

## A MOUNTAIN ADVENTURE.

RECENTLY one of two hunters who were out in the Coast range of mountains had a very thrilling experience with an enormous cougar, and narrowly escaped with his life. These men, leaving the settlements in one of the many little valleys that lie at the base of the range, pushed up into the mountains. The spot selected as a camp was a wild, rugged, romantic one, at the base of a lofty, frowning bluff, the top of which was densely clad with timber. A small stream leaping from the crest of the cliff came dashing down, forming a series of beautiful cascades.

Primarily, the object of the two nimrods was to stalk deer. However, they were "loaded for bear," and would not have objected to running afoul of a black, a cinnamon, or even the fierce and formidable grizzly. For several days the hunters had climbed the rugged and heavily timbered mountains, descended profound canyons, crossed brawling torrents, clambered along the escarpment of dizzy precipices, plunged into the gloomy depths of forests, and worked their way slowly and with great labor through tangled and almost impenetrable thickets of underbrush. Fickle fortune had smiled propitiously. Three deer and a small black bear had fallen victims to their unerring rifles. They had been so lucky, that the two hunters had about concluded to return to the settlements, and finish the hunt later in the season. Finally it was settled that early the following morning they would pack up their traps and return home.

One of them concluded to remain in camp that afternoon to pack the jerked flesh of the deer and bear that had not already been eaten. The other thought he would take a little stroll with his rifle, hoping to bring down a deer. It was late in the afternoon when he started forth. The day was a lovely one in August. Clouded skies hid the sun, now far down toward the mountain horizon, and rendered the temperature delightful. Musing and absorbed in admiring the wild, romantic scenery, he sauntered listlessly along, paying little attention to where he was going. His almost aimless course led him across a broad belt of thick undergrowth. Many years before great, destructive fires had swept away the dense and noble forests, but Mother Nature had been thoughtful and kind, and in the course of years had clothed these dreary, blackened wastes with a thick growth of young brush.

Through this tangled thicket the hunter cautiously

and laboriously made his way. Entering suddenly a little glade, he paused a moment, and had just about made up his mind to retrace his steps to camp, when a slight rustling in the brush not far away attracted his attention.

Turning around, he saw a fine, fat buck, bearing a beautiful head of horns, just entering the edge of the glade, not more than seventy yards away. Bringing his trusty rifle in position, he touched the trigger. At the crack of the weapon the buck fell, but soon jumped up again and bounded away. Knowing that the buck had received a very serious wound, the hunter was determined to follow it, so he elbowed his way through the dense chaparral and pushed on in pursuit. To his joy, he soon came in sight of the wounded animal, which was bleeding profusely and could make but slow



"A FINE, FAT BUCK, JUST ENTERING THE EDGE OF THE GLADE."

progress. By this time the sun had set, and the lengthening shadows warned the hunter that night was near at hand. But he pushed resolutely forward despite this fact, determined to secure the tempting game. Several times he caught glimpses of the mortally wounded buck, but, owing to the thick brush, could find an opportunity to shoot it. Wrapped in the excitement of the chase, time passed unheeded. Nearly exhausted with the severity of the labor, and despairing of success, the hunter finally, with great reluctance, gave up the chase and began to retrace his steps. Twilight came on, and very soon night descended, and with it that peculiar, death-like silence so common to those great, solemn, mountain solitudes. Soon the