

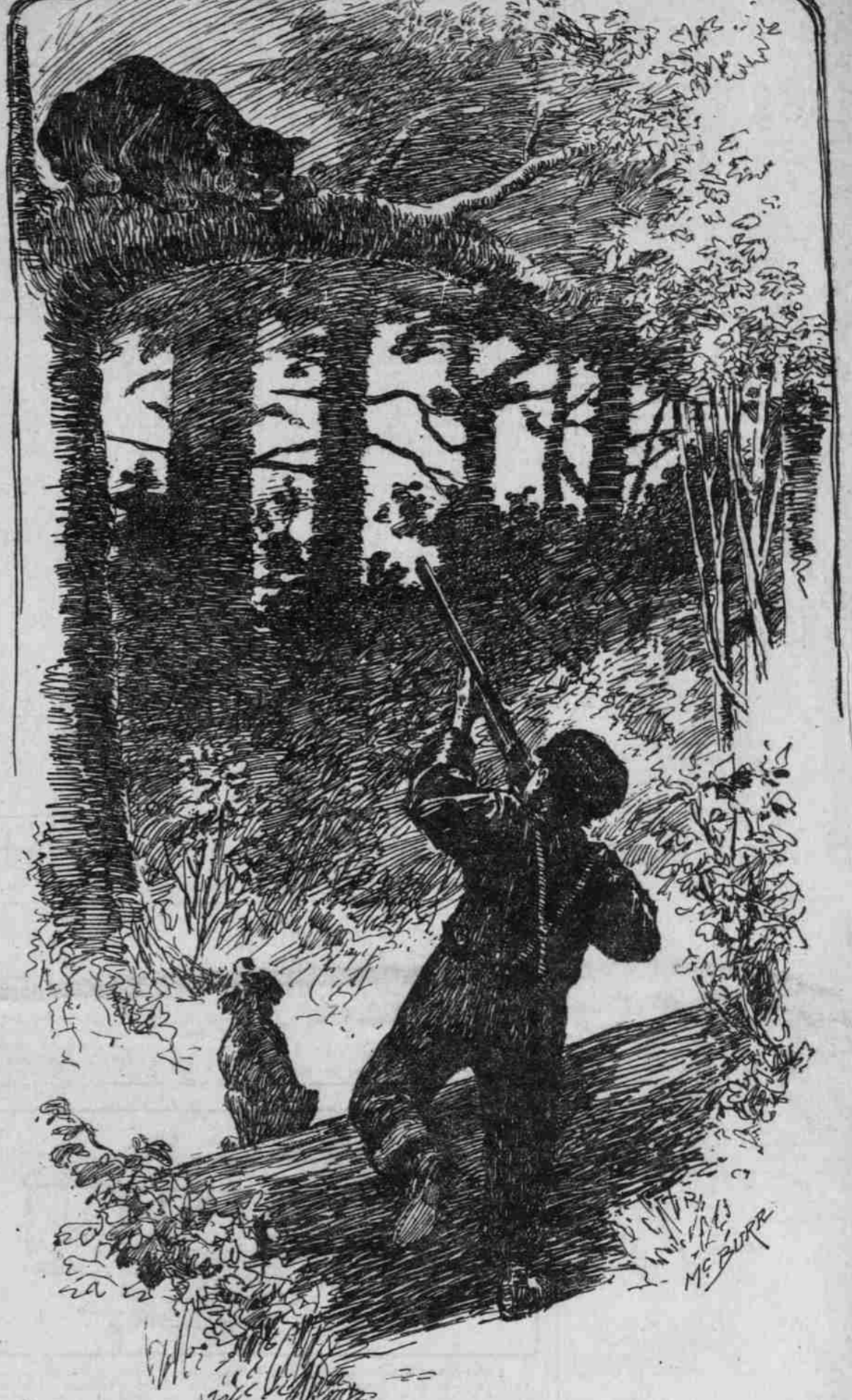
THE TRUTH ABOUT OREGON'S BIG CATS

B. A. Childers Writes From His Experience With Treacherous Panthers During a Lifetime

Glory of a Boy Who All By Himself Laid Low An Animal Called the Mountain Lion



THE ANIMAL WAS SO BUSILY ENGAGED THAT HE DID NOT NOTICE HARVEY



IT WAS JUST LIGHT ENOUGH TO BEAD HIM

BY B. A. CHILDERS.

SHOW me a man or boy who does not take delight in reading stories of hair-raising hunting experiences and I will show you one, man or boy, who has no red corpuscles in his blood. The two go together. Hunting big game produces men who make the best soldiers the world ever saw. These men have the trained eye and the steel nerve, requisites for the successful fighters.

Many a night, in my boyhood, after all had retired, I have stretched myself in front of the wide chimney, and by the light of a chip fire, read the thrilling experiences of Daniel Boone, Louis Wetzel, Adam Poe, Simon Kenton and Kit Carson. In fancy I hunted and fought side by side with them and gloried in their success. I too had Big Foot's head under water and tried to drown him. I roamed the pathless forests with Daniel Boone; scouted and killed Indians with Wetzel; guided, scouted and hunted buffalo with Kit Carson, and always intended, when grown, to be a hunter, trapper, scout or something else, the very thought of which set all my nerves a-trill.

Forty years ago I landed in Oregon. During the two years following my arrival I lived in Lane County on the classic shores of the Long Tom, which leads in the Notli Mountains, one of the highest of the Coast Range.

That section of the state is pre-eminent for its abundance of big cats. Nowhere else do they thrive and multiply and grow so large as on the Long Tom and its tributaries. I have known them to measure 11 feet from tip to tip. As a rule the biggest cats are not the longest. Cats weighing 300 pounds often measure less than nine feet. Others weighing less than 200 pounds often come near the 11-foot mark.

Here it may be well to state that the big cats of the West have many names. When the enthusiastic novice kills one, accidentally, it is always a mountain lion. The more experienced hunter tells of the gigantic cougar that fell an easy victim to his unerring rifle. The old-timer tells, modestly, of the big panther, or painter. He killed up the hills, the mountain lion. He has never seen a mountain lion, not a cougar, and doubts their existence. To him, and he is right, all of the big cats are panthers.

Whenever deer abound the big cats make their lair. I have often, while hunting, been so near that I could smell them as

distinctly as one can smell those in cages at the City Park if he stands close in front of their cage.

The scent of one to the hunter alone in the forest does not produce a pleasurable sensation. He knows that the chances are in favor of the cat, which is watching his every movement, and that it would not run if he should blunder onto it. They are not afraid, these big cats, but will lie motionless and allow a hunter to pass within 20 feet of them and never betray their presence by even a twitch of the tail.

The mountain hunter rarely ever sees a panther, unless it is chased by dogs. During a residence of 40 years, in which I have hunted the Coast Range, the Cascades and the Blue Mountains, I have seen only two not chased by dogs. They were both hunting me, although I have always felt sure they mistook me for legitimate prey.

Coming down the trail from the Prairie Mountains on the head waters of the Alsea River in Benton County late one afternoon I saw a large animal slip over a log which lay across the trail. I knew it was a panther although it was the first I had ever seen.

Calling my two dogs, which were in the trail behind me, I tore down the trail in the direction of the panther. Just as I saw it the dogs struck its trail and began baying. I saw the panther's head about half-way from where I saw it and the dog passed me, and they were excited as I. The panther never moved until they were almost upon it. Then it sailed down the mountain looking for all the world like a gigantic flying squirrel.

It was almost sundown and I was five miles from camp, but I did not hesitate. Down the mountain I tore, the most elated boy that ever chased a panther. I could feel a panther's pelt around my neck and see myself strutting proudly into camp to the surprise of all.

Soon I heard the dogs baying and knew that they had him up a tree. I loosened my speed so I should not be nervous, and cautiously approached the spot where the dogs were baying. Catching sight of the dog, I glanced up and there was my beauty, about 30 feet from the ground,

rolling his eyes and lashing his tail in impotent fury.

It was just light enough to "bead" him, and at the crack of the gun he let all hold on and fell to the ground with his skull crushed.

To say I was proud is meaningless. I was almost delirious with joy. I had to pinch myself to see if I were dreaming. The snarling of the dogs as they tended the huge beast dispelled all illusions, and I took off my pelt.

It was 12 o'clock when I reached camp tired but elated, displaying my trophy and told how I did it. I was the proudest boy in Oregon that night. Since then I have killed, and helped to kill, many panthers, but none afforded me the pleasure of my first one.

The big cats of Oregon are remarkably agile. In Benton County, I, with several other men, saw a sample of this agility. The snow lay six inches deep over the ground, and there was no chance to be mistaken.

A panther had ascended a leaning tree near a deer trail, and lay in wait for its prey. We found part of the deer in the trail, with panther tracks all about the carcass, but no tracks leading up to the point of attack. Cautious about our ground, the cat had climbed the leaning tree. From the point where it crouched to where the deer was caught was about 24 feet.

The immense strength of these big cats is exemplified by a feat of one in the Cascade Mountains on the military road across the mountains from Eugene City. Hugdon, who owned the last ranch on the road, had a well-grown calf six months old, which he kept in a "stake-and-rider" fence ten rails high. A panther entered the corral, killed the calf and sprang over the fence with it, carrying it a distance of 100 yards before making a meal from the carcass. The calf easily weighed 300 pounds, no doubt, being much heavier than the panther.

In 1860, in broad daylight, on the Muddy, a tributary of the Long Tom, in Benton County, a panther sprang over a yard fence and caught a child, biting it through the back of the neck. The vicious attack of a dog saved the child from being carried off, although it died a few days

after. Men and dogs hunted that panther for days unsuccessfully. The child's mother, alarmed by the dog's barking, ran into the yard in time to see the animal leap the fence and disappear in the fern.

In 1871 a man named Cole, in Douglas County, was carrying a deer along a trail when a panther sprang on the deer, hurling Cole to the ground. Fortunately Cole was unhurt, and immediately there was something doing. The panther evidently was hungry, and having tasted blood, did not care whether he feasted on man or deer. Cole killed it with his hunting-knife after a desperate encounter which left Cole sadly in need of a new suit of clothes. This cat measured only seven feet from tip to tip. Had it been as large as the one that killed Hugdon's calf, the chances are the man would have been slain.

Last winter a hunter near Eugene City lost his life in an encounter with a panther. The animal was fatally wounded, and in the struggle the man was killed accidentally by the discharge of his own gun. He had used the gun as a club, thinking it was empty, and it was discharged in the conflict.

For years a gigantic panther ranged the Alsea Mountains, which the dogs could not track. Often I have seen his tracks on the road leading from the Willamette Valley to the headwaters of the Alsea. His track measured seven inches—the largest I ever saw.

The children from the Inman mills often went to the falls, a mile and a half below the falls, trout-fishing. Returning one afternoon, the dogs struck a trail and were soon baying some animal viciously. Naturally the children were frightened and wanted to run home, but Harvey Belknap, a lad of 11 years, had his shotgun, loaded with bird shot, and he was from Missouri.

Following the sound of the dogs, the children trailing with popping eyes, they soon came to where the dogs had an immense panther sitting with his back to a giant fir. Whenever a dog came within reach, Mr. Panther would hit him with a swipe, tumbling him head over heels.

The animal was so busily engaged that he did not notice Harvey, who walked up within 30 feet and blew the whole top of his head off with a load of bird-shot. It was a foolhardy thing to do and no man would have attempted it, but, boy-like, Harvey was willing to take a chance—and he got the panther. It was the big fellow we had all been trying to get for years. The reason of this cat's immunity for

years lay in his fearlessness of dogs. When brought to bay it is probable he boxed them over until fully rested, then gave them another run. At the time he met his death there were 10 or 12 dogs after him and he was too busily engaged to notice the boy with the gun.

It is a well-known fact that panthers will tree much more quickly from a small than a large dog. Whether they do not understand the little fellow or wish to inspect him at leisure, is one of the secrets of panther lore.

Harley A. Belknap, now of Prineville, killed a panther in the Alsea Mountains which chased his dog out of a thicket and followed it to within 30 yards of him. The panther showed no fear of either dog or man. One cannot help speculating as to the result of a miss, Harley being armed with a muzzle-loading rifle and the cat advancing when shot dead.

I have known a panther killed by a man and dogs without gun or knife, and

on a night so dark the man could see neither dogs nor panther. The dogs treed two panthers in an oak tree near the house and the three men took one gun and went out with a lantern to bag whatever the dogs had treed.

As the men approached with the light the panthers sprang from the tree, separated and five of the dogs caught one of them within 30 feet of the tree. Curley and Stub, two bulldogs, were in the gang that caught the big cat. Curley was a famous fighter and when his vicious jaws closed in anger they were there to stay.

Isaac Innon, an uncle of mine, felt his way through the dense fir brush until he came to the scene of combat. Listening, he assured himself that Curley had a death grip on the panther's throat. Feeling cautiously about, he finally got hold of the panther's tail and began to kick in its ribs. When Dave and Tom reached the field of action with the lan-

tern, Ike and the dogs were putting in the finishing touches. Curley still maintaining his hold on the brute's throat. This boast measured eight feet. Uncle Ike, when asked if he were not afraid, said: "Not when I knew Curley had it by the throat. Nothing but death would break his grip."

The panthers of Eastern Oregon are not as large as the west of the Cascades. Neither are they so fierce. Yet they are not easily frightened. Cam Vanderpool, crossing a log over the Deschutes River, met one half way. The cat did not wish to turn back and Cam dared not. They stood and glared at each other for some time. Cam tried to "shoot" it, but the panther would not "show" worth a cent.

Finally Cam began to beat the animal over the head with his fishing-pole, thus inducing it to retreat. The instant the cat turned Cam did likewise, and the way he ran was a caution to sprinters.

SOME BIG RENTS THAT ARE PAID BY NEW YORKERS

ENORMOUS SUMS CHARGED FOR OFFICES BOTH UP-TOWN AND DOWN-TOWN

M. W. Mount in New York Tribune.

THE Island of Manhattan isn't very big, but it makes the most of itself. One little chunk of it, at Broadway and Wall street, commands a higher rental than is paid for the same amount of space anywhere else in the world. Slightly over 225 square feet, averaging, it is said, \$10,000 a year, is paid by a clear company for one small store on this site, which goes to show that money invested in cigars does not all go up in smoke.

A quarter of a million is the conservative sum estimated as representing the combined rentals of space on the concourse floor of the Hudson Terminal building, while half a million is paid by a single firm for ten floors in a neighboring skyscraper and, it is said, the Erie Railroad more than matches this sum by the tidy rental it pays for five floors in the Cortlandt-street Terminal building. No other corporation has as much floor area in this structure.

People who want office space in Manhattan never seem to let a little matter of rent stand in the way of acquiring it. When John W. Gates desired a suite of private offices in upper Fifth avenue he paid \$3,000 a year for a modest-sized floor and fitted it up costly at an expenditure of \$12,000. His suite in the Trinity building cost him \$50,000.

The postoffice is one of Manhattan's good tenants. Close upon a quarter of a million dollars goes into Father Knickerbocker's pockets from the Government, which pays \$22,000 a year for postoffice

stations, finding space in the Grand Central Palace at \$2,500 a year, at West and Morton streets for \$20,000 and at the Madison Square and a few other stations at almost as high a figure. The Produce Exchange has the postoffice for a tenant. Like others, it has to pay the \$150 a square foot, which totals up to \$150 a year for store space in this building.

Lessees are so afraid that rents will continue to soar in Manhattan that many—the Government included—have taken out as long leases as they could, while on the other hand, numerous agents have wisely provided against future contingencies of another kind and refused to lease except on long terms.

A \$12,000,000 Lease.

The longest lease of its kind in New York is that of a Greesley Square site at the southeast corner of Broadway and Thirty-third street for a term of 35 years for \$12,000,000. Four millions will be paid for the first forty-two years and \$3,000,000 for the rest of the term, an arrangement on the part of the lessee, Harry Levey, which goes to show that he believes the site will increase in value a generation or so after he has erected a two or three million dollar structure to stand upon that corner on completion of the Pennsylvania tunnel.

The old New York Club sits, at Fifth avenue and Thirty-fifth street, has been taken by a grocery firm for a term of twenty-one years for \$4,000,000 net, while another lease for the same period has been entered into for No. 1 West Thirty-fourth street.

"Notwithstanding the present money stringency, there has been no appreciable

reduction in rentals for office space this year," said Robert A. Granniss, Jr., vice-president of the firm of Pease & Elliott, speaking about downtown office buildings. "The general average of office rent for \$2 a square foot, and \$20,000 for a floor is considered a pretty good rental in the average office building. A common price is about \$1000 a year for an office about 28x35 feet in size, which is usually partitioned off into three rooms.

"Of course, there are exceptions. In some cases, store rents are always higher than office rents, and ground floors are looked upon as practically store floors and rent accordingly."

Rent of \$1000 a Room.

It is said in the Empire building, in which the Carnegie Steel Company is, that its offices rent for over \$1 a foot, or more than \$1000 a room, and some companies occupy several floors in this building, each representing an annual fortune in rentals. The same prices obtain in the Trinity and its companion building, where no company occupies more than two floors at an estimated rental of more than \$30,000 a floor. It is said that these prices are matched by those obtaining in the City Investing Company, Inanover Bank, Equitable, Singer and Terminal buildings. The two latter are, respectively, the tallest and

the largest office buildings in the world, while the City Investing Company is said to possess the longest main corridor in the country.

In the neighborhood of these structures store space rents at \$15 a square foot, or \$8,000 a year for a small store of 600 square feet, while second floors, with only a short flight of stairs from the street, bring \$10 a square foot, or \$4000 for a small store. Correspondingly high prices are also paid for offices which occupy especially advantageous positions.

In the uptown office district \$30,000 a year is said to be the highest rental paid for a store floor. This is at Fifth avenue and Twenty-sixth street, and rooms for offices in this locality bring about \$1000 a year, or \$25 a square foot.

Significant of the times is the fact that private houses which have rented for \$5000 and \$10,000 are now bringing only \$4000 and \$5000. For exceptionally fine houses people pay a rental of from \$25,000 to \$50,000 a year, a price which would have made the late J. Henry Smith glad to buy \$2,300,000 for the Whitney house when he bought it, with a few of its furnishings, would have caused the very wigs to rise from their heads in amazement.

"The most expensive residence property in Manhattan," said Messrs. Pease & Elliott, "lies between Fifth and Madison avenues from Fifty-ninth to Seventy-second street. In good sections this property sells for \$500,000 to \$600,000, while in Park and Madison avenues values run from \$100,000 to \$200,000 for a house and lot.

The highest rental paid recently for a house was \$40,000 for a period of eight months. This house is in Sixty-second

street, just off Fifth avenue. Scarcely two blocks below it in the avenue are apartments which are said to be the most expensive in the city, with an average annual rental of \$15,000 each. People who have two of these apartments thrown into one to enjoy a spacious home pay just twice that sum for the additional privilege.

In this locality ten-room suites, unfurnished, may be had for \$12,000 a year, while a block further down large suites entice the gregarious householder at \$7500, unless he wants them furnished, when he can get them for \$9000. Around Fifteenth street housekeeping apartments bring \$12,000, while an apartment hotel not far distant asks \$1000 a room a year and rents small suites at \$500 a year.

Certain apartment hotels consider \$500 to \$500 a room a year an unreasonable figure to ask for suites of rooms, and that housekeepers agree with them is shown by the cheerfulness with which they pay this price.

New York hotels no longer shelter only a transient population. Each great caravansary means home to unnumbered small families. John W. Gates is said to have paid \$50,000 a year for his suite at the Plaza Hotel. A certain wealthy woman is said to exceed this figure by \$10,000 in the sum she pays for her luxurious hotel apartment. At the Holland House one may enjoy the use of two rooms and a bath for \$15,000 a year, and at the St. Regis at the rate of \$5 a day, while the Waldorf charges \$20,000 a year for small suites.

The St. Regis is perhaps the only place in New York which will not make a long lease. A tenant is charged by the day

only, and may decrease or add to the number of rooms in his suite at his own convenience and depart at pleasure, with no lease to occasion months of outlay during absence.

Special Privileges Costliest.

The highest rents in New York are paid for standing room. The most princely rental paid for store, office, residence, apartment or hotel space does not compare, proportionally, with the sum expended for a humble bootblack stand, a soda fountain or cigar kiosk.

A Schulte pays \$30 a square foot for cigar privileges in the Cortlandt street Terminal Building, and this is said to be next to the highest rent paid by anybody in the world. The cigar lease for the northwest corner of Cortlandt and Church streets runs for 12 years at a cost of \$20 a square foot for 600 square feet, while the lease includes five other stands in the Terminal Building at a total cost of \$500,000. One of these is in the exact center of the Hudson terminal concourse floor, and for this glass booth, open on three sides and covering a space 21x9 feet in size, a rental of \$750 a year is charged. It is said that \$88,000 cigars at two for 25 cents would have to be sold to cover a year's expenses of this stand, and even taking other expenses into account, 250,000 would need to be disposed of before profits would begin.

Higher prices are paid for cigar privileges than for any other occupying a proportionate amount of space. In a Broadway office building \$1500 is received as annual rental for a stand 20

square feet in size, and such stands pay correspondingly high prices for space in other buildings and hotels.

A bootblack formerly rented a large stand in the Empire Building at a cost of \$10,000 a year and one paid \$4000 for a small space in the Equitable Building, which was the first to establish booth-lined corridors, and now charges as high as \$2000 for stand privileges. The bootblack privilege in the Hudson terminal rents for \$10,000 a year for a term of 12 years.

Notwithstanding such a tax upon the privileges of shining shoes, bootblack stands netted Tony Aste a fortune and enabled him to maintain a costly racing stable.

Flower booths in hotels pay an average rental of \$1500 to \$2000 a year, and in the Terminal Building nossegays will cost their sellers from \$2000 to \$4500 in booth rents.

Those who adorn every available spot—from chimney top to bedrock—with advertisements have to contribute not less than \$40,333.34 a year to the coffers of the subway and elevated systems for the privilege of informing the wayfarer what to chew and how to make the hair grow, while railroad trunk lines derive a pretty penny from news companies who dispense news and candles along their lines.

Incentive Lacking.

555 Motl.

I never use had language; no, I never do. But then I never play at golf nor try to use a fountain pen.