

TRAILER'S FIRST BEAR.

BY JOHN E. GRIFFIN.

The first bear that Trailer ever treed was on Griffin creek near the old home ranch. I was living on the place then about one hundred and fifty yards north of the old farm house, where my sister was living at the time. One night in the month of June '82 I had just gone to bed, when my sister came running down and called to me to get up as she thought a bear had caught a hog up above the house, as she heard one squealing. I hurried out as quickly as possible, grabbed my gun and ran up to the house where both dogs, Trailer, then a young dog a little over a year old, and Lion, a cur that had been in one bear fight and got the worst of it, were lying; but neither had heard nor scented the bear on account of being on the opposite side of the house from where he was. I called them out at once and as soon they got around to the other side they scented the bear and away they went; the bear had already "racked" out.

Neither dog barked nor made any noise until they got to the place where the bear had been, when Trailer immediately took up the track and started after him yelping at every jump, but old Lion, remembering his former experience, stopped and commenced to bark, afraid to go farther.

I broke and ran as fast as I could and as soon as I got near enough shouted at him and urged him to go. When he found out I was coming he racked out, but Trailer had already got at least a half-mile the start of him and was just going over the hill out of hearing. I waited then until I heard the old dog across the hill when I turned down towards the creek to the wagon road as I supposed that the bear would probably tree somewhere near the creek. I had not gone far when I was joined by John S. Miller, an old bear hunter, who was cool as a cucumber while I was all excitement.

We did not go far until we heard both dogs barking furiously and knew by the bark that Bruin was treed. We quickened our steps then, Miller all the time cautioning me to go slow, as, if we made much racket the bear might hear us and come down. We soon reached the tree and, sure enough, there he was, a large brown bear clinging to the side of a big pine. It was now about 10 o'clock but the stars were shining brightly and we could plainly see the bear. Of course I wanted to shoot and so did Miller, but finally I gave my gun over to him as he was an old bear hunter. He took delib-

erate aim and blazed away with such precision that old Bruin came down on the double quick and away he went with both dogs at his heels. He didn't go far however, until they brought him up again, this time in a dead fir. I took the gun which Miller seemed to be willing to give up and went over to the tree; The bear was up about 30 or 40 feet and as there were no limbs to bother I could see him plainly, so I pulled away without stopping to study over consequences. At the crack of the gun he fell over backwards and down he came, landing in the brush below. The dogs attacked him furiously but there was no fight left in the bear as the bullet had passed through the heart killing him so dead that he never knew what hurt him. We dressed him and hung him up, then went back to the house and to bed but, as may be imagined, I was too excited to sleep much.

I was now sure that I had a bear dog, something I had wanted for years. In this I was not mistaken as the career of Trailer has proved him to be one of the best bear dogs ever known in this or any other country. An account of the bear hunts in which he was engaged would make a good sized book; and if you wish it and think it would interest your readers I will give at some future time an account of other bear fights that Trailer and I have "enjoyed" together—particularly the last, or *one-hundred and eighth* bear scrape in which the poor old fellow participated.

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The Rev. Robert Sherrill, a "Soul-sleeper" clergyman, has been preaching or lecturing in the U. M. L. Hall, of course with the object of getting people to thinking his way. Baptists, Methodists, Dunkards, Seventh-day Adventists, Seventh-day Baptists, Agnostics and Spiritualists, each have quite a number of adherents in our community, but as competition is the great stimulant in every department of human endeavor, we should not object to a "right smart sprinkling" of Soul-sleepers, Campbellites, Presbyterians, United Brethren, Christian Scientists, Swedenborgians, Lutherans, Occultists, Unitarians, Episcopalians, Catholics, etc., etc, *ad libitum*.

Don't forget that E. M. Deauvaal is the Talent shoemaker, and does his work up in good shape, for moderate prices.