himself by the law, and yet "not, in any sense, what would be called a lady" — by a New Yorker. And how could Watts d'Alloi, "with two hundred and fifty years of Knickerbocker and Huguenot tradition" behind him, have been such a cad as calmly to accept, and never in the whole course of the book disclaim the sacrifice of Peter, who leaped headlong into the breach when his friend's honor was a second time at stake, and became *splendide mendax* on his behalf? And how could Miss de Voe — a charming pastel, by the way, a lady as lovely in character as she was lofty in lineage — have talked about her "escortage," when she meant the friend who had gone with her to the opera, and the "shortage" of her guests at a dinner-party? And how could all these good people, with all their presumed advantages, have said "brainy" and "tony," and permitted themselves freely to conjugate in all its revolting moods and tenses the terrible verb "to enthuse"? Can it be that, amid all the warfare that appears to await us in the near future, the United States troops will one day have to be called out for the defense of our mother tongue?

But these, after all, are not matters of the first importance, and our last word about Peter Sterling shall be one of hearty commendation and recommendation for a timely, manly, thoroughbred, and eminently suggestive book.

THE WILDERNESS HUNTER.

No books excite more interest, for readers who care for them at all, than those which describe the pursuit of large game, yet it is doubtful whether the best among this class of works are usually estimated at their actual value. Commonly, they have been considered only as interesting narratives of adventure, and their important contributions to natural history remain, for the most part, unacknowledged. Furthermore, certain enthusiasts for "culture" decry sport, and disparage the sportsman's qualities. They say that these, at best, are characteristic traits of a barbarous state, and that love of the chase is a survival from savagery.

If an ideal condition of things existed anywhere, such objections would carry more weight; but as societies are now constituted, wherever enterprise, patience, quickness of sense, and unfaltering courage display themselves, sympathy and esteem are inevitably won. Imagination and feeling respond to impressions produced by those scenes which the hunter seeks; they cause us to share his vicissitudes, and to take part in what he does. Few of us have really passed beyond the stimulating touch of the aids and incitements which personal experience amidst the greater wild beasts may give. Shakespeare (the general, not the poet) may overestimate this training as a moral safeguard, but Dunraven, Baker, and Roosevelt have so painted the true sportsman's character that, while our present dispensation continues, it can neither be undervalued nor ignored.

As for the Wilderness Hunter himself, what he has written [1] may be reviewed without reference to individual attributes. Moreover, in books such as this, men involuntarily portray themselves better than another could describe them. Those "who in the love of nature hold communion with her visible forms" need not be indebted to criti-

[1] *The Wilderness Hunter.* By THEODORE ROOSEVELT. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1893.

cism for an acknowledgment of their endowment with "the vision and the faculty." It is the same with respect to valor. Whoever has voluntarily confronted the tremendous charge of elephants or tigers, and acquitted himself well, or has followed the grizzly bear into places where the sole alternative is to conquer or die, gains nothing by having these feats exploited.

If Mr. Roosevelt's book be compared with the best accounts of direct observation in other modern languages, it will be found to be singularly free from those blemishes which cling like hereditary vices to judgments pronounced upon wild beasts. Biological and psychological misconceptions and superstitions disfigure almost the entire literature of this subject, and a body of information so extensive, various, and instructive as that given in The Wilderness Hunter may claim to be exceptional among the annals of sport. Interesting and often valuable as their matter is, the narratives of most great hunters impose upon those who study them for scientific ends a heavy burden in the way of elimination and reconstructive labor. Such is not the case here; so far as it goes, this author's text may be taken as it stands. The pernicious doctrine in descriptive zoölogy, that instinct iscontradistinguishable from intellect, and is something more than inherited fitness and automatic function, does not anywhere pervert the opinions expressed. That widespread fallacy which insists upon an intuitive recognition of man's primacy in nature by creatures that have not been taught through experience to dread his power nowhere appears. Mr. Roosevelt never makes the common mistake of looking upon a local group as fully representing the peculiarities of widely ranging species, whose members, being differently situated in separate areas, cannot be the same. No one can appreciate, without a critical study of the voluminous records of eye-witnesses concerning character and habit, how little they are to be relied upon in general; not from lack of good faith, but because want of acquaintance with natural laws, or an inability to apply them, has involved this subject in a mass of contradictions scarcely to be paralleled elsewhere. That The Wilderness Hunter so fully masters those constantly recurring implications from the law that all life depends on a continuous adjustment of organisms to the entirety of conditions under which they are placed, betrays, of course, the closet student. Individual experience does not confer success of this kind, which, in the work under consideration, shows itself as conspicuously by an absence of dogmatic decisions as it does in anything that is said. Reticence with respect to subjects concerning which conclusions are for any reason uncertain is, to those accustomed to announcements of crude and incomplete views, premature generalizations, and the perpetual confounding of inference with observation, an unmistakable indication of proficiency. Mr. Roosevelt makes no display of scientific attainments, rarely refers to authorities, never indulges in theoretical disquisitions upon the many and strikingly contrasted creatures with which he came in contact. He tells what he knows of them, nothing more; but this is done so fully, so fairly, and with so complete an absence of preconception, prejudice, and the errors attributable to the sources just pointed out, that it is merely a plain statement of the truth to say of this book that it stands nearly alone in the literature of sport with large game.

It is unreasonable to demand of an author more than he professes to give. Men, however, who know all about the subject upon which they write almost certainly make this evident, and sometimes present much more than was promised. The author of The Wilderness Hunter constantly does so, as, for example, in his descriptions of the cougar and wolf, which are admirable accounts of

these animals, given at first hand, and full of instruction upon details that have not made their way, to any great extent, into formal natural history. Still more strikingly true is this of his chapter on the grizzly, or, as he properly calls it, the *grisly* bear. In certain respects the present writer is out of touch with opinions there expressed; but these differences are neither radical, nor perhaps irreconcilable. Be this as it may, it need not prevent a free admission that nothing so thorough and satisfactory concerning this animal's way of life and general character has yet appeared. Like Mr. Roosevelt's description of our mountain sheep, in Ranch Life and the Hunting Trail, this is the best essay in existence on its own subject. Furthermore, regarded from a standpoint furnished by the literature of wild beasts at large, none of the *ferœ* have been dealt with so completely upon the basis of a single individual's personal knowledge.

Mr. Roosevelt says that it has been his "good luck to kill all the various kinds of large game that can properly be considered to belong to temperate North America." As he is essentially a sportsman, one who would disdain wanton destruction for the purpose of making a bag, the chase has been with him an accessory of life, not its end, and all that his varied observation has revealed he has also faithfully and effectively described. It was therefore a decided gain to zoölogy that such opportunity should have been offered to a man in every way capable of using it to advantage. We shall never know more than a small part of the true history of wild animal life in any country. Hitherto, insuperable obstructions have interfered with accuracy and insight upon the part of those who chiefly came in contact with these denizens of the jungle, mountain, and plain. If, in the future, a different class of sportsmen should arise, they will find most of the great hunting-grounds in all lands tenantless.

The Indian elephant is preserved within such extensive ranges that we may entertain a good hope for the survival of this species. But the African elephant is doomed, and the white rhinoceros, a creature only second in size to him, and not long since widespread and abundant on the Dark Continent, has so entirely disappeared that no museum in the world possesses a single complete specimen. Our bison, or buffalo, has also gone, and even if the protected fragments of its vast herds are able partially to overcome the physiological disabilities involved in interbreeding, the great ox of the Western world is to all intents and purposes blotted out of creation.

These are accomplished facts in a series of events whose fulfillment appears to be certain. Those noble animals which Mr. Roosevelt hunted so lately have in great measure vanished from the regions where they were then plentiful. The greater forms in the American fauna are rapidly withdrawing into such fastnesses of the north and west as yet remain, there to make their last stand. Natural history goes but a little way beyond skeletons and skins. With these the systematic naturalist may work indefinitely, yet the days of descriptive zoölogy are numbered. Biology and psychology must seek narrower channels than those in which they might once have run, and many contributing streams will be lost, even while the current flows fresh from its source. Few appreciate, and fewer care for the desolation which is going on; nevertheless, it is only too true that domains of life and mind are now closing to the world, for whose loss nothing can ever compensate.

Mr. Roosevelt masses illustrations of these conceptions, and of those deficiencies in our knowledge which, probably, can never be made good. For example, speaking of northern Rocky Mountain wolves, he says that they attack "every four-footed beast to be found where they live;" and that while, unlike their con-

geners of the Old World, these animals are intolerant to a degree of man's proximity, they are daring and dangerous, and also "the shyest and hardest to slay." Nobody who knows it will deny that such anomalous traits coexist in "the dark gray beast;" yet who is to explain them, not on general principles, but with reference to the creature itself? It may be possible to understand why timber wolves have proportionally larger teeth than their brethren of the plains, because we happen to be in some degree acquainted with the contrasted conditions of existence through which natural selection operated. On the other hand, Mr. Roosevelt saw that, although there was a wide specific variation of color in *canis lupus* here, sub-groups everywhere exhibited a strong tendency to assimilate in tint. With some beings the rationale of this would be obvious, but how can it be certainly accounted for in the case of such a wandering and unsocial savage as the wolf? Again, this beast seems to be eminently fitted to prosper in the struggle for existence; the black bear, apparently, has no such fitness; yet where they live side by side, the latter holds its own, while the former perishes. What turns the scale against it?

Phenomena of a like character, but manifested in a wider field, and equally inexplicable, abound. "The otter of America is larger than the otter of Europe," remarks Mr. Roosevelt, "while the badger is smaller." Our mink is "a much stouter animal than its Scandinavian or Russian kinsman, while the reverse is true of our sable, or pine marten. No one can say why the European red deer should be a pygmy compared to its giant brother, the American wapiti; why the Old World elk should average smaller in size than the almost indistinguishable New World moose, and yet the bison of Lithuania and the Caucasus be on the whole larger and more formidable than its American cousin. In the same way, no one can tell why, under like conditions, some game, such as the white goat and spruce grouse, should be tamer than other closely allied species, like the mountain sheep and ruffed grouse. No one can say why, on the whole, the wolf of Scandinavia and northern Russia should be larger and more dangerous than the average wolf of the Rocky Mountains, while between the bears of the same regions the comparison must be exactly reversed." These results were all brought about by natural selection, but what were the several processes, what the coöperative factors and play of forces, in different instances? How can we hope to answer these questions, now that nature's object-lessons are drawing so nearly to an end?

The Wilderness Hunter has, moreover, done well in a higher department. On this continent extremes in human condition touch. Without intervening social grades, civilization here borders upon primeval savagery. The first man and the last man stand in opposition. Except these, distinguishable types among the human strata on our frontier change and fade like forms seen in a dissolving view. Famous artists have preserved ideals of some representative figures in this strange and transitory mass, and Mr. Roosevelt's sketches from real life are executed too skillfully not to inspire a hope that he may hereafter make them more complete. His cowboy is a study that could not well be dispensed with.

The original wilderness hunters have become creatures of vague remembrance and untrustworthy tradition. One hears of them through fragmentary reminiscences at lonely camp-fires, but they are gone, leaving scarcely a trace of their individuality behind. Trappers and hunters of later times are not the same men as were their predecessors: this we know, and this is nearly all. Whatever it is possible to perpetuate concerning this latter class claims attention. It has a place in human natural history.

The subject is at present overlaid with absurdities and fiction, until well-nigh all that is commonly believed of it is untrue. Yet a little while, and the last unadulterated product of border life, the semi-nomadic horseman of its cattle ranges, will ride away "into oblivion and night." Much that was worth knowing has been rescued already from forgetfulness by the writings of Mr. Roosevelt, than whom no one has known this sociological variety better, has had more facilities for observing it, or was fitter to describe its features. It will be well indeed if his future contributions to descriptive zoölogy may be supplemented, like The Wilderness Hunter itself, by additional studies of human types.

RECENT BOOKS ON JAPAN.

The real Japan, to use a somewhat presumptuous title adopted by Mr. Henry Norman, is slowly coming to light. Facts about Japan have been abundantly set forth, but it is the purpose and privilege of art to transmute fact, and to reveal the more intimate and pregnant truth which merely clever reporters miss. The form of the art may be music, color, or fit language, and it is as works of literary art that the intelligent reader apprehends the recent writings of Mr. Lafcadio Hearn.[1] Through this art he comes into a very intimate acquaintance with the finer verities of Japanese life.

Mr. Hearn seems born to be the mouthpiece of races so alien to ourselves that they live the poetry they do not talk about. To those whose hearts had been swept by the storms of Chita, or had drifted through the opalescent lymphs which bathe Martinique, the tidings that this lover of hues had made Japan his home was very welcome; for Japan, too long a prey to the literary Philistine, is indeed a poet's Mecca; in her alone are the life-tints of a pristine world undimmed. There is a library of books about Japan, but, as in the sketches of those English painters who have visited her, no local color, no aroma. Some are heavy with disjointed skeletons of facts, others involved in a maze of chronologic tunneling. Either description or elucidation employs an Occidental method; in many cases indiscriminate eulogy repels one who is willing to be enchanted. There must also be mentioned those counter-streams of calumny in which the writer would seem to seek notoriety by opposition. Only one of these productions need be cited, that of Madame Chrysanthème, in which the brilliant French sensualist, lifting for a moment a little soiled and trampled blossom, cries to the world, "Behold Japan's spotless flower!" and tosses it farther into the slough. Of the deep-hedged gardens and lily-starred hilltops he does not speak. Perhaps he cannot. Yet somewhere between the dissolute cynicisms of Pierre Loti and the amiable puerilities of Sir Edwin Arnold a blue haze trembles over the middle distance where lies the living reality of poetry, the soul of Japan.

Sympathy and exquisiteness of touch are the characteristics of Mr. Hearn's genius. He is a chameleon, glowing with the hue of outer objects or of inward moods, or altogether iridescent. He becomes translucent and veined like a moth on a twig, or mottled as if with the pro-

[1] *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan.* By Lafcadio Hearn. In two volumes. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1894.

Out of the East: Reveries and Studies in New Japan. By Lafcadio Hearn. Same publishers. 1895.