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THE BEAR-HUNT

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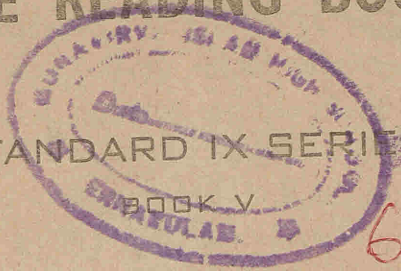
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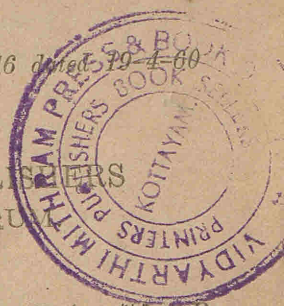
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THE BEAR-HUNT

Edited by

A. SANKARA PILLAI, M. A. M. Ed.

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FOREWORD

'The Bear-Hunt' is the Fifth of a series of six Tales from Tolstoy retold in simple English for the use of pupils in Standard IX as a home reading book. Only the words and sentence patterns used in the Detailed English Texts for Standards V to VIII are introduced in this book. Whenever a new word is used its meaning is given at the foot of the page, if it is not already clear from the context.

Leo Tolstoy (1828—1910) was one of the greatest novelists and story writers the world has ever seen. He was a Russian writer and his stories are famous for the moral truths they teach.

In the following story Tolstoy gives a thrilling account of his adventure with a bear.

Self-administering tests are given at the end of very chapter and a final test covering the whole book, at the end. Teachers are requested to check up the library work of the pupils by making them write out the answers in their library note books.

Bright pupils may be encouraged to write out an appreciation of the story in their own words. The following points may be useful.

1. Name of the story
2. Name of the author
3. Nationally of the author
4. Chief characters
5. Chief incidents
6. Why they like the story.

THE BEAR-HUNT

1. TOLSTOY GOES HUNTING

When Tolstoy was a young man he used to go out hunting. In the year 1858 when he was thirty years old, he went out to hunt with a friend. Then he had an adventure[1] with a bear which almost killed him. He gives a true account of his adventure with the bear in the following story.

'We were out on a hunting expedition. My friend saw a bear and shot at it. But he did not kill it; he only gave it a deep wound. Blood fell on the snow, but the bear ran away.

We had a number of men to help us. Their work was to find out where the bear was hiding and drive him

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1. adventure – daring enterprise

out so that we might shoot him down.

Some of us wanted to go after the bear at once and kill it. The others thought it better to wait for a day or two till the bear came out of its hiding place again. At last we sat down in a group in the forest to make up our minds as to what we should do.

We had with us some men who knew the habits of bears quite well. We had taken them with us as bear-drivers. We asked them whether we could get round the bear that day.

"No," said an old bear-driver. "You cannot get at him now. You must leave him alone for four or five days. Then it will be easy to get round him and kill him. But if you follow him now, you will only frighten him off and he will not come out at all."

But a young bear-driver named Demyan did not agree with the old man. He said that he was not right and that we could get round the bear at once if we tried.

"On such snow as this, the bear can't go far," he said. "He is a very fat bear. He will come out before evening and we can overtake him on snow-shoes."

My friend who was sitting by my side was against following the bear that day."

"It is better to wait," said he, "and hunt him down on another day."

But I was for following the bear at once.

"Let us not quarrel about this," I said. "You do as you like. But I will follow the bear with Demyan. We will follow the drops of blood on the snow and get round him. If we succeed, it is all right. If we don't,

we lose nothing. It is still early and we have nothing more to do today."

They all agreed to my plan.

The others went back to the village where we were staying. Demyan and I took some bread and remained behind in the forest.

TEST. Complete the following sentences choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. In the year 1858 —— went out on a hunting expedition (I, Tolstoy, Demyan).
2. His friend shot at a —— but did not kill it (lion, wolf, bear).
3. Tolstoy wanted to go after it —— (at once, next day, after five days).
4. His friend was for waiting for —— (four hours, a day, five days).
5. A bear-driver named —— said that they could get round the bear that night. (Daman, Demyan, Dayman).

6. So Tolstoy and Demyan remained in the forest while the others went back to the —— . (hut, village, town).

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2. IN THE FOREST

When all of them had gone away, Demyan and I took our guns and examined them carefully. Then we put on our warm coats and started off after the bear.

The weather was fine, cold and calm. But it was very hard to walk in snow-shoes. The snow was deep and soft. It had not at all become hard in the forest. Fresh snow had fallen the day before and our snow-shoes sank six inches deep in the snow and sometimes more.

The foot-marks of the bear could still be seen on the snow. So we knew which way he had been going. Sometimes he had sunk up to his

stomach in the snow. In the beginning when we were under large trees we could follow his path clearly. But when we came out of the thick forest, it was not easy to follow him.

Then Demyan stopped.

"We must leave this path now," he said. "He is hiding somewhere here. You can see from the snow that he has been resting here. Let us leave the path and go round. But we must not make any noise. Don't speak aloud. If he hears us, he will be frightened and won't come out."

We therefore left the path and turned off to the left. But when we had gone about half a mile, we saw the bear's footmarks right before us.

We followed them and they brought us out on the road. Then we stopped and examined the road to see which way the bear had gone. Here and there in the snow we saw

the marks of the bear's feet. Here and there were the marks of a peasant's wooden shoes.

"The bear has gone towards the village," I said.

So we went along the road.

"It is no use watching the road now," said Demyan after walking some distance. "We shall see where he has turned off, to the right or to the left by the marks on the snow. I am sure he has turned off, for he won't have gone on to the village."

We went along the road for nearly a mile and then we saw the bear's foot-marks turning away from the road. We examined them.

"How strange!" said Demyan. "They are the bear's foot-marks, right enough. Only they have not gone from the road into the forest, but from the forest on to the road."

The toes were pointing towards the road!

"This must be another bear," I said.

Demyan looked at it and stood thinking for a while.

"No," said he. "It is the same bear. He has been trying to trick us. He walked backwards when he left the road."

"Walked backwards!" I said for I could not believe it to be true.

So I followed the foot-marks and found that it was really so!

The bear had gone some ten steps backwards and then turning round had gone off straight ahead.

Demyan and I stopped and examined the place.

"Now we are sure to get round him," said he. "There is a marsh ahead of us and he must be hiding

somewhere there. Let us go round and see whether we can get at him."

We began to make our way round through the forest.

By this time I was tired out and it became very difficult to get along. Before long we came to a place where thorny plants grew and my snow-shoes where caught in them. I had had very little practice in walking in snow-shoes and my shoes began to slip off. Now and again I came up against logs of wood hidden in the snow.

I was getting very tired and was feeling very warm. So I took off my woollen coat.

All this time Demyan was going along quite easily. He had no difficulty with his snow-shoes. They never slipped off his feet or caught up against anything. He even took my coat and put it over his shoulder.

"Come," said he, "Let us go on."

We went on for another two miles and came put on the other side of the marsh. By this time I was very far behind. My snow-shoes kept slipping off and I was so tired that I could not move on.

Suddenly Demyan who was ahead of me stopped and called out to me to come where he was. When I came up to him, he bent down and pointed to a little bird sitting on a branch.

"Do you see the bird on that tree?" he asked. "It has seen the bear. That is why it is making that noise. The bear must be hiding somewhere there."

We turned off and went on for more than half a mile. Presently we came on to the old path. We had now gone right round the bear who

was within the circle along which we came.

We stopped. I took off my cap and unbuttoned my clothes. I was feeling as hot as in a steambath and I was as wet as a drowned rat.

Demyan too was tired.

"Well sir," said he, "we have done a good day's work. Now we must have a rest."

By this time it was evening. The sun was setting and we saw the western sky turn red. We took off our snow-shoes and putting them down, we sat on them. I was feeling hungry; so I got some bread and salt out of my bag.

First I ate some snow and then some bread. The bread tasted so good that I thought I had never in my life eaten anything like it before.

We sat there resting until it

became very dark and then I asked Demyan if it was far to the village.

"Yes," he said. "It is about eight miles. We will go there to-night. But now we must rest."

Then he advised me to put on my coat.

"Put on your coat, Sir" he said, "or you will catch cold."

Demyan then chose a place for us to lie down. He removed the snow and made a bed of leaves for me: I lay down resting my head on my arm.

Demyan also lay down by my side.

I do not know when I fell asleep. But two hours later I woke up, hearing something fall.

I had slept so soundly that I did not know where I was sleeping when I woke up. I looked round me. It was a wonderful sight that I saw.

I thought I was in a big hall all shining white with white pillars on all sides. When I looked up I saw a black roof over my head and there were many coloured lights above.

After a good look I remembered that I was in the forest. The hall with the pillars was the forest covered with snow. The black roof was the sky overhead and the coloured lights were the stars shining in the sky.

Snow had fallen in the night. All the trees and branches were thick with it. Demyan was covered with snow. It was on my coat and I shook it to remove the snow. It was very cold and I woke Demyan.

"Let us return to the village," I said.

We put on our snow-shoes and started.

It was very quiet. No noise was heard as we walked on in our snow-shoes. Now and then the branch of a tree fell down making a loud noise which resounded through the forest.

We did not see or hear any living being as we made our way through the forest. But once I heard the sound of an animal behind me. Something came close to me and then moved away quickly. I was afraid it was the bear.

"Look out," said I to Demyan. "It is the bear."

Demyan went to the place from where the sound came. Then he saw the footmarks of hares on the snow.

"They are only hares," said he.

Around me I saw several plants whose young shoots had been eaten up by them.

After an hour we came out on the road and followed it. It was

difficult to walk on the snow while we were still in the forest. But when we came to the road, it was easy walking. Our snow-shoes made a clattering sound as we walked along the hard surface of the road. They sank into the snow as we walked on. Our face and coats were covered with snow. When we looked up the stars seemed to be coming after us.

It was late in the night when we came to the village. My friend had already gone to sleep. But I woke him up and told him how we had got round the bear. I told the landlord to call the bear-drivers early in the morning and keep them ready for the bear-hunt.

Then I had my supper and lay down to sleep.

TEST. Complete the following sentences choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. Tolstoy was able to follow the bear because his foot-marks were clearly seen on the —— . (water, snow, marsh).

2. They followed him through the forest and came to a —— (village, marsh, tree).

3. Then they went —— and came to the other side. (away from it, round it, to the middle).

4. The bear was within the ——along which they came (path, road, circle).

5. By this time they were —— ; so they sat down and —— (cold, tired, ate, rested).

6. They made a bed of —— and slept for two hours (thorns, leaves, straw).

7. Then they went back to the —— (inn, village, forest).

3. THE BEAR

It was broad daylight when I woke up. I was so tired when I went to bed that I would have slept on till mid-day. But my friend woke me up.

I jumped up and saw that he was already dressed and was ready to start.

"Where is Demyan?" I asked.

"In the forest," he answered. "He has gone over the path along which you went yesterday and came back an hour ago. Now he has gone off to call the bear-drivers."

So saying he took his gun and began to examine it.

I washed and dressed myself. Then I loaded my guns and was ready to start.

The sledge[1] was brought and we set off to the forest.

Sledge—carriage that slides over the snow.

Snow was still falling and it was very cold. The sun could not be seen. There was a thick mist above us and there was snow on the trees and on everything.

We drove for about two miles along the road and came near the forest. Then we saw a cloud of smoke rising up from a place in the forest. So we went towards it. Presently we came to a group of people, both men and women, sitting round the fire and talking. They had thick sticks with them.

We got out of the sledge and went up to them. The men sat eating hot potatoes and laughing and talking with the women.

Demyan was with them. When we came, the people got up and Demyan took them to the place where the bear was hiding. They went along in a line and formed a circle round the place. They were

thirty in number, men and women, all old.

The snow was so deep that their eet sank twenty inches and more in it. We could only see them from their knees upwards. They turned into the forest and I followed them with my friend.

It was very difficult to walk in the snow. Sometimes I sank up to my knees in it. Though thirty people had gone before me along the same path it was not easy to follow them. Yet no one could fall. For it was like walking between two walls of snow.

We went on this way for nearly half a mile when all at once we saw Demyan coming from another place. He was running towards us in his snow-shoes and asking us to join him. We went to him and he showed us where to stand. I took my place under a tree and looked round me.

To my left I saw a long line of tall trees. Between their trunks I could see a good way off. Behind them I saw a bear-driver who was trying to find out where the bear was hiding.

In front of me there was a forest of small trees. Some of them were about as high as a man. But their branches were bent with the snow that covered them. Through the forest I saw a path thickly covered with snow. It came upto where I stood. At the other end of the forest there was a group of trees which were more than fifty feet high.

I saw Demyan taking my friend to the foot of a tree and he told him to stand there.

I examined both my guns and looked round to see where I should stand. Three steps behind me there was a big tree.

"That is where I will stand," I thought. "Then I can place my second gun against it."

I moved towards the tree and sank nearly two feet in the snow. But I reached the place safely. Then I cleared off the snow and made a place for myself to stand on. It was about a square yard in area. One loaded gun I kept in my hand. The other which too was already loaded, I placed against the tree.

Then I took my long knife and kept it ready in case I had to use it.

Just as I had finished this work, I heard somebody shouting.

"He is up !, He is up !"

It was the voice of Demyan and it came from the forest.

As soon as Demyan shouted the other men and women caught up the words.

"Up, up, up!" cried the men.

"On, on, on," cried the women.

"Up!, up!, up!, Ay ! Ay ! Ay !" they cried again and again.

They were standing in a wide circle and the bear which was inside was trying to break through.

Demyan drove him on and the bear-drivers went on shouting.

Only my friend and I stood still making no noise.

We waited for the bear to come near so that we might shoot him down.

As I stood looking at them and listening to the noise they made I began to think, 'Now the bear will come suddenly. I shall aim, fire and he will fall.'

Suddenly to my left I heard something falling on the snow. It was quite close to me. I looked

between the trees and some fifty feet away I saw something big and black.

"The bear!" I said to myself.

I raised my gun, took aim and waited.

"Won't he come nearer?" I asked myself.

I waited for him to come nearer; so I did not fire.

But as I waited I saw him move his ears. Then he turned round and slowly walked away. As he moved off, I saw him well. He was a very big animal.

At once I raised my gun and I fired. But the bullet did not hit the bear, I heard it strike against a tree.

I looked through the smoke of my gun and saw the bear going off into the forest.

"Well," thought I. "I have lost the chance of killing him. He won't

come back to me. Either my friend will kill him or he will escape into the forest. In any case I won't be able to kill him."

TEST. Complete the following sentences choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. Next morning Tolstoy and —— went again to the forest (Demyan, his friend, the bear-driver)
2. Demyan had already gone to call —— (the bear, the bear-drivers, his friends).
3. When they came to the forest, they saw ——men and women (ten, twenty, thirty).
4. They got round the place where —— was hiding and shouted (Demyan, Tolstoy, the bear).
5. The bear came out and they drove him towards —— (Tolstoy, his friend, Demyan).
6. When the bear was about fifty feet away —— fired (Tolstoy, his friend, Demyan).
7. It hit the —— (tree, bear, Tolstoy).
8. The bear ran away and Tolstoy —— him. (killed, could not kill).

4. THE ADVENTURE

When the bear went back to the place from where it came, I loaded my gun again. But the bear-drivers did not leave off. They were shouting all round to frighten him and drive him back to us.

I stood listening to their shouts. Then to the right not far away from where my friend stood, I heard a woman crying out.

"Here he is! Here he is! Come here, come here!"

"On, on, on! Ay! Ay! Ay!" shouted the others.

It was clear, she had seen the bear. I knew he wouldn't come to me. So I turned to where my friend was standing.

"Perhaps my friend may get a chance to kill him," I said to myself.

Suddenly I saw a man running across the forest with a stick in his hand. He had no snow-shoes and he was running towards the place where my friend was standing.

It was Demyan!

I saw him bending down and throwing his stick at something.

It was the bear!

At once my friend raised his gun and took aim.

Crack! He fired.

"There," said I, "he has killed the bear."

I looked at the bear and saw that my friend did not run towards him.

It was clear he had missed the bear or that the shot had not killed him.

"The bear will get away," I thought. "He will go back. He won't come to me a second time."

All at once I saw something coming towards me like the wind.

"What is that?" I said to myself.

It came nearer and nearer and I saw the snow flying up as it came. I looked straight before me.

There was the bear, running along the path through the forest right at me!

It was clear he was frightened.

He was less than ten feet away from me and I could see the whole of him—his black body, big head and shining teeth. There he was running straight at me and pieces of snow fell on either side as he came.

I could see by his eyes that he did not see me But mad with fear, he was running blindly along. His path brought him to the foot of the tree under which I was standing.

I raised my gun and fired, crack!

He was almost upon me now and I saw I had not hit him. My shot had gone past him and he did not even hear me fire.

Still he came rushing headlong towards me.

I took the second gun and fired again, almost touching his head.

Crack!

I could not miss him now. I had hit him, but not killed him.

He raised his head and rushed at me showing his white teeth!

Before I could fire again, he sprang forward and knocked me over into the snow. Then he passed right over me.

"Thank God, he has left me," I thought.

I tried to rise; but something pressed me down and I could not get up.

The bear who had gone past me now turned back and fell with all his weight upon me. I felt something heavy pressing me down and something warm above my face. I saw that the bear was drawing my whole head into his mouth. My nose was already in his mouth and I felt the heat of it and smelt the blood.

The bear was pressing my shoulders down so that I could not move at all. All that I could do was to draw my head down while he tried to get his teeth into it. I realized that he had got my face just under the hair into his mouth. It was as if my head was being cut with sharp knives. I tried to get away while he tried to break my head. Thereupon I tried again to free my head but he began again to get it into his mouth.

"Now," thought I, "he will kill me."

As I waited for my end to come, I felt the bear moving away. I looked up and saw that he had gone.

When my friend saw the bear spring upon me, he ran to save me from him. But in his hurry he ran into the deep snow and fell down.

But Demyan saw that my life was in danger and ran up to save me. He had no gun but only a stick in his hand. Yet he came running up to me as quickly as he could.

"He is eating the master! He is eating the master!" he cried.

And as he came near he cried out to the bear, "Leave off, leave off, On, On, Ay, Ay."

The bear heard him and obeyed him. Leaving me behind he ran away.

Demyan helped me to sit up. When I got up there was as much

blood on the snow as if a sheep had been killed. The flesh hung in pieces over my eyes. But I felt no pain.

By this time my friend had come to my help and all the other people also came up. They exmined my wound and put snow on it.

But forgetting about my wounds I asked them about the bear.

"Where is he ?" I said. "Where has he gone ?"

Suddenly we heard a woman's voice.

"Here he is, Here he is !"

We looked that way and saw the bear again running at us.

My friend took his gun but before he could shoot, the bear had gone past. He had become fierce and tried to attack me again. But when he saw so many people, he was afraid

and ran away. Blood was running from his mouth leaving a red line on the snow.

We wanted to follow him and hunt him down. But by this time my wounds became very painful.

"Let us go back to the village and see a doctor," said my friend.

So we went to town and sent for a doctor to examine my wounds.

The doctor came and stitched my wounds with silk. In a month they began to heal.

When I was well again, we again went to hunt that bear. But I did not get the chance of killing him. He would not come out, but went round and round making a fierce sound.

But Demyan killed him. The bear's head had been wounded and one of his teeth knocked out by my bullet.

He was a very big bear and had fine black fur.

I got him stuffed and he now lies in my room.

The wounds on my head have healed up so that the scars cannot be seen.

TEST:- Complete the following sentences choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. The bear ran towards ——.
   (Tolstoy, his friend)
2. He fired, ——.
   (and killed the bear, but did not hit the bear, hit the bear but did not kill him)
3. Then the bear turned and ran to ——.
   (Tolstoy, Demyan, his friend)
4. He fired and hit the bear but the bear——
   (was killed, was not killed)
5. The bear knocked —— down and began to eat his ——.
   (Tolstoy, Demyan, head, leg)
6. Then Demyan ran up and ——.
   (killed him, drove him off, shot him)

7. The wounds on his head were deep; so he went to a ——.
   (bear-driver, doctor, friend)
8. The wounds were stitched up and they——
   (did not heal, healed)
9. A month later they came again and —— killed the bear.
   (Tolstoy, Demyan, his friend)

FINAL TEST

Complete the following sentences choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. In the year 1898, Tolstoy went out hunting ——.
   (lions, bears, deer)
2. He had a —— who shot at a bear.
   (bear-driver, friend, servant)
3. An old bear-driver told them to wait for some days and not ——.
   (to kill the bear, to follow him at once)
4. Tolstoy was for going after the bear at once, ——.
   (and his friend agreed with him, but his friend was against it)

5. So Tolstoy went after the bear with ——.
   (his friend, Demyan, the old bear-driver)
6. They followed the bear to a —— and then went in a circle round him.
   (lake, hill, marsh)
7. They were very tired, so ——.
   (they returned home, they lay down and slept, they sat round the fire and ate some food)
8. Then they went back to ——.
   (the forest, the village, the bear-drivers)
9. Next morning Tolstoy went to the forest with ——.
   (Demyan, his friend, the old bear-driver)
10. Demyan had brought —— men and women to help them to find the bear.
    (ten, twenty, thirty)
11. They lined up in a circle round the bear and ——.
    (sang, shouted, sat down)
12. Tolstoy loaded his guns and stood ——.
    (on a rock, under a tree, near his friend)
13. When the bear came running up, Tolstoy fired, ——
    (and hit him, but did not hit him)

MUHAMMAD ALI HOUSE
Date
REMARKULAR.

14. The bear turned and ran towards ——.
(Demyan, Tolstoy, his friend)

15. He too fired ——.
(and hit him, but missed him)

16. Again the bear turned and ran to ——.
(Tolstoy, Demyan, his friend)

17. Tolstoy fired and hit him, ——.
(but the bear turned back, but did not kill him, and killed him)

18. The bear knocked —— down and began biting his head.
(Tolstoy, Demyan, his friend)

19. But Demyan ran up and ——.
(killed the bear, drove the bear off, shot the bear)

20. Tolstoy went to a —— who stitched his wounds.
(friend, doctor, nurse)

21. When his wounds were healed, he ——.
(went home, came again, stopped hunting)

22. This time they ——.
(did not see the bear, killed the bear, shot at him but did not kill him)

——



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