THE GREAT MIGRATION

of the fox. They have. Besides the wolverine and wolf, the ermine and arctic fox, the marmot and polar hare, and several  
smaller animals that yield furs of commercial value. The sea otter is common upon the coast of Kamschatka; and this is  
 also an object of the chase its skin being among the costliest of peltries. The great argali or wild sheep, and the reindeer,  
furnish them both with flesh and skins; but one of the chief objects of the chase is that great quadruped for which our  
young hunters had come all the way to kamschatka, the bear. Into his presence they would find no difficulty in   
introducing themselves; for perhaps in no country in the world does master bruin’s family muster so strongly as in this  
very peninsula. Fishing bears. Previous to starting forth in search of the kamschatkan bear, our hunters collected all the  
particulars they could in regard to the haunts and habits of this animal. They learnt that there were at least varieties  
known to the kurislski and koriac hunters. One of them was the more common kind a bear, closely resembling the  
ursus arctos; and the other also a brown bear; but with a whitish list running up from the under part of his throat, and  
meeting like a collar over the tops of his shoulders. This latter kind was undoubtedly the species known as the Siberian  
bear (ursus collaris); and which has an extensive range throughout most of the countries of northern asia. The native  
hunters alleged that the kinds were of nearly similar habits. Both, went to sleep during the winter concealing themselves  
cunningly in caves and crevices among rocks. Or among fallen timber, where such could be found in sufficient quantity  
to afford them shelter. One remarkable habit of these bears indicates a very marked difference between them and the  
ursus arctos. With which they have been usually classed and that is that they are fishing bears subsisting almost exclusively  
on fish which they catch for themselves. During their winter sleep, of course they eat nothing; but in spring as soon as  
they emerge from their retreats. They at once betake themselves to the numerous streams and lakes with which the   
country abounds; and roaming along the banks of these fish thanks to their immense numbers, and the shallowness of the water  
in most of the lakes and streams, the bears are enabled to catch almost at discretion. They wade into the water, and  
getting among the shoals of the fish as they are passing to and fro, strike them dead with their paws. The fish are killed as  
instantaneously as if impaled upon a fishing spear; and in such numbers do the bears capture them, at certain seasons, that  
the captors grow dainty, and only eat a portion of each fish they show a strange preference for that part, which is usually  
considered refuse, the head leaving the tall, with a considerable portion of the body, untouched. The rejected portions,  
however, are not lost for another animal, still hungrier than the bears, and less skilful in the piscatory art, is at this time  
also in search of a meal of fish. This creature is the kamschatkan dog not a wild species, as you may suppose, but the  
trained sledge dogs of the kamschatdales themselves which at this season forsake the ostrogs, or villages, and betake  
themselves to the borders of the lakes and rivers. There they remain during the whole period of summer, feeding upon  
fish which they also know how to capture and eating up such portions as have been refused by the bears. In fact, this is  
the only food which these poor dogs can get; and, as they are not needed during the summer season, they do not think   
of returning home until frost sets in. Then, strange to say, one and all of then go voluntarily back, and surrender  
themselves up to their old masters hard taskmasters too, who not only work them like slaves, but half starve them  
throughout the whole winter. This voluntary submission to their yoke has been quoted as an illustration of the high  
training and faithful disposition of the kamschatkan dogs; but it has its origin in a fur different motive than that of mere  
fidelity. Their return to the snug shelter of the balagan is simply an instinct of self preservation; for the sagacious animals  
well know, that in winter the lakes and streams will be completely frozen over, and were they to remain abroad, they  
would absolutely perish either from hunger or cold. Even the wretched winter allowance of heads and entrails of fish  
the only crumbs that fall to their share is better than nothing at all; which would be their portion were they to remain  
abroad among the bare snow clad hills and valleys of kamschatka. The kamschatdales have various modes of taking the  
bear. In early winter they sometimes find his track in the snow; and then pursue him with a gun and a bear spear, killing  
him as they best can. Later still when he has gone to sleep in den, he is often found by similar indications as those  
which guide the Laplanders, north American Indians, and esquimaux such as the hoar caused by his breath showing over  
the spot, or by their hunting dogs scenting him out, and breaking at the entrance. The log trap, or dead fall, is also in use  
among the kamschtkan hunters; and the penn formed around the mouth of the bear’s cave, shunting him up, until an  
entrance can be dug into from above. In the summer time the mode is different. Then the hunter lies in ambush, with

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