

insurance company, simply because he is burning up his vital resources in reckless living. Oftentimes organic heart disease is treated more liberally than "Wein, Wein, und Gesang."

Real merriment, the kind that makes the liver flop over but does not tear the nervous system to pieces, never shortened anybody's life. It is the artificial, poison produced, liver hardening laughter that kills.

The association of merriment with fatness has long been a matter of common observation; and here we are confronted by an apparent paradox. If laughter prolongs life, why is it that the fat man is so short lived? But fatness is not so much the result of merriment *per se* as of a peculiar placid temperament that excludes worry, and is in many cases accompanied by a disinclination to physical activity. Most fat men had rather sit around and tell stories than exert themselves, and often they are led into convivial habits of overeating and drinking, less from appetite than from pure sociability. There are, of course, notable exceptions to this rule.

Borrow the fat man's optimism and jollity, therefore, but not his physical lethargy, inaction, and small indulgences. That obesity is a real life shortener has been demonstrated by life insurance experience. In broad investigations, covering many thousands of lives, the curious fact has been developed that after thirty years of age the lowest mortality is exhibited by those who are slightly under average weight. At middle life, therefore, the so called "robust" type is not a pre-

ferred risk, and the frank heavyweight is in an impaired class.

The lesson that we should read from this is that the average man can be much improved by attention to certain hygienic measures that will keep his weight within bounds. Of course, the man of average weight does not suffer from the flesh that he carries, but from the practices that permit him to carry it. On the other hand, the fat man not only suffers from such practices, but from the burden of flesh that obstructs his circulation and embarrasses his vital organs.

A great hullabaloo recently arose over the announcement of a "new medical discovery": namely, that frequent eating would reduce flesh. This "discovery" was doubtless news to the reporter, but not to the medical profession, since standard authorities on dietetics have long since decided that in the reduction of weight frequent light meals are preferable to one or two hearty meals a day. Naturally, this reasonable and easily understood proposition will be transmuted, before the popular expositors are through with it, into the statement that the more you eat the thinner you grow. As a matter of fact, by frequent light meals the edge of the appetite is blunted, and there is an opportunity, by proper exercise, more completely to oxidize or burn up certain food elements that would otherwise be accumulated as a burdensome surplus.

For those inclined to slight overweight, there is no need to adopt any intricate or complex diet fad. Regular exercise, and the exclusion of certain articles of diet

—for example, potatoes and sugar—will often suffice. Other foods that help to shorten the life of the heavyweight are alcohol (which is not a food), fats, milk as a beverage, salmon, lobster, crabs, sardines, herring, mackerel, pork and goose, fat meats, nuts, butter, cream, olive oil, and water at meals.

For those affected with a moderate degree of overweight, the following general outline will prove helpful, bearing in mind that occupation, habits, or complicating disease will call for some modification:

On rising, a little fruit and a glass of hot water.

A light breakfast is advised,—one or two poached eggs, weak tea or coffee sweetened with saccharine instead of sugar, and bread and butter in small quantity.

For dinner or luncheon choice may be chicken, game, lean meat, ham or tongue, sweetbreads, in moderate portions. Vegetables: Celery, spinach, sea kale, lettuce, cucumber, may be taken as desired; other vegetables in limited amount. Dessert: Farinaceous puddings, melon, cooked unsweetened fruit.

A little clear soup or a glass of buttermilk or tea may be taken between breakfast and luncheon, and luncheon and dinner.

A glass of hot water on retiring.

It is better to eat light meals and follow this custom than to eat two fairly hearty meals a day, with nothing in the interval.

There is no need for the fat man to lose his laugh with his weight. His life-shortening obesity may be

Continued on page 19

IN THE YEAR OF NO RABBITS

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

IT was the hungry year; for all the flesh eating kindred of the northern wilds a year of ceaseless ambush, of strained vigilance, of unprecedentedly savage feud. In this year every truce was broken. For it was the year of no rabbits.

As happens once in awhile, mysteriously, the swarming hordes of them had vanished, as if wiped out by a pestilence, or exiled in a mass, inexorably, by some caprice of the unseen Powers. And so, red anarchy in the wild. For the rabbit is the great reconciler, the great keeper of the peace. It is he that keeps life more or less regulated for the fiercely individual and ungovernable hunters and prowlers; for to his inexhaustible fertility, and to the food supply afforded by his myriads, are all their lives attuned. Their wants satisfied by this facile chase, they can afford to save themselves trouble by avoiding one another at times, by respecting, to a certain extent, one another's ranges, and so escaping the risk of dangerous and doubtful encounters. Few of the wild creatures, with the exception of certain males in the mating season, care to fight for fighting's sake, or to join battle, unless in defense of their young, with an antagonist of anything like equal powers. A victory too costly is almost as bad for them as a defeat; for it leaves them weakened, so that they fall a prey to the next foe that chances along.

In these circumstances it is not strange that there should be signs among the greater beasts of something like a truce where their helpless young are concerned. It is no matter of good will, by any means, but of common prudence merely; for when their young are threatened, even the weak are dangerous, and the strong become implacable in their vengeance. In general, therefore, among equals, the raiding of nurseries is not regarded as good hunting. The peril is too great for the profit.

But when the rabbits were gone all that was changed. Then any hunting was good hunting.

It is hard to realize that little, palpitating, bulging eyed Bunny could exert so vast an influence on the economy of the wilderness; but there was none so strong or so haughty as to rest indifferent to his going. Even man himself was touched; for the foxes and the wildcats drew in about the settlements and harried the henroosts and pastures of the outlying farms. The great herb eaters—the red deer, the caribou, and the gigantic moose himself—were not exempt from the sudden anarchy; for the moose and the caribou had to guard their young with a vigilance hitherto undreamed of, and the weaker deer discovered that enemies he had been wont to despise had all at once grown formidable.

Of all the wilderness dwellers the bears, perhaps, were least affected. They had never taken more than a chance interest in quarry so elusive as the nimble rabbit; and flesh food was never essential to them so long as roots and fruits and fungi, grubs and beetles, ants and honey, were to be found in the forest. And when the craving for flesh was not to be denied, it was big game they hunted, such as deer, or the settlers' sheep, or some strayed heifer that had lost her bell. But, for all their lordliness of independence, the bears were forced to take count of Master Rabbit's departure. They were afraid to go any distance from their dens, lest in their absence some greatly daring lynx or fox or fisher should slip in and kill the cubs.

It was perhaps, on the other hand, the lynxes that suffered most. They, with the weasels, were the most assiduous hunters of the rabbit; and they somewhat lacked the weasel's adaptability and craft. They are rather set in their ways, the lynxes; and, though more savage and vastly more formidable than their smaller cousins, the wildcats, they are at the same time far shyer of man and all his works. Instead of following the foxes and wildcats into the fringes of the settle-

ments, they stayed where they were, and went hungry or hunted dangerous game.

NEAR the top of a steep and rocky knoll at the heart of a cedar swamp a wise old mother lynx had her lair. The knoll was an upthrust of broken strata, a tangle of cleft rocks and stunted birch and hemlock; and in a narrow mouthed cave near the summit was the lair. Here the savage mother felt that her litter was pretty well hidden. All approaches to the den were narrow and difficult, and it would be a bold enemy indeed that would dare the perilous entrance unless very sure of getting clear away before the mother's return. She ventured, therefore, as few mothers in that calamitous season could venture, to allow herself some freedom of range. And this was well. For they were lusty and hungry youngsters, those striped,

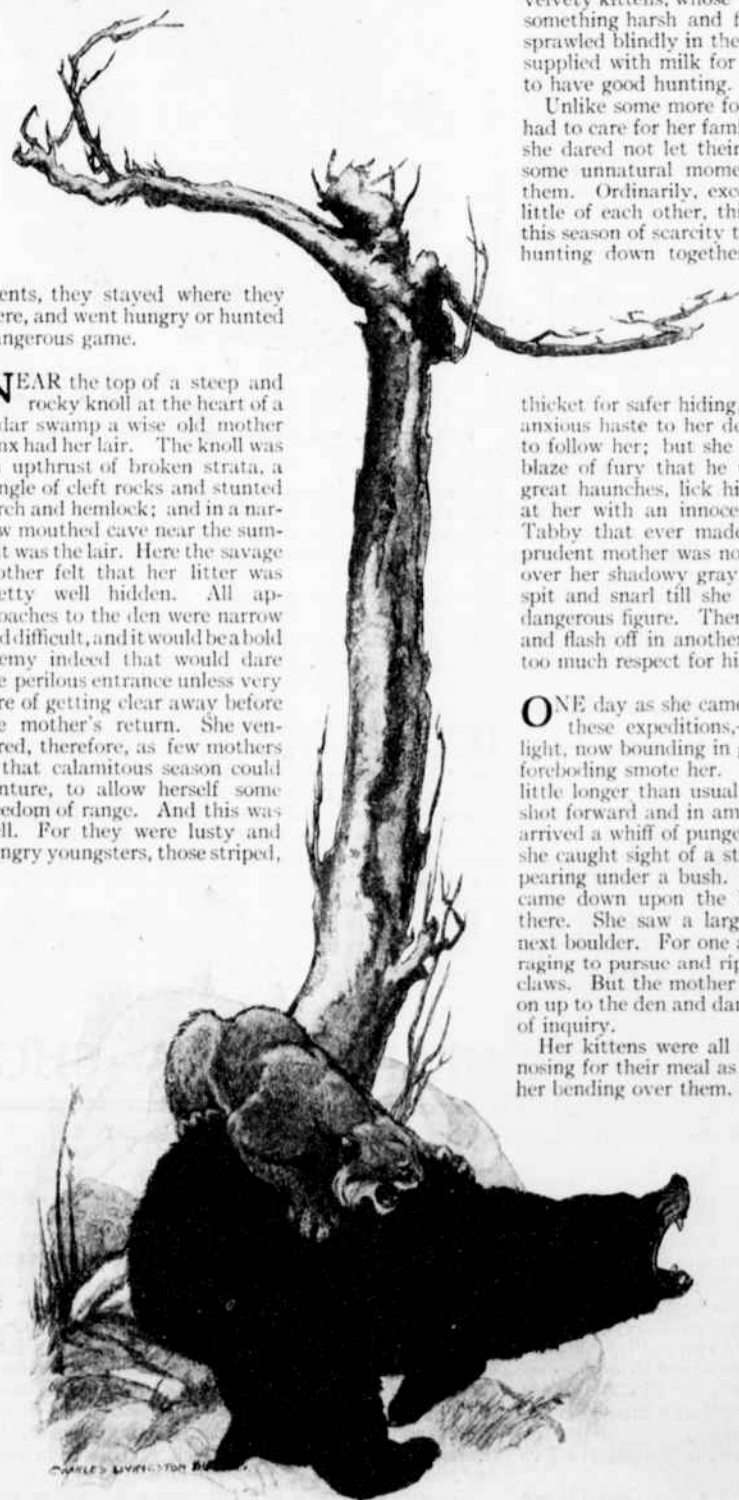
velvety kittens, whose baby whimperings had already something harsh and fierce in them, though they still sprawled blindly in their nest; and to keep her breasts supplied with milk for their precious demands she had to have good hunting.

Unlike some more fortunate mothers of the wild, she had to care for her family alone. To her ferocious mate she dared not let their hiding place be known, lest in some unnatural moment he should make a meal of them. Ordinarily, except in mating season, they saw little of each other, this wild and sullen pair. But in this season of scarcity they often met for the purpose of hunting down together some game too powerful for either to manage alone. Together, if fortune favored them, they would perhaps pull down a buck. When they had feasted full, and dragged the carcass into a thicket for safer hiding, the female would start back in anxious haste to her den. The male would make as if to follow her; but she would turn upon him in such a blaze of fury that he would jump back, sit upon his great haunches, lick his bloodstained chaps, and gaze at her with an innocence as demure as that of any Tabby that ever made way with the canary. The prudent mother was not to be deceived. Staring back over her shadowy gray shoulder, she would growl and spit and snarl till she was quite out of sight of that dangerous figure. Then she would wheel in her tracks and flash off in another direction. And her mate had too much respect for his hide to attempt to follow her.

ONE day as she came racing back home from one of these expeditions,—now gliding like a flicker of light, now bounding in great noiseless leaps,—a sudden foreboding smote her. She had been away, perhaps, a little longer than usual. Lengthening herself out, she shot forward and in among the huddled rocks. As she arrived a whiff of pungent scent smote her nostrils, and she caught sight of a streak of ruddy yellow fur disappearing under a bush. With one lightning spring she came down upon the bush. But there was nothing there. She saw a large fox just whisking round the next boulder. For one agonized moment she hesitated, raging to pursue and rip him to shreds with her terrific claws. But the mother pull was too strong. She raced on up to the den and darted in with an anxious whimper of inquiry.

Her kittens were all there, undisturbed, and noisily nosing for their meal as soon as they felt her and smelt her bending over them. But she had no time just then to gratify their wants. She was too much concerned about their enemies. Giving them a hurried lick of reassurance, to their squalling indignation, she left them abruptly.

Sniffing carefully outside, she quickly satisfied herself that the fox had come only to within some ten feet or so of the entrance; but that was more than enough for her mother fears. The enemy had been reconnoitering, and he had found the hiding place of her treasures. He was an enemy whom she dreaded, because of his cunning so much superior to her own. Beside herself with rage and fear, she searched every nook and crevice of the knoll; but of course



He Wheeled and Fled Wildly Through the Cedars.