

By M. D. Bellomy

# ANIMAL GANGSTER



THE animal kingdom is harassed by a gangster as hated and feared as his human counterpart. He is cunning and sly, villainous and murderous. He is the North American Wolverine, commonly known as "skunk bear" or "glutton." The Wolverine is hated, especially by hunters and trappers. This wily animal seems to have almost an uncanny faculty for locating traplines. Sometimes only minutes elapse after the trapper has baited and set his trap until a Wolverine appears. Hungry or not, he sneaks close to the trap, glances around to make certain he is undetected, then breaks open the trap and eats the bait.

The Wolverine is similar in character to the petty thief who sets fire to a house after he has robbed it, seemingly for the pleasure he derives from adding to his victim's discomfort. The Wolverine, after confiscating and consuming the bait, clamps the metal mechanism between strong teeth and destroys it whenever possible. All through the night this animal gangster prowls

and plunders. He never seems too tired to destroy just one more trap. However, when dawn approaches, the Wolverine seeks a hideout.

The Wolverine deserves his name of glutton. He gorges himself on stolen food seemingly for the pure joy of eating something which does not belong to him.

Trappers, both white and red men, are well acquainted with tales of the Wolverine's "evil spirit," and its insatiable bloodthirstiness. The Wolverine is a native of Canada and the Northern United States. It is seldom seen by human beings. Tales of its ferocity and devilish cunning are largely hearsay.

A trapper with whom I spent one winter told me that on one trapline alone, he was kept busy replacing bait that a Wolverine managed to purloin even though the trap was watched for several hours nightly. In discussing the animal's bad habits he said, "They aren't satisfied with stealing bait; they steal your furniture, too, if you happen to leave your camp unoccupied at night."

When I asked him to explain further, he said the Wolverine would steal anything he could carry away: pots, pans, clothing, shoes, blankets, rugs, buckets, books, garden tools, even small pieces of furniture. He told me he actually knew of one case where a Wolverine had carted off an entire roomful of camp furniture, piece by piece.



THE Wolverine's strength is amazing, amazing because there is so much of it in so small a body. When hungry especially, he will tackle anything. He is willing to take on all comers, large or small. He never backs up, but always moves forward unless mortally wounded. There are actual cases on record where this animal openly attacked a much larger and a supposedly stronger animal, and killed it.

Of course, there is a reason for this superiority. Nature has equipped the Wolverine with adequate means of defensive and offensive action. *American Wild Life* says: "Sharp teeth, large curved claws, and a powerful body, three and a half feet long, make the Wolverine a potent engine of destruction . . . When

an opportunity presents itself, it has been known to bring down deer and caribou."

He is an exceptionally strong swimmer, a far better than average runner, and he can climb small trees. The Wolverine likes a varied diet: mice, birds, beavers, ground squirrels, rabbits, and fish. However, if he is hungry and cannot do better, he will not turn up his nose at leftovers, or carrion.

Most of the Wolverine's days are spent in hiding, a true gangster habit. He locates a deserted or temporarily unoccupied hole, burrow, or cave, usually the home of some other animal, and curls up for an all-day snooze. In March, the Wolverine's hideout becomes a love-nest. About three or four months later, he becomes the father of from two to five little potential gangsters.

The Wolverine is a highly prized trophy because of its warm fur. Long before the white men came, the Indians discovered the value of Wolverine pelts. Long-haired, the skins are excellent wind-breakers. Sub-zero temperatures will not cause the pelts to frost. When stitched together, they make one of the warmest of automobile robes, and they can be made into beautiful as well as practical hearthrugs.

No doubt many a trapper who sometimes had been bedeviled by living Wolverenes, is pleased to have a dead one, in the form of a rug, under his feet.



# *There Was a MAN Sent from GOD*

By J. M. STICKLEY

IN A WORLD divided by conflicting ideologies, daily emphasized by a press that stresses the line of demarcation between East and West, it is refreshing and almost unparalleled to find the political thunder being stolen by a religious crusader.

Billy Graham fell foul of a certain section of political opinion immediately on his arrival in England. It was said that he observed, anent the decline of Great Britain from the position of leading world power, that Socialism had completed what the war had failed to achieve. Mr. Graham has denied that he said anything of the sort. Since the war, however, signs have been fast multiplying of a sad departure from spiritual and moral values and a corresponding insistence upon material and social values. The Welfare State, the "something for nothing" at other

people's expense, the "couldn't care less" attitude, and the declining spirit of sturdy independence have eaten into the very vitals of this nation and sapped its moral and spiritual fibre. Billy Graham is a warning light to England of the danger in which she stands and he is God's special messenger to recall backsliding Britain from the error of her ways.

Sir Winston Churchill on the eve of the Hitler war remarked that "the lamps all over Europe are going out." Many have since been extinguished and the rest are only giving a fitful gleam. It has been left to a man of God's appointment to relight some of them. It is a sad commentary, however, that this once proud country, so rich in spiritual heritage and now almost bankrupt of moral and spiritual values, should have to look to someone from the New World to come and light the torch of Evangelism in the Old World.

Billy Graham has been described

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