

FARM-COTTAGE, CAMP
AND CANOE IN
MARITIME CANADA

OR

THE CALL OF NOVA SCOTIA TO THE
EMIGRANT AND SPORTSMAN

BY

ARTHUR P. SILVER

With an Introduction by the RT. HON.

LORD STRATHCONA & MOUNT ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

With 97 Illustrations, mainly from Photographs



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To

THE RIGHT HON., THE EARL GREY,

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE DOMINION OF CANADA,
THIS WORK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY THE AUTHOR, BECAUSE
HIS EXCELLENCY BY A PROLONGED TOUR OF PERSONAL INVESTI-
GATION HAS BECOME THOROUGHLY ACQUAINTED WITH THE
VARIED RESOURCES, THE UNIQUE ATTRACTIONS AND
STRIKING ADVANTAGES OF MARITIME CANADA,
AND BY HIS PUBLIC UTTERANCES HAS MADE
THEM KNOWN TO THE WORLD.

EARL GREY'S APPRECIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

SPEECH AT DIGBY, NOVA SCOTIA,

August 13, 1907.

It is now almost three years since I landed at Halifax to take up the duties of Governor-General. I have employed the interval in visiting as much of Canada as possible, in making the acquaintance of its people, and in learning and studying the stimulating and unending story of her illimitable resources. Every Province in turn has captured my heart and confirmed my faith in the majestic future of your Dominion. And I have no hesitation in saying that so long as the heart of the people is sound, wholesome, honest and patriotic—and you must remember that no river can ever hope to rise above its source—then so long will you be justified in entertaining the ambition to make Canada one of the greatest, perhaps the greatest, of all the self-governing Dominions which contribute to the might and glory of the Crown and to the civilization of mankind. After three years' study of Canada I am prepared to hold the field against the world—that great as are the resources, advantages and attractions of her sister Provinces, Nova Scotia need not be afraid to pit her charms against any of her sister Provinces however fair they may be. Any one making a fair and impartial investigation of your material resources and able to form a correct estimate of the effect of climate and position on the life and character of people, can only rise from his investigation with one conviction, and that is, if you do not reach greatness you have only yourselves to blame.

It is with great regret that I leave the shores of your beautiful Province. I have seldom enjoyed a day's travel more than yesterday, when I motored over sixty miles through the famous Annapolis valley which lies behind you. The rich crop of potatoes and other vegetables, the prosperous and comfortable homesteads, the soft and refreshing air, the evidence of general well-being, and the absence of any sign of hardship or poverty—all these things caused me to realize more vividly than I had ever had occasion to realize before, how great are the privileges enjoyed by the people of Nova Scotia and what desirable advantages your Province offers to those who coming from across the seas seek to create a new home under the free and happy flag of Britain on this side of the Atlantic.

INTRODUCTION

MR SILVER has asked me to write a few words as an Introduction to his book.

Everything has its *raison d'être*, and it is not difficult, after reading the present volume, to see in what direction Mr Silver's enthusiasm runs. Nova Scotia is a country with varied resources in its farms and orchards, its mines, fisheries and forests. A man with a little money, some business aptitude, and a capacity for work will find opportunities for his energies, in one direction or another, in almost any part of the Province, and social conditions which will appeal to him. On the other hand, a man with a settled income, and a partiality for sport, will soon realize that Nova Scotia is an ideal place of residence for one who is fond of the rod and gun. To the latter class especially Mr Silver's work will afford much pleasure.

The admirers of Nova Scotia and its many attractions will welcome the book; and it will be exceptionally valuable to those who wish to learn something of a portion of the Dominion which is not as well known as it ought to be. In explanation of the lack of knowledge that prevails of this nearest portion of our Colonial Empire, it may be stated that the Province is a little out of the beaten track of summer travel, and that in winter-time the number of visitors and tourists in Canada is not large. Perhaps to the Army and the Navy the country is more familiar than to any other class, as Halifax has always been a favourite station for our soldiers and sailors. Now, however, the red-coat and the blue-jacket from the Old Land are not seen there as often as was once the case; and there are those who regret the policy which, rightly or wrongly, has led to the absence of these two emblems of Imperial Unity.

While it is no doubt a fact that the Maritime Provinces of

Canada are becoming better known, such books as Mr. Silver's must be of value in directing still further attention to them. Halifax is less than a week's voyage from the United Kingdom, and with an improved service, such as I hope to see in the early future, it will be much more accessible than it is now. Increased facilities will induce many to visit Nova Scotia, and its valleys, rivers and forests, who are not yet acquainted with this beautiful Province.

There is something especially fascinating about Nova Scotia and its sister Maritime Provinces. From whatever point of view they are regarded—historical, industrial, or social—they are most attractive. Much has been written of their scenery, the sport they afford, and the happiness and comfort of their thriving populations. And it is generally admitted that Eastern Canada has a great future before it. For some years it has been to some extent overshadowed by the West; but its day has now arrived, and it is bound to share in the era of prosperity which the whole Dominion is certain to experience in the next few decades.

I need only say in conclusion that I hope the volume will meet with the success it deserves.

STRATHCONA.

PREFACE

TO-DAY there is a large number of Englishmen with no particular occupation beyond 'killing time', delightfully or dolorously as may be, scattered along the seaside resorts of the southerly coasts of both England and France; some mere youths: other men at middle life who find themselves, perhaps through no fault of their own, without occupation and in possession of an income insufficient to wholly gratify the tastes for out-door pursuits which are usually bound up with the English temperament. Granted the courage, and the passion to gratify the ordinary tastes of the country gentleman for fishing, shooting and the rest, sufficient to carry a man so far afield from his familiar walks of life, within the limits of one short week it is possible to reach a land under the British flag, with healthy bracing climate and sunny skies, where exist glorious opportunities for enjoying to the full the pleasures of open-air life, and where excellent sport with gun and rod is to be had for a mere song. The working of a small stock farm, or the cultivation of a few acres of apple orchard in the more fertile portions of Nova Scotia is full of interest; while the possibilities for sport afforded by the countless picturesque streams and lakes of that peninsular province of Canada, and by the ample tracts of forest and wilderness which in Maritime Canada still exist in a state of primeval wildness, are a most alluring feature to the sportsman. Rural life in England offers many great attractions to the man of large means, but the man of moderate means by crossing the ocean undoubtedly gains many distinct advantages

which should more than compensate him for some necessary sacrifice of small comforts and amenities of life.

The opening up of the Canadian North-West of Canada has been an event of world-wide importance, for it has developed a vast new source of food supply for the old world, and is fast raising Canada to an important standing. Here is undoubtedly a field for the strenuous worker : the man with his career ahead of him.

Yet for him who understands and enjoys ' mixed farming ' there exist in Nova Scotia immense fertile areas on which hay, grain, root, and fodder crops may be made to grow luxuriantly ; there are large tracts of wild pasture lands which may be acquired at a trifling cost admirably adapted for profitable sheep-raising ; there are great opportunities for raising and fattening cattle for the foreign trade in meat ; while the nearness to good markets is a special advantage which Nova Scotia has to offer. Improved farms with comfortable homesteads are frequently to be picked up at a bargain where a man may make a comfortable living without being called upon to face the undeniable hardships which often confront the pioneer of the prairie-provinces of the West. There is an excellent free school system established by the Government throughout the Province of Nova Scotia, so that the new-comer is sure to find himself enjoying good educational advantages for his family, and within easy access of religious worship, and most of the amenities of what is known as civilized life. For him whose powers or work and ambition have somewhat been spent along the dusty roads of the world's traffic, for him who desires beyond all other things airy, pure, fresh days surrounded by beautiful things—woods, meadows, pleasant streams for instance, with some congenial activity, the seaward province of Nova Scotia, with its varied features, its moderate healthy climate, its striking similarity in type among both the vegetable and animal kingdom to those common in the mother-country, appeals as the more fitting field

to answer his complex requirements. In Nova Scotia there are unique attractions for a class of men who differ from the typical strenuous emigrant: the class that may be styled 'the gentleman emigrant', with independent means, not necessarily large, with the ordinary tastes of the English country gentleman, seeking a fuller and more satisfying life than that of the seaside town or suburban villa. In addition to the pleasures of a life close to nature, this class may find out here better investments for their spare funds and a more promising field for the energies and careers of their sons, should they have any, than is offered at the present day in England, where competition is so severe. Out here there is more breathing space in more senses than one.

Several of the following sketches have appeared in *The Badminton Magazine*, and by the courtesy of Mr Alfred E. T. Watson, editor of this prominent periodical in the world of sport, I am permitted to publish the matter contributed to his pages. I owe Mr Watson a debt which I gladly avail myself of this opportunity to acknowledge for his kind encouragement of my early efforts to make Maritime Canada better known to the many people in this country who are anxious to extend their field of operations. Some minor portions of my work have been published in the columns of *Outing*, *Chambers' Journal*, *The Wide World*, and *The Empire Review*, to the editors of which publications I am under a similar obligation. The game license table, by the permission of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, I am enabled to reproduce here as particularly serviceable to those contemplating sporting excursions to Canada. Many inquiries concerning the wild sports and country life of this part of the world have reached me from all parts of the world, from gentlemen contemplating settling in Nova Scotia, and the author sincerely hopes that to such the information afforded in the following pages may prove useful. For a portion of my descriptive account of Nova Scotia and its resources I am indebted to the booklet entitled

Nova Scotia: its Resources, and Opportunities, issued by the authority of the Nova Scotia Government. In some instances I am under obligation to General Hardy's book, *Forest Life in Acadie*, published by Messrs Chapman and Hall in 1869, and in others to Mr John J. Rowan's work entitled *The Emigrant and Sportsman in Canada*, published by Mr Edward Stanford in 1876; a great deal of the descriptive matter in these two interesting works is still true of the conditions as existing to-day. Some accounts of sport in Newfoundland have been introduced as that inviting field for the sportsman is so very easily accessible from Halifax by steamship and rail. To the late J. Bernard Gilpin, M.D., M.R.C.S., I owe some facts concerning the natural history of Sable Island.

A. P. S.

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Blomindon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the mountains
 Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty Atlantic
 Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station descended.

In no part of the world do apples take more kindly to the soil with such uniformly good results as in this beautiful region. Halifax, the capital city of Nova Scotia, at the eastern gateway of the Dominion, sitting on the shores of one of the most magnificent of the world's natural harbours, is the most convenient centre whence the whole province and the strikingly beautiful island of Cape Breton are easily accessible by steamship and rail.

General Hardy in his book remarks very truthfully: 'In the fields and uplands of a thoroughly cleared district (of Nova Scotia) the new-comer from England is scarcely reminded of a difference in the scene from that to which he has been accustomed. In the pastures he sees English grasses, with the buttercup, the ox-eye and the dandelion; the thistle and many a well-known weed are recognized growing by the meadow-side, with the wild rose and the blackberry as in English hedgerows. Though the house-sparrow' (alas! too abundant since these words were printed) 'and the robin are missed, and he is surprised to find the latter name applied everywhere to the numerous red-breasted thrushes which hop so fearlessly about the pastures, he finds much to remind him of bird life at home. Swallows and martins are as numerous, indeed more so; the titmouse, the wren, and the goldcrest are found to be almost identical with those of the old country, the former being analogous in every respect to the small blue tit, and many of the warblers have much in common with their Transatlantic representatives. The various birds of prey present most striking similarities to those of Europe. The wasp, the bee and the house-fly present no appreciable difference, nor can the visitor detect even a shade of distinction in many of the butterflies.

'The seafaring man arriving from Europe will find even less of divergence amongst the finny tribes and the sea-fowl on these coasts, and indeed will not pretend to detect a difference in most cases.'

Mr. Rudyard Kipling's chance epithet (in one of his rhymes), 'Our Lady of the Snows,' had the effect of giving Canada a great deal of misrepresentation among folk that do not know her well. Of course, there is a vast dissimilarity in the climate of different portions of Canada. The mean temperature, for instance, of Dawson City is as different from that of Halifax as that of St. Petersburg is from that of Paris. In Nova Scotia the average mean temperature is about 41.5°, with upwards of forty per cent. of bright sunshine in the year. Lying between the same parallels of latitude

as France, spring comes a little later than in Ontario or along the Pacific coast; but, on the other hand, mild summer-like weather, often lingering until the very end of October, more than makes up for this. To some of the more northerly portions of the Northwest Territory the term of 'Our Lady of the Snows' may not be inapplicable for some months of the year at least, but it has no meaning whatever when applied to Canada generally: particularly to her maritime provinces.

There is no province of the Dominion of Canada possessing a more astonishing variety of natural resources than the little sea-girt peninsula of Nova Scotia. Few indeed are the regions



APPLE ORCHARD IN BLOSSOM: 'HIGH-CREST,' ANNAPOLIS VALLEY.

of the world where vast coal fields, iron ores, gold-mining areas, great natural water powers, the resources of the forest, farm and fisheries are found existing side by side. Hence it happens that scarcely a year passes without a boom in one or other of such enterprises, so that the average of prosperity is kept at high-water mark, and there are scarcely any of the class of the very poor (with the rather inconvenient result that good domestics and farm hands are often very difficult to obtain). Nor must we omit fully to gauge the importance of the apple-growing industry, which is rapidly being developed into great dimensions. The fit-

ness of Nova Scotia as a fruit-growing country and the profits afforded by orcharding are a specially interesting feature to the intending immigrant. Under 10 per cent. of the land suitable for cultivating apples has as yet been planted. There are wild lands to be had from \$10 (£2) to \$50 (£10) per acre, according to location ; none better in the world for the purpose. It is proved that Nova Scotia can produce superior commercial apples, such as the King, Ribston, Blenheim, Fallawater, Golden Russet, Nonpareil and Baldwins, of best flavour and highly coloured, beneath her bright skies. The important fact should never be lost sight of that Nova



CULTIVATING THE APPLE TREES.

Scotia is nearer the British and other European markets than any other part of the continent : and these markets are open for almost an unlimited supply of such apples as come to their highest perfection in Nova Scotia, which are much superior to the fruit raised in the United States of America. For it is a firmly established principle that only at the most northerly latitudes, where fruits can be brought to their full maturity, is the highest development to be reached and anything like perfection attainable. The life of an apple tree in Nova Scotia is from 60 to 100 years, a very great advantage over more trying climates, where from 20 to 30 years are all that can be counted on. Thus in Nova Scotia,

The expenses of cultivating, pruning, spraying, picking, packing, and shipping are found to vary from 60 cents to \$1 per barrel, according to amount of labour and the crop obtained.

To sum up, it may be briefly said that the fruit industry of this province offers excellent investments for at least two classes of men coming here as settlers : to those who come with a capital of, say, from £2,000 to £3,000 sterling, and can therefore buy orchards already in bearing, which will yield a good interest on their investment from the start ; and to those of lesser means who come with a few hundred pounds, and buy up unimproved lands and develop



APPLE-GATHERING IN THE ANNAPOLIS VALLEY.

these. Lands suitable for this latter purpose can be had from \$10 (£2) per acre upwards. By setting such land with apple trees and then interplanting with plums and small fruits a plantation is quickly established on a paying basis.

Should a man prefer dairying, general farming, or the rearing of horses or cattle, he will find Nova Scotia interlaced with river valleys, widely margined by broad intervale meadows, which, owing to the overflowing of the streams in spring and autumn are to a certain extent self-sustaining, not infrequently growing 3 tons of hay to the acre, and capable of raising splendid grain and root crops. He will find broadly bordering the head-waters of the

Bay of Fundy large stretches of the most fertile lands on the continent of North America: the celebrated so-called 'dyke lands,' which require no manure or fertilizer whatever beyond the deposits of the tidal waters, which once in a period of from ten to twenty years are allowed to overflow the land in the winter season. The great variety of natural resources, hitherto only partially developed; the good transport facilities, and accessibility to the markets of the world, render Nova Scotia a peculiarly attractive field for the safe investment of capital with good returns.



'BLOSSOM SUNDAY,' THE FIRST SUNDAY IN JUNE.

The province of Nova Scotia undoubtedly possesses a number of distinct advantages over almost any other portion of the American Continent. The importance of its proximity to the big markets of the world cannot be overrated. Yarmouth has a line of steamships running in a few hours to Boston and New York; Digby to St. John, New Brunswick; Halifax to Boston and New York, Great Britain, the West Indies and Mexico, not to speak of excellent railroad facilities to the United States and Canada West. The province itself is now almost completely encircled by a good railway system; while the Right Hon. the Lord Strathcona, one of Canada's best friends and helpers, while these words are being penned, is deeply engaged in an effort to bring Canada and England

two days nearer to each other by the 'All-Red' line of steamships, destined to knit together more closely the distant portions of the Empire. Like busy shuttles ceaselessly weaving the web of traffic, a fleet of the very best steamships of modern days will soon ply to and fro, reducing as far as possible the natural disadvantages of distance. The settler will soon think little less of the broad ocean separating him from home than if he lived across the Solent.

Lest any might imagine that the writer may be unduly prejudiced in favour of Nova Scotia, the following encomium pronounced on this lovely province of the Dominion by His Excellency Earl Grey, Governor-General of Canada, on the occasion of his last summer's tour, is worth quoting as unbiassed confirmation:—

'To-day brings my visit to Nova Scotia to an end. It is with great regret that I leave the shores of this beautiful province. I have seldom enjoyed a day's travel more than yesterday, when I motored over sixty miles through the famous Annapolis Valley which lies behind you.

'The rich crop of potatoes and other vegetables, the heavily loaded orchards, the prosperous and comfortable homesteads, the soft and refreshing air, the evidence of general well-being, and the absence of any sign of hardship or poverty—all these things caused me to realize more vividly than I had ever had occasion to realize before, how great are the privileges enjoyed by the people of Nova Scotia, and what desirable advantages your province offers to those who, coming from across the seas, seek to create a new home under the free and happy flag of Britain on this side of the Atlantic.'

No other land under the 'old flag' shows such a generally comfortable manner of living among its inhabitants.

Nova Scotia contains large tracts of woodland which produce timber for manufacturing into lumber for exportation. Large quantities of pine, spruce, hemlock, hardwood, deals, scantling, staves, etc., are annually shipped from the different ports in the province to the West Indies, United States and Europe.

A large proportion of the Nova Scotian farms, unlike those in Great Britain, contain a wood lot, and this is a great advantage to the farmer. He has arable land enough for raising all necessary crops, including hay; pasture land enough for the requirements of the stock he keeps, and wood land enough to supply all necessary fuel, fencing, and building timber. Although the coal supply in the province is abundant, farmers usually provide their fuel from their own wood lot, and do so in winter months when farm work does not press upon their time. When the farm embraces 200 acres or more, the wood portion is often large. These wood areas, combined with the larger forests owned by the lumber manufac-

turers, perform the very important function of preventing high winds, of promoting more frequent rainfall, and of holding, by their shade, the moisture in the soil, discharging it gradually to the streams, and thus preventing droughts as well as early frosts. Should the farmer wish to sell cord wood, he can easily do so to near-by towns and villages at good prices.

An English farmer should not be disconcerted at the comparative length of Nova Scotian winters, for while it is true that the work of the farm has to be accomplished within a shorter period than in the old country, there are many advantages to offset this drawback. Among these may be mentioned the astonishing rapidity of the growth of vegetation when summer fairly sets in, and the comparatively small number of days when the work of the farm is interrupted by foul weather during the season when crops are growing and being gathered. The winter conditions also lend themselves to facilitate such useful work as hauling firewood, fertilizers, lumber for building purposes, and other necessary requirements of the farm. Moreover, the frost and thaws of winter save labour by disintegrating the soil, and materially assist the farmer by bringing the land turned over by the plough in the late autumn into good condition for the spring planting: so that hay and root crops get the early start which is favourable to their early maturity.

The cultivation of all the ordinary varieties of small fruits can be made a profitable business in certain well-chosen localities. There are good facilities for marketing, and a man with small capital and a thorough knowledge of this branch of agriculture can hardly fail of success.

Area of Nova Scotia, 21,428 square miles; one-fifth part consisting of lakes and streams.

Population, 459,574.

FISH.	TIMBER.	MINERALS.
Cod	Maple	Coal
Haddock	Cherry	Iron
Mackerel	Elm	Copper
Herring	Birch	Manganese
Alewives	Oak	Gold
Pollack	Beech	Antimony
Hake	Poplar	Gypsum
Halibut	Arbor-vitae	
Eels	Pine	
Shad	Spruce (three varieties)	
Salmon	Hemlock	
Trout	Fir	
Grayling	Tamarac	
Perch		
Smelt		

II

THE LIFE OF THE FARM-COTTAGE IN NOVA SCOTIA

THE newly arrived should be in no great haste to invest his money in land before he spends a few months in looking about him and learning something of land values. He should school himself in the necessary, if painful, art of driving a sharp bargain. Otherwise, he may drop a portion of his capital to no purpose. Besides getting a comfortable house or a pretty view from his verandah, there are other considerations that should guide him in the choice of a homestead—such as the social advantages of his surroundings, and the opportunities for obtaining sport without undue effort and expense; railway facilities, and good schools should he be the father of a family.

Nova Scotia is pre-eminently suitable for the working farmer with a moderate capital. To no other part of the Empire can the small capitalist with a practical knowledge of farming emigrate in order to obtain conditions more favourable to success. The man who owns a well-cultivated farm can make himself as comfortable and independent as a farmer can be anywhere. From the land he may acquire almost all the necessaries of life, while he has the satisfaction of knowing that year by year his property is growing in value.

A suitable homestead may be acquired from perhaps £300 up to say £800, and often accompanied by an orchard of apple trees whose produce will go far towards defraying the interest on the outlay. A new-comer will do wisely thoroughly to identify himself with his adopted land, avoid sneering at things colonial, and endeavour to place himself in an attitude of sympathy, while making allowance for differences which sometimes may grate harshly. Leaving class prejudices behind him, he should not assume superiority for English ways and ideas in all matters, big or little; for the colonist can often teach him things worth knowing, and give him useful points in practical matters. If these rules are observed, and a man has made up his mind to 'burn his ships' and leave the old life behind him, I fail to see why he cannot lead a pleasant, care-free, and happy existence out here, and find his compensations

for the loss of his home pleasures in the glorious climate, the untrammelled freedom of an open-air life which seems to me the nearest to English life outside of England, and the closest to nature possible in these modern days.

The attractions of the mode of life are worth some trouble and a little sacrifice to those who are sick of the city and dream of a cottage and a bit of land. It is a great thing to find interesting outdoor work all the year round, a little inexpensive sport, and altogether lead a safer and happier existence than in being perpetually tossed about in the risky whirlpool of what is called business.

Many inquiries concerning the advantages and disadvantages of Nova Scotia for the intending settler have reached me from all quarters of the Empire.

My inquirers, roughly speaking, fall into three divisions: first, those who, having little or no capital, desire to make their way by agricultural pursuits in a new land; secondly, those who, having means, yet desire to take up farming as a serious occupation; thirdly, those who, with a settled income, are merely desirous of settling down comfortably where a reasonable amount of fishing and shooting is to be enjoyed alternating with the routine of the life of the fields and the farm.

The first two classes of inquirers may find some useful hints in the succeeding chapter, and more ample information in the numerous pamphlets and blue-books published by the Emigration Department of the Government of Nova Scotia.¹ These should bear in mind that to achieve success in any career three things are necessary: native talent, close application, and experience. The pursuit of farming is no exception to the rule. Sporting inclinations must be ruthlessly suppressed. The farmer must watch the sky much as a general the moves of his enemy, and be ready to take instant advantage of weather changes either adverse or in his favour. To an unduly prolonged stay on a salmon river (when the June run, to be sure, was at its height) I attribute the loss of a valuable horse, and between the sudden appearance of a flight of black duck and the failure to house in good condition a fine crop of ripe oats I can establish a close connexion. As a general rule Rowan's remark is quite true: 'that wild sports of the Canadian forest are no more within the reach of the Canadian settler who has to make his way and get his living, than is a Highland deer forest or a grouse moor the ordinary property of an English farmer.'

To the third class—neither the working man nor the small capital-

¹ These are to be procured by application to the Provincial Secretary, Halifax, Nova Scotia: Emigration Department.

ist, but the man with fixed income, be it more or less—emigration is not quite so serious a matter, because he is able to return home if he does not find his surroundings to his liking. Success in the far West is often only to be had by the sacrifice of many good things in life which can only be found in an older community like Nova Scotia. I might cover page after page with glowing and attractive pictures of the possibilities of rustic peace and cheerful simplicity of life out here to one 'to the manner born': the true lover of the life of the farm and the forest. Not only people whose means are uncomfortably short may profitably settle in the province of Nova Scotia, but those with resources of mind and pocket may obtain new vigour by the return to nature, by the enjoyments possible in a country that is not yet pressed for breathing space. Some patch of earth which endears itself to the heart, carefully cultivated and guarded, may yield more continuous pleasure than any other manner of life, provided that the reward of a wholesome and happy existence is held a worthier aim than the ceaseless round of getting and spending and the hot scramble for dollars. The soothing and invigorating sights and sounds of the country-side, it may be the flashing of the landscape under the spring sunshine, or the good smell of the brown earth as the ploughshare speeds on its errand; the response of the land to intelligence and well-directed labour; the sleek herds at pasture; the cheerfulness of heavily laden fruit trees, make irresistible appeal to these fortunate ones who find farming a vitally interesting occupation, and have a deep instinctive feeling for the land 'bred in the bone.' In Canada one seems to get closer to the heart of nature than in the old country. To many minds there is a distinct fascination in living in a country where, to quote Hookham Frere, 'the Almighty has kept large portions of the land in His own hands.' The more sharply defined contrasts furnished by the climate and the seasons constitute to many a peculiar charm. Each season has its varied attractions. Even 'torpid and taciturn winter' has its keen outdoor enjoyments: skating on the frozen lakes, snow shoeing on the powdery white wastes, sleighing on the highway worn to a slippery smoothness by the winter's traffic.

What can be more beautiful and exhilarating than a fine winter morning after hours of continuous snowfall? You look out on a white world. All the soils and stains of earth are blotted out. Beneath the clear blue sky the facets of the snow crystals glitter like diamonds. The landscape sparkles like some fairyland. The atmosphere is keen and bracing. The beneficent snow, moreover, not only provides the most pleasant mode of all possible travelling, but it shields and enriches the soil, distributes water gradually,

and renders easy winter tasks of the farm, such as the important one of felling trees and filling up the woodyard.

The return of spring is always eagerly looked for.

Summer is coming, summer is coming!

I know it, I know it, I know it!

Light again, leaf again, love again!

Yes! my wild little Poet——

The first note of its coming is sounded by the wild geese passing over high in the air, bound for their breeding grounds in Baffin's Land or Hudson's Bay. Soon after, on some warm evening, the drumming of the breeding snipe is heard over the lonely marshlands; a woodcock is seen feeding at the brookside; the faint croakings from little wayside pools tell that the softer airs are reviving the torpid reptile life: then little green spears are thrust upwards in the russet fields, and the migrant birds swarm over the bare pastures. Now the plough is brought out and planting is presently in full swing. All thoughts of sport are laid aside until seeding time is over. By this time the trout are once more in good condition after the glut of the mayfly, and excursions to the lakes with little portable canvas canoes are in order.

The advent of summer brings many tasks on the farm, a ceaseless warfare against the weeds, which if let alone would soon destroy all prospects of a crop. Delightful is the progress of the summer season. All the country-side becomes adorned with purple masses of rhodora and the crimson plumes of the kalmias. The forest glades throw gusts of perfume in the face of the wayfarer. The *Linnaea* vine, the wild cherry, the budding firs, the 'balm of Gilead' poplars, load the air with their heavy-scented fragrance. Of all summer tasks the gathering of the hay crop is the most important?

Autumn is a season of prolonged and varied enjoyments. The pleasures of garden, farm, and wood may be alternated. To the sportsman and to him who can breathe defiance to black care there is a loud call to the forest and the open. Game is at its prime. Shall it be a few days' snipe shooting with your trusty old friend, the boon companion of many outings which lie fair in the memory? Or shall it be a plunge into the forest with a native Micmac Indian as your guide to try for a pair of moose antlers for your study walls? Or a search on the hills covered with berry-bearing shrubbery for his majesty the bear? Exactly as taste and inclination may dictate.

After the Canadian autumn there comes the marvellous 'Indian summer'—a brief term of truce to the encroachments of the colds of winter.

The seasons have now progressed through their circle. We are back again to the time of the crackling log-fire, and the season of social activities.

Heap on the logs
And let the blaze laugh out.

The wild flurry of the winter drift against the pane is little heeded, while the flames from the burning wood on the ample hearth are no bad substitute for the gaudy sunshine of summer.

Undoubtedly there exists in Canada some subtle charm which strongly attracts the old-country man. It appeals to many as the most attractive of all the colonies. India, 'the brightest jewel in the Imperial Crown,' is seldom regarded as a permanent home. South Africa is a good place to make money in to bring home to spend. Australia and New Zealand are too remote in the estimation of many, and generally speaking the climate is too arid. Canada is the nearest colony; its climate and natural features most nearly resemble those of Britain. Its huge forests, great lakes, and noble rivers, its rolling prairies and majestic mountains, lend it a flavour of romance. Most Englishmen when they know it well love it well.

III

TO-DAY'S OPPORTUNITY IN NOVA SCOTIA

‘**T**HERE are a great many people of moderate means living in Great Britain to-day who would emigrate if they knew of the capabilities of Nova Scotia.’ These words were said to the writer only the other day, by an Englishman, who for many years past has resided in the pretty little rural village of Hebron, Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia. He lives in a tidy farm-cottage, and is bringing up and educating satisfactorily a healthy promising young family.

Another, who is not a Canadian and can therefore give an independent opinion, writes as follows :—

‘Undoubtedly Nova Scotia offers many attractions as a place of residence to men of small or moderate incomes, who are fond of sport and outdoor life, and who from lack of means are unable to gratify their tastes in Great Britain, owing to the increasing cost of all field sports, shooting, hunting, fishing, in a thickly populated country.

‘There are opportunities and openings for the rising generation which an old and thickly populated country like Great Britain cannot now offer.

‘Nova Scotia is, I may say, with possibly the exception of British Columbia, the most “English” part of Canada, so many people from the “old country” having settled in it, and any one going there from Great Britain would very soon feel himself at home and amongst friends.

‘A man can buy a farm for what he would often pay in rent for a year in Great Britain. Some of his land might be rough and require considerable work before it could be brought to a productive stage. However, it being his own farm and all improvements made being for his own benefit, this fact becomes a great incentive to a man to work hard and improve his own property. From an agricultural standpoint the peculiar value of Nova Scotia is for the man of moderate means, who has a good practical acquaintance with farming in its various branches. To the son of the

small tenant farmer, if he is a shrewd hard-working young man, well up in the working of land and the management and care of stock, and with some capital, Nova Scotia offers an inviting field.' ¹

After all, experience is the real test. From Englishmen comfortably settled in their farm homes such statements as the following made to the writer carry weight.

Says one: 'Many Englishmen with a fixed income of modest dimensions could live in much greater comfort here than they can in the old country.'

Another writes: 'I am quite sanguine about the success of farming in the (Annapolis) Valley, and believe that the right man with the right methods can make as great profits as in the North-west.'

It must always be borne in mind that the impressions of a new environment of one who has been comfortably situated in the motherland, and of another who has been 'down on his luck,' must of necessity be widely different. To the latter emigration is likely to prove a relief, to the former a hardship. Many a man has left Great Britain who has saved a wreck of his fortune, or who has got together a little money by risk and hard work. He comes to Canada, works for wages for a year or two, places his money in a bank, and presently becomes a landed proprietor; feels he can amount to something in Canada; becomes pleased with his greater freedom of movement and the general friendliness, and sociability of his neighbours, with the diminished pressure of class prejudice; and finds the climate, though severe, a tonic to his whole physical and moral nature. All these benefits he has gained without renouncing his flag or changing his language. To him emigration

¹ Mr. John Howard, Agent-General for Nova Scotia, sent to the *Canadian Gazette* of October 17, 1907, the following note on opportunities in Nova Scotia for a certain class of settlers: 'There are at present opportunities for buying good land cheap on what is called the North Mountain, which is only a small elevation with an extensive plateau. It lies between the Annapolis Basin and the Bay of Fundy, and much of the land can be bought at extremely low prices, less than a year's rent in England. "I wish," says the Nova Scotian writer, "that I had 500 good farmers from England, Scotland, and Ireland with a little capital to settle on this land and show what can be done. I am certain the land is good, and only needs to be worked with intelligence and patience. It is a great place to raise sheep, all products of which bring good prices now, and prospects of better. A great many varieties of fruit grow here to perfection, and with the improved methods of marketing it has great possibilities in store." Nova Scotia may well claim more attention among British immigrants. There are many excellent chances in the Maritime Provinces for the small holder; cost of living is comparatively low, social conditions well developed, and there exist no great extremes of temperature.'

spells success from start to finish. Canada has transmuted adversity into good fortune. Take another case: that of a man of gentle breeding brought up among men of leisure like country gentlemen in England; a good rider, a first-class shot, a judge of sound claret, and fond of golf and cricket. He might find a similar environment not at all to his taste, and feel acutely the absence of class distinctions and the loss of accustomed pleasures. To him emigration might not appear in quite so attractive a light; at all events until he had adapted himself to his environment, and got rid of the dead weight of old ideas and habits.¹

The present opportunity of acquiring improved farms in Nova Scotia, often including good orchards, at very profitable prices may not last very long.²

There is a splendid demand for the products of 'mixed farming' in Nova Scotia. The farmer who comes to this province will come to a country where the demand of the local home market far exceeds the supply. How is it that oats are retailing to-day in Halifax at 70 cents (almost 3s. stg.) per bushel—imported oats—while there exist vast stretches of untilled land, which can be had at trifling cost, which could easily be made to produce between 35 and 40 bushels per acre? How comes it that when lambs readily bring from \$3 to \$4 each (i.e. from 12s. to 16s. stg.), and wool is eagerly bought up at 30 cents per pound (1s. 3d.), there are large vacant tracts in various districts peculiarly suited for sheep runs to be purchased for little money? How is it that Nova Scotia imports not only large quantities of hay, oats, barley, butter, eggs, poultry, but beef also from Prince Edward Island and Upper Canada, when home production might be made to pay a handsome profit? One explanation of this state of things is that there is very little of what may be called 'good' farming in Nova Scotia: another is that the lure of the West and the nearness of the province to the great Republic, loses a great deal of the young blood which should enrich

¹ Mr. Keir Hardie was quite right in his recent remark made in Canada that 'adaptability to changed conditions is a first essential in a new country.' This faculty is far oftener found wanting in English emigrants than in Scotch or Irish, and accounts for 90 per cent. of the failures.

² This is particularly true within the writer's knowledge of the values of large tracts of land in Hants, Yarmouth and North Queen's Counties, admirably adapted for fruit growing and general farming, and of extensive areas in Antigonish County peculiarly suitable for sheep. To quote the Principal of the Agricultural College at Truro, M. Cumming, B.A., B.S.A.: 'A settlement of congenial British farmers can take up lands here at very moderate prices, and work along lines of general farming in the early part of their career, with the idea, however, of having profitable orchards in from ten to fifteen years.'

the veins of her agricultural districts. Both of these reasons point to the opening which undoubtedly exists here to-day for muscle and industry reinforced by brains; for putting into the business of agriculture the qualities which command success in other industrial pursuits: improved methods, and the power to direct labour.

There are undoubtedly opportunities for those who will take up dairying seriously, for Nova Scotia, with its well-watered pastures and exceptional markets, is naturally a dairying province. There are from 50 to 60 per cent. of the best farming lands vacant to-day awaiting labour to make them productive. There are only about \$1,000,000 worth of apples grown annually in Nova Scotia, while thirty times that amount might within two decades be readily produced. Much the same possibilities exist for almost all the products of mixed farming.

Nova Scotia has very large areas of valuable hardwood: beech, yellow and white birch, oak and three varieties of maple. This renders profitable the production of material for wooden ships, flooring, cooperage and the manufacture of furniture, railway cars and vehicles. The United States is within measurable distance of the end of its hardwood supply, which is estimated at the present rate of consumption to endure only fifteen years longer. During the last seven or eight years the waning supply, with rather a tendency of decrease than increase in demand, has forced up prices from 25 to 65 per cent. Obviously Nova Scotia's hardwood forest cannot fail to prove an asset of great importance, and presents an attractive opportunity for investment.

'The tools,' said Carlyle, 'to the man who can handle them.' The farm, the forest, the fisheries, the mining resources, the water powers of Nova Scotia—these are the five quarries in the rough out of which those who can handle the tools can hew greatness and prosperity. Providence has furnished Nova Scotia with natural resources on a lavish scale: she is only waiting for the men who can turn the opportunity to advantage to make her wealthy beyond the dreams of avarice. Many such men have arrived, but there is room for many more. The Steel Works of New Glasgow are the direct result of the life-work of Mr. Graham Fraser, who started in life as a blacksmith. The little town of Amherst has been made a veritable hive of industry by the enterprise and initiative of a small group of individuals. The building firm of Rhodes & Curry, the Robb Engineering Company, sending their finished products to Britain, Spain, India and Australia, prove what can be done. 'These men,' to quote from a recent speech of the Premier of Nova Scotia, 'took advantage of the natural resources and surroundings of their particular towns—master minds who grasped their opportunities

to turn natural advantages to account.' Individual energy and initiative applied to agriculture in Nova Scotia to-day cannot fail of the same success which these qualities are earning in commercial enterprise.

'We have thousands of happy homes' (again to quote Premier Murray) 'among the agricultural classes of this country, just as happy farming homes as you will find under the flag of any country in the world. We can, in my judgment, in almost every section of this province, where we use intelligence and industry, support a happy and contented population upon our agricultural lands. But agriculture, while it means everything to the West, and great as it may be in Nova Scotia, does not by any means measure the resources of Nova Scotia. It is not enough to-day to be a nation or province of one industry to take a proper place in the affairs of the world. The strong feature of any country is in having a great variety of resources, and in our variety of resources lies the great strength of our province.'¹

The abundance of coal and iron and other metals suggests that these elements may eventually do for Nova Scotia what they have done for England; suggest naturally the export of these in the form of implements, tools, machinery—even steel ships—and other finished products. This in turn involves a larger field for the products of the farm.

Were the immense potentialities of Nova Scotia fully understood, which it is safe to assert are rarely surpassed within any spot on the globe of the same area, there is little doubt that a jet of that

¹ The following table shows that the value of Nova Scotian products for the year 1907 amounted to nearly \$107,000,000, which is a sum equivalent to an average of \$1,000 (£200) for each family in the province:—

Coal	\$13,875,000
Coke	1,925,000
Gold	265,000
Gypsum, Limestone and other Minerals	975,000
Stone and Building Material	310,000
Pig Iron	1,385,000
Steel	4,100,000
Steel Rails, Rods, etc.	8,150,000
Fisheries	9,200,000
Manufactures, Ships and Freights	39,800,000
Products of the Farm	23,500,000
Products of the Forest	3,750,000
Total	\$107,235,000

These figures obviously point to no mean degree of prosperity, and yet most of the great natural resources of Nova Scotia are only in the initial stage of their development.

great tide of emigration setting so steadily westward¹ would be diverted advantageously to her shores, where the heavy price paid for material prosperity by pioneers of former generations in rawness and discomfort of life is no longer exacted; where the right class of men can find a fitting and profitable sphere for their activities amid comfortable and well-ordered surroundings; where the leading problems confronting a new country—such as education and transportation—are happily settled.

The free rural schools and high schools, the technical college, the agricultural college, the Government educational institutions of the model orchard, the model travelling dairy, and the experimental farm, all these practically free and splendidly equipped institutions offer their advantages to all who will embrace them. To quote Howard A. Kennedy, author of *New Canada*: 'Probably no other branch of Government activity has conferred such immense and direct benefits on the population of any country as the experimental farm system of Canada. Experiments are constantly being made by men of the highest skill to discover, and even to produce, such varieties of plant life as can be grown with the greatest success and the highest profit in all the various climates and soils with which Canadian farmers have to grapple. Not only is the information thus obtained put freely at the disposal of every farmer in the Dominion, but the seeds and plants raised and tested at the experimental farms can be obtained by any farmer who is willing regularly to report the results he gets from them.'

In concluding this chapter it may be said as a final word that the many favourable conditions for manufacturing that exist to-day in Nova Scotia furnish an opportunity to the enterprising capitalist which can readily be demonstrated, but which has seldom been stated with sufficient emphasis.

¹ The total emigration to Canada for the year 1907 exceeded a quarter of a million.



WINTER : THE FROZEN LAKE.

IV

THE CYCLE OF THE SEASONS

EVERY normal Anglo-Saxon has in his nature, however deeply hidden, some latent reminiscence of primitive instincts not quite eliminated by the habits of civilized life. We are all more or less susceptible to a sort of nostalgia for the woods and wilds, where life may be lived in perfect accord with nature's demands. Hence it is not because Canada is the nearest colony that she remains for so many Englishmen the most attractive and desirable of all the colonies ; nor yet because her climate, fauna and natural features conform more closely to those of the mother-country, but chiefly on account of the glamour of romance which broods over her primeval forests, boundless prairies, and majestic lakes and rivers.

The climate of Nova Scotia, exhibiting as it does so many phases of deep interest, and presenting far sharper contrasts between the seasons than that of Great Britain, matures a hardy and powerful race of men. Each period has its own fitting open-air occupation. Even winter has its peculiar attractions, and the intense exhilaration of outdoor exercise in the invigorating frosty atmosphere of winter is preferred by many to the more languid pleasures of summer. The transition period of a few weeks, which neither falls under the category of winter nor yet of spring, is the only tedious interval.

At that time the country-side wears a rather dishevelled aspect, and dragged strips of what once was white snow fringe the edge of the muddy roads. At length towards the close of March warm rains have completed their task and washed bare the tawny fields and pastures. Presently the subtle odour of spring pervades the softened breeze; the sweep sap of the sugar-maples rushes to the very topmost twigs; and on all sides one sees sudden stirrings of life, where erstwhile the features of nature reposed in death-like silence.

The first scouts and heralds of advancing spring are occasional skeins of wild geese flying northward to their breeding-grounds in



WINTER: AFTER A DAY'S DUCK SHOOTING.

sub-Arctic tundra or the cool meadows of the Hudson Bay, majestically cleaving the air in harrow-like formation. So high do these wild geese fly that it is difficult to make them out clearly, but in spite of the distance their strident clangorous calls smite heavily on the ear. The bleating of the snipe is one of the first sure signs of established spring weather. Very significant is that sound, dowering with strange grace the lonely marsh levels, hovering over some low-lying barren moist tract stubbornly recalcitrant to the prosaic demands of the farmer; the drumming of the breeding snipe high in the clear brightness of the evening sky sounds like some soft reveille to tender blue skies and all the pleasing activities of awakening nature. With April come enormous flocks of the American

robin (a species of thrush), which may be seen hopping about the bare russet fields searching diligently for stray earthworms. The rich strains of the song-sparrow, the plaintive little trills of the blue-bird, the sweet low whistle of the blackbird, now mingle with the drowsy hum of honey bees as the air steadily grows more soft and balmy day by day. The vast number of migrants arriving are not, however, all destined to remain. Immense flocks are on their way to disperse in various directions towards the north, among them that to sportsmen peculiarly interesting owl-like, russet-coated little bird, the American woodcock, which is the very first migrant coming after the wild geese, and may often be seen, before the snow is thawed in the early morning and evening twilights, feeding in the vicinity of warm muddy springs, where the temperature is more equable than that of the ice-fed brooks.

Not until the middle of May does vegetation begin to grow with any rapidity. To this rule, however, there is one notable exception. That sweet little trailing arbutus, *Epigæa repens*, adopted as the emblem of the province of Nova Scotia, known as 'the mayflower,' which stars the sea-green mosses with roseate petals, and throws out gusts of delicate perfume ere yet the winter may fairly be said to be over and done with.

Near the Atlantic seaboard the progress to summer is like to an advancing and receding tide, a balmy air to-day, harking back to winter weather to-morrow. By degrees, however, the higher sun and the tempered atmosphere bring out the crimson flower clusters of the red-blossoming maple; the graceful white plumes of the Indian pear and wild cherry break like a white foam over the wayside, while masses of wild azalea, blossoming profusely before the birth of their leafage, cover large areas of the barrens with broad lavender patches. The olive springy mosses, which carpet the dark aisles of the coniferous forests, are dotted with the white bloom of the star-shaped pigeon berry and the tender purple of the pendant 'lady's slipper,' while the twin roseate bells of the feathery vine, *Linnaea borealis*, load the air with delicious fragrance. Soon a new bright foliage is unfurled all over the land, and the forests quickly assume the appearance of a rolling sea of vivid verdure. The warm light brings out into relief the graceful tawny tassels of the alders; the tips of the maple saplings grow a pale lemon-gold streaked with blood-red splashes, while the swamp willows, lining the watercourses, glitter with a fresh metallic sheen adorning their bead-like rows of silver catkins. Nothing can be brighter or more varied than the Canadian spring leafage in its first purity and freshness.

About the middle of May the trout in all the lakes and rivers

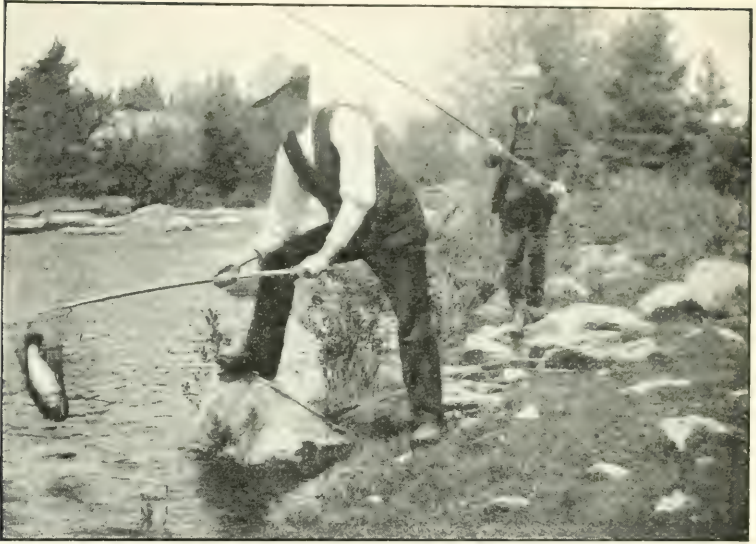
are in the most likely mood to take the fly. They are now gorged with the mayfly (which is black in colour and otherwise quite unlike the English species) until they have come to the very pink of condition. Every rock and bush at the edge of the sheltered lakes is now found on a fine warm day to be fairly covered with these choice morsels of trout diet. At times the insect myriads rise on the wing until they suggest a cloud of smoke. Vast, indeed, is the number of lakes scattered broadcast over Nova Scotia—often connected by streams into long chains—affording means for delightful expeditions, by means of a birch-bark canoe or light draught boat, far into the penetralia of the backwoods.



SPRING: CARRYING THE CANVAS BOAT TO THE TROUT LAKES.

Early in May schools of 'alewives' (fresh-water herring) begin to migrate up all the principal streams—where their ascent is not cruelly barred by the lumberman's mill-dams—yielding an agreeable change of diet to the settler along the banks, and contributing to the support of his family during the long winter months. They are taken by means of dip nets attached to a long swinging pole for a handle.

Capital sea-trout fishing is to be had in many of the woodland streams of Nova Scotia. If there should be a run of trout not yet entered the rivers, one may take a boat down any of the long estuaries which everywhere indent the Atlantic seaboard, receiving some woodland stream at its head. Here the trout lie at the edge



SUMMER : THE FIRST OF THE JULY RUN OF SEA-TROUT.

of the sandbanks, feeding among the beds of golden kelp and seaweeds, rushing out with great spirit at any gaudy fly, although they greatly favour a 'white admiral,' else a fly made with white wings and scarlet hackle about the body.

Many a sportsman's paradise is easily accessible by steamboat or railway. Take for example the Eastern Atlantic seaboard of Nova Scotia. The coast is deeply indented by pretty fiords, each receiving its sea-trout or salmon stream, separated by intervals of only a few miles. Take also the romantic island of Cape Breton. Nothing can exceed the striking natural beauty of many of the charming streams and of the lakes embosomed in the woods by which they are fed.

The month of September ushers in the shooting season in Nova Scotia, when all wild game is at its prime. The sportsman can now choose between cock-shooting with well-broken pointers or setters in the coverts, or snipe-shooting in the open. Should his ambition run towards big game—a head of the giant moose, the graceful antlers of a caribou stag, or the jet-black pelt of the American bear—he should hire a couple of sturdy backwoodsmen, or preferably members of the fast-vanishing tribe of Micmac Indians, making his way into the interior by means of a birch-bark canoe launched on any one of the several great waterways he may select. Here he may spend a couple of pleasant weeks in the heart of the wilderness, where he cannot fail to learn much about the interesting denizens

of the forest and their ways, and will not fail to bring back many sylvan trophies.

In the progress of the seasons there falls in every quarter of the globe some brief term of days surpassing all others in the charm they are capable of exercising over lovers of the open. There is nothing quite like the Canadian Indian summer elsewhere. On the far verge of autumn a warm sunny interval invariably occurs between the first cool and fitful breath of October and the dark storms and biting cold of November ; sometimes a few days earlier and sometimes later than the fall of the leaf. It is a brief term of truce to the encroachments of the cold of winter. There suddenly comes some fine morning a different sky, a different atmosphere. A widely dispersed brilliancy of light and colour, due no doubt to some peculiar atmospherical conditions, flashes upon mountain, lake and sea, transforming the whole face of nature, until even the barren wastes of wilderness wear an aspect of sparkling gaiety. Something of this magical effect is due no doubt to the bright colours—orange, Indian red and flaming scarlet—which splash the foliage not only of the deciduous trees but of each tiny shrub, such as the rhododendra, azalea, and swamp-whortleberry. The rich blue sky wears a more than midsummer softness and depth ; the water seems more crystalline ; the sun sets in more voluptuous splendours than at other times.

Summer is departing with its pride and profusion, while the face of nature for the space of a few warm transparent days is



SUMMER : PLOVER-SHOOTING OVER DECOYS.

genial and serene. But yet there is an indefinable touch of melancholy interest everywhere present, as if unseen the parallels of the enemy were hour by hour being brought closer to the ramparts of summer's citadel. Possibly on the afternoon of the fourth or fifth day of this bright interval the mellow atmosphere, under which all nature has reposed in dreamy languor, yields to a leaden haze which pales the yellow sunlight. This dim curtain is destined to transform itself on the morrow into fierce gusts of wind and showers of rain.

The gorgeous pageant of the Indian summer is at an end for another twelve months. The saturnalia are over. The Canadian autumnal season in allegorical designs is not correctly personified



AUTUMN : READY FOR A TRAMP.

in accordance with the general idea by the figure of a melancholy sad-eyed maid ; rather it whirls before us like some mad maenad scattering with debonair graces ' the magnificent ashes of autumn,' left by the passing of fierce flames of scarlet and gold over the northern woodlands.

Happy the sportsman who, for a few bright October days, has left ' the weariness, the fever, and the fret ' of the populous city to wander through woodland paths ankle deep in the rustling leafage, kicking aside ' the flying gold of ruin'd woodlands.' He listens to the pulsating reverberations of the ruffed grouse bursting into the open from the fringes of some abandoned clearing, and speedily drops into his game-bag a couple or two of the little red

woodcock, or a few brace of snipe from the intervale levels. The common little brown hare has more than once crossed his path, but, in order not to spoil his well-broken dogs for 'feathers,' he has refrained from loosing at the little vanishing lumps of brown fur. He has perhaps discovered a spot where a flock of 'blue-wing' duck are in the habit of spending their evenings, by signs of down-trodden aquatic plants, muddy appearance of the water, and a few floating downy feathers. As he lies in ambush for his expected shot, he hears once more the clangorous metallic notes of a flock of travelling geese, and looking up sees a long undulating straggling aerial line, stretching away for many a rood against the evening sky, bent on their prodigious journey from the far north to the sunny savannahs which border the Gulf of Mexico. The season has come its full cycle.

A DAY ON A NOVA SCOTIAN TROUT LAKE

THE lake, as I first saw it, glimmering and flashing beneath the direct rays of the midday sun like a sheet of burnished silver, reflected a clear image of the frowning granite rock walls running sheer down into serene depths. Directly in front, for a mile or more, the rough stretch of landscape swept away in a succession of bold undulations, billow succeeding billow, until finally, plunging steeply downwards, these broke into the oily calm of its sleeping waters. The scene might strike the casual beholder as a mere melancholy waste of desolate silence, or it might exert an inexpressible charm by the unquestionable fascination of its wild wayward grace and a mystery of inexplicable rugged beauty. It was a stretch of landscape rich in variety of colour. The play of the brilliant sunlight touched each point of the rock terraces with a glittering salience. Their exposed weather-worn slopes were diversified by clusters of tasselled alders, still wearing the fresh tints of their early verdure; splashed here and there with the pale olive greens of little coppices of beech saplings; dotted with a few black clumps of dwarf mountain pine—weak stragglers from the belt of dark forest bordering the distant shore, separated from the lake by a wide beach of silvery sand.

The air was quiet, save for the clear bell-like notes of that cheerful songster of the Canadian wilderness, the white-throated sparrow, repeated again and again from the tallest of a group of gaunt stems of fire-killed pines. A pair of white-necked ospreys soared high overhead in majestic circles, now and again indulging in shrill screams, intended as a menace to the invaders of their sanctuary.

On the shores of the lake there seemed to be no one place more likely than another for a cast. Almost everywhere the water was dimpled by the rising trout. Faint puffs of a balmy westerly breeze kept incessantly driving the mayflies, weak on the wing, in masses to the sheltering lee side of the boulders and behind clumps of alder coppice, until there the atmosphere looked as if filled with a dense smoke. The faintest breath, catching the feeble

insects newly emerged from their cases, scattered them in multitudes over the surface of the lake, to be eagerly seized by the feeding trout. On occasions the trout appeared to collect in a big school and make a complete circuit of the lake at the distance of a moderate cast from the shore. Should one rise at this juncture, he is usually marvellously unsophisticated in his procedure.

The water fairly 'boils' as they break briskly in their progress of triumph, greedily gorging themselves until they become almost entirely indifferent to the artificial lure, although positively ravenous for the half-dead ephemerae. They can now at length forget the hard fare of the long winter days before the loosening of the ice, when they languidly sought for spots of open water and disdained



A TYPICAL NOVA SCOTIAN TROUT LAKE.

not to seize the bit of pork let down through the ice hole by the rustic urchin, or a pectoral fin of one of their own brethren dangled in the open water of the 'run in'.

The mayfly soon puts in the pink of condition the lively fish which swim in the pellucid waters of such a clear rock-margined lake as this. Note the small well-shaped head, the broad back, the well-proportioned form, the swift dash at the fly, and the spirited contest for dear life as the slender 6-oz. rod is arched to the butt by some plump gamey trout, not much over the pound, whose pluck and leaping powers are often rewarded by escaping his fate within the very jaws of the landing net. How different in every essential from the trout of the low-lying marsh-fringed forest lake,

with muddy bottom clogged with lily pads and crowded with reeds and aquatic plants! At table, how pink they are in flesh, and what delicious eating!

Bright, strong, and active fish in the crystal lakes of the wilderness may glance with deserved contempt upon the flabby and sickly-



THE GUIDES' HOME.

looking denizens of the dim dark pools, overshadowed by rank growths of alder coppice, brown with the ooze of decaying vegetable matter, or of the dull stagnant dead-waters, winding amidst stretches of rushes and sedge and sponge-like sphagnum, yielding deep impress to the tread of man or wandering deer.

The eastern portion of the peninsula of Nova Scotia is dotted with countless lakes and lakelets. Deep and intensely blue beneath a fair sky, their shores fringed with rock boulders and generally studded with wooded islets of all shapes and sizes, they do much to diversify the monotonous scenery of the backwoods by their picturesque beauty.

There is good fishing in hundreds and hundreds of such lakes embosomed in the Canadian forests, on many of which, perhaps, a fly has never been cast. The number of lakes scattered throughout the provinces of Quebec and of Nova Scotia almost staggers belief. Many of the large and famous lakes of Quebec are now the property of private clubs, but trout-fishing on thousands of charming rivers and lakes is open to every one. Canadian lakes frequently stretch away in long chains, presenting the attractions of exquisite scenery as well as of good sport. By means of a light boat or an Indian

birch-bark canoe delightful trips can be made by such lines of water communication, and the most hidden penetralia of the wilderness can be easily invaded and explored.

To the typical lake of the wilds, tributary brooks come merrily dancing down from far back in the woods; shaded by dark firs and hemlocks, full of little falls and rapids, eddying round great rocks which stand out from the stream, capped with ferns and lichens, *unde loquaces lymphæ desiliunt*. Frequently the flashing stream expands into a long stretch of amber dead-water, broadly margined with sweet green levels—meadows of rank grasses waving luxuriantly enough to suggest a western prairie. Often the brook forms gravelly pools and eddies which closely resemble a salmon river in miniature.

The very best cast is usually from some rocky rampart not at a great distance from the 'run in.' From such a stand I took the 'big 'un,' which turned the scale at four pounds and a shade over. It was a long and doubtful contest. The oblique rays of the evening sun were slanting across the gentle wavelets, throwing deep shades from the big grey boulders over the darkening water.

The cast of flies hung nicely to my fancy. The trout 'Admiral' sailed on the delicate trace a few feet ahead of a well-tied 'Nixon,'

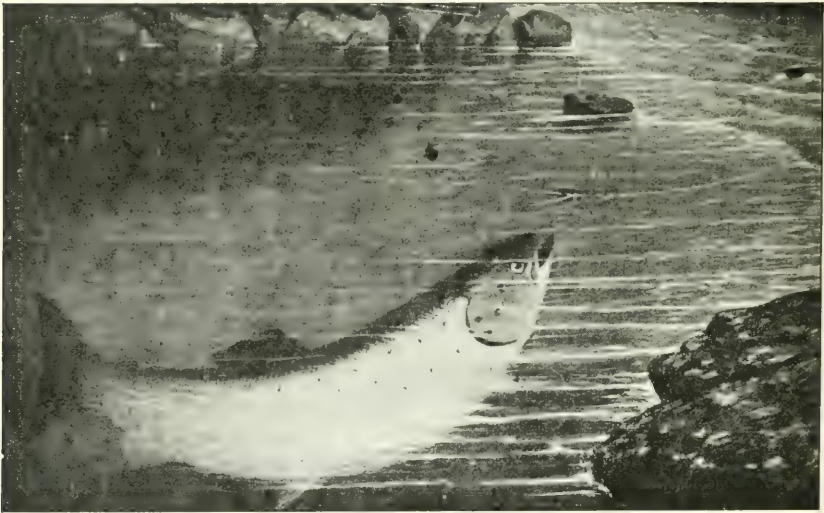


PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE.

and with an artistic turn of the wrist I sent them like thistle-down a few inches from the spot where I had seen the 'big 'un' feeding. For, as large trout often do (and small ones never), I had seen him in a very leisurely manner lift his head, then dip it slowly, showing his black dorsal and tail quietly for a brief second, without dis-

turbing the water overmuch. I flattered myself that good Charles Cotton himself could hardly have done it better. The pair of flies drew away and were followed by a bold rush, but I brought them lightly back, for he had missed by an infinitesimal fraction of space.

Again I cast, after a brief interval, over the same spot. A yellow bar apparently swirled lazily up from the depths of the dark water beneath the floating flies; there was a sloppy blow on the surface, and the yellow streak sank. Next a bright body flashed on the surface for an instant only, to disappear to the tune of a madly singing reel. The fish fought pluckily for liberty, and once he threw himself clear in the air. He seemed to understand



THE 'BIG 'UN.'

that the taut line was his deadly enemy, and sprang at it, thrashing it with his muscular tail over and over again.

At last he seemed to come suddenly towards the landing net as if he had thrown up the game. Inch by inch he approached the gaping mouth of the bag net, cunningly placed so as to receive him without too much challenging his attention. But the big trout had evidently seen the whole process. His former struggle was nothing to this last great effort at escape. Once and again he reeled out a dozen yards or more, and once and again, turn by turn, I got the line all back. But still the tiny little bit of bent steel kept its hold. At last a long reach out of the arm, and the prize was mine.

Well recompensed for the long stiff tramp over the boulder-strewn hills, I bore him for ever away from the cool depths of the

granite-margined lakelet, with its charming beaches of clean white sand; its big grey boulders carved often into the most fantastic shapes, hurled everywhere at random as if by playful giants; its miniature islands—one a bare granite rock, crowned with a single dwarf pine which has gained precarious foothold in a crevice; its tiny sheltered harbours with deep black water and winding coves receiving tinkling brooklets, where at the edge of bordering beds of lily pads, as the water gradually deepens, the big ones are apt to leap out suddenly at a well-flung fly.

VI

SEA-TROUT FISHING

WHEN the successful angler surveys a four- or five-pound sea-trout dripping fresh from the tidal waters of some Canadian river, as he notes the fine proportions and pure colours of the fish, the graceful form of the round broad back curving to the small well-shaped head, the flashing lights thrown back from the brilliant silvery sides, the opal tints of the lower parts of the body, and the delicate carmine of the stiffening fins, he finds it difficult to believe that the sea-trout is not entitled to a name of its own, for all the protestations of the naturalists that it is nothing more or less than the ordinary river trout, otherwise *Salvelinus fontinalis*, which has 'suffered a sea change into something rare and strange,' by a habit that has gradually been acquired of running to the ocean, where the bountiful diet of the sea has brought about a remarkable development in size and beauty. Anatomically considered there can be no structural difference whatsoever discovered between the two, sharply contrasted as they are to all outward appearance.

The naturalist has also settled it that there is no specific difference between the gamy *ouananiche* (pronounced *wonaneesh*—a fish in appearance very similar to the well-known Loch Leven trout), which haunts the inland Canadian waters, and the Atlantic salmon. The opinion was for a long time held that this interesting fish was a 'land-locked' salmon, by some means having formerly become imprisoned by natural barriers in remote upper waters, and debarred for a long period of time from access to the sea. Further investigation, however, has shown that the ouananiche cannot possibly be considered a land-locked salmon, for wherever found it can run to sea if it has the desire. Hence we are brought face to face with the remarkable conclusion that two varieties of the finny tribe by which the vast network of Canadian lakes and her thousands of clear rapid rivers are tenanted have this marked peculiarity in common, that a certain proportion of individuals have developed the habit of running to the ocean, while others of less enterprise, remaining all their lives in the fresh-water pools and rapids, are

seen to be inferior in size and attain less magnificent proportions, although it must be admitted that in strength and courage these are in no wise inferior, or in any properties which go to the make-up of a noble game fish.

Careless of their classification on the library shelf, however, early in July shoals of silver-sided trout press in from the sea toward the mouths of all the great rivers flowing over the ancient gneiss and granite rocks of the interior of the great Labrador peninsula, rushing down the sides of her shaggy mountains into the cold Arctic tide; advancing also into the myriad streams which seek the channel of the majestic St. Lawrence, the noble rivers of New Brunswick, and the short but picturesque streams of Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia.

Perhaps the best sea-trout rivers of the Dominion are two beautiful little streams running into the Bay of Chaleur, the Nouvelle and the Escuminac. No satisfactory explanation can be given of the remarkable fact that no salmon are ever known to ascend either of them. It is impossible to picture a more ideal specimen of a sea-trout river than the Escuminac. Here you see a succession of deep still pools overhung by steep shady banks with gentle rapids above and long shelving tails, where the big fish love to sport and feed. In both rivers are found a peculiarly large and fine breed of sea-trout—smart bold rising fish which take freely and play with wonderful agility. In their general characteristics they approach the salmon more nearly than any other Canadian sea-trout. They choose the same stations at the tails of the pools, and rise at the fly and play when hooked very like the salmon. The water in both these rivers coming from the Shick Shock Mountains is gin-clear, so that a pool fifteen feet deep looks as if the bottom were merely glazed with a thin sheet of plate-glass. One can watch every fish in the pool, and see him leave his lair to dash at the fly like a falcon at its quarry. Most fishermen prefer not to see their game, notwithstanding a weighty authority has declared—

The pleasantest angling is to see the fish
Cut with her golden oars the silver stream.

It is very exasperating to fish over a six- or seven-pound fish in full view taking not the least heed of your skilful attempts at his capture. I have seen as many as a dozen trout collected together in the Escuminac behind a rock, and have caught them all one after the other. After an interval of an hour or so I have seen as many more come to the same resting place and all take the fly in turn. There is, no doubt, not as much amusement about this to most anglers as there is in taking out of deep dark waters a fish

of whose existence you were previously totally unaware ; a pleasure which Thoreau considered somewhat akin to drawing the winning ticket in a lottery.

It may happen that when angling for sea-trout one finds himself suddenly confronted with his big cousin, the salmon, as illustrated by the following anecdote from the diary of an old friend who, to borrow Izaak Walton's familiar epitaph, was 'a good angler and now with God.' This shows how the unexpected sometimes happens in sea-trout fishing.

Mr. Baillie, grandson of the Old Frontier missionary, was fishing the General's Bridge River (Annapolis Co., N.S.) upstream for trout, standing above his knees in water, with an old negro, Peter Prince, at his elbow. In the very act of casting a trout fly he saw a large salmon lingering in a deep hole a few yards away from his feet. The sun favoured him, throwing his shadow behind. To remain motionless, pull out a spare hook and penknife, and with a bit of his old hat and some of the grey old negro's wool to make a salmon fly then and there, he and the negro standing in the running stream, was the work of only a few minutes. This fly must have been the original of Norris' famous killing 'silver greyt!'

In the early part of the season the sea-trout, especially in tidal waters, prefer gaudy flies such as the red hackle and scarlet ibis, or a bright claret body with white wings. A distinction must be made in the size and colour of flies for use in the rough rapids, or in dark pools covered, as is often the case, with an inch or two of creamy or snow-white flocks of foam, also between those tied for the dark water of some streams which have their sources from lakes encumbered with beds of black mud from which shoots upward a rank growth of water plants, and these which issue from clear mountain springs. The same flies are not equally effective on dark days, or when the wind ripples the water and when the sun shines bright and clear. During the fishing season there are apt to be far fewer cloudy days than bright ones. Frequently the sun rises and sets day after day in unclouded splendour. There are many picturesque trout pools, however, where precipitous cliffs shade the water so as to admit of a couple of hours' good fishing both in the early and late hours of the day. Were the sportsman compelled to confine himself to one fly for both bright and dark days, clear water or turgid, he could not do better than select the *Parmachene Belle*, which is irresistible at almost all times to a feeding trout. Many very successful sportsmen limit their range of sea-trout flies to bodies of claret, yellow, or orange, with wings of turkey, drake, teal, or woodcock mingled with the black and white of the jungle fowl. The very best trout fishing cannot be had except by camp-

ing out. However, Canadian guides are, generally speaking, expert canoemen and adepts in woodcraft, and one can often hire good Indians, who are agreeable, by their wonderful gift of taciturnity, to one who wishes to do nothing and think of nothing but fish and enjoy the beauties of his usually romantic environment.

As a canoe—whether of birch bark or cedar—is a *sine qua non* in the majority of Canadian rivers, the angler should practise casting with a firmly balanced body and hold his movements at all times well under control. It is true that the little craft can often be steadily held by the poles during the play of a fish, but it is sometimes necessary to run free and trust the skill of the men in navigating the rapids while one keeps his attention riveted on the struggling game fish. Whenever there has been a heavy spate the Canadian angler looks forward eagerly to the few days during which the water is slowly subsiding to its normal average condition as certain to offer the best fishing. Both trout and salmon may doubtless have run up river during the flood, but it requires the dwindling current to settle them in their accustomed pools and stations.

A favourite 'station' for large trout in a river is an eddy behind some shelving rock where flies and smaller fishes are carried by the set of the current. There are some such haunts never unoccupied when fish are running, for if a trout is taken out of one of them his place is immediately supplied by another who has deserted a less desirable station.

Should it be near the time of the full moon, when one run has passed on its way, there will be no long wait until the next one arrives, though the fish will certainly not average the same size. There is undoubtedly something about the 'bright regent of the heavens', when in the majesty of full orb, which determines the flights of snipe, woodcock, and other migrant birds, and which determines the inshore movements of anadromous fish. In the case of the birds it may be that they prefer to travel beneath a bright sky. The high tides prevailing at the full of the moon doubtless account for the approach of the fish to the rivers at this time—the sand bars and reefs being better covered up and affording an easier passage than ordinary.

Whoever has had the privilege of lying at full length on some mossy overhanging bank while watching a large trout in his lair, perceives that a true figure has yet to be drawn of him. Even photography can give no hint of the wavy circles from the spotted dorsal fin undulating loosely athwart the broad back; of the perpetual fanning of the pectoral fins, of the capacious gills opening and closing, the half-open round mouth, the luminous brown eye, the ceaseless slow vibration of the powerful tail; nor can pen

adequately describe the startling suddenness of the dart at some idle fly touching the surface, the quick return to the old position and the resumption of the poise with head elevated at a slight angle, pectorals all tremulous, and floating watery circles, emanating from every slight motion of the body. It is also worth while to watch a trout rush four feet up a perpendicular fall of water, pause, tremble violently all over, and in a moment throw himself clear of the stream and fall into the basin above, at an elevation of about three feet more.

In low water sea-trout play about near the mouths of all the rivers, moving along the deep channels cut through the sandflats by the racing current with the ebb and flow of the tide, awaiting favourable conditions to make their ascent in order to deposit their spawn. Here, by taking a boat, good sport may be enjoyed.

It is true there are those who agree with Scrope when he declares, 'The truth is I like no sea fishing whatever, being of opinion that it requires little skill.' On the other hand, a sea-trout taken from the salt water is vastly superior to one that is caught after spending a couple of weeks in the rivers. The change of diet, or the effects of the warmer fresh water, seem to have a relaxing effect, and speedily affect both the appearance and flavour of the fish.

Perhaps the most enjoyable sea-trout fishing is to be had in some dark romantic pool far 'up river', where the fish will be found at the edge of lily pads, or sometimes under the broad leafage of the floating water weeds, or hiding behind banks of water fern or half-sunken logs. Such fish are only to be approached in a light boat or canoe. You must steal slowly and circumspectly up the calm water ('studying to be quiet,' as good old Izaak directs), showing no shadow until you have drawn within reach of the place where you have repeatedly seen back fin and tail show up as a fly was lazily seized, or large vibrating circles where his prey has been struck at with the broad tail. That he is feeding is evident from the brief intervals at which he keeps rising. Now see to it that the 'green drake' descends like thistle-down. There comes a sudden 'boil'. Yes, you have hooked him—by the quick tension of the line and the rod curved to the butt. Give him no loose line, but hold him tight, keep his head well up, and guide him, if you can, out of the dangerous tangle of the weeds, away from his lair, where there may be another giant of the river in hiding. He plunges and fights with great fury, but all to no purpose. You slip the net under him, and he is yours.

Boiling is doubtless the best mode of cooking the sea-trout. However, in camp the more expeditious frying-pan is usually called into service. Say that the beech or maple logs of the camp fire

have burnt low into scarlet glowing coals—burning without any smoke whatever—there is your chance for artistic cooking. The frying-pan is laid on with several slices of the best pork available, and when this is sufficiently melted and the pan sputtering and crackling with the heat, then drop in the trout, split and cleaned, and lay the thin brown slices of the pork or bacon over them. When the underside is of a bright chestnut hue then turn over the bodies, and it will not need the tingling air of the Canadian forest to sharpen the appetite into an appreciation of the delicious fare.

VII

ONE SALMON : A NOVA SCOTIAN SALMON STREAM IN SPATE

THE scene is in Halifax County, Nova Scotia. The little river is roaring hoarsely beneath the wooden bridge, in heavy spate; its dark swift current racing with a swiftness and fury which makes our chances for a salmon indeed slim. We know that it is as much as a fish can do to keep himself comfortable in some quiet nook amid the foaming torrent, void of the least bit of ambition, or say of superfluous energy, to waste in chasing the alluring tit-bits of the fly-book. Silver Doctor, Yellow-leg, Black Dose or Durham Ranger, even the latest fad of an Admiral tied with white wings instead of turkey, will only too likely swim unheeded within the ken of our intended victims, oaring the tumbling waters with tireless fins, too busily occupied in holding their own against the rush of water to give attention to aught else. And yet I feel very happy and contented this glorious June evening as I listen to the heightened pulse of the dear stream where I have passed so many delightful hours, in front of mine host's comfortable little cottage, as he puts together my fifteen-feet steel-centred cane-built rod made by Hardy of Alnwick, which has many a triumph to its record in the series of pools which are for the most part in sight from my bedroom window. For first of all I know that the 'cherry run' of fish are now due in the river—and it is pleasant to know that the waters are peopled with the gleaming beauties even if we cannot bring them to the gaff. There are earlier runs but the 'cherry run' (when the wild cherry covers the hillsides with white sheets of bloom) is the best of all, for the fish are sure to be in prime condition, 'game fighters', and to make the heaviest average on the scales. A fortnight or so later the 'strawberry' run will enter the river, smaller fish and not so large a company—due to begin when first the wild strawberries sprinkle the pastures with shining dots of crimson. After that the grilse.

There is nothing harsh in the roaring of the waters: rather is their cadence of a soothing character: 'a sound of balm and solace'. One gets to regard his pet river as an intimate friend,

and time does not wither nor custom stale its infinite variety. How charming this mood of untamed fury ! How the flood revels in its wild new-found strength !

Until the sun drops behind the western hills in a red glow, pacing the little bridge I talk of fish, nothing but fish, with my genial host, my guide to be on the morrow. The old old story was told once more of the salmon so big that 'sonny', whom he had sent up river with the gentleman owing to a bad 'twist' of rheumatics, was too frightened to put the gaff in. 'Wonderful high water, sir ; kind of dubersome, but you never know, bless your soul ! quare fish the salmon—he will not come easy in this water, but when he does muzzle the fly he comes mighty savage.' Thus my friend, summing up his view of the situation. Every now and again we pause spell-bound to watch the unlooked for revels of our woodland stream, usually so quiet and domesticated, now exceeding all bounds of decorum as it wildly spurts against the piers ; riots in ropy swirls, tosses hither and thither creamy masses of whitey-brown foam ; and springs tiger-like with an exultant roar at the big grey boulders which dare to oppose its tumultuous passage. We can trace its fascinating movement until it is lost in yonder sleeping bay of curving outlines some two or three hundred yards distant, and watch it steadfastly for minutes at a stretch with unabated interest this glorious June evening as nature smiles on us in one of her most gracious moods :

Now do the woods with soft réveille ring,
Now in thy blood the challenge of the spring,
Bids thee forget the narrow days behind,
The winter weather and the winter mind.

This day has been the first of the warmer days of the earlier summer, when that indefinable feeling of the awakening of a new life assures the angler that the best season in his calendar is about to begin. The whole scene around us is well suited to 'a lover of the angle'. The fresh vivid greens of the bursting leaflets of the deciduous forests, the crimson tassels of the blossoming scarlet maples, the dark glowing maroons of the ash, the tender terra-cotta of the Indian pear trees, splash the hillsides with a pleasing variety of colour, while here and there the bloom of the wild cherry bursts like white foam over large patches of the woods. Withal everywhere in the air there is the pleasing sound of the nuptial songs of birds.

What happy walks we have had together, Tan and I, up the banks of this pleasant little river : our only luggage the rod and gaff and the well-filled luncheon basket ; starting in the freshness of the

early morning with the dew still hanging heavy on the alder bushes, and the long clear day ahead of us, to enjoy the fishing and the resinous scents of the firs and the fragrance of the forest flowers. Ah! these long midday siestas on the mossy knoll which overlooks the Still Pool, when we steeped ourselves in the dreamy peace and glory of the June river, and recalled some of its many fishing scenes of the past: the famous run down to the sea of that twenty-pounder through half a dozen pools; the saving of that other fish by cutting the line after he had fouled a log, and tying line on another rod; the ludicrous escape of that one to whom, about to receive the *coup de grace* from the killing stick, came liberty by an unlucky blow which struck the guide's fingers and made him drop the still very lively fish into the river.

It is a Nova Scotian stream of which I am writing, and like many others of that province it has its birthplace—its cradle so to speak—in one of those numerous lake basins which are sprinkled over the interior in countless number, and a short course of some twenty miles to the Atlantic seaboard. The lower portion of the stream, a strip of some three miles, offers the best fishing, and only lately seventeen fish have been hooked in one day in this stretch of water. It affords a choice of some eleven good pools. In this part of the fishing world one meets on almost every river an Admiral's pool, a General's pool, a Priest's and a Doctor's. The titles are all reminiscent of worthies not unforgotten among the angling fraternity; 'good anglers now with God' would have been Walton's comment on all of them, had he known and loved them as many out here have done—'men of mild, sweet and peaceable spirits such as most anglers have'. Other resting stations of the salmon are the 'Pet Pool', where the river gathers its waters into an oily smoothness in a narrow funnel before it plunges into a wild rapid, where many a good fish severs his connexion with the rod; the 'Hemlock Pool', where a large tree of that species deepens the darkness of the already dark water with its feathery branches; the 'Oak Pool', where, beneath deep shadows of leafage in the turf-cushioned arm-chairs made by massive twisting roots, many an honest fisherman has eaten his midday sandwich and washed it down with a cool draught from the adjacent 'whisky spring'; the 'Still Pool', the cast of a fisherman, which must be made with the smallest of flies, gently as an autumn leaf fluttered by a faint breeze on the water, where a brown strip of submerged rock marks the chosen 'seat' of many a fine fish; the 'Flat Rock', and 'The Turn', and 'Fool's Pool', and 'Rocky', and 'The Meadow', and the 'Champagne', with its creamy bubbling water; and the 'Foot of the Lake', and 'Log Pool', and 'The Dam'. Is not the reason for each

of these names writ large as one surveys them, and is not the memory of each one a delight on nights when the path to the salmon pool is deep in snow and the pool itself sleeping beneath its coverlet of ice?

This chapter is written, as the title implies, to tell the story of one salmon and *one* only—and somehow that story lingers in the writer's mind with a greater charm than that of many monsters brought to the gravelly beach of the rivers of far-away Labrador or of the seagirt island of Newfoundland. On as fine and fresh a June morning as ever dawned, we sought—my guide and I—for our fish in the dancing waters, and found, as we expected, most of the pools unfishable: the customary dark streak of fishing water covered with foam bells in many of the pools had changed to a hissing torrent. When we reached the Pet Pool we found the usual casting place running madly as a millrace. Far on the opposite side—a goodish long cast for a fifteen-foot rod—the river strayed in a backwater against a fallen trunk of what had been a monarch of the forest, a great red pine overthrown by some autumn gale. This bit of water looked in excellent order for a fish, and, as I had but little promising water ahead of me, I determined to give it a thorough good try.

‘A No. 2 Silver Doctor this morning, Tan?’

‘Yes, sir; I think that will do.’

But it did not do. Anglers may say what they like about one fly being as good as another, but in the light of my own experience I will never believe it. After a couple of casts a salmon showed to the deep in the water—making a slight swirl. He then refused a Fiery Brown, Jock Scott, Black Dose and Durham Ranger successively. So I changed to a white-winged Admiral, peculiar, I believe, to this part of Canada. My guide, Tan, states that its virtues were discovered and the fly originated by Admiral Stewart, on the Restigouche. However this may be, I proved its merit in this instance, and have since done so in many others. It is a particularly useful fly when one happens to be fishing late in the dusk of the evening, or in muddied waters, or amid floating sawdust, or on some very dark day when sky and water are almost inky in appearance. So soon as my Admiral passed over my friend, whose resting place was at the edge of some half-submerged alders, he came at it savagely and got hooked. He began by jumping, and after some highly creditable acrobatic feats were over, I had a most exciting quarter of an hour, for the odds against me were very heavy. In the first place, he tried to rush down the rapids, which would have meant a sudden ending to the game, so I had to give him the butt until the rod bent almost double, and risk the very severe strain on the tackle.

This I knew was sound. Then I had to keep my eye on the submerged bushes and the network of boughs which branched from the fallen pine tree. After all, perhaps the fight was better than in a stretch of still water, for here your knowing fish will run you out thirty to fifty yards of line and suddenly make a dash for your feet, causing the slacking of the line and throwing large chances into his favour. In swift water, if you can only hold on while your fish is working down stream, he cannot make headway fast enough against the rapid current to create the danger of bellying the line, and he wears himself out more quickly. Up and down my fish came and went in a game of seesaw, once or twice skating along the surface amid a smother of foam, and three times he nearly got into the drag of the boiling vortex, which drew away the water of the pool in long whirling swirls, and viciously dashed against submerged boulders for upwards of a hundred yards. Had my intense pull relaxed for an instant at one of these critical junctures good-bye to my gallant friend for ever! Each time he reached the very end of the pool and the strong water helped to drag him away from my control, I could scarcely prevent him from being carried down stream by the sheer weight of the current. What happiness in the glorious fight he was making and what moments of intense anxiety! But after the third attempt had been made and had been checked, the issue of the contest which for so long had been doubtful began to be assured, and I at length felt some confidence in bringing my salmon to the gaff, if only I could save him from fouling the line against the submerged wood. How nearly he came to defeating me—the hair's-breadths by which I succeeded in steering him clear by tremendous pressure—are known to my guide and me; but all the dangers were successfully surmounted, and at length in due time the salmon glittering on the bank: a fresh beauty just from the sea, with sides gleaming like hammered silver, delighted us by his magnificent symmetry, with small head, tapering well at each extremity, broad tail and immense dorsal fin. I can safely say that I enjoyed taking that fish more than ninety and nine others where the fight was tamer—and perhaps such is the experience of most anglers. Moreover, he was my first fish for the season, and, brothers of the angle, ye know what that means!

The next time I fished the river I could scarcely make myself believe that this silent stealthy silver stream, which I watched so quietly gliding by me, was the same dark river of swift currents and riotous whirlpools whence I had taken the one salmon which had afforded me such moments of mingled pleasure and solicitude.

VIII

SUMMER DAYS ON A NOVA SCOTIAN SALMON STREAM

Afoot the wash of waders and aloft the haze-veiled blue,
The heart it needeth nothing so the cast falls clean and true ;
O carol of the running reel and flash of mottled back !

A SUDDEN swerve of the highway, and there is the river—glimmering, dancing, sparkling along its boulder-strewn channel, racing right merrily to swift annihilation in the tiny harbour which twists stealthily in from the sea. We draw rein as we reach the little bridge with its wooden piers fretting the impetuous current, and look outwards on the blue salt water dotted with tawny sails of fishing boats : at the white cottages of fishermen sprinkled along the shores : at the background of dark fir trees, whose barbed tops on the one side are traced as in india-ink against a cloudless sky, and on the other are burnt and bitten into a fiery sunset. It is the view up the valley threaded by the little salmon stream we have come hither to fish which more steadfastly holds my gaze. Swiftly towards me, between serried ranks of coniferous trees embroidered with the white stems of silver birches, now with loud murmurings, now with soft musical purl, again fairly shouting among the grey granite boulders which are strewn on its pathway, sometimes slow slipping over golden pebbles, sometimes swift sliding over glassy ledges, comes my fascinating friend—the river. For friend and companion for the next two weeks this river is to be to me. At night its voice will soothe me deliciously : all day long I will draw its cheerful life into my veins. I will study its moods. There may arise forbidding moods ; but, like some capricious charmer after spent anger rewarding her patient lover with an unforgettable smile, there is sure to come at length the sudden swift unveiling of dazzling divine beauty. It may be at sunset-hour after rain, when there unfolds a sudden transformation into an atmosphere so clear, so marvellous, so brilliant, that the passage of light on the river (which is the imperishable heart of the scene) glorifies the whole landscape, until it becomes transfigured with colours never caught on the canvas of Titian or of Turner.

On the bridge stands Enoch, my guide, gaff in hand, a true son of the forest. Sixty winters have not grizzled the heavy mass of brown hair on his face and head, though his body is twisted with the wet and cold. 'Uncle Enoch' the village imps call him, wondering, with little arms akimbo, as he returns from the river, how many salmon are hid within the leather bag at his side to give his shoulders that unwonted stoop. He wears a drab woollen shirt, open at the neck, half revealing his swarthy breast, and a gift suit of chequered Harris tweed, at least one size too small, so that his lean muscular arms, knotted like whipcords and burned to a brown-black by the summer suns, are exposed almost to the elbow. Nature's elemental forces—winds, rains, sun, frost—have made the

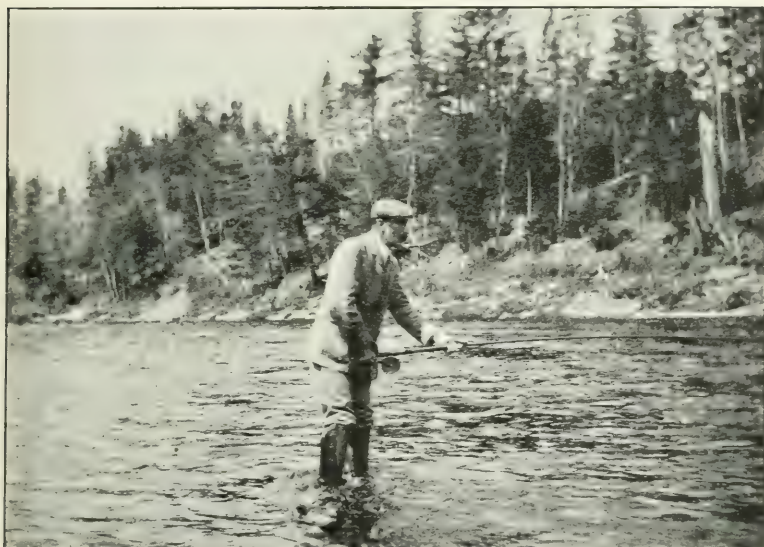


UNCLE ENOCH NEGOTIATING A DIFFICULT RAPID—GRID-IRON FALES.

features of the man too weather-worn and rigid for emotional expression, save that one can notice a somewhat contemptuous upward curl in the corners of the mouth if a fish is handled without due skill or the pool has not been covered in orthodox fashion. A quiet taciturn man is Enoch, as if he knew that a sportsman's first duty was stealthiness and his second silence. A true sportsman, too, most thorough in all his methods.

'Throw out there in the bubbly water and kiver the whole pool, sir,' is his laconic message, when he notices that I am missing a likely looking eddy where a whirl or two in the sable water, marking sunken boulders which lure a salmon to rest, seem to him to be escaping the searching sweep of my Silver Doctor; and always Uncle

Enoch is quite right. On the particular occasion here recalled, as the No. 2 Doctor swings round above the curl of the wave that plays at the head of the riff, there comes an upheaval of water dear to the angler's eye, and the back fin and pink side of a large salmon are revealed, but quickly curtailed by the closing flood. A few moments to rest him—and perhaps there are no more delicious moments in the angler's experience, only to be compared to the delight of putting together the rod for the first time after the long sleep of winter—and I send the fly inch by inch nearer to where he broke, on the tiptoe of expectation. But no response. Surely my friend has gotten a taste of its quality? What can be wrong?



'KIVER THE WHOLE POOL, SIR.'

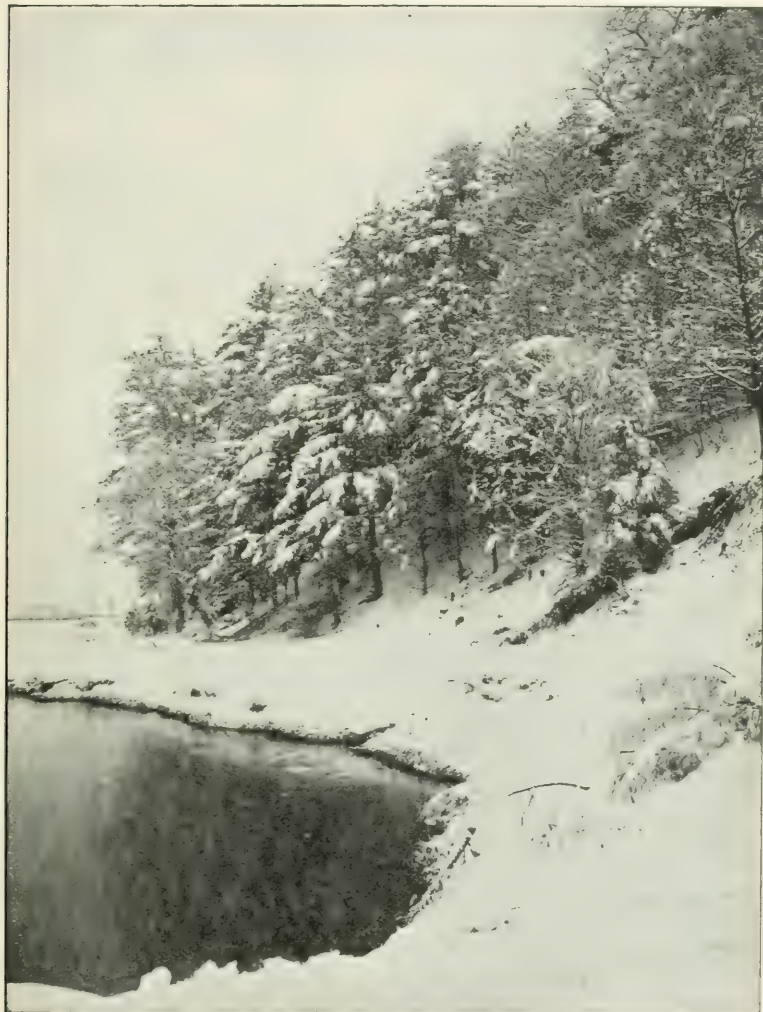
'Perhaps he has moved, sir; kiver all the pool, sir, if you please,' says good old Enoch. Acting on the suggestion I lengthen my line and send a cast several yards away to the other side of the ripple from the rock. The response is immediate; with a sidelong rush that shows his black back and gleaming sides the salmon seizes the fly, and instantly the line begins to hiss from the reel, while the rod is strained almost double. My friend proves a very game fish of nearly twenty pounds, and evidently set a high estimate on the value of his life, for he fought long and valiantly, and left no tactics untried to rid himself of the toils. A series of high springs, a straightway rush at the pace of ninety miles an hour, electric twistings under water, jerking savagely, and striking heavily at

the leader with his tail—all proved of no avail. Admiration for his pluck almost made me regret his fate; but Enoch's relentless gaff quivered for one moment only above his victim; then instantly with unerring aim the bright steel was buried in the shining side, and the metallic body was laid bright and beautiful amid the rushy sedges on the shelving shore. Here indeed was a good fish saved that but for Enoch's vigilance I might never have made acquaintance with. 'Kiver the whole pool' is an excellent axiom when you angle for a salmon.

Enoch on occasion is good at a yarn, and as we sit in the shade enjoying the afternoon pipe he loves to recall stories of 'the Old Hunter', a retired colonel who once fished this river with a very long rod (18 ft.), bearing inverse ratio to the quality of his temper. 'Rest his soul, he's dead and gone; he was the best sportsman as ever fished in these parts,' was Enoch's epigrammatic verdict on him who proved Walton's rule concerning the peaceable mild spirits of anglers by affording a most notable exception.

'Onc't,' continued Enoch, 'he was wexed by a sportsman casting into his water from the opposite bank. He said nothing, but managed to cross the man's line and tied it to the bushes. Didn't it sarve the man right? Onc't he thrashed two Indians within an inch of their lives for stealing a jug of old Jamaica rum *cachéd* at one of his camps for winter moose-hunting. Another man annoyed him by unlawful fishing. He found out where the critter hid his spears and dip-nets and other things that are a hurt to the river. One day he found a 50-fathom net with a leader, besides spears and bags and triangles. Lord, it was wild! and the Colonel he gets wild too, and goes to a magistrate and slaps the fine on him. But that did no good. So the next time he found this man poaching he took off his coat, for he had wexed him too bad this time to stand it any further. Instead of slapping on the fine this time, he says to the poacher, "If we have a law let it be a law, and we must fight it out betwixt us right here and now". The man was a shocking big brute of a fellow, but did not stand up for long before the Colonel; after three rounds he was on the ground howling with pain. He limped home to his wife, very badly hurt, they told me—and ever after the Colonel had no trouble on that river when they knew he was out for his sport. Onc't he fit a duel in Halifax because some big man sent a favourite rod back he had loaned him with a broken tip. And onc't when he was commanding at a sham-fight on the common, on the Queen's birthday, he was wexed because a company of blacks under a white officer, wheeling to the left instead of the right by mistake in the word of command, came up right in front of a troop of horse artillery. The Colonel

was mad, you bet ! and the language he used was something horrid and awful, although there were lots of the quality ladies looking on ; but the men only laughed, for they knew he was a brave man, and a tiptop sportsman, and could not help a bit of a short temper



THE SALMON POOL WRAPPED IN WINTER SLEEP.

and swear words at a time like this. " Ride over the black devils ! ride over the sons of Belial ! ride over them ! " he roared out over and over until he fairly got black in the face, they say, while the coloured boys got out of the way of the guns at best they could.'

So with yarns of the choleric colonel did Enoch beguile the hour of siesta one bright afternoon as we smoked our pipes, resting on the slope of the mill-dam, whence we had a view of the Falls Pool immediately beneath us. It is a good pool, but full of sunken logs and branches which a hooked fish is not slow to take advantage of. Indeed, it is one of those pools which afford so many chagrins that I would not advise a man of 'mild and peaceable spirit' to fish it too often, lest he might fall from grace and develop a temper. *Crede experto.* The way of a salmon among submerged timber passeth all understanding.



THE RIVER—'INFANCY'.

It is a curious pool to fish, for you cast from the dam, and as you look down upon the sunny water you often see a fish or two sculling gently along with a dreamy motion, or else poised at his station on easy fin. You can see the whole process of his taking the fly, and are very apt to draw it away on that account before your fish has well seized it. Personally, I prefer not to see the fish for which I cast, as I much enjoy that sudden revelation of what lurks behind the veil—the quick surprise; the lifting of the curtain that hides the finny tribe from observation.

Our river distinctly divides itself into three parts: the upper is infancy, the middle is youth, the lower manhood. The upper

reach is where the waters are gathered into a large lacustrine expansion swelled by numberless small rivulets teeming with parr and with trout, big and little ; in its middle course the stream gathers strength until it affords a few fair pools where one can take grilse in midsummer. But it is to the lower reach that memory turns most often in other scenes than these ; for here is our battle-ground with *Salmo salar*, here are registered our victories and defeats.

What a lovely pool is Indian Camp ! Quite near the sloping green bank old Indian warriors lie at rest beneath a score of fern-clad mounds ; men who long ago fished here with their rude gear



THE RIVER — ' YOUTH '.

and made elaborate stone weirs, traces of which are still to be seen, notably in the Weir Pool.

It is only a stone's-throw above tidal water, and when salmon rise here they come savagely, with tiger-like spring, apparently more strong and lusty than after they have lived in the fresh water even for a little time. Then succeeds ' The Alders ', where brown tassels and metallic leafage dip in a sable reach of water flecked with foam bells, netting among their interlacing branches frothy fabrics like pyramids of whipped cream.

Next come the Lower and Upper Wing-dams ; salmon pools of great interest to the fisherman, for in reality they are artificial



THE RIVER—'MANHOOD'.

pools, not made for the angler's delight expressly, but incidentally serving his purpose. They are structures built by the lumber-men for facilitating the driving of logs, provided with a gate in the centre, and with sides set sloping to the stream, furnishing a sort of funnel or bottle-neck pool, and backing up the water to a depth which the salmon dearly loves—anywhere between two and three feet—and somehow correcting the speed of the current exactly to his taste. Should any reader wish to construct an artificial salmon pool here is a valuable model, for above these so-called 'wing-dams' the salmon will surely rest for a long time. A fish hooked and lost here on June 12 of last year was taken with the cast in his jaws by another fisherman at exactly the same spot on June 27. He had remained in the pool for all that time.

For two whole weeks this pleasing river had been to me companion and a friend. Life by its waters had bestowed the power to enjoy simple things. 'The gliding of the stream, and the birds singing, and the soft blue sky, seem like life passing in a summer dream, as though no winter stress could e'er come nigh a scene like this, or any human deeds seem louder than the whisper of the reeds.' Oh, happy state of mind, when mere sky and running water, rocks and trees, the fluttering leafage, the glory of a summer eve, the notes of birds from the tree-tops, can make one forget that life

holds anything save rapture in it! As I pause at the top of the hill overlooking the river, tracing my steps backwards towards the ties of humanity which for awhile have been almost completely severed, I find myself repeating these words, hardly exaggerated, though originally referred to human love:—

Now see,
The red sun drops behind the dusky hills,
And nightly dews rise from the sombre vale:
Farewell, beloved, for belov'd thou art.



AT THE CLOSE OF THE DAY—READY FOR HOME.

IX

SPORT ON THE SALMON RIVERS OF EASTERN CANADA

IN contrasting Canadian inland waters with those of the mother-country, one cannot fail to be struck by the difference in the character of the trout fishing. Not only in remote sheets of water lying amid sequestered solitudes, which have remained and will continue for centuries unvisited by the angler, but even in lakes and streams of the settled districts, when trout are found feeding, they are extremely unsophisticated in dealing with the artificial fly. Not that for trouting some occasions may not prove far more favourable than others. Dear to the heart of the honest fisherman everywhere are a few fleecy clouds, not sufficiently dense to interfere with the warmth of the sunshine, yet serving to veil the intensity of the light: sweet the curl of a gentle south-west breeze coming across the meadows to darken the water. Yet such conditions are apparently of less importance in Canada than in England. Cautious approaches and the cast made on the knees by the chalk-stream fisherman would cause no small merriment to the young urchins who are given to the practice of driving out trout from underneath the shelter of overhanging alder thickets *vi et armis* for the purpose of 'fly-ing' them, even in small and shallow pools.

When it comes to *Salmo salar*, however, it cannot be said that his habits contrast very sharply with his representatives in the old world. He seems to enjoy life more keenly perhaps, and parts with it after braver struggles. The rush at the fly of a thirty-pounder of the York or Grand Cascapedia is sometimes almost tiger-like in its fierceness. Something may be due to environment to account for this. Perhaps the more highly aerated waters of the rapid streams, and wild revels in the midst of broiling torrent and mad cascades, may develop strength. The late Sir Donald Stewart used to say that 'salmon fishing in the heavy tumbling rivers of Canada is to salmon fishing in Scotland what tiger shooting is to deer stalking'.

Alike is the Canadian salmon, however, to his European brother in that there are times when he cannot be enticed by a well-flung fly; when he puts man's petty artifices utterly at defiance; in

that he generally refuses to rise well during the waxing of the water after rain, but comes well with the river on the wane, while *decre-scentia ripas flumina prætereunt*.

His favourite 'seats', too, are in the rough rapids at the head of a pool, else in front of some submerged rock far below, where the water deepens and darkens at the tail. Here he loves to lurk and laze beneath the foam-flecked whimpling ripples, and here, when he does rise, the old-country angler is familiar with the rocket-like rush, the javelin-shaped uplifting of the water, the pink gleam

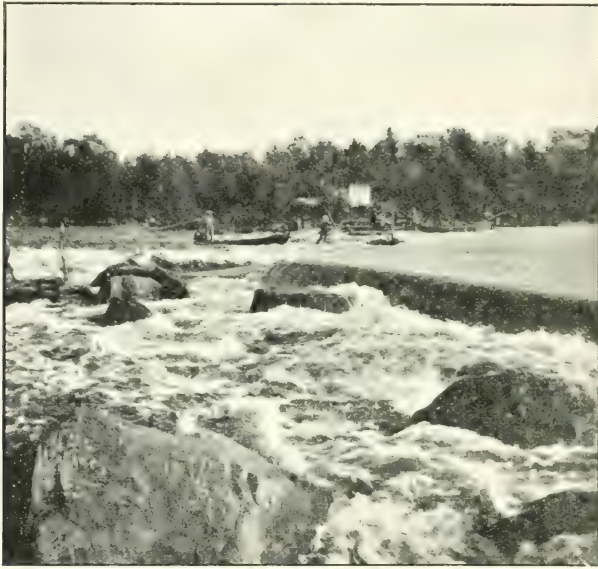


FISHING SCHOONER FROM CAPE BRETON SAILING TO SANDWICH BAY, AT THE HEAD OF WHICH IS THE WHITE BEAR RIVER.

of the sides, and then the brief glimpse of black dorsal fin and tail as the fly is carried down in the midst of encircling waves. In the more quiet water the fish seems to gain added strength, and even a twelve-pounder will go off 'pulling like a wild horse with the lasso about him'.

Everywhere, even in Canada, the same golden rule is to be observed in salmon fishing: '*nil desperandum*'. Slight changes affect the fish; the atmospheric conditions attending a change of weather, a calm after storm, or vice versa, will set obdurate individuals agog for the fly. An exceptionally warm day occurring in a cold spring, or a cool day in midsummer, in short any surprise

in weather—and such surprises are of astonishing frequency. The threatening eye with which fortune looks upon men just before she means them most good she often turns upon the angler.



THE MEDWAY SALMON RIVER, NOVA SCOTIA.

Although salmon are often caught during the brightest hours of the day, the same rules apply in Canadian streams as elsewhere. Avoid fishing a pool after ten o'clock on a clear summer morning until about five o'clock in the evening. In comparatively still water the fly must descend as lightly as a feather exactly on the right ripple, for the salmon will not offer to take unless the fly is precisely at a certain distance away. If the water is very still it is a good plan frequently to allow the fly to sink a few inches, then draw toward the surface and again allow it to sink.

Many of the pools in Canadian waters are surrounded by perpendicular or overhanging rocks, and in such places it is well to keep out of sight as much as possible, and never disturb or approach the water before trying it. In hooking a fish it is best to strike a little sideways, rather gently, 'doing something with your wrist which (as Mr. Penn says) is not very easy to explain'.

Scrope's advice is very much to the point everywhere: 'It is indispensable to have a quick eye and a ready hand. Your fly, or its exact position, should never be lost sight of, and you should imagine every moment of the live-long day that an extraordinary large salmon was coming at it.'

Although the orthodox method of casting generally answers, namely, 'to bring the fly round the stream, describing the segment of a circle, taking one step in advance at every throw, occasionally giving short jerks in order to set the wings in alternate expansion and contraction', yet there are exceptions to this rule.

For instance, take the well-known 'Falls Pool' below the Grand Falls of the Nepisiquit, in New Brunswick, the highest point of the river which the salmon reaches. Here the falling water in countless ages has worn away a deep gorge between precipitous cliffs, raging and wallowing through a narrow channel, sending up volumes of fine spray to be pierced by the rays of the summer sun until a beautiful mist rainbow overarches the cataract. Below this is a smaller fall, where the salmon occasionally essay a futile leap. At a little farther distance the mass of foaming water rests in a pool of comparative calm and quiet. It is extremely interesting to stand on the rocks overhanging the river and watch the salmon, their every movement distinctly evident. As the pool is shallow, it would be impossible to take any fish here, were it not that a great fragment of shelving rock, detached from the cliff, rests on a ledge at the base. Crawling upon this rock on all fours, and entirely



CAMP ON THE NEPISIQUIT.

concealed from view, the fisherman has to throw his fly very lightly on the pool, and allowing it to rest for one moment only on the calm surface, must immediately withdraw it if not taken. One

clumsy action will entirely destroy his chances, until a fresh fish slips into the pool, which is continually happening. This method of casting calls for a very stiff rod. The work has to be done with the tip. One veteran sportsman who fishes this pool has fortified his rod with a narrow double strip of steel rod running from tip to butt. The salmon meaning to rise will separate himself from his companions, and not until the fly is at the exact distance which pleases his lordship will he deign to make his plunge after it. The 'old soldiers' seem to know the deception, and occasionally turn on the side and eye the feathery cheat in a sidelong mocking way that is very provoking. The only fish hooked are those that have newly arrived in the pool. If the throw prove successful, the moment that the fly touches, like an arrow shot from the bow, a torpedo-like shape darts diagonally toward it, and floundering for one moment on the surface, disappears below. The other fish appear to eye the hooked one with amazement, but hardly with alarm. They evidently fail to take in the situation, and draw aside lazily when he comes among them, as if to implore sympathy and aid. Seeing that there is no relief here for him, the fish usually darts down stream, and the Indians bringing up the canoe, the fisherman steps in and gaffs his prey a few hundred yards down the river on a sloping, gravelly beach that seems to be provided for the express purpose.

One can here see a procession of salmon passing into the gorge and back again from the broad lake-like basin below twice each day.

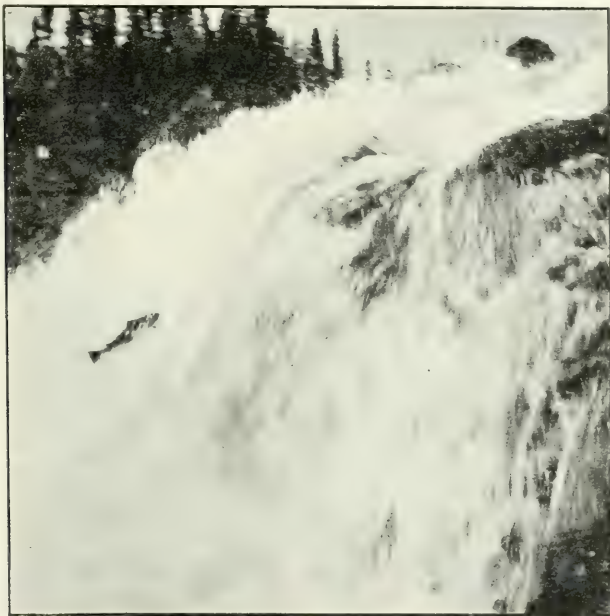
It is easy to believe the tales of canoe loads of salmon speared here in the olden time by the Micmac Indians when game wardens were a thing unknown. What more tempting spot for 'burning' could the desperately wicked heart of the poacher desire!

After vainly essaying to scale the falls, the fish slink back into the shaded waters of the cañon. Salmon are unable to surmount a fall upwards of eight feet, and even in effecting this much depends on the perpendicular character of the fall and the depth of water at its foot. The deeper it is the higher they can leap. Highly amusing is the ancient myth that the salmon takes his tail in his mouth:—

And bending like a bow,
That's to full compass drawn;
Aloft himself doth throw,
Still yerking, never leaves
Until himself he fling
Above the opposing stream.

Next to the actual play of a lusty fish on the rod, perhaps the most delectable amusement of your genuine admirer of *Salmo salar* is

to watch some salmon 'leap', where fish after fish springs in the air, nearly all falling backwards, again to renew the struggle, while few only, with a wriggle of the tail, sail off triumphantly, bound for the pleasant pools in the upper reaches of the river, which their less agile comrades have been unable to achieve. The successful vault appears to be a nicely calculated arrival at the curve of the sheet of falling water at a correct distance below the escarpment, where, after a slight pause, when the body trembles violently all over, a rapid quivering of the pectoral fins and tail puts the finishing touches on the supreme effort. The heart of the honest angler is



SALMON LEAPING THE FALLS OF WHITE BEAR RIVER.

Photograph by Dr. R. T. Morris, New York.

often lacerated by the treatment accorded to this noble fish in the inland waters of the Province of Nova Scotia. The time will come when, as has happened in the State of Maine, the policy of annihilation will be succeeded by expensive re-stocking of the salmon streams. An ounce of precaution in this instance would be worth, however, many pounds of cure in the shape of expensive Government Fish Commissions and slow rehabilitation.

The interior of this province is occupied by a number of lake basins, from each of which a picturesque salmon stream seeks the Atlantic. Within easy reach of the City of Halifax there are, to the westward, Indian River, Gold River, Ingraham, East River,

the Lahave, Medway, Liverpool, the Clyde, the Shelburne, and the Tusket, each of which has glorious salmon pools, and once fairly swarmed with sea-trout, salmon, and the useful gaspereaux—in appearance something like the herring, a member of the *Clupeidae* (*Alosa tyrannus*). The catch of this latter fish alone in 1870 amounted to 50,000 barrels a year in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, where they formed a welcome addition to the means of the farmers settled along the river banks.

The same may be said of Salmon River, the Musquodoboit, the Tangier, and the St. Mary's to the eastward of Halifax. The beautiful Annapolis, a slow full river, flowing through long fertile meadows and luxuriant apple orchards, has of late vastly improved, and offers many tempting pools to which the fish have a free course from the Bay of Fundy. Although in each of these rivers (named in the order of their distance from the capital city) the fishing is free and open, each season tempts a bare score of salmon anglers to their banks. A couple of fish a day seems to be the maximum of an angler's hopes, and it must be confessed that on many a good fishing day he draws a blank.

Turning to New Brunswick, there the conditions are widely different. Her numerous charming streams, of far greater volume than those of the sister province, perhaps ranking among the noblest salmon rivers of the world, are all leased, and the privileges of the rod, with few exceptions, are only obtainable by purchase or favour. Every year some streams, or sections of streams, are offered at public auction in the town of Fredericton, and prices are often ridiculously cheap compared with those obtained for far inferior water in Norway. The Restigouche ranks high in merit in comparison with any salmon stream in civilized territory.

The Miramichi, not one river, but several, draining an immense tract of wilderness, is divided into two main branches, the North-west and the South-west. The Metapedia is a fine ample river, but has failed of late for causes not determined.

Flowing into the romantic Bay of Chaleur, in the Quebec district of Gaspé, are several rivers commanding high prices, noted for the large size of the salmon which they hold. The most famous of these are the Grand Cascapedia, the Little Cascapedia, the Bonaventure and the York, which flows into the charming Gaspé Basin. In a beautiful grove, on the Grand Cascapedia, a few miles from the mouth where a mountain torrent storms into the river, nailed against the wall of the fishing camp, is an effigy cut in birch bark of a salmon which weighed fifty-four pounds, killed by Lord Stanley.

The season for all these rivers is from the 10th or 15th of June up to the 1st of August.

Along the north shore of the St. Lawrence there is a succession of noble salmon streams (accessible from Quebec by steamer) which are capable of yielding their dozen or score of fish a day to each rod. The St. Marguerite, the Godbout, the Wacheeshoo, the



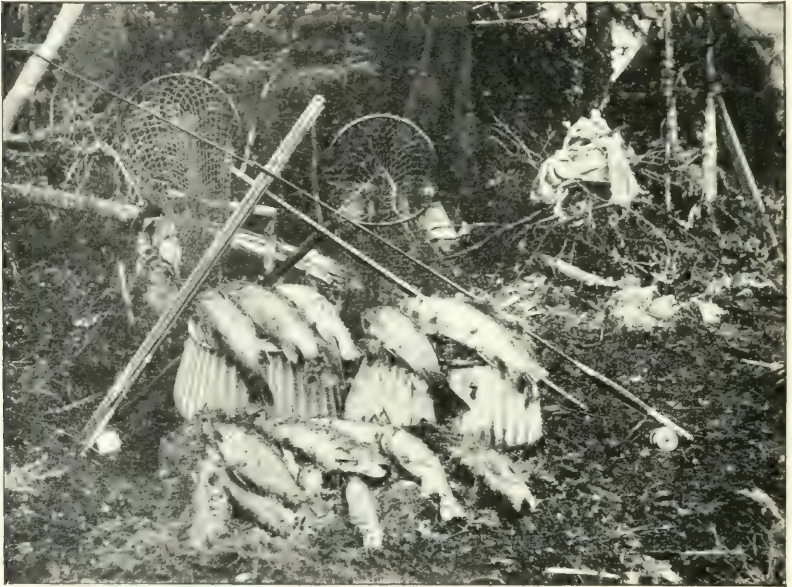
SALMON LEAPING THE FALLS OF WHITE BEAR RIVER.

Photograph by Dr. R. T. Morris, New York.

St. John's, the Mingan, the Moisie, the Romaine, the Natashquan, the Meccatina and the St. Augustine, are the most famous of these, but all are under lease to private owners or clubs.

Passing on to Labrador, this coast has recently been placed among the 'accessible' regions of Eastern Canada by the powerful agency of steam, and should interest the angler looking for new worlds to conquer. The country through which its streams run is very peculiar; rough hills of laurentian and granite rocks rise near the edge of the coast, and extend far back from an elevated tableland, for all practical purposes an unexplored and unknown territory. The hills are bare and bleak, or if clothed at all with wood, have nothing but stunted spruce and white birch. At intervals, some large rivers, after winding along the plateau in lacustrine expansions alternating with turbulent rapids, fall into the sea, as a rule offering a very short course before the ascent of the salmon is barred by impassable cataracts. The Forteau is a river well known

to many officers of his Majesty's warships which patrol the coasts of Newfoundland; noted, however, more for its sea-trout than for its salmon. The White Bear River at the head of Sandwich Bay, where Cartwright found his fishing-station in the middle of the



SEA-TROUT.

eighteenth century, must have at that date simply swarmed with salmon. In one year he killed, between June 23 and July 20, 12,396 salmon, averaging 15 lb. apiece. He adds that, if it had not been for interruptions caused by privateers, he is confident he would have killed 32,000 fish or 1,000 tierces.¹

This river below the falls often yields excellent fly-fishing, while several rivers further north call for exploration. Sandy Eil's River, near Tub Harbour, and the North-West, running into Hamilton Inlet, excellent salmon streams, can be reached without great difficulty.

Such is a cursory review of the scope suggested to the angler in Eastern Canada. The range offered is immense. The rod will often be carried far into the wild solitudes of nature in its primeval grandeur, surrounded by sombre forest; the fisherman will at times be called on to undergo, perhaps, severe labour; yet it is surprising how comfortable it is possible to make oneself in the wilds by means of a few simple artifices.

¹ Cartwright's *Sixteen Years on the Coast of Labrador*, July, 1778.

'The most exquisite kind of angling, in my opinion,' said good Sir Humphrey Davy, 'would be that of angling in a river never fished in by European before.' This supreme pleasure may still be enjoyed by the adventurous sportsman in some portions of Eastern Canada.

Note.—I consider that a Hardy split cane fifteen-foot salmon rod, with steel core running entire length, the very best for all-round salmon fishing in Canada. A smaller spare tip will fit this beautiful rod for sea-trout and brook-trout fishing.



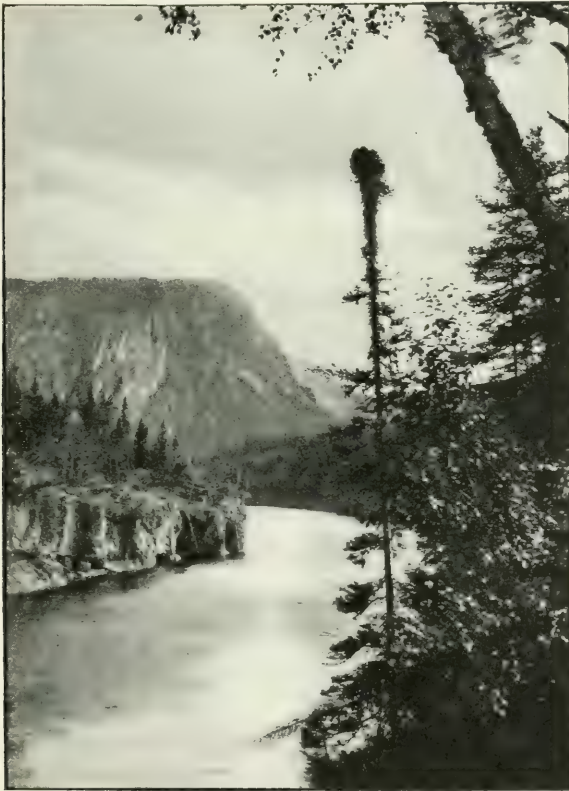
THE HUMBER RIVER.

X

THE SEA-TROUT AND SALMON STREAMS OF NEWFOUNDLAND

FEW indeed are the regions of the world more prolific in fishes than the coasts of Newfoundland. Vast eddies from the contact of the Gulf Stream with two branches of the Arctic current form the great submarine deposits known as the Newfoundland banks, stocked with an inexhaustible supply of marine fish life, while inland every tumbling brook and blue lake is populous with trout. The salmon streams of Newfoundland are becoming better preserved every year, hence the fishing undoubtedly promises rapid improvement. The magnificent Humber, pursuing a course through the immense lake known as Deer Pond, and lapping the base of precipitous cliffs, affords sport amidst enchanting and even noble surroundings. A very attractive trip is to start from Deer Lake, with camp outfit and a couple of good boatmen, for the long pool immediately below the Grand Falls. Two days will suffice

to surmount the difficulties of the river, which often runs into swift rapids. During the two latter weeks of June, salmon should be found here in force, and may be seen jumping the falls, six or eight out of water at a time. None could pass over the falls were it not for the help of a projecting ledge a few feet from the head of the falls. The pool affords fishing for nearly a mile, and after the salmon are over it becomes fairly alive with grilse.



SUNSET ON THE HUMBER.

On a calm summer evening the sportsman encamped on the shore is often startled by a human-like whining or crooning, or a heavy splash off some rocky ledge. Beneath the keel of his boat a flash of yeasty froth, followed by the emergence of a round glittering head, tells him that he is not alone in the pursuit of the salmon, as seals are sharing the sport, probably with a far greater degree of success, for they are gifted with agility far surpassing that of the salmon.

There are many good salmon rivers along the southern coast of Newfoundland, among which the Garnish, the Bay du Nord (Fortune Bay), Little River and Grandy's Brook (Burgee), may be noted. In Bay d'Espoir two fine streams flow respectively into Bay d'East and Bay du Nord. There are also the La Poile and the Rose Blanche. All these rivers, however, are not nearly so easy of access as those of the west coast, several of which are crossed by Reid's railway.

The Terra Nova should soon become an excellent salmon stream, as it contains a number of fine pools, and has been recently equipped with two salmon ladders at the Upper and Lower Falls, which once barred the ascent of the fish from the lower reaches. The Gander is also naturally a fine river over thirty miles in length, which should go on improving. It was ruined by former merciless methods of fishing, which are now being put a stop to. Cruelly trapped, netted, speared and even 'barred', small wonder that while it once yielded 1,000 tierce of salmon it virtually became depleted. The method of 'barring' a river is to stretch a net clear across from bank to bank, which again is usually 'backed' by another net of small mesh directly behind it, so that if a small fish gets through the first barrier he is certain to be stopped at the second.

The great Cod Roy is easily reached from Port aux Basques, the western terminus of the railway. Its valley is one of the most fertile portions of the island. It is a shallow stream, but broad, often affording very fair sport. The long estuary at its mouth allows the nets to get more than a fair share when salmon are running in from the sea.

Among the other easily accessible streams on the west coast there is Harry's Brook, where there is a good sportsman's hotel known as *The Long Cabin*; the Greater and the Less Barachois; Fischel's Brook; Robinson's Brook; Crabbe's Brook and the little Cod Roy—all of them near comfortable houses, so that camping out in the bush though desirable is not an actual necessity. The pools seldom in breadth exceed a fair cast even for a fifteen-foot rod.

It may here be explained that on the island the terms lake and river are only quite recently being applied even to large bodies of fresh water. The early settlers who here won for England her first foothold in the new world were hardy mariners from Devon and the West country. Consequently they had no other word for an inland expanse of still water save *pond*, or for a bit of running water save *brook*, without regard to dimensions. A visitor receives a shock at hearing a sheet of water fifty-six miles in length referred to as Grand Pond. If this is a pond, he asks, what must the lakes be like?

Along the Newfoundland coast salmon begin to press in toward fresh water about the twentieth day of June. They follow the enormous schools of that curious fish the caplin, which frequently crowd into the shores in such numbers, for purposes of breeding, that tons of them are often picked up dead and used for manuring the soil. There are several later runs depending altogether on the state of the water. Most of the rivers being short, readily run off in a dry season. Then the fish will hang about the estuaries until the arrival of a freshet, which invariably impels them upstream.

Often a pool near the tide which on the previous day contained only an odd salmon or two, blackened by a long stay in the fresh water, will be found to have become filled during the night with a



GRAND FALLS, EXPLOITS RIVER.

large school of sea-trout. These fish do not run upstream in force until about the middle of July, although a few large ones come in with the salmon.

They are said to come on in larger numbers at the full of the moon, when possibly higher tides enable them to pass over the sand bars and rapids with greater freedom. In low water they play about near the mouth of all the rivers, moving with the ebb and flow of the tide.

If any one cares for that style of fishing, he can take a boat and often secure excellent sport in channels which are cut through banks of sand by the racing tides. He must use a large white-

winged fly, which should have a bright claret or scarlet body. If the trout refuses this lure he must spear a few small flounders in the shallow water, where they lie with outline hardly distinguishable from the sand, and, cutting a long strip of white from the underneath of the body, attach it to the fly. This invariably proves effective.

This form of sea-trout fishing cannot compare, however, with the skilful cast of a fly flung to descend like thistle-down just outside the margin of some lily patch in a quiet pool fringed with alder bushes, where now and again large vibrating circles keep breaking the still water slightly curled by a gentle zephyr. Then to take a four-pounder a man must be a long remove from Dr. Johnson's famous definition of an angler; he must be a being of parts and erudition.



THE LOG CABIN, HARRY'S RIVER.

After a run of sea-trout has made a river, for several days and nights they will press eagerly upstream, seldom lying many hours in the same pool. Suddenly, some fine morning, the angler finds that the run has gone by; but should the water be right, not many days will elapse before another arrival will take the place of those which have passed up river.

In the little Cod Roy River, abounding in magnificent well-stocked trout pools, with a charming range of blue hills standing out against the horizon in two directions amid a beautiful sylvan environment, the trout fisherman can revel in his favourite pastime.



TROUTING UNDER KILBUDE FALL.

Here fish after fish may be landed between three and four pounds ; and rare beauties they are ; very close of kin to the aristocrat of the stream—the lordly salmon.

See them on the grass in the red afterglow of a July evening ; rich in colour beyond description ; their backs of mackerel-green, shot with zigzag streaks of glittering bronze ; sides of molten silver ; bellies like pearl, and sometimes touched with a blush of faint pink or rose ; and fins delicately streaked with carmine. Many of them drag the steel spring down at four pounds.

With what unalloyed pleasure one gathers up such rich spoils at the end of the long sweet summer day, and trudges happily off to Tompkin's comfortable hostelry, with its widespreading acres of cultivated intervale land—rather a rare sight in Newfoundland—and hands over to the cook a couple of the shining beauties for his evening repast !

When sea-trout are newly arrived they will rise, even on a bright day, at almost any description of fly. Above the rocks, forming a sort of dam, where the outlet of the pool begins to curve before it breaks away in a wild dash to the rapids below, the biggest fish are

likely to be hooked : and they are often found graded in size as you walk higher up the pool towards the inlet. A fish about two and a half pounds generally fights more gamely than his larger brethren.

The streams of Newfoundland are becoming better preserved every year ; hence the fishing will undoubtedly improve, and already has improved. In the streams mentioned, and in some of their branches, should the fisherman hit good water, he may have the good luck to land a couple of salmon a day ; but where has not salmon fishing its glorious uncertainties ? *Salmo salar* is the same uncertain, capricious creature in Newfoundland as elsewhere ; one day rising greedily, on the very next sulking indifferently at the bottom of the pool for no assignable reason.

The streams are all free and open, without any fee whatever. The first rod holds possession—that is the rule of the river. A camp may be occupied just as long as the owner of it chooses to remain.

Several noble rivers discharge into Hawke Bay, far north on that strip of coast known as the French shore, where conflicting claims of ownership have resulted in an international complication not easily unravelled. Amid grand scenery, closely resembling some portions of the coast of Norway, some American gentlemen have erected a fishing lodge, where they resort annually and command the fishing of two good streams, which have been not quite ruined in the past by poaching and overfishing.

One of the very best salmon rivers of the island at the present day is Hare River, away up on the extreme north-eastern apex of the island, flowing into Hare Bay. To reach this stream it is necessary to take camping outfit, and proceed from the railway terminus at Burnt Bay by coasting steamer as far as Tilt Cove Copper Mine. A small steam tug carrying mails is sometimes available, whereby to cross White Bay, and to proceed within easy reach of this attractive river. The little boat hugs the rugged coast, and often threads a pathway through an archipelago of interesting islands. Good caribou hunting may also be had on the neighbouring plains, and as the Newfoundland deer season opens July 15, a fishing party need never be without plenty of good venison.

Some fifty miles from the capital city is the noted Salmonier, which is the home of a small but gamy salmon that never outgrows the size of a well-nurtured grilse. There is a fine surrounding country, where willow grouse may be shot on the high barrens in the season, and where an occasional snipe marsh is found alternating with thick evergreen forest.

One of the best known as well as the largest rivers of the island is the Exploits, falling into an arm of the Great Notre Dame Bay. It has its source in Lloyd's Lake, known only to the lonely fur

trapper, then pursues a course through steep rock gorges into Red Indian Lake, noted for its excellent deer-hunting, and afterwards winds along through a well-timbered country to the sea.

Along its shores the now extinct tribe of aboriginal Indians were accustomed to make huge enclosures by felling trees in order to impound herds of caribou when on their spring and autumn migrations. Near Grand Falls the remains of these ancient fences are still to be seen, though crumbling to decay, as well as the circular mounds which mark the foundations of rude birch-bark wigwams.

The Grand Falls of the Exploits are heard rumbling and roaring at a very long distance, and are at least 125 feet in height. An immense volume of falling water, compressed into a comparatively narrow space, is rent in many places by large projecting rocks, while a short distance below the stream is divided by a wooded island, which is used as a breeding-place by countless gulls. The scene is striking and wild in the extreme.



A BIT OF INTERVALE LAND, LITTLE COD ROY RIVER.

Although the Falls afford an imposing spectacle they bar the ascent of the salmon, which seem thereupon to turn their course up Great Ratling Brook. This brook, or river rather, has three very good pools within a distance of two miles from its mouth, so that a party camping near the mouth can easily fish them every day; and often excellent sport is to be had here in the month of July.

Say that there has been a gradual falling of the water, and the

fish are disposed to linger as they arrive in the pools from the main river, awaiting the advent of rain, careful fishing with a small 'Doctor' or 'Ranger' or 'Admiral,' in the early morning or towards evening, is sure to be rewarded with success.

Besides the actual fishing, the disciple of Walton will find much to interest him in a trip to Newfoundland.

Countless as are the lakes of the islands, of all dimensions from fifty yards to fifty miles in length, either on the open savannahs or else embosomed among the pines and firs, each one seems to contain a distinct variety of *S. fontinalis*. Various accidents of environment develop novel forms and colours. Trout are sometimes met



A GOOD FIGHTER.

with which seem to defy classification under the existing system of nomenclature. In one lake I know of, with no shrubbery on the shores, surrounded by a dreary, glaciated waste, the trout, apparently dwarfed by starvation, never exceed six or eight inches in length.

In the Museum at St. John's there is a curious fish labelled a 'smut' salmon, which is said to be a hybrid form not infrequently met with. The ouananiche on calm evenings startles the deer hunter as it leaps up in the waters of Red Indian Lake, and is also found in the Terra Nova, Badger, and Great Gander Lakes. Rainbow trout have been successfully introduced by the St. John's

Angling Clubs in more than one lake, as well as the agile trout from the waters of Loch Lomond, spotted like the pard. Local conditions change these fish somewhat from their typical character—especially the over scarcity or abundance of insect food. There is no doubt that a thorough ichthyological exploration of the inland waters of Newfoundland would furnish valuable and interesting results. On most of the streams of Newfoundland the air is very fragrant in the early summer with the bloom of the balsam poplar, or Balm of Gilead tree. There are many rare and beautiful wild flowers—some deliciously fragrant, such as the pink bells of the *Linnaea*



TROUT FISHING. OUTLET OF HARRY'S BROOK, GEORGE'S LAKE.

borealis. That most charming of wilderness songsters, the white-throated sparrow, pours forth its cheerful melody from numberless tree tops. If one puts aside the rod and strolls upon some neighbouring 'barren', or dry upland marsh, he will see perhaps a cock willow grouse burst from the moor, or possibly a ptarmigan exactly like the Norway ryper, leading him away from its young brood with a plaintive cry of distress and a pretended broken wing, drooped and trailed along the moss-covered ground. The harsh 'honk' of the Canada goose may often be heard, as she takes her young to some grassy 'tussock' in the middle of some secluded pond, where a fancied security is obtained against all enemies. If the sportsman

wander into some sequestered meadow through which a still brook glides noiselessly, fringed with a dense mass of shrubbery, he is very likely to startle a caribou hind with her April fawn, or a stag carefully nursing the soft, gelatinous, velvet-covered sprouts presently to develop into forms of beauty coveted by the hunter.

There is no country so near England at the present hour which offers so many attractions to the sportsman as Newfoundland. As the price of good or even indifferent salmon fishing in the old country and Norway becomes year by year more prohibitive, it is necessary for the disciple of Walton to seek out new fields, or rather streams, where it is possible to indulge in his favourite pastime at a reasonable cost. Some already have done so, but there is plenty of room for very many more. Superb sea-trout fishing is only a question of being on the right water at the right time.

Newfoundland is no bad substitute for Norway. The beauty of the bold and deeply indented coast; the excellence of the fishing amid the wild solitudes; the countless number of lakes and streams by which the island is watered—all conspire to make of Newfoundland a veritable paradise of the angler for trout and salmon.

'Fisherman's luck' depends largely upon finding the water in proper condition. A heavy spate is quite as unfavourable as very low water, which now and then occurs during the fishing season, and mars for the time being all chance of good sport. After salmon have remained for some length of time in fresh water, they rise tardily or refuse altogether in Newfoundland as everywhere else.



THE VILLAGE OF BEAR RIVER, DIGBY CO., N.S.
GOOD CENTRE FOR AUTUMN COCK SHOOTING.

XI

COCK SHOOTING

WHILE the breeding range of the European woodcock is one of extraordinary dimensions, extending from the British Isles and the Azores throughout Europe and Asia eastward to Japan, and reaching as far north as the 60th parallel of latitude, the American woodcock has for its domain only that eastern part of North America stretching from the tropics to the waters of the St. Lawrence river and the great Canadian lakes, limited to the westward by the prairies and the high arid plains which occupy so largely the central portion of the continent and are ill adapted to a bird which is no lover of the open.

Nova Scotia is a noted breeding ground of the American woodcock. Many of her rivers, slowly coursing through fertile alluvial valleys, are broadly margined by level intervale meadows studded with clumps of alderbrake, withrod, and wild willows. Here are favourite haunts of the shy russet-coated little bird.

Of all the game birds of America none is so endeared to the lover of country life, or more highly prized both by the epicure and sportsman. Not 'Bob-white', nor even the English snipe, inspires half so much affection, and the pursuit of either of these will speedily be abandoned when a flight of cock is reported in the coverts.

Granted an inborn love of sport sufficient to make light of a hard day's tramp, and admitting that the size of the bag is not

always a true measure of the day's enjoyment, a bright autumn day spent among the haunts of this engaging game bird has its own peculiar fascination. Even should the birds prove more wary and sagacious than yourself (a circumstance by no means impossible), still a visit to their haunts is well worth while—for the sake of broad open views of hill and dale; for the sake of sequestered vales such as the sylvan god Faunus, *Nympharum fugientum amator*, might have sought out wherein to 'hide him from day's garish eye'; for the sake of meadows enamelled with brimming chalices of the red-veined Indian cup, and woodland paths where autumn has scattered its bountiful largesse of colour; and for the sake of the dusk shade where, amid the trickling coolness of mossy springs, banks of sere brown and bleached pale gold ferns, making twilight with lush tangles of alders, load the air with a fragrance sweeter than that of the many coloured blossoms of summer.

In the backwoods settlements of Nova Scotia one often falls in with old clearings which are seldom without their brood or two of cock. Here invading clumps of alders, like light infantry thrown out by the wilderness to retake its vanquished territory, furnish covert which the woodcock loves best of all, beneath which the deep rich soil is full of choice angworms and fat larvae of May chafers.

Such spots the birds commonly make for when they arrive towards the end of March, while yet the skirts of winter lie on the landscape. Before the nipping frosty weather is yet altogether done with, there usually come a few bright days when great white-bosomed clouds drive slowly across the blue vault before a gentle west wind, which flushes with delicate rose the bursting sheaths of the swelling maple buds. All the forest streams are loosened and the air is full of the gurgle of running waters, as the last remnants of the snow are vanishing under the touch of the spring sunshine. There is as yet no thought of listening for the strain of linnet or song-sparrow, or even for the cheery song of the robin (red-breasted thrush). The earliest migrant to arrive, the last to depart, the woodcock, hastening to make the most of the short breeding season, may now be seen running along the borders of the warm springs, or a hasty view may be caught of its glimmering brown wings in the dusk of the evening twilight.

In the daytime the bird is seldom seen unless disturbed with dogs, but at the arrival of dusk it suddenly becomes all activity. Darting athwart the pale clearness of the vernal sky, it may now be watched floating in moth-like flight over the briary tangles of alder coppice, or, with a curious twittering, flitting from the dry upland coverts across the fields towards its wet feeding grounds in adjacent

meadows. Occasionally it may be seen out of sheer joy and sportiveness slanting its body strangely sideways, so that one wing appears pointing skywards and the other earthwards, as it sails through the air in a swift oblique descent to some low-lying alder brake.

Old clearings often afford grand sport during the late autumn. Here one can enjoy the *ne plus ultra* of cock shooting. Here are no dense thickets that must be fought through somehow before one can meet the game, but the dogs may be sent into the coverts while the guns take their chances outside. Fair straight-away shots



THE AMERICAN WOODCOCK
(*Ptilomela minor*).

in the open as the birds dash out this way or that render cock shooting under such conditions a fascinating and enthralling sport.

These dry clearings are further useful in affording the cock their favourite breeding places. Failing these, the birds will select the dry slope of some sparsely wooded hillside abutting some moist tract occupied by alders, moose wood, or young maples. At all seasons of the year the cock requires soft soil which may readily yield to the probings of its long bill. No sign of the presence of cock is more welcome than their fresh 'borings', sometimes in a straight row, but more often in the form of a semicircle, in muddy

spots alongside the delicate prints of their somewhat long and slender pink feet.

It is a vastly interesting sight to watch a feeding bird. The point of the bill is thrust into the earth until buried to the base. Then for a few seconds the bird keeps perfectly still as if listening, while the great round eyes seem to assume a very knowing look. Perhaps some slight movement in the earth has betrayed the spot where an earthworm is lurking. The bill is quickly withdrawn, and instantly a dexterous thrust reaches the luckless worm, which is drawn to daylight and quickly devoured. That the woodcock has an incredibly voracious appetite and a marvellously rapid digestion are facts that have been amply proved. A bird in captivity has been known to consume more than its own weight of angleworms within twenty-four hours.

Incubation occupies about twenty days. The eggs are four and sometimes five in number, somewhat pear-shaped, of a light buff colour, spotted with irregular markings of black and maroon, and streaked with pale grey. The mother bird collects a few dry leaves together in a slight depression of the ground, and strews others about this rude nest, in order to make it a difficult matter to detect her presence while sitting. One's attention may be drawn to the exact spot not fifteen feet distant, and yet one may be unable to distinguish her from a parcel of brown withered leaves, until at length one perchance discovers the gleam of the prominent liquid hazel eye. When at length the bird is flushed she will feign lameness, fly heavily with legs dropped, and attempt the same feints as the grouse tribe in order to lead away the intruder from her eggs or young.

If not disturbed, so soon as the young brood is able to fly the old cock leads them away to the alder swamps, or beneath the shrubbery which edges some sluggish stream.

The female is greatly attached to her nest, and both parents prove their devotion by occasionally carrying off their callow offspring held between the downy thighs, while the long bill presses the precious burden gently to the breast. Gilbert White found it difficult to believe Scopoli when he asserted of the European woodcock that *pullos rostro portat fugiens ab hoste*, but the habit of carrying their young away from danger is undoubtedly common to both species.

Instances of touching parental devotion have occasionally come under the notice of the writer. Once when a farmer was improving the dry weather of an early spring to burn his meadows, from one of the piles of brush collected for burning, after fire had been applied, a woodcock was observed to issue, and after flitting

in evident distress round and round the blaze, the bird at length plunged into the midst of the flames, making a funeral pyre for herself and four fledglings which were afterwards discovered burnt to a cinder.

On another occasion a farmer, while harrowing a piece of newly burned ground reclaimed from the forest with a rude harrow made of maple branches, passed over a woodcock on her eggs. Two of these were broken. It certainly was a most extraordinary act of courage on the part of the bird to refuse to rise while the horses were almost trampling her body and the brush harrow actually sweeping over it.



AMERICAN WOODCOCK ON HER EGGS.

There is always a certain amount of mystery about nocturnal or crepuscular birds which justifies an unusual interest in their habits. A dry, level, open space fringed with timber is a favourable spot for listening to the peculiar night song with which the woodcock woos his mate. First arises a curious 'cluck-cluck' from some patch of scrub near the edge of the wood, where the little owl-like bird is strutting like a miniature turkey cock, jetting out his white-tipped tail like a lady's fan. Suddenly a dark form springs high in the air, quickly rising above the tops of the tallest trees. Up, up, the bird soars like the lark, all the while 'pouring forth a flood of rapture most divine'. One single note with ever-increasing intensity and fervour passes from a sweet warbling at length into a quick, ecstatic, tumultuous burst of song. This he continues for

some length of time, then suddenly pitches downward in a zigzag flight, and drops into cover alongside his mate. He had soared perhaps to a height of two hundred yards, entralling the ear with a music that was difficult to credit to a bird whose usual deportment seems to convey a suggestion of deep-rooted melancholy.

As compared with his European representative, the American woodcock is a small bird, weighing from five to nine ounces, the female usually exceeding the weight of the male by nearly two ounces. It is eleven or twelve inches in length, and of this the bill takes up from two and a half to three inches. Instead of having the underneath part of the body barred with dusky waved lines, the plumage below is a rich buffish brown, passing into paler tints on breasts and neck, while the flecks of sooty black on the dark tawny mottled back correspond so closely with the fallen foliage and occasional patches of bare soil that many a time the observer mistakes the bird for a little bunch of withered autumn leaves, until from beneath his feet he springs with a sharp rattling sound, and goes off in a blundering, inaccurate course, striking against the thick boughs in his hurried flight.

The whole of the upper surface of head and body is marked with colour bands and charming ocellated spots in varied shades of soft brown, such as so enhance the beauty of the moth tribe. Apart from certain occasional extreme aberrations of colour, such as half or fully developed albinism, there is extremely little variation to be observed in the plumage. In this respect, as well as in its greater fondness for warm climate in winter, the American bird offers a distinct contrast to its European cousin.

By the first week of August the young of the second hatching are strong on the wing, and soon afterwards the birds nearly all disappear from their usual haunts. In September they once more collect in good condition and plumage. Whether meanwhile a southward migratory movement has occurred, or whether the birds have been hiding away in the recesses of the woods to undergo their moulting, are contrary opinions which divide the sporting fraternity.

When the late autumn arrives, and the white frosty October moon is bringing down fresh flights of birds from the north, the woodcock does not return to precisely the same feeding grounds which it prefers during the summer season.

Instead of haunting moist alder brakes, it now often chooses some dry hillside gently sloping to the west or south, covered sparsely with graceful young juniper trees with foliage now changed to a pale grown gold. In such warm leas and sunny exposures it loves to cuddle in the slanting rays of the late afternoon sun, and sometimes lies so close to the dogs that it almost has to be 'kicked up'

in front of the barrels. These later haunts resemble good trout pools or favourite 'seats' of salmon, in that you may make your bag one day, and perhaps go back the next to find them peopled with fresh tenants; whereas when you have once thoroughly shot out an alder covert in the early part of the season it is utterly useless to try it again until at least some length of time has elapsed.

The migratory movements of the woodcock are regulated by the moon. Severe storms occurring during the height of the migration often cause great destruction. A snowstorm occurred in February, 1899, in South Carolina which killed many thousands of cock, and left other thousands so helpless and bewildered that they fell an easy prey to foxes and hawks, as well as to nefarious pot-



YOUNG BROOD OF COCK.

hunters. It is sad to relate that many birds perish annually by dashing against the wires of the telegraph lines, which are usually set up at the exact height of their flight.

One of the chief charms of carrying the gun after 'the little red woodcock', say amid such charming environment as the smiling intervale scenery of long fertile valleys like those of the Musquodobit or Annapolis, for which Nova Scotia is so justly famous, is that one can enjoy the glorious autumn weather to perfection when tramping along the sheltered woodland paths and over the breezy hills. If some find the autumn a melancholy season, to the shooting man the face of nature never appears more smiling and gay. To be a successful cock shooter, not only must a man be a good shot, but he must

be well up in the habits of the birds. There is no experienced game-keeper available to post him at a coveted corner where the only requisite is very straight powder. He has to learn, usually unaided, to distinguish the coverts which hold cock year after year from



A COVERT IN THE AUTHOR'S GROUNDS, RIVER BANK, LITTLE SALMON RIVER,
HALIFAX, N.S.
POINTER WORKING ON WARM SCENT.

those equally likely in appearance which never hold a single bird. A good knowledge of the ground is indispensable, and cannot be had except at the price of many a hard tramp.

The very best shooting is often just previously to the final departure. One may visit nine coverts and get almost nothing, for at this time the cock are here to-day and gone to-morrow. Yet in the tenth the happy sportsman may meet a score or so of birds which in the depth of the previous night watches have dropped like tiny little rockets from a great height into its shelter. They may be big-throated nine-ounce specimens from the fat alluvial lands of Tantramar, or they may be dwarfed birds with short strong wings from the north shore of the Bay of Chaleur, where plenty of their favourite annelid diet has for some reason been hard to find; for different flights of birds differ in size almost as much relatively as the cob differs from the Clydesdale carthorse. Yet, whether or

not he falls in with a big flight of birds small and stocky in body, or a score or so of more largely developed morsels of tender flesh, during the late autumn the thing is at all times possible, and that is enough to keep up the spirits of your born cock shooter.

Successful sport may be had in a great variety of covert. Occasionally, very late in the season, when flights of birds are assembled near the seacoast and in the neighbouring meadows and low-lying pasture lands, just previously to their final migration towards winter quarters, they may be shot on a sunny morning after a severe night's frost in perfectly open ground, or at least in such slight covert as is offered by frost-bitten bracken. On such occasions the birds are apt to be rather listless and to drop again when flushed at no great distance away. Instances of open shooting may often thus occur in the south-west corner of the peninsula of Nova Scotia, in the counties of Digby and Yarmouth, where it sometimes happens that the final flight of birds does not get away until early in December, after a few inches of snow have whitened the ground.

Perhaps an infallible find for a woodcock family is where some little mountain brook comes tumbling down to a dead water over a gentle declivity, where, as it flows on, here and there a flat marsh is formed. In this secluded marsh the tinkling brooklet saunters



DRAWING CLOSE UP TO SCENT.

and stops round the natural vegetation of a hillside marsh, which is alder brake. Round the roots of the alders it piles up soft mud, and in the mud feed many earthworms on the decaying vegetable matter. Such a spot is the natural home of the woodcock.

Sometimes one can take a post commanding with his gun the whole of a woodcock covert. It is not, however, always easy to hit a bird which appears above the crisp brown leaves of the sapless shrubbery for only an instant, describing a curve that irresistibly reminds one of the leap of a salmon as it immediately pitches to earth again. Very trying is this kind of shooting to a young and inexperienced dog, for out of his master's sight he often falls into the incurably bad habit of flushing the bird himself, instead of waiting until his owner either walks the bird up or else throws in a well-aimed missile to start it on its way.



ENTERING A COVERT.

In many coverts it is often necessary to plunge into the thick of the tangle. One has to listen carefully to the tiny bells attached to the collars of his dogs. Suddenly there is silence. One cannot see the dogs, but guesses where Blaze is backing Rex, and makes a dash towards the spot. Yes, there are the faithful fellows, each rigid as a piece of sculpture! But there is the fire of intense life in their glistening eyes, and Rex has one paw lifted as if he were powerless to move it ever again.

A fat old cock, that perchance has fed all the summer in this network of light and shade, is now perhaps only ten feet or maybe only ten inches in front of his keen nostrils. A step or two forward,

and, as some dry stick breaks beneath the foot, up springs your game at length with a startled rattle. You toss your gun to the shoulder, aim at a vanishing brown shadow among the matted branches. Down comes a mist of falling débris of splintered twigs and shredded foliage. Perhaps you see a few floating downy feathers, and fancy you have listened to a fall of something heavier on the ground. At any rate you think it worth while to call up Rex from where he has dropped to shot, and you send him in to retrieve; 'Rex—seek dead—Rex—fetch!' Already you have marked his eager gaze fixed on the spot where you hope the bird lies dead. Without any hesitation he obeys, and soon a tender downy body



POINTER RETRIEVING WOODCOCK.

is transferred gingerly from his mouth to the palm of your hand. You reward him with a caress and a 'Good dog!' and are pleased to note the air of triumph and pleasure at the success of his stealthy cat-like stalk, his staunch point, and the certain proof afforded of the perfect nose.

A thorough cock dog is invaluable, and is often not to be procured for love or money. Many shoot cock over retrieving spaniels; but the fatal objection to these otherwise intelligent dogs is that they cannot be cured of their inveterate habit of chasing the common little brown hare, and though keen and painstaking they are hopelessly slow. Setters are preferable on account of their toughness.



APT PUPILS AT REHEARSAL.

The chief objection to the use of pointers lies in the inability of their legs and bodies to withstand the wear and tear of the thickets, especially late in the season when the limbs and sprays are often coated with ice and rime.

The woodcock is protected against the ubiquitous farmer's boy by the necessity of following it with well-broken dogs, and also on account of its elusive habits. It requires quicker shooting than the youth can command to stop a bird soaring away with sharp whirring whistle far above the tree-tops; nor is it at all easy exactly to mark down when it settles suddenly with a curious backward jerking of the body and a strange upward flip of the wings, carrying it a little distance from where it appears to go down.

The woodcock is so little known to the ordinary American rustic that even old men see the birds at close quarters usually for the first time in the sportsman's bag. In some remote backwoods settlements the farmers know him as the 'whistling red snipe', 'bog-sucker', 'night partridge', or 'big-headed snipe', while the right name of the bird they give to the large scarlet-crested woodpecker.

Five or six brace of cock a day, with perhaps a couple of brace of ruffed grouse and as many snipe, is considered a very fair bag for

two guns in a day's shooting in Eastern Canada. There is great pleasure in knowing that one owes whatever success he may have enjoyed entirely to his own skill and to the accomplishments of his canine friends. His glory has not been earned by mere luck.

It is much to be regretted that the woodcock is exposed to ruthless persecution when massed during the depth of the Northern winter within the borders of the South Atlantic and Gulf States. Praiseworthy efforts are being made to avert its still further diminution by arousing public opinion in America against wanton and excessive destruction.

Out of the nine Southern States within whose borders the woodcock retire, seven—namely, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas—give the birds absolutely no protection whatever; all the winter long, from the arrival in the fall until the departure in the spring, they are killed without mercy, and none prohibits their shipment to the markets of the Northern cities. The two other States, Alabama and South Carolina, while granting a fair measure of protection, still do not cut off the spring shooting.

Hence it has happened that in many localities in the Northern States where twenty-five years ago a fair shot with a good dog could secure forty or fifty birds in a day's sport, it is doubtful if 10 per cent. of the former bag could be obtained to-day. Even in the most



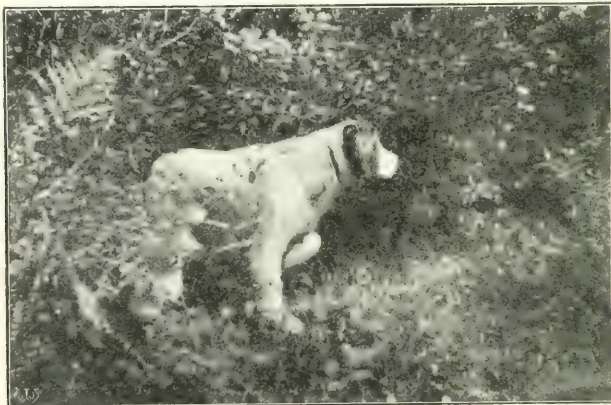
MIDDAY REST.



EXERCISING IN WINTER.

favoured localities the decrease within the past twenty years has been 50 to 60 per cent.¹ In the same interval the birds have certainly not diminished in Ontario or Eastern Canada in any degree approaching this striking decline.

Fifty years ago the feathered hosts of the passenger pigeon swarmed 'in numbers numberless' over the temperate regions



SETTER POINTING A COCK

¹ *Vide* Report Agricultural Department, U.S. Biological Survey, by A. K. Fisher, 1901, Washington, U.S.A.

of Eastern North America. To-day this bird is practically extinct. Probably no bird is less like the fleet passenger pigeon than the little owlet-like woodcock; yet the lack of protection against the too heavy hand of man may prove as fatal in the one case as it has done in the other, and may ultimately deprive America of one of the finest game birds that ever graced a covert.

Note.—I consider W. W. Greener's 12- or 16-bore cylinder, or else slightly choked barrels, 24-inch barrel, weighing in the vicinity of six pounds, the most useful and satisfactory gun for use in Canada for cock and snipe shooting; for duck and shore-bird, curlew, and plover shooting Greener's 12-bore, 26-inch barrels (the left slightly choked) and for grouse shooting Greener's 10-bore the best.



AUTUMN SNIPE SHOOTING — BIRDS HERE LATELY.

XII

SNIPE SHOOTING

THE snipe is as nearly cosmopolitan as a bird well can be, for he is found scattered broadcast over the two hemispheres, demanding only in return for his presence moist feeding grounds of ample dimensions.

The ' scaipe-scaipe ', as he suddenly rises quick as a flash from nowhere in particular, is a familiar note along the low marshy levels of Australia, the dyked lands of Holland, the river bottoms of California, and the vast sloughs of Central Asia. He draws the fire of the home-sick British subaltern in the rice fields of India, and is the chief solace of the shooting-man in the Mississippi Valley and the Grand Prairie of Illinois. He dances away unharmed from the trembling aim of the tyro in the bog lands of Ireland ; he pierces far into the bleak tundra of the arctic circle ; he gives life to the sunny savannahs which border the Mexican Gulf, while in the delicious Canadian autumn weather he furnishes the chief ingredient of the very respectable ' mixed bag ' which may be picked up in the course of a long day's tramp across country.

While the American woodcock is sharply differentiated from the European species, nothing short of the tyranny of science can compel the casual observer to admit that the English and the American snipe are sub-specifically distinct, so much alike are they in

every respect save for the trifling distinction that the Wilson (American) snipe rejoices in sixteen tail feathers while the English is strictly limited to the number of fourteen.

Another slight distinction lies in the fact that the Wilson snipe, frequently while breeding, and at other times occasionally, will perch on the branch of a tree, a dead stump, or on a rail fence. This habit the European snipe has never acquired. In the course of opportunities of observation extending over a score of years I have seen the Wilson snipe alighting thus in the shooting season only on three several occasions, twice on the upper pole of the Canadian famous 'snake' fence, and once on the branches of a black spruce. This shade of difference therefore appears somewhat unsubstantial.

The English snipe, averaging upwards of four ounces, is perhaps an ounce heavier than his American cousin. Yet one occasionally meets a flight of Wilson snipe, doubtless hailing from some peculiarly rich dyke lands, which run from five to six ounces apiece.

The dietary of the Wilson snipe ranges from earthworms to larvae of ants and beetles, and even to newts. During an autumn of exceptional drought I once disturbed a large number of both cock and snipe feeding in the wet depressions of the bed of a pond nearly dried up completely, which held no end of caddis larvae and wriggling masses of tadpoles. The birds resorted hither evening after evening, regaling themselves on the rich repast until the supply finally became entirely exhausted.

The bill of the snipe is an extraordinary weapon, flexible only under very strong pressure, yet capable of entering fairly stiff soil. It is easy to see how many country folk, struck by the sight of these birds probing in muddy places, might hastily conclude that they, as well as their blood relations the woodcock, got their living by suction.

That Byron gave credence to this popular error is evident from his well-known lines :—

For man is a carnivorous production,
And must have meals, at least one meal a day,
He cannot live like woodcocks upon suction.

But then the poet was confessedly weak in ornithology, as he readily acknowledged, when in deference to the views of an eminent naturalist he altered his fine line on the fall of Napoleon at Waterloo from 'Then tore with bloody beak the fatal plain', to 'Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain'. This he claimed if better ornithology, was also better poetry.

That snipe are very sharp of hearing I can verify from my own experience. A fringe of alder coppice at the edge of a snipe marsh

was reached rather late on three or four successive evenings, and the dogs turned into the covert with the little bells attached to their collars as usual. On the second and each subsequent evening all the snipe were seen to get up in a body and leave the marsh while the bells were tinkling at a long distance away. The cock, however, took no notice whatever of this music even when quite close at hand.

The rare intelligence shown by the snipe in setting a broken leg has often been commented on. Some years ago an instance came under my notice. The limb had been broken almost at the middle joint. The most skilful surgery would not have set the bone in better shape. A ligament of exceedingly fine fibre had been tightly wound round the fracture, and the whole was coated over by a gelatinous transparent substance which resembled a veneer of shellac varnish.

The great mass of American snipe breed in the vast stretches of marsh lands which extend over so large a portion of the northern part of the continent. Many, however, rear their young in the sheltered meadow lands of Maine, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the province of Quebec. These move slowly southwards as soon as the severe frosts set in, and afterwards are overtaken by the bigger flights from the north. Large bodies winter in the Gulf States, whence their northward migration begins about the 1st of February. By the 1st of March they have reached the Carolinas and Virginia. They cross into Canada early in April.

Unfortunately in most States these birds have little or no protection under the law, and hence are shot in season or out of season with heartless indifference. The result of this unwise destruction, coupled with the constant reclaiming of marsh lands, would tend more seriously to diminish their numbers were it not for the inaccessible character of their breeding range—far in the interior of the vast northern solitude where man in his endless search for the means of subsistence seldom or never penetrates.

The province of Quebec with its vast stretches of marsh levels, broadly bordering both sides of the noble St. Lawrence; the dry-dyked areas at the edge of the great Bay of Fundy, where a man can shoot snipe in his slippers without wetting his feet; the celebrated marsh lands of the broad Tantramar, famed for its romantic history, afford noted snipe grounds. One half of New Brunswick is rocky and sterile or else covered with dense forest. The other half is highly cultivated, valley and dale, with smiling orchards, having here and there neglected strips of moist waste lands, which, while they daunt the farmer, are the delight of the sportsman. Nova Scotia possesses every variety of soil, and all requisites suitable

for snipe life. The rich alluvial meadows of such noble streams as the Annapolis, Stewiacke and Musquodoboit rivers have an irresistible charm for this vagrant game bird. Here the long interval valleys, with deep soil productive of excellent pasture, are ornamented with the graceful pendulous foliage of tall elm trees which the settlers agree in sparing. Their tall trunks, adorned with rich festoons of matted foliage like classic columns draped for some great occasion, much enhance the natural charm of the scenery.

The snipe shooter may bait his horse at almost any of the big grey barns along the roadside, and be hospitably welcomed at the comfortable white homesteads nestling amid their luxuriant apple orchards.

The very best time for snipe shooting in Canada is when the northern birds are daily arriving. This usually happens during the last fortnight of October. Then throughout the low-lying marsh land of Lower Canada 'resounds the frequent gun', and the sportsman enjoys the best days in his calendar.

Somewhere near mid-October, should a fine warm morning succeed two or three days of a stiff nor'wester, by all means *carpe diem*. Happy man who is now free to order out his horse and trap and leave behind, *fumum strepitumque*—the smoke and noise brooding over the care-worn city. One need not travel many miles before he arrives at some low-lying meadows where the ground has been largely given up to its own devices, and is being slowly encroached upon by luxuriant alder coppice. Your dogs at this season may be up against birds lying close to the sward at almost every turn.

A little brook will usually be found, sunk perhaps a few feet below the level of the meadow, in places eating deeply into the thick layers of deep rich soil. There are one or two bends in the channel—your faithful old setter knows them as well as you do—which in snipe season are absolutely never without birds, and you are so well prepared for their exit at these points that you almost feel ashamed of taking what seems to you an undue advantage of your knowledge of their whereabouts.

The early shooting, however, is often not to be despised. Say that it is the 1st of September, the opening of the shooting season. It is quite possible that the breeding snipe may not have as yet been disturbed, for few rustics have powder to waste on a bird which generally 'snaps its fingers', so to speak, at their efforts for its discomfiture. These will be found fat and lazy from their epicurean habits and freedom from pursuit, and allow a near approach before taking wing.

It is well worth while to study at all times the habits and haunts

of the snipe, which vary with changing atmospheric conditions. A thorough knowledge in this regard will often enable one sportsman to fill his bag while another may be making up his mind that every single snipe has fled the country. It often happens, for example, that in the chilly nipping weather of late autumn, the ordinary haunts of snipe in the open may be gone over in vain, and it will be found that the birds have betaken themselves to the haunts of their near relatives the woodcock, amid alder coppice and the cover of sapling growths of beech or maple.

It is not generally known that resident snipe frequently have alternative resorts. Should one find a meadow covered with fresh markings indicating the recent presence of the birds, yet find them absent, carefully examine the surrounding land. Possibly back of that belt of dark firs cresting yonder slope one may be surprised to discover a sheltered little bit of marsh of whose existence you had never dreamed before, where the missing birds hide away in the daytime. Such a bit I lately discovered through which flashed a trickling rill bordered by rank sedges and bunches of royal and oak ferns, where the birds which I could not find on a neighbouring marsh were hid away in safe seclusion.

Many a bird the experienced gunner will pick up while lying low on some raw and gusty day. Suddenly a snipe will be seen to spring from the grass as if loosed from a catapult. Skirring away over the rushy levels, zigzagging in a wild reckless mood, away he goes, until the eye vainly essays to follow his amazing aerial convolutions. As he watches, the little bird becomes once again a visible speck in the grey sky, whirling hither and thither as if alarmed at each turn by confronting some fearful apparition, or as if striving strenuously with some overmastering temptation against his better judgment. Suddenly, however, their resolute mood passes; the bird has now a definite idea of the direction he wishes to travel. He pitches down within a few feet of the place whence he had been flushed, doubtless while regaling himself on some peculiarly rich repast. On such occasions especially, his mode of alighting may be studied to advantage. The bird just before touching earth raises both wings pointing skyward, makes a short turn, then, with a sudden jerk, pitches down backwards. Snipe often appear to alight when they begin a low skimming flight close to the ground, and bewilder the novice, who thinks that he has marked them down with exactness. Nevertheless, unless one has witnessed this peculiar wing motion and jerking of the body in the air, he may rest assured his bird has not alighted.

Snipe, like plover, collect in a large company at times when their ordinary feeding grounds are dried up, or happen to be inundated

or ruined from some other cause. The whole mass will sally forth, apparently looking for new pastures. I have seen a large body arrive thus at the shore of a sedge-grown lake. They wheeled round and round, détaching one squad here and another there, as the ground invited, until all had finally settled to the number of several hundreds.

A good dog for snipe shooting is not so difficult to obtain as for cock shooting, which is done in thick coverts. The dog *par excellence* for snipe shooting is a well-broken retrieving setter. It is always a great convenience to have a retriever when snipe shooting, for without considerable practice it is not easy to mark down the dead bird so that you can walk directly to it, a feat still more difficult when several birds rise together and you are lucky enough to get a right and left. This pleasing consummation is more often attained in snipe shooting than in any other wild shooting in Canada.

The hairy body and limbs of the setter enables him to stand the cold water of the marshes much better than the more delicate pointer. One man can do better with a brace of dogs in the field. There is a great deal of pleasure in watching a pair of dogs accustomed to work and live together. A brace of dogs will answer equally well for two guns. Although often jealous of each other, good dogs will make their every move subservient to the interests of their master, and seem to understand and take as deep an interest in the sport as the human biped who owns them.

All open meadows are, of course, much exposed to the wind, and must invariably be shot 'down wind'—reversing the usual order of things in shooting. It is the habit of the snipe to rise against the wind, and by advancing on them with the wind at your back they are forced to fly towards you for a little distance, and give closer and easier shots to the right or the left than if approached in the ordinary manner. If you are not blessed with a dog which will properly quarter the ground, working with nose up wind, and crossing and recrossing every thirty or forty yards, you may find it difficult to make a good bag on a very windy day, and in this case had better give the dog the advantage of 'the wind in his nose'.

If your dog, however, understands his business, the birds will be less likely to rise out of distance; and even if he runs in upon an odd one now and then, on the whole you will fare better than by a dead beat 'in the eye of the wind'. Somehow it is a fact that although snipe must more distinctly hear you coming towards them down-wind, they will crouch and lie closer than when you are beating your way towards them up-wind.

When preparing for their autumn migrations snipe appear to

wait for an evening which exactly suits them—an evening usually with a gentle east wind, not by any means brisk, bearing on their quarter—to speak in nautical phrase. There must be bright moonlight—preferably the clear frosty rays of the large round October or ‘hunters’ moon’; the full orb of *Wegāwegoos* in the Indian tongue, i.e. the moon of the fat month—when game is at its prime. Snipe are essentially nocturnal birds, and make all their long voyages, and usually their casual trips as well, from feeding grounds to retired meadows and back again, between sunset and sunrise.

In their general grand migratory flight they are occasionally known by some mischance to miss a moon, and may thus be a whole month late and consequently suffer severely from bitter cold and snowstorms. One backward spring quite a body arrived a month before their due time, and doubtless many perished of starvation. When fairly started on their long voyage of migration, they soar to a vast height, and strike out in the thin atmosphere of their high aerial plane at a pace which has been estimated at upwards of sixty miles an hour. I have seen what looked like a waving rope in the air, which, by the aid of powerful glasses, was found to be a large body of arriving snipe seen against the dim greyness of the autumn sky. While it remains true that the snipe seems mostly to rejoice in the society of its kind, on occasion it can be a solitary bird enough, and I once got on very familiar terms with a lone bird, which took up its quarters near a warm spring quite close to my country residence, which I forbore to fire at, only too glad of this fine opportunity of observing at close quarters the habits of so shy and interesting a creature. This snipe remained, strange to say, long after his companions had left for a warmer temperature. The last day I saw him was in mid-December, when the heavy snows had cut down his feeding ground to a few square feet, and he kept restlessly on the wing, in short circular flights, for several successive hours.

In the spring-time, and occasionally during the progress of the summer, the male snipe is in the habit of mounting to a considerable height above his favourite meadows, and darting downward suddenly with great velocity, making at each descent a low tremulous and musical vibration, which is a good sound to listen to. The passions of love and rivalry are finding their expression in graceful air dances and sonorous wing beatings, not as in the case of most birds by vocal strains, but by instrumental music which ‘takes the soul of these wild wastes with joy’. There are few sounds more fascinating to the lover of the open than the wing music of the breeding snipe, which once heard can never be mistaken for any other sound in nature’s realm. The sound kindles a train of sug-

gestions ; hints of the near approach of the joys and freedom of summer, for the day of the arrival of the snipe seems to unquestionably announce the finish of the gloomy and taciturn reign of the stern winter. The sound is produced by the fact that the bird by some unexplained muscular action turns edgewise as he drops plumb through the air. He is seen to soar almost out of sight, where he disports himself for hours in mid-ether, sailing round and round in small circles, and at times letting himself drop fifty feet or more, before he again mounts on the 'wing'.

It is during these perpendicular descents that this strange and powerful hum is produced which may be heard at a great distance. 'In their aerial dance,' Audubon says, 'each seem to call up another by the sound when sporting together aloft, whirling round each other with extreme velocity and dancing as it were to their own music.'

In conclusion it may be said that snipe shooting is pursued in Canada in the glorious days for which the Canadian autumn is so justly noted. Nature does nothing here by halves, and when she sets out to give you a golden 'Indian summer' day, she succeeds so well that colours seem to be brought out on hill and valley never seen at other times ; the sky seems of a deeper and more tender blue, the water more pellucid, and the whole face of nature seems to be marvellously brightened by the exceptional purity and brilliance of the autumn atmosphere.

XIII

IN THE HAUNTS OF THE CANADA GOOSE

Hawnk! honk! and for'ard to the Nor'ad, is the trumpet tone;
What goose can lag, or feather flag, or break the goodly cone!
Hawnk! onward to the cool blue lakes where lie our safe love-bowers;
No stop, no drop of ocean brine, near stool or hassock hoary,
Our travelling watchword is 'Our mates, our goslings and our glory!'
Symsonia and Labrador for us are crown'd with flowers,
And not a breast on wave shall rest until that Heaven is ours.
Hawnk! hawnk! E—e hawnk!

FRANK FORESTER.

WHEN the first cool blasts of the autumn wind give warning of the approach of winter with its icy fetters, a marvellous stream of feathered life sallies forth from the bleak, rock-bound fiords of Labrador and Baffin's Land, setting southwards towards the more congenial coasts of Florida and the Carolinas. This stream, composed mainly of immense flights of eiders and several varieties of scoters, passes in the early morning and the late afternoon from headland to headland of the Atlantic seaboard, pausing during the mid hours of the day, to become a dark border of feathers on the edge of the ocean. An uninterrupted line of several miles may often be met with rising and falling, diving and disporting, on the long rollers rushing to the shore over sunken ledges, peopled with innumerable shellfish. The spectator is astounded to observe, day after day for several weeks, countless flocks sweeping past in rapid succession, low over the water, each moving in regular line, as if animated by one mind, defiling past as if the whole grand army of sea-fowl were having a field-day. From many a rocky ledge and tossing boat along the deeply indented seacoast of Nova Scotia flash after flash salutes their ranks from long ducking guns with queer buccaneer stocks held by hardy fishermen in the intervals of fishing.

Simultaneously there is another migration going on of nobler wild fowl, brant and geese, vegetarian feeders, void of the fishy flavour of their shellfish-eating cousins, hence prized by the sportsman and epicure.

These also come from the regions of the polar bear and iceberg,

from breeding places on quaking bogs and inland peat beds, where they have reared their young amid the wild solitudes which only the frigid zone affords. They differ from the fish eaters in that they take a lofty plane of flight, and a direct cross-country course, not following the coast-line. Most wing their way direct to the sunny savannahs of the South, but some call occasional halts for a bivouac at favourite feeding places on their route ; becoming objects of hot pursuit on the Atlantic bays, where they are shot at from ' sink boxes ' over decoys ; on the stubble of Nebraska cornfields, where they are destroyed from the ambush of sandpits ; and on the sand-bars of the Mississippi, where they are stalked from the stealthy scull-boat.



A MARVELLOUS STREAM OF FEATHERED LIFE.

They will run the same gauntlet of foes when on their return voyage in the spring ; over plains and mountains still clad in snow ; over ice-bound lakes and rivers, an imperious instinct of making their breeding haunts inaccessible to enemies drives them on clanging pinions back to the stern North again ; their welcome ' ah-hunk ' saluting the ear, the first announcement of the finish of winter's reign, and their thin aerial line the first prophecy of the advent of spring days to the Canadians.

So fond are these fowls of the Arctic Zone, that it has been suggested they may have originated around the North Pole when that region enjoyed a temperate or tropical climate, as stated by geologists, but were forced southwards by the ice-cap of the

glacial period ; as it gradually receded following back, returning to breed as near as possible to the old location at the edge of the glaciers.

One of their favourite halting places is an immense shallow bay on the coast of Northern New Brunswick. More exactly speaking, it is a tranquil lagoon, into which empties an ample river noted for its sea-trout. It is changed by the ebb of the tide into a veritable prairie of bronze sea-grasses intersected by a winding creek through which the tide rushes like a rapid river. A narrow strip of sand, with undulating sandhills in the form of snowdrifts, separates its quiet waters from the tumbling surf of the Atlantic, and forms a shining shield to fend off the shock of the white ocean breakers racing to its strand.

Both bay and river bear one of those picturesque Indian names that, lingering on many a river, mountain, and headland, will perpetuate the memory of the red man long after his feeble race has melted away.

These simple children of nature thus recognized the fact that both are inseparable, that a description of the bay of necessity includes the river. For does not the river lure hither the black bass, the sea-trout, the aristocratic salmon—the support of the fishermen?—and, best of all, swarming schools of smelts, which in winter are pulled up through cuttings in the ice, one draught of the net sometimes capturing a ton of these bright, silvery, slippery, quivering little fishes, pulled up as from some mysterious subterranean retreat? Does not the brackish element made by the 'sea-change' of its waters nourish acres of luxuriant sea grasses which draw hither thousands of geese and brant?

Hence it should be described how many a mile behind the long stretch of evergreen trees, which form the background to the few fishermen's huts dotting the white beach, it issues from the distant cloud-like outline of blue hills, the nursery of several noble streams ; how it comes from the homes of the beaver, moose and caribou ; through a region of mossy silver birches, elms, and sugar maples ; passes the base of many a bleak, bear-haunted mountain ; sometimes placidly, gently, falls for miles like a mirror set sloping on Nature's breast ; again roars hoarsely through gorges cleft in ancient Laurentian rocks ; plunges with delirious bound over rock precipices into dark, deep pools, kissed by drooping branches, haunted by monstrous greedy trout ; how its banks echo to the scream of the golden eagle and the fishhawk, the rattle of the kingfisher, the carpenter work of the big scarlet-headed woodpecker performed on giant hollow red pines, while over its highway there is a ceaseless whistling of the wings of ducks hurrying

to and fro along the estuary which the bay sends for many miles among the wooded hills to welcome its waters.

In the autumn, when the sportsman visits these scenes, he rejoices in the delicious light and air. The summer fogs are over, the atmosphere has grown transparent, the breeze, laden with ozone, is clear and bracing. An occasional bath of storm freshens the face of Nature. He will love to think afterwards of serene sunny mornings on the sands ; also of raw and gusty days, when waves of sombre hue dashed on the shore, while the shrill piping of the plover, the loud challenging of restless geese added an indescribable charm of wildness and desolateness, when combined



AN IMMENSE SHALLOW BAY—FISHERMEN WITH HARPOONED ALBACORE
IN THE FOREGROUND.

with the roar of the resounding sea. What keen delight it was to make a heap of slain victims, kindle a pile of driftwood, and listen to John's yarns while the kettle sang its familiar song and the air grew fragrant with the steaming tea ! What enthralling music was the cheery calling of new flocks of geese, arriving at a vast altitude, from the wintry, mysterious, distant North, while they wheeled to reconnoitre, hailing their well-fed comrades with unmistakable gladness ! They were like wearied travellers, tried and hungry, sighting a well-known inn where they intended to take their ease.

To be ready for the flight that is always stirring at the first

break of dawn, the sportsman, warmly clad, embarks on waters still reflecting the stars. By the time that shafts of pale yellow and rosy light herald the rising sun, and reveal the woods streaked with scarlet and yellow at the farther side of the bay, he should be in position. That means he should be extended in a 'sink box'¹ with his 10-bore Greener across his knees. Painted decoys, the counterfeit presentment of geese and brant done in wood, should float around him to the number of forty or fifty. The best guide of the bay, the trusty John, should have sculled the canoe to the sand-spit, and have concealed his person behind one of the ricks of salt hay frugally stacked for winter feeding. Then there will come shots of a certainty. See! There is an immense body of birds far up the bay. The rising tide, coupled with a fresh breeze that disturbs the water, is vexing them, as is evident from their peevish and querulous tones. Sooner or later they will rise and disperse. Presently some fisherman's sloop flying along the tortuous channel puts them up. Hark! There smites the ear a mighty rushing sound like the roar of falling waters produced by thousands of strong wings beating the air. A mixed multitude of myriads of brant and geese swarm in the air, giving vent to shrill calling notes. Streaming across the sky they resemble at first a cloud, then a swarm of bees.

The geese are discerned by their forming into single file, or else into flights wedge-shaped like the letter V. The leader often retires, and his place is taken by the next bird.

Brant form into larger flocks, often of over a hundred birds. The surest to decoy are lone birds, or else small flocks of three to a dozen. Some of the moving host are sure to drift within range.

It happens sometimes that a file of geese pass at such a height that the whole cheat becomes evident. As they take in the human form in ambush, they scold like a parcel of fishwives. Many flocks make feints at the decoys, but sheer off playfully. Some will pass on as if not seeing the decoys, and may be enticed back by careful imitative calling, a subdued clucking. At length there is sure to come, sweeping low over the water looming black, increasing in size with astonishing rapidity as they come on at the speed of fifty miles an hour, a flock of brant. They may wheel once or twice sportively, showing the white underneath their bodies, but are surely lured. Are they not quite certain that they have sighted comrades enjoying a breakfast of tender roots of sea grasses? Why should

¹ The 'sink box' used is an oblong box long enough to recline in comfortably. It is weighted down with rocks, or lead bars, to the level of the water, and steadied by means of canvas flaps on hinges. It is usually painted a dull grey.

they not share in the feast of fat things? The young birds among them give a pleasant indescribable twitter or chirrup—short, quick, jerky syllables of sounds—very cheery and sportive. They poise on the wing and come actually skimming over the decoys. Two barrels should now account for at least three or four birds; the remainder might give points to a homing pigeon in their speedy exit into space.

John brings up the canoe and gathers in the slain.

Sometimes the wounded give him a long chase, both brant and geese being given to the practice of submerging their bodies when pursued with only their bills above the surface. But John has the eye of a hawk for marking a bird that is hard hit. It is no uncommon thing for a goose or brant to fly off apparently unhurt, and, after a flight of several hundred yards, suddenly spread its wings, and keeping them set drop gently in the water, to fall over dead. It is unwise to seize a slightly wounded bird, for the formidable beak at the end of the supple neck and the spurs or knuckles of the wings can be used with tremendous effect. If these birds understood their collective power, they might revenge their wrongs by attacking and killing any single sportsman. As the tide advances more shots fall to the gun, but not all such easy work as described. The birds grow more wary as the day goes on, and the light gets more garish. Good marksmanship is called for to bring down a brant going before the wind, a black duck or widgeon fizzing past like a bullet. The increased difficulty, however, adds to the enjoyment of a successful performance.

When the flood tide fills the lagoon till it resembles a magnificent lake the shooting is over for the time being. John is hailed, a landing effected on the sand-bar, and luncheon cooked behind the shelter of a hayrick.

Then John discourses on birds. He says dark clothing is 'pizen' to them, and destroys all hope of success; that the brant go away first, but the geese often remain till the whole bay freezes solid, usually about Christmas; that in spring they remain till the middle of June, when the eggs are well developed; that brant eggs have never yet been beheld by mortal eye, though fabulous rewards are offered for them; that Indians decoy with bundles of eel grass stuck on sloping sticks. He mentions a curious method practised by Indians for taking gulls. Digging a pit in the sand, they covered it with poles some nine inches apart, over which they laid seaweeds and chopped fish. The man in ambush would drag down bird after bird that visited the bait without alarming the others.

John also says that the white throat patch, and the conspicuous white rumps of both brant and geese, assist the flocks greatly in

keeping together during thick and foggy weather, the conspicuous white markings fore and aft serving as useful recognition colours, supplementing vocal cries. John is good at yarns. I was wont to season his tall stories of carnage with several grains of salt, until the following experience befell me—the most impressive scene of bird life I ever witnessed. I never afterwards doubted John's stories of marvellous bags in days when the birds, wing-weary with some biting merciless snowstorm, put aside all caution and came on the decoys by battalions.

It was the month of November; John and I got out on the bay when a driving snowstorm came on, which turned to sleet and hail. The night had been so cold that we had to break sheet ice for 200 yards from shore to make the channel. It is needless to say we had the bay to ourselves. It was too rough to launch the sink box, so we dug a hole in the apex of a sand-pit and concealed the box in the sand. I had taken out sixty cartridges—twenty were, unfortunately, ruined by the wet. With the other forty I had shot thirty birds. Then commenced a scene the like of which I never expect to see again. The cruel storm seemed to drive away from the birds all sense of fear. They almost brushed my face with their wings. Then on either hand they commenced to settle. Company after company arrived, like some routed army rallying. Presently two vast armies of mixed geese and brant occupied sandpits to the right and left. They were cowed by the awful storm, and mostly silent, but at times a raucous clamour went through the whole vast host. The black necks of the Canada geese, with the white bar across the head, the smaller white ringed necks of the brant were uplifted in serried ranks, and their bead-like eyes peered out with pathetic resignation into the strife of the wind and waters and the pelting of the pitiless hail. For an hour I watched this wonderful spectacle. Then almost benumbed with the cold and wet we poled the canoe homewards among the wearied birds that were too listless to get out of our way.

While we have been idly spinning yarns beside the crackling flames, and pulling at our briar-roots, the tide has been busily pouring out the winding channels until the broad bay at last seems emptied and pumped out dry. Under the direct rays of the sun, rows of geese and brant, among the bronzed weeds, indulge in contented conversational tones, while an astonishing mirage causes them to loom and glisten like ranks of soldiers in shining armour. It is of no use to expect shots under such conditions. The gulls alone keep poised on the wing, their day-long flight evidently causing no fatigue, as if they floated on an upward air current. Otherwise all nature is steeped in the languor of an afternoon siesta. Crickets

chirp from ridges of starved grass or from patches of yellowish mosses mixed with melancholy bunches of reeds, red where they emerge, as if the soil bled as they pierced it. A blaze of deep rich yellow from a bunch of golden rods and asters surprises one as would an unexpected ribbon in the bonnet of a Quaker maiden. Long files of geese wend their way to still dark ponds of fresh water in the peaty black lands, where they will drink and run the gauntlet of the youthful pot-hunter lying in ambush among the branches of fir trees. Sometimes the brown, human-like head of a seal emerges from the wave and peers shyly around. Once the writer watched some thousand gannets feeding outside, evidently on a passing school of herring. From a great height they dropped one after



INTERRUPTED WAYFARERS.

another with a splash into the blue sea, emerging with unfailing certainty with a fish grasped to be swallowed in the air; the splashing caused by the ceaseless pelting of the sea with their white bodies making a curious and beautiful spectacle. To while away another hour there are golden plover to be pursued on the sands. One can watch the tribes of small peeps and snipelets probing for clams and collecting the dinner cast up by the sea; one can pace the glistening strand and watch the white sails, swelling before the breeze, of tall-masted barques, timber-laden, setting forth on their outward passage, or the snowy sails of the little fishing fleet hovering over their lobster traps like a flock of terns, or a row of velvet and bottle-nosed coots (scoters) diving in the surf after shell-fish, and indulging in a sham battle of mock chases and retreats.

See! At length the tide is well on the flood; once more box and decoys—for long on the mud—are floating. This afternoon is to be dedicated to the destruction of geese. Look at the signs on the sands, which give us the certainty of sport. There is seen the impress of big webbed feet, and hundreds of holes scooped out of the size of their bodies. The birds have been here last night. They will revisit these sands this evening and get an unexpected reception. Once more in position, with a loud whistling a flock of widgeon bear down close overhead, but depart unaware of their danger. The temptation to fire is resisted, and we have our reward; for ere long an interrogative ‘honk? ha-onk? ha-a-onk?’ is trumpeted from five large birds coming on in a low plane of flight a few feet above the water-line, with their black necks stretched out stiff and stark and their bills open to speak every few moments. Now is the time for skilful calling—better omitted if not artistic. Roofing the mouth with the open palm, once or twice a subdued responsive ‘ah-hunk,’ ‘ah-hunk’ inspires confidence. All distrust is laid aside. There is slight suspense while they overshoot the mark, but the flock rapidly wheel, and steer directly on the decoys. Poising their wings and lowering their bodies they bend their heads this way and that. One might as well think of missing a haystack. The invariable spring in the air at the appearance of the gunner is over. Two heads are well in line, and with a mighty splash down come two ponderous bodies into the wave. The other barrel accounts for a third as he attempts to move off, with his nervous system apparently prostrated by fright.

Several other flocks share a like fate, for never do geese decoy better than when returning to the same point where they fed unmolested on the previous evening. Later we move to a spot under the ‘fly line’, which seems to guide all the flocks coming in from the sea over a certain point—though the flights are too far apart to see each other—as if their exact course had been determined by compass.

Good results can rarely be obtained by sculling. Yet occasionally, taking advantage of the fact that geese invariably rise against the wind, by crouching in the canoe an insidious approach may be made to a flock on a sand-bar. Some ancient sentinel will presently sound the note of alarm, a rousing ‘ah-hunk!’ Then twenty black necks will be outstretched, and twenty throats will vociferate ‘ah-hunk, ah-hunk!’ Walking about uneasily, they will rise *en masse*; but, if luck favours, the gun may now be within sixty or seventy yards, and as they rise one or two come down with a loud swish.

At last the setting sun is reddening the sky over the river, giving

back the rich colours it has been absorbing all day long. The birds that have been feeding in the estuary are beginning to stream seaward to spend the night on the bosom of the ocean. We know that at John's cosy cottage, at the mouth of the river, a brown brant and a pint of Hermitage await us. The canoe is headed into the brilliant level rays of sunset lingering low down in the rosy west ; so the curtain falls on a long day of ceaseless interest, spent on the breast of the sea, under the boundless blue sky, the ozone from the breeze and the successful sport tingling the blood like some rare old vintage.

XIV

MOOSE HUNTING IN THE BACKWOODS

IT is difficult to exaggerate the startling appearance of the gigantic North American moose—largest and most powerful of the deer tribe now extant—when the spectator for the first time encounters him in his native haunts in one of the wilderness tracts of Northern Canada.

A full-grown bull stands 8 feet in height at the shoulder, weighs upwards of three-quarters of a ton, and has broad antlers which commonly weigh 70 lb., and have a spread of nearly 5 feet. He has a short thick neck, and legs rather strikingly slender for his bulk. When in motion he often seems awkward in gait, clumsy and inelegant; but when he rears his stately head in an attitude of attention, the majesty and grandeur of his appearance are most impressive. When he is in the act of charging, or in one of those fits of fury which frequently take possession of him, his aspect may be described as almost terrific. At such times his eyes flash forth a green blaze, and his short, stiff mane stands erect like the quills of a porcupine.

His haunts are not on forest trails; he seeks more or less open country, with a growth of small hardwood trees, whose tender young shoots and leaves furnish his chief food supply. Lichens, lily pads, and roots of aquatic plants, however, vary his diet in summer.

No wonder that the magnificent antlers of the moose are prized as highly as the skin of a grizzly bear. Nor are they always obtained at less risk of life and limb to the hunter, for the most sporting methods of moose hunting put the nerve and courage of the sportsman to as severe a test as he ever is likely to endure.

Let me describe my first meeting with the noble quarry. It was late in October. The Canadian forest had, as is its wont, blazed into scarlet and gold and disrobed for the winter. On gusty days the leaves were whirling at our feet like snowdrifts. My party consisted of myself and two Micmac Indians. One of these was an expert at camp cooking, and the bearer of our slender outfit. His crowning quality was that he could make a fire in a few seconds, even during pouring rain—a blessed gift in the frosty Canadian autumn. The

other, Joe, was a hunter and trapper, accomplished in all sorts of woodcraft. He possessed the keen eye of an eagle, and that born instinct which enabled him to read the pathless forest as an open book, and confidently interpret every movement of unseen animals.

! Bronze-coloured men, they were mostly silent and with emotionless faces, save when the fierce joy of the chase burned in their bosoms. Yet they are not heroes, for they have many human weaknesses. One is for 'fire-water', which makes demons of them for the time being. Another, even more serious, is an uncontrollable excitability in the presence of big game, which is an incomprehensible thing to the white man, seeing that long custom should have made them cool in the presence of moose, or caribou, or bear.

But let me give them their due. These two men had fought their way with birch-bark canoe up the fierce rapids of the Nepisiquit River, and set me down at the lower end of a long, canal-like reach of the upper stream, a hundred miles from the village at the river's mouth.

With this most primitive, yet most effective, of all contrivances for alternate lake and stream navigation, they had braved the impetuous river, and with spike-pole and paddle had triumphed over its troubled and angry waters.

We made camp on an interesting spot, where the river took a great bend to the north, towards a range of mountains from whose loins sprang two other noble streams—the Tobique and the Miramichi.

After a day spent in the construction of camp and of such luxuries as table and benches and sideboard (not omitting the hunter's ambrosial bed, made of the tender tips of the balsam fir, spread six inches deep), we started upstream, with three days' rations, for Portage Brook Meadows, where Joe was quite sure we would meet big game. After twelve miles of smooth river, often split into a dozen channels by small islands, and presenting most charming vistas, we drew our canoe ashore on a narrow beach of gravel, just below where a mountain torrent stormed into the channel of the river. Following for half a dozen miles a forest trail, which was well indented in places with the sharp, triangular track of the moose, and also that of the black bear (so like the impress of a human foot), we emerged on a plain with a cup-like setting in an amphitheatre of bare hills. A glance at intersecting moose paths, where the soil was cut up like a cattle corral, showed us at once that we had not journeyed here in vain.

After building a shelter at some distance from the meadows, for fear of alarming any wandering moose, we cooked our supper and

waited impatiently for the approach of evening. It was the intention of Joe to call up a bull moose by imitating the voice of the cow, as the pairing season was not yet over. For this purpose he manufactured out of the bark of the canoe-birch a long, trumpet-shaped funnel. As we took our stand at the edge of an island of stunted firs and spruce trees in the middle of the plain, we noted gladly that the wind had fallen till there was a perfect stillness. It is of not the slightest use to call up moose if a breeze allows them to get your scent, otherwise they will circle down wind, sniff the tainted air, and at once take warning. Then a full moon had risen over the wilderness, and a cloudless sky assured me of sufficient light to see the sights of my rifle.

Soon commenced one of those wonderful exhibitions of skill on the part of the Indian which is ever a matter of surprise and admiration to the white man. Putting the birch trumpet to his lips, Joe gave the call of the cow moose in a manner so startling and truthful that only the educated ear of the Indian could detect the counterfeit. The cry of the cow is a long-drawn-out, melancholy sound, rising loud and sonorous, and falling gradually in cadence to a murmur. Then it rises again strong and full, to finish off abruptly. Sometimes it rends the serene stillness of the wilderness like a rifle volley. At others, it is most plaintive, as when the lone Juliet of the forest makes her appealing tones faintly vibrate over the low cedar swamps.

Joe knew there were moose in the vicinity by the fresh tracks, but we were hardly prepared for what followed his skilful calling.

From a ribbon-like stretch of dark green woods, which marked the valley of a brook running down the side of the opposite mountain, a large bull moose, attended by a cow, came out into the open moonlight and stood still. From the opposite direction there suddenly appeared another large bull, which had also heard our call and was answering with the usual guttural croak, which is represented by the syllables, 'waugh—waugh'. Here was an interesting situation indeed! Joe thought it best to keep perfectly still and await developments. Then a startling thing happened. The newcomer, seeing the bull in possession of the cow, lowered his antlers and charged. The other fearlessly advanced to do battle. The two met with a mighty crash, and then such a play went forward as is not often witnessed by man in nature's amphitheatre, when the Hector and Achilles of the wilderness meet to fight for another Helen of Troy. The fight that ensued was terrific, as might be expected from such powerful giants, at this season of the year in the perfection of strength and condition. In the dire struggle huge

boulders were overturned, showers of soil were sent flying down the mountain-side, and small trees were entirely uprooted. Now one of the combatants was pushed back on his haunches for several yards before he recovered himself, with a groan that betrayed his strained effort. Probably gaping wounds were inflicted on both sides. At times the huge antlers interlocked, and the vast bodies went swaying and rocking this way and that, as if they were inextricably interlaced and both animals were doomed to a miserable death. At last the new-comer, although the heavier of the two combatants, after a severe round, in which he was pushed heavily down the slope of the mountain, drew off, leaving his antagonist in possession of the field and of his calm spouse, who held aloof ready to bestow herself on the victor—no doubt on the principle that none but the brave deserve the fair.

The vanquished monster went sullenly away in the direction whence he had come. Joe then tried another ringing call, to which, however, he deigned no notice, being probably severely hurt in the conflict. But to our astonishment the victor with his consort slowly approached our direction.

Joe knew well that to entice him within rifle shot it was of not the slightest use to imitate the cow, as he was already mated. So, with inimitable strategy, he lowered the mouth of his tube close to the ground so as to deaden the sound, and then gave the subdued cough which is the challenge of an enraged bull. The response was immediate. The bull stood listening, perfectly still, with every fibre of his long ears stretched to detect the source of this new challenge. Now came a fresh proof of the Indian's fidelity to nature. The smallest hoarseness, the slightest wrong vibration, the least unnatural sound, would have proved fatal to our chances of a shot. But the man writhed on the ground like a serpent, making agonized expressions of countenance in his studied efforts to counterfeit nature. Then he went one step further in his art, and broke off branches of trees and thrashed his birch-bark horn against the bushes, in imitation of a challenging bull defying all comers with his antlers.

The Indian's art triumphed perfectly. All caution was laid aside by the monarch of the Canadian glen, which was now swiftly advancing towards us under the delusion that he was approaching yet another claimant to his consort.

It is small wonder that the novice at moose hunting is so often the victim of 'buck fever'; and that even old hands are reported as so often missing their chance at a bull moose. For one thing, listening long and intently in the woods strings up the nerves to high tension. For another, the cold benumbs the fingers after a

long vigil in the frosty air. Then the advancing bull is given to 'smashing around', as the Indians put it—venting his bad temper on the unresisting trees, and knocking his antlers against fire-killed stumps, which answer with a hollow reverberation to his blows. The sight of a bristling mane also fails to inspire confidence in the huge beast's intentions should he succeed in gaining close quarters.

However, I was armed with a Winchester 45'90 repeating rifle; and though the first shot failed to kill, the second sent the big animal plunging heavily on his knees. A third shot was administered as the *coup de grâce*. As for the cow, she appeared to vanish as if by magic, without the slightest noise.



THE FALLEN MONARCH.

Under such circumstances it was not a matter of danger to bag our noble quarry, but it often happens that the most skilful caller cannot succeed in getting the moose to come within range, because, for some unknown reason, the animal's suspicions have been aroused.

Then it becomes necessary to creep out in the open towards him, and if the hunter has not the nerve to stand his ground before a charge that can be as frenzied as that of an African bison, and send a decisive ball into the brain or shoulder of his foe, he had far better have engaged in other pastime.

There are other ways of hunting the moose besides calling and 'still hunting' or stalking; but they are all unsportsmanlike, and

in many parts of Canada wise legislation has made them unlawful. 'Fire-hunting,' or hunting by torchlight, is practised by the use of a bright light generally formed by burning bunches of resinous birch-bark near lakes known to be frequented by the game. The brilliant light seems to stupefy and fascinate the moose, who will then readily fall to the rifle. Yet there is an element of danger even in this method, for a wounded, and therefore an enraged, moose has been known to upset and destroy the canoe which exhibited the torches.

Then there is 'crusting', or pursuing moose on a hard crust formed over the deep snow by a winter thaw between frosts. The game is then taken at an unfair advantage, as the crust will support the hunter on snow-shoes, or even when shod with moc-casins or soft leather jackboots.

At such times the moose resort in companies to some sheltered valley, where they trample down the snow into what are termed 'moose-yards'. Driven out of these asylums the poor beasts flounder helplessly in the deep snow, and their destruction under such conditions is not sport but butchery. A still worse method is 'hounding' or pursuing with a large, fierce breed of dogs, which will follow the trail day after day, and finally drag their prey down utterly exhausted till the hunter comes up; this also denies the game the chance of life which true sportsmanship calls for.

The writer cannot bring this paper on moose hunting and its perils to a more fitting conclusion than by the relation of a narrow escape that befell an Indian guide with whom he was once hunting in the wilds of Northern New Brunswick.

We were camped near the head-waters of the Tobique and Nepisiquit Rivers, and had made several successful trips out of the main camp, to lakes surrounded by grassy meadows, and also to clearings made by abandoned lumber operations, where there was a returning growth of fresh young forest trees. In such open spaces we had successfully hunted both bear and caribou, stalking them after the Highland fashion.

It was our custom, in the intervals of excursions, to rest in camp for a few days, stretching our bearskins on frames and preparing the antlers, so as to bring our trophies home in good order. One morning, after a heavy rainfall, we saw moose tracks passing quite near our camp, and so determined to follow. The Indian's confident tracking through pathless forest, swamp, and bog; now stopping to examine a broken twig, or impression in the yielding moss; now noting a fresh disturbance of the water in some muddy pool, was a wonderful exhibition of skill. He said that a bull moose, with a cow and a two-year-old calf, had gone on two hours ahead of us.

The track was traced into a ravine or glen so common in these parts ; but this one was unlike all the others in that it ended in a *cul de sac*, the banks growing steeper as we advanced, and, as it proved, ending at a steep cliff over which poured a miniature cataract. The wind was blowing straight up the ravine. The animals had scented us and had increased their pace, breaking into a trot.

Rounding a sharp turn abruptly, we stood face to face with a magnificent bull moose, standing a few yards in advance of the cow and calf as if to shield them from attack. I immediately fired, as the animal had lowered his head ominously. My shot, however, fell low. Failing to penetrate the forehead and reach the brain, it shattered the jaws of the moose and aroused the full depths of his fury. As the great beast came crashing along I again got a shot, with which, however, I failed to stop him, and then we both sprang aside to seek shelter. Suddenly the Indian slipped and fell heavily. The mane of the moose stood out straight on end, and his eyes blazed as he strode towards the prostrate man. * Quick as a flash the Indian drew out from its sheath the long Indian blade, sharp as a razor, which always dangles at a hunter's belt. Springing up even apparently while being trampled and gored, he managed to drive the keen weapon right home to the great beast's heart. Then he sank back unconscious, while I, having reloaded, gave the moose the finishing touch. He hardly needed this, though, for already his huge bulk was tottering, and suddenly, with an expiring groan, he collapsed in a heap, and his great brown antlers smote the ground heavily.

Then came a moment of dreadful suspense. Was the Indian a mangled piece of human wreckage ? No, thank God ! He raises his head, throws his long black hair away from his eyebrows, and leans on an elbow. Then he brushes aside the overhanging shrubbery, stands erect, and limps hurriedly towards me.

That Indian, Joe, still carries his birch-bark canoe up among the lakes and rivers of New Brunswick. He still takes solitary trapping journeys in the depth of the savage winters ; he still exchanges his hard-earned pelts of lucifee and sable and bears for groceries and fiery rum at the tiny village at the mouth of the river ; and many a time since has he wreaked dire vengeance on the antlered moose.

XV

MOOSE HUNTING IN NOVA SCOTIA

HALIFAX, the capital of Nova Scotia, is one of the few colonial towns which combine most of the amenities of civilized life with the great charm of being within easy reach of cock cover, snipe marsh, salmon stream, or the primeval forest haunts of the moose, caribou, and black bear. Owing to the countless streams and lake basins which stretch in chains across the interior of this province, the most desirable hunting grounds can be readily reached by boat or canoe. The unrivalled climate of the autumn season adds immensely to the pleasures of camping out in the wilds. One soon becomes familiar with the little tricks of backwoods life necessary to secure comfort, and at times capable even of making luxury obtainable. In every tumbling brook there are fish waiting to hop into the frying-pan. The bush is fairly alive with juicy young 'partridges' (ruffed grouse), while on every hand there is abundance of dry firewood for the gathering. One should choose for guides professional hunters or trappers, or, failing them, native Indians, of whom a few families still remain on the fringes of many of the frontier settlements. Such men are able to deprive 'roughing it in the bush' of all its terrors.

No device for wooing sleep could excel the regulation forest bed of fragrant fir-boughs, into which tired limbs sink gratefully. No kitchen can look half so cheery as the row of pothooks hung over the ruddy glow of sparkling birch logs, especially when the air is fragrant with 'the something hot' preparing for the usual toast, 'Here's luck to-morrow', that winds up the camp-fire yarns. In such a sylvan home the hunter can enjoy unalloyed, in one of the most perfect outdoor autumn climates of the world, the charm of absolutely wild surroundings; can admire the changing moods of the primeval wilderness, by turns inspiriting, grandly beautiful, majestic, solemn, sad; can observe the pageant of forest and river life daily and nightly unfolded around him; can find exciting hours in the pursuit of bear, caribou, or the giant moose. Days of toil in hunting big game are sure to be frequently rewarded by gratifying success. How the pulse is stirred on a bright October morning as the prow of the yellow canoe cuts the gently resisting current, rifles

all aboard, together with a few days' frugal rations! Across the stream the kingfisher's shrill rattle falls, as if in protest against the invasion of his domain; a bracing nor'-wester is calling forth from the forest boughs a rustling note that does not accord badly with the ever-present music of the rippling water. Yonder, inland, where the sierra of mountains draped in blue rear themselves skyward, adventures and encounters with big game are certain to be obtained.

About fifty years ago Nova Scotia was one of the best and most prolific moose-ranges in North America, and if now greatly reduced in numbers, there are still a great many of these noble deer to be met with in the more remote woodland districts. Nova Scotia is admirably adapted to the moose, because her lakes are studded with little thickly wooded islets where the cow moose hides away her fawns, and because the long chains of swamps and mossy bogs, which run far back into the heart of the evergreen woods, abound with their favourite browse, and while secluded, at the same time these open spaces are free from the encumbrance of dense timber. Yet it is surprising on occasions how domestic in their habits moose can become, forming 'yards' on some sheltered hardwood slope within hearing of the settler's axe, the barking of the farmyard cur, and even where the shrill whistle of the passing railway train wakes sharp echoes.

It is characteristic of the native hunters of every big-game country to lure up wild animals by means of imitating the love calls of the mating season. Thus the Indian shikari calls up the sambur stag. On the bare steppe-like plateaux of Newfoundland skilled hunters 'tole' the caribou stag by a clever counterfeit of his short hoarse bellow. In Canada, nearly every master of hunting-craft is able to imitate the amorous roars of the cow moose until the deluded bull comes crashing towards his doom, seemingly bold and fearless from the consciousness of his immense strength. Yet there are men who can never attain to success in the art of moose-calling. Even the most experienced professional callers differ widely in their methods of simulating the pleading, plaintive bellowing of the cow moose. The Milicete guide sounds a succession of short quavering roars, ending as suddenly as if their author were cut down by a stroke of apoplexy. One veteran backwoodsman is very successful with a couple of guttural coughs or sobs, followed by a scalp-lifting, blood-curdling wail, the 'spookiest' sound that any mortal could possibly utter. Another gives the challenge with an ending suggestive of a note of interrogation. There can, therefore, be no infallible standard for a novice to copy. It is, however, accepted as a *sine qua non*, that the call must be rendered through a trumpet-shaped cone made of the crisp bark of the yellow birch, which serves

so many wonderful uses in the forest life of America. It is, therefore, quite plain that skill in this accomplishment belongs to the practised woodsman rather than to the casual amateur.

Perhaps nowhere are there better moose-callers to be found than the Micmac Indians of Nova Scotia, the older men far excelling the younger. There is something peculiar to the Indian speech, abounding as it does in soft vowel sounds, which lends itself readily to the imitation of every sound of nature. There is something very fascinating in moose-calling on a fine autumn evening, far back in the wilds, either on the shore of some lake or still-water, or at the edge of one of those dry grassy savannahs, often the legacy of an extinct beaver colony, which penetrate the evergreen forest in all directions. One must have felt the sudden thrill which stirs the blood at the first challenge of the answering bull, and the vocal trail of his hoarse mutterings drawing swiftly nearer and nearer, in order to appreciate the intense excitement which this form of woodland sport is capable of yielding.

When the calling is pursued at night there is something indescribably weird about the scene which appeals to the imagination with a pleasing and irresistible charm. While the pale orange, full-orbed hunters' moon hangs low in the heavens, outlining the black arrow-heads of the tallest fir trees as if traced in india-ink, the coaxing tones of the caller resound through the forest aisles. Now and then the fiendish hooting of owls breaks the stillness, or the long-drawn wolfish howl from some great northern diver or loon, keeping vigil on a neighbouring lake. Occasionally one hears the whimper of a bear, the shriek of a lynx or the baying of an old fox, and often the hunter listens to mysterious forest sounds which he is utterly at a loss to account for.

Many an old hand at the game loses his nerve when at length he is confronted by the noble stag in a pose of sturdy pride and confidence in his own vast powers. The fingers tremble, ever so slightly perhaps, after the tension of the long wait, or from the cold. Thus very often the bullet flies wide of the mark, whereupon the great deer steals away with the silence of a spirit. Ordinarily the moose, like other wild animals, seeks only to escape the presence of man when threatened, but if wounded, especially after being fatigued, he is quite likely to charge his hunter, and in the mating season he has been known to do so without provocation.

The advance of the moose, coming on boldly, trampling the underbrush and clashing the branches in a fit of fury, is full of interest and may prove intensely exciting. Now a metallic ring sounds through the woods as the great antlers are repeatedly struck heavily against some decayed tree boll ; now comes a crackling sound

as if a stick were being drawn sharply across an iron paling ; now there is a shower of falling débris as the game in a fit of fury shreds bark and foliage from opposing branches ; now a battle with some gaunt fire-killed pine stem suggests the hurling of a cartload of rocks to the ground. 'Biggest row of all' occurs when some rival bull is encountered and the mossy swamp is torn up as if by the ploughshare, while two huge bodies go swaying this way and that in doubtful and protracted conflict.

Moose hunting is pursued at the best season of the year in the Canadian forest, when the air is bracing and the skies usually bright and clear. The beauty of the changing woods it is hard to exaggerate. It is thus described in McGregor's *British America* :—

'Two or three frosty nights in the decline of autumn transform the boundless verdure of a whole empire into every possible tint of brilliant scarlet, rich violet, every shade of bronze and brown, vivid crimson and glittering yellow. The stern inexorable fir tribes alone maintain their sombre green. All others on mountains or in valleys burst into the most glorious vegetable beauty, and exhibit one of the most enchanting and splendid panoramas on earth.'

Both the deer and native hunter strangely enthral the imagination. The moose, in his whole make-up, seems to belong to a remote and antediluvian period of time. The Micmac Indian, carrying one along the waterways in his curiously fairy-like craft, an invention for lake and river travel which has never been equalled, strikes one as the ideal savage in his primitive state, and as an equally puzzling anachronism. Time seems to have run backwards and fetched the age of stone among these glorious vistas of boundless dark-green forest, breezy hills, and bright, wood-embosomed lakes.

When the moose has once heard a call which attracts him, he can travel to the exact spot from a distance of at least two miles without a repetition of the sound. No more cunning or wary animal exists in the American forests, nor any of greater strength and endurance and of nobler and more impressive appearance. Startling is the giant stride of his stilt-like limbs, enabling him to get away from danger at a tremendous pace even across the face of country strewn with seemingly impassable tangles of fallen timber. Marvellous is the keenness of his capacious nostril, up which a man can thrust his arm, while his hearing is wonderfully acute. Not the slightest noise out of the common can escape the great yellow ears, incessantly poised to catch the faintest signal of danger. Even on a wild and windy day, when the trees and dry limbs are cracking in the gale, should the hunter snap ever so small a stick, the deer will start at the sound, at once distinguishing it from the ordinary

noises of the forest. The moose also displays astonishing intelligence in his remarkable habit of making a loop of a half circle before lying down, thus taking a position of the utmost advantage for the detection of any pursuer following his trail.

Many of the weaker animals of the North American forest in winter approximate the whiteness of the snows. The caribou does not disdain to wear this arctic livery, but the lordly moose dons a more glossy black as the cold increases. The monarch of the forest needs no disguise.

Vast, indeed, are the domains of the moose. Frequenting by choice low-lying swampy woods and river and lake basins, he ascends the banks of the rivers of the North-West of America nearly to the arctic circle, as far north, in fact, as his favourite browse—the willow saplings—grow at their edges. In the forests which fringe the shores of the Yukon, the Peace River, the Mackenzie; throughout that wild Alpine region which nurtures the infancy of the Stickine, and in the wide, wooded belt which approaches the low shores of the Arctic Ocean to the northward, and sends numerous spurs of forest jutting out into the plains to the south, the moose is everywhere abundant. He makes his home also in isolated patches in the North-West territories, locally known as 'moose-woods'. In the woodland districts of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, the south side of the St. Lawrence, in the province of Quebec, and the State of Maine, he still roams in sufficient numbers to afford the chance of excellent sport during the brief hunting season.

Not only will the immense range of the moose and the inaccessible character of the regions into which he can retreat help to postpone the extinction of his race, but it also contributes heavily to his chances that he can sustain life by merely biting off the tips of any of the more esculent shrubs and of almost any of the deciduous or 'hardwood' trees. Wise game regulations, and the practice of setting aside public preserves, help to increase the numbers of moose and other wild game throughout the Dominion of Canada.

In conclusion, let it be said that the bringing back of a trophy to adorn the smoking-room walls is not the only reward of a few weeks in the open after big game. The relief of a period of free, untrammelled life, for the time being independent of galling social fetters; the simple primitive pleasures of forest life in practically primeval hunting grounds; the constant lesson of that patient, persistent effort which Nature ever puts forth even in the rugged northern wilds, suggesting the ever-renewed struggle of humanity itself against opposing odds, altogether afford a pleasing experience which does not readily fade from the memory.

XVI

THE BEGUILING OF THE MOOSE BULL

NO sound breaks the deep stillness of the autumn night save the occasional plaintive moose-call sent faintly vibrating over the mist-streaked cedar swamp by the Indian hunter from his place of ambush, amid fern bracken and alder thicket, close to the edge of the dark evergreen forest. The sound, a low guttural bellow, now faint, now rising wild and sonorous, comes mellowed through a funnel-shaped cone of yellow birch-bark, which the man slowly moves in an undulating fashion through the air. He is taking infinite pains to feign accurately a love call of the female at the mating season, whereby she appeals to the wandering lord of the Canadian forest.

Some three hours have passed since the sun dropped behind the purple hills, and now the October full moon lifts her copper-coloured disc over the black spear-like tops of the shaggy conifers, hastening on her serene path towards the blazing constellations studding the high heavens.

At length her light clears to silver, shooting great level bars athwart the open glade, throwing into bold relief the grassy tussocks sprinkled like little islets over what resembles the surface of a dark lake, reflecting glittering patches from little pools in the hollows, and sharply outlining irregular patches of blackness in the shadows cast from the fir trees clasping the little savannah in their rugged embrace. There is the sense of a certain awesome solemnity hanging over the scene, and a tense silence provoking the ears of the listeners with intensity of desire to hear some response to the cajoling and coaxing tones of the challenge of the moose horn, a silence that would tempt some men to shout aloud by way of relief.

Close to the grizzled redskin, a weather-bronzed Saxon face is thrust forward into the circle of light, wearing an expression of eager expectancy, yet closely watching every motion made by the Indian.

Suddenly the calm of the forest is rent by a low hoarse croak, faint and far away, borne feebly on the thin autumn air over the undulating sea of verdure.

The plaintive notes are rendered with inimitable skill, notwith-

standing that the effort is seen to be extremely trying to the vocal powers, judged by the ceaseless contortions of the hard-bitten gaunt features of the redskin. He tells the white man to put out his pipe instantly, to break not the least twig, and to look to him for directions, for he will give signs by the hand. With a startling suddenness the series of low bellowings abruptly terminates in a wild choking sob, which goes pealing and echoing through the still aisles of the forest.

Then begins the first scene of a drama beneath the bright midnight sky : the skill of man pitted against the sagacity and keen senses of the wariest big game that is hunted anywhere in the world.

Twice or thrice the moose gives answer at regular intervals of about two minutes' duration. Some wonderful instinct enables this deer to come from a distance of two miles or upwards directly to the spot whence a call has once emanated, even without repetition of the sound. He will come on in a straight line ; maybe, he will make long and frequent pauses at intervals in his advance. Hence the sport of moose-calling can tax the patience of the hunter severely. Neither is it exactly an amusement for people with nerves ; for there is something uncanny about the whole business. In the first place the moose itself is a queer antediluvian type of animal : a seeming strayling that has travelled into the grim forests of North America in this twentieth century from an unknown prehistoric period.

Vastly uncertain in behaviour is the moose bull, often displaying a reckless indifference to danger, born perhaps of a consciousness of his vast strength. Most deer are gentle and timid in character. Their large round mild eyes appeal to the pity of the hunter even when he is compelled to slay that he may eat. The moose on the other hand wears an almost ferocious aspect, while his small sunken eyes seem to twinkle with a treacherous and truculent gleam. They fairly flash forth a green blaze at such times as he gives way to one of those sudden fits of fury which so frequently take possession of him, and make him on occasion a dangerous enough quarry from whom one had better stand clear at close quarters, else see to it that his powder is not 'crooked'. There are times when his short stiff mane stands erect, while he strikes madly with his huge shovel-like antlers at the stems of trees, raining down showers of débris on his broad brown back.

It is a custom of the moose when advancing, as he supposes to meet his mate, to make his progress impressive by various exhibitions of prowess. Should he meet a rival on the way, as sometimes happens, then a battle will immediately ensue ; and many are the

startling tales of terrific encounters listened to with bated breath around the camp fire.

At the nuptial season the moose attains to the prime of condition. His massive neck seems to have doubled its ordinary dimensions. His black pelage has now become glossy as the coat of a well-groomed horse, and his huge limbs and long canon bones are ornamented with bright orange stripes, sharply contrasting with the general sombre tone of colour of the grizzled body. His broadly palmated antlers, now hard as flint, rough as the bolls of ancient birch trees, become a thing of beauty as well as a terrible weapon against a foe. His sharp hoofs, rather delicately formed for such a great beast, are formidable auxiliary weapons of offence.

At this time he often seems to forget entirely the fear of man, and if wounded will often charge desperately: sometimes indeed even without the slightest provocation.

Returning after this digression to our hunters, let us suppose that an hour has elapsed and still nothing has happened of a startling character: only the men have listened to an occasional low hoarse note vibrating over the forest at intervals of about two minutes, growing distinctly nearer all the while, outlining what might be called the vocal trail of an advancing moose.

Suddenly however the great 'wood-eater' begins what the Indian calls 'sounding'. He has reached the ruined trunk of a huge pine tree, and against this he strikes his antlers repeatedly until the forest re-echoes as if to the blows of a dozen woodmen's axes. For a long time he keeps on 'sounding', proving that his temper is evidently 'up', perhaps from the disappointment of having failed to meet a rival to settle with. Rearing on his hind legs he hits out furiously, and there follows a mist of falling fragments of broken wood as he delivers lightning-like blows with his terrible forefeet against some fire-killed rampike.

At length he wearies of these pugilistic exercises and moves forward once more, giving utterance to a frog-like croaking, the weakness of the utterance contrasting grotesquely with the bulk of the giant whence the weak voice emanates.

Will he never emerge from covert? Surely now he must be sneaking round the black edge bordering the little swamp; but he has ceased to give voice or any sign of his presence whatever.

Now the Indian redoubles his efforts, yet with a certain masterly restraint, not overstepping the modesty of nature. He begins to put into the notes something of a new and most seductive expression.

At close quarters he well knows that when 'speaking' to the moose one false intonation, one awkward quaver will send the great creature off into space in ghost-like silence. Instantly would

the game be 'up' likewise, were the faintest whiff of wind to carry that strange taint of the human body to nostrils so sensitive that they can discern the presence of mankind at incredible distance. Successful calling requires a perfectly windless night. Otherwise moose will reassure themselves of their safety by working round to leeward and ascertaining if the overtures proceed from an individual emitting the right sort of odour. How far must the olfactory powers of many animals surpass our limited faculty! which, by the bye, may be on the whole considered a provision of Providence merciful to the human being.

The red man, with impassive inscrutable features, yet with a blazing eye which betokens fierce excitement held well in check, plays his part with all the skill that is born of long experience, and of an instinct inherited perhaps from a long line of ancestors, whose principal occupation in life was doubtless one long-continued crusade against the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fishes that swim the waters.

The caller being an 'old hand' at the game, presently resorts to various little stratagems apart from vocal mimicry. For instance, he takes the cone of yellow birch-bark and strikes it heavily against the green boughs of some beech saplings. He buries the mouth of his trumpet in the feather-like springy mosses at his feet in order to muffle the note as a moose might do while engaged in browsing. All his little artifices and tricks, however, in this instance appear to be of no avail. Our moose bull has evidently grown suspicious. He refuses to advance out of cover into the open at the supreme moment. What is to be done?

Your redskin is ever equal to an emergency of this sort. Without a moment's hesitation he suddenly changes his tactics, just as a salmon fisherman would try a new fly with a fish that is recalcitrant. Again he puts the birch-bark funnel to his lips, and with art inimitable he gives the challenge note of a rival bull. The response is immediate and terrific. During all his prolonged silence the great deer had been standing amid the black shadows that edge the swamp at less than one hundred yards distance, quiet as any field mouse. The challenge stirs his blood. Enraged and maddened at the feigned rival who would rob him of the spouse towards whom he had been for so long time stealthily working his way, he charges into the open with giant stride, plunging and slopping into the soft places of the marsh. He emerges full beneath the white rays of the moon. A great mountainous black mass is seen to stand out in bold relief, while the white rays touch with silver the many glistening points of the broad-spreading antlers, and glance upon the sights of the rifle now held in terrible alignment against the shaggy fore-shoulder.

The huge ears keep nervously vibrating while another challenge rings across the open arena. The fateful moment has arrived. The son of the forest throws up his hand as the signal to fire. Twice the yellow flame flashes from the rifle's mouth. Twice echoing reports jar the awful stillness of the wilderness. While the sickening odours of the discharge are yet hanging in the currentless atmosphere, the black figure wheels and once more is blotted out of the zone of light and merged into the shadows which border the little marsh. There ensues a terrific breaking of dead limbs, a crashing of brittle timber: after a few seconds a ponderous fall; then silence.

Not noisily thus would a moose disappear unless mortally hit. If slightly wounded, steering his great antlers marvellously among the densest evergreen thickets so as not to crack the tiniest twig, he would have vanished with quiet mysterious celerity, and have left no trace behind save the imprint of big triangular hoofs in the sponge-like mosses. A dying moose, however, stumbles against every obstacle in his pathway. 'Skin him to-morrow morning—other side of little brook'—is the laconic remark of the redskin, affecting, if he does not feel, all absence of excitement, *suo more*.

Groping their way along a straggling forest trail the two men reach the margin of one of those beautiful sheets of water which in many portions of Canada occur with such astonishing frequency. Supplementing the light of the moon by an extemporized torch, made up of that seeming necessity of forest life in North America, the resinous bark of the yellow birch, they seek for their upturned canoe hidden away amid the dense greenery which edges the lake shore.

Launching their fairy-like little craft, they bend their weight to the paddles until the water fairly ripples beneath the keel with merry musical cadence. A northern diver, or 'loon', as the bird is locally called, utters a startling cry, which resounds across the still lake like the baying of some wolfish beast rather than the note of a bird. Without other incident the shelving beach of one of the little islets with which the lake is thickly studded is reached, where a white tent nestles in the lee of a huddled grove of fir trees. The dying embers of a still smouldering camp fire are quickly knocked together and fresh fuel is added. From a pothook stretched from a bar supported on a couple of notched stakes, a little tin kettle gives out the grateful fragrance of steaming tea. A cup or two is quaffed, a pipe follows: then blissful sleep such as is not to be had elsewhere than on a bed of 'sapin' or fragrant fir boughs amid the pine-scented forests of Canada, sweetened by the successful issue of a more than usually protracted and doubtful passage with a more than ordinary vigilant moose bull.



CANADIAN BACKWOODS VILLAGE.

XVII

A MOOSE HUNT ON SNOW-SHOES

SCENE : A rustic bridge spanning the dark current of a swift river near its effluence from a wood-embosomed lake, joining the two halves of a backwoods village, some two score whitewashed cottages fronting a straggling street, each backed by a few acres redeemed from the fangs of giant stumps and huge rock boulders. The air is full of the buzz and whirr of the great lumber mill, fed by a wing-dam immediately below the bridge, as its huge gang-saws rip up the fallen monarchs of the forest, swiftly transforming them into huge piles of yellow boards.

Everywhere snow ; often gathered into picturesque drifts and ridges, which mark the low scraggy stone walls and the bristling 'snake' fences. The vast sheet of pure white only loses itself where it strays on a distant hillside among the dark boles of a huddled patch of shaggy spruce trees spared by the woodman's axe.

Time : 9 a.m. of a brilliant morning of early March. One of those peculiarly clear sparkling mornings which seem to belong to the latter part of the Canadian winter.

Dramatis personae : A dozen hardy athletic men, attended by a pack of mongrel hounds, some of powerful breed ; others mere curs, yet showing some faint trace of pointer or foxhound blood.

Each of the tall, lithe, and burly hunters is armed with a small axe and has a sheath-knife stuck in his leather belt. He also carries firearms of fearsome description. It may be some family heirloom, some gigantic prehistoric 'flint-lock' converted by the village blacksmith into a 'percussion'; else a 'three-dollar' bit of 'gas-pipe' from the only village store, mounted on a painted stock; or perhaps a 'Queen Anne' musket which may have helped Wolfe to take Quebec.

The thermometer shows nearly twenty degrees of frost, yet the hardy hunter wears no coat. The sleeves of his grey shirt rolled up above the elbows, and the neck open to the breast-bone, expose a brown sun-tanned skin apparently indifferent to cold. Each carries the old-fashioned cow-horn as a powder flask, and a leather pouch, full of slugs and bullets, attached to the belt. Slung across the shoulders is a canvas bag containing two days' rations of hard bread and fat pork, while from the bag hangs a pint mug or small tin kettle. This completes the outfit, saving, of course, the caribou or moosehide network snow-shoes not yet fastened to the moccasined feet. A battered and shapeless apology for the conventional colonial hat of soft felt, faded by the alchemy of sun and storm into a rusty brown, is the ordinary head-gear. The eyes of the men are bright with the fierce joy of the barbaric hunt in which they are about to take part. Their gaze is keen and steadfast from long looking out beneath the open sky on forest, lake, and stream, where their lives have been mostly spent.

They are 'loggers', men who all the winter go on felling, trimming, and hauling the forest trees until they accumulate huge piles of logs on the river bank, which at the loosening of the ice they send scurrying full-cry on the swollen stream towards the mill.

Although it is a good time yet to the coming of spring, the glittering carpet spread over plain and hill has changed its winter condition. The snows, heated by the warm suns and frozen up again at night, have acquired a 'crust', hard enough to bear dogs and men on snow-shoes, which is, however, easily broken through by the comparatively small and sharp hoof of the massive moose. In the soft green woods and spruce thickets, where winter lingers long in the darkest recesses penetrated by no ray of sunlight, this crust is much thinner and often absent together. The increasing power of the sun has already loosened some of the mountain brooks, and a heavy stream is hurrying beneath the bridge from the forest country attracting the March run of big salmon from the sea.

Although the best days for 'still hunting' or stalking moose are in wild windy weather when the branches of the forest are creaking in the breeze, for successful 'crusting' the state of the weather

matters little, so long as there is no snow or rain. The moose often travels scores of miles before he is overtaken, necessitating the 'camping out' of his pursuers, and when as sometimes happens a storm of sleet and rain follows, on the succeeding day the quarry can make good his escape while his pursuers are landed in an uncomfortable and perhaps perilous situation. Very different is their journey homeward when the snow is soaked with rain and the ice over the brooks has become soft and treacherous. Then the sport becomes cruelly hard, and an acute attack of rheumatism the frequent consequence.

On the particular morning of the hunt to be described, the



IN THE WINTER HAUNTS OF THE MOOSE. AN EXAMPLE OF THE 'SILVER THAW'.

phenomenon known as the 'silver thaw' had loaded each shrub and tree to the minutest twig with a crystalline coating of ice and rime, which had transformed the wilderness scenery into a very plausible imitation of fairy-land. The previous day had seen a brief storm of sleet, followed by a warm atmosphere with some gentle rain, terminated abruptly by the sharp veering of the wind to the north. Snow, rain, hail, and frost together had done their work effectively. An inch or two of crusted snow had been the result, while walls and fences and every spray of every tree was seen to be incrustated in shining ice. The heads and limbs of trees were lowered and bent, the lower branches drooping and massed

together resting heavily on one another, all overlaid with the sparkling frost work. Viewed beneath the rays of the setting sun on the previous evening all the woodland had presented a wonderful and magical appearance. A row of maples along the village street was caught between the blood-red sky in the west, and a heavy bank of indigo-blue cloud which marked the retreat of the storm on the opposite horizon. Against this the trees fairly flamed. Every branch and twig appeared as if carved out of rosy coral, and on the top of each tree the light flashed from the ice as if from great waxen tapers. Some of the utmost twigs burned like a crown of stars.

The hunters, therefore, were obliged to wait impatiently until the rising wind, assisted by the thaw due to the sun's rays, should clear the woods of this picturesque, yet for their purposes, awkward encumbrance.

Otherwise the thaw had happened opportunely, for it had immensely strengthened the crust, and had given it sharp knife-like edges when broken which would serve to cut the shins of a travelling moose, and thus handicap him very severely.

At this season of the year these deer, if undisturbed, confine themselves to 'yards', which are not, as often imagined, spaces behind which they fortress themselves against the attacks of wolves and other foes, but merely some hillside or 'barren', which they have selected because it happened to be well sheltered and not unsparingly covered with their favourite browse, such as the various species of maples, withrod, white-hazel, mountain-ash, moose-wood, and other esculent deciduous trees on the tips of which they sustain life. In such favourite spots they will remain as long as the food supply holds out, if not pushed from their cover by the hunter. When disturbed, they invariably travel twenty to thirty miles before yarding again.

The space occupied by some half-dozen moose may be upwards of half a mile square. Here the deep snow will be found scored in every direction with a network of narrow paths along which the deer invariably travel in single file. The bushes and young trees are often bitten away to a height of some ten to twelve feet from the ground. Between their great forelegs the moose will even ride down a small tree, thus holding it firmly until hunger has been satisfied. Should a number of 'yards', as sometimes happens, approach each other closely, the deer, when frightened, can make their way from one to the other, and thus being able to travel at their ordinary gait, a fast trot, they can speedily distance the most expert snowshoer, and baffle their fleetest enemies.

When the snowfall is light, moose do not yard at all. In northern

New Brunswick and Quebec the moose is far less migratory in winter than in Nova Scotia, on account of the greater depth of the snow. Once he has chosen his 'yard' in winters of heavy snowfall, there he has to remain, and lies at the mercy of any hunter hardy enough to invade his domain.

In the far north, contrary to the general belief, snow does not accumulate to such an inconvenient depth. Hence, in subarctic regions, the moose only retreats from his usual haunts when the



MOOSE BULL LISTENING TO THE CALL OF THE COW.

(From a Painting by F. C. Bell, Halifax, N.S.)

spring thaws form the much-dreaded crust which furnishes a secure foothold to hunting packs of wolves.

In the 'yard' the animals feed from daybreak until about eleven o'clock, when they invariably lie down until two or three in the afternoon, after which siesta they will again be found browsing or else chewing their cud with heads drooping in a listless manner. The hunter, aiming at surprising a yard, will endeavour to approach while they are feeding, for at other times the moose is keenly alert,

watching with his wonderful faculties of scent and hearing at the highest tension. The faintest taint of the air, the least snapping of a dry twig, or creaking of the snow beneath the moccasined foot of the hunter, is sufficient to send him travelling in hot haste for a long distance.

Nothing can exceed the zest of a tramp on snow-shoes on one of those superb sunny days in early March which offer such a sharp and pleasing contrast to the sombre skies which often prevail during the two preceding months of winter. The forest in its white garments, with all the hardwood trees silent and leafless standing waist-deep in the snows, becomes beautiful and impressive. The air is still keen enough to be intensely bracing. A long tramp, which at other times might seem severe, is now a luxury. One fairly flies over the crust of snow and delights in the clear open vistas among the trees denuded of their foliage.

The little band of hunters keep moving rapidly over the smooth pavement prepared for them across the swamps where in the summer the traveller would sink knee-deep in the sponge-like sphagnum. Lakes, where thousands of perfumed water-lilies reposed on the trembling surface last July, can now bear a team of horses on the thick flooring of ice which confines within it the stems and pads of the queenly flowers. Certainly the Canadian climate affords interesting contrasts.

After an hour or two of brisk tramping, dogs and men reach a moose 'yard', which is found to be deserted. A number of well-worn paths cross each other among a low forest of young birches and maples, in places soiled with the spoor, showing that the yard has only been recently evacuated. Passing onwards and skirting a stunted growth of evergreens which fringe a 'barren', where huge boulders strewn in the wildest confusion and tangled windfalls make the going somewhat difficult, the dogs pause at a single track where perhaps an hour ago a moose bull has passed, leaving deep holes where he has thrust his long canon bones into the snow. The scent freshens as the trail is followed, until the dogs become almost frenzied. A veteran of the hunt, old Bang, with mutilated ears and grizzled muzzle well scored with ancient scars of battles, stands completely upright on his hind legs and sniffs the suspected breeze. A cross between Newfoundland and bull-mastiff, he unites the broad soft foot of the former with the strength and courage of the latter. He is a powerful brute, who will dare swift blows from the forefeet of the moose, and rush in to seize the largest bull by the muzzle or by the long ears while others are taking him in the rear.

The whole pack in concert with noses high in air suddenly

give tongue. 'Bang' starts straight as an arrow through the thick underbush and is followed by the others, while the forest echoes merrily to their cries. It is evident, however, that the moose has had a good start and is well away from the dogs; also that he is a strong and cunning quarry by the giant stride and by the trail leading wherever the crust is less sharp to the legs through the soft evergreen woods.

Fainter and fainter the cries of the dogs fall on the ear. The hunters know that a chase of many miles lies before them, and, recovering from their attempt a futile spurt, settle down to a steady pace.



DEATH OF THE MOOSE BULL.

The moose soon enters a dense forest of black spruce where the going becomes heavy for the men. For a full hour he baffles his pursuers in this advantageous cover, but at length they push him into the open. Here little thickets dot an undulating wilderness of rocks and stumps, broken also by dense groves of alders fringing the windings of a sluggish brook. At a spot where the brook emerges from its sheathing of ice, and runs clear for some distance through a grove of hemlocks and pines, the wary deer bounds from the bank into mid-stream and travels in the water in order to obliterate his tracks. Now dogs and hunters divide into two companies, some running up stream, some down, until once more they pick up the trail.

The chase now follows along one of those natural meadows due, perhaps, to the labour of ancient colonies of beavers, which are found so often in the heart of the wilds, and presently leads out upon a woodland lake stretching away mile after mile, studded with islets, and indented with deep coves and bays. The moose, unlike the caribou, under ordinary conditions avoids ice. His small and pointed hoofs render him about as awkward on a slippery surface as a horse, and he will not venture on the frozen surface if he can possibly help it. However, his sorely bleeding hocks urge him anywhere away from the knife-like edges of the broken crust. In a trice every snow-shoe is whipped off and, with moccasined feet, the men swiftly follow at a run the deep scratches in the ice, and the blood-red dotted trail reaching far ahead till lost in the distance.

Soon, however, the great deer tires of the hard surface and bolts away among the stems of a tall forest of hemlocks. He is showing unmistakable signs of fatigue: the stride is shorter and the hock leaves a deeper groove as it is lifted with diminished speed and energy. Marks of the great teeth in the snow show that he has scooped out a mouthful now and then, a practice in which he never indulges save when extremely hard pressed.

But now old Uncle Enoch, the captain of the hunt, is seen to be casting anxious glances towards the low winter sun hurrying downward to the clear cold indigo-like horizon, and throwing lengthening shadows from the tall trees athwart the whiteness. He calls the party to a halt where a clear brook is brawling between great grey boulders near a fine grove of hardwood.

‘We must camp here to-night, men, and take him to-morrow.’

The words of Uncle Enoch are ever obeyed by all the able-bodied men of the village, for he is their self-appointed yet natural leader. Whether on his knees in the trim little ‘meetin’ house’, unburdening his conscience with his own peculiar potency of vocabulary, or leading such a stern foot-chase as here described, this hardy veteran is ever the prominent figure. The snows of three-score winters have not stained with white a single hair of his head, or dimmed his eagle eyesight, or abated his physical powers by one jot.

In the winter twilight, a single planet in the pale-gold east shining brightly meanwhile, and a delicate purple vapour draping the distant hillsides, the men begin to shovel with their snow-shoes downwards to the hard soil beneath. Some fell trees for the night’s supply of fuel; others build a ‘lean to’. A ‘lean to’ is easily made, the name explaining itself. Two stout forked poles are set up, bearing a cross bar, from which slender poles are slanted to the ground. This rude framework may be covered over with canoe-

birch bark, or simply with fir boughs. An enormous fire is built in front, which must be to the leeward if there is any wind. If the wind shifts in the night, the camp may readily be turned to suit.

On the levelled ground the small tips of 'sapin' or the balsam fir are deeply strewn and the camp is complete. Nature seems to have furnished the flat leaves of the balsam fir for the purpose of furnishing the tired hunter with a luxurious and aromatic bed. So quickly is a home prepared in the wilderness.

The fire is kindled on top of the snow about three feet above the bed, but it quickly eats its way down to the same level. Had



THE AUTHOR'S LIBRARY. THE FINAL RESTING-PLACE OF THE MOOSE-HEAD.

the men not dug the snow hole, they would find the fire by midnight in a deep pit below them. The men roast slices of pork at the roaring flames, boil tea in their tin kettles, and with hard bread complete their frugal supper. Without extra covering they fall to sleep before their camp fire. At times one or another rises, stealthily carries a log from out the darkness and throws it on the flames.

A few hundred yards distant the hunted moose has flung down his stiff and bleeding limbs for his last bivouac on the snow.

That icy shiver which passes over the face of Nature immediately

before the winter sunrise arouses the men to a new day. The fire is replenished and a meal is prepared. While the pale amber opalescence in the east is fading before the intenser light of the rising sun, the dogs are again laid on the trail and the chase resumed. Once more the tired deer listens to the dread shouts of men and the wolfish baying of the hounds. His bloody lair in the snow is reached and passed; his great strength is surely leaving him now. The keenness of the dogs proclaims his nearness. Uncle Enoch's eyes are fairly blazing with the excitement of the anticipated triumph. Soon the infuriated rioting of the dogs tells the tale that the game is brought to bay. At the foot of a steep cliff he has turned on his enemies. The snow, so lately of virgin purity, is now soiled and beaten down by the noisy conflict of deer and dogs. 'Bang' is bleeding profusely, while a black cur lies quite still with his ribs fairly cut from the spine by blows from the sharp fore-hoofs of the moose.

The captain of the hunt now approaches and levels his piece. All is soon over with the gallant moose, which has led his pursuers such a dance of nearly thirty miles.

While it must be conceded that this form of woodland sport yields at times great excitement and calls for extreme hardihood in its votaries, yet it may readily be seen that it can easily be abused, should the snowfall be deep enough to handicap the moose too heavily.

When the great deer, as sometimes might happen, sink to their bellies in the drifts, there would be nothing to prevent a few hardy hunters, experts on snow-shoes, from slaughtering half the moose of a district. The floundering animals would sink exhausted a few hundred feet away from their yards.

When the snow, however, is less deep, and the crust weak, a moose will travel thirty to fifty miles before he gives in. Under such circumstances, 'crusting' may be termed an exciting and manly sport, only to be followed by men of perfect physical fitness. 'Crusting' has been the chief winter pastime of the past generation of backwoods settlers. It is exactly adapted to men of very tough fibre, good on snow-shoes, yet with no particular skill with the rifle. In this manner the grey-bearded veterans of the settlements have been accustomed all their lives long to replenish their larders in the season of winter scarcity of fresh meats.

While there is much to be said against it, especially owing to the butchery which it occasionally renders possible, 'crusting' has always been a good means of testing the mettle of the pioneer settlers, for none but men of the greatest endurance could be in at the death of many a gallant quarry.

Moreover, the sport is often redeemed by a spice of danger. A bull moose will usually show fight, and kill or maim many of

the dogs, and even charge the hunters, unless he has only been overtaken after a very lengthy chase, when he is generally too exhausted to wage any serious battle with his foes.

The writer knows a New Brunswick guide who nearly lost his life from the attack of a moose in winter. The animal charged and broke his gun to pieces. In the end the hunter killed the moose with a weapon made by binding his sheath-knife to the end of a long stake, thus providing for himself a most effective kind of spear.

XVIII

A BRUSH WITH A CARIBOU

THE caribou or North American reindeer is ordinarily a timid and inoffensive quarry. Every hunter who has surprised a herd is familiar with the characteristic pause caused by the alarm or shock from his sudden appearance ere the whole band, with heads erect and scuts up, get away from danger at a rattling pace.

Yet there are times during the rutting season, especially towards its close, when the stag, under the spur of intense excitement, becomes very quarrelsome and pugnacious, and sometimes he has been known to charge the hunter in a reckless and defiant manner. His prodigious strength and the dagger-like points of his peculiar 'dog killers' or 'war tines' render him a formidable foe if incautiously allowed to get within striking distance.

A well-known New Brunswick guide whom I have often employed, a Micmac Indian noted as a very successful trapper, was once knocked down and received a severe mauling from the sharp hoofs and massive antlers of an infuriated stag. This man was curiously nick-named 'Lucivee Dick'. While hunting in his company I myself had an exciting and dangerous encounter with a large caribou stag near the head-waters of the North-west Miramichi.

My first meeting with 'Lucivee Dick' was in this wise. The sun-down shadows were lengthening across the main thoroughfare of a tiny backwoods village, when I heard a group of ragged young urchins volleying whoops and yells, and vociferating again and again—

'Here comes Lucivee Dick! Good old Lucivee Dick!'

Then there strode along, followed by all the village idlers, a stern Indian trapper, from whose back hung down a bunch of pelts of lucivee, beaver, bear, otter, sable and marten, the result of his long winter exile in the grim northern forest. The man was one of a fast vanishing tribe, a lithe sinewy copper-coloured fellow with impassive weather-roughened features and fierce defiant dark eyes, which curiously enough seemed to take no note of his immediate surroundings. He wore a greasy caribou skin tunic which exhaled the peculiar pungent odour of the smoke of resinous forest fires, and a queer cap made of mink skin out of season, from beneath which

strayed a coarse mass of black matted hair. A mongrel cur kept close behind his heels.

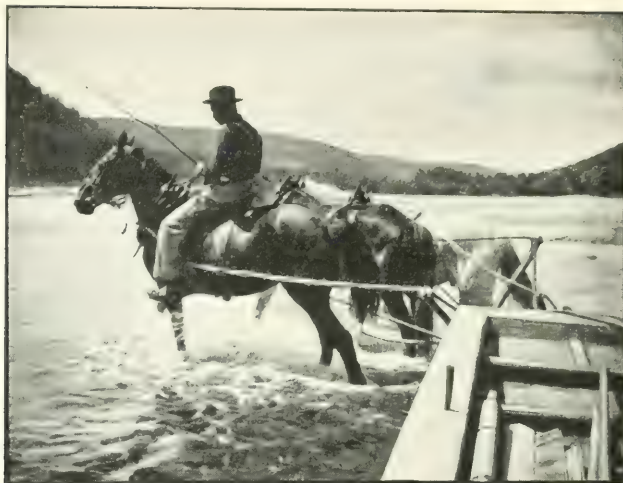
This man is the type of a class that is now dropping out of existence in Eastern Canada. In the next generation his kind will be known no more for ever ; there will be none to replace him. He emerges from the forest at long intervals for a brief visit to the log cabin where his 'squaw' rears his dusky brood : stays until his cash and credit are both exhausted at the village bar-room. His hard-won peltry bartered away for Jamaica rum, groceries and cartridges, he again buries himself in the solitude of the wilderness. At one season he will be found trapping beavers, otters, bears, and



TYPICAL MICMAC INDIAN TRAPPER AND HUNTER IN BIRCH-BARK CANOES—
HOLIDAY ATTIRE.

the smaller fur-bearing animals ; at another he will be shooting caribou and moose for the sake of their hides.

In the village this man is a restless creature quite out of his element. He is not to be judged as one sees him there ; but follow him, as I have done, on the trail of a wounded caribou ; go with him up the rugged hills to surprise an unwary bear ; mark his dilating nostrils and flashing eye when with birch-bark horn he has called up within the reach of your rifle the monarch of the forest—the stag moose ; watch the energy, patience and skill that he displays in the construction of his traps and deadfalls ; see the masterful manner in which he guides his frail birch-bark canoe among the seething rapids of the river ; note his knowledge of



ACROSS STREAM TO FIND A GOOD CHANNEL.

every living creature of the backwoods, from the tiniest bird to the largest beast; witness his never-failing courage, hardihood and woodcraft, and then you will see how superior he is to the vicious semi-criminal village idler, who regards him as his laughing-stock and makes him the butt of his coarse jests.

'Lucivee Dick' had earned his sobriquet from a fierce encounter he had once waged successfully with a savage lynx or 'lucivee', without other weapon than a thick oak stake. He told me of a pair of mighty antlers of which he had caught a transient glimpse at Big Bald Mountain which resembled the winter branches of the rock maple. My ardour to possess such a trophy as Dick so eloquently described prompted me to make an engagement with this hunter on the spot to go out in the succeeding autumn in quest of this stag of many points—for not until the hard frosts of late autumn arrive can the caribou be successfully hunted.

It is a remarkable fact that the rutting season of this deer does not begin until the first cool blasts of October give warning of the approach of winter. Most other wild animals mate in the early spring when the forests beneath the gentle west winds grow redolent of the coming summer.

All summer long the 'bulls' and 'cows' (as they are locally designated) wander singly and separately. During summer fishing trips I have frequently surprised a solitary stag, and sometimes a hind with her yearling calf hiding in some secluded spot, or enjoying a sun-bath on the sand bars of some mountain river.

When October comes the animals collect in a large band in some open space cleared by forest fires, or where some high mountain

pasture, carpeted with yellow mosses and the reindeer lichen, breaks the evergreen forest. Such a spot then becomes a vast battlefield, where bellowing stags fight furiously with one another till the great herd gets split up into a number of smaller ones, each dominated by a master stag who has fought his way fiercely to supremacy.

In his sleepless efforts to maintain his sovereignty, never off his guard for a moment, incessantly driving away less powerful rivals, accepting every challenge from solitary bulls or lords of another harem, the once grand and lordly looking stag soon becomes a sadly ragged object, and is sometimes known to perish of sheer exhaustion.

The annual rendezvous of a large herd was known to Lucivee Dick—a place where open mossy glades alternated with evergreen groves, at the foot of Big Bald Mountain, where caribou loved to make their meeting-place.

Hence it came to pass that when the October hard frosts had changed the tremulous leaves of the maple to bright gold and scarlet, a party of three stood on the shelving beach of the Restigouche River—the writer, and Dick, and a French half-breed Sebattis (short for St. Jean Baptiste)—and the thoughts of one at least of the party flew with eager anticipation to expected adventures among the blue hills that loomed in the distance.

A party of lumber men going into camp for the winter were towing upstream with a team of horses attached to a comfortable house-boat. With these cheerful fellows, continually breaking into songs and forest 'chanties', we cast in our lot for a time, threw aboard our luggage, and tied our slender cedar canoe to the rudder



THE UPSALWICH RIVER.

post. It was a marvellous sight to see the sagacity of the horses in negotiating difficult bits of river. Towpath there was none. The intelligent brutes at times were compelled to clamber like goats over steep slippery masses of rock ; at others they would actually have to swim across stream to find a good channel, towing the vessel all the while. Soon we turned up the Upsalwich River, a tributary of the Restigouche, and parted company with our merry friends, all except a party of three who canoed some distance alongside. They were going to explore some timber limits on the Nepisiquit river. We were now obliged to force the canoe up a strong river current by means of ' poling '. As this is the method by which long and toilsome journeys are performed up mountain rivers, it is worth describing. The men, furnished with long iron-shod poles, pick up the bottom simultaneously and force the canoe along through the strongest water. Sometimes they ascend impossible looking rapids, gaining inch by inch when the ' stern ' man has to hold hard, while with a swift short stroke the man at the bow impels the shivering craft forward. The untiring energy displayed commands admiration as hour after hour the monotonous click of the pole on the river bed marks the slow advance. With a heavily laden canoe twelve to fifteen miles a day cannot often be exceeded. When the hunting country is reached, the iron shoes should be removed, as the click is sure to frighten away any big game that might be loitering in the neighbourhood, and it is surprising how the river draws to its banks animal life of every description from the surrounding wild lands if not frightened by needless noise.

At the end of the fifth day we had got to our destination, and proceeded to build our camp on a knoll commanding an extensive prospect of a long quiet reach of the Nepisiquit River. We made luxurious beds of the tender fragrant tips of spruce branches. A huge fireplace was constructed, and various sized kettles hung from wooden pothooks across the crackling flames. A rough table was also knocked up, and even a sideboard with shelves. This pantry was immediately invaded by little striped squirrels or ' chipmunks ', who scuttled out of their holes, stole a morsel of bread or bacon, and then scuttled madly back again. Slate coloured ' whiskey jacks ' or Canada jays, with fearless bravado, perched on the breakfast potatoes cooling by the pot, and with saucy scolding notes helped themselves on the table itself. We rather delighted in their bold confiding behaviour.

Big drab herons came fishing among arrowy schools of darting troutlets, and at evening time there was a constant plunging of belted kingfishers after their prey. Musk rats plashed about the pool and peered at us with fearless bright eyes. Once we saw the brown

shape of a young moose emerge from the thicket of bushes on the opposite bank and shyly vanish. At night, owls of various species visited our camp fire, at times snapping their beaks ferociously, or indulging in blood-curdling screeches. A long low howl at rare intervals showed us that the grey wolf was not yet extinct in this region.

Large trout were to be had by the most careless method of fishing. No need to cater to a pampered appetite by artificial flies! It were a useless waste of tackle. A bit of rabbit fur wrapped round a Limerick hook, or the pectoral fin of a brother trout, proved lure enough



A PARTY OF THREE WHO CANOED SOME DISTANCE ALONGSIDE.

for large speckled beauties who fought gamely for their lives, leaping out of the water like the salmon. These trout were a welcome addition to our table, and were often followed by juicy young 'partridges' or ruffed grouse, which did not need the stimulus of mountain air to prove delicious eating.

We had certainly got to the heart of the wild backwoods, and the release from all the conventions of civilized life was truly refreshing and altogether delightful. For sheer physical enjoyment nothing surpasses the luxury of a smoke round a forest camp fire after a hard day's work.

A caribou hunt to Big Bald Mountain was now resolved upon. This involved a severe tramp of some score of miles, where in places the going was most difficult, owing to fallen fire-killed timber. Hard climbing up the sides of forest-clad mountains, and steep descents into ravines obstructed by tangled growths of cedars and firs, made the trail at times inconceivably rough and difficult.

Great was our relief when we emerged into what by comparison seemed a park-like country—with pleasant valleys and glades diversified by clusters of evergreen trees, printing their ragged spear-like tops against the blue sky. An experienced eye could tell at a glance that this must be a favourite haunt of caribou at this season of the year. If any confirmation were needed one only had to look around and see almost every young sapling tree partially denuded of its bark, where these deer had rubbed and polished their horns when coming out of the velvet.

The succeeding three days were crowded with unmitigated enjoyment. Not a cloud dimmed the splendour of the sky. The air was crisp and invigorating. The northern woods are strangely beautiful in autumn—as indeed they are at all other times. Still, hunting on the mountains of Eastern Canada is one of the most fascinating of hardy outdoor sports, not only from the attractive nature of the quarry, but because of the glorious wild scenery, and the exciting nature of the chase itself. The climbing is just difficult enough to ensure sufficient fatigue without taxing the powers to the uttermost like the inexorable Rockies.

After some careful spying we came upon a herd led by a fairly well-antlered stag, and were fortunate enough to witness his combat with a solitary wanderer that had evidently been driven out of another herd by the leader. Nothing can be finer than a caribou's attitude when, challenged by a foe, he prepares for battle. It is a splendid sight to witness. He then looks every inch the embodiment of stateliness and strength, whereas at ordinary times he slinks along with his neck level with his body, his head stretched out nearly straight, and his antlers almost resting on his shoulders—by no means a graceful object.

A battle between a well-matched pair of caribou stags is, however, nothing to be compared to a combat such as I have witnessed between two well-grown bull moose. It is true that they charge furiously with lowered horns and bristle at the neck. Sometimes the shock throws one of the animals back on his haunches. Yet after pushing and struggling for upwards of an hour they are rarely severely hurt, seldom even receiving a bloody wound through their thick hide. The branching of the antlers seems to make an effective guard. Of course a flank attack is naturally dreaded, and the great concern of the duellist whose powers are failing is to get away by spinning rapidly round so as not to be caught while turning. He bolts for a couple of hundred yards, but is never vigorously pursued—the victor relying evidently on the moral effect of his defeat.

Having failed in securing a first-class trophy, I determined to journey on to Little Bald Mountain. Here, after preparing a

brushwood camp on the fringe of the forest, we moved out into the open and ascended a grim-looking elevation of bare rock, and swept the surrounding country with field-glasses. We could see the lesser hills undulating below us like mountainous billows. Some were nothing more than bare masses of gneiss rock. The eye could readily trace the sinuous silvery course of the North-west Miramichi River, here in its infancy, but presently to develop into a famous salmon stream and unite its waters with the Big South-west Branch.

We were attracted by the appearance of a park-like valley to the south, dotted with little groves of young spruce and pine. Hardly had we entered this valley, proceeding in Indian file, than I heard the snort or bark of an unseen bull caribou. Giving

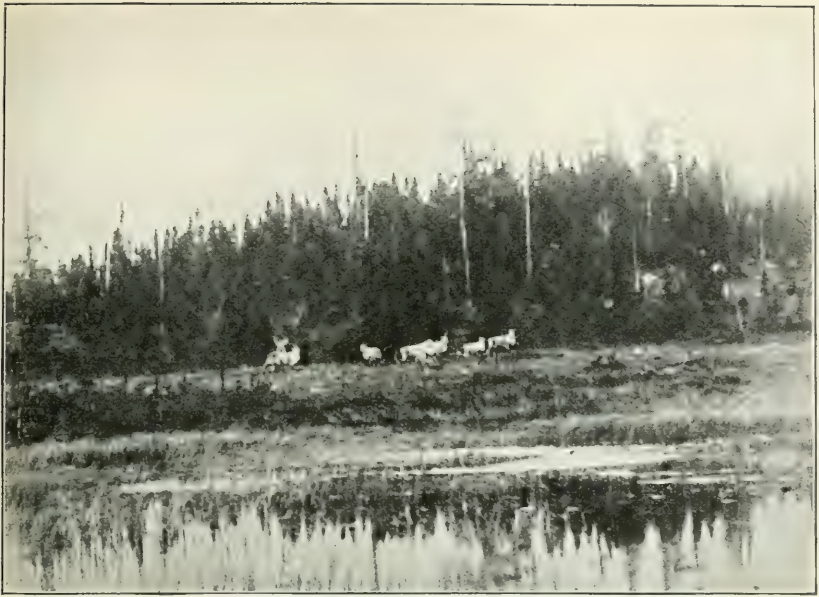


CARIBOU CALF ABOUT SIX MONTHS OLD (A PET).

a low whistle to the men we all dropped in our tracks. Above the low scrub the only part of us visible to the quarry was the pack which each man carried on his back. Mine was done up in an enormous canvas bag containing a blanket, changes of underclothing, small tins of canned meats, and other camp necessities. This was securely fastened to my shoulders. Suddenly the belt of spruce in front of me swayed and opened, and a lordly stag caribou with a pair of magnificent spreading antlers stepped out in that fine manner which always denotes excitement or alarm. I immediately fired at the coveted head, but it was at the same instant lowered for another charge and my bullet went high and sliced up the animal's left ear. Advancing to meet him two accidents happened at once—the

breech action of my rifle failed to work, and encumbered with my load I tripped and fell prostrate over the trunk of a fallen tree.

It seemed to me that the animal could not make out clearly what I was ; at all events in this inglorious attitude I sustained his charge. Happily his fury was vented on the canvas bag on my back, which was torn to ribbons, and he passed over me with parts of it attached to his antlers. Like Fitz-James I arose unwounded but breathless. I now succeeded in getting open the breech block. The frenzied stag was once more lowering his head and blustering about, confronting me in a menacing posture. Pawing up the soil with his great splayed hoofs, his sides heaving, jets of steam rising from his nostrils through the frosty morning air as he snorted defiance, mane bristling, and green eyes snapping with rage, he presented a fine picture of the very incarnation of evil fury. Had I allowed him this time to get past my guard, the result would almost certainly have been fatal to me. Nerved by the peril, I took a steady aim at the shoulder ; at the same time I ran towards the spot. The stag reeled to and fro, sometimes falling on his knees, and at last plunged wildly forward and fell full length on the blood-stained moss. So ended the career of this vindictive and resolute beast. Then indeed I lived some of those moments which repay the hunter for long days of hope deferred and unrequited toil—if indeed he needs any repayment, and does not find life in the Candian forest a sufficient reward in itself. For the antlers secured were no mean prize, and their brown curves still lead memory pleasantly back to the glowing coals of the camp fire in the scented pine woods with ‘ Lucivee Dick ’ drawing at a well-seasoned clay pipe recounting his yarns of hardships and triumphs of the chase, and of the wild beasts of the forest and their marvellous ways, for all of whom he evidently had a loving sympathy. For instance, he discussed the short temper of my very pugnacious friend by the remark that he had evidently been deposed and driven out of some herd by the master bull, and was soured by solitary habits ; further that caribou differ as widely as men in courage and boldness—and at times like human beings go stark raving mad. I generally assented with approval to ‘ Lucivee Dick’s ’ conclusions, and in this instance made no exception ; for otherwise how could I account for the extraordinary boldness of a deer whose conduct is generally characterized by fits of stupid tameness or equally stupid panic ?



A HERD OF NEWFOUNDLAND CARIBOU.

XIX

DEER STALKING ON THE NEWFOUNDLAND BARRENS

COUNTLESS lakes and lakelets; innumerable picturesque salmon streams; broad stretches of upland moors and marshes roamed over by restless herds of caribou; a bold and curiously indented seacoast fringed with islands, which are the breeding place of myriads of wild fowl: all these make the island of Newfoundland a happy hunting ground for the sportsman and naturalist.

He who has once carried his rifle across the interior of the island is never likely to forget the experience. The beauty, wildness and solitude of the country; the indefinable charm of exploring the inmost recesses of an untrodden wilderness; of wandering unrestrained across dry elevated plains where deer stalking may be pursued in all its fascinating perfection; the long clear standing shots where often the unbroken level prints the outline of the quarry clearly against the sky: all combine to make still hunting in the natural deer parks of Newfoundland one of the most attractive of sports. Here on these high mountain pastures the caribou appear to be holding their own—one of the few instances where the big game of America is not decreasing in numbers.

So abundant is the game that one can take his own time in selecting his heads, and only requires to be on his guard lest he may be tempted to take a life which he might afterwards regret. For it may be very galling when one has shot the full complement which the law allows to be obliged to hold one's hand when a monarch



DEVIL'S DANCING POINT EN ROUTE TO GRAND LAKE.

of the plains afterwards comes into view bearing a record set of antlers—perhaps to be for ever after remembered with regret.

On the Newfoundland plains, stags are constantly encountered carrying grand and stately antlers so magnificent in size and symmetry that they cannot be equalled elsewhere in the wide world.

The fine development of the Newfoundland caribou may be attributed to the abundance of food easily within reach, especially the luxuriant growth of caribou lichen with which whole plains are frequently carpeted ankle deep. Something is also due to the fine shelter afforded during the winter months by the southern portions of the island of which the herds habitually avail themselves, observing semi-annual migrations as regular as those of the wild fowl on the coasts.

The sportsman desirous of good heads should arrive on the island before the middle of September. A close season stops hunting from October 1 until October 20. After that date,

although there is better hunting to be had, the weather is apt to grow very inclement. It is well to use as his highway into the interior one of those several immense lakes which are one of the most remarkable features of Newfoundland. Lakes of all sizes are found universally over the whole country in an abundance



CAMPING ON HUMBER.

scarcely to be credited. They are to be met with not only in the valleys, but on the highest ridges, and on the summits of the loftiest hills.

In fact the interior is simply a vast network of lakes and lakelets defying all attempts to name or number. Of every size, from fifty feet to fifty miles in length, they lie amidst the open barren reflecting the open sky, or in the forest lonely and silent, known to none save the solitary trapper.

There can be no more charming road into a wilderness country than a lake or river stealing into the scenery with many a picturesque curve, now winding among open glades, now meandering between steep lofty wooded banks, or hiding in the deep valley it has furrowed for itself through the countless ages.

The largest lake of the island is Grand Lake, with a superficial area of 196 square miles. It contains an island 22 miles long and 5 miles in breadth. This island has a lake which in turn holds another island. This also has a lake which contains an island,

and so on—like a nest of Japanese boxes. From the shores of Grand Lake the high tableland, where the herds of caribou wander, can be reached by three or four hours of hard climbing up the side of a thickly wooded declivity. Once arrived on the summit there is the glorious tableland swept by the thrilling breath of the mountain top, stretching away on every hand far as the eye can reach, cut up by deeply worn deer tracks, diversified by countless lakelets, by islands of dwarfed evergreen trees, and by low undulating ridges of rugged hills.

This champaign country is the natural home of the caribou, and ministers to all his wants, including his necessity for boundless wandering. Beneath him, carpeting the plain, lies his favourite food, the crisp grey caribou moss. When the winter snows cover this too deeply, he can browse on the 'old men's beards', or the black fibrous moss hanging from almost every tree trunk. These barrens seem to exist purposely to furnish him with a magnificent pleasaunce.

In many respects, Red Indian Lake exceeds the rest in attractiveness.¹ It was here that the now extinct tribe of Beothic Indians loved to camp and hunt in the brief but beautiful Newfoundland summer. The Beothics,² a branch of the Algonquin race, were so barbarous and treacherous in their dealings with the early settlers, that they brought on themselves a war of extermination, which resulted in their extinction. After many cold-blooded murders, it became the practice of the white population to shoot an Indian at sight, as if he were a dangerous kind of wild animal.

The usual remedy for Indian troubles was ruthlessly applied—extermination. Short was the shrift granted even to the squaws and children when hunters surprised an encampment hidden away in the forest, or in some nook among the cliffs of the seacoast. This tribe were famed as excellent hunters. The caribou which made their homes on the shores of the lake and its tributaries, ducks and geese in vast numbers during the summer, and generally speaking inexhaustible fish in the brooks which feed the lake, yielded them an easy and pleasant means of living. During the

¹ The hunter looking for big antlers will soon have to cut Red Indian Lake out of his field of operations, as the Harmsworth Company are invading its precincts in their quest of pulp wood. The upper reaches of the Gander, Terra Nova and Clode Sound rivers; in fact the whole of the central portion of the interior, as well as a large part of the northern peninsula, will offer the greatest attractions to the adventurous sportsman seeking heads of forty points and upwards.

² The lake is named after this tribe. On its shores they found the deposits of red ochre by the assistance of which they dyed their features, to a deeper red than nature intended.

fine season of the year life was one long prodigious feast. Even in the stern period of winter, good vension could at any time be had



GALLANT SWIMMERS.

from the herds of caribou wandering on the neighbouring barren lands.

There is something about the lake that suggests caribou and

Indians to one who knows the habits of both. It has bold rocky points, and promontories enclosing fair soft curving little bays, where the woods descend with gentle slope to a narrow margin of gravelly beach. It has occasional meadows on its borders which are favourite summer haunts of the deer. These are dotted here and there with clumps of brushwood, and usually watered by some mountain brook which with soft murmurous babble empties itself into a brown oily 'steady' (still-water) flecked with yellow lilies slowly winding a circuitous path towards the lake.

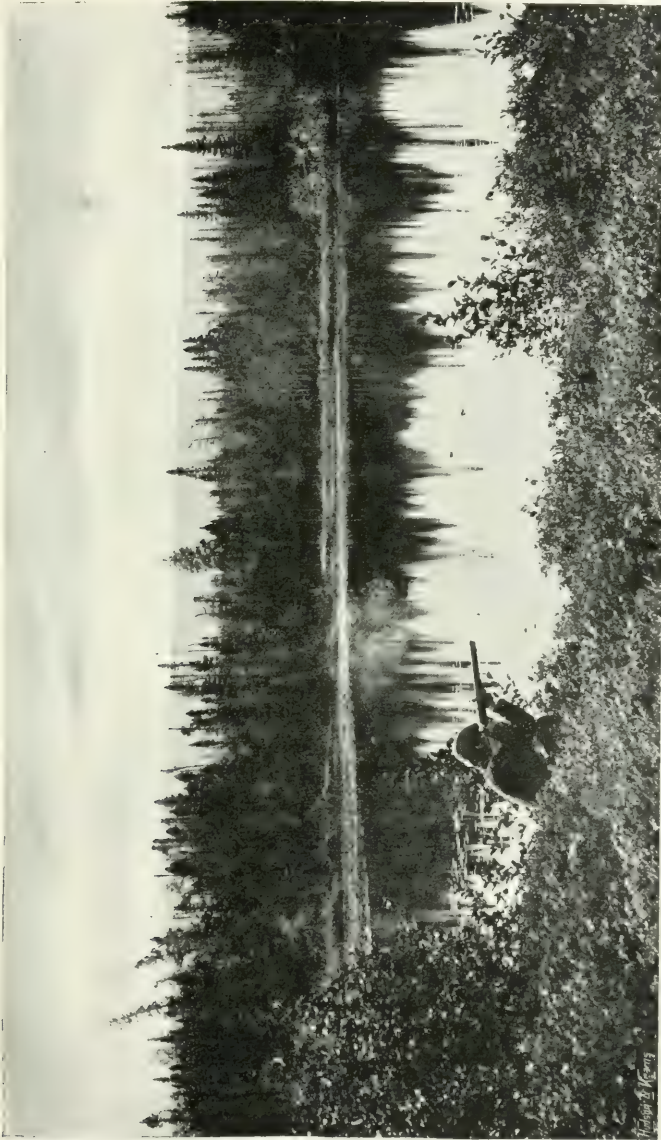
The caribou come down to its shores from the neighbouring barrens. All through the summer the cry of the 'twillick', or yellow-legged plover, keeps time to the lapping of the waves on its rocky shores, and the rustle of the western breeze through the scrubby growth of the dwarfed and ragged evergreen forest. From early May to mid September, the shores of the lake swarm with wild geese, and the midsummer night is filled with the discordant cries of the 'wabby', or red-throated loon, and the harsh call of the great northern diver. Emphatically a lonely spot—that has for its background an uninhabited wilderness stretching away for many a league—where reigns a tense silence, save when on rare occasions broken by these weird and disconsolate notes of the northern solitude.

Most enchanting can Red Indian Lake appear at times—either when its crystal waters array themselves in the borrowed glories of sunrise or the golden splendour of sunset; or on quiet nights radiant with stars; or when the autumn mists, reeling before the sunrise into rosy shattered spirals, are moving across its surface like the remnants of a defeated army, unveiling a glittering expanse as smooth as glass.

Toward September 20, stags in large numbers may be looked for in the vicinity of this interesting lake—which, however, is only one of many other equally attractive hunting grounds. The hunter has ten days before him wherein to secure his trophies ere the close season shuts off his sport for a brief interim. By the middle of September the southerly movement of the deer fairly sets in. They will be met with after thus traversing the island in their periodical migration from north to south. Should the weather be rough and cold their march is accelerated. Should fine and sunny days prevail the animals linger and loiter on their route.

All the great lakes of the interior lie across their path. They are seen to cross them even when the waters are lashed into wild fury by autumn gales, for the caribou is a gallant and tireless swimmer. Now and then the bleached skeleton of a drowned

deer is thrown up on some gravelly beach, but this does not happen often.



A SHOT AT EVENING.

First in the march of the great army come the does and fawns. Sometimes for days not a single stag, other than a pricket, may be seen among them. There are barren does without a fawn,

and occasionally there are does seen accompanied by two fawns. When this is the case, the doe is generally only a foster mother to one of them.

The September sportsman most frequently encounters the large stags roaming singly. They present a far different appearance from the animals he may have met in the summer months. The neck has grown stouter, as if strengthened by Nature to bear up the new massive antlers she has bestowed; the hair on the neck and breast has grown extremely coarse and long, and from a rusty drab has turned into pure white. More especially is this true of the northern deer arriving from the extreme north of the island. Though all stags in September carry white necks, yet the colour of the body varies very considerably. There is a variety of a light-brown colour, which generally includes the fattest deer and carries the best antlers.

Then there is the white stag, more or less white all over, even in summer and autumn. These are supposed to belong to the extreme north of the island. There is also the dark slate-grey stag with white hind quarters and a head almost black, which attains the largest size of any, and carries a different type of antlers from the rest.

All, however, grow light in colour in the winter, under the protective care of Nature, assimilating to their surroundings. When the natives come out on the plains to take their toll off the herds in winter they find their game quite white. They clothe themselves in white moleskin suits, and even have their guns enclosed in cases of the same material, understanding the value of the mimicry of Nature's work for their own purposes.

In the spring the caribou is a dirty greyish white. The hair comes off in handfuls at the touch, and easily breaks off short, forming ragged patches. At this season the meat is poor; the hide is full of holes made by the 'bots' of the deer flies. Very often the scent of the animals is utterly destroyed by these pests lodging in their nostrils, and under the palate in the throat. Yet the caribou carry no vermin as do foxes, beaver, and many other wild creatures. The hide is invariably cleanly in this respect.

The antlers of the Newfoundland caribou, generally speaking, are not in prime order until the middle of September. The old stags lose the velvet first, but an occasional animal is seen with ragged strips of velvet adhering even as late as September 20. The antlers are dropped about the middle of November, except in the case of barren does and hinds with fawns, which preserve them intact till the spring.

The habit of threshing the antlers against the alder bushes,

which exude a reddish brown sap when barked, serves to give them a beautiful chestnut varnish, which much enhances their beauty.

The frequent thaws and rainstorms of the Newfoundland winter



ONLY A TWO-YEAR-OLD.

often are the means of forming a firm crust over the surface of the snow upon which the caribou can easily travel without breaking through. In the winter the frog of the enormous hoof becomes completely absorbed, so that its shape grows concave, while very

sharp, shell-like edges grow well out on the margins, assisting the animal immensely in crossing frozen lakes and scaling the steep sides of slippery rock precipices. The constant alertness of eye, nostril and ear, is very remarkable, as if a watch were never relaxed by these timid creatures for unseen foes. The hinds with fawns wear an indescribably anxious expression, which is so foreign to the animal kingdom that I am inclined to attribute it to the relentless pursuit of man, and not to the fear of beasts of prey. When an enemy is sighted but not winded, it is the curious habit of the caribou, instead of merely turning its head for better observation, to turn the whole body broadside to its foe, thus giving the hunter his most coveted opportunity for a deadly shot.

The foes of the caribou other than man are not numerous. Although the big grey wolf—that fierce enemy of the calves of the great deer—is still reported on the northern plains in considerable numbers, it is now seldom encountered in the interior. Having formerly existed in large packs, it is supposed that a migration must have occurred across the winter ice-floes of the Belle Isle Strait to the coasts of Labrador.

Even such a redoubtable beast of prey as the grey wolf could at no time make certain of a successful foray upon an animal endowed with so great speed and endurance as a well-grown caribou. A trustworthy old Newfoundland trapper relates that he once witnessed an exciting chase by wolves of a couple of 'prickets', or two-year-old caribou stags. Their long, swinging trot availed them to keep at a safe distance, until from the nature of the ground they were driven to double on their course. Both sides doubtless were going at their utmost pace. At this spot he measured the bounds of the caribou and found them eighteen feet, while the wolves only cleared fourteen, so that the caribou easily gained on them when close pressed. So much ahead were the caribou at times that they rolled over on their backs in the snow to cool their panting and heaving sides, and seemed to gather new strength, and refreshment from the act.

It is a common sight in a caribou country to see numberless fir saplings, about one inch in diameter, peeled and destroyed, from being incessantly used as rubbing posts to help get rid of the velvet. As the horns grow thoroughly hardened, they are boldly rubbed against tougher materials. The rough bark of some old yellow birch, or the brown wrinkled bowl of a hemlock, more readily assists them to cleanse the antlers from the irritating substance. The best antlers are carried by stags in the prime of life from four to eight years old. They are frequently met with showing over forty points. Indeed, rare stags have been reported as carrying

between fifty and sixty points. The illustration shows the writer's best head with thirty-seven points.

Should the reader desire to know just how it was secured, let him accompany two hunters for a couple of hours to a typical Newfoundland barren. They stand upon the pleasant shores of a lake lying upwards of a mile above sea level. It is the last week of September, bright with the warmth of the dying summer—that tranquil autumn time when all nature seems to rest and bask in a mellow radiance which is the farewell glow before the northern summer comes to an abrupt conclusion.



From a picturesque encampment among silver birches and pines, you look across a narrow inlet of the lake over the sun-dried yellow herbage of a flat meadow, the further side of which is seen to be fringed with a belt of pine, firs and black spruce. Beyond this there rises a rough and rugged mountain on the nearer side bearing traces of strange ruin. Wounds and scars, of the age of the ice period perhaps, appear still raw. It looks as if the skin and flesh had been torn from these precipitous mountain sides but yesterday. Boulders wrenched and filed from the scarped rock are strewn on the ledges in crushed heaps.

At the edge of an island of dwarf fir trees where the hunters can command every portion of the open space spread before them, the two men pause and examine fresh hoof-prints in a deeply worn deer 'lead'. A dappled herd soon come in sight moving

slowly, cropping the tips of the shrubbery and the soft grey lichens in their path; once in a while stopping to sniff the air and peering with great round eyes in every direction. The company is made up of does, fawns, 'prickets' (two-year-olds), and a couple of three-year-old stags in their rear with antlers of no merit. Always alert and observant, the does are the keenest to scent danger, acting as sentinels for the lazy stags. Many a young fawn goes gambolling and frisking like a lamb in the month of May by the side of its dam. They pass to the leeward of the two men, until all of a sudden every ear is cocked at full tension, every nostril is distended,



HERD OF DEER SWIMMING IN RED INDIAN LAKE.

as they detect that strange taint of the air which notifies to their keen perception the presence of a human foe—although yet at a great distance off. A momentary pause till an unmistakable whiff convinces the most dubious. Instantly with a sound like the charge of a squadron of cavalry, the herd is off at a rattling pace with their white scuts erect in the air. After two or three bounds they all settle into a long swinging trot. Now and again they turn for a short space, apparently to convince themselves that the danger was a real one.

After a brief interval has elapsed, at a point in the belt of spruces



GERALLOCHING.

in front the boughs sway and open, and there steps out into the open an immense doe with white neck and rump and bluish-grey sides, followed by a lordly stag carrying a grand head. These two are not on the lead commanded by the rifle of the sportsman, and a long *détour* is necessary, to remove all risk of giving the animals a whiff of wind.

In such spaces of meadow land, recessed between mountain bastions, 'the winds have a quare way of blowin' from all parts at oncet', as a Newfoundland hunter once remarked. The men are clad in light brown suits which are very near the monotone of



A HERD OF CARIBOU : REID'S RAILWAY IN THE FOREGROUND.

colour of the tawny sun-scorched shrubbery and fulvous grasses. The doe walks ahead and her vigilance compels the men to be very slow and stealthy in their advance. The great ears keep working; her nostrils sniff the air repeatedly; her eyes seek all points of the compass by turns. While that mood lasts the men remain as utterly moveless as the boulders on the shore of the lake. A deep but narrow inlet of the lake, winding in half circles through the meadow, lies directly across their path. Slowly and deliberately their round fat bodies, projecting high above the surface, come over the water. Their great splayed hoofs make swimming an easy matter. Each limb is a perfect paddle. Their inevitable

ease in the attempt reminds one of the swimming of wild fowl. The doe emerges first and shakes glittering drops from her sides, just as a huge Newfoundland dog might do. The stag does the same, but the weight of his massive horns causes him to stagger and reel in a comical fashion, as if he had almost lost his balance. He does not appear to have quite got accustomed to the twenty-eight pounds of new bone on his forehead.

'These are northern deer, sir,' says one of the men, handing to the other an express rifle. 'Wait till you can take him behind the shoulder, sir.'

Will that doe never relax her vigilance? There! she has given the alarm and is off. Her indolent lord and master before deigning to follow looks round to satisfy himself that there is cause for flight.

Suddenly he gives a start which shows he is aware that something is undoubtedly wrong.

Nothing can be finer than the manner of a large stag when excited and alarmed. However listless he may appear at ordinary times, he then seems the very embodiment of strength and grace.

Looking truly magnificent, with head erect, the noble creature pauses broadside to the foe. A cloud has been drifting across the sun, but suddenly breaking away, a rift of yellow sunlight plays upon the brown branching antlers in all their proud beauty. That is his last look around at the environment of awful and infinite grandeur which forms the background to the drama. Two short sharp reports of the rifle echo among the hills and the stately caribou plunges wildly forward, and falling full length in the blood-stained moss soon lies dead on his native barren.

XX

'HELD UP' BY A CARIBOU STAG

ON a recent shooting trip, far away in the interior of Newfoundland, I had an attendant guide who possessed more than local fame. He was the hero of a desperate encounter with a frenzied caribou stag, with which he voluntarily closed in battle armed only with a hunting-knife. The story is worth telling.

At the end of the rutting season occasional stags seem to forget that they were ever afraid of man, and become really dangerous should the hunter allow them past his guard. Such reckless characters are known as 'musky' stags, because they emit from a large gland a very pungent and offensive exhalation like strong musk. At this time their flesh is so nauseating as to be perfectly uneatable. They roam about intermittently uttering a short, hoarse bellow and a kind of snort or guttural bark, when they are apt to prove troublesome customers enough to one not armed with a rifle.

Their weapons of offence, besides the formidable antlers, are their wonderful hoofs, splayed and broad-spreading at all times. In the autumn the hoof becomes edged with thin layers of sharp horn like broken oyster shells, a wonderful provision of Nature to enable the animal to travel securely across frozen lakes and along the edge of slippery rock precipices.

It was the afternoon of one of those typical autumn days when rays of sunshine, darting through the gaps between the slowly driving cloud masses, flood the scene with limpid light, while next moment woods and water grow grey and sombre, and big drops of rain drum heavily on the bare rocks and drench the bushes with moisture. Harry, the guide, with his brother Alfred, had been out for venison, and now, burdened with heavy loads slung over their shoulders, the two men were slowly working their way across a circular savannah, from the edges of which the land undulated away in a succession of flinty billows towards the sky-line. They were making for one of the large lakes, on the shores of which was their birch-bark wigwam and the little craft which formed their only connecting link with home and civilization.

Suddenly the well-known note of an angry 'musky' stag reached the practised ear of Harry, who gave the customary low warning whistle to his companion. Both sank slowly to the ground, quickly disencumbered themselves of their burdens, and proceeded to examine their firearms. On came the stag along a well-broken deer

'lead' or path until presently he stood confronting the two men—a magnificent animal, snorting with rage, pawing up the stiff soil until showers of débris fell over his broad brown back. He presented a perfect picture of evil fury incarnate.

Harry levelled his gun at the heart of the stag, but at the pressure of the trigger there came no report—only the snapping of the



'BOTH MEN WERE DRIVEN TO MAKE A HASTY RETREAT.'

percussion-cap. The powder in the nipple of the antiquated weapon was wet from contact with the rain-laden bushes.

An attempt on the part of Alfred to finish the career of the stag ended with a similar fiasco. Thereupon, as though recognizing their helplessness, the enraged animal immediately charged home, so that both men were driven to make a hasty retreat. Happily for them a large clump of 'tucking bushes' offered a convenient, and for a time an effective shelter.

'Tucking bushes' are peculiar to the sub-Arctic regions of America. They are simply stunted spruce and fir trees, and are matted together so compactly as to sustain the weight of a man, who can walk upright over them as if treading on the shields of an unbroken Greek phalanx. No ray of sunlight can penetrate their dark recesses, but it is possible for a man to crawl about among their twisted stems and obtain shelter from some driving storm, or, as in this present instance, from some menacing and formidable antagonist.¹

Over the interlaced tops of the shaggy 'tucking bushes' the bellowing stag strode fiercely, sinking through at almost every step, and vainly seeking to get within striking distance of the intended victims of his fury. The men, after awhile, both became badly tangled up in the dense cover. Nothing daunted, however, they essayed to pick out the rain-saturated powder as well as they were able from the nipples of the gun and put on fresh caps. This done, they once more fired at the stag, but the weapons again failed to explode.

The situation of the two hunters now became desperate in the extreme. Their adversary, by his keen sense of scent, could easily discover their whereabouts, although they were hidden among the roots of the bushes, and soon it seemed inevitable that he would stamp out their lives with his sharp hoofs.

Seeing the imminence of their peril they established a mutual understanding that, whenever the stag approached closely to one of the men, the other would explode a percussion-cap, whereupon the enraged beast would turn his attention in the direction of the new sound. The animal was thus kept going to and fro like a shuttlecock off a pair of racquets. At last, however, having exploded all their caps, the desperate men felt that they were drawing towards the end of their tether. What was to be done?

The assaults of the stag were continued with unabated vigour, and every moment the brothers expected to feel his hoofs penetrating the bushes and crushing out their lives. Presently Alfred, hard pressed by the stag, made a run of about fifty yards to a juniper tree in the open, up which he clambered in hot haste. This tree has fantastic feathery branches, which, at a little distance, give it an outline curiously like a Chinese pagoda or leaning tower. In this instance the resemblance was heightened by the fact that the tree was not quite upright, but leaned over at a noticeable angle. To the horror of both men, as Alfred climbed higher to avoid the blows from the forefeet of the stag—delivered with lightning-like rapidity

¹ It is a curious fact that the main stems of many of these dwarfed trees, upwards of thirty years old, do not exceed one inch in diameter.

—the slender tree began to slowly bend downwards beneath his weight! Inch by inch, lower and lower, the tree swayed and bent with its human freight—slowly down towards the irate animal, which pounded away at the bark just below the unfortunate guide. It was evidently only a question of a few moments, when the man would be at the mercy of the stag; then doubtless he would be



'THE TREE SWAYED AND BENT WITH ITS HUMAN FREIGHT.'

torn by the dagger-like tines of the spreading antlers and, perhaps, pounded out of all resemblance to human form by the terrible splayed hoofs, with their knife-like edges.

At this critical moment a heroic resolve sent Harry out into the open to wage a duel to the death with the fierce animal—a duel in which victory meant the deliverance of his brother from a terrible

fate, and defeat the certain destruction of both of them. Quickly drawing his long hunter's knife from the scabbard which hung at his leathern belt, he advanced boldly, with the bright steel glistening in his left hand. When he was halfway to the tree the caribou charged down upon him with a hoarse bellowing roar dreadful to hear. Fortunately the hunter was practised in quick movements, and managed to dodge the first deadly rush. Then came a period during which man and beast hovered round one another, fencing for an opening, and when at length the two combatants closed the man managed to hold on to one horn with his right hand, while he endeavoured to stab the beast in the neck with his disengaged arm. The vast strength of the stag—at this season of the year in the prime of condition and frenzied with rage—was too much for him, however, and he was thrown to the ground, falling on his back and receiving some nasty thrusts from the sharp tines of the brow antlers. But never for a moment did he relax his hold on the horn; and at this juncture he remembered a trick he had learned in his youth for throwing domestic cattle. With his right hand pulling on the left horn of the stag he twisted the nose up in the contrary direction with his left, thus exerting a telling leverage on the animal's neck.

In the *mêlée*, however, his knife fell to the ground, leaving him unarmed.

His brother, who had been watching this uneven combat with spellbound interest, now pulled himself together, dropped from the yielding tree, and, after recovering the hunting-knife, ran to his side. Locked together in a fearful trial of strength, man and stag, striving desperately for the mastery, went swaying this way and that, until, with one supreme effort, Harry sent the great stag down on his knees, while Alfred kept stabbing away in the vicinity of the ribs, making small impression, however, the blade of the knife not being of sufficient length to reach the vital organs. Finally, with one desperate drawing cut, he passed the sharp blade across the throat, and made a lunge at the spine.

These last strokes decided the hitherto doubtful conflict in favour of the men. The great beast plunged heavily forward on the blood-stained moss, while his life slowly ebbed away in a red stream, and Harry, breathless, but only slightly hurt, rose from that perilous battle-ground. Never had hunter been in more imminent danger. Never was man's life more bravely risked for another.

After an interval, in order to recover themselves from their exertions, the hunters decapitated their late enemy. It was a magnificent head, with forty-two points, and after adding the trophy to their load they set out for their camp once more, and this time reached it in safety.

The two men are not altogether hunters; they spend part of their time fishing on the deep, and part in cultivating a little clearing by courtesy called a farm. However, they often hire their services in the fine autumn weather to sportsmen for a few weeks in the wilds, and after hunting hours in the field are over, when at



'A FEARFUL TRIAL OF STRENGTH.'

length the welcome pipe is enjoyed at the camp fire, the story of how Harry defeated the 'musky' stag is often called for, while in all the settlements his name is honoured. A pleasant smile greets him from the village lasses, and once in a while a mother, hoping for similar courage in her offspring, will name some pink lump of humanity after the hero of the caribou plains.



THE LITTLE TOWN OF BATHURST, AT MOUTH OF NEPISQUIIT. OUTFITTING AND STARTING-POINT FOR TRIP UP RIVER

XXI

A BLACK BEAR HUNT

THE log fire burnt cheerily, shooting aloft showers of red sparks into the velvety darkness of the summer night, lighting up the slanting tops of the pines and the black arrow-heads of the fir trees which girthed the forest camp. The flames, as they greedily fed into the centres of the great rock-maple trunks, hissed and crackled, throwing dancing discs of light over the coarse masses of shaggy black hair and the tawny faces of my two Indian hunters, Noel (Christmas) and Nicola Glode (Cloud), as they sleepily watched the wreaths of blue smoke curling upwards from their pipes, and assumed that grave impressive inscrutable pose of countenance which is characteristic of the North American Indian in his attitude of ease wherever you find him.

Bounded abruptly on all sides but the river by the naked stems of the forest, our camp was pitched in a clearing on a point of land jutting out into a famous trout pool known as the Devil's Elbow, where, deep in the innermost recesses of the backwoods, the impetuous Nepisiquit, most enchanting of all the woodland streams of New Brunswick, hushes its brawling for a brief space and grows calm in an oily sheet of sable foam-flecked still-water. Stern and savage, yet lovely in its wild wayward grace, there stretched around us on every hand the unbroken wilderness which covers the whole of the central portion of northern New Brunswick, attain-

ing to a diameter of upwards of a hundred miles. It is a tract covered in large areas by dark evergreen forests and mossy cedar swamps. It is broken by many shallow lakes with broad margins of low-lying marshes covered with a dense growth of cotton grass, rushes, sphagnum, Indian cup and arrow-head, frequently scored by a network of deeply worn deer-paths. In the more elevated portions there often occur many level savannah-like stretches of tableland crowded with luxuriant bracken, kalmia, and berry-bearing bushes.



HOUSE-BOAT. A STOP TO FEED THE HORSES.

Sometimes these dry upland plains assume curious terrace-like forms hemmed in on parallel sides by naked ridges of precipitous rock, while from the other extremities the woods gently slope away to other bench-like plateaus of similar character.

This tract is further varied by open spaces vast and drear, known as the 'burnt barrens', exceedingly wild and desolate, where the travelling is painfully tedious, and the barren aridity is such as is scarcely ever seen equalled elsewhere. Here some forgotten fire has once ravaged the evergreen forest. Spectre-like the gaunt white skeleton stems of once noble pines and hemlocks stand sometimes singly and sometimes in groups, at every variety of angle, often leaning and creaking against their comrades, their ruin adding a fresh touch of melancholy to the scene such as the sight of wreckage sometimes lends to the sea. There are yet other fire-swept spaces where, as if still covering under the hot breath of the flames, the

earth seems powerless to reclothe her nakedness save in tattered shreds and patches of dwarf scrub.

The hunter pursuing his game in these wilds often climbs to the naked summit of one of those sugar-loaf mountains, bare flattened domes of rock, which occur as they do in the Maine forests at frequent intervals. From such a point of vantage he drinks in a glorious wild view of forest and lake. The bare hills which undulate below him look like a tossing ocean suddenly stilled. The valleys which divide them are seen to be overlaced with the silver courses of innumerable brooks, some of which, reaching back into solitudes seldom trodden even by the lonely trapper, attain to considerable volume, and at length swell into ample rivers. Another view shows one vast canopy of the mingled light and dark-green foliage of evergreen and hardwood forest, where the eye vainly essays to trace the forms of individual trees.

This broad tract of primeval untamed nature rejoices the heart of the trapper by its unlimited possibilities of fur, and is dear to the sportsman who, seeking the coveted trophies of the hunt now and again, here attains the *ne plus ultra* of his wishes.

It is the natural home of the giant moose, roaming the undisputed monarch of his giant demesne, wading the shallow tarns and the cedar swamps on giraffe-like stilted legs, with long prehensile tapir-like lip cropping the tender tops of the young deciduous trees; 'yarding' in the winter time on the more sheltered hill-sides. Here also roam bands of that most ancient type of deer, the robust, thick-legged caribou, capable of sustaining life upon glacial wastes on bitter lichens and sour mosses; crossing the winter snow-drifts and frozen lakes by means of the wide-spreading, hair-cushioned foot furnished with curious shell-like cutting edges, which is the beautiful Arctic adaptation to the rugged country over which they roam. Here in a few sheltered valleys feed small companies of the red or Virginia deer, creatures as delicate in appearance as the fallow deer, as slender and graceful in limb and head, but still able to thrive in spite of their stern winter environment.

That most weird of the many discordant notes of the northern wilderness—the night howling of the big grey wolf, until recently here mingled with the eerie hootings of the owl and the wild demoniac laughter of the loon. This most fierce enemy of the calves of the great deer, however, has of late quietly slipped out of this region; not becoming extinct by the hand of man, but by that noiseless way which wild animals have of fading out of sight, ever retiring into deeper solitudes as their haunts become encroached upon and breeding grounds disturbed.

While the wolf has disappeared the black bear is as abundant as ever in this region. The sequestered feeding grounds which it affords, alternating with inaccessible mountain fastnesses, are exactly adapted to the secluded habits of this stealthy animal. In Europe, on the other hand, it is curious to note that the wolf has outlasted bruin everywhere.

Even where bears are fairly numerous there is only one season of the year when they can be hunted with the sure prospect of success. This falls in the early autumn, when vast quantities of ripe berries, particularly the huckleberry and blueberry, have come to their maturity. The saccharine juices of these wild fruits furnish the supply of fat requisite for the long winter hibernation.



THE WHITE-TAILED VIRGINIA DEER, A FREQUENT VICTIM OF THE BLACK BEAR.

(Photo by Jane Turnbull.)

In such broad open spaces as are found along the upper reaches of the Nepisiquit River, also upon the bare hills hemming in the basin of the Patapedia, a tributary of the Restigouche, in the province of Quebec, successful stalking is at this season only a matter of wariness and skill. The usually sly and sneaking fellows boldly come out into the open for three or four hours after sunrise and throughout all the late afternoon and evening, in order to feed greedily on the delicious wild fruits there found in astonishing abundance.

When not engaged in feeding they frequent the long narrow damp mossy ravines which are often found abutting the river.

Sometimes, however, they conceal themselves in the watercourses which descend from the forest into the open, forming with their steeply wooded sides a sort of covered way. A peculiarly soft subdued light pervades these coverts, which are usually composed of dense copses of black spruce mingled with cedar and hemlock. Where the deep cool verdure of the sponge-like sphagnum bathes the tree roots with its chilling moisture the bear loves to make his lair. Here, fringed with luxuriant masses of cinnamon and royal ferns, he sleeps throughout the heated hours of the day. The sportsman does not often see him, it is true, in such a lurking-place, though he often puts him out, leaving behind him a rank and strongly offensive smell. It is truly astonishing when disturbed with what silence and celerity he manages his retreat, seldom allowing of a chance to cover him even with the rifle held at the ready.

Wherever forest fires have recently spread—and it must be said that they keep recurring with astonishing and regrettable frequency—a plentiful berry growth, irresistible to bruin, soon follows. Hence hunters often set fire to the bush, while lightning in seasons of special drought effects the same end by an operation of nature.

It was the last day of August when we pitched our first camp at Devil's Elbow. On the previous day a sharp thunderstorm had cleared a sultry atmosphere, and now a chill nor'-wester came sweeping down the river, while heavy driving clouds occasionally threw dark shadows on the river of the hue of steel. But yesterday summer was supreme; to-day saw autumn's reign established—a revolution in a single night.

We were very luckily the first hunting-party 'up river', so that as yet none of the haunts of the big game had been disturbed.

On either bank of the pool ran a well-defined 'animal path', while many freshly torn limbs of the choke-cherry tree, cranberry, and 'Kinni-kinich,' or wild willow, betrayed the recent presence of feeding bears. The latter tree yields a white acrid fruit very much esteemed by bruin. The heavy animal well knows that the slender limbs of these fruit trees will not support his weight, so he climbs the trunk and tears down the small fruit-bearing limbs within reach by means of his great curved claws.

It was immediately decided to leave the heavy camp equipment and take the lightened birch-bark canoe up to the three magnificent Nepisiquit lakes which feed the river at its source, then drop silently down stream on some quiet evening after the wind had died away, in order to surprise unwary bears during their usual feeding hours.



A GOOD BIT OF CANOEING WATER.

Accordingly, in the red afterglow of a lovely evening, we started up stream, with Noel at the stern armed with spike-pole, from which the noise-making steel shoe had been removed, while Nicola took his station at the bow and kept a sharp lookout for game.

Give me an Indian hunter for such a trip as this. The red man with his birch-bark canoe is as much an integral part of this northern wilderness as the black bear itself. After he has succumbed to that strange sickness which civilization has brought on his race, the rivers and forests will scarcely seem the same.

Few persons know how beautiful and delicate a craft the canoe is. It is made only by the Indian. In that the white man has never equalled him.

Of all the modes of locomotion a wilderness hunter can make choice of, far and away the most delicious is travelling by canoe. It is marvellous with what untiring energy and skill the Indians mount the long impetuous rapids. When quiet 'steadies' are reached the light barque rushes along with an exhilarating buoyant motion driven by the paddles through the pure cool waters. The rare scent of wild flowers and resinous pine odours perfume the air. Here the river broadens out into shallow reaches pouring over glassy ledges. Now and then the canoe seems to have scaled

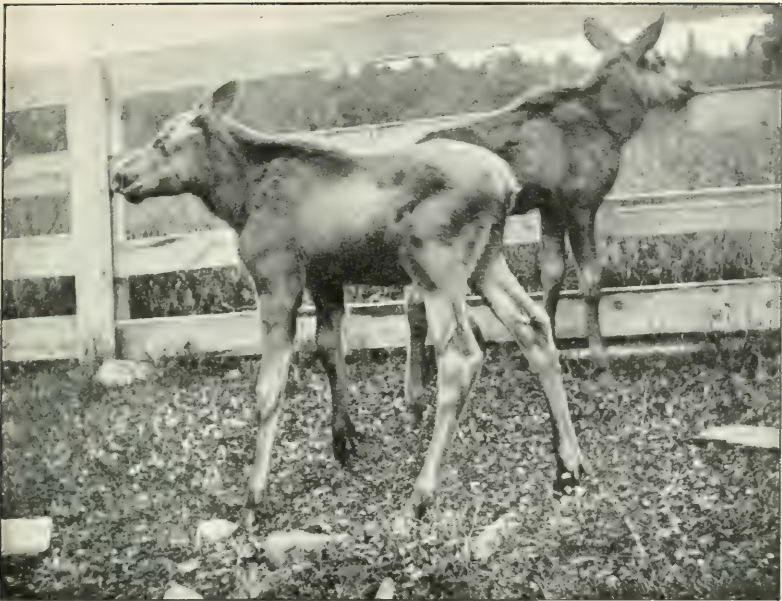
triumphantly the green side of some waterspout. Daily before the onward path callow broods of trout-eating mergansers or shell ducks beat the water into yeast as they flee along the surface, as if Justice were pursuing them for the murder of untold innocents, while big drab herons flap lazily in advance as rounding the points new vistas are opened up, or with a harsh cry black duck disturbed by our presence rise from the reeds on the wing.

At one time the stream is like a narrow canal moving with smooth yet swift current between high sombre walls of spruce and hemlock. Soon a rampart of rock bastions seems to stretch clear across stream from bank to bank, till a narrow defile splits the steep Laurentian rocks into a gorge through which the river roars and rages in white fury. Sometimes it happens that even the skilful efforts of the Indians fail to overcome a rapid where hissing waters chafe the base of some precipitous hillside. There a portage becomes necessary ; but one hardly regrets relaxing stiff limbs along the straggling portage path for a brief interval.

Late on the third day we came to a round lake encircled with a fine growth of deciduous trees, having for a background an amphitheatre of romantic hills. Here is the lovely cradle of the Nepisiquit River. Wading the shallows of the lake a moose bull, cow, and April calf were surprised while busily feeding on the roots of the yellow lily. Doubtless they had sought the water to evade the clouds of flies which were in this vicinity a plague of full Egyptian quality. The gambols of the calf were highly amusing. When making off, at times apparently fatigued by the swimming, it rested its forelegs on the hindquarters of its dam. On reaching the shore it flung up its heels like a colt, and for many moments after the others had disappeared in the bush it remained boldly staring at us, as if wondering what its seniors saw in such insignificant-looking bipeds to be alarmed about.

It was a serene evening as the light bark canoe came gliding down over alternate 'steadies' and 'rattles', skilfully guided by occasional silent touch of the paddle, while I kept a sharp look-out in the bow. 'Never seed so much "works,"' whispers Noel, as we survey a grove of cherries showing clean white wood torn by the early morning feeding. Mile after mile we slip pleasantly down stream, now among an archipelago of lovely little islands, splitting the fretted stream into a dozen branches rippling shallow over golden pebbles ; now apparently in a lake hemmed in by tree-covered banks ; while far in the background the silhouette of a blue sierra of cloudlike mountains is printed against the roseate evening sky.

At last a low whistle from Noel warns me that he has seen game. Ah ! there is a rustling among the branches—then a tran-



A PAIR OF YOUNG MOOSE CALVES, FOUR MONTHS OLD. A FAVOURITE FOOD OF THE BLACK BEAR.

sient glimpse of some black object, but no certain target. The canoe is held as steady as a rock with the spike-pole pressed to the river bed. The wind is all right: nothing is required but patience. Soon a cherry tree shakes violently. In another instant a tawny snout emerges from the thicket, followed by the upper half of a slowly climbing lustrous black body. The report of my rifle is instantly followed by that peculiar soft thud which always indicates a deadly shot. Then is heard a ponderous flop. My first bear is bagged, and is wildly thrashing the bush in its death struggles. Two other snouts appear for a moment only above the tangle of brushwood, but abruptly vanish. My quarry proves to be a female, and the couple which escaped were doubtless her yearling cubs.

More sporting work than this stealthy mode of hunting is a day's stalking on the slopes of the mountain several miles back of the river. Here a circular range of bare hills encloses in a cuplike setting a meadow, for the existence of which beavers are responsible, through which Portage Brook slowly winds in a circuitous course. Bears are sure to be found feeding at this season, as the surrounding hills are well covered with wild fruits. This noted haunt we lost no time in making for. Landing at Blue Ledge, the canoe is beached and turned bottom upwards on the bank. Each man carries a pack containing rations for three days and a single blanket. A

direct line is taken across country, the scene growing wilder and wilder as we advance. Through tangled and obdurate masses of timber, up the sides of thickly wooded declivities, across fire-scarred stretches, after several hours of tedious travelling we emerge on the bare top of a dome-shaped rock-bestrewn height commanding every portion of an extensive open plateau. Caribou are sighted in the distance, and a lordly moose bull observed coming down to a beaver pond to drink; but the season for hunting this game has not yet opened. Here are patches purple with berries. There could not be a more likely place for bears. We were, therefore, hardly surprised when a careful inspection with field-glasses showed a moving black spot, probably at the distance of a mile. It is easy to lessen the intervening distance at first, but as we draw nearer caution is required. The chance comes when the bear lowers his head, snapping this side and that at the fruit which hangs like miniature clusters of grapes. It is easy to take cover when he moves and stares about him with his shifty piglike eyes. At last an approach is made within eighty yards. A shot is fired and goes home. Then another, aimed too high, sputters on a rock immediately in front of the now well-frightened creature. He takes it for an enemy in front, and comes loping heavily along right towards us. Should we pass within reach, he would doubtless aim a heavy blow with his fore-paw which it would be highly undesirable to receive. He is such a ball of fat from excessive feeding that he wheezes and whines as he comes on. Now is the chance! There is a white spot on the breast—a most excellent bull's-eye. A bullet stops his career, yet he has marvellous vitality, for it requires another in the head to finish him. He is a fine specimen, and measures nearly six feet from the stump of the tail to the nose extremity. One huge canine tooth is broken off short, no doubt by the habit of biting at trees in the spring, to which the animals are unaccountably addicted.¹

Noel speedily divested the game of his black coat with almost as little difficulty as he would remove his own jacket. He then cut up the choicest parts of the meat into small pieces, folded the bearskin neatly with the pieces within, and afterwards tied the whole with bands of withrod (*viburnum*), and with the same bands secured it across his shoulders as a pack, leaving the arms free for action, according to Indian custom.

¹ The male bear in the rutting season has the habit of rising on his hind legs, biting and sticking his claws into the bark of the balsam fir, like a cat against a table leg, at the same time snarling, growling, and foaming at the mouth. He seems to take delight in placing his mark high enough up on the trunk to distance all competitors.

That night we made a modest camp in a well-wooded brook valley which bore many signs of being in present use as bear cover.

Next morning we took up our march for a mountainous district a few miles distant. Here, where the woods fell away for a little space on the side of a steep mountain slope, two bears were made out in the act of feeding. It was not as easy as it appeared to get at them, however, as the way to them led through a densely wooded ravine where one could easily lose his general direction. To obviate this difficulty, we stood Nicola, the younger Indian, on a



A VETERAN MICMAC BEAR HUNTER WITH HIS SQUAW AND DAUGHTER.

commanding spur of rock, and instructed him to make signals by waving his arm when we came out at the lower extremity of the open patch. This answered admirably. Guided by his directions, I approached within sixty yards of the two animals roaming slowly towards me along a caribou path. I fixed my attention on the leader while I dropped out of view between two huge boulders among a mass of prickly evergreen tresses of the creeping ground juniper. I had time to watch him closely. He had a peculiarly arched profile, singular tawny spots of hair on his shoulders, his coat otherwise

jet black and in good condition ; a large diamond-shaped white spot in the centre of his breast. He snapped his jaws testily at times, revealing his large white teeth. He kept turning his tawny muzzle in ceaseless circles, then for a few seconds at a time would sit up on his haunches gathering in with his hairy paws the berries he loved, while muttering from time to time a low whimpering growl. When he had arrived within ten yards of my position I stepped out and confronted him. Never have I seen such a look of surprise in any animal before—or since. Suddenly, however, into the eyes there gleamed an expression of uncompromising ferocity which was frank and unmistakable. He kept striking his teeth together viciously. I covered with the foresight of my rifle the white spot at the centre of the breast, then as I fired I saw the creature reel under the blow and roll helplessly down the steep hillside. Strange to say, life was not extinct, and I had to thwart a desperate effort at escape by two more bullets before all was over with him. In the excitement of the *mêlée* I had not noticed what had become of the other bear.

One day we emerged into the open sunshine on a broad meadow cut up with tracks like a cattle 'corral'. Here beavers have formed their marvellous dams and dome-shaped houses in three or four very respectable lakes, for the existence of which their labours are responsible. When the last beaver lake is passed a ribbon-like meadow is gained, of bright green reeds and rushes winding up among lofty hills, some of which are covered by a pretty patchwork of light and dark green foliage, according as birch or fir predominate ; others are bare enough to admit of careful inspection with the field-glass. As the hills enclose the valley in a basin-like setting, Nature has seemingly prepared the arena with a view to scientific stalking. On the tallest mountain, dome-shaped, behind which flames the sun sinking to the horizon, two black bears are plainly visible through the glasses. Somehow they had killed a caribou between them, and were gloating over their feast. How moments seemingly lengthened to hours as the largest left his companion and marched in our direction, where we stood waiting on the declivity of the opposite mountain for the favourable moment to make our attack ! What a depressing situation when he was heard to pass, with occasional snappings of dry limbs, invisible in the thick covert, and yet within a few yards from where we stood at arms ! Fortune, however, recompensed this discomfiture, for as we made our breathless charge, whenever we emerged from thick places and obtained a view we saw the other, though at intervals disappearing, ever returning to the bare rocks that

crowned the summit of the height. At last, after a stiff climb, often over precarious footing of loose rocks, a halt was called at a caribou path in order to recover some of our fugitive breath before the encounter which we now knew was fated. When our quarry was finally sighted he showed signs of such alertness and observation that a nearer advance had to be made with extreme caution. Whenever he raised his head it became necessary to stiffen into the rigidity of graven images. When he recommenced his hog-like feeding an advance could be made swiftly and boldly. In this manner an approach was made within eighty yards' distance, when a deliberate shot gave him a severe wound that was



SUNDAY IN CAMP.

not fatal. He circled, and then came on straight towards us. It was impossible to decide if he was charging, or if he was making a blind rush. At about forty yards another shot dropped him, but, pulling himself together, he came on again, to fall dead within a few feet, shot through the brain. This seems to be the only shot that will finish a bear straight and lay him out; the body can be pierced over and over without stopping his career.

It will be seen by these easily won victories that the bear is not difficult to hunt at the season of the year when he is greedily feeding and laying in stores of fat for his subsistence during winter. His voracious habits render him comparatively mild and sluggish at this period, though after he awakens from his sleep in March,

in a lean and hungry condition, he often gives evidence of a short temper, and occasionally adopts that simple rule of warfare, to 'go for an enemy on sight'.

It may hence be readily understood how some make out the black bear a dangerous animal, while others brand him as the most arrant of cowards. This is only one of many instances where seemingly inexplicable differences in observers' accounts may be reconciled by allowing for variations in the character of the animal at different seasons of the year. A desperately wounded bear, however, it is always well to avoid at close quarters. Not long ago a couple of farmers had been worrying a bear all day, which, mortally wounded, had retreated to a deep ravine in order to hide from his enemies. The foremost man, armed only with an axe, thinking to make an easy prey of the creature, extended on the ground and bleeding profusely from the mouth, aimed a blow which the bear quickly parried. It then closed with the aggressor. After a terrible struggle both bear and man fell dead, and were afterwards borne away from the steep ravine on the same rude barrow of branches.

When, seated about the camp fire, the pipes are lit—and there are no such pipes smoked elsewhere—tales go round of bruin's cunning and stratagems. The Indians, usually taciturn, begin to unbend in stories of their craft. There is no doubt that the weird hibernation of 'mooin', as they call the bear, appeals in a greater degree to their sense of awe than the furtive ways of any other of the furry folk of the forest. Mooin grows very sleepy early in the month of November, and withdraws from a cold world into the undisturbed seclusion of a winter den.

While the moose is tramping defiantly round his storm-swept yard, and the caribou is 'toughing it out' on the windy plains, digging for his dinner with his great splayed hoofs down through a dense sheet of snow to the crisp grey lichens beneath; while the beaver's citadel is beleaguered with thick-ribbed ice; while the gaunt lynx, made reckless by famine, leaves the wintry forest and prowls even in daytime in the dangerous precincts of the farmyard, there is your philosopher mooin snugly curled up on a well-prepared bed of withered leaves, dry ferns, and grasses. Kingdoms may crumble, wars and carnage may convulse the civilized world, but the echo of man's strife reaches not his cave deep buried on the mountain slope. The warmth necessary to his existence is supplied by his own fat. Each day he draws a small cheque on his reserve fund of 'bear's grease', rich in carbon. By dint of suspended activity and undisturbed sleep this will support life until the spring thaws set him free, to go forth gaunt and haggard

it is true, yet strong and agile, to draw out fish in the warm shallows with his great hairy paws, or break up decayed tree-stumps and feed on swarming colonies of black ants, or otherwise forage for a living.

By no means the least of Nature's many mysteries is this marvellous hibernating habit. Birds have learned to evade the severities of winter by migrating to sunny climes; the bear has discovered a different method of surviving when the wilderness fruits are exhausted, and the ground, rigid with frosts, is wrapped about his favourite roots. Instead of starving he sleeps, and that on a scale only usual in fairy tales. The fires of life are banked and all the vital processes almost at a standstill. A comatose condition is certainly the first stage of starvation, and may have been in the first instance established by the impossibility of obtaining suitable food in winter time; for it is well-known that bears in warm countries have not acquired this habit, as they can secure their usual food without interruption. When going into winter quarters they have been said sometimes in time of snow to adopt a trick equivalent to the highwayman's noted ruse of reversing the shoes of his horse, walking backwards for a long distance towards their dens. This, however, requires verification, for it implies a higher degree of intelligence in the animal than the writer has been able to discover.



TWO VICTIMS.

The sportsman, when hunting caribou in the first snow, sometimes stumbles across a bear's tracks and follows them to the den. Should the den be that of a female with cubs he will often find it a comfortable apartment, floored by spruce boughs and dried ferns, such as no tired hunter would disdain for a night's resting-place.

The male, however, is more easily satisfied. Behind the tangled roots of some upturned tree, among a mass of boughs, or in some slightly protected hollow in a cliff, he will curl himself up, and the snows soon cover him in his rugged sleep. The female doubtless takes precautions for the sake of her young. The cubs are born early in January. It is remarkable that the mother secretes milk while in a state of torpidity. For three and a half long dark months, without access to food, she, weighing perhaps five hundred pounds, suckles a cub less in size than a pointer pup at the same age. A ten-day old cub the writer once saw, measured, when stretched out from tip of nose to end of hind toe, only ten and a half inches. It had fine black hair on the back and dark slate on the underneath of the body. It had no teeth, and the eyes were closed. The length of the claws was remarkable. The specimen helped him to understand the origin of the old fable, that a cub is born a formless lump and licked into shape by the dam.

A curious lair was once discovered by some lumbermen on the Upsalquitch River, who were surprised at seeing a very large bear one soft April morning crawl out from under a bridge of logs, over which they had been hauling timber all winter long without arousing the creature from his deep lethargy.

Bear-meat is always kept simmering in the pot exclusively set apart for the Indians. While sticking in a fork with astonishing frequency they delight in presenting the subject of their feast in comical situations. In fact, they make out bruin a born humorist. Noel knew of a bear which, after breaking into a lumber camp, drew a molasses tap and rolled over and over in the sticky syrup; afterwards, breaking up a flour barrel with one stroke of his terrible fore-paw, he rolled over and over in the flour. When the men returned they were astonished to find a white bear in the house. Was not this bear having his fun—as what bear has not at times? Once Nicola saw a bear seated on top of a beaver-house, trying in vain to hit the beavers with his paw as they swam past in a tantalizing manner. On another occasion he watched a bear on a large log amusing himself by delivering a series of blows on a poor yearling moose calf he had artfully driven in a slough till it had become 'mired'. Every blow, delivered at regular

intervals on the withers, elicited a loud roar from the terrified beast, which seemed to cause bruin vast amusement.

A striking bear story of a different character from those above was related one evening at the camp fire by the senior hunter. He told us of one night when he was 'shining' moose on a quiet mountain tarn bordered with a narrow strip of marsh with a background of dark hemlock forest. 'Shining' is an illegal practice, and justly so, for the grand animal, dazed and apparently fascinated by the red glare of the hissing resinous torch, approaches the object of his wonder as if under a spell, and easily falls to the rifle. Tom Isaacs kneeled at the stern, dipping his way quietly along with water-ash paddle, while Noel held up the bunch of burning fagots



'MOOIN,' THE BEAR (*URSUS AMERICANUS*).

which spread a lurid gleam across the surface. In an instant a mighty moose bull had emerged from the fringe of woods, and soon came wading into the lake, while the flare of the torch capped the circling wavelets from his limbs with flashing coronets of molten gold.

In the uncertain light Noel hit him hard. 'Moose got it bad—worse sort'—in his own laconic jargon. The poor animal floundered and staggered, finally collapsing on the shallows of a sand-bar. The men following on to secure their prey were astonished to see two large bears issue from the woods and begin to fight over the still living moose. At length they evidently patched up a peace, and began together tearing and crunching away at the quivering flesh. The Indians fired in the uncertain light, but

only irritated the feeding bears, one of which fiercely charged them. They hastily abandoned their canoe and fled along the shore pursued by the irate animal. In the morning, incredible as it may appear, they found that the bears had dragged the huge body of the moose, though it weighed as much as the heaviest of oxen, many yards into the woods, where they had completely covered it with ferns, withered leaves and grasses, and had skinned the greater part of the carcass as neatly as a hunter could with his knife. The men did not take much trouble to discover the whereabouts of the bears, which were probably asleep after their gorge in some neighbouring thicket. They 'trailed' a gun, however, and from their camp a couple of nights later they heard the air rent by a rifle-shot. Next morning they found one of the marauders quite dead with a bullet through his skull.

The last day of the hunt saw our camping ground presenting a most sporting appearance. Several bearskins were stretched on rude frames in various stages of curing. For the last time I listened to the inspiring *récillé* to the breaking dawn from the throats of countless Kennedy birds, the only wilderness songsters—an unforgettable piping recitative. For the last time, as I bathed in the pool, I watched the morning mists reeling before the sunrise into pearly shattered spirals. For the last time, as I returned to where the tossing plume of blue smoke rose from our camp fire over the sea of greenery, I watched the points of the opposite rock terraces touched with topaz as the climbing sun flooded one after the other with limpid light. For the last time, as I breakfasted, I heard the cock grouse beat once more his regular morning tattoo of muffled drumming on the fallen moss-shrouded birch trunk a few yards away from the camp, in a hardwood grove which was already beginning to blaze with many a shade of scarlet and gold—for, dolphin-like, the Canadian summer dies in a rich glow of colour.

As the light craft flew merrily down the dancing rapids on the homeward way, regretfully I realized that I was about to exchange the simple primitive pleasures of the forest for the inevitable worries and chimeras of civilized life. When night overtook my men cutting the tent-poles under the soft white radiance of the rising moon, I found myself dreamily wondering how I had come to be so steadfastly enamoured of the subtle charm of these bear-haunted slopes and lonely pine groves, which were casting their shadows into the infinite peace of a noble reach of quietly flowing river ere it passed into the noisy travail of tumultuous rapids below. While the beauty and impressiveness of forest and river seemed multiplied tenfold in the luminous greyness of the moonlit night, the

truth of the following sentences, penned by Captain Campbell Hardy (*Forest Life in Acadie*), came forcibly home to me :—

‘To understand the true character of the American forest and read its mysteries aright, we must plunge boldly into its depths and live under its shelter through all the phases of the seasons, leaving far behind the sound of the settler’s axe and the tinkling of his cattle-bells. The strange feelings of pleasure attached to a life in the majestic solitudes of the pine forests of North America cannot be attained by a merely marginal acquaintance such as is gleaned along the roadside or from the edges of the cleared lands.’



PROCEEDING NORTH ALONG THE LABRADOR COAST.

XXII

A SUMMER SAIL TO THE LABRADOR COAST

A VOYAGE to the Labrador coast is full of interest to the lover of imposing coast scenery, and if only the salmon streams could be explored and the big game reached with greater facility than at present its interest would be greatly enhanced to the sportsman. Each recurring summer season brings parties of eager students from each of the two great American Universities, Yale and Harvard, cruising about the coasts in little fishing schooners chartered for the excursion, combining in agreeable proportions the pursuit of science, sport, and travel. There is always a nameless glamour over everything pertaining to the arctic world, and in the hot summer months when to those 'in populous city pent' ice seems a mere figment of the imagination, except for certain cooling cubes afloat on the surface of refreshing potations, there is a distinct charm in allowing memory to wander back to blue seas flecked with chips of the arctic floes.

Apart from sport a summer trip to the coast presents many features of remarkable interest. Owing to its exposed position the western coast of Labrador is seldom free from the roar and fret of the long Atlantic rollers. A tremendous slow-breaking swell comes in both before and after a heavy blow, rolling slowly but irresistibly landward until it bursts with fury upon the coast with wild lamentations, hurling sheets of foam and spray sparkling in the sunbeams high up the sides of the wave-worn ledges. There are also frequent extraordinary and voluptuous studies in colour in the evening

skies, to which the fantastic shapes of half-melted icebergs lend an indescribable touch of weird and delicate beauty. One may derive much pleasure from watching the gambols of porpoise, whales, and grampus, and all that marvellously rich marine life which enlivens these northern waters in the brief summer season. The bird life is also an attractive feature, for although on the whole wild-fowl are not seen in any great numbers, yet there are occasional bits of coast which they make their own, where many interesting species litter the shelves of precipitous cliffs with their eggs and young. Then there are the ever-present wandering seals, or 'rangers', gliding off the slippery rocks with a ponderous flop, or bobbing up their round glittering heads in all the broad bays as well as in the deep narrow fiords. Remnants these are of those marvellous herds which have contributed their quota to fill the holds of the sealing steamers.

Not least of all is the human interest of these lonely and desolate shores. The innumerable white sails of the fishermen pushing boldly to the north through the ice-flecked sea to gather in the rich spoils of fish strewn over the marine banks in lavish plenty, and the unceasing labours of the 'liveryes', or settlers, who all summer long go on fishing and curing their catch in the sun, spreading it over broad acres of wicker 'stages'. The teeming life of the sea which washes the rock-bound coast of Labrador is simply marvellous. The peninsula stands out on the Atlantic Ocean bounded on the north by the Hudson and Davis Straits with their floating ice glaciers. Past the shores of the peninsula sweeps the broad, deep, and powerful arctic current, bearing with it enormous masses of floating ice until late in the summer. When the procession has at length passed southwards to melt in the warmer currents, the salmon appear at the mouths of the bays and the rivers, and the cod, following their natural food, the caplin, move shoreward from the deeper waters.

The numerous fishing banks and shoals lying off the Atlantic coast on the edge of the continental shelf, so to speak, which form the feeding grounds of the cod, are found to swarm with countless varieties of animalculæ, attracting the smaller fishes, which in their turn attract their larger brethren. These occupy an estimated area of 7,000 square miles. The fisheries during the summer give lucrative employment to nearly 30,000 persons, and in good years the catch exceeds 1,000,000 dollars in value. Pressing after the immense shoals of that curious little fish, the caplin, and after the other bait fish, such as the herring and squid, which often litter the shelving beaches as they are crowded ashore by the serried ranks of their comrades in the rear, besides the cod come armies of such

marine wolves as the sleeper shark, and also the smaller white whale, as well as several varieties of seal and porpoise.

The three midsummer months witness a deadly warfare on the devoted cod, which must feel sorry for its commercial importance. In many a picturesque little fiord along the shore are to be seen the shambles where the victims are hacked and hewn into a compact form for the foreign markets of the world. From the foot of a table where a group of three rough men splashed with gore are busily working a smell arises which poisons heaven and is wafted many miles to leeward. This comes from the pile of offal which grows apace as the men keep busily at work. Such a trio are called respectively the 'cut-throat', the 'header', and the 'splitter'. The cut-throat seizes the fish by the eyes, cuts his throat, and slitting the belly down to the vent, with a swift single stroke of his sharp sheath knife, passes it on to the header. In a twinkling this man cuts out the liver for a separate receptacle, disembowels the fish, and then decapitates it. Now the splitter catches the fish and at one stroke removes the vertebræ, leaving the fish as flat as a pancake, opened out from head to tail. Then the salter scatters his white dust, which must be in the exact dose required. If sprinkled in excess it will burn the fish; if in too small a quantity it will fail to cure.

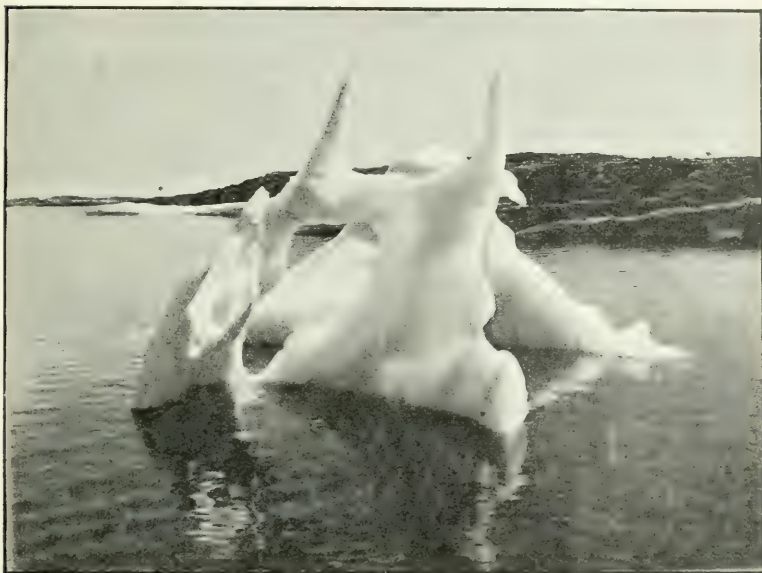
The cod is now left to swelter in heaps for a few days. At last the piles are taken down and the fish spread in turn on the 'stages', which are hurdles carpeted with spruce or fir boughs, supported on strong stakes a few feet from the ground. Great care is now required for many days while sun and wind, here most capricious, complete their useful work in fitting the fish for export. At night the fish have to be collected in piles with the fleshy side down, while each fine morning sees them again spread out to catch the light and air. A boat manned by two men will often load up to the gunwale with hand lines where the water is ten fathoms or less. There are many ingenious devices employed, however, whereby the labour of hand lines is supplemented or even avoided altogether. Foremost among these is the trap. A cod trap is formed of submerged nets so as to form an enclosure, kept in position by small anchors, by which companies of cod travelling along the line of coast are inveigled into a prison and the door closed after them by means of ropes and pulleys. The fish are thus caught in a sort of bag, and the whole writhing fighting mass is drawn to the surface and literally pitchforked into the small boats as farm labourers toss hay.

The 'cod seine' is another deadly contrivance. It is often used to envelop a school of cod in deep water or to sweep a narrow cove

or inlet. It may be several hundred feet in depth, and is worked by half a score of men under the direction of a 'skipper', or 'boss', who scans the bottom of the sea by means of a fish-glass, which is merely a tube, having a glass bottom, thrust beneath the wave.

Next after the settlers, or 'livyeres', themselves, perhaps the two most noteworthy features of Labrador are the dog and the Eskimo.

The dog may be said to be the only domesticated animal of the coast. Settlers have tried pigs, but the dogs find them an irresistible morsel, hence they invariably get short shrift. Sheep fare equally badly. The wily goat has, however, in some instances



ON THE LABRADOR COAST.

been known to receive his assailants on his horns repeatedly until at length he has been let severely alone, and even allowed in time to join the pack and participate in their summer rambles along the beach in search of some stray fish cast up by the waves.

The pure breed of Eskimo dog is a strong and handsome animal. His pointed ears and curling bushy tail give him an air of great intelligence and distinction. Yet it is said that the dog obtained by cross-breeding with the Newfoundland and other powerful varieties will outlast him when, as often happens, tremendous winter journeys have to be undertaken on short and irregular rations. The commetique of the Eskimo dog has often been described, but few persons are aware what a comfortable vehicle this



CATCH OF COD-FISH.

sledge can be made when lined with sealskins and covered over with a white bear robe, so as to form a sort of a bag into which the traveller can introduce his body. The best are shod with whalebone runners, which after constant use receive a polish like that of ivory. Runners can be made by simply freezing mud and water to the sledge, the adhering amalgam soon growing smooth from the friction.

In the winter season the dog team is indispensable. Seventy miles a day is an ordinary journey, and should a sudden storm come on, the keen noses of the team may be relied on to pick their way home without a fault. By this means wood is brought from the interior, venison hauled out when killed in the wilderness, and social intercourse becomes possible between the widely scattered little communities over the frozen sea. Communication between the isolated little coast settlements, often consisting of three or four rude houses nestling in sheltered nooks and crannies of the cliffs, is chiefly by water during the summer, and in winter time either by snow-shoes, made of caribou hide, or else by dog sledge.

Not only in appearance, but in character and habits, many of the dogs approach closely to the wolf. In summer, when their usefulness is gone for the time being, they are turned loose to 'do for themselves', when they often become very savage, fighting incessantly with each other as they contend for the fish offal below the stages. Woe betide the unfortunate stranger whose nerve fails

him in confronting a frolicking pack. There are cases when, while dinner was in course of preparation, the kitchen has been invaded and everything edible instantly devoured. Human beings have been torn to pieces by the brutes, and many very narrow shaves are related owing to the fortunate appearance on the scene of the owner just at the nick of time armed with the thrice terrible dog-whip, which in skilful hands becomes a truly formidable weapon. Even in midsummer, when discipline is relaxed, the first glimpse of the whip is sufficient to arrest the most mischievous intentions.

The whip is made with a short, thick, wooden handle, with an immensely long leash of thick walrus hide, tapered off with sealskin. There is an old yarn current of a dog being cut in two by a stroke from the driver, who immediately stuck together the severed parts of the body, which (*of course*) grew together. Unfortunately for the dog's future prospects in life the hindquarters were put together the wrong way, so that the animal went about with his hind legs sticking straight up in the air.

There is another story told of a lean Yankee fisherman who offered to stand up at a distance of forty feet to receive two blows at the hands of an expert driver for a bottle of rum. By way of precaution he incased his lower limbs in two pairs of woollen drawers, and over them a couple of pairs of strong trousers. The first stroke cut through the trousers, drawers, and flesh nearly to the bone.



BIG COD-FISH.

With a terrific yell the Yankee stooped down to examine the extent of the wound, there and then renouncing all claim to the bottle of rum with the remark: 'Wall! I guess I'd be too leaky to hold liquor after another stroke!'

The sagacity of a team of dogs when travelling on the icefields of the coast is nothing short of marvellous. Sometimes the ice opens in great yawning chasms in a mysterious manner, when the dogs are very quick to perceive their danger of being cut off from the land. On such occasions they instinctively choose a safe course and, needing no guidance, will carry their master swiftly and surely away from the spot where danger threatens. The property of a settler may be measured by the number and quality of his dog team, most of them taking great pride in keeping fine animals, and as many of them as possible. In summer their keep costs nothing; in winter they get a daily dole from a stack of frozen fish of the otherwise useless sort, such as dog-fish, sharks, and skates. There is said to be a practice of tying out an old bitch in the wilds so that she may be mated by some wandering wolf in order to avoid the danger of deterioration by too close in-breeding.

As for the Eskimo race, or Innuits (the people), it is sad to relate that they are falling victims to that strange decay with which civilization inevitably curses the savage everywhere. Whether it is owing to a change of diet and clothing, or to the diminished energy with which they follow their natural pursuits, to the introduction of pulmonary and other wasting diseases, or to all these causes combined, certain it is that the Eskimo are becoming swiftly exterminated. A century ago they flourished in their thousands all along the coast; to-day there are very few within three hundred miles north of the Strait of Belleisle. From this point to the northern extremity of the coast there are now under two thousand all told.

The art of using the kayak is becoming a thing of the past. This picturesque little craft, into which a man can lace himself so tightly that he can laugh at the crested billows and even upset with impunity, as he is able to right himself at once with the paddle, is now put aside generally for the more clumsy wooden boat, or 'dory'.

Skin tents for summer use are now often replaced by wooden or else mud huts. The white man's flimsy clothing is donned in exchange for the old-time suit of sealskin. Seal blubber and whale flesh are now replaced in the larder by flour and salt pork, and bad colds are even known to be contracted by the unfamiliar modern practice, introduced by the missionary, of washing the person. Civilization has proved a far worse foe than their old sworn enemies

the Montagnais Indians, who in the olden time lost no fitting opportunity for descending upon their coast settlements and engaging in savage warfare. The Eskimo held their own fairly well until the Indians were furnished with firearms by European adventurers, who complained that the Eskimo robbed their fishing-stations



DINNER-TIME.

whenever they got the chance. Battle Harbour was the scene of the last deadly conflict between these hereditary enemies. That the fight was a sanguinary one is attested by the graves which are strewn in profusion over the desolate headland.

So striking are the ordinary natural features of the coast of the peninsula of Labrador, so strange and unfamiliar are the sights and scenes here surrounding the traveller at every turn, that even a transient and marginal acquaintance rivets on the mind an impression vivid and ineffaceable.

The visitor in the first place is conscious of something like a mental shock when his eyes rest upon the awful desolation of mile after mile of dreary coast-line, of smooth sphinx-like headlands, and bare wave-worn beetling rocks, at times carved into fantastic shapes by the fierce assaults of frost, wave, and tempests. This storm-scarred lofty coast he recognizes as the edge of an enormous rugged tableland, of which little is known. A handful of explorers of the vast waste which occupies the interior have described a region whose sterility can scarce be equalled elsewhere in the wide world. They tell us of countless shallow lake basins of every conceivable shape and size, scooped by glacial action out of the ancient rocks; of turbulent mountain torrents, too impetuous even for the

passage of the light birch-bark canoe of the mountaineer Indian ; of the appalling spectacle of tumbled masses of boulders and bare rocks undulating in every direction as far as the eye can reach, broken only here and there with patches of yellow mosses and grey reindeer lichens, or diversified once in awhile by dense fir trees and birches darkly clothing the windings of the deeper valleys. Over vale and plain and mountain there has fallen apparently a hail of huge rock boulders, for the country almost everywhere resembles a battlefield of the Titans. Sometimes detached boulders lie in huge heaps three or four strata deep. Often the desolation is still further accentuated by the blackness left by fires which have spread far and wide, fed during some summer of drought chiefly



DRYING COD ON THE LABRADOR COAST.

by the crisp mosses and lichens. 'God in making this country here threw down the refuse of His materials,' quaintly remarks an old historian and voyager.

Repelling and depressing as is this fearful coast at the first glimpse, yet a closer acquaintance reveals many phases of wild life and nature so novel and interesting that one usually ends by becoming completely fascinated by the spell of his strange environment.

The mammals of this wild region are what one might expect in such inhospitable quarters. The white bear, wolves, generally hunting in packs and seldom solitary, the lynx, black bear, and the robust caribou, far smaller than his better-nurtured fellows in the island of Newfoundland, here manage to support existence, and

are hunted by a few roving bands of Montagnais Indian trappers and hunters. The caribou make periodical migrations to the coast to escape the flies and to lick the salt from the seaweed scattered along the strand. The Eskimo of the northern coast follow the herds far into the highlands of the interior, penetrating with their sledges in the early spring through the windings of the deeper valleys.

To the ordinary traveller the means of communication with Labrador are by steamer from Newfoundland, making fortnightly trips from St. John's along the coast as far north as Nain, and touching at many intermediate points along the route. There are three or four good salmon streams thus rendered available.



KAYAKS DRAWN UP ON THE BEACH.

After passing the Strait of Belleisle, the Labrador coast looms high and rugged. It is walled in with steep cliffs over which cascades fall at intervals, and through whose gaps turbulent rivers seek the sea. It is thus easily understood that here the rivers are but ill adapted to salmon, whose passage up stream is soon arrested by the impassable cataracts. From Cape Charles northwards the range of elevated land falls back, and a belt of islands from nine to fourteen miles in breadth borders the lower lying coast-line. Schools of salmon usually strike the coast near the mouth of the Strait of Belleisle during the last week of June. These fish, slowly pushing their way along, do not make their appearance at Hamilton Inlet, upwards of a hundred miles northward, until nearly

a month later. At the 'Narrows' near Rigolet, where the tide rushes with great velocity into Esquimaux Bay, a sheet of water thirty miles long by about eight in width, salmon may be caught by a spoon-bait or artificial minnow. Here they begin to disappear again towards the end of August, thus seeming to remain little more than a month during the brief Labrador midsummer, which corresponds in climate to that of the south coast of England in May. They do not seem to range farther north than about 56° north latitude. The northern fish are small relatively to those of more southern waters. A friend of the writer saw no signs of salmon in a recent trip up the Barren Grounds and Fraser Rivers, where probably no man ever cast a fly before. In the latter stream he caught a number of very large trout of extraordinary brilliancy of colouring. The different types of trout to be seen in North American waters are simply marvellous in their variety. As Izaak Walton has observed, 'You are to note there are several kinds of trout . . . which differ in their bigness and shape and spots and colour'. This is especially true of the Labrador trout, some of which run to enormous size, seventeen and even nineteen pounds weight having been recorded.

The three rivers running in at the head of Sandwich Bay are more frequently resorted to than any of the others for fly fishing.¹ The traveller may step off the *Glencoe*, or some other one of Reid's comfortable steamships sailing fortnightly from the Port of St. John's, at the Hudson Bay Station, called Cartwright Harbour, at the mouth of the Bay. Here are to be seen the monuments of John and George Cartwright, who more than a century since accomplished so much exploration of the Labrador peninsula. The voluminous journals of the latter, who was once an officer of the Navy, afford an interesting picture of life and nature on the coast, little changed at the present hour. The factor can readily furnish a tight, well-manned little sailing-craft which will convey the sportsmen, guides, tents, and camp paraphernalia to the mouth of the river. The sail up the Bay is delightful, although the 'Narrows' is sometimes a bad place to get through owing to the racing of the tides. The Bay is walled in by high mountains, some of them clothed with dark ridges of evergreen trees alternating with brighter patches of birch and poplar. The northern side is edged by the Mealy Mountains. Here and there a sugar-loaf lump rising high above the lower peaks even in midsummer is seen to be capped with snow and ice. Now and then a few sea-fowl are put up on the wing—patchpolls, yellow bills, and bottle nose scoters—disturbed in the act of diving for shellfish at a little distance off the ledges.

¹ The White Bear usually affords good fishing after the end of June.



INDIAN HARBOUR, LABRADOR.

The anchor is dropped at Burnt Harbour. The 'skipper' puts the fishing-party off in a row boat, and after proceeding four miles all are finally landed on Separation Point, dividing the White Bear from the Eagle River. Here there is a fishing hut. Large trout and salmon are taken in the nets. The mouth of this river is exceedingly shoal, coursing in a broad stream over a sandbank strewn with boulders. The little boat is dragged and pushed four miles up stream to the foot of the Falls, where camp is pitched at the edge of one of the most beautiful pools that the heart of angler could desire. The black flies and mosquitoes are, however, a plague of full Egyptian quality, and their persecutions can only be mitigated by raising a 'smudge', as a thick smoke is called, from burning damp moss. Without netting to protect one at night and thick veiling by day to keep the swarms of insect life out of one's mouth, ears, and eyes, existence would be well-nigh intolerable.

The falls are really a succession of cascades, making a descent of about seventy-five feet. The river here narrows its channel to scarcely a hundred feet of breadth. The fishing is sometimes excellent, although there are times when one may exhaust every fly in his book and fail to hook a single fish, although one is positively certain that he is casting over scores of salmon. When they are rising the kind of fly seems to be not very material. The 'yellow legs', and the standard flies such as silver doctor, fairy, black dose, and ranger will apparently all serve equally well. The Paradise and Eagle Rivers are inferior to the White Bear. There is no doubt that the seals keep worrying the salmon a great deal, and this may account for the occasional caprice of their conduct.



DOUBLE ISLANDS, LABRADOR.

In order to reach the North-West River on the north shore of Hamilton Inlet, a fishing-party require to land at Rigoulette, a Hudson Bay trading post, from which there is a trail across to another post on Ungava Bay, an inlet of the great Hudson Bay. The fishing here is often very good. Boats and guides can be obtained from the Hudson Bay Company.

Another very good fishing river is Sandy Hill River, near Tub Harbour. To get to this place one requires to land at Indian Tickle and, securing guides and boats, proceed up stream. There are other excellent streams only to be reached by becoming the sailing-master of one's own craft. This has its drawbacks, however, as owing to dangerous navigation, the absence of lighthouses, the frequency of fogs and heavy blows, even in midsummer, very slow progress can be made in any given direction without picking up a pilot familiar with every inch of the coast. The many ledges and currents which have never been properly marked on any chart, and the numberless islands and passages too intricate to be accurately mapped, often render navigation a mere matter of guesswork.

Nearly the whole of the coast is edged with clusters of islets, separated from the mainland by deep narrow channels. It is not, therefore, surprising, as Dr. Grenfell has observed, that 'the surveying is mostly accomplished by the bilges and keels of devoted fishing-craft'.

XXIII

A VISIT TO SABLE ISLAND

THE Atlantic coast of the maritime provinces of Canada is remarkable for the presence of a series of shoals or submarine banks of enormous dimensions, composed of immense accumulations of loose grey sands, the débris from melting icebergs, and fragments of shells and rocks carried hither by the strong drift of the arctic current. These shoals lie submerged beneath a depth of water varying from thirty to seventy fathoms, and are all of them famous fishing grounds because of the vast quantities of animalcules which attract a teeming fish-life. Nature has elsewhere provided no waters so perfect in every condition for maintaining an almost inexhaustible supply of the valuable food-fishes of commerce.

Of this series of submarine beds the largest is the famous Grand Bank of Newfoundland. Other well-known banks are named Quero, George's, and Sable Island Bank. The two latter are especially interesting to navigators, for the shoals of George's Bank rise dangerously near the surface, so that in heavy weather the roar of their breakers can be distinctly heard many miles distant, while the Sable Island Bank is capped by a long, narrow sand-spit with a ghastly history of drowned men, which has earned for itself the sinister title of 'the Graveyard of the North Atlantic'.

Sable Island, so called because it consists practically of pure sand, is shaped like a bow, concave to the northward. The north and south sides of the island are formed of two nearly parallel ridges of hills, steep towards the sea, but sloping gradually inward. The whole length of the island, following the curve and including the dry parts of the bars, is twenty-three miles; its greatest breadth is one and one-fifth miles. In most parts it is wholly or partially covered with grass; but in some places the sand is scooped out by the winds into crater-shaped hollows, or thrown up into hills varying in height to a maximum of 110 feet above high-water. Some of these hills are frequently changed in position by the wind. Between the bordering ridges a long pond named Lake Wallace, gradually filling with blown sand, but still in some parts twelve feet deep, extends from near the west end to a distance

of ten miles ; and a low valley continues from six miles to the north-east end of the island. Lake Wallace is sometimes connected with the sea by means of a channel through the south bar ; at other times the channel is entirely closed by storm. When there is no channel, the sea flows into the pond over the low sandy beach only during high tides and heavy gales.

When seen from the north, from a distance of nine or ten miles, the island presents the appearance of a long range of sand-hills, some of which are very white. On a nearer approach many of the sand-hills are seen to have been partly removed by the wind, so as to form steep cliffs next the sea. In most parts the island is fringed by a broad beach, which, however, cannot be reached without passing over bars of sand covered with only a few feet of water. These bars, which are parallel to the shore at distances not exceeding one-third of a mile, form heavy breakers, and are dangerous to passing boats.

The quantity and variety of vegetation on this gigantic sand-bar is extraordinary. Besides two kinds of grass, there are wild peas and other plants affording sustenance to wild ponies as well as to the domestic cattle. There are four or five kinds of edible berries in great abundance, and many flowers and shrubs, but no trees except in a plantation experimentally established in 1901. There are good gardens at the several stations. The climate is much milder and more equable than on the neighbouring mainland ; but high winds are frequent, and in winter storms salt spray is carried across the land, scalding and destroying all but the hardiest vegetation.

Fresh-water can be obtained in almost any part by digging down a few feet into the sand in the flats or from the numerous ponds. Seals and abundance of wild-fowl frequent the island in their seasons. The fisheries around the island are exceedingly valuable ; but the danger of remaining near its formidable bars has hitherto restricted the number of vessels engaged in them.

The establishment on Sable Island for the relief of shipwrecked persons is supported by the Government of Canada, with the assistance of an annual grant of £400 by the Imperial Government ; a small revenue is derived from the periodical sale of wild ponies, cranberries, etc., and occasionally from salvage on the sale of wrecked vessels and their cargoes.

Four lookout stations, together with two lighthouses, form a chain of posts from which the shores of the whole island with its bars are watched in clear, and patrolled in thick or bad, weather. No wrecks can take place on the island at a greater distance than five miles from some one of these posts.

The main station flagstaff on Sable Island is in lat. $43^{\circ} 56'$ N., long. $60^{\circ} 2'$ W. The distance of the island from the lighthouse on Whitehead Island, the nearest part of Nova Scotia, is eighty-five miles.

Sable Island has been compared to a sea-monster with open jaws crouched low on the water, lurking for its prey directly across the line of commerce between the Old and the New World. Its treacherous sand-bars, which stretch out from twelve to fifteen miles from the sloping sand-dunes, have wrought more havoc with ocean shipping than any other danger-spot of equal dimensions in the known world. The first wreck of which we have a chronicle is related in Hakluyt's *Voyages* (1583). In graphic language and with an unaffected strain of piety, the quaint, old-fashioned chronicler relates the circumstances which attended the loss of the *Delight*, or *The Admiral*, as she was also called, of the hapless flotilla of that accomplished gallant of the Court of Queen Elizabeth, Sir Humphrey Gilbert. He tells how the brave knight himself went down standing at the helm of the *Golden Hind*, sorely wounded in his foot, Bible in hand; how the last words heard from him ere his vessel foundered were that famous message of high courage: 'Heaven is as near by sea as by land'.

The writer cannot forbear quoting the historian's simple and touching language, in common use during the spacious days of the great Elizabeth, which carries a flavour like the bouquet of some rare old wine:—

'Sabla lieth to the seaward of Cape Breton about 45° , whether we were determined to go, upon intelligence we had of a Portingall, during our abode in St. John's, who was also himself present when the Portingalls, about 30 years past, did put into the same island both neat and swine to breed, which were since exceedingly multiplied.

'The distance between Cape Race and Cape Breton is 100 leagues, in which navigation we spent 8 days. Having the wind many times in different good, but could never obtain sight of any land all that time, seeing we were hindered by the current. At last we fell into such flats and dangers that hardly any of us escaped. Where nevertheless we lost our *Admiral*, with all the men and provisions.

'Contrary to the mind of the expert Master Cox, on Wednesday, 27th August, we bore up toward the land. Those in the doomed ship continually sounding trumpet and drums. Whilst strange voices from the deep scared the helmsman from his post on board the Frigate.

'Thursday the 28th, the wind arose and blew vehemently from

the south and east, bringing withal rain and thick mist, that we could not see a cable-length before us. And betimes we were run and fouled amongst flats and sands, amongst which we found flats and deeps every 3 or 4 ships' length. *Immediately* tokens were given to the *Admiral* to cast about to seaward, *which* being the *greater* ship, and of burden 120 tons, was performost upon the beach. Keeping so ill a watch they knew not the danger before they felt the same too late to recover, for presently the *Admiral* struck aground, and had soon her stern and hinder parts beaten in pieces. The remaining two ships escaped by casting about E.S.E., bearing to the south for their lives, even in the wind's eye. Sounding one while 7 fathom, then 5, then again deeper. The sea going mightily and high.'

Fifteen years later another awful tragedy was wrought on this desolate island. Is it surprising that this place of horrors has a weird fascination for those who visit it? The first settlers on Sable Island became such not by their own free will. In 1598 the Marquis de la Roche, having been made Viceroy of Canada and Acadia, set sail for his new territories with a shipload of convicts released from royal prisons. Whether owing to mutinous conduct, or to the desire of first preparing for the hapless prisoners some stronghold on the mainland, he left them all here to their fate. It is said that De la Roche made a vigorous attempt to return, but a succession of gales kept him off the low shores with their surrounding tumult of dangerous shoals, and drove him back to France. Landing on the Breton coast, he was made a prisoner by the Duc de Mercouer, at that time in arms against the king, and held in durance for five years. Meanwhile the unfortunate men, left to their own resources, formed a shelter for themselves from the timber of wrecked ships. They killed seals and the wild cattle then found on the island, using their flesh for food, but varying this animal diet with the wild berries which were everywhere abundant. They could get fresh-water by digging anywhere to the depth of a couple of feet, but they had no means of making fire, which must have been a terrible hardship in the long tempestuous winters of these latitudes. Small wonder that they waxed quarrelsome, as we are told, and that disputes were often settled with the knife. In a short time their clothes were worn out and their savage appearance enhanced by their appearing clothed in the skins of seals. Seven years afterwards, brought back to France by royal command, they were presented to the great King Henry as they had been found. With shaggy, tangled masses of hair and beard, and surrounded by the minions of that splendid and luxurious Court, they told their piteous tale of hand-to-hand contests with huge seals and walruses

for bare existence and for skins wherewith to defend their bodies against the incessant fury of the terrible gales for which the island has been ever noted.

A free pardon and fifty golden crowns apiece attested the depth of royal interest. Strange to say, these galley-slaves of France returned once again to the scene of their exile, and afterwards accumulated a quantity of valuable furs.

One of the most notable wrecks of Sable Island was that of the Government transport the *Francis* in 1799 on her voyage out to Halifax conveying the equipage of His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, father of the late Queen Victoria, at that time in command of the forces in British North America. The horses, plate, library, collection of maps, furniture, and outfit of the Duke, valued at eleven thousand pounds, were all lost, and every soul on board, to the number of two hundred, perished. About that time piratical vagabonds used to frequent the island; and it is generally supposed that some of the poor people of that unfortunate ship reached the shore in safety, but were murdered by the wreckers for their property. Among those lost were the surgeon of the Prince's own regiment, together with his wife and children, His Royal Highness' coachman and gardener, and several military officers.

The Prince sent down Captain Torrens of the 19th Regiment, in the brig *Haviot* of Newcastle, to inquire after the fate of the hapless ship. She too was driven by the gales upon the sand-flats, and few of her crew were rescued before she went to pieces.

The record of wreckage is too long to be recounted here; but many will remember the loss of the *Moravia*, three years since, bound for Antwerp from Boston, the last important disaster of the tragic series.

To the visitor at Sable Island, the island first appears as half a dozen low hummocks on the distant horizon, scarcely to be distinguished from dark masses of fog, which even in fine weather near the edge of the Gulf Stream dodge about like grim spectres. As he draws nearer he makes out the sloping sides of the sand-dunes, and he sees the long line of breakers dashing over the submerged sand-bars for many a mile seaward. He can make out the bright-red English ensign floating from the tall flagstaff of the lookout, called the 'Crow's Nest', erected upon the highest hill midway on the island. At a respectful distance, be the day ever so fine, the anchor is let go, while a well-manned surf-boat is seen approaching rapidly to the side of the packet ship. Eager the men are for news of the outside world, for it may be that many months have elapsed since the last visit, and no cable can exist amid the incessant fretting of the terrific breakers which widely margin the shore. News is

told and letters are delivered, while the visitor is lowered into the boat which is to return to the island. The lifeboat enters the perpetual fringe of the surf, the crew bend to their oars, the helmsman standing high in the stern, and giving his orders in a stentorian voice, and at length the great buoyant boat goes riding on the back of a huge wave, and is carried high up on the beach amid a cascade of white, foaming water. To spring from their seats into the surf and hold hard the boat to prevent its being carried back by the receding wave is the work of only a few moments. Presently she is dragged high up on the beach out of danger.

The visitor is now conducted towards the residence of the superintendent at what is called the Main Station, where a kind welcome is extended alike to idle curiosity or to real distress. He notes the neat, well-kept buildings, the large stores and boat-houses, the sailors' home for shipwrecked men, the white column of the lighthouse, and the cattle lowing around the well-stocked barns. He might fancy himself many miles inland, so sheltered is the scene, were it not for the incessant roar of the surf as it comes dashing again and again along the beach.

He is next taken to the flagstaff, and climbing into the 'Crow's Nest', surveys the desolate scene. He looks out upon the crescent-shaped outline of the undulating sandbank covered with a carpet of coarse, rank grasses, cropped here and there by shaggy ponies. He sees the middle of the island occupied by a large and shallow lake, in which perhaps wild-fowl are swimming. By the help of a glass he can see the flagstaff at the foot of the lake, the burial plot of ground amid the long grass on the slope of a hill consecrated to the repose of many a storm-tossed body, and here and there along the beach the ribs of unlucky vessels half-buried in the shifting sands.

Troops of the wild ponies are seen moving among the more fertile patches at the edges of the numerous fresh-water ponds; seals may be made out basking on the warm sands or showing like ledges of dark rock along the shore.

The establishment kept at Sable Island for the relief of shipwrecked crews consists of the superintendent and his family at the headquarters, with a boat's crew, cowherd and teamster, and cooks for the men's messes; an outpost-man and his family at the south side, another family at the foot of the lake eight miles distant, and another at the eastern extremity—in all, with women and children, about forty souls. Their duty is to keep perpetually on the lookout for vessels in distress, and to render every assistance in saving life and property. In fine weather the lookout men from the various stations can see the entire circuit of the island.

After storms and during thick weather they are obliged to patrol the whole island at least once a day.

By the evening fire, before a hearth glittering with sheets of burnished copper torn from some shipwrecked keel, in a room where the light plays on the rich Spanish mahogany facing of carved lockers, and touches with a golden salience billets of English oak perforated with many a nail-hole, the stranger listens to tale after tale of hairbreadth escapes or sad stories of ocean's havoc, not without a due touch of the supernatural. It may be the story of the Paris gentleman who always appears to wrecked Frenchmen and bitterly complains of Henry IV for banishing his wife with the convicts of 1598. It may be one of the regicides of Charles I, who, tradition says, made this island his hiding-place, and lived and died here. This spectre on the 29th of May marches round beneath a broad-brimmed hat, singing psalms through his nose so loudly as to be heard above the storm—which, by the by, is something of a performance, for steam-sirens are here rendered nugatory from being drowned by the roar of the waves.

If it were not for the hardy grasses of the island, no herbivorous animals could here exist ; but fortunately the sand keeps perpetually clothing itself with a panoply of beach-grass which serves as a coat of mail against the attacking winds.

Great vigilance is exercised near the stations to guard against any breach in the sod, which is quickly repaired, else the gales would discover the weak spot and proceed to scoop out a hollow, and eventually undermine the buildings. One night's drift of sand will often bury a telephone post entirely out of sight.

The wild grass roots itself very firmly, and is probably superior to the recently imported Falkland Island tussock grass, which has been planted by way of experiment as a safeguard against the devastating powers of winds and waves. The beach-grass during spring and summer grows to the height of about two feet. The sand may be heaped over it to a great depth, yet it forces its sharp-pointed spears to the surface and sprouts from the summit.

Two years ago the Minister of Marine and Fisheries Department in Canada sent experts to France in order to purchase every kind of tree and shrub that had been found serviceable in staying the inroads of the sea on the coasts of Normandy and Brittany. Every variety of the pine was sent out : cluster pine, Scotch fir, Australian pine by the ten thousand each, with lots of five thousand and two thousand and one hundred each of other pines. Spruce, cedar, and juniper were planted almost as profusely. To these were added all the common trees of the ordinary forest, rose-bushes, creeping plants, flowering shrubs, pea-vines, hawthorns,

honeysuckles, and whortleberry bushes. The great enemy to vegetation is the cutting and stinging of wind-driven sand-blasts. Their force may be known from the fact that many panes of glass in the station buildings cease to be transparent, and become opaque as frosted or 'ground' glass. The effect of sand driven by wind on wood is also most curious, the erosion often shaping a beam as if it had been under the turning-lathe. The dry gales of August are found to be destructive to many of the weaker shrubs. The cluster pine that flourishes in Brittany seems so far to thrive in Sable Island. The matting of the fallen foliage with the sand may, it is hoped, give the banks a firmness which they do not now possess, and go a long way towards averting the dread catastrophe which some prophets of evil pronounce inevitable in the long run—namely, the total submergence of the island beneath the surface of the sea.

Since 1852 the sea has encroached on the land and covered places where grass formerly grew. The west sand-bar changes in size and shape with every severe storm. It still shows ordinarily nine miles of heavy breakers succeeded in bad weather by seven more miles where the depth increases from five to ten fathoms.

Since the lighthouses were established in 1873, it has been necessary to move the west end lighthouse eastward on two occasions, and the continuous wasting of the west end will soon render a third removal unavoidable. From a wreck-chart prepared in Canada, it appears that the number of known wrecks on Sable Island and its bars for each decennial period of the last century is as follows: Ending 1810, eleven; 1820, nine; 1830, eighteen; 1840, twenty-five; 1850, twenty; 1860, twenty-three; 1870, eighteen; 1880, nineteen; 1890, ten; and 1900, twelve.

Heaven help the shipwrecked sailor should the time ever arrive when Sable Island will lapse into a mere treacherous shoal of quicksands, swept by furious and dangerous seas, with no human aid possible for hapless castaway!

XXIV

AMONG THE WILD PONIES OF SABLE ISLAND

Unclipped, undesecrated, her coat is like a mat ;
One wild rough mane her crest is : no weight could keep it flat,
Her liquid eye is friendly, and oh, I never knew,
A mortal eye more darkly unfathomably blue.

Yet on her peat moss litter, to luxury resigned,
She seems to catch the echo of every stormy wind ;
And sad, but uncomplaining, she seems to see the foam
Tossed from the angry breakers, that beat about her home.

For ah ! she must remember that home so wild and free,
That barren wind-swept islet washed by the northern sea,
Where late she sniffed the tempests and heard the curlews call,
Before she knew a bridle, or moped within a stall.

R. C. LEHMAN.

IT is a curious sight—this handful of human beings and this herd of wild ponies—in lonely isolation from the outside world—on their low, narrow, surf-fringed waste of sand, scourged by unremitting gales and thundered upon incessantly by the long unbroken rollers of the ‘roaring forties’ of the Atlantic.

To how many poor souls of mariners this has been the last strip of earth their mortal eye beheld none may ever know. Long indeed is the roll of known disasters, from the loss of the *Admiral*, of Sir Humphrey Gilbert’s ill-fated expedition to Newfoundland in 1583, to the wreck of the big steamship *Moravia*, bound from Boston to Antwerp, some four years ago. Yet larger still is the list of the unknown. Out on the treacherous shifting sand-bars, by which the island is margined for many mile, a ship may be trapped and crumbled by the toppling seas, without a soul being the wiser. Not without reason has Sable Island been christened ‘The Graveyard of the North Atlantic’. Notwithstanding it may not be a charnel-house on a scale sufficient to justify such a cognomen, yet many a sad story of drowned men and stranded ship, of haunting spectres, of fiendish plunder of wreckers, lends touch of weird and melancholy interest to its windswept desolate sand-dunes. After any wild night of storm, bleached human bones are sure to be disinterred from the shingle of the beach,

while the next gale terminates their sojourn beneath 'the glimpses of the moon' and buries them once more beneath some migrating sandbank.

Situated about eighty-five miles eastward of the coast of Nova Scotia, Sable Island comes perilously close to the ocean pathway of commerce between the old and new world, its terrors to navigators being greatly enhanced by the westward sweep of a branch of the arctic current which here varies in velocity according to the force and direction of the wind. Ships have been known to run heedlessly towards the low, dark hummocks, which are difficult to make out distinctly even on a perfectly fine day at a distance of twelve or fifteen miles, until the attention of the lookout has been suddenly arrested by the red ensign floating from the tall flagstaff of the 'crow's nest'. The island has been compared to a wild beast with open jaws ever ready to close on its victims.

As lurks the hungry tiger for his prey,
 Low crouched to earth, with ill-dissembled mien,
 Peace in his eye—the savage wish to slay
 Rankling around his heart—so thou art seen,
 Stretched harmlessly on ocean's breast of green,
 When winds are hushed and sleeps the placid wave ;
 While on thy sands the lazy seals repose,
 And steeds unbridled sporting carelessly
 Crop the rank grass that on thy bosom grows,
 While round the timid hare his glance of caution throws.
 But when thy aspect changes—when the storm
 Sweeps o'er the wild Atlantic's heaving breast :
 When hurrying on in many a giant form,
 The broken waters by the winds are pressed,
 Roaring like fiends of hell which know no rest,
 And guided by the lightning's fitful flash,
 Who dares look on thee then in terror drest,
 As on thy shuddering beach the billows dash,
 Shaking the heavens themselves with one long deafening crash !

The above Byronic sketch from the pen of the late Hon. Joseph Howe, of Halifax, conveys a faithful picture of the island in calm and storm. Nowhere does Neptune more swiftly change his moods. Even on a halcyon summer day one cannot get rid of an impression of feline treachery on the part of the smiling sea. Though the eye wanders over patches of silvery sheen beyond the green shoals quivering and glancing up to the very rim of the horizon, it is impossible to forget that recent morning when, without other warning beyond a moaning and troubled sound of the surf and a white horse or two, a sudden gale burst in awful fury, while the sky grew wild in appearance, and a dull

leaden haze obscured the rays of the sun, only a few moments before at their very brightest. Moreover, it is thought that the sea, ever nibbling voraciously, and in memorable hours of fury taking huge bites out of the sand-cliffs, will never rest until men and ponies and all living things are driven away or devoured, and Neptune will claim for his own the windswept desolate sand-hills which he appears to covet so ardently.

The Dominion Government would be wanting in the common instincts of humanity were all possible means not taken to prevent shipwreck and to carry aid to sufferers after disasters have occurred. Communication is kept up with the island by means of a monthly visit of one of the steamships of the Marine and Fisheries Department. And the care of two well-equipped lighthouses, or huts of refuge,¹ repairs to the station buildings, the looking after life-boats and life-saving appliances, the cutting and hauling of fire-wood, curing hay for stock, the gathering of the annual crop of cranberries, and attending to the monthly visits of the packet, keep a staff of some score of individuals continually busy.

During the prevalence of fogs the island has to be patrolled twice a day ; also on days of storm, when outward there are sixteen miles of white and broken water, and landward drifting sands and flying mists shut in the vista from the 'lookout'. Mounted on his hardy pony, the solitary horseman now rides up the central valley, once and again climbing a hillock to peer seaward, or turning his horse to the beach to examine some broken spar, or empty bottle, or bit of wreckage tossed up by last night's gale. Now he invades the sanctuary of the sea-gulls until, with harsh clamour, hundreds of angry birds scream above his head and swoop down towards his weather-beaten tarpaulin jacket, or snap viciously at his pony's ears. A few minutes more and he has drawn rein to mark the seals resting their sleek wave-tossed bodies on the sands. The wary old male turns his broad moustached nostrils to the tainted breeze and the whole herd begin a lumbering retreat. Great ocean bulls and cows and calves are seen to be tumbling over each other in their haste to reach the water, wherein they are at home and safe.

Charging the herd for the fun of it, the patrolman gives his pony her full stride along the beach. He shouts with laughter at the rolling, tumbling mass, wallowing towards the surf into which they splash at length with loud snorts of relief. Now they

¹ Each house is furnished with a fireplace, matches and drywood. A bag of biscuits is hung upon the wall out of reach of the rats which at all times infest the island. Written instructions are posted up with directions how to find the main station, and how to dig for fresh-water. Many a poor fellow has been saved by the welcome shelter.

ride the green rollers with the grace of Naiads and look back with great wondering eyes at their tormentor, accompanying him (at a safe distance) a mile or two along his beat, semicircling inwards and out again. At length he meets the patrol sent from the opposite direction. The two men draw rein and compare notes. An hour or two afterwards each is making his report to the superintendent — 'an empty barrel; an old spar covered with barnacles; a herd of seal; a barque in the offing under storm sails'. There comes a day when he returns at full gallop to headquarters, and shouts to the lookout 'A wreck! a wreck!' The telephone is set going to the out-stations to muster all the able-bodied men; the working horses are driven at their best gait with the boats mounted on the carts, and all is intense and eager haste to the scene of disaster.

Here is work for man and horse for a month. To rescue the crew, strip the wreck, land and store the cargo, and haul it for reshipment will fill many a day with labour and excitement.

Once a year the wild ponies are rounded up. They are driven into a 'pound', while the staff are converted into seeming vaqueros as they ride after some proud 'Sultan-stallion', detach him from his troop of mares, and transfer him ignominiously bound, with eyes ablaze with the fires of impotent rage, into the hold of the Government boat.

Hence it will be seen that employment on the island does not lack variety. It might be thought a difficult matter to obtain good men willing to banish themselves to this desolate shore. On the contrary, the staff having once tasted the freedom of the life seem unwilling to abandon it. They are not spiritless men, not daring to leave the naked sands where they have been flung by fate, but they have learned to love the passing of the ships on the sea, the wild-fowl seeking the shelter of the inland ponds, the ceaseless piping of the plover, the scuttling herds of seals, the seaward roar of the breakers swinging in again and again to hurl their foaming cascades along the ringing beach. Once in awhile they taste the supreme joy granted to human beings of bearing aid at the risk of their own safety to brothers in distress; when amid the smother of flying spume and the deep and dreadful undertone of the sullen thunder rolling above the shouting of the shoals, they snatch some crew from the packs of hunting waves.

Structurally the island is simply an enormous accumulation of loose grey sand forming two parallel ridges united at either end. The valley between these ridges is occupied for about eight miles by a shallow lake, on which many black duck and sheldrake rear their broods: the black duck breeding in the grassy tussocks, the sheldrake on the high sand-cliffs. Separating this lake from the ocean

on the south side, being very narrow and low, the sea breaks over the ridge in heavy weather. The lake often remains a foot or two above the sea-level, until gradually an opening re-forms, and the surplus accumulation runs off. The lake formerly had a narrow channel to the sea, admitting of the passage of small craft. A gale in 1830 closed its entrance, shutting in two American schooners whose ribs are now buried in the sand.

In approaching the island from the ocean little more than sand is seen thrown up into every variety of drift, or scooped out by the wind into bowl-like hollows, relieved only by the stark timbers of many an unfortunate ship, washed by the waves or thrown out high upon the shingle. In parts of the island the scene resembles somewhat a bit of a western prairie. In several places there are fresh-water ponds formed by the rain-water collecting in cup-like depressions. It may be mentioned that fresh-water is found anywhere in the sand by digging to the depth of about eighteen inches to two feet. Digging to a greater depth the water becomes salt—so that the curious phenomenon is to be noted of an island of sand holding fresh-water like a sponge.

The central valley of the island in places is adorned with wild roses, lilies, asters, strawberries, whortleberries, and the trailing vines of wild cranberries, which are exported in large quantity. Smiling grassy vales may be said to alternate with naked sand dunes for the entire length of the interior of this little island. The wild horses feeding dot the landscape, and seem to give colour to the Grecian myth that whenever Neptune struck the earth with his trident a horse appeared.

Certainly Sable Island does not exactly tally with one's preconceived notion of the character of a horse ranch. Yet here the ponies thrive in average seasons; here they roam in ignorance of the labours which most of their race are fated to endure—until at last the evil day arrives of the annual drive, when the whole island is swept from end to end, and a kicking, snorting, half-terrified mass is driven into a large pound. Two or three dozen of selected ponies are then lassoed, thrown down, bound, rolled over upon a hand barrow, lifted up and slid into the surf-boat, rowed out, and finally hoisted on board for conveyance to Halifax.

It may be gathered from what has been said of the singular environment, that the hardihood of the Sable Island pony has been amply tested, and the survivors have proved their right to exist by reason of their endurance of the long tempestuous winters entirely without the protection of man. The number of the wild horses has varied considerably during the last two or three centuries, owing to a variety of causes. It is generally thought that the original stock

was landed from some Spanish wreck early in the sixteenth century, although there are some who suppose the herds to be descendants of animals imported from France in the two quixotic attempts to colonize the island: first when Baron de Lery in 1518 stocked the island, and again in 1597, when the Marquis de la Roche landed his ill-fated band of convicts out of the French prisons on what was called, on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, the 'French Gardens' of America. It would be interesting to compare the Sable Island pony with the 'Galloway', known to have come from one of the ships of the Armada, sent by the ambitious Philip in the fond hope of carrying his admiral in triumph over British soil. The Galloway is perhaps a far handsomer pony, with cleaner limbs and more symmetrical head.

How many lives have been saved by the herds it is impossible to tell. The frequent entries in the journals of the superintendents such as 'we got another fat horse for to eat', shows that the staff preferred a steak from a tender young mare to their regulation diet of salt beef and pork.

In 1828 there were said to be 300 horses on the island: in 1864, 400 divided into six 'gangs' or herds: about twenty-five years ago there were from 500 to 600 roaming about. Two successive winters (1881 and 1882) of phenomenal storms ruined so much of the wild hay that large numbers perished. At the present time there are less than 200 divided into five troops, each named after the locality to which it has become attached,¹ known respectively as the Greenhead, Smoky Hut, York, Eliza, and Milo 'gangs'. Not more than two-thirds of these are from the original stock, the remaining one-third being the offspring of mares crossed with introduced stallions. The career of one of these poor 'Jack of Trumps', well known on the Halifax racing grounds, was brief. Jack was turned loose on a fine bright morning of early spring, after much careful feeding and grooming. Gaily he pranced forth in his pride to where, at the distance of a mile, a troop was espied grazing. The leader, distinguished by the prodigious length of his mane, at once left his family, and advancing towards the intruder, assumed a defiant attitude and quickly showed that he was prepared to fight if any interference with his mares was attempted. He was repeatedly seen to drive in the outlying mares and young colts strayed outside the ranks into the general herd, for this purpose frequently passing backward

¹ When in the annual 'round up' the herds become mixed, it will be found that during the succeeding night each troop will have returned to its favourite feeding ground, having travelled perhaps ten or twelve miles for the purpose.

and forward, pausing from time to time to toss the tangled masses of mane from eye and ear. At length the rivals closed, and after a desperate conflict waged by savage biting and striking with the forefeet, 'Jack of Trumps' was found with a prodigious hole in his neck, and had to be shot.

'Flying Frenchman' was the next victim. This horse is said to have gone crazy after galloping round all the herds in succession, and being severely handled. Still the Department persisted in their efforts and sent down successively, Pretoria, Black Hawk, Telephone, Columbus, and finally Sable Prince, a fine young Canadian pony. As the precaution was taken of deporting the leaders of the 'gangs' before turning the animals loose in the spring, this experiment proved more successful. It remains to be seen if the offspring of these crossings, although undoubtedly improved in size, will have sufficient hardihood to withstand the conditions to which the Sable islander has become acclimatized. We are indebted for the continuation of the original breed only to the young horses, who are driven out by the leader with furious bites when they arrive near maturity, and are thus obliged to live in small bands on the outskirts of the herds. Sometimes an old or disabled mare, unable to keep up, drops behind. She becomes an object of the greatest attraction to the young horses and soon produces foals. Thus the nucleus of a new herd is formed. Vastly interesting is it to witness the victim of the leader when the troop is close pressed. The old stallion boldly faces the approaching danger while he takes pains to keep the foals and mares in a close pack as a general retreat is begun, first at a slow trot, presently at a gallop; at length he deems it expedient to retire, he joins his herd, but always keeps between them and the enemy. In this respect the nobler horse in his wild state differs from the deer tribe, for notwithstanding that stags fight furiously on occasion between themselves, usually for the favours of the coveted hind, contrary to general belief, in time of danger they will desert their consorts in a cowardly and ungallant fashion, only intent on preserving their own hides intact.

The horses of Sable Island are seldom seen lying down to rest. They often sleep standing. They persistently refuse the shelter of a stable, or even the rough sheds erected for their comfort,¹ and shun the near presence of man. In the mildest weather, escaping from the stable, they will put a mile or two between them and it before they stop to graze, in this respect differing from the semi-wild cattle which formerly besieged the barn doors with their lowings during the winter-time.

¹ Quite recently a rough shelter with a stack of hay in the middle has been found to attract the ponies in bad weather.

The winter season levies its toll off the old and infirm. Some succumb after each storm. During severe tempests, thousands of tons of sand are often carried from the beach—some from one side and some from the other as the gale veers and shifts to all points of the compass in turn, and are strewn over the island, so that vegetation in spots becomes nearly smothered. Scores of horses died in 1811 from insufficiency of food, the result of a hurricane by which the outline of the island was, in one night, completely altered. Sandhills which had formed landmarks were tumbled into the sea, and hills piled up where once valleys nestled. Recent wrecks disappeared, and others were brought to view of which there was no record.

In severe weather it is the habit of the horses to gather in the gulches or hollows between the sandhills. Here they arrange themselves in regular order, the colts in the centres, their elders outside of them, and the master stallion in the most exposed situation of all. The very marked droop of the rump is supposed to have been developed by the constant habit of hunching up the hindquarters, which are always opposed to the direction of the storm and wind.

During the American Revolutionary war much destruction was caused among the herds from the common practice by filibusters on both sides of raiding the island for remounts and meat. Since that time, nearly two thousand horses have been exported from the island and sold in Canada.

It is startling how the type recalls the sculptures of antiquity. A description of the Sable Island pony might stand for the low, large-headed, heavy-shouldered, powerful-limbed animals, with necks clothed with volumes of shaggy mane, and tail coarse and abundant, which are depicted in the ancient sculptures of Nineveh. The short, stocky horses of the Elgin marbles, 'cocked thrappled', that is, having the wind-pipe and fore-neck above its insertion in the chest projected like the same parts of a game cock when crowing, and with their haggard manes, compact round barrels, and short, stiff pasterns, irresistibly suggest the Sable Island pony. The same may be said of figures of the 'Tarpan' or wild horses of Tartary. The 'Sultan-stallions' of these herds, we are told, were objects of research for the chiefs of armies, who endeavoured to catch them and make them their chargers. It was on a piebald horse, very like these ponies, that Attila, King of the Huns, known as 'the Scourge of God' in the fifth century, rode forth to ravage the civilized world.

Descriptions of the wild herds of Mexico also tally with the characteristics of the type. In both we have a low body from

twelve to thirteen hands ; head large and ill-set, with usually the Roman nose and thick jowl ; the ear small, short and square at the top ; crest very thick and heavy in the male ; neck swelling in front ; withers very low ; quarters short and sloping ; legs very strong and robust with thick upright pasterns ; the eye not large or bright ; often seen to be the ' wall eye ', or opaque ; the mouth very short ; the forelock and mane abundant ; tail also reaching as does the mane nearly to the ground and covering the nostril ; the weight of the mane often pulling the crest over so that, especially in the mares, the animal seems ' ewe necked ' ; the fore hoofs usually turned out, ' paddle footed ' ; and the withers seemingly lower than the rump or quarters, although they are exceedingly short and sloping ; the coat during winter long and shaggy, especially under the chin and on the legs.

Thus the descendants of the first stock have lapsed during something over three centuries into the habits and shape of the original primal stock of the world.

The master horse of the herd sweeps between the intruder and his mares, and cruelly banishes his colts just as the ' Sultan-stallions ' are described as doing on the Steppes of Tartary. Varro, Strabo and all the ancients in relating of wild horses refer to such a sturdy form of low-set horse, having heavy manes, great forelocks, long bushy tails, robust barrel and strong thick limbs. Such must have been the ' million ' of war-horses we are told of (doubtless with great exaggeration) which drew the chariots of Semiramis, the founder of ancient Babylon. Would the descendants of Ormonde, Persimmon, Isinglass, crossed with such mares as Sceptre for example, left in such inhospitable environment deteriorate to this type in the course of a few centuries ? Who can say, if they survive at all, that they would not ? One is almost forced to the conclusion that the descendants of Flying Childers, Herod, or Eclipse of a past generation, might under similar conditions have degenerated to a race of stunted ponies.

The original stock appear to have carried the germs of all colours save grey ; none of that colour have ever been found on the island. Chestnuts are the most numerous, having tails and manes of a lighter colour, and a dark streak on the back and withers. Next come the bays and browns, which are perhaps the more natural equine colours, but there is now and then a pure white and an occasional piebald or ' paint horse ' of the Indian prairie. These last are usually quickly deported from the island as their increase is not desired. Yet the piebald ' snow ball ' bore on his back for many a tough gallop over the strand for a long term of years the superintendent, who had upwards of fourteen stone to his credit. There

are a few 'duns,' blue greys and mouse colour on the island. At one time there were some blacks, but this colour appears to have a tendency everywhere, among feral breeds, to become scarce, and finally disappears altogether.

Summing up the lesson of this narrow page of natural history we find that, following the laws of natural selection, the descendants of a few individuals have returned to the type of the only stock of wild horses known in the world; that they have wonderfully reproduced the ancient forms of whose general appearance we are aware from antique sculptures of Nineveh and the friezes of the Parthenon. In these freizes are found the luxuriant tail and mane either close-cropped or tied, and plaited to prevent its encumbering the rider, and one notices the hairy jowl and horizontal head, and in some figures the short croup and low-set tail. In the immense mane of the Sable Island pony (one is known to have measured three yards) we are reminded of the breed of the Ukraine, a stuffed specimen of which now in Dresden is said to carry a mane measuring the incredible length of twenty-four feet. As all the ponies are under thirteen hands, their usefulness is restricted. None seem to reach the standard of the polo pony, which must be upwards of fourteen hands. The price obtained at the auction sales in Halifax in the past has been all the way from £1 up to £8 and £10. The nearest type is probably the familiar New Forester which Youatt describes as 'hardy, safe and useful'. Some turn out extremely serviceable animals, easily kept, with fair speed and great endurance, especially under the saddle. As a rule when once broken and well cared for they become affectionate and docile, with an occasional display of their old free spirit, but without serious vice. There always remains, however, an absolutely untamable minority.



' LOGGERS ' AT WORK FELLING A HEMLOCK.

XXV

IN THE LUMBER WOODS

THE traveller among Nova Scotian backwoods settlements, with an observant eye for fresh 'types' of humanity, is sure to have his attention arrested by little knots of men with weather-roughened features who gather about the front steps of village stores, the doors of the hotels, and the clandestine bar-rooms, masquerading as eating saloons. These men are not farmers; they are not hunters or trappers; nor are they village loafers; their athletic appearance, their bright blue and scarlet blouses, their neat leggings laced with tasselled cords, their jaunty hats proclaim them to be a class apart.

They are 'loggers' or 'lumberers', men not quite of the forest nor quite of the farm. Their summers are occupied by the rude

cultivation of some rugged patch, by courtesy called a 'farm', where a few acres of clearing fall apart from the dark shadows of the coniferous woods. Winter finds them deep in the heart of the forest primeval, in a log camp crowded with their mates. Here they go on all winter long in spite of cold and snows, and the ravings of wild winds among the tops of the pines and hemlocks, cutting down the giants of the forest, and piling up the trunks on the frozen river. Should the traveller during the weeks of early autumn go canoeing up any Canadian forest stream, in order to hunt moose, bear or caribou, or merely to steep his being in the strange beauty of the northern wilds at this season, he will be sure to encounter groups of 'axemen' passing 'up river' to their winter exile. Long ago in some summer excursion the timber 'locators' had explored the most promising belts of pine, spruce or hemlock, far up among the sources of the river and the head-waters of the tributary streams, and set the seal of destruction on the tallest of the trees.

The great lumber firm which owns the steam-mill at the river's mouth, during the previous winter, when that great roadmaker the snow had rendered the construction of a sledge-track possible, had sent up supplies. A 'bear house', so-called because it has to be made proof by strong barricades against the assaults of marauding bears, had been built to receive the salt pork, flour, beans, corn, meal and spices, which form the staple of the lumberman's diet.

Imagine the solitary sledge-track, beaten smooth and slippery over snow three or four feet deep, running for scores of miles up into the snowy wilderness; at times hemmed in by dark pine forest, at times crossing the white surface of frozen lakes, to end at last in a clearing and a rude dwelling separated by so many square miles of forest, lake, and morass from the rest of mankind.

In the summer the firm sends up a couple of men to build the log camp and the stables. All is ready by the time the first cool and fitful winds of October give warning of the approach of winter. Then the loggers go 'up river', by boat or canoe, and establish themselves in their winter quarters. Though of rough exterior the buildings answer their purpose and are fairly comfortable. Give a Canadian woodsman an axe and an auger and he can make you anything from a house itself to the smallest article of furniture. The cabin has been constructed out of spruce logs with their rough reddish bark left on. The projecting ends of the logs overlapping each other at the corners, lend a touch of the picturesque. The chinks between the logs have been well stuffed with moss and clay. Here is a most natural and suitable forest-home wherein

to defy the winter strife of the elements. A mere pile of rugged forest trunks roofed over with rough bark, and still further protected from wind and weather by boughs of fir, spruce and hemlock, giving assurance of warmth inside, even in the most bitter weather, when the fierce winds are roaring through the branches as if through the ropes of a fleet of full-rigged ships.

Some sheltered ravine is usually chosen as the site of the logging camp near a spring or brook, hemmed in on all sides by the naked brown stems of evergreen trees printing their black spear-shaped tops against the sky. In a climate where the thermometer remains



PILING LOGS ON THE FROZEN RIVER.

for weeks at forty degrees below freezing, and the snow lies at an average level of three feet in depth, the fireplace must necessarily become an important feature. Although some camps are now furnished with huge stoves, the ordinary method of heating is of extreme simplicity. A square hole is cut in the roof, surrounded by sheets of tin to guard against truant sparks. Immediately under this hole on the solid earth-floor a rude fire-place is constructed of unhewn stone, where a blazing fire is fed day and night, devouring the snow or rain that occasionally enters the aperture above, which serves as the chimney. It is surprising what an

effectual heating is thus simply obtained. Daylight is admitted by one small window. A small rough deal door grating on wooden hinges is the only means of entrance. Down the middle of the room runs a narrow table formed of two or three planks supported by rough stakes driven into the floor, surrounded by benches constructed in a similar fashion. Facing the fire is a long low bench called 'the deacon's seat', made of a spruce log split in halves with three or four stout limbs left on each side for supports which it is plain can never get loose. Here the lumberers smoke their evening pipes, sing their forest 'chanties', and blithe songs, spin long yarns, as sailors do, and play for small stakes with well-thumbed cards.

No wonder that the social side of the lumber camp appeals to many a lonely youth eating out his heart in the grim solitude of some backwoods farm. The camp becomes his club. Nowhere are there happier faces to be seen than among the jolly loggers of the Canadian lumber camps. Yet their lives would be considered hard even by many a day labourer. For instance, consider the bed where they take their rest after their day's labour with the axe in the frosty air. The sleeping bunk is a mere oblong box where they are obliged to lie packed like sardines in their tins. It has been filled six inches deep with the tips of fir branches once fragrant and aromatic but quickly reduced to red withered fragments of brittle twigs. Here the men huddle together at night and sleep heavily enough, as the camp visitor finds often to his sorrow. When some stertorous breather arouses the 'boss' of the camp, he gives the word 'heave', and the sleepers all change from the left side to the right, or vice versa, at the command, as promptly as a company of soldiers obeying an order to 'right about face'.

The cook of a lumber camp is an important and responsible personage. It is his duty to ply the fire with fresh fagots during the night, and woe betide him if he omits throwing on a fresh log at the right moment. The cook invariably wears a hunted and tired look, for he is made the butt of all the coarse jests of the camp; nor are his duties light. He has to provide four meals a day for men whose appetites are sharpened by the bright and bracing atmosphere of the keen forest air. If he does not ring sufficient changes on his limited stores of eatables he comes in for hearty abuse. To do him justice it is simply marvellous to witness his skill in the making of piping hot 'riz' buckwheat cakes served up with molasses. His 'Johnny cake' is a revelation. So also are his 'potater' pies, also his hot breakfast 'rolls', white as the driven snow, and of almost equal feathery texture. Strange diet for such stalwart axemen.

Very delicious are his smoking dishes of baked beans, which have been cooking all night in a 'bean hole,' This is a pit of glowing hardwood coals in which the pot is buried, and afterwards covered over entirely with fresh earth, leaving the beans to simmer gently throughout the long winter's night. Very crisp and brown are his red and white streaked slices of pork and bacon. He knows exactly the juncture when to fork them out of the sputtering frying-pan. Tea, black as ink, sweetened with molasses or 'sugar house syrup', is always near the fire by day and by night, and is used in vast quantities. Sometimes in a rare fit of good humour the cook will brew 'spruce beer', a wonderful concoction, which



A FOREST LUMBER CAMP ON THE LA HAVE, NOVA SCOTIA.

is said to naturalize a man to the forest at once, and make him dream of the wind sighing among the swaying branches of the pines all the night through.

No picture of lumber camp is complete without some description of man's constant forest companion, that drab-coloured imp of iniquity known as the moose bird, also as the 'whiskey jack' and 'camp robber'. The familiarity of these birds is astonishing. Giving vent to extraordinary cries they enter the door and steal from beside the camp fire whenever the cook's back is turned. Their harsh notes, sometimes musical but generally discordant, are almost the only sounds in nature which disturb the tense

expectant silence of the forest. Quarrelling over scraps of food they often become quite forgetful of the presence of man, and may be captured alive by the hand. On rare fine days a not unfrequent visitor to the camp clearing is the ruffed grouse, forming a welcome addition to the pot. As spring approaches, active little chipmunks and squirrels visit the camp to pick up stray morsels of food or ascend the neighbouring pine trees to chatter and cut off the cones, letting them fall beneath after stripping them of their seeds.

Sometimes the camp keeps a hunter, usually an Indian, who brings back on occasion the dark red flesh of some great moose, surprised on its early morning beat around the winter 'moose-yard', or the dry flavourless meat of a caribou, shot after many hours of stealthy creeping on some moss-carpeted barren. It has not infrequently happened that the sound of the axe has disturbed some bear hibernating beneath a pile of logs and brushwood, and the dazed half-asleep animal suddenly driven out into the winter daylight has fallen an easy prey to the keen weapons of the axemen. Then the lesser fur-bearing animals, lucivee, sable, marten, otter and beaver, are trapped on Sundays and other holidays, and add a trifle to lumbermen's modest winter earnings.

The shelter for the horses and the long-horned mild-eyed oxen, which patiently tug at the logs all winter, is hardly distinguished from the men's camp, except that it is overhung by no blue wreaths of smoke. Near it there is always a blacksmith's forge, where all the ironwork on the sleds used for hauling is repaired, and a refuse heap where bleached skeletons of bob-sleds, litters of broken flour barrels, broken axe handles and other used-up tools surmount a dreary pile of débris.

At the advent of spring vast piles of logs have been accumulated, all carefully scored with trade-marks at their butts, awaiting the release of the river from its fetters of ice. On some fine day, usually during the early part of April, after many ominous crackings, the reign of the ice king is brought to an abrupt close. Spring suddenly usurps the throne of winter.

As if by some convulsion of nature the river becomes unsealed, and the ice breaks up into countless fragments. Jostling and grinding against each other the ice-pans move suddenly down stream like a routed army in full retreat. Following in their rear are the victorious revolutionary forces, glimmering frothing waves of clear water leaping and dancing down as if rejoicing in their liberty once more attained.

Very soon the winter's work of the logging camp comes scrambling along on the flood of waters where the ice so lately held sway.

The river becomes one swirling fighting mass of logs. Great tree trunks, tossed and pitched about like tiny corks in countless numbers, float down with fearful velocity on the rushing current. At times the endless rush of the logs becomes partially blocked, and for awhile below there is a clear waterway. Towards this mass of blocked timber some huge log comes end on, and slashes its path out, knocking the smaller logs to right and left. Then it too brings up broadside against the 'jam'. A mightier than it comes charging along end on. There is a crash. The huge trunk is flirited half out of the water. Proudly on its course, carrying with it a number of lesser logs set free by the collision, the massive trunk sails majestically down river. So the unruly pack go full cry for the mills, fighting and snarling, on their troubled pathway.

The novice might imagine that once launched on the torrent the logs would find their way down the hundred or more miles of river to the steam-mills, where the timber is cut up into 'deals' and boards, and loaded on sailing-ships for export. Could he once see the rapid and shallow parts of the river where the logs have to run the gauntlets of innumerable obstacles and falls: where the flood sometimes breaks itself against submerged rocks with the fury of a tropical water-spout, he would see the necessity for the services of the hardy gangs of 'drivers' to shepherd such an unruly flock. Without the drivers scarcely a log would reach its destination.

Sometimes the obstructed logs accumulate in vast piles called 'jams'. These the drivers must release even at the peril of their lives. A log sometimes drifts up against a sunken rock and turns sidelong to the stream, catching all the others coming along. The 'key' log must then be moved at all hazards.

Then again in stretches of still water (or 'dead water', as they are called), the logs often become dispersed over miles of surface and are thrown up on the shores by the action of winds and freshets. The drivers must pick up each log and restore it to the highway. The lumber also is frequently thrown ashore when the river is rising rapidly from heavy rains, for at such times the pitch of water is considerably higher in the middle of the river than at the shores.

When a river passes through a lake on its passage seaward, as often happens, the timber has to be 'rounded up'. That means it has to be enclosed by a 'boom' or fence of floating logs. This timber island has to be towed across the lake by means of a windlass erected on an anchored barge. This operation is slowly and laboriously repeated till the huge collection of logs is wafted safely across to the lower end of the lake.

I once witnessed an imposing 'jam' of logs on the Nepisiquit

River, in New Brunswick, above the Grand Falls. Here the river plunges over a precipice of eighty-five feet in height. The water above became backed up by the 'jam' for several miles. When the river fell the logs were left arched over the summit of the falls, wedged between the steep rocky heights which formed the river banks. Here they remained for a whole season. During the ensuing spring, when the river rose to an unprecedented height, they were suddenly started and carried away with an appalling crash; some huge logs were split entirely in halves. Below the falls the waves bound and wallow through a steep gorge for half a mile with a great swelling noise, and the passage of the timber through this rock canyon was most impressive. The sound of the huge logs striking the rock walls resembled the bombardment of a battery of artillery—and much good timber was utterly ruined by being bruised and smashed against the sides of the canyon, as the logs rushed past and were borne along by the resistless fury of the current. It was a striking spectacle to see the surging mass careering on the tumbling billows, and vaulting over the frightful brink of the cataract.

It is easy, therefore, to understand that driving logs is an exciting as well as an arduous and dangerous occupation. An expert driver commands high wages, as well he might. He must be able to navigate a log as if it were a canoe. He must be indifferent to cold or wet. He must have the strength of an athlete. He must understand the many uses of the 'pe-vee', that remarkable lumberman's lever—a combination of a spike and cant-hook attached to an oak handle some seven feet long, by the aid of which miracles are worked. He must be prepared to stand up to his neck in ice-cold water with his shoulder to a log weighing half a ton. He must be ready to sleep where night finds him in his saturated clothing. He must regard the most swollen and impetuous mountain torrents as his playthings, laugh at them at the height of their fury, take the danger out of them and subdue them to serve his own ends.

A sawmill affords the spectator a lively scene of human activity. The sets of 'gang' saws keep ripping up the lumber with a shrill clangour; the circular saws buzz like millions of swarming bees. On one side of the mill-pond logs are being hauled up an enclosed plane by water power; on the other they pass out as boards, planks and sawed timber, and are formed into rafts for loading the vessels. The long edgings of the boards as fast as cut off are thrust down a hopper, where they are ground up beneath the mill that they may be out of the way and done with. Otherwise they would accumulate in vast piles by the side of the building, increasing the

danger from fire, or else, floating off, would obstruct the river. This well illustrates the cheapness of wood in a lumbering country. Forest fires are the greatest destroyers of valuable timber, and dreaded scourges they may indeed become, sometimes swallowing up millions of dollars' worth of trees in a few days, as well as scores of human lives.

Perhaps the lumberman's gravest fault is his improvidence, for, like Jack ashore for a spree, he wastes in a few days of revelry the earnings of months. Frequently he vows the hardships of the life are too severe, and that he can do better on his farm, but when the fall arrives and the gangs gather to move off to the great log shanties, the old spell generally asserts its sway, and off he hies once more to taste the bliss of a whole winter spent amid the serene peace of the forest, free from the incubus of almost every mundane care.

XXVI

A BIRCH-BARK CANOE TRIP

ON the morning of August 20, a morning that broke brightly over the Nepisiquit Bay after two days of mist and rain, I found myself bidding good-bye to our well-fed host at the *Wilbur Hotel*, Bathurst, New Brunswick. Seated on an express wagon piled up with boxes and bags, and bristling with guns and rods, with two Indians perched on precarious eminences of the motley pile, we waved our farewells. A pair of weedy colts, better up to their work than their appearance promised, bowled us swiftly over the rough road, past farms and bits of uncleared forest, a distance of some nine miles, to the Papineau Falls, on the Nepisiquit River, above which our canoe *White Heather*, awaited us.

The falls presented a very fine spectacle, the river pouring itself over a ledge of granite, and where it has receded leaving curious traces of water sculpture, such as circular basins in the solid rock with the round stones still remaining, the gyrations of which had scooped the 'pot-holes', so called. Here we left our wagon, which was to proceed along the rough lumber track on the river's eastern bank, to join us some sixteen miles above, at the Grand Falls, and this, therefore, will virtually be the starting point of the expedition.

The muscular arms of my two Indians, Joe and Peter, swiftly forced the light canoe against the rapid current, and having a permit to fish as I moved along, I willingly rested them at the principal salmon pools.

The first notable pool is Gordon Meadow Brook, named in honour of a former Governor of New Brunswick, famed for his sporting proclivities. Here the river is wide and shallow, but the mouth of a tributary stream invariably has a great fascination for the Salmonidae, and this proves no exception.

A beautiful pool just beyond, where some immense masses of rocks overlook a lake-like expanse of the river, is noted as the place where a gentleman of St. John encamped with his whole family, after being burned out of house and home by the great fire. As we passed a brood of young shield ducks were driving and disporting in a very lively fashion.

Among the most noted camping grounds that we passed, I must particularize the Middle Landing, where the river contracts itself into a deep, narrow gorge, and then pours itself into a placid pool, where grilse and salmon delight to linger: the Big Chain, one of the most picturesque parts of the lower river, where Lady McDonald spent a few weeks of the previous summer; the portage path here is like a bit of fairyland, so wondrously lovely is it with sweet, flowering shrubs and hazel copses, with a bubbling ice-cold spring and deliciously cool banks of ferns and mosses.

Little Chain is another beautiful pool, doubtless endeared to my memory because it proved a lucky one. Here I killed another salmon and raised a grilse, but could not charm him to make a second attempt at black-doe or fairy. A bear had been reported as seen at this spot a few days previously in the act of taking a bath and fishing.

Toward evening we find ourselves no longer struggling with a rushing current, but paddling apparently on the bosom of a broad lake. Quickly traversing its expanse we enter a gorge where the water at first is still and dark, and the precipitous rocks rise on either side to the height of from one to two hundred feet. The shades of evening were already closing over the landscape, and curtained, as we were, by the steep sheer sides of the cliffs, the gloom grew intense. We knew that in these rent rocks we witnessed the work of myriads of slow years, during which the waters had been chiselling out this passage. There was an awfulness about it difficult to describe. Pushing through the gorge for nearly half a mile, at a sudden turn I looked up and beheld confronting us—

The giant element

From rock to rock leap with delirious bound,
Crushing the cliffs beneath.

I felt that seldom in my life had I witnessed anything more impressive. We had passed through the galleries of the sculptor, and here we stood, face to face, with the power that, unwearied with untold centuries of labour, was still at work carving the solid rock in the old fashion.

A steep pathway led up from the ravine of the river bed to a level plateau that formed a lovely camping ground, and had evidently been very frequently used for that purpose. Here we found our baggage awaiting us, and in the fast waning light we cut our tent poles and firewood, and soon the air was fragrant with the steaming tea, and the juicy salmon steak broiling over the glowing coals. The cataract was hidden from view by a growth of birch, but its roar filled the air not unpleasantly.

Still later in the evening shouts were heard from some French half-breeds, who always make a noise as they travel, and are therefore poor guides, if any hunting is aimed at.

Two Boston gentlemen—one of whom, an old college chum, I had last met quite as unexpectedly on Fleet Street, an antithesis as direct as conceivable to this quiet scene of sylvan beauty—were making a canoe voyage up the Nepisiquit, intending to portage to the Tobique River, and descend by that stream to the St. John. After a pleasant exchange of hospitalities they pushed on to the pools of the Upper River, haunted by the giant trout; while I concluded to remain here to do another day's salmon fishing below the falls, and to enjoy the quiet repose of the succeeding Sunday in this romantic spot, from the allurements of which I found it difficult to tear myself away.

It is difficult to decide which view of the falls is most impressive, that from the canoe below, looking upward at the seething torrent in the act of taking the delirious bound, or that from the cliff above, where one looks down upon the white and tortured waters, writhing between the rocky barriers after they have made the fearful leap. On the cliff above are carved the names of many, who, like us, have with awe bent over the giddy summit, and looked down upon the raging abyss immediately beneath. Among them we recognize the names of officers in Her Majesty's service, now, perhaps, in sun-scorched India or Egypt, who, doubtless, when oppressed with the glare of eastern skies, sometimes think tenderly and affectionately of such spots as these, in our happier climes.

Leaning over the edge of the protruding rock, I counted sixty salmon fanning the sands of the pool below, but I was told that many years back it was a common thing to count upward of two hundred in this pool. After vainly essaying to scale the falls, they slink back here to show their disappointment by indulging in a lazy sulk. In vain for them exist in the upper river above the falls most lovely pools and boiling rapids which their restless intrepid spirits would have delighted to achieve. They have come only some twenty miles from the river's mouth. Could not a small grant of Government money be made to build a fish ladder that would enable the fish to surmount this great natural obstacle and open to them the remaining sixty-five miles of river, and the three lakes, and furnish a journey from the sea worthy the ambition of the most aspiring salmon?

Of course, so famous a pool is not without its salmon myths and traditions. The writer has been told, on excellent authority, how one forty-five pounder committed suicide by leaping into the canoe, how another rushed down stream with a line of one

hundred yards and was again made fast. Gentle reader, the writer also heard other stories far more wonderful, but he will not rehearse them, as he wishes to gain confidence and esteem, and fears to provoke such criticism as he once overheard of a brother angler: 'How strange that men who in other relations of life are truthful in speech and trustworthy in character, will lie with audacious hardihood about fish'.

With a sigh of regret the salmon tackle was put away and a Hardy trout rod got ready. What a toy-like thing it seemed after the ponderous sixteen-foot salmon rod. We took a long, lingering look behind at the brown backs in Falls' Pool, and regretting for their sake, and our own, that the power was denied them of accompanying us in our progress through the upper river, bade them a sad adieu. Our various packages have been skilfully stowed in the canoe, that surprised us by its capaciousness; the canvas tent is spread as a covering over the cargo; the senior Indian Joe takes his station at the stern; gun in hand, I recline as comfortably as circumstances admit of on the motley baggage; two pairs of muscular arms are impelling us up the swift current. Onward! Each turn of the river is to open up to us a new wonderland! With enthusiasm thought flies ahead to the upper reaches before us, to the fabulous trout that haunt the upper pools; to the bears and moose and caribou—Heaven help them that may wander within reach of our rifle.

Without one sigh of regret, we reflect that we are rapidly leaving civilization and its cares behind us. In exchange, Nature is steeping our whole being in her gladness and freshness. The west wind is wafting to us from the woods the resinous scents and odours of wild flowers. The glorious sun is touching all things with heavenly alchemy.

Can we dream of wars and carnage,
 Craft and madness, lust and spite;
 Roaring London, raving Paris,
 In this point of peaceful light?

Good-bye to cities! My only society for the next few weeks is to be found in two or three favourite volumes, the companionship of my two men, and most of all, in the open book of Nature that I have turned at such an inviting page.

Let me take this opportunity of pausing to sketch my henchman Joe. The other man is nothing more than a muscular piece of mechanism without any traits worth mention. But Joe is interesting. After the day's toils and excitements are over, and as he is enjoying his pipe before the glowing coals of a hardwood

fire, how fittingly his stories of Indian superstitions, of the habits of the denizens of our forests, of hardships endured in the chase, chime in with the surroundings. Give me an Indian for a guide on such an expedition as this ; with all his faults, there is a lovable simplicity about him, and a sympathy with the wild creatures that I heartily admire.

While sitting round the camp fire one evening I noted that Joe had lost a large part of his right great toe. On questioning him I got the explanation : ' You remember that cold Friday, sir, about twenty-eight years ago ? Plenty people froze to death ; plenty more lose toes, fingers, nose, on that day, I tell you. Me and my brother Peter were in the woods that day, far from home. Six miles from our camp we had killed two moose the evening before. By the time we dressed them it came on dark, very dark, sir, and snow began to fall. We could not find our way about, so we dug down through the snow.' ' How deep, Joe ? ' ' About four feet, sir, to the ground ; then we laid down for the night.' ' Had you any fire ? ' ' Oh, yes, sir ! but it got so cold before morning ; we sat there quiet, waiting for daylight, and neither spoke. At last we saw the sky grow brighter ; so slow, though, it seemed like a year getting daylight ; our teeth chattered ; we looked at each other, but neither said anything. We rose to try and make our tent, where we had blankets, flour and pork. But now there was a fearful driving snowstorm ; we could not see five yards ahead ; we missed our tent, and then tried to get to a lumber camp we knew was five miles away. We wandered about, and at last struck a lumber road that we knew led to the camp. Taking off our snow-shoes, because the lumbermen do not like snow-shoe tracks on their roads—it packs the snow and makes it difficult for the horses—we made for the camp, some eight miles off. We got about four miles ; then I felt like dropping. My brother reeled like a drunken man, and staggered and sometimes fell, but at once jumped on his feet again. When I began to freeze I felt very warm, as if going to sweat, and took off my mits, and opened my coat.

' At last I got to camp, but could not speak for a long time. When I could speak I told them about Peter, and they went and got him. They put my feet for two hours in salt water and snow ; then put me to bed. There was a big fire in the middle of the camp on the ground that was the floor. It seemed to me like coming from hell to heaven. But when I woke my feet were burning in a slow fire. I made them strip off the skin that rose in blisters, so that it would heal quicker. They kept me three days. I tell you, sir, a lumber camp in winter is comfort. It looks rough outside, but once get in—plenty good grub, plenty warm, plenty

good yarns. I got a free ride into Bathurst, but could not walk till planting time, and feet tender ever since ; part of big toe clean gone, as you see, sir.'

Such was Joe's terrible experience of that cold wave which swept over New Brunswick in February of 1858, when the thermometer touched 20° below zero. Well does this painful narrative illustrate the dangers and hardships faced by the hardy hunter in the winter months ; vividly did it remind us of the severely stern aspect which this smiling scenery, now bathed in the mid-summer sun, can assume in midwinter.

Proceeding some four miles above the Grand Falls, we reached another rocky gorge, called the Narrows, about one-quarter of a mile in length, through which the river roared hoarsely. Here must have been at one time the scene of an imposing cataract, but centuries of attrition had completed their work, and cut out a channel. All our stuff had to be portaged by the path ; but the men were able to pole up the empty canoe. It took them some length of time, and furnished me with a very pretty spectacle. Looking over the brow of the cliff, below in diminished perspective, the Indians, with every nerve and muscle at full tension, were to be seen, forcing the canoe through the seething water, sometimes scarcely gaining a foot in five minutes. The picture was framed by the walls of dark rocks on both sides of them.

Once more we were pitching our camp as evening fell ; this time on a grassy meadow at the mouth of Nine-Mile Brook. While the camping preparations were going forward, I put my rod together and killed sufficient trout for the pan in a few minutes. In fact, small trout swarmed everywhere in this part of the river. I caught one trout six inches in length, distended in an abnormal fashion ; and found on investigation that its stomach contained a young mole. How the fish swallowed the animal and was able to take the fly, when the tail was actually protruding from its throat, puzzled me very much. In the upper pools I afterwards frequently caught large fish with an imitation mouse made of fur twisted on the hook. I also heard of squirrels being swallowed (on undoubted testimony) as they swam across the upper pools ; but the captors may have been well over 4 lb. in weight, while this midge was only 4 oz., and had swallowed a creature almost as heavy as himself.

On the following day Forty-two Mile Brook was reached. Landing on the river bank, I walked ahead of the canoe for some distance, and shot a number of juicy young partridges, and two rather tough shield ducks, to vary the fare. The beauty of a large part of the river had been sadly marred by recent fires, and it

was with no small relief that we found the ravages of fire had here terminated, and once more we welcomed the green woods.

Fire has been the curse of New Brunswick. The terrible Miramichi fire that occurred some scores of years ago is one of the most awful instances on record of the ravages of that element. Picture the Miramichi River, with farmhouses and clearings bordering its banks on both sides for a distance of upwards of one hundred miles. Flanking this double strip of cultivated and inhabited country, extended the unbroken forest of spruce and pine in every direction. The summer of 1826 had proved exceptionally hot and dry. All nature was parched and scorched. A party of unlucky hunters had kindled a campfire and allowed it to get beyond control. The flames spread with fearful rapidity, devouring the feast which the extraordinary drought had prepared. One fatal evening the dwellers on the banks of the Miramichi beheld the sun sink red as blood, and as night fell saw lurid gleams shoot high into the sky, while the air grew dense with smoke and resinous vapours. With a hideous roaring and crackling the fire closed upon the wretched people with a speed exceeding the pace of a fast horse. So intense was the heat that every fibre of wood was licked up in its progress, and the very rocks seemed to melt before it. Hundreds were overtaken in the act of flight, and burned to death; men in lumber camps were first stifled, and then consumed ere they left their tents. Large numbers rushing from death by fire, met death in the river by overcrowding of boats. Whole villages were swept away. Families were dispersed never to be reunited. Thousands were left bereft of homes, property, kindred, and every earthly possession.

Subscriptions were mercifully set on foot for the miserable survivors, and the tragic tale aroused the sympathy and pity of England and America. A fire so disastrous to humanity told with added force against the helpless animals of the forest. Many touching stories are recorded of the terror of the dumb creation that seemed to lose all fear of man in presence of the dreadful common calamity. Even birds were seen to fall from a height overpowered by the heat, and moose and bears cowered peacefully together in the saving waters of the river. Almost all, however, fell victims to the fury of the fire. For many years the hunter's occupation was gone. No game survived but the mink and otter and beaver, which could exist below the surface of the water. Hundreds of square miles of most valuable timber land were left bare as the Sahara. The district we had now reached had suffered severely. Though sixty years had elapsed, only in a few places had any vigorous growth of trees

developed. Cowering under the effects of that paralysing blow, the earth seemed powerless to re clothe her nakedness, except in tattered shreds and patches.

Joe pointed out the site of a lumber camp where seventeen men had been burned in their beds. Uninviting as was this spot for a camping ground, we determined to halt here for a day, as there was a good lake for black duck within reach, and bears were known to be attracted to the neighbouring hills by a prolific growth of blueberries. So our tent poles were erected on a dry bank close to the murmuring river, whence we had a fine opportunity of observing the range of hills on the opposite side, where we expected to see bears. Nor were we disappointed. We had bagged three widgeon and a teal in Red Pine Lake, and were eating some of Joe's rather tough pancakes, when that worthy began to knit his brows and focus his eyesight upon a small black object on a bare hill opposite. After many minutes of close observation we settled it that the object moved, and that it must be a bear. In a few minutes we were across the river and toiling over prostrate trees that had been killed by fire and fallen in inextricable confusion. It took us a good hour to get to the leeward of bruin, where we could plan our attack. A deep ravine, through which a small brook brawled, and nourished with its moisture a tangled growth of hemlock, intervened between us and the summit of a hill from which we felt confident we should get a shot at our game.

It took us a long time to struggle through this valley and reach the eminence beyond. Slowly we raised our heads above the brow of the hill; and there, some 150 yards away, was the unconscious bear, with head down, biting at the sprays of luscious blueberries, as he moved leisurely along. My shot did not prove a miss, as was evident from the bear's actions, for suddenly rolling and striking at his side with his forepaw, he started off for a thicket only a few yards away, and was lost to sight. 'Come away,' said Joe, 'I'll skin him to-morrow morning'. The wisdom of this proceeding was made evident on the following morning, when in searching the thicket we found the carcass. The ball had gone through the lungs, and had we disturbed him after he lay down, he might have travelled a long distance and been lost to us. Returning to camp with the skin and choice bits of the meat, we were delighted by the hunter-like aspect of things. The bear meat simmered in the pot (the Indians putting in a fork every once in awhile), while the skin was artistically stretched out by Joe to dry on stakes erected for the purpose.

Of course bear stories were the order of the day. Joe delighted in presenting bruin in comical aspects, telling how once a bear

broke into a lumber camp, and drawing a molasses tap rolled over and over in the sweet flood, then breaking up a flour barrel rolled over and over in the flour. When the men returned they were startled to find a white bear in their house. 'This is the only instance, I suppose, Joe, where the white bear has been seen in New Brunswick,' I said. 'No, sir; I once heard of a white bear with pink eyes killed on this river.' Could this have been an albino, or was Joe hoaxing? Once when out with a brother hunter, Tom Isaacs by name, an otter was stolen from Tom's steel trap by a bear; made evident by the tell-tale track. Tom swore a terrible revenge, for an otter was worth about \$12. Wandering afterward on a neighbouring barren, he came quietly upon a bear feeding on berries. 'Where's my otter?' thundered Tom. The bear jumped aside nearly twenty feet, and failing a satisfactory answer, was shot dead by Tom. This animal is a curious mixture of bravado and timidity. He will not pass through an open door; but if a hut is sealed up will use every endeavour to break through, especially if he scents the odour of molasses or pork. A common plan of protection is to leave a chain stretched across the open door of the storehouse, the clank of which frightens bruin when he touches it.

At this camp a curious nocturnal bird, new to me, and by no means to be mistaken for the common night-hawk, kept on the wing until after midnight, uttering a harsh short note that jarred the ear, accustomed to silence at that hour. Numbers of kingfishers had perforated the bank beneath us for their nests; we found the holes invariably sloping upward, doubtless to afford more dryness by draining off the water to the mouth.

Above this point we were delighted with the fresh green woods on either side, so refreshing after the fire-scathed country through which we had passed. Lovely maples, elms and ash, greeted us, and a few noble spruce and pine that had escaped the lumberman's axe reared themselves nobly aloft, 'fit for the mast of some great admiral'. Indian Falls gave us a rather severe portage of nearly a mile, but somewhat repaid this inconvenience by the charming and romantic scenery it presented.

At the Devil's Elbow we halted for two days. This is the name bestowed on the best big trout pool of the river. What connexion the Prince of Darkness can have with these lovely surroundings we failed to discover. Our tent poles went up on a sloping pebbly beach, where the river makes a sharp turn. Here we saw traces of our American friends in the shape of heads of enormous trout, wings of the shield duck and partridge. We have omitted to record that we daily shot numbers of these birds.

We afterward learned that our friends had killed an immense number of large trout, some six or seven pounds in weight, had shot a wild-cat swimming the river, and had unsuccessfully stalked a bear. We caught some very large trout here, the largest drawing the scale to $6\frac{1}{4}$ lb. Some were beautifully tinted with red and ochre, but their symmetry was sadly marred by the enormous size of their heads, which gave them a look of ferocity.

Two miles above this fine trout pool we found the camp of a young Yale student showing unmistakable evidence of successful hunting. One bearskin was stretched out with cords on a framework of stakes in the process of drying; two more, already well dried, were spread as rugs on the floor of the tent; a fine beaver skin, the enormous wings of a golden eagle, some mink and musquash were also among his trophies of war. A message, written with charcoal on a bit of birch bark, informed us that he had gone on to the lakes, and would return in a few days; near his tent was a deserted lumber camp that had been a favourite resort of bears owing to some stores having been left there.

Rugged hills now loomed up blue in the distance and beckoned us on. Pleasant bits of intervales were crowded with a growth of choke-cherries, tree-cranberries and squaw-bushes, whose fruit is so prized by bruin.

Joe observed that he never saw more 'works' about the river, referring to the bears, which indeed had trampled down the bushes well along the shore to get at the berries, especially the fruit of the squaw-bushes, which is white and has an acid, not disagreeable flavour. Squaw-bushes are probably so called because they are much used by the Indian squaws for withes and basket making.

We passed several pools full of enormous trout, but we desisted from killing trout over four pounds in weight simply because the sport had become monotonous. At Lyman's Pool, so called after an American lawyer who roughed it here in the brush with my man Joe for three successive seasons, I killed a male fish of $4\frac{1}{4}$ lb. weight, most exquisitely marked with carmine and orange, especially on his ventrals and pectorals. Joe had many stories to relate of his trip with Mr. Lyman. Here Mr. Lyman shot a bear; there fell a bull moose while standing in that 'bogan' or cove; at that point a fine caribou was missed, and so on. At the mouth of Portage Brook, a stream of no inconsiderable size, we found fine camping ground, evidently often used in the past. Here we remained for two days, attracted by the beauty of the spot. Large trout lay in a pool some hundred yards below the mouth, well across the stream toward the opposite bank. Fresh tracks both of moose and caribou were seen in some

meadow land close to the river, while the numerous stalings of bears betrayed their recent presence. We were evidently in a good game country. Toward night we heard more than once a stealthy crackling among some dry timber, but were at a loss as to what class of game to attribute the noise. We found about a mile to the eastward of the river a bog and meadow intersected with moose paths. However, we did not stumble across anything. Joe called in the evening, making rather a poor effort, however, in comparison with the scientific skill of the Micmacs of Nova Scotia, and to no effect.

Partridges were very plentiful about this camp, and by straying some fifty yards away we were sure of several shots. I now began to use my rifle upon them, and succeeded after a little practice in decapitating the bird at almost every shot. Occasionally the ball would hit the body, when it would be mangled to such a degree as to be useless. A few shield ducks passed up and down the river in search of feeding grounds, and afforded some wing practice. They proved very tough and inferior eating and we were obliged to stew them to make them at all palatable. The hills at a distance of three miles were seen to be wrapped in a dense smoke that must have been caused by large forest fires to the windward. This was disappointing, for Joe had hoped to descry bears feeding on the rich blueberry feast which their steep sides offered.

Some sugar having been spilled here on the floor of our camp, a surprising number of semi-colon butterflies (*Grapta* s.) visited us and indulged in graceful air dances. The *Vanessa milberti* butterfly, somewhat dwarfed in size, was also on the wing in numbers, and a few of those bird-like flyers, *Danaïis archippus*, were also observed; but on the whole, insect life seemed very scarce. I much missed the cheerful notes of the cicadas which in Nova Scotia fairly make the woods resound, and have a mirthful, exhilarating effect, when all else in nature is steeped in the languor of a summer afternoon.

I asked Joe if he had ever seen them. On describing the insect he said, 'Oh, yes'; his father once offered him a pair of snow-shoes if he caught one that he heard whistling in a high tree. For a long time he looked this way, that way, for the cicada is literally a ventriloquist; at last he climbed the tree at haphazard, saw him walking down the trunk, made a prisoner of him, and got the coveted snow-shoes. Joe continued that some have checkers marked on their wings, some dominoes and some card spots, and that if you keep such wings in your pocket you will excel at these games.

Seeing many signs of bears about, we constructed a dead-fall

trap, so arranged that when bruin seizes the bit of pork smeared with molasses (or still surer bait, with the rank smelling oil from the beaver castors), he brings down upon his back a load of logs and stones that crushes the life out of him. Joe maintains that bruin always foresees his doom before he enters the fatal dead-fall, but cannot help going to his doom. Destiny drives him onward. He never goes straight for the bait, but promenades quite around the enclosure. Joe once found a young bear caught in his trap and the old dam keeping guard over her dead offspring; refusing to escape, she fell a victim to Joe's rifle—a striking instance of the force of the maternal instinct in the brute creation.

Near our camp is a grassy plot known as the Unlucky Wigan. Every one that visits this spot, says Joe, is sure to cut himself or injure himself soon after. The ground is accursed. A lumber camp was once built there, but one and another cut themselves with knives and axes, till finally it had to be abandoned.

In the evening, the small saw-whet owl flitted around the fire. 'Do not mock him,' said Joe, 'whoever laughs at him is sure to burn himself as a punishment.'

These anecdotes serve to illustrate the superstitious character of the Indian. Yet there is a strong vein of humour through all their superstitions, which save them from being degrading. The Indian character is not well disciplined; he is the victim of moods, one day bright and cheerful and obedient; the next, perhaps, sulky, churlish and discourteous. He has an evident affection for 'the beasts', as he calls the denizens of the woods, and spares them when he cannot use their hides or flesh. Among themselves the Indians are kindly, unselfish and hospitable. I often think of Les Carbot's description of the Nova Scotian Micmacs when he went among them with that French courtesy and suavity which won its way to the Indian heart and made them the firm allies of France. Writing in 1620 he says: 'Verily of some families I know, there be among them some with whom, were they not Pagans, Christ would come in and dwell'.

A close intimacy with the Indian character reveals many lovable traits, much of the rough diamond. They universally deplore the coming among them of the white man. Before his advent, fish and game, they say, abounded everywhere and were easily killed, and small estimation is set upon what the whites have given them in return. How pathetic is their decline, melting like snow at the touch of the spring sunshine.

Though I call Joe Indian, yet his lineal tree shows a strain of white blood three generations back. A certain John Young, adventurer from England, where his life was forfeited to the Crown,

made a lucky escape, and coming hither in a trading ship, married a squaw and became a great sachem or chief. He lived to a ripe old age, and before his death sent home to His Majesty of England three canoe loads of bear, beaver and otter skins, with a petition for a grant of land for the Indians; and this was assented to. John Young was Joe's great-grandfather, and though Newgate lost a victim for the noose, Bathurst gained a useful citizen.

Our canoe showing symptoms of leaking, we hauled her up on the bank to dry, bottom up in the sun, preparatory to applying rosin. Here let me express my intense admiration of the birch-bark canoe, that incomparable vehicle of river navigation; let me pay tribute to its lightness and strength, its beauty and fitness.

All the forest life is in it
 All its mystery and magic,
 All the toughness of the cedar,
 All the lightness of the birch bark;
 And it glides upon the waters
 Like a yellow leaf in autumn—
 Like a yellow water lily.

The very soul and poetry of motion, how serenely it rests upon the distracted waters, calm as the iris that broods over the raging cataract, and with how gentle and swift a flight it can traverse the placid lake, as silently as the silver moonbeam that steals across its surface. No wonder that when the old Micmac warrior lay down for his last sleep, to be borne by his weeping braves to the great burial place at Penhook, or Sable Island near the shore, where the sea was for ever to chant his funeral dirge, he was rolled in the sheet of yellow bark which during his life had served him in such good stead. Had it not formed the house that had sheltered him from the scorching sun and driving snows? Had it not made the flambeau with which he had searched the dark stream by night for the lurking salmon? Had it not meant for him kitchen utensils, pots and pans, cups and saucers? Out of it had he not fashioned the horn with which he had lured the mighty moose to his doom? Best of all, had it not equipped him with the canoe? As has been well said: 'What the steed is to the Arab, the camel to the Abyssinian, that is (or was) the canoe to the Micmac Indian'.

He believes that Providence had his needs in view when were created birch bark and cedar bark—these seeming requisites for supporting life in the North American forest. When from the cedar is torn the outer bark, a shaggy covering, there is found inside a strong fibrous sheet, like wood pulp felt, which being cut into long strips, furnishes both cord and rope. Moreover, the

wood of the cedar, being very light, is valuable as a lining for the canoe, and when the summer heats have dried up the streams so that even this light draft boat scrapes on the sharp rocks of the river bottom, he lovingly protects the frail sides of the vessel with long strips of cedar splints bound together so that it glides unharmed over the pebbly bottom.

On the morning of September 1, a sharp thunderstorm of the previous day having cooled and cleared the air, a chill nor'-wester swept down the river. Yesterday summer was still reigning: this morning saw autumn usurping her throne, a revolution in a single night.

Though the river dwindled much in size, it grew very pretty above, no recent fires having defaced the green woods. We passed several high blue hills or mountains, one—Spider Mountain—being very beautifully shaped: a symmetrical, ideal mountain.

Fifteen miles above Portage Brook we pitched our tent on a grassy plateau, lit a roaring fire—for there was a most unseasonable frostiness in the air—and cooked our primitive supper.

On the morning of September 2, we struck camp early and proceeded up the river, that here became very small and shallow. Clothed with long luxurious wild grasses that lined the edge, and with copses of hazel and alder bushes that reached out their branches to make a deep dark liquid mirror, the banks often resembled reaches of the Upper Thames; but when the eye is withdrawn from the rich grasses and bosky masses on the shores, to rest on the stern, rugged hills that rise in the background, the illusion is abruptly dispelled.

A few hundred yards from the camp the canoe swept suddenly round a sharp curve in the river, when lo! about 150 yards ahead of us, on a small grassy island that marked the end of a lovely little reach of river, standing in the rank grass, was revealed an enormous well-antlered bull moose, gazing at us in a beautiful attitude of attention. Startled at the sudden apparition of the canoe, the animal had reared his head to attention, and plucked up his long ears, looking truly graceful and majestic, the outline of the form clearly defined against a background of thick bushes.

Joe and Peter stood as if turned to stone, watching the huge beast. Not a syllable was uttered between us. I raised the rifle and fired. My bullet fell rather low and went through the lungs. Tracking the wounded animal for about half a mile we found him in a dying state on the steep side of a beautifully wooded mountain. We found the flesh in fine condition, and stripping off the hide, which was in very good form, left the useless portions for the delectation of the bears, evidence of whose presence in large numbers

appeared around us by many signs. The antlers were good enough to carry home.

We reached the lakes without further adventures, killing a few partridges and some blue-wing and shield ducks as we went along. At the outlet of the Upper Lake we caught a number of silvery-sided trout, very sweet eating, very much superior in flavour to the large and coarse trout we had been killing below.

The lakes, with the exception of the Upper Lake, which is environed by a fine sierra of well-wooded hills, would not strike Nova Scotians as remarkably beautiful, for they are much inferior to the famous Rosignol chain of lakes in Queen's county, and dozens of others that could be named; but they are rather celebrated in this part of New Brunswick. They are well wooded to the very brink with a tangled, impenetrable forest, and are much resorted to by wild-fowl. In the Lower Lake we found one deep cove where grew rich beds of aquatic plants, arrow-heads, white and yellow lilies, water fern and jelly plant—swarming with wild duck of all sorts. Scared at our approach they rose on the wing. We landed, and made our camp in the concealment afforded by a pleasant grove of spruce, not far distant, where the soil was carpeted with springy moss. Building a blind on the shore, we awaited the return of our feathered friends, and had an excellent evening's sport. Not only did I bag the commoner wild-fowl—the black duck (*Anas obscura*), the American merganser (*Merganser Americanus*), the shield drake (*Merganser serrator*), the green-winged teal (*Anas carolinensis*), but I also shot a pair of wood ducks (*Aix sponsa*), the drake of which species is one of the most exquisitely coloured birds of North America. Our fare for the next few days—if monotonous—was very palatable. We saw numbers of hawks about, and one golden eagle on the wing, and in the evening found our camp visited by two great long-eared owls (*Bubo Virginianus*). Musquash abounded and plashed about the lakes in great numbers. Their houses, shaped like domes, were very numerous on the shallow reed marshes.

Whenever a camp was made here, the familiar moose bird, or Canadian jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*), flitted around us in great numbers, and acted as scavengers, gleaning up the scraps of meat that were thrown out. They have remarkable powers of mocking or imitating almost any noise. They frequently whistle like a man, and mock all the forest songsters in turn. Joe says if a dog is starving he will not touch their flesh, however temptingly cooked—on the principle, perhaps, that one of the scavenger tribe is sacred to the rest. Joe's name for this bird was 'Whiskey Jack'.

On returning down stream we disturbed a bear in a small cove

or bogan, and heard him go splashing away, but were too late to get a shot at him.

Visiting the bear trap a mile below our camp, we were delighted to find a fine bear lying prone in it, lately dead. The coat was in fair order for this season of the year, but does not assume that glossy rich appearance till the cold weather sets in, when the fur is of much greater length. The carcass was very fat and was much enjoyed by the Indians, but I did not attempt it. The skin Joe dried by stretching with cords on a frame of stakes. We found our provisions all right, but a bear had visited the tent and eaten some large trout we had left drying on a cross pole, bearing the supports quite to the ground by his heavy weight. Doubtless, in another night or two he would have summoned up sufficient courage to break into the tent.

The episode gave another instance of Joe's superstition. He had told me that morning he knew we would get some heavy game to-day. 'Why, Joe?' 'Oh, sir, I felt my back ache this morning and twitch, so I knew I was going to carry a heavy load of meat. Besides that I stepped on a stone that quivered and shook under my foot, and that is a sure sign of game.'

We also had more bear stories of course. An Indian without a gun was once chased by an infuriated she bear, whose cub he had robbed. His only refuge was a hollow tree, down which he lowered himself with his captive. The old bear descended bear fashion, tail first. The Indian seized her by the stumpy tail, whereupon he was drawn to the top, and giving the bear a thrust off, remained at the summit of the stump master of the situation.

Joe was once hunting on the Patepedia, a tributary of the Restigouche, that defines the boundary line between New Brunswick and Quebec. Now in the former province there is a bounty of \$3 for a bear snout, but none in Quebec. Joe had caught an immense bear in a large steel trap by the foot, and found him marching around shouldering the pole to which the trap was attached, biting savagely at the knots and boughs of trees and inflicting terrible wounds on the defenceless wood. Joe knew there was no bounty if he shot him there on the Quebec side, so driving him across the brook, he dispatched him on New Brunswick soil: an instance of a sudden rise in the value of meat, for the bear by going a few yards raised his price by \$3.

Another clever Indian cut off the snouts of two large Newfoundland dogs, and producing them before the magistrate, demanded the bounty money. Being asked for the customary oath, he said: 'Swear me in Indian, me no understand English well'. 'All right,' said the unsuspecting justice. The wily red man then

swore in the Indian tongue that he had killed two large black dogs, and pocketed the coin.

When we returned to camp Joe said, 'Everything all right. No Indian devil been here'. 'Indian devil! Joe, what do you mean by that?' 'Oh, sir; sometimes he gets in camp and throws everything in the fire, and breaks up things in the tent. When he goes away sometimes he leaves tracks like a man, sometimes fox, and sometimes lucivee. Once my father said he heard of a man catching him. He had taken a lot of powder wrapped up in birch bark and put it in the fire. When it went off it rolled his eyes round till the whites were out, and he could see nothing at all. The man came in and caught him, and tied him to a tree outside the camp. Every day he licked him, morning and evening too. But after seven days Indian devil run away, and left tracks like a dozen men.'

A veritable Puck indeed. Probably Joe's version of an old nursery tale that Indian mothers tell their children, as English Jack the Giant Killer. Coco-Soo, or Kat-Mous, is the name of the Indian devil, and some such name does duty for the wolverine—an animal now almost extinct. Once he was caught (on the authority of Joe again) by placing a man's hat on a sharp upright stake; leaping down on his supposed victim, he forthwith impaled himself. Sometimes he makes moose meat spoil; he wets the powder in the gun; springs the bear traps; calls up the bull moose by imitating the cow and then laughs at him. How much these tales remind one of Shakespeare's impish creation.

One of the most extraordinary facts that applies to all wild animals is that they do not appear to dread so much the sight of man, but have a terror of catching the wind or scent that passes from the human body, which is imperceptible to our duller senses. 'Moose don't trust their eyes,' Joe says, 'but their noses.' Referring to their keen sense of smell, he says, 'Moose kin sent a mile off'.

Before setting forth to our next point of destination, Upsalwitch Lake, at a distance of six miles, we undertook a toilsome journey to the summit of one of the highest of a range of hills that we thought offered a good chance of finding a bear. The day was very sultry and the travelling extremely difficult; nor were we rewarded by a successful quest. There were plenty of berries, and numerous tracks of bears; almost every decayed log was broken to splinters by bruin in search of the ants that inhabit them. Mr. Simpson had lately shot two bears in the vicinity, and Joe was of opinion that this must have frightened the rest away. We had some compensation for our toilsome tramp in the grand view of the lonely wilderness, just before the sun sank behind the hills. From the highest mountain we beheld the lesser

hills undulating below us like mountainous waves turned solid, as if some awful voice had suddenly pronounced the fiat to a tossing ocean, 'Peace be still!' Silver threads that wound among the valleys showed the sinuous course of the river and its tributaries. One's very being seemed to be absorbed into the scene, to mingle with it and become a part of sky and mountain. Seeking out a copse beside a brook that brawled down the hillside, we passed the night pleasantly enough beneath the stars, and early next morning returned to camp and commenced to portage our baggage to Upsalwitch Lake, whence we intended to run down the Upsalwitch River and reach Metapedia by the Restigouche. The weather was intensely hot, and our portage path lay for part of the distance along a meadow, where we occasionally sank to our knees in the spongy moss, and were assailed by myriads of flies with an energy I had never before witnessed.

We were glad to deposit our burdens on the shore of a picturesque lake, from which cranes and ducks rose on the wing beneath the protecting arms of some noble trees. It took us two more days to complete the portage; even the canoe—no contemptible burden—had to be carried across. Along this path was a line of bear traps that a hunter had set up last spring. In one we found a few remains of a bear that had been taken after he went out of the woods, and it had been devoured by the other bears.

As there was a good growth of cedars here, and the first portion of the Upsalwitch stream was likely to be very low, we decided to stop in this comfortable camp for one day and shoe the canoe. This process consisted in cutting long thin strips of cedar, so shaped as to envelop the canoe in a complete framework, the strips being firmly lashed together by withes and cords. She could thus be dragged over a rocky bottom with impunity.

On the following morning we embarked with our possessions on the lake; we saw several grebe ducks swimming about, one of which we shot and it proved most delicate in flavour. We also shot two blue-wing ducks on our passage to the outlet, a distance of three miles. We were surprised to find the stream so shallow. We were obliged to wade for the first two or three miles and haul the canoe after us. By breaking down two or three beaver dams we were enabled to raise the water considerably, as they had backed it up nearly two feet. These interesting and amusing animals are fast disappearing from the remorseless pursuit of the hunters; the recent rise in the value of their fur will further assist in their destruction. We had the opportunity of examining some extensive works in a small tributary brook. Joe supposed there were six beavers in this colony, two old ones and four cubs. Why they had

chosen a small brook out of which to form an artificial lake with infinite labour, where natural lakes were at their disposal, seemed something of a mystery. Two dams had been built to the height of about four feet, chiefly of mud about five feet thick at the base and two at the apex; the total length of these gigantic walls was at least one hundred yards. Imagine the industry necessary for such a construction. Then there were two houses composed in a most skilful manner of mud and sticks, that rose to the height of seven feet, and were at least twelve in diameter. The dams enclosed two ponds, in each of which was a house, the upper, doubtless, intended as a citadel or refuge in case of being driven from the other. In the middle of their hut they have a landing, where they lie with their heads together all day (like 'little boys', Joe said), and their broad trowel-like tails in the water, for they are nocturnal in their habits. They are said to carry mud on their flat tails as well as with their forepaws pressed against the body. We found some enormous beech trees felled by them of nearly eighteen inches in diameter, and a pile of food consisting mostly of limbs of the beech and birch submerged in the water to last through the winter. The entrances to their houses were all under water, and they had numerous sallyports or holes under the roots of trees, where they could find refuge in case of attack. A very inhuman way of taking them is to drain off their dams and send in a dog to drive them out—a dog that knows well how to avoid their terrible incisor teeth. The poor animals flounder helplessly in the shallow water and are easily knocked on the head. Their castors, or oil bags, are much prized by hunters, emitting a very pungent smell; when mixed with camphor they prove fatally attractive in traps to bear and lynx.

All along the brook we saw numerous fresh marks of moose; fresh tracks and newly bitten bushes. In fact, we once must have been nearly upon a moose, for we saw the green chewed leaves he had dropped from his mouth and heard him crackling in the timber at some little distance, but saw him not. He had caught our scent no doubt. We had just crossed some meadows that were well beaten with their tracks and had seen numerous marks in the shingle; so that we were startled, but hardly surprised, when on turning a bend we beheld before us, at about two hundred yards, a fine bull and cow standing in the river. I got my rifle ready and leaped into the river; meanwhile the bull had partly hidden himself in some thick growth at the bank. The bullet hit in the neck bone; he fell like a log. We pitched tent in a cosy, sheltered spot near by, protected by a fine growth of hemlocks. The springy moss furnished the most luxurious bed it ever has been my lot to recline

upon. This bull was a three-year-old, the flesh proved very fat and delicious, and the hide was of a beautiful brown.

Early on the following morning we dropped down the stream, now grown considerably in volume, two miles to the falls, which were very picturesque, but were devoid of any grandeur. Here the river makes a long elbow or bend, and by making a portage of three miles we were enabled to accomplish six miles of river. By nightfall we had portaged all our stuff to the river's brink at the place of re-embarkment, and here we made preparations for passing a quiet Sunday. Nothing was lacking for the promotion of our comfort; our table was well supplied with fish, fowl and flesh: the air was balmy, and its breath was sweet with the soft odours from the forest; our surroundings were very romantic, our tent being pitched in a valley surrounded by fine hills, well wooded. During the night we were awakened by some caribou that passed near the tent, and frequently struck their horns against the trunks of trees, but it was too dark to get a shot at them.

On Monday morning we proceeded down the dancing waters of the Upsalwitch, that by receiving tributary brooks soon swelled into a river of respectable size.

When we paused for lunch we removed the cedar shoes from our canoe, as the water now allowed of our running freely without contact with the sharp rocks.

We ran over hundreds of salmon that were assembling in the pools in the vicinity of the spawning grounds, preparatory to the act of spawning. It was very amusing to disturb a large fish in very shallow water and watch his plunges and swift darts hither and thither. In one pool we saw some two hundred fish, none exceeding twenty pounds, the fish of this river as a rule running small.

It took us two days to reach the Restigouche, and two very enjoyable days they were. The men, relieved of all toil, were in excellent spirits; the bark floated merrily along, only needing steering; rapidly we passed sweet bits of intervales, shaded by tall elms, steep rocky cliffs, hardwood groves, and imposing hills and mountains.

The gliding panorama did not include the habitations of men until we neared the Restigouche, and these were now deserted—picturesque little fishing villas, owned by wealthy New Yorkers and occupied by them for a brief season only.

The broad Restigouche seemed very noble when we were fairly launched on its bosom. The scenery grew pastoral, a sudden change from the rugged forest scenes to which we had grown accustomed. We met parties being towed up stream in launches by a pair of

horses, going to their winter's exile in the grim forests in a very jolly frame of mind, keeping up their spirits with lively songs and breakdowns.

In another hour we had our canoe drawn ashore at Metapedia and our journey was for the present at an end, for here was the railway station, and we were soon on board the train for Bathurst, whence we had started exactly four weeks previously.

I am sorry to have to record that Joe took the first opportunity of getting gloriously drunk on that 'drink of heroes'—as Dr. Johnson styles brandy—and showed he could be as heroic in his potations as in his hunting feats.

Full many a glorious morning had I seen
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the forests green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy.

After such a trip there will survive lifelong memories of melancholy plains burnt to a sober russet colour by the summer suns; of hissing rapids and thundering plunges of confused waters; of the tranquil beauty of placid lakes over which ospreys circle, where on calm evenings trout leap incessantly, while beaver and wild-duck break the glassy surface into ripples; of meadows where the huge moose, like a brown shadow thrown from a magic-lantern, steals with astonishing noiselessness across the scene, suddenly vanishing like the baseless fabric of a vision; of mountains where the rich repast of wild whortleberries attracts stealthy bears, that batten undisturbed, except on some rare occasion when the fatal lead speeds to finish their last feast; of caribou like gigantic goats rapidly treading the rocky ways of desolate bluffs; of red deer stealing down to the riverside, half hidden by wild grasses, to drink as the evening shadows lengthen; and, perhaps beyond all other scenes in impressiveness, that wonderful transformation of the forest when a blaze of scarlet and golden splendour bursts over the foliage just previous to the fall of the leaf.

APPENDIX

GAME REGULATIONS AND HUNTING SEASONS

PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA

(OPEN SEASON)

HUNTING

BIG GAME.—Moose, October 1 to December 1, except in Island of Cape Breton, where they are protected until 1915.

(No person shall kill more than one moose in one season, nor any calf moose under the age of one year.)

Deer and caribou protected until October, 1910.

Dogs must not be allowed to hunt moose or caribou.

Bear, all year.

OTHER GAME.—Beaver, protected.

Fox (yellow or red), at all times.

Hare or rabbit, November 1 to February 28.

Mink, November 2 to February 28.

Muskrat, November 2 to February 28.

Otter, November 1 to February 28.

GAME BIRDS.—Woodcock, snipe, teal, blue-winged duck, wood duck, September 1 to February 28.

Blue-wing duck, September 1 to April 30.

Shore-birds, plover, curlew, September 1 to February 28.

(No person shall in one day shoot more than ten woodcock or more than five ruffed grouse.)

Pheasant, blackcock, capercailzie, ptarmigan, sharp-tailed grouse, spruce partridge or chukor partridge, protected at all times.

Ruffed grouse, commonly called partridge, October 1 to 31.

Cape Breton, the open season for birds, partridges excepted, is from August 20 to February 28.

HUNTING LICENCES

NON-RESIDENTS are required to obtain licences to shoot from the Provincial Secretary, from Clerks of Counties, or from the agents of the Game Society in various parts of the Province.

Licence fee, for all game, \$30.

FISHING

Bass may be caught with hook and line at all times of the year.

Salmon, February 1 to August 15.

Trout of all kinds and land-locked salmon, April 1 to September 30.

FISHING LICENCES

NON-RESIDENTS are required to obtain licences to fish, which may be obtained on application to the Fishery Warden. Fee for three months, \$5; fee for six months, \$10. No person shall kill in one day more than twelve bass, pike or perch, or twenty trout.

REGULATIONS APPLICABLE GENERALLY IN PROVINCES AND STATES

The Provincial and State laws generally prohibit possession or sale or transportation in the close season for game or fish, except that after the open season closes a short time is allowed in some states and provinces, but in many export is illegal at any time.

Netting game fish or catching or killing them by drugs, explosives, etc., or by any other means than hook and line is forbidden.

Insectivorous and song birds, and nests and eggs of all birds, except birds of prey, are protected at all times.

Netting or snaring game birds, or killing by any other mode than shooting is illegal.

Night shooting is generally prohibited.

Streams or lakes leased to individuals or clubs cannot be fished by the public, though in many cases persons properly introduced may obtain fishing.

Licences should be kept in personal possession of the sportsman at all times, as they are subject to production on demand of game wardens.

PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK

(OPEN SEASON)

HUNTING

BIG GAME.—Moose, caribou, deer or red deer, September 15 to November 30.

Cow moose or cow caribou (of any age) and calf moose (under age of two years) are protected at all times.

No person shall kill or take more than one moose, one caribou and two deer during any one year.

Moose, caribou and deer are not to be hunted with dogs, or to be caught by means of traps and snares.

No person shall hunt, take, hurt, injure, shoot, wound, kill or destroy any moose or caribou in the night time, i.e. between one hour after sunset and one hour before sunrise.

A gun may not be carried in a moose or caribou country between November 30 and September 15 without first obtaining a permit from a game warden.

OTHER GAME.—Beaver, protected until July 1, 1907.

Mink, fisher or sable, protected until 1906.

Muskrat, in Kings, Queens, and Sunbury Counties, March 10 to June 10.

GAME BIRDS.—Partridge, September 15 to November 30.

Woodcock and snipe, from September 15 to November 30.

Wild geese, brant, teal, wood duck, dusky duck, commonly called black duck, September 2 to November 30.

Wild geese, brant, teal, wood duck, dusky duck, commonly called black duck, shall not be hunted with artificial light, nor with swivel or punt guns, nor trapped or netted at any time.

Sea-gulls, pheasants, song-birds and insectivorous birds, entirely protected.

Sunday shooting is prohibited.

NEWFOUNDLAND

(OPEN SEASON)

HUNTING

GAME.—Caribou, August 1 to January 31, excepting from October 1 to October 20, inclusive.

Beaver, protected until October, 1907.

Moose and elk, protected until January, 1912.

Otter, October 1 to March 31.

Foxes, October 16 to March 14.

Rabbits and hares, no close season.

Not more than two stag and one doe caribou to be killed in any one year by any one person. No person shall be allowed to hunt or kill caribou within five miles on either side of the railway track, from Grand Lake to Goose Brook.

Dogs must not be used to hunt caribou, nor may they be killed with hatchet or any weapon other than firearms, nor while crossing any pond, stream or watercourse.

GAME BIRDS.—Partridge, ptarmigan and other grouse, October 1 to January 12.

Curlew, plover, snipe or other wild or migratory birds, excepting wild geese, August 21 to January 11.

HUNTING LICENCES

NON-RESIDENTS are required to obtain licences. Fee, entitling the holder thereof to kill and take two stag and one doe caribou, \$50.00. Guides must be licensed, fee, \$50.00, if non-residents. Licences are issued by Stipendiary Magistrates, Justices of the Peace and Department of Marine and Fisheries.

Export of heads and carcasses permitted under certain conditions.

FISHING

Salmon, grilse, char or trout, in any lake, river, pond, brook or stream, January 16 to September 14.

No licecne required to take fish with hook and line.



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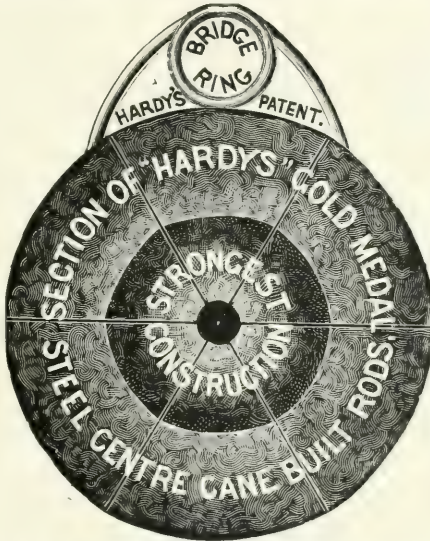
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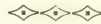


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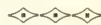
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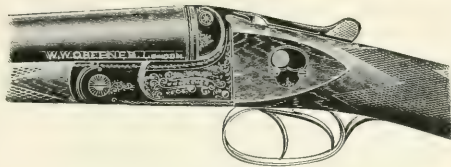
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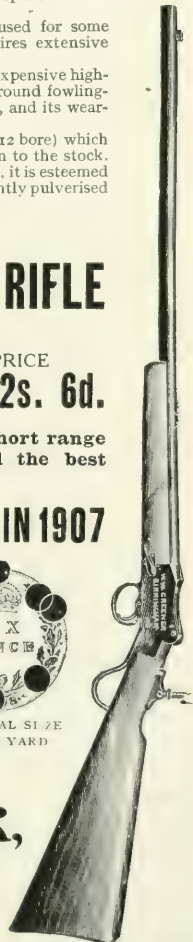
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