THREE MONTHS AMONG THE MOOSE,

37

"A WINTER'S TALE"

OF THE

NORTHERN WILDS OF CANADA.

BY

A MILITARY CHAPLAIN.

"AYUBAH!" "AYUBAH!"

Montreal:
PRINTED BY JOHN LOVELL & SON.

MDCCCLXXXI.

Entered according to Act of Parliament of Canada, in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one, by JOHN LOVELL & SON, in the office of the Minister of Agriculture and Statistics at Ottawa.

F
1054
.B5
F84

Dedicated

TO MY OLD AND FAITHFUL FRIEND

WM. C. CALDWELL, B.A., M.P.P.,

FOR NORTH LANARK, ONTARIO,

WHOSE LIBERAL AID, WISE COUNSELS, AND GENIAL COMPANIONSHIP HAVE AFFORDED ME SOME OF THE

HIGHEST PLEASURES AND MOST SUBSTANTIAL BENEFITS OF MY LIFE.

THE AUTHOR.

Exchange
Library
Univ. of Western
Ontario
9-21-29

CONTENTS.

PART I.

PAGE

I. Which? Europe or the Backwoods? 7
II. Our four days' drive through the Piny Wilderness. 11
III. Rest and comfort at the Black River Farm...... 20
IV. My Indian companions, Seymo's wigwam and family.................................. 24
V. Camping in the snows.......................... 29
VI. I shoot my first moose.......................... 38
VII. A wild chase.................................. 47
VIII. Sabbath in the forest.......................... 57
IX. Seymo and I fall out.......................... 63
X. Return to the wigwam—Used-up................ 69

PART II.

I. Life and sports at the Farm..................... 74
II. "Come and see something of a Trapper's Life."... 78
III. Otter and beaver trapping..................... 81
IV. A twenty-six mile tramp........................ 86
V. How a backwoodsman builds a winter camp...... 91
VI. The suspended wolverine........................ 95
VII. Frozen out.................................... 99
VIII. Making the bed over the fire................... 103
IX. A winter hurricane in the woods................ 111
X. Perished in the storm........................... 118

PART III.

PAGE.

I. Letters and papers at the Farm 120
II. Off for another hunt of the moose 123
III. Manyass' place and family 126
IV. A young Indian swell 130
V. The first two days out 133
VI. Joe's discomfiture 138
VII. A gala day in moose hunting 142
VIII. Lost in the forest 153
IX. Chased for dear life 157
X. Back to Manyass 161
XI. Home! Reflections! 164

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

Which? Europe, or the Backwoods?

One morning my Doctor, who is as good a fellow as ever lived, and my fast friend as well as medical adviser, called to see me. His salutation was,

"F—unless you give up work, and take some months of perfect relaxation and entire change of scene, you will be a dead man in six months, as sure as you were born."

Startling as this announcement sounded I was in some measure prepared for it.

For some years, week in and week out, with the exception of an occasional run to the seaside, I had been doing the work of two men. There had been a constant and heavy strain upon both my mental and physical energy. I hardly knew what it was to have an hour in the week in which I had not an engagement or some professional work to attend to.

For some time back I was sensible that my health was breaking, my nervous system was shaken, I was always listless and fagged, and I felt myself losing interest in life and work.

Under these circumstances I knew that I must have a change, though I could hardly make up my mind to think about it, and, in fact, could not see my way clear how to accomplish it.

But the Doctor's peremptory announcement brought matters to a climax, and, as very often happens in such cases, I at once fell in with it. All difficulties seemed to vanish immediately, and the whole thing seemed to be a most practicable and desirable affair.

After some further consultation my doctor friend advised me to take a trip across the ocean, and visit the Old Country.

He said, that "a thorough tearing sea-sickness" would do me a world of good: it would clear away the noxious vapors and diseased tissues of my system; and, combined with the excitement of travel and new and interesting scenes, would completely recuperate, and make a new man of me. I accordingly made up my mind for a trip across the Atlantic, and at once commenced my preparations.

I was just on the point of taking out my ticket when who should come to visit me but my old and trusty friend C—. Through thick and thin we had stuck together since childhood, and had had many a joyous campaign together, hunting and fishing in the backwoods. In his characteristic way he poo-poohed the idea of my going to the Old Country. "Come with me," said he, "and I'll soon set you on your feet again."

My friend—a distinguished graduate of one of our universities, and a member of Parliament to boot—was an extensive lumber merchant, and was arranging to start in a few days on his annual winter trip to one of his far-off shanties on the Upper Ottawa.

His presence and the memory of old associations acted like a charm. The old spirit of the woods came upon me, and without much hesitation I agreed to forego my sea voyage, and accompany him. I knew that the country to which he was going abounded in moose, an animal I had never hunted, in fact never seen except at a menagerie.

I had shot abundance of our common red deer in every conceivable orthodox style, by stalking, still-hunting, hounds and jacklight, but I was ambitious of higher game, and had often longed for an oppor-

tunity to hunt the moose, the true monarch of our Canadian forests.

Here, then, was a glorious chance of carrying out the idea I had so fondly indulged in for years. Nothing could have been more opportune, both as to time and inclination.

Without further ado, then, we concluded our arrangements for what we expected to be the best trip we had ever had together.

I obtained leave of absence for three months, and a substitute to do my work; and two days after we were *en route* by train for Sandpoint, where my friend had ordered his team, and sleigh to meet him.

On arriving there the same evening we found the team awaiting us; and, after a very merry night with Judge M— and some other old friends who met us there, we started the next morning on our long four days' drive to the backwoods.

CHAPTER II.

Our Four Days' Drive through the Piny Wilderness.

A MORE merry party never left Sandpoint. We were four in number: My friend C— and myself, his servant Adam, who was a crack whip, and an old supernumerary of the "concern," who rejoiced under the euphonious name of "Date."

Date was a character in his way: he was over seventy years of age, tall, rigid, and tough as a blasted oak. He had seen every phase of lumbering life, from prosperous independence to absolute penury. He was a privileged character, and could come and go, and do as he liked; and, though self-opinionated and obstinate to the last degree, was yet a great favorite with my friend, to whom, in fact, he was distantly related. He was withal a profane old man and "full of strange oaths;" but yet highly respected by all who knew him for his sterling integrity and honest independency of character.

It was a glorious winter morning, mild yet bracing, with the atmosphere full of quickening oxygen, and life-giving ozone.

We had all that was desirable in the way of equipage, a most comfortable sleigh, with abundance of warm robes, and a pair of horses that, for speed and endurance, could hardly be surpassed.

No wonder we were merry, and as we glided swiftly along, generally at the rate of ten miles an hour, we made the woods echo and ring again with our hilarious shouts, and jests and laughter.

Thus we drove on, passing Renfrew, Portage du Fort, and, crossing the Ottawa, continued along its North shore, until the evening of the second day when an incident occurred which, though it had its amusing side (to me at least), might have ended seriously enough. My friend is a most unmerciful man to his beast, and is notorious for his fast and furious driving. "On Adam, on," was his continual shout to the driver. We were now to experience the consequences of this ill-advised speed.

We had driven this day about seventy miles, and shortly after sunset were close at hand to the tavern where we were to spend the night. It is a place called the Manitou, on the Black River, which here runs swift and deep at the base of a mighty hill, down the side of which our road ran.

Just as we reached the brow of the hill, and were about to descend, one of the horses, a beautiful

mare, dropped as suddenly as if she had been shot, and, rolling over on her back, flung her feet wildly and convulsively in the air. Consternation seized us; we were all out of the sleigh in a second, and making for what we thought was a dead horse. We speedily unloosed the harness, and managed to get the animal upon its feet, but the trembling limbs and heaving flanks told how far gone she was. At this juncture I remembered a flask of strong malt whiskey which I had in my valise, and which I had brought along merely for emergent and medicinal purposes. Here was a grand opportunity of testing its virtue. In a trice I had it out; and while old Date held open the horse's mouth, and Adam and I supported it on either side, C— poured the raw contents down her throat. The effect was almost immediate. The mare appeared to shake herself together, and in a few minutes was able to walk slowly about. She was too weak, however, to trust again in the harness, and we accordingly sent Adam on with both horses to the tavern, which lay at the foot of the hill, about half a mile distant.

But the end was not yet.

My friend, who is a strong and muscular man, and as full of self-confidence and iron determination as he is strong, proposed that we should take

the sleigh down the hill to the tavern. "It will save the trouble of coming back for it," said he.

It was a proposal of absolute and unmitigated insanity.

It might have been possibly practicable if there had been nothing but the weight of the sleigh to consider, but in addition there were some seven hundred pounds weight of broadaxes, and other shanty gear lying at the bottom, and the descent was steep, though winding, and slippery as glass. I remonstrated, but C— was determined.

"Come on, Date," he yelled like a maniac, "you and I can do it alone and F— can sit on the top if he likes." I couldn't stand this, of course, so we laid hands on the sleigh. I took a firm hold of the back part, Date buckled on to the side fender, and C— took the post of danger at the end of the pole.

For the first few yards we got on well enough, but the sleigh, gradually acquiring more and more impetus, finally became thoroughly unmanageable. In vain I dug my heels into the icy incline, and drew back with all my might. The sleigh got going at racing speed, and a hundred men couldn't have held it then. At the risk of splintering my tibia I was forced to let go my hold, and the last look of that sleigh, as it disappeared in the gloom of

the evening and the descent of the hill, I shall never forget as long as I live. Old Date, obstinate as his master, still hung on, but his feet had slipped and he was crumpled up like an immense eel under the fender, and I could hear, though faintly, through the thickening gloom his muttered half-smothered oaths and protestations. My friend, in his immense fur coat, disdaining to let go, was being bounded onwards, as if propelled from a catapult. I shouted to him to let go and jump aside, for his position was really most dangerous: if he had slipped and fallen, and the sleigh struck him in its headlong descent, it would have killed him on the spot. The two, however, finally got clear, and then the three of us went slowly down the hill to pick up the fragments.

We were an ill-assorted trio. C— with his nose in the air, stalked ahead in sullen, offended dignity; Date, bruised and sore, followed at his heels, muttering profanities, not loud, but very emphatic; and I brought up the rear, convulsed with irrepressible, but silent, laughter, for I knew that if the slightest sound of merriment escaped me I would be immolated on the spot.

As we expected, at the first turning on the hill-side, the sleigh had dashed straight on into the trees in front and was badly damaged. The stout

oaken pole was splintered into ribbons, the jaunty fore-part was knocked into kindling wood, and the whole " institution " was generally demoralized.

Here appeared to be a pretty fix, indeed. But when things get at the worst they generally begin to mend.

When we got down to the tavern we met a number of men there on their way to and from the woods, who, with that kindly readiness which is so characteristic of the Canadian shantyman, at once went for the sleigh, and brought it down the hill in orthodox style, viz., with brakes on the runners and the back part facing downwards; not only so, but, with that wonderful dexterity with the axe which its long use has taught them, they improvised a capital pole, and repaired the sleigh, so that, for travelling purposes, it was as good as ever. The mare, also, after careful doctoring and attention, was ready for the road in the morning.

My friend, who was quite accustomed to such smash-ups, had regained his usual serene and genial equanimity of mind; and we started off, all as merry-hearted as mortal men could be.

At the Manitou we left behind us the last vestige of civilization, and fairly entered into the great piny wilderness of the backwoods.

And what a land it is! The land of high mountains and deep valleys, of interminable forests and broad lakes. The mighty pines and hemlocks often interlaced their branches over our heads as we followed the winding road. The great stillness, the weird silence, the sombre grandeur were almost oppressive, when, suddenly, we would burst out into the glad sunshine, and the broad, glittering expanse of a beautiful lake.

This quick change of scene is most delightful. I know of nothing which more pleasingly affects the mind than the sudden transition from the dark, silent, sombre shades of the forest into the clear, open, bright expanse of these ice-bound waters: a thousand snowy diamonds glitter in the sunshine, the dazzling whiteness of the snow contrasts splendidly with the dark green foliage which fringes the shores. Many of these lakes are dotted with islands, upon which may stand out boldly and defiantly a single tree. The number of lakes in that country is almost incredible; this day we crossed twenty-seven, some of those, no doubt, were mere ponds, but others were of great size, one in particular, Lake St. Patrick, was five miles wide where we crossed it. I shall never forget the sensation of delight I experienced as we dashed out of the deep gloom of the forest into

the sunny glory of this grand lake. Its shores were indented with long, narrow bays, which afforded the most beautiful vistas, where,

> "The balsams with curtains of shaggy green,
> Like tents in the distance, were dimly seen."

The greenery of the foliage which gradually closed in these far-stretching views, and which clothed the shores on every side, was exquisitively beautiful. Every hue and shade of green, from the bright-tinted cedar to the almost inky blackness of the balsam, was strikingly thrown out by contrast with the virgin whiteness of the snowy carpet which lay at their feet. Light, fleecy clouds floated over the crests of the giant pines. High hills, or, more properly, mountains, clothed to the summit with verdure, encircled the lake. Sometimes these were broken into bold precipitous crags of dark granite, which towered several hundred feet above the icy level. Though the great body of Lake St Patrick presents an unbroken view to the eye, still many of its large bays are full of small islands, often of most fantastic shape, which add greatly to the beauty of the scenery. Down over all, suffusing forest, lake, island and hill, came pouring the glorious sunshine, with a brilliancy and sparkling fullness that lit up everything with a dazzling radiance.

This was truly a Red Letter day in my experience of backwoods' winter travelling. Even old Date seemed impressed. His solemn, wrinkled visage relaxed, and he was always pointing to this or that particular object of beauty or interest.

That night we were very comfortably housed at a stopping-place kept by a Frenchman called Joe Le F—. Though Joe was absent, his wife was all kindness and attention, and prepared for us a famous supper of fresh white-fish, eggs and pork chops, to which we did the justice its excellence demanded.

Early in the afternoon of the next day we arrived at C—'s lumbering depot, commonly called the Black River Farm.

CHAPTER III.

Rest and Comfort at the Black River Farm.

HERE we met with a right royal welcome from C—'s younger brother—who is commonly called Jim by his familiars—and his uncle, who is the general manager of his business. "Uncle Willie," a man of iron frame and constitution, was thoroughly acquainted with all the intricacies of lumbering life, and, from his great experience, as well as sound judgment, was C—'s right-hand man in the business. Though only forty-six years of age his hair was almost as white as snow, and behind his back (for he was a cross fellow in his way) the men called him "Old Cariboo." He had spent about five years in that country gold-mining.

Notwithstanding the pleasure and exciting variety of our five days' journey, and my greatly-improved health, still I felt very much exhausted. A reactionary feeling of nervous prostration set in, which made me feel that I must rest and recuperate. And if there ever was a place in which one could do both it was that Black River Farm. This farm,

inaccessible in summer except to foot-travellers, was extensively cultivated and well-stocked. There was abundance of provisions of the freshest and healthiest quality : milk, eggs, butter, vegetables of every kind, fresh beef, pork, and, last and best of all, moose meat *en masse.*

What more could the heart of man desire ? What better building-up material for a weak, nerve-shaken frame ? Under this regimen, combined with a fair amount of snowshoe tramping in the surrounding woods, in which Jim and I had some capital grouse shooting, I improved rapidly, and at the end of a fortnight felt equal to a campaign against the moose.

In the meantime my friend C— found that his business necessitated a more speedy return to the settlements than he had anticipated. So, after a run round to his different shanties, and an inspection of the work done, which occupied about a week, he started on his return home, and left me to the tender mercies and hospitalities of his brother and uncle.

I now made my arrangements for the great object I had in view in this trip, viz., to see, hunt, and, if possible, shoot the moose, an achievement I had

always been led to believe of most difficult accomplishment.

My plan was to go to an Indian encampment, some six miles distant, and engage three of the men to go with me to the locality where we expected to find the moose.

My friend had already visited their camp, and arranged that whenever I was able to start they were to be ready to accompany me. All the necessary supplies of pork, biscuit, tea, tobacco and blankets had been forwarded, and everything, in fact that kindness and liberality could provide, was ready there, awaiting my arrival.

So one fine morning I strapped on my snowshoes, shouldered my rifle, and bidding good-bye to my friends, tramped off to join my Indian allies. I had already met them two or three times at the Farm, and we had fully pow-wowed our whole plan of operations.

My tramp that morning through the woods was most exhilarating and delightful. The air was keen and bracing, yet not too cold. I felt as if I had regained my full strength and vigor. I laughed and shouted like a boy let loose from school. I fired my rifle at every living thing I saw from mere wantonness of mirth. I felt an elasticity and

buoyancy of spirit, a real, genuine, light-heartedness, and overflowing life in my veins such as I had not enjoyed for years and years.

And well I might: I had three months before me all my own, in which no man dared to say me nay.

No more of the trammels and restraints, the pressing engagements and treadmill routine of professional life. No more of the harassing anxieties, the cankering cares, and the never-ceasing brainwork of solemn and responsible daily duty. No one to watch and criticise, and too often condemn, every step and action. No more of the constrained, superficial and hollow-hearted ways and conventionalities of society. I was out of the "hurly-burly" of city and artificial life, and face to face with grand old Dame Nature in all her simplicity, beauty and sublimity.

CHAPTER IV.

My Indian Companions—Seymo's Wigwam and Family.

IN due time I arrived at the camp, and received an undemonstrative, though hearty, welcome, from my Indian friends.

It was a queer place, and an odd family that lived in it. It was prettily situated on a rising ground, at the back of which lay, in frozen stillness, a beautiful lake, enframed, as usual, with the variegated greenery of the forest. A shanty road ran in front of the dwelling, and belated teamsters often stopped here at night, using their own food and blankets, and putting their horses in a shed which stood a few yards to the left.

The dwelling itself consisted of two apartments, the first one, half wigwam half shanty, was occupied by the men and any casual visitors. The camboose was in the centre, that is, a platform about a foot high, of squared logs, covered with sand, upon which a roaring fire was continually kept up, the smoke escaping by a hole in the roof.

Rude bunks, deeply strewn with cedar and hemlock tops, ran round the walls, and were capable of accommodating about a dozen men. On one of these a man, with a pair of blankets, can sleep as comfortably as on the downiest couch.

The other apartment, wholly wigwam, was separated from this by a rude sort of door, in it the squaws slept. It was a dingy hole, dug deep into, and walled high up by the earth; it was warm, however, and that was the great point.

The head of the house, Seymo, was one of the smartest Indians I ever met with. Though over sixty years of age, he was a tall, powerful and active man; a full-blooded Aboriginal, and considerable of a rogue to boot. He was professedly a Roman but practically a Pagan.

His wife was the better half, as far as weight was concerned. She was an immense hulk, and rejoiced in the apt name of "Big Mary." There were four daughters, of all ages, from twenty downwards, comely enough, too, they were, as squaws go. Old Seymo had but one son, a smart, active boy of twelve years. I took a great liking to him, which was warmly reciprocated, especially after I gave him a first-rate jacknife, the first he had ever possessed.

The remaining member of the family was a fellow about nineteen, a kind of distant relative. He was called Nick, and was the dirtiest, ugliest lout I ever saw; his face was certainly never washed except when the rain did it for him. He was decidedly a bad-looking fellow, a fiendish scowl rested continually on his countenance, a kind of hungry, murderous look gleamed in his eyes. I felt as if I would like to kick him every time I looked at him. He was undoubtedly in love with Seymo's eldest daughter, who, I could see, hated him. This, I suppose, had something to do with his lugubrious villainous aspect.

Immediately on my arrival the women set to work to make dinner for me, for which my six mile tramp and exhilarant spirits had given me a famous appetite. And such a dinner! A more enjoyable one I never partook of. There were potatoes, which they had brought from the farm for my special delectation; there were, of course, bread, pork and tea from our supplies, but the crowning dish was that grandest of all dishes, moose mouffle. This is the immense upper lip and nostrils of the animal, and I have no hesitation in pronouncing it one of the most toothsome and savoury of all the dishes within the range of the gastronomic art. It is white and tender as spring chicken, yet firm and substantial as fresh

beef, with a flavor combining the excellencies of both. I eat to repletion, yet was not sensible of any of that uneasy heaviness which generally follows a too hearty meal.

We may talk as we please about our numerous courses and varieties of food at the table, yet after all, to a really hungry man, there is nothing so enjoyable and agreeably satisfying as one dish, if it be to his taste.

As it was too late to make a start that day I spent the afternoon strolling about the camp, and practising with my rifle and revolver, so that when the moment of action came I might be up to the mark.

At night after supper—again mouffle—the whole of the family congregated round the camboose. None could speak English except Seymo, and he and I had a long pow-wow on theological matters. I found, however, that, in common with most Indians, his ideas of religion were of the vaguest and most indefinite nature, and not worth recording here. One point will suffice. He seemed to have the most idolatrous reverence for the name of the Virgin Mary, and yet he actually did not know who she was. We talked until near midnight, long after the rest had retired, when, feeling the drowsiness of sleep stealing over me, I took off my outer garments, and

turning over on the bunk, sunk easily and gratefully into pleasant repose. I was in that half-dreamy state which precedes sound slumber, when I heard a kind of muffling sound a few feet beyond my head; looking round I saw old Seymo kneeling before the bunk with my trousers in his hands.

"What are you doing?" I suddenly asked him.

"Oh!" said he, "I'm saying my prayers."

"There is more religion in you than I thought," I said to myself, not without a twinge of conscience, as I remembered that I had been rather remiss in that duty myself that night, and turning round I was soon oblivious to all earthly and celestial things. But I was sadly deceived—saying his prayers forsooth!—the old rascal was deliberately rifling my pockets to see what plunder he could secure, though I didn't find it out for several days after—of this, however, I shall speak further on.

CHAPTER V.

Camping in the Snows.

THE next morning, about daybreak, we were all astir, and after a hearty breakfast we paraded before the camp, thoroughly equipped, for a two or three weeks' campaign against the moose.

Seymo, the boy, and Nick were to be my companions. Our course lay west by north. Our object was to get as far away as possible from the neighborhood of all lumbering operations, for the moose instinctively flies from the sound of the shantyman's axe into the deepest recesses of the forest.

Old Seymo took the lead with an enormous pack upon his shoulders of blankets and provisions, and Nick and the boy had each a load proportionate to his strength. I brought up the rear with nothing but my rifle on my shoulder, which I was to find out afterward, to my sorrow, was even more than I was able to carry.

The snowshoeing was very bad, in fact it was execrable: there had been a heavy snowfall lately, and the snow had not yet compacted, it was light,

and fleecy, and at every step we would sink over a foot deep; even on the broad, beaten track of my companions I found it difficult to keep up with them.

Here the wonderful endurance and strength of the Indian shews itself. Old Seymo with his pack, of at least sixty pounds, tramped steadily on through the deep snow, without showing the least symptom of fatigue, and the other two exhibited the same indifference.

The country that we passed over was of the roughest description imaginable. In order to keep our proper course we had to ascend at times high and steep hills, and the descent on the other side was as bad as the ascent. In other places again the undergrowth was so thick that we had to cut the way through with the hatchet before we could proceed.

Heartily glad I was, then, when, about midday, a halt was made for dinner. The packs were thrown on the snow, and while I luxuriously reclined upon them, a fire was quickly made, and in a few minutes a tin-pailful of fragrant Bohea was simmering before me. On bread, cold boiled pork and tea we dined. Oh! the luxury and satisfaction of these midday meals in the depths of the forest. How quickly

the spirits revive, and the wearied limbs are refreshed and strengthened under the stimulating influence of the hot strong tea and the rich fat pork.

After a smoke and rest around the fire for half an hour, the packs were again hoisted, and the tramp resumed.

We were now in the country that the moose loves to frequent. Here is his favorite food, shrubby undergrowth of every tree of the forest, but especially the moose wood, a kind of withey willow, on the twigs and buds of which he is particularly fond of browsing. We tramped steadily on for about two hours when suddenly an excited shout broke out from our leader:

"Moose! Moose!" was the cry. We hurriedly gathered to the front, and there, sure enough, was, not the animal itself but his tracks, deep and floundering in the snow. There was no mistaking those tracks, an elephant could hardly have made more conspicuous ones. I was in a whirl of excitement and wanted eagerly to rush on, but the Indian knew better.

"Plenty time," he said, "we catch him p'raps to-morrow."

"To-morrow, I shouted, he'll be a hundred miles away."

But the old fellow only laughed, and repeated "we catch him sure, pass here three days ago."

And so it was! On looking more closely at the tracks, I saw that they were not so fresh as at first sight they appeared, and no doubt Seymo was right.

So the march was resumed, though with more satisfaction than before, because now we had a sure trail before us, and all we had to do was to follow with patience, and what speed we could, until we tired out and overtook the quarry.

We had not gone more than a mile or so, when again the shout "Moose! Moose!" was raised by Seymo, and more excitedly than before. We again gathered round our leader and, sure enough, here was the track of another moose, joining in at right angles with the one we were following, and continuing on in it. It was much fresher, however, and evidently of a much larger animal.

Again my partially calmed excitement rose to fever heat, and the Indians seemed to catch the contagion. They talked eagerly and excitedly over the trail, and appeared divided in opinion.

At length Seymo, pointing to the sun which was slowly nearing the horizon, ended the matter by saying "too late, get two moose now, one to-morrow sure; good camp place near here."

So we moved on, but very shortly came to a small creek, on the banks of which the Indians threw down their packs, and prepared to camp for the night; old Seymo saying: "me make fine camp, sleep good to-night, to-morrow hard run."

Though the last excitement had dissipated for the time my fatigue, yet now I felt quite ready for rest. Unused to the snowshoes, and not yet by any means so strong as I thought, the tramp had told heavily upon me. But my fatigue was not of a painful or distressing nature. I was just in the mood to enjoy rest, one of the pleasantest physical sensations a man can feel. So, opening the pack containing the blankets, I improvised a couch upon the snow, and lighting my pipe, I lay with great ease and comfort and watched the men as they made the camp. My comfort was greatly increased by the boy making a temporary fire at my feet, until the camp should be ready; for I now began to find out that it was a very cold day. I had not felt it as we were tramping vigorously along, but now as I lay inactive I knew that it must be many degrees below zero, and getting colder as the sun went down. There was undoubtedly a very cold night before us. The camp question, then, was one of prime importance. We

must have warm and refreshing repose to brace us for the "hard run" of the morrow.

We had no tent, and only one pair of blankets for each man, rather scanty protection (one would suppose) for such a night as was before us.

Three things have to be considered in choosing a camping place in winter, dry, and, if possible, hard wood, water, and a close sheltered spot. Seymo, like old "Leatherstocking," had been "judgmatical" on these points.

The process of camp making by the Indians is exceedingly interesting and ingenious. I never saw it practised by white men. Each man has his own special department to attend to.

Old Seymo took the large axe and looked round for the proper trees to fell for fuel.

Nick, with the small axe, went to a large cedar, and cut from its side a slab about five feet long. "What in the world is he going to do with that?" I said to myself. But in a few minutes he had fashioned it into a most serviceable snow-shovel, and coming near to the spot where I was lying he began to dig into the snow, and send it flying in all directions. I soon began to understand what he was at. He was digging an immense grave at the bottom of which we were to sleep that night. It was about ten

feet long and six feet wide, and as he dug down to the ground the walls on every side were about five feet high, which was the average depth of the snow at that time.

The boy, in the meantime, was breaking off the soft tops and boughs of the cedar and young hemlocks, and carrying them in immense armfuls to the side of the excavation.

The three so timed their work that in about an hour each one had finished his task.

An immense pile of capital firewood lay ready at hand on the snow; and, while Seymo was splitting the larger logs, Nick, by the aid of great rolls of birch bark, was building a grand fire at the bottom and end of our sepulchral-looking sleeping-place; and the boy was strewing the ground over a foot deep with the boughs and tops. The blankets were then thrown in, and spread over these, making a soft and comfortable bed.

The sun was now long set, and the shadows of the great night were coming down upon us, but we were fairly housed, and cared not for darkness and cold.

The fire sparkled and roared at our feet. A wall of snow rose more than four feet high on every

side, and the boughs beneath exhaled a fragrant and balmy odour.

Supper was now prepared, of which we partook with a relish and a gusto that can only be realised under such circumstances. After supper came the pipe, which never left our mouths, except to be refilled, until bedtime.

At length our drooping eyelids proclaimed that sleep was stealing upon us. Almost reluctantly, I turned in. It was so pleasant to loll before that glorious fire, thinking about everything or nothing, gazing up at the thousand starry sentinels as they peered silently down upon you through the lofty tops of the overarching pines, listening to the pistol snaps of the frostbound woods, and the voiceless echoes of the silent night in the heart of the great forest. At length I crept in between Seymo and the boy, as far away as possible from Nick.

We had two pairs of blankets beneath us, and two above. We spread them lengthways over us, and when we had them tucked in tight about our heads, which we are compelled to do in such a degree of cold—it was fully twenty degrees below zero—it left our feet uncovered. This was a matter of small account, however, as, in addition to having on five pairs of socks and thick buckskin moccasins,

the great fire blazed away lustily right before them, and kept everything warm in its immediate vicinity.

The fire, however, must be kept up all night, else we would freeze. Nick's orders, therefore, were, to sleep with one eye open and throw on wood whenever necessary.

Almost as soon as I laid my head down, and was closely covered up, sleep overtook me, and held me fast in her refreshing embrace until daybreak, when we were awakened by the stentorian voice of Seymo shouting, "pozen, pozen," "get up, get up."

Breakfast was hastily prepared and eaten, the packs were made up, and shortly after sunrise we were cheerily *en route* after the moose.

CHAPTER VI.

I Shoot my First Moose.

We had walked about an hour when a great shout was raised by Seymo. We had come to the spot where the moose had slept over-night, and which, apparently, he had just deserted, roused, perhaps, by the noise of our approach.

All was now excitement, the Indians even more so than myself. Nick and the boy hastily threw down their packs, and looked closely at the priming of their old rusty flint-locks. They even took off their coats and flung them on the packs, and then started off full run on the fresh trail.

Seymo hoisted the three packs and the coats on to his stalwart shoulders, told me to follow the boys as fast as I could, and he would come on after. I waited for no second intimation, but started off with all speed after my companions. There was no necessity for caution or woodcraft now, it was simply a matter of running the animal down, which, in the deep snow, is sometimes very quickly done. The more noise, perhaps, the better. If the moose gets

terrified and panic-stricken he becomes the more easily blown and exhausted.

So, when I heard the wild whoops and yells of the Indians before me, I shouted and hurrahed in concert with might and main, and bounded on as if I had the speed and endurance of an antelope. The pace was tremendous, and I soon began to feel that I had over estimated my powers. At the end of a mile or so I was completely blown, the perspiration poured off me in torrents, and I felt that I must pull up and take it more easily, or else something would burst within me. So I halted for a few minutes, recovered my wind, and started on again at a more easy, but still a good walking, pace.

The Indians, however, kept on in their headlong pursuit, and quickly disappeared in the thick undergrowth, though I could now and then hear their wild cries echoing more and more faintly through the intervening forest.

I jogged on contentedly enough, however, as I knew I would have the sport of it after all, as they had received strict orders not to shoot, except in case of necessity, until I came up. I had not gone far when, to my amazement, old Seymo overtook me. Even with my rapid running, and what I considered

very good walking, the old fellow had not been far behind me, packs and all on his back.

So we joined company and travelled on until near midday, when, feeling tired and ravenously hungry, I proposed dinner and rest for a little. But the old heathen laughed me to scorn.

"We take dinner off the moose," said he, "and then camp and smoke."

His scorn and confident tone re-animated me. I felt ashamed of myself, and again tramped manfully on.

But the grosser, baser part of my nature could not be silenced. There is no gainsaying the cry of hunger and fatigue. So, after resisting it stoutly for two hours longer, I grew desperate, and, with a voice and a look that would brook no denial, I told the old fellow to throw down his pack and get some dinner ready.

"The moose might go to Jericho for what I cared, eat and rest I would."

He complied, though, I could see, very sourly and grumblingly. A fire was soon blazing, and a hot dish of tea before me. After a hearty "snack" and a short rest we again set out.

Seymo now condescended to tell me the real reason of his great hurry, and it was one that did

honor to his heart. He was afraid that his little boy, having caught up with the moose, would be standing waiting for us, and without his coat would be sure to catch cold.

We pushed on vigorously, then, for two or three hours longer, and I was beginning to think that, with all their blow and confidence, they were not going to get that moose so easily after all, when suddenly we came on to a great pool of fresh blood, and on the track, as far as we could see, the snow was deeply stained with it.

"Boy shoot here," said Seymo.

I was inclined to be wrathy at first, but his next words appeased me.

"Moose take lake here, if not shoot, 'praps get away." And so it turned out.

The moose, hard pressed by the Indians, had made supermoosian efforts to reach the lake, where his instinct told him the snow was not so deep, and with a firmer bottom for his feet he would have some chance of escape. But the boy, knowing this as well as the moose, had fired just as he was about to quit the forest, and severely wounded him.

A few yards more brought us to the lake, and to still larger quantities of blood; it seemed to have poured from him in bucketfuls. We pressed eagerly

on, and on rounding the first point we saw far ahead the two Indians coming slowly towards us, but no sign of the moose.

It turned out as we thought, the animal though sorely, no doubt fatally, wounded, had, on gaining the lake, gone ahead at a rapid rate. The Indians had followed for some distance, but the boy becoming faint from hunger and fatigue, and knowing that the game was sure, they had slowly retraced their steps. They looked at me with sullen and displeased countenances, as much as to ask "why had I not kept up," but, without saying a word, fell to upon the bread and pork.

As the sun was yet an hour high I told Seymo I would follow the track and perhaps get the final shot. He nodded approval, and pointing to a headland some distance in front of us, said, we would camp there that night.

For about two miles up the lake I followed the blood-stained trail, until I came to where the moose had lain down for a time; when, either roused by scenting my approach, or with the instinctive knowledge that his end was near, and with that desire which all wild animals have of dying in the deep solitudes of the forest, he had left the lake and plunged into the woods.

It was painful to see the desperate efforts he had made to carry himself on; the staggering gait plainly showed itself by the marks in the snow. But it was a still more painful sight when, about a quarter of a mile from the shore, I came suddenly upon him. He could go no further; he was leaning sadly and weariedly against a mighty pine, his tongue was hanging out, and he seemed ready to drop.

He was an immense animal, larger than any horse I ever saw, and, as he stood on a slight rising at the foot of the pine, his gigantic frame loomed out in the dusk of the evening in even larger proportions.

It was a pitiful sight, a pang of regret shot through me as I gazed at the noble brute, all his mighty strength gone, hunted to the death by his mercilesss enemies.

He turned his head wearily towards me as I approached, and looked despairingly at me. I could stand it no longer, and, raising my rifle, I sent a ball crashing through his brain. He instantly dropped, and his life and his misery were ended.

I had shot my first moose, but I felt neither elation nor satisfaction. The deepening gloom of the dark solitude oppressed me, and I quickly turned and retraced my steps to the lake.

The fiery red of the western sky, gleaming through the green tops of the pines, told me that the sun had just set. I sat down on the shore of the lake, lit my pipe, and for the first time since leaving home gave myself up to solemn and serious thought. It was a lonely scene, yet sublime in its loneliness. The silent majesty of nature, in all her divine simplicity, lay before and around me. The great stillness of the vast snowy wilderness seemed to speak to and stir the innermost depths of my being. I felt as if I could lie there forever, and think of the great questions of time and eternity, of life and death, of God and man.

Nature in her solitude is strikingly provocative of strange and wondrous thoughts within the soul of man.

But the waning light, and my stiffening limbs, warned me that I must tramp campwards. It was long after dark before I reached the camp, to the great relief of my companions, who were becoming anxious at my protracted stay.

Either through want of time, or disinclination, they had not made the same comfortable arrangement as on the night previous. They had merely trodden down the snow, and strewn a number of boughs upon it, over which the blankets were spread.

They had, however, a splendid fire, and supper ready cooked.

I had no inclination to sit up that night; I was thoroughly fagged out, and shortly after supper prepared for bed.

I dressed myself as carefully as if I was going to a dinner party. I pulled my deep fur cap down on to my neck, turned the heavy collar of my hunting coat up over my ears, and then round and over all wrapped my warm woollen muffler. I tightened my sash, and over moccasins and socks drew a long pair of woollen overalls reaching above the knees.

Then, all huddled closely together, we slept without sense or motion till broad daylight.

When we awoke the great blazing pile of logs was reduced to ashes, and I at least felt benumbed and chilled to the very marrow.

Our first business after breakfast was to go and "dress" the carcase of the moose, to whom I had given the *coup de grâce* the night before.

Seymo was greatly pleased with the vast size of the animal, saying it was one of the largest he had ever seen.

After dressing the animal we left it lying on the snow, to remain there, until the first thaw and hard

frost would form a crust capable of bearing a person, when the squaws would come out and bring in the meat on taboggins.

This business finished, we retraced our steps to the point where the slain moose had left the first track, in his bloody desperate flight up the lake, and gave chase on it after the other moose.

CHAPTER VII.

A Wild Chase.

THE trail led directly across the lake, which was about a mile wide, into the woods on the other side. This track, then, we followed, and soon came to places where the moose had stopped to browse, and sometimes to lie down, showing that he had been, and no doubt still was, travelling along at his leisure.

I strictly enjoined upon the Indians that they were not, to leave me behind, that I could not, and would not, keep up the breakneck style of travelling of the day before. I told them that I had not been on snowshoes for years, and that I was unwell. In short I made as poor a mouth over the matter as I could. They promised obedience, and kept it faithfully. The boy taking my hand, and looking wistfully in my eyes, as much as to say that he was sorry that he had displeased me. I had gladdened his heart the night before by the jack-knife which I had promised him when starting, as soon as I should shoot my first moose.

The traces of the moose became more plentiful

and recent every mile we advanced, till, finally, we came to the spot where he had slept the night before.

I could see that the Indians were all impatience to start off on the full run, but I had had enough of that, and was neither in the humor nor condition for anything of the kind.

In fact I was travelling in great discomfort and difficulty. My sleep the night before, though sound, had not been of that refreshing kind which can be gained only when the body is warm and comfortable. I felt stiff and sore, and every joint was aching.

Snowshoeing in those backwoods in the depth of winter is very laborious work. It is very different in the settlements, where the snow is generally firm and compact through alternate thaws and frosts. Here there had been no thaw all winter, and, consequently, the snow was deep and fleecy. And besides the natural roughness of the country, there were great numbers of fallen trees to be scrambled over, some of them of enormous size. Many a fall even the expert Indians got, from which it was laughable to see them extricate themselves, particularly the old fellow with his huge pack.

By bushrangers, who travel in that country exploring timber limits, seven or eight miles a day

is considered fair snowshoeing. We, the day before, had tramped about twenty, and the day previous to that fifteen miles, and I now felt severely the effects of this rapid and exhaustive travelling.

I was tormented, too, with a burning thirst, always a sign of exhaustion, and hailed with delight every creek and water we came to, not merely for the sake of quenching the thirst, but also as an opportunity of a few minutes' rest, which I always protracted to the utmost limit of the Indians' patience.

However I kept steadily on until mid-day, when I insisted on dinner and a smoke.

After a half-hour's rest we continued the chase, my companions every now and then pointing to some sign in the snow or overhanging boughs, by which they seemed to intimate that the moose was not far ahead. Whether this was the case or not, or whether they wished to stimulate me to greater exertions, I know not, but at all events, after about an hour's further tramp, I felt that I could no longer resist the overpowering weight of lassitude and fatigue that oppressed me, and I suddenly and fairly collapsed.

I could go no further if it was to save my life. I was decidedly a used-up institution.

I never experienced such a sensation of utter

prostration. I threw myself on the snow, and petulantly told the Indians to leave me, that I would follow on when I was ready.

Without doubt I was in thoroughly bad humor. There was something absurdly tantalising in the idea that a big stout fellow—I was fully a stone heavier than Seymo—should be ignominiously "done out" by a boy of twelve and an old man of sixty.

But so it was, and Nick might grin, the boy wonder, and old Seymo leer obliquely at his mighty pack,—there was no denying the fact I was completely "played out." But, like many other mighty men in such circumstances, I tried to cover over my defeat by getting into a rage and again ordering them to "be off, and leave me alone."

And go they did, apparently very glad to be absolved from their promise. Seymo, however, told me that they would soon run the moose down, and bring him to bay, and then Nick would come back for me to finish him. "Very near," said he, "soon get him if run fast."

I sullenly and ungratefully told him to "be gone, and leave me in peace."

Oh, the relief and the joy of that rest on the soft snow, under the over-arching boughs of the mighty pines. How my limbs seemed to be embraced

with delicious slumber, and a soothing, delightful languor stole over my entire frame. I soon recovered my good humor and equanimity, and gave myself up to the full enjoyment of my ease and comfort.

I had lain for nearly two hours very enjoyably when I thought I heard the faint sound of a human voice in the distance. I listened attentively, when again it sounded, nearer and clearer, and soon, clear, loud and ringing, came the welcome shout, "ayubàh, ayubàh," reverberating through the aisles of the forest.

Fatigue and indifference vanished at once.

I sprang up, twisted my feet into the strap of the snowshoes, and hastened in the direction of the approaching voice. Again and again it rang out, "ayubàh, ayubàh," *i.e.*, "moose, moose," until Nick himself appeared, coming to tell me the quarry was at bay.

We did not follow the trail of the pursuing party, however, for the moose, hard pressed, had turned sharply to the right in the hope of gaining a lake which lay in that direction. But the distance was too great and, like myself, his strength and courage had collapsed. By the short cut Nick had taken

we arrived in less than a third of the time it had taken the others.

When I came up Seymo quietly pointed ahead, and there, sure enough, at a distance of about forty yards, lay, up to his belly in the snow, the great dark hulk of the moose. I raised my rifle, but, trembling with excitement, my aim was uncertain, and I inflicted only a skin wound along the back. We could see the thick hair fly in all directions, and the moose, stung by the pain, and also refreshed by his rest, made a tremendous plunge and bolt, and was out of sight in a twinkling.

And then the chase commenced in earnest, and such a chase! Pandemonium seemed suddenly to be let loose in the silent, peaceful glades of the forest. A wilder pack of howling savages never careered through its snowy aisles.

I kept the lead, and, loading as I ran, yelled and whooped with the loudest. There was no pity or mercy in my breast now; the demon of destruction raged within me. Again we caught up, and this time I inflicted a deep flesh wound in his side, from which the blood spurted out far over the snow. This second wound seemed to rouse the animal to greater exertions than before: again he bolted, and was quickly out of sight.

I have noticed that when an animal receives a wound from which the blood flows freely he seems to be animated for a time with greater speed and determination. It may be the pain and terror of the wound which causes this, but I think the real reason is, that the sudden gush of blood relieves the lungs, and makes the animal feel lighter, and more courageous for a time at least.

Be this as it may, this run was far longer and more arduous than the last. But after a time we again caught up, and I again wounded him severely, and though he once more bolted, it was only a few desperate plunges, when he sank in the snow, finally and thoroughly exhausted, and I finished him by a ball through the head.

Though not as large as the last moose, he was still of great size, and had given us a run through the deep snow, from the time I struck him first, of over three miles.

Seymo soon joined us with the packs, and a mutual congratulation society was organized on the spot, round the prostrate body of the moose.

We decided to camp there that night, so, after a smoke, a rest, and a big talk, the Indians set to work to make a first-class camp.

We feasted that night on moose steak, which was

a most welcome change from the fat pork, of which I was getting tired, and then, snugly ensconced under the blankets, with a great roaring fire at our feet, which to-night was kept well replenished by Nick, we slept soundly, sweetly, and refreshingly until sunrise.

We were in no hurry this morning, as we had decided to remain here for a day or two, not only to rest, but to have a little variety in our sport in the way of partridge shooting, of which we had come across several in our headlong chase the day before. So, after a hearty breakfast of moose, of which we partook in thorough otiose style, Seymo and Nick took the flintlocks, and started off in different directions, and I, with the boy as my companion and game-bearer, went in another.

The day was deliciously fine and mild. The glorious sun lit up the darkest recesses of the forest with golden light, and everything sparkled and glittered as if in a land of enchantment. At " our own sweet will " we wandered through the dazzling aisles and snowy windings of the dark green bush, doing the day more in lounging and smoking, than in hard work.

It was one of the most enjoyable days of my whole trip.

Our mid-day "snack" of pork, moose and hard tack was appreciated with all the relish of a hunter's appetite.

We were fairly successful, too, in our shooting. We bagged about a dozen of the spruce grouse, which, in my estimation, is the most delicious of all the partridge family. Its plump little body, which is enrobed in garments of dark mottled-grey plumage, surmounted with an inky black crest, makes a most savory *entremets* amid the sterner viands of fat pork and moose steaks.

Grouse shooting with the rifle is capital sport, far ahead of small-shot with a fowling piece. The great object is take the bird in the head or neck, and this, at even fifteen or twenty yards, is pretty sharp practice. The boy fairly danced with delight when, after several misses, he succeeded in bringing down a plump old cock, with my revolver, which I had given him to carry, and which I allowed him to blaze away with as much as he pleased.

Early in the afternoon we slowly retraced our way to the camp, where we found the others lolling lazily before the fire, with the everlasting pipe between their teeth. They also had had fair sport, and reported that they had come across an old

moose track, which they proposed we should follow the next day.

To this proposal, however, very much to the surprise of the Indians, I gave a most emphatic negative; as we shall presently see.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sabbath in the Forest.

In our snowy chamber, with its lofty roof of starry sky, which seemed to rest upon the mighty pillars of towering pines on every side, and the gentle murmuring of the forest softly and tenderly wooing the ear, and a warm cheery fire at our feet, we enjoyed sweet, sound, and refreshing slumber, and awoke in the morning in capital condition and spirits.

To me, at least, it was the day of rest. It was the Sabbath. I always made it a rule when in the backwoods, except in cases of imperative necessity, to abstain from travelling and hunting on that day. And I always enjoyed the day.

This idea, to the Pagan understanding of the Indians, was utterly incomprehensible, and they were inclined at first to demur against it, as a waste of time and provisions. But I was firm on the point. They could spend the day as they pleased, but as for following of the chase of the moose I was determined they should not. Though

they yielded, still I could see it was with a very bad grace.

In the still, solemn grandeur of the forest temple, not made with human hands, there is a depth and whole-soulness of worship to the great God above, which cannot be realised in the magnificent shrines and groined, and pillared, and arched temples of our towns and cities. In the vast lonely solitudes of nature, far removed from the hum, and bustle, and fret of human life, you realize a deep, calm, reverent emotion which speaks to, and harmonizes with the innermost depths of your spiritual nature. There is nothing here of man's work, or art, or genius: it is all God's own handiwork, and from it your thoughts rise insensibly to the Great Architect Himself, in sincere, humble, adoring homage. You cannot and you dare not be hypocritical or hollow-hearted in your worship, for you feel that you are face to face with God, and a thousand voices are silently speaking to you, and proclaiming the overwhelming majesty of the Great Unseen.

The next morning we prepared to follow the trail the Indians had come across on Saturday. We struck the track at no great distance from the camp, and followed it the whole day without seeing any signs of the moose, or the trail becoming any fresher.

As we lay before the fire that night I remarked to Seymo:

"It was surely no use to follow the track any longer, as it appeared so old, that the moose by this time must be a great distance off."

But the old fellow only shook his head and said:

"Moose may be very near, perhaps not half mile away."

And so it turned out in the morning. For we had not proceeded more than a mile on our way, when we came to the "yard", where the moose had taken up house for a time, and had, in fact, just quitted on scenting and hearing our approach.

This yard is a very peculiar institution of the moose. In his wanderings through the bush, if he comes to a place where there is an abundance of his favorite food, he generally makes up his mind to camp there for a while. Within a circumference perhaps of a hundred feet the snow will be beaten down by his mighty hoofs to the very ground, with a floor as hard as a pavement. There he will remain perhaps for weeks at a time, until, all the bush and twigs within reach being consumed, he will wander forth in search of fresh pastures. Often three or more will be found "yarded" together.

The moose is very loth to quit his snowy home,

and will do so only at the last moment of danger. In this case, apparently, he had just gone out, and probably had not ten minutes start of us.

So off we raced pell-mell after him, and the exciting scene of the last chase was re-enacted. But though we caught up with him several times, and I put no less than four balls into him, it was not until my fourth shot, in which I broke his back, that he was finally brought low. He was an immense animal, and his dying struggles in the deep snow were fearful to witness, but I quickly ended them by shooting him through the head with my revolver.

It was now long after midday, but even I had not thought for a moment of stopping for dinner or rest. We must have chased the moose for more than twelve miles, but at one point he got a grand start ahead, by coming to a lake about three miles long, over which he would travel with great ease and speed. By this time we were just about as much used-up as the moose had been, and were ravenous for dinner, rest, and the pipe. So after "dressing" the moose and feasting to repletion on our savory viands, we enjoyed a delightful siesta before the cheery fire.

The Indians were in great good humor at our

unwonted success, and laughed and chatted to each other in their musical lingo with great glee.

It is seldom, indeed, that even the most expert hunters succeed in bagging three such fine animals in such a short space of time. Very often they may travel for weeks through the woods, and never see even the track of a moose.

We, therefore, had been unusually successful. The Indians had now, not only a sufficiency of meat to keep their family for several months, but also a large surplus to take to the shanties, where there is always a capital market in exchange for pork, flour and tea. Accordingly they were very merry over their great good luck, and inclined to make rather free with our scanty supply of spirits, which hitherto I had doled out only in extreme cases of fatigue and cold. However I soon checked this, and after allowing them one extra dram all round, for even the boy took it as a matter of course, they set to work to make a camp after the most approved style.

That night we rested luxuriously, and rose in the morning with that freshness and buoyancy, both of body and of mind, which can only be truly realized in such environments. We remained three days longer at this place, but our luck had turned, we met

with neither sound nor sign of moose. We had, however, some fair partridge shooting, which offered a pleasing variety in our cuisine.

Seymo had also seen traces of mink and fisher, and had constructed several "deadfalls," in one of which he had the good fortune to find a beautiful marten, over which he raised a hullabaloo as jubilant as over the success with the moose. And well he might, for a first-class marten skin at that time was worth five dollars. He took great pride in presenting me with a peculiar bone of the animal's body, which makes an admirable toothpick.

On the fourth day, finding that our tea and biscuit were giving out, we decided to start for home, from which Seymo calculated we were distant about a two days' tramp. Anyway we were just as likely to meet in with moose in that direction as any other.

CHAPTER IX.

Seymo and I Fall Out.

So the next morning we started homewards, the Indians laden with as much moose meat as they could carry.

The weather had been getting milder for the last few days, and now it clouded up and threatened rain, not an uncommon occurrence, even in mid-winter, in these Northern latitudes.

About midday it came down, a cold, raw drizzle, which, without soaking, chills to the bones, and is more enervating than the heaviest and most violent snowstorm. In fact it is astonishing how indifferent you become to the snowfalls in the woods, but it is the rain that the hunter detests and dreads, especially when snowshoeing, for it makes it as bad as it possibly can be. This we found out to our sorrow that afternoon.

The light, fleecy snow becoming saturated with wet, fell in heavy masses upon the broad snowshoes and clinging tenaciously to them made you feel, as you trudged wearily on, as if a fifty-six pounder were tied to your heels.

Shortly before dark we stopped to camp. We were

fagged, jaded and dispirited. Everything was cheerless and dreary in the extreme. The glory of the forest had departed. A thick mist hung like a dense pall over hill, and valley, and forest, and lake. The drip, drip, drip of the rain sounding in our ears like the ceaseless nagging of a sullen-tempered, ill-conditioned woman.

The Indians silently, and without any alacrity or heart, set to work to prepare a camp, and, notwithstanding the urgent necessity, made but a very poor affair of it. With their characteristic indifference to exposure of weather of any kind, they erected a miserable shelter against the rain, which continued, if anything, to come down harder than before.

We were all thoroughly out of temper, particularly Seymo and myself.

At our dinner that day I discovered that I had lost a five dollar bill. I wore a pair of ordinary shanty trousers of thick grey cloth, with pockets that came down almost to the knees. At the bottom of one of these I had placed, when leaving the Farm, this bill, though there was hardly any possibility of needing it, and still less possibility of its finding its way out of the pocket of itself. So the whole mystery of Seymo praying with my pants in his hands, on the night of my stopping at his place, was cleared up.

I at once charged him with the theft, and, though he denied it, yet I saw by his confused manner, and especially by his remarking that his squaw would find it on the floor the morning we left, that he was undoubtedly guilty. I may have been mistaken, and I sincerely hope I was, but such was my firm impression at the time, and it produced a most disagreeable effect upon my mind.

I know of nothing more repugnant to a man's right sense and good feeling than, in the circumstances in which we were, to find out that you are closely associating, and sleeping side by side with one, who is deliberately deceiving and robbing you.

All the pleasure and gratification I was enjoying seemed to vanish at once. The loss of the money was nothing, even the discomforts of the weather and the travelling were trifling, compared to the wretched feeling of distrust, suspicion, and misplaced confidence that was awakened in my mind.

I said nothing more at the time, and we tramped silently on, though I could see by the sullen, vindictive expression of his countenance, that the fellow bore no kindly or friendly feeling toward me.

In our damp clothes and blankets we passed a most miserable night, the fire would not burn, and the rain kept steadily coming down. In the morning

I rose, stiff, cramped and unrefreshed. Our supply of spirits was exhausted just when we most needed it.

I looked forward with dread to the long weary day's tramp through the wet heavy snow. However there was no help for it, on we must go, and on we went.

The stiffness of my limbs somewhat abated as I became heated with exertion. But my weariness and fatigue gradually increased, until I thought I should have to succumb. It was only my pride and displeasure with Seymo that kept me up, and prevented my asking him to stop and rest, which, even under the most favorable circumstances, is the general practise of travellers in the backwoods. About the middle of the forenoon a halt of a quarter of an hour is almost always called to rest, and "smoke the pipe." But the old rascal seemed determined to "put me through," and give me all the discomfort he could.

So I kept wearily on, heavily dragging one foot after another until after midday, when, the Indians making no sign of stopping for dinner, I called out to Seymo to halt, and, we would eat and rest. He turned half round and, with a diabolical leer on his countenance, informed me that we would not stop

until we got to his place, and we would eat there. This was more than my patience could endure, and making a stride forward I caught him by shoulder, and commanded him, at the peril of his life, to prepare dinner then and there.

I knew from old experience that this is the only way to deal with refractory Indians. If you are mild and conciliatory with them when they are in such a humor as this fellow was, they will only laugh at and impose upon you the more, but boldness and determination will at once cow them, and make them quite subservient.

So it proved in this case: the impudent leer vanished from his eye, and he became at once meek as a sheep.

He then sullenly told me that he had made a mistake yesterday, and that we were quite near to his house, as he called it, in fact, not more than a mile distant. Though I was rejoiced to hear this, yet I was enraged that he had not told me before, as he knew it ever since the night previous, and just from very spite he left me under the impression that it would be late that night before we arrived.

I contented myself however by telling him he was a mean dog, and ordering him to go on ahead

as fast as his legs could carry him, and have a good dinner ready, and I would come on at my leisure.

So once more I was left alone, and heartily glad I was, too, to be rid of the presence at least of Seymo and Nick. The boy looked wistfully at me, and I saw at once that he would have liked to have stayed with me, and rested too, but his father calling angrily to him he, too, went on, and they were all quickly out of sight.

CHAPTER X.

Back to the Wigwam. Used-up!

My sudden outburst of temper however had somewhat invigorated me, and I went on bravely for half a mile or so, when I suddenly emerged out of the forest unto a broad stream, which I knew at once to be Black River, and knew also my bearings, and that I was not more than a mile from Seymo's place.

I now did about as foolish a thing as a man could possibly do in my circumstances. Instead of pushing boldly on while I was heated up and able to walk, I sat down on the bank of the river and took a long smoke, and rest on the soft wet snow. It was an act of as great insanity as my friend's attempt to take the sleigh down the hill of the Manitou.

When I decided to start again I found that I could hardly rise to my feet, and when I did manage that, I was almost powerless to move a limb. I was stiffened and cramped in every joint. It was only by a desperate effort that I was able slowly and painfully to get one leg past the other. And thus I progressed onwards, inch by inch. No

snail ever travelled more slowly. The pain in my joints was excruciating, and I could have howled from very vexation of spirit at my folly and madness for sitting so long in the snow under the cold drenching rain, in the state I was in.

But how true a phase this is of human life in many of its evolutions. For the present enjoyment of a transient, and paltry gratification, we often entail upon ourselves hours, and days, and years of wretchedness and misery.

As I crawled on, I laughed to myself in very bitterness of soul, as I thought of all this. And not the least bitter of my reflections was, how that ruthless old Pagan, Seymo, would rejoice in, and triumph over, my discomfiture. This thought, however, helped to nerve me to some kind of movement.

On to the ice, towards the farther bank of the river, there had been drawn a large quantity of square timber, laid here and there according to the caprice of the teamsters. Over these the trail of my companions directly led, to the road by which the timber had been drawn to the ice, and which again joined with the road which ran in front of Seymo's place.

When I got to the logs I was in a terrible fix: I couldn't lift my feet higher than two inches; I

couldn't go round the logs, as I did not dare to leave the beaten trail, for, in the state I was in, I would have stuck fast in the soft untrodden snow.

So when I came to the first log I was compelled to lie down on its flat side and roll myself over, and then pick myself up the best way I could on the other side. This operation I had to repeat at least a hundred times, and it took me more than an hour to get over these logs. At length I rolled over the last log and stood on the hard beaten road where at last I could dispense with the hated snow-shoes. I gladly kicked them off my feet, and leaving them, and my rifle on the log I limped weariedly, and painfully on. In about an hour and a half I arrived at the place, and throwing myself on one of the bunks I lay speechless and powerless.

Without doubt I was completely and thoroughly used-up.

The squaws were all kindness and attention. With that quick sympathy which distinguishes woman all the world over, they perceived my exhausted condition, and most kindly and tenderly ministered to my wants.

Fortunately they had some spirits in the wigwam, and a strong draught of this revived me considerably. After a while I felt rested enough to sit up and

devour an enormous meal of mouffle and other good things, which the squaws had prepared with delicacy and abundance, then, divesting myself of my damp garments and putting on dry and warm ones, and instructing one of the squaws to go for my rifle and shoes, I wrapped myself in the blankets, and with a great blazing fire before me, I was soon locked in sound and refreshing slumber.

I slept steadily on for over twelve hours, and awoke greatly refreshed. But I was still stiff and sore, and it was not till after two days, during which I slept almost continually, that I felt myself equal to the six-mile walk to the Farm.

During this time the squaws had treated me with such great, and tender kindness, that I could'nt find it in my heart to say a word about the five dollar bill. Even Seymo I forgave, and when we parted it was at least with the semblance of friendship.

I wish particularly to notice here the great benefit I received from the copious application of skunk oil to my joints and limbs. As a lubricating agent for the mitigation of cramps, bruises, chafings, stiffness, or pains of a rheumatic nature, I know of nothing that equals it. It is regarded by the Indians as a panacea for any such ailments. I have such faith in it, from practical experience, that I am never without a bot-

tle of it. Every hunter, especially, should carry a small phial of it in his kit. There is nothing offensive about it, in fact it is almost odorless.

On the morning of the third day I started for the Farm, where I arrived about mid-day, and received a warm welcome and hearty congratulations from my friends.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

Life and Sports at the Farm.

For a week or so I loafed about the Farm, doing an immense amount of eating, smoking and sleeping. If Dominie Sampson had been there he would certainly have often ejaculated "prodigious."

I felt also quite satisfied with myself and my exploits during my three weeks' excursion, and played the lion generally among my friends, and the denizens about the Farm.

When Jim's business would allow him to take a day, we had some capital sport together in the surrounding woods, which abound in partridge.

Jim is a crack shot, in fact I never saw a better at short ranges. At fifty yards I have seen him drive a nail home into a deal board with his sporting Snider. I saw him make the best shot I ever witnessed with my Ballard rifle.

This was a piece of wonderful accuracy and great range. Many a partridge have I taken from the top of the highest birch, and many a noble buck I have laid low by its deadly precision.

On this occasion, as we were ranging through the forest, Jim espied a little black-cap titmouse, perched upon the topmost twig of a lofty pine. This is the smallest bird that flies in the woods. It is a beautiful little creature of a greyish blue colour. It never migrates south, and its "twitter, twitter" is constantly heard in its favorite localities.

"Now F—," said Jim, "If you want to see a good shot just hand me your rifle," pointing as he spoke to the bird, which was hardly discernible on its airy perch.

I laughed and jeered at him. But taking the rifle, and carefully wiping the sights, he took deliberate aim, and sent the ball fairly through its tiny body. I couldn't believe he had hit it, till, taking it up where it had fallen, I saw the hole of the bullet. The distance could not have been less than a hundred yards.

A favorite amusement with us in these pleasant days was, when we would be coming home to the Farm after dark, to set fire to the birch trees.

The yellow birch is very abundant in that country and grows to a great size and height, often rivalling the giant pine in its dimensions. From the "butt" to the top and out over every limb, the old bark, dry, but full of pitch, hangs in great loose folds. Apply-

ing a match to this inflammable material, it would become instantly ablaze, and encircling the trunk, the great crackling roaring flames would run up the tree to the topmost twig, out over all the branches, and in a minute or two the tree would become a vast pillar of fire.

We would often have a dozen of these blazing at once at short distances apart. The effect produced was striking and magnificent. The heat, causing a great draft upwards, would send the flames high into the air, and illumine the forest for miles round. Every dark green bush would stand out in the red fiery light in striking relief against the snowy lawn beneath.

The great old pines looked unconcernedly and fearlessly on, secure from danger in their frost-bound garments, and quietly listening to the roar of the angry flames as it woke up the echoes in the solemn stillness. of the dark night. It made one of the grandest pyrotechnic displays you could possibly conceive.

It would be a dangerous amusement to indulge in in summer, as it would certainly cause a terrible conflagration in the woods, but there is not the least danger in winter, and it is questionable if even the

birch itself is injured then by it. For underneath this inflammable covering, the true bark is thick and green, and so hard frozen that the heat would have little effect upon it.

CHAPTER II.

"Come and see something of the Trapper's Life."

WHILE I was thus agreeably and healthily passing the time a trapper came one day to the Farm to obtain supplies in exchange for his furs. He gave me a most pressing invitation to spend a week or two with him at his camp.

"Come and see something of the trapper's life," he said.

Nothing could have chimed in better with my wishes and views.

So the next morning we started for his place, with an abundant supply of all necessaries and some few comforts.

We reached our destination about mid-day and with wolfish appetites assailed a grand bouilli of beaver, which my friend's chum had prepared in expectation of his arrival.

In my estimation beaver ranks only second to moose, in backwoods fare at least, for delicacy and richness of flavor.

The names of my companions were Steve and Xavier. They lived in a hut built of substantial

logs, about ten feet square and seven feet high. It was roofed with "scoops," which overlapped one another, and effectually kept out all rain and snow. Every aperture and air-hole was plugged with moss, except an opening in the roof for the escape of the smoke. It was in the heart of a dense grove of second growth pine and hemlock, and was almost buried in the snow; at ten yards distant you could pass without noticing it.

It was one of the snuggest little dens you could imagine, and in it I took "mine ease" with great satisfaction.

Steve was one of the best specimens of a backwoods French Canadian I ever met with. He was a strong-built powerful man, and could endure any amount of fatigue. He was a very handsome fellow, with a great wealth of curly black hair and beard. His manner was modest, kind and gentle; yet I was told that when in liquor, which was rare however, for he was a temperate man for his class, he was a perfect demon for fighting, and few were able to stand before him.

His chum Xavier was quite a contrast to him. He was a lithe, wiry little fellow; a loquacious, merry chatterbox, with a perpetual roguish twinkle in his eye, and a lover of scandal, whiskey and women.

They were both expert and successful trappers, and preferred the freedon and independence of the trapper's life to the steady and arduous, though more profitable, work of the shanty. Though they were partners in business yet Steve had the greatest share. He owned the traps, about fifty in number, and laid in the supplies in the Fall. Both could speak English after a sort, and each in his way was an entertaining companion.

I slept sweetly and soundly that night. Steve and I occupying the "bed," and Xavier curled up in a single blanket before the fire.

The next morning Xavier and I tramped off to examine the traps in the vicinity of the camp. It was a beautiful sunny day, though extremely cold. We had a most delightful tramp, over lake, and stream and willowy marsh, the country which the beaver and otter love to dwell in.

CHAPTER III.

Otter and Beaver Trapping.

WE did not find a single animal, dead or alive, in any of the traps, which brought out many a "sacré" from my companion.

I had full opportunity however of observing the *modus operandi* of otter and beaver trapping.

The otter is the plague of the beaver's life. He finds out where his victim has built his dam, generally at the foot of some small lake, where it debouches by creek or stream. He then sets to work to cut a channel right through the centre of it, as the Indians sometimes say for mere devilment, so that he can sport and play in the little rapids caused by the escaping water.

But, like some human beings, his diversion is often the cause of his destruction. For the trapper, knowing his disposition and habit, always closely examines the dam, and if he finds a channel which he knows by certain signs has been cut by an otter then he places his trap either at the foot or the mouth of the channel, and is almost sure to secure the animal.

The trap is the ordinary spring one used for catching rats, and is attached by a chain to a heavy pole, the lower end of which is stuck into the soft mud at the bottom, and the other stands high up in the hole cut through the snow and ice. When he wishes to examine the trap, all he has to do, is to pull up the pole to the lower end of which it is chained, and if it is empty either to replace or put it in some other spot.

The process of trapping the beaver is much more difficult and ingenious. He builds his house in the Fall, about an acre or more from the shore of some marshy lake. He commences at the bottom, and builds up, raising it from three to five feet above the surface of the water. The materials are branches of trees, closely and strongly thatched with bulrushes, and grassy reeds. When the frost and snow come it is, of course, tightly bound in by the ice, and warmly covered over by successive layers of snow, and presents the appearance of a great snowy mound rising to the height of six or eight feet above the level of the lake.

The beaver shews wonderful sagacity in selecting the location of his dwelling for the purpose of obtaining food during his long winter sojourn under the ice. He generally builds it directly opposite the

mouth of some small creek which runs into the lake from the surrounding woods. As the season advances, and after the first ice is formed, and considerable snow fallen, the creek dries up, and a dry free channel remains under the ice and snow, with its mouth opening into the waters of the lake which is by this time firmly frozen over. Here, then, is the feeding ground of the beaver. Setting out from his warm, cosy home he swims along under the ice until he comes to the mouth of the channel; ascending it he meets with the soft succulent willows, and young poplars, which so often grow in the very bed of these swampy creeks, or closely fringe its shore, and upon these he delights to feed.

Xavier was now to give me a practical illustration of the mode of beaver-trapping.

On crossing a lake we came to one of these snowy mounds in which he felt sure a beaver family were dwelling. So he set to work to make a trap.

Choosing a spot about twelve feet from the house, and towards the shore, he began to dig away the snow. This he did by means of his snowshoe, which, by grasping the heel with one hand and using the toe-strap as a fulcrum with the other, makes a capital shovel for light work. He soon had the snow cleared away down to the ice, when

his real labor commenced, which is to cut a rectangular hole about a foot broad, and two feet long, through the ice. As the ice was nearly three feet thick this would occupy him a long time, and as I was getting very cold, standing on the open lake, in the cutting wind, I went off for a stroll through the woods. When I returned the ice was cut through, and he was about to make and set the trap.

He had procured several long dry poles from the bush, and a quantity of the beaver's favorite feeding wood. He thrust the poles through and close to the edges of the oblong hole down to the bottom, and firmly planted them into the soft mud at distances of two or three inches apart, forming a kind of rectangular enclosure, with one end open in the direction of the beaver's house.

He then took the feeding wood, which was the bait, long slender withes and willows, and thrust these also into the mud inside the enclosure. He then placed the trap at the mouth of the enclosure attaching it, as in the case of the otter, to a long heavy pole. Here, then, was a complete trap at the bottom of the lake. The beaver, scenting and seeing the fresh tempting wood, had to pass over the trap in order to secure it; if he tried it at all he was sure to get caught.

It was now well on in the afternoon, and having brought no "snack" with us we quickly took the shortest cut to the camp, which was about two miles distant.

Steve had a grand dinner ready for us, of beaver flesh and tails, potatoes, scones and tea, which we enjoyed hugely, and revelled in like famished paupers.

As there were yet some hours before dark, Steve proposed that we should go to a lake about a mile distant, and try the fishing. Accordingly off we started, with line and hook and pork for bait to try our luck. But, though we cut several holes in the ice, and dangled our baits up and down in most tempting and persevering fashion, yet we got not even a nibble. It was awfully cold work, too, and we had to dance a continual jig round the edge of the hole to keep ourselves from freezing.

We finally gave it up in disgust, and anathematising fish generally and the pike of that lake in particular, we wended our way campwards, in the waning radiance of as gorgeous a sunset as I ever witnessed.

After supper we made ourselves merry before the blazing fire with pipe, and song, and pleasant talk until bedtime, when we turned in, and slept the sweet sleep of the tired and the just.

CHAPTER IV.

A Twenty-six Mile Tramp.

In the morning, according to previous arrangement, Steve and I started off to visit the distant outposts of their trapping-grounds; and as the extreme one was twenty-six miles away, we had to take several days' supplies with us.

Accordingly Steve hoisted on to his broad shoulders an immense pack, containing blankets, tea, pork and "hard tack." The kind fellow would not allow me to carry anything except the double-barreled fowling-piece and the big axe. I had also a few bullets in my pouch, in the event of coming across any large game, and Steve carried my revolver in his belt.

We had a glorious tramp that day through the dense forest, and over broad lakes till after dark, when we arrived at an old deserted shanty, where we were to camp for the night.

It was a dreadfully cold night, and the shanty was about as frosty and cheerless a looking place as could be imagined. One half of the roof had fallen in, the door was gone, and it was more than half full of snow.

However one side was still dry and weather-proof; and as Steve and others had frequently camped in it there was a large quantity of cedar tops and wild-hay piled up in one corner, and there was yet left abundance of dry wood in the shape of scoops, flooring and bunk timbers.

Altogether, we considered ourselves very well off, and quickly set to work to make ourselves as comfortable as possible with the means at our disposal.

Steve soon had the snow cleared away off the camboose, and a royal fire blazing on it. After a hearty supper, we made a capital bed of the tops and hay, as near to the fire as possible, without getting burnt, and managed to pass a tolerably comfortable night; though the intense cold frequently compelled us to rise and replenish the fire.

The next morning, at sunrise, we resumed the tramp.

About the middle of the forenoon I met with one of those accidents which frequently happen in backwoods travelling, and, though seldom dangerous, are yet always most unpleasant and disagreeable.

Our route led us for some miles up the course of a small but rapid stream. As I tramped along, unconscious of any danger, I suddenly sank through

the ice, up to my shoulders, into the cold, freezing water.

I had stepped upon one of those air-holes which are so common in these streams, and which, concealed by the thinnest covering of ice and snow, are perfect man-traps of devilment and sometimes of drowning. If you step on them at all, and it is impossible to avoid them by optical discernment, you are certain to go through.

If I had been alone it might have been a serious business for me. The stream, though not more than four feet deep, had a strong, swift current, and this, catching broadsides on my wide snowshoes, pulled and tugged at me most lustily. I felt as if there were a thousand invisible fiends trying to drag me under the ice. There is no doubt I would soon have been forced to give up my hold upon the edge of the hole, and gone under, had not my loud yells for help quickly brought Steve, who was some twenty yards in advance of me, to my aid, and one pull by his powerful hands landed me high and wet on the firm ice.

I was indeed in a sad plight: I was of course soaked to the skin, my wet clothes clung tightly to my limbs, and the icy water chilled me to the very marrow.

When I got on my feet I turned and looked at that air-hole with a terribly vindictive feeling in my heart. If I had been given to profanity I could have cursed and swore at it. It was about as sudden, disagreeable, and humiliating a transition as ever I passed through. However, better feelings soon succeeded, when I thought of my narrow escape and providential rescue. But Steve's stentorian voice quickly interrupted my moralizing: "Come, come," he shouted "run hard, and soon get warm."

So off we started, as fast as we could go, and though the intense cold soon made my clothes as hard and stiff as a three-inch plank, and made me look like a steel-clad warrior of old, yet the active motion, perseveringly kept up, soon made me quite warm and comfortable.

It is astonishing how little you feel your frozen garments, and how harmless they are, even in such a temperature, if you only have strength enough to make and keep up vigorous exertion.

In about two hours we arrived at the spot where Steve purposed to make our headquarters for a few days, as it was convenient to the traps he had already set, and also for the setting of new ones if he thought it necessary.

While I kept walking about and carrying wood

Steve made an enormous fire and erected a temporary shelter of balsam branches. I then quickly divested myself of my icy garments and put on dry and warm ones, of which I luckily had a change with me. When this was done I felt that I was not in the slightest degree the worse for my involuntary bath.

After dinner we set to work to make as comfortable a camp as backwoods skill and energy could devise.

CHAPTER V.

How a Backwoodsman builds a Winter Camp.

STEVE'S plan of construction was very different from that of the Indians', and, to my mind, not so warm and snug.

Selecting a spot between two trees which stood about eight feet apart, he tramped down the snow between them and for some feet back, until it was firm and hard, with high banks on every side. Then cutting deep notches into the trees he laid a strong pole across, fitting at each end into the notches of the trees. From this tranverse pole he laid several smaller ones, about a foot apart, having their heavy ends resting on the snow at the head of the place trodden down. He then placed short side poles against these slanting rafters, and collecting an immense quantity of the heavy, thickly-woven branches of the balsam, he laid them closely and carefully over the top and sides of this framework, overlapping them like shinglework on a roof. He then strewed the floor with a deep carpet of the soft boughs and tops of the cedar. Here, therefore, was a complete enclosure on three sides so heavily and

tightly thatched that it was wind, rain, and snow proof. At the open front the fire was built, which, if sufficiently supplied with wood, was supposed to keep the enclosure thoroughly warm.

When all was finished, and a great roaring fire of dry tamarac and birch was made, and the blankets spread over the downy cedar, with the fragrant balsam overhead, it was indeed as snug and cosy a little den as a trapper's heart could desire, and strongly provocative of a rest and a smoke, which we took with great comfort and relish.

But the declining sun and the increasing cold warned us that we must provide an abundant supply of firewood. So while Steve felled trees and cut them into logs, I carried them on my shoulders to the camp, and by sunset we had a large pile ready at hand for use.

Steve, who in addition to his other accomplishments, is an excellent cook, now prepared a famous supper of grouse, of which we had shot several in the morning's tramp, and the ordinary supplies of our menu, and, with appetites sharpened by the keen, frosty air and our vigorous exercise, we eat long and heartily. We now made ourselves comfortable for the night. And though the cold was intense, and the wind had risen to a high gale, we

felt them not. We sat, and smoked, and talked before the great pile of blazing logs until late into the night.

My companion had a vein of sentiment and refinement running through him, which you seldom find in men of his class. He was about forty years of age, and had lived in the woods and on the river since he was fifteen. He had held for years positions of high trust with the lumber merchants, as foreman and "jobber," and could command such whenever he pleased; but he loved to take a winter now and then of the wild, free life of the trapper and hunter.

As we lay before the fire he entertained me with many a stirring tale of backwoods life, interspersed with some sentimental reminiscences of the fair sex. From his tone in this quarter I fancied he had been rather severely scorched by the gentle flame, and that some deep and unforgiven wound was yet rankling in his heart.

At length we turned in, and creeping as close together as possible, and enveloped head and shoulders in the warm blankets, we sought for sleep.

I was in that dreamy half-awake, half-asleep, condition in which you pleasantly lie, and contentedly wait until profound slumber overtakes you.

The deep murmuring of the majestic pines as they bowed and swayed in the strong wind, the creaking and straining of the frost-bound limbs, the whistling and howling of the breeze as it swept over and around you, the occasional fall of some mighty giant of the woods echoing sullenly and loudly through the dark glades and snowy halls of the forest, and, intermingling with all, that strange musical sobbing which comes you know not whence, all combined to compose a delightful lullaby, which soothed and wooed you, gently and unconsciously, into deep, sweet, and refreshing slumber.

CHAPTER VI.

The Suspended Wolverine.

THE next morning we set off on a tour of inspection of the traps in the neighborhood of the camp, and Steve's heart was rejoiced at finding several valuable animals, stiff and frozen, in their iron jaws.

On drawing up the pole at one place he found a splendid beaver, with fur black and glossy as a raven's wing. The water here was six or seven feet deep, and it is quite an exciting event to draw up one of these magnificent creatures, weighing perhaps over forty pounds, and worth to the trapper from six to eight dollars, besides the meat, which is a most savory and valuable addition to his ordinary stores. Steve, therefore, was greatly delighted, and reset the trap with great care, saying " he would likely get the rest of the family during the winter."

At another spot in the heart of the forest we came upon what, to me at least, was a most startling spectacle. It was a large wolverine caught by the foreleg in the trap, and hanging suspended four or five feet in the air, from the end of a long pole. I couldn't for the life of me understand how he and

the trap had got up there. But I was soon enlightened.

The same trap is used for the marten, the fisher, the mink, and the wolverine, and is set in the same way for each. The spot chosen is generally at the foot of some tree, where there is a large root protruding above the ground. The earth and snow are dug away under this root, close to the trunk, thus forming a kind of arched cavity, extending a foot or so under the tree. The bait, generally a piece of fresh rabbit, is placed at the extremity of the hole, in full view, however, from the outside. The trap is then placed exactly at the opening, so that it is impossible to get at the meat without passing over and springing it, and is concealed by light twigs and rabbit hair. The chain of the trap is securely fastened to a strong but flexible pole, the heavy end of which is planted firmly in a slanting direction over a log, into the deep snow and earth on the other side; the slender end, to which the trap is chained is then bent over the log until it reaches the ground, where it is prevented from springing back and up by a notch cut in a convenient sapling into which it is not very firmly hooked.

When a marten, fisher, or mink is caught in the trap, its weight and strength are not sufficient, at

least very rarely, to spring the pole. But it is quite different with the wolverine; he is a large and very powerful animal, and the moment he feels the trap snap on his foot, he makes a frantic spring and immediately frees the pole from the notch, which, flying back to its straight natural form, suspends him high in the air, several feet above the ground. There he hangs, perfectly helpless, till he dies.

A great deal has been said and written about the cunning of the wolverine. In fact such marvelous stories are told about him that we would be tempted to believe that he is gifted with a kind of prescient intelligence, which enables him to defy all the gins, and snares, and traps that the ingenuity of man could devise for his destruction.

But the Indians and trappers of this country have no such high. opinion of his cunning and dexterity in evading capture. They say they have no more difficulty in capturing him than any other fur-bearing animal, and never think of resorting to unusual expedients in order to do so.

There is one peculiarity of the wolverine which I distinctly noticed, and which it is difficult fully to account for. In his prowling through the woods, if he comes across a human track, he will abandon any pursuit he may be engaged in at the time, and follow it. I found on several occasions that when,

returning to camp, we crossed or retraced our morning trail, that it had been taken up and followed by a wolverine, and perhaps he had been dogging our steps the whole day.

Whatever his object in this may be, whether to pick up the crumbs and fragments which may be left on the snow after the mid-day meal, or from mere curiosity, which is said to be a large ingredient in his character, at all events the habit often leads to his destruction. For when he comes to where a new trap has just been set, probably baited with a tempting piece of fresh bloody rabbit, his appetite gets the better of the cunning, with which he is so often credited, and, before he knows where he is, he is summarily treated to an involuntary, and ignominious dance in the air, where he will be found dead and frozen by the trapper on his return visit, in a week or ten days afterwards.

We were now quite ready for our "snack" of cold pork and scones, of which we partook with the keenest relish, and then resumed our tour of inspection. And Steve's heart was again gladdened by finding in the traps two martens and a fisher.

As it was now late in the afternoon we returned to camp, where we arrived in time to lay in a plentiful supply of firewood, and good occasion we had for its use, as we found out that night to our sorrow.

CHAPTER VII.

Frozen Out.

THE cold had now become intensely severe. I thought I had never experienced anything like it before, and my companion expressed the same opinion.

On my return to the settlements, some weeks afterwards, I found that for three days, just at that time, it was between the fifth and eighth of March, the thermometer had ranged about thirty degrees below zero, and no doubt fell considerably lower during the night.

We were, withal, most scantily provided with blankets. We had one pair under us, and a pair and a half (shanty blankets are always in pairs, woven together at one side) over us, a most insufficient covering for two men in such a degree of cold. I deeply regretted not following my own judgment in carrying a light pack of at least one pair of blankets, this addition would have made all the difference in the world in our comfort. However it couldn't be helped now, and if we hadn't that which we liked, we just had to like that which we had. Comforting our-

selves with this philosophy, and sitting before the fire till sleep had almost overpowered us, we wrapped ourselves tight in the blankets and, back to back, as close as twin oysters, we prepared to "tough it out" for the night.

We hadhardly laid our heads down until we were sound asleep. But, alas! it was of short duration. The insiduous, penetrating cold would creep in and around our head and shoulders, and up through the icy snow into the small of the back, always, with me at least, a most sensitive spot to the cold. In the unconsciousness of sleep, I would give a tug at the blankets to cover more tightly the chilled part of the body. This would necessarily disarrange them round my companion, and he, in turn, feeling the biting frost, would give a mighty pull and draw them off the other fellow, till, finally, by this alternate tugging and pulling we would completely disarrange the whole concern, and lie at the full mercy of the cold, until, with chattering teeth and shivering limbs, we would be forced to rise and fly to the fire.

Piling on fresh logs, and melting a tin pail full of snow we made tea, and greedily drinking the hot, scalding liquid, and devouring fabulous quantities of fat pork and biscuit, we contrived to raise the tem-

perature of our bodies to some respectable degree of warmth.

After again sitting and smoking until we could no longer keep our eyes open we betook ourselves to the blankets, and covering over every conceivable aperture, and solemnly declaring that we would not stir a finger, or move a hair's breadth, come what may, we thought that surely this time we might manage to sleep in peace. But our resolutions and defences were in vain. In the helplessness of overpowering sleep the enemy again stole in upon us. The alternate tugging and twitching recommenced, until finally, benumbed and chilled to the very bone and marrow, we were again driven to the fire.

Thus we passed the long dreary hours of that terribly bitter night. Putting all our snatches of sleep together, we did not have more than an hour of it.

One incident will show the extremeness of the cold. While munching my pork and biscuit, I laid my dish of tea, fresh from the boiling pail, on the blanket beside me; when I took it up, after an interval of a minute or so, it had not merely cooled, but was actually frozen over.

At length the longed-for daybreak dawned upon

us, and never was its coming hailed with more delighted relief.

As we eat our breakfast, I heard Steve with a quiet but deep oath mutter to himself "—— if we would spend another night like that." Though, unless he set the forest on fire on every side of us, I couldn't possibly conceive how he would better our condition if we had the same degree of cold to contend against. On my hinting this to him he only shrugged his shoulders and said, "You'll see."

CHAPTER VIII.

Making the Bed over the Fire.

WE despatched our breakfast with great haste, as we were anxious to get on the tramp, as it was only by active motion that we expected to obtain any degree of physical comfort.

Accordingly, buckling on our snowshoes we started from the camp on the full run, as if we were fleeing from the plague, and the active exercise soon warmed us into our usual good nature and comfort of body.

We took no "snack" with us this morning, as it was Steve's intention to visit two traps which lay at the extreme point of his range, distant about four miles, and, re-setting them, to return to camp by dinner time. On arriving at the spot we found in one trap a fair-sized beaver, and the other sprung, but empty. Hastily re-setting them, for the cold was so intense that it was impossible to remain inactive for any length of time, we retraced our steps, and quickly prepared, and consumed a most substantial dinner.

As we sat before the fire, enjoying our post-prandial pipe, I wondered what Steve was going to do next. I noticed on leaving the camp that he had thrown into the fire all our remaining wood, and, on my remonstrating with him on this apparently useless expenditure of what had cost us so much labor, he only replied with his customary shrug and, "you'll see."

Steve was decidedly out of temper this morning, as all backwoodsmen are when they lose their night's sleep. They will stand any amount of fatigue, and even want of food, but sleep,—sleep, they must have. I was now to witness the denouement of his confounded "you'll see."

His first act was to take up our bed of cedar-tops and boughs and the thatching of balsam, and place them by themselves, then, taking down the slanting rafters and side-poles, he placed them on the top of the pile.

At this juncture I ventured to suggest to him the superior excellence of the Indian plan of making a camp. But at this Steve waxed so terribly wrathy that, like Grimwig, "I could have eaten my head" with vexation for daring to make such a suggestion.

These fellows are very jealous of any supposed superiority of the Indians in woodcraft, and despise even the appearance of learning anything from them·

"I would like to see the Indian that could show me how to make a camp," he hotly replied to my timid suggestion.

He further told me that he was going to make such a bed "over the fire" that no cold could get at us. This intimation of course rather increased than diminished my wonder.

But I soon saw what he was at.

The immense fire we had kept up for the last three days had melted the snow for several feet round down to the ground, and had abstracted from it all the frost and dampness. Steve now threw the half-burnt logs and larger embers on to the place where we had slept the night before, leaving at the bottom of the fireplace a great mass of hot ashes and coals. Over these, when sufficiently cooled so as not to set fire to it, he purposed making our bed.

The device was worthy the ingenuity of a Newton.

I saw at once how now we could laugh at almost any degree of cold to which we might be exposed.

Having carefully deposited on this warm bottom all the tops and boughs, he tightly spread over these the blankets, so that the heat might not escape till we were ready for bed. He then simply reversed the position of the top and side poles, covering both, as before, with the thick balsam branches.

"What do you think of that now," he demanded of me with an air of triumph, when all was completed.

"Très-bon," "très-bon," I shouted, as I rolled luxuriously on the blankets, through which already I felt the warm glow from underneath.

After laying in a plentiful supply of firewood, and partaking of a grand supper of bouilli of grouse, beaver, pork and hard-tack, we felt quite ready for turning in, feeling assured that, though the cold was as intense as ever, we could repay ourselves to-night for the discomfort of the previous one.

On account of the warmth beneath we could afford to have two pairs of blankets above us and a single one under us, and though we had to rise two or three times to replenish the fire, yet we enjoyed most luxuriant and refreshing slumber, and awoke at sunrise fresh and strong as young giants.

It is a matter of great astonishment to some people how human beings can sleep not only with impunity but even in absolute comfort in the open air on the snow, in such a low degree of temperature, and at first sight it does appear inexplicable, if not impossible.

In our comfortable homes in mid-winter, with every appliance and expedient for excluding the

cold and keeping up the heat, on the deepest and warmest of feather beds (which, by the way, I detest), and under a mountain of quilts and blankets' we are yet often no more comfortable than we ought to be, and think we should have had more blankets over us. Some persons, then, are inclined to be very incredulous, and to treat as travellers' cram, the accounts of sleeping out in the open air, with the mercury at thirty degrees below, and only two pairs of blankets over you and a single one underneath, and, withal, enjoy pleasant and refreshing slumber.

But so it is, notwithstanding; and I would only ask these sceptical individuals to go and try the thing for themselves, and I will be willing to guarantee, that not only what I have said is the fact, but that, in the generality of cases, they will enjoy more sound and healthy slumber than on their downiest couches in their warmest chambers.

And I account for it in this way. There is no undressing, of course, but rather, if we have any extra clothes and wraps, we put them on. The only thing we change are our socks and moccasins: these, no matter how dry and frosty the day may have been, will become damp, probably wet—and dry and warm feet we must have. Then the head must be

tightly covered over with a warm cap or tuque, and the blankets tucked in and about, so that not an aperture is left by which the breath can escape. This, to many persons at first, is intolerable, but you soon get habituated to it, and think nothing of it. It is a saying with old campaigners that "to keep the head covered is as good as two pairs of blankets."

The next great and indispensable requirement is, that the fire be kept always briskly burning, perhaps as much as a quarter of a cord of wood blazing away on it the whole night. Of course this keeps the feet, encased in thick moccasins and several pairs of socks, thoroughly warm, which, in itself, is a great factor in keeping up the heat of the body.

If these precautions are carefully attended to, and we take into account at the same time the enormous quantity of fat, strong food that we dispose of, and the generally healthy tone of the system, with the blood circulating freely and fully, then we can easily understand how the general temperature of the body can be kept up to such a degree of warmth as to secure safe, refreshing, and enjoyable repose.

I have often been asked the question by medical men and others whether, in such circumstances, it is a good thing to use freely, or even moderately, alco-

holic spirits. My answer is, emphatically, no! I believe that a draught of good whiskey, that is, high wines diluted with water (for high wines is the only liquor you can carry in that country, where every pound's weight is to be considered) is an excellent thing, when you are thoroughly chilled, wet and fagged out. I think it assists nature to recuperate, and is generally beneficial in such cases. But to take it when you are going to sleep, with the idea that it will keep up the heat of the body, or under *ordinary* circumstances in winter backwoods travelling is a foolish and dangerous mistake. My theory is this: alcohol, acting directly on the blood, increases the circulation, and of course for the time produces heat and comfort, but this increased action, combined with the volatile nature of alcohol, causes an evaporation from the system through the pores, which carries off the caloric from the body, and, unless the stimulus is constantly kept up, leaves the body colder, and more susceptible to the cold, than before the spirits were taken. On the other hand, strong tea and fat pork, besides having a stimulating and heating effect at the time, possess a staying power behind, which has a most beneficial effect in warding off and neutralizing the effects of extreme cold. Take it all in all, I think that a man with an

ordinarily strong and healthy physique is just as well without alcohol, in any form, in the backwoods, even in the depths of winter, than with it. But this is a matter very much of experience and constitution. Mere conscientious scruples have nothing to do with it, in such circumstances.

CHAPTER IX.

A Winter Hurricane in the Woods.

WE had intended to-day to finish up the trapping business in this quarter, and start for home the next day—" but, l'homme propose, mais Dieu dispose."

During the night the wind had been gradually rising, and by daybreak it had increased to a perfect hurricane. It blew with such terrific violence that, without peril to life or limb, we dared not venture more than an acre from the camp. There was no question about it—we were fairly stormbound. All we could do was to remain quietly and snugly ensconced in camp. To me at least this was a matter of no concern, but rather of satisfaction. A day of perfect rest was a pleasant interlude in the life of continual excitement and laborious exercise which we were leading, especially as we were in a position in which we could hear and enjoy the storm without any danger to ourselves, as, with a view to any such contingency, Steve had so located the camp as to be out of the reach of any falling trees or limbs.

We were in the heart of a dense grove of young cedars, spruce, and balsams, on the edge of a large lake, which stretched windward of us about three miles, and on the other side we were sufficiently distant from the larger trees to be out of danger.

A winter storm in the forest is one of the grandest, and most striking exhibitions of nature. When it rages in its wildest fury, as it did to-day, it is indescribably awful and magnificent. It can be appreciated only in all its stupendous sublimity when you are in the very midst of it. The shrieking of the icy wind as it sweeps through the forest is simply terrific; it sounds as if ten thousand raging demons were rioting and fighting in the air. The moaning and creaking of the trees as they bend before the storm produces a strange, weird, subduing effect on the mind. The continual crash, crash of the giant pines and hemlocks, which have sternly withstood the storms of a thousand winters, as they come headlong to the ground, crushing down with them all lesser trees and shrubs, sounds like the continual discharge of heavy artillery.

As you lie and listen to the wild shrieking of the storm, you can hardly dispossess your mind of the idea that there is a living thing in it, a something that has sense, and motion and feeling. There

seems to be a method and a meaning in the deafening noises that din the ear, as if some sentient being were passing through terrible convulsions of emotion, now agony, now suspense, now triumph: then triumph, suspense, agony.

And, loud over all, comes the dying wail of some mighty forest king as he comes thundering to the earth. It is almost pitiful to witness one of these magnificent pines succumbing to the power of the storm. It is like the dying struggles of some gigantic animal when he has been struck by the deadly bullet. He heaves and tosses his mighty branches as if in defiance to the wind; his lofty crest, which "quaffs the moisture at the brink of the clouds," nods bravely and proudly in the fearful swirl of the hurricane; his gigantic trunk, like a sturdy wrestler, bends and yields, and then recovers itself for another encounter; but gradually the deep strong roots become weakened in their hold upon the earth, and another and stronger and more steady, gust of wind makes him tremble from butt to crest, and brings him, slowly at first, but then at once suddenly and with the violence of a tornado to the ground, and his dying roar is heard like thunder above the wildest din of the tempest.

At such a time as this it is extremely dangerous to travel in the woods, you may, by keeping a sharp

lookout, avoid the falling trees, but the frozen boughs and limbs snap in the wind like pipestems, and are falling and flying in every direction; you are in continual danger of being struck, and, if not killed outright, what is far worse, to be disabled from moving, and thus miserably perish from cold and exposure.

The shantyman will not work, and the hunter, and trapper will keep in his camp while the storm lasts.

As I lay in my snug camp before the great fire, and listened to the ceaseless din, and roar, and thunder of the storm, I took in, in all its fulness and grandeur, the mighty power of nature when she arises in her fury and anger. It was like the voice of God, calling upon men to hear and tremble, to fear and repent, in the presence of His wrathful omnipotence.

To me it was a day of delightful, yet thoughtful, enjoyment. I had two invaluable companions with me, from whom, wherever I travel, I am never separated, my Bible and my Shakspeare. And in alternate reading and mooning, and the grosser enjoyments of eating and smoking, I wiled away the day most agreeably.

Steve, however, shewed very little sentiment on the occasion. He was too familiar with these storms to give them more than a mere passing notice.

After his own fashion, though, he doubtless enjoyed the day as much as I did. When he was not eating or smoking he was fast asleep; and as he lay beside me on the blankets his loud snoring sounded in my ears like the blasts of a war-trumpet, and was a most unsentimental accompaniment to the wild music of the storm.

Towards evening it was necessary to look out for firewood for the night. This is one of the imperative necessities of camp-life in winter, with which no circumstance of exposure or difficulty must interfere. The fire must be kept up all night, or, in such a temperature as we were in, we might never awake again in this world.

There was a half-dead birch standing a short distance from the camp which Steve had decided to use for the night's fuel. I never thought that he would carry out his intention, as its great branches were swaying and creaking in a most alarming manner, and every now and then some of the smaller boughs would be torn off, and sent flying away on the wind like feathers. But Steve was not to be deterred. He had set his mind on that birch, and that birch he would have. So, taking the big axe, he was soon hewing away lustily at its trunk. Every blow from his powerful arms made the tree quiver to its very top.

Just what I was dreading now took place. A large branch, weakened already by the force of the wind, became still more so by the shaking of the tree through the blows of the axe, and, becoming detached from the trunk, came crashing down. I shouted to Steve, but it was too late. Just as he bent his shoulders to make a spring it struck him fair on the back. There is no doubt it was that bend which saved his life; if he had been standing upright, as he was a second before, it would have taken him right on the head and killed him on the spot. As it was, his tall sturdy frame staggered and reeled for a moment or two, and then, like the pine I spoke of before, came suddenly down with such force headlong into the snow that he was completedly buried, nothing but his legs and broad snowshoes, wobbling in the air, were to be seen. It was undoubtedly a most ludicrous spectacle, and, though I didn't laugh at the time, I did afterwards till my sides ached.

Before I could get on my snowshoes to go to his assistance, the brave fellow had wriggled himself out and scrambled to his feet, and was rubbing his eyes and coughing the snow out of his mouth and throat. And such a rueful look of scared astonishment I never saw on any man's countenance. It had all

passed more quickly than we can read it. But, all joking aside, it was the most miraculous escape I ever witnessed; and certainly never did human mortal get a more tremendous whack on the back, and live, than Steve did from that birch branch. He, however, seemed to think little about it; and after shaking himself together two or three times, and getting his wind back, deliberately proceeded with his work. He felled the tree, and cut it into logs, without further hindrance or accident.

These backwoodsmen become so habituated to hairbreadth escapes that they never seem to realize that there is anything Providential in human life. They take it all as a matter of course, and out of the very jaws of death they go on, as thoughtless, careless and unconcerned as before.

CHAPTER X.

Perished in the Storm.

THE next morning broke clear, mild and beautiful. The cold "spell" and the storm had passed away. Hill, and lake, and forest, were bathed in glorious sunshine. All nature seemed to break out into merry laughter, as if rejoiced at having emerged from her stormy, turbulent, and passionate mood.

Steve finished up his trapping business, and the next morning we started on our twenty-six mile tramp homewards, where we arrived, without special incident, towards evening of the second day.

Xavier received us with exuberant demonstrations of joy and welcome, and feasted us royally on the daintiest delicacies of his larder: and his delight was enhanced when Steve brought forth the rich trophies of the traps.

In the morning I bade farewell to my hosts with whom I had passed such a capital time, and whose kindness to me had been unbounded, and taking my lonely way through the forest arrived in safety at the Farm, greatly to the relief of my friends who had been seriously alarmed concerning me during the prevalence of the intense cold and the violent storm.

A dreadful casualty occurred during this storm about twenty miles north of the Farm.

Two men on their way to a shanty attempted to cross a lake some miles in width. It was an act of madness. Better far to have gone round the lake, and risked the dangers of the forest, than attempted this.

These storms on our broad lakes assume the form of what are called on our Northwest prairies "blizzards," and can be braved with impunity by neither man nor beast.

These poor fellows soon became bewildered by the whirling drift, and piercing blasts which seemed to come from all points of the compass at once, until, finally, one of them, overcome by the cold and fatigue, lay down in the snow, and, notwithstanding the entreaties and exertions of his companion, refused to make any further effort, and was left to perish miserably and alone in the storm.

The other man, after some hours of incredible exertion, arrived at the shanty, but in such an exhausted and frost-bitten condition that he died in terrible agony a few hours after his arrival.

Good cause, therefore, had I to be thankful to a merciful Providence for my preservation and happy return to the comforts and hospitalities of the Farm.

PART III.

CHAPTER I.

Letters and Papers at the Farm.

AT the Farm I found a large budget of letters and papers awaiting me, which I perused with great interest and satisfaction.

It was about two months sinee I had heard any news from the outer world, and in that short time it was astonishing to read the number of striking events that had taken place in the busy arena of worldly affairs.

The isolation of life in those Northern wilds is undisturbed and absolute. The government of your country may be upset, the greatest nations may be turned topsy-turvy, the most startling incidents may occur in every circle of human life, and you will know nothing about them, and, strange to say, so absorbed are you in your personal pursuits and enjoyments, you care still less. For the time being you feel perfectly indifferent whether you

will ever hear again how things are going on among the teeming millions in the busy hive of humanity.

And this I conceive to be one of the greatest practical benefits to be gained by such a mode of life as I was now pursuing, especially for professional men, or any whose brains and intellects are being constantly and laboriously exercised.

It gives the mind perfect rest. It allows it to lie fallow for a time, though, unconsciously, all the while it is receiving a fresh crop of new, beautiful, and wholesome ideas and impressions, which in due season will bring forth abundant and valuable fruit.

However, be this as it may, the moment your eye lights on the old familiar Daily, which, morning and evening, was an indispensable requirement of your life, a revulsion of feeling takes place, the old interest revives, you are again a citizen of the world, at once cosmopolitan in your ideas and interests.

The next ten days slipped away in quiet and healthy enjoyment. Jim is a great reader, and when he leaves his home in the early Fall for his sojourn in the woods, which sometimes extends to nine months in the year, he takes with him an abundant supply of the best literature of the day.

So, with books, and occasional tramps through the bush, and mighty bonfires at night, the days quickly and pleasantly passed away.

But my furlough was coming to an end, and I must have one more campaign among the moose before I return to work and duty, and for this I now made every arrangement.

CHAPTER II.

Off for another Hunt of the Moose.

THIS time I had no occasion to entrust myself to the tender mercies of Seymo.

I had made the acquaintance of a lumber merchant, whose depot, a large and extensive establishment, was distant from the Farm about thirteen miles. He had given me a cordial invitation to visit him, and had promised to arrange with the Indians in his vicinity to give me a "first-class" hunt.

So one bright morning I shouldered my rifle, and with a light pack strapped on my back, containing a few comforts, and a change of flannels, I started for his depot. I had no occasion to take my snow-shoes, as I was on a hard beaten road in the direction of the settlements by which all the supply teams had to travel to and from the shanties.

I was in capital "twist," as they call it, in these backwoods, both of body and mind. No more shaky nerves, bilious headaches, low spirits, and sleepless

nights, distressed me. I had regained my normal elasticity and vigor of frame, and my natural buoyancy and cheerfulness of heart.

In the overflowing exuberance of my animal vanity I felt like a young Hercules, and equal to any amount of labor and fatigue that might be before me. And for an amateur there is no question I made capital time that morning over these thirteen miles. It was not the regulation "heel-and-toe" stride, but the "go-as-you-please" pace that I adopted, and between the two I covered the ground in two hours and a half by my watch.

My friend received me with great cordiality, and we spent the day very agreeably together in pleasant talk about mutual friends and associations.

Mr. McT. is a warm-hearted generous Irishman, a true-blue Presbyterian, and a capital type of the Canadian lumberman. Though a man of great intelligence and general information, yet he makes no pretensions to education or mere refinement, and is brimful of humor, vigor, and animal spirits. He has risen from the ranks, and is not ashamed to own it, and has now an extensive and prosperous business.

As a class, there is no body of men that I have a higher respect for than our lumber merchants. They

are manly, upright, open-hearted, and hospitable to a fault. Accustomed to large money transactions they spend freely, and live high—perhaps a trifle too much so—and, as a rule, are devoid of that petty trickery, and sharp practice which too often characterize our town and city business men. There is no stronger proof of this than the fact that it is no uncommon thing to find men who have grown grey, and often become supernumeraries, in the service of the same family. Also for men to leave their wages for years in the hands of their masters, feeling that it is quite safe there, and that they will receive it, with interest, whenever they choose to ask for a "squaring up."

The next morning my friend made up a pack of all necessary supplies for my trip, and drove me to the place where the Indians were to be in readiness to accompany me. We arrived about noon, and found everything arranged as he had stipulated.

CHAPTER III.

Manyass' Place and Family.

This was a very different establishment from that of Seymo's. It was situated at the junction of the two main roads of that country, and was a regular stopping place for teamsters and others, with whom it did a large and profitable business.

The proprietor's name was Manyass, and he was accounted a highly respectable and honest "old Injun." His dwelling was a long, comfortable one-storied shanty, divided into two compartments. The outer one is about twenty feet square, with an immense camboose in the centre, and a double tier of bunks on every side, capable of accommodating about forty men. This was for the benefit of the travelling public; he had also stable room for forty teams. He charged twenty-five cents for keeping a man and team over night, and the same for a meal which, however, was seldom called for, as every teamster is supposed to carry his own and his horse's provisions: he supplies him, besides, with hot water free to make tea with.

The inner apartment was used by Manyass' own family, a very large one, of all ages and sizes, from the infant at the breast to Peter, who was about twenty-one.

After dinner McT. bade me good-bye, with many good wishes for my success, and strong injunctions to the Indians to take good care of me. In fact I heard him, when my back was turned, say to them, "If you don't give Mr. F. a good hunt you need never shew your faces at my place again."

This was a terrible threat to them, for the Indians of that section are largely dependent for their subsistence and prosperity upon the lumbermen, who always treat them well if they are honest and well-behaved, but if they are found stealing or dishonest they are kicked out most unceremoniously.

I spent the rest of the day strolling about the place, talking with an occasional teamster as he came along, and watching the gambols of the children. To one of these I gave my empty revolver to play with, a very foolish thing on my part, for the young imp, notwithstanding my prohibition, kept continually snapping it, until finally he broke the mainspring, and made it useless for the rest of the trip.

I was specially interested in watching the demeanor of Peter and his wife. They had been married but a few weeks, and she was not more than sixteen.

It was the most perfect exhibition of conjugal love and devotion that I ever witnessed.

I have seen a good deal of philandering and spooning between newly-married couples, but this completely threw into the shade anything I ever saw.

She was an exceedingly pretty squaw, with more than the usual grace and litheness which you so often see in the young Indian girls. He, on the contrary, was certainly no beauty. He was a short, squat, stout-built fellow, with a low beetle-browed forehead, a nose and nostrils like a full-blooded negro, and a mouth like a hippopotamus. He was, however, a most manly, honest fellow, and most tender-hearted withal.

She seemed to perfectly idolise him. When he was not working she was always hanging about and clinging to him. Her love was so openly displayed, so unaffected and unsophisticated, such a genuine outcome of the heart, that you never thought of laughing or sneering at it. It seemed to be all right, quite natural, just the very thing to do. And the great

coarse hulk of a fellow seemed quite satisfied, he took it all as a matter of course, and I could see that, though in less demonstrative way, he warmly reciprocated her affection.

I liked to look at them. I admired and respected them. It is seldom that you see much sentiment displayed among the Indians in their love and marriage relations. But there could be no mistaking the character here. It was a marriage of love, pure, simple, beautiful and holy.

I was honored that night with a bed in the family domicile, curtained off from the rest by a couple of blankets, but I found it hot, stuffy, and uncomfortable, and always after, when I had occasion to stay there, preferred to sleep in the outer apartment, which was open and airy.

CHAPTER IV.

A Young Indian Swell.

THE next morning, at sunrise, we marshalled our forces, and, thoroughly equipped at all points, felt eager for the fray with the moose.

My companions were Peter, who was my special body-guard; Joe, a younger brother, about eighteen; and Paul, a cousin of their's, about the same age as Peter.

Joe was a coxcomb, a young Indian swell of the first water. The fop is a world-wide character. Dandyism is not local, but cosmopolitan; you find the character in every land and color, and tribe, and Joe fully sustained the reputation of his on this point.

He wore small silver rings in his ears, and a ruby-colored glass ring on his finger, worth, probably, about one cent. He had on also a Yankee soldier's forage cap, which he wore on the side of his head in the most knowing and jaunty style. His dress generally was as much of the rakish stamp as he could

possibly make it. To give him his due, he was a good-looking fellow, with piercing black eyes, and a tall, well-made figure, quite a contrast to his brother in these respects, but infinitely inferior to him in all others. In his broken English he affected to be witty, but was merely rude, and, without exception, was as impudent a puppy as I ever met with. I had a suspicion in my own mind that Joe and I would fall foul of each other before a great while, and my forecast came true, as we shall presently see.

Paul was a quiet, reserved, well-behaved fellow. He did his work faithfully and well, and minded his own business. He was, too, somewhat of a man of the world. He had travelled; he had been to Pembroke twice, and his reminiscences of that great city formed the staple topic of his scanty conversation.

Take them all in all, they were three as well-conditioned and stalwart young Indian braves as you could meet with in a year's journey.

The whole family assembled at the door to see us off. Peter's wife clung convulsively to him to the last, and every now and then she looked spitefully at me over his shoulder, as much as to say, "it is mean of you to take him away from me." It was, I believe, their first separation since their marriage.

In single file we marched off, each Indian drawing a large toboggin after him, on which were placed our blankets and stores, and which, if successful in the hunt, were to be laden on our return with moose meat.

CHAPTER V.

The First Two Days Out.

THE day was gloriously fine. Our route lay north-west, over high hills, broad lakes and rivers bound in icy fetters, and through dense dark forests, in which no living thing was seen or heard.

The snowshoeing was all that could be desired. Since the heavy rain, referred to before, little snow had fallen, and the frost had formed a strong crust upon which our broad shoes hardly made an impression. We travelled along, therefore, at a great pace, and by mid-day had covered fifteen good miles.

We took our dinner at a spot where, several weeks before, the Indians had killed a moose, and after "dressing" it, had cut the meat into pieces convenient for carriage, and wrapping them in the hide had left them on the snow until they should come for them.

The meat was there, just as they had left it. There is something very singular about this. For though there are no wolves in that country, and the

bears are all "denned up" in the winter, still the wolverine, the lynx, and the fox, all highly carnivorous, are abundant, and yet they never touch the meat. The Indians account for this in various ways, but I think the most plausible reason is that, like some people's religion, they are cautious overmuch; their suspicion overreaches itself even to their own prejudice and loss.

Be this as it may, we at least feasted on it voraciously, and, after the customary pipe and rest, resumed the tramp, and arrived at our destination early in the afternoon, having travelled about twenty-two miles, an easy and pleasant day's journey on the hard crust with very light loads.

As we intended remaining here for a few days, the Indians saying "it was a good moose country," they set to work to make a first-class camp, very much after the pattern already described under Seymo's leadership.

Peter, when he had finished digging out our grave-shaped bed, gave me an illustration of Indian foresight and philosophy.

"There will be no flood in the river this spring," he said.

"How do you know that, Peter," I wonderingly asked him.

"Because," he replied, "no frost in the ground, when the snow melt, the water all go into the earth," striking, as he spoke, the handle of his shovel deep into the soft earth.

This was certainly sound natural philosophy.

He gave me also a specimen of Indian woodcraft which I never witnessed before, and have no doubt few, if any, of my readers have.

They had brought with them four moose dogs, as they are called, to assist in the hunt. These are beautiful little creatures, not more than nine inches high, of a greyish-white color, with short tails, curled over the back, and sharp cocked ears. They are jaunty little fellows indeed, and as lively and merry as crickets. They were an unfailing source of amusement to me, and greatly valued and beloved by their masters, as well they might, for the pure breed is very rare, and they are invaluable in the chase. They have a peculiar sharp bark which can be heard at an immense distance, and is given only when they sight the track, or the moose itself, as we shall have occasion before long to witness.

Peter had so dug out our camping-place as to have just at the foot an immense birch tree, whose roots protruded above the ground, and against which the fire was to be built.

He now called the dogs down to him, and making pretence that there was an animal somewhere about the roots of the tree, and inciting them on just as you call "rats, rats," to a terrier, he set them to, tooth and claw, tearing up and clearing away the earth underneath and around the roots, making great caverns under them in every direction.

I looked on in amazement, "what could the fellow possibly be at now?" I thought to myself. In answer to my impatient query, he simply said, "make fire burn good."

Though I did not fully understand the manœuvre, until the logs were piled against the tree and the fire kindled, then the thing flashed upon me at once. The draught upwards caused by the heat drew the fresh air strongly through these holes and caverns, making them serve the purpose of a capital flue, as in a chimney, and of course making the "fire burn good."

It was a device equal to Steve's ingenuity in making the bed over the fire.

That night we feasted and rested luxuriously, and arose at daybreak on the full *qui vive* for an expected grand day's sport. But our sport began and ended in great expectations.

Peter and I, with two dogs, set off in one direction, and Paul and Joe, with the other two, in another, but though we scoured the woods the whole day, and had a pleasant enough tramp through a beautiful country, yet we met with neither track nor sight of moose, and returned to camp towards evening mightily out of conceit with ourselves, and I at least maliciously hoping that our companions had been equally unsuccessful, and luckily, as I honestly confess, it turned out so, they also returned empty-handed.

CHAPTER VI.

Joe's Discomfiture.

After supper, as I lay before the fire smoking my pipe, an incident occurred which threatened apparently the peace and pleasure of our trip, but in reality, as I fully intended, had quite the reverse effect.

Up to this time I had been intolerably annoyed with Joe's petty impertinences. In his silly, rude conceit he had been continually "taking me off," sometimes in his broken English to my very face, and oftener in his own language to his companions who, I was sorry to see, did not resent it as they ought. But, as is too often the case even in civilized and good society, they were afraid themselves of Joe's glib tongue, for the shallow-brained puppy is generally a vulgar bully, only in another style and too often makes everyone around him uncomfortable and timid.

To night Joe recommenced his tactics, and I now made up my mind that, if I expected to have any comfort or pleasure in this hunt, I must put a stop

to it. The *suaviter in modo* had hitherto failed with him : I must now have recourse to the *fortiter in re.*

The young rascal's favorite mode of chaffing was to make remarks about my personal belongings. He would ask the price of this or that particular article, and then indulge in his supposed witty comments on it.

As I now drew out my watch to see the time he asked " what's price of dat." I quietly told him, but if I had said a million and a half instead of a hundred and fifty dollars he couldn't have laughed more mockingly and incredulously. I let this pass, however.

Again as I laid aside my long hunting knife and sheath—one of Costen's best— he queried also its value, and when I told him "five dollars" his jeering cachination echoed loudly through the silent listening forests; I let this pass also.

But when he scoffingly remarked to the others, " to-morrow we run forty miles, and leave white man in the snow as Seymo's boy did," then my long suppressed wrath came to a culmination.

I am one of the most patient and meek-tempered men on the face of the earth, but there is a point beyond which endurance is no virtue, and that point

had now been reached. In fact my "dander" was fairly up; and suddenly rising I placed my rifle against the snow wall behind me, so that I could club it if necessary, and making a stride to where Joe was standing before the fire, I seized him by the throat with one hand, and shaking him till his teeth chattered in his jaws, I thundered in his ears: "if you give me another word of your impudence I'll smash your face for you." The suddenness of my onset, my tone, my menacing dexter, and, no doubt, the demoniacal glare in my eye, produced a terrible effect.

I never saw such an instantaneous change pass over the face of any man. His dusky countenance assumed an ashy hue, his eyes rolled in his head, and his whole frame became limp as tow in my grasp. I felt at once the victory was mine, and nothing further need be said or done.

As I resumed my recumbent position on the blankets I could have burst with internal laughter at the astonished look of utter discomfiture on Joe's face. As the young ladies used to say at Old Orchard Beach, "it was too comical for anything." I could see that the other two, though amazed, were rather pleased than otherwise with my summary treatment of him.

And it produced a most wholesome effect. From that time forth, neither in look nor word, had I the slightest cause to complain of him, and I have no doubt it would do Joe good to the end of his days.

CHAPTER VII.

A Gala Day in Moose Hunting.

THE next morning we were off again, bright and early, on our scouting tramp.

But our experience of to-day was to be very different from that of yesterday—it was the gala day of all my excursion in moose hunting.

We had not proceeded far on our way when suddenly a joyous snort issued out of Peter's expansive nostrils, and pointing to the snow at our feet he excitedly uttered, "track, track." I looked, but could see nothing at first differing from the surface of the surrounding snow, but Peter's keen eye had detected a slight indentation on the crust, and carefully removing this I could see, plainly enough underneath, the track of the moose.

"Pass here 'praps month ago," said Peter, "but get him sure."

The dogs also had detected the track, and at a word and motion from their master were off, full tear, upon it, and Peter and I followed suit as fast as our legs could carry us.

The pace was tremendous, but I had no difficulty in keeping up, as, in addition to having, by this time, become "hardened up" and quite at home on the snowshoes, I had learned a trick in following the Indians on the chase which was of invaluable service to me, and it is this: I allowed my leader to keep several yards in advance of me, and, as he necessarily had to follow the windings of the trail, according to the caprice of the moose, as he fed here and there, I could take every now and then short direct cuts, which saved many a weary step.

This was particularly the case in the present instance, for this moose seems to have been an unusually capricious fellow in his leisurely wanderings. I suppose, take it all in all, I did not cover half the ground that Peter did. So I kept up with ease, and enjoyed the chase immensely. It was exhilarating, indeed, in the highest degree.

The dazzling sunshine poured down with unusual brilliancy, the air was almost springlike with its balmy freshness, and the scenery was the most beautiful and variegated that I had yet seen. Now we would dash into a thicket of balsam and young spruce, then out again into the broad sunny glades between the great pines and birch, and then, suddenly, we would burst out upon the glistening surface

of a small lake calmly embosomed in the depths of the forest; and every now and then we would hear, far ahead, the sharp, impatient bark of the dogs, as if calling to us, " come, come," " quick, quick."

Suddenly a bark of a peculiarly shrill and prolonged tone broke upon our ears, and Peter called back to me: " dogs found the yard, and see moose." And so it turned out. In a few minutes we came to where the moose had been " yarded " and from which the dogs had just driven them.

And a most singular looking place it was. It had almost a kind of domestic home look. It was like a miniature barnyard in the heart of the vast piny wilderness. The snow, trodden down to the ground, was covered with hair and dung, and had quite a comfortable look with its high snow walls on every side.

On the opposite side from which we came we saw the deep floundering track of the moose as they plunged out of the yard, and also that there were two of them. Without delay we hastily followed it, and before long the same peculiar bark that we heard last again saluted our ears, and we knew the dogs had brought the moose to bay.

The first intimation I had of their presence was seeing Peter suddenly lifting his gun from his arm,

and, with a significant look over his shoulder to me, taking aim before him. This time I was just at his heels, and looking upon his silent signal, I saw the moose about eighty yards distant, standing sideways towards us.

It was a sight I shall never forget. We were at the foot of a hill whose slope was entirely destitute of trees or shrubs, and just on the crest stood the moose. In the bright transparent atmosphere their immense dark forms stood out in bold relief against the clear azure sky, beyond, and seemed to be magnified into double their natural size. With their long drooping ears and gigantic hanging heads they looked like elephants, quiet, motionless, inert.

They were so taken up with the dogs barking, or rather screaming, in front of them that they never noticed us. And it was not till the loud report of our guns fell on their startled ears, and the sharp bullets struck them, that they suddenly lifted their mighty heads and, with a terrified snort, and a frantic plunge, they were out of sight in a second over the brow of the hill.

Quickly reloading, we followed the now blood-stained trail at our highest speed. It was a race and a chase with a vengeance. With wild whoops and yells we bounded over the hard crusted snow.

I was worked up to the highest pitch of excitement, and felt as if I could leap over mountains.

After about a mile's run, and when I was beginning to feel somewhat blown, we again caught up, and this time, taking more deliberate aim, we fatally wounded the larger of the two animals, and, though he made a tremendous spring when the bullets pierced him, it was his dying plunge. When we came up he was lying on his side, motionless, dead, with the light just fading out of his glassy eye.

He was an immense animal, fully equal in size to the first one I had shot, and elicited many ughs and snorts of admiration from my dusky companion.

As it was now long after mid-day, and we had had a long and hard run of at least fifteen miles, all in all from the camp, we felt ready for food and rest. The other moose, a much smaller animal, we had not seen from the time it had disappeared over the brow of the hill. It was no doubt not far off, and, with the dogs, we knew we could soon overhaul it. The dogs, in obedience to their training, had remained by the fallen moose.

After dinner Peter proceeded to "dress" the animal, and I thought this a capital opportunity to satisfy my curiosity, and to get some insight, if possible, into what to me, and I have no doubt to most

of my readers, had always been an inexplicable mystery, viz., the extraordinary yearly growth of the antlers of the moose.

These always drop off about the beginning of the year, not simultaneously but singly. The Indians tell me that it is not an uncommon sight to see a moose running in the bush with only one horn, though probably this will be only for a day or two after the other has dropped.

The enormous size to which these antlers grow is almost incredible, and their growth and shedding within one year, and every year, is one of the most extraordinary phenomena in all natural history. My friend C— has a pair at his family residence which measures five feet four inches from tip to tip, and weighs more than fifty pounds.

With this windmill arrangement on his head you wonder how the moose could possibly make his way through the dense underbush and cedar thickets. There is no doubt it is an incumbrance in these circumstances (though some writers affirm the contrary, and say that it rather facilitates his progress) and greatly impedes his flight when hotly pursued. But, by elongating his nose in the air, he brings the antlers to a level with his neck, and, resting them

upon his broad shoulders, the obstruction is not so great as at first sight would appear. And, when we take into account his gigantic size and strength, the weight will be like a feather to him.

I now sat down on the animal's neck— and a soft and cozy seat it was—and drawing my knife proceeded to anatomise this wonderful growth. At this season of the year, March, the antlers are in the incipient stage of development. If you clench your fist, encircled in tight fur mittens, and place one against each temple of the forehead, it will give you a good idea of what the antlers are like at this stage of their growth.

Taking my knife I cut off the top covering of soft velvety fur and then pared off rind after rind until I got close to the head. At first it was as soft and easily cut as cheese, but it gradually became harder until it assumed the firm consistency of solid bone. From this time until the end of June, when they have attained their full size, their growth must be remarkably rapid.

How wonderful the process must be by which such a pair as I have referred to attain their full development in the short space of twelve or thirteen weeks. No doubt the arteries at the base of the antlers are greatly enlarged, and at every pulsation

throw off at this spot a fresh tissue of bony essential substance, which gradually accumulates outwards, and upwards, until the natural size is reached.

The hardening process and the contracting of the blood-vessels commence and are carried on simultaneously, until both are completed. Then the soft velvety outer covering is speedily stripped off by contact with trees and other objects, and the antlers stand proudly out in all their majestic, and kingly magnitude.

The moose attains his full growth and strength in about fourteen years, and his age can be calculated by the number of "tines," or prongs, on the extremities of his palmated horns. He often attains a height of seven feet at the shoulders, and a weight of a thousand pounds.

We now set the dogs on the track of the other moose, and resumed the chase after it. But, to our amazement, they had hardly disappeared from view when the peculiar bark which signals the presence of the moose was heard a short distance ahead. We hurried up, and there, not two hundred yards from the spot where we had rested for the last hour, lay the animal. Was he dead? No, his frantic struggles plainly shewed that. Was he wounded? No, for not a drop of blood could be seen on the

track or about him. I looked at Peter, but he was gazing with open mouth and dilated eyes and nostrils in blank astonishment at the struggling animal.

Its convulsive efforts to escape were painful to witness, and its pitiful sobbings of terror as we approached within a few feet of it were most agonizing. As if actuated by a common impulse, we both fired at the same time, and sent the deadly bullets crashing through its head. The mystery was soon solved. The animal in making its last plunge had firmly imbedded its hind legs under a small fallen tree which lay in its path beneath the snow. The trunk of the tree was fairly over the inner haunches of the thighs, and there it lay so securely trapped, that even though we had not overtaken it, it could never have got free, and would soon have perished.

Peter in all his experience had never seen or heard of anything like this, and it formed the theme of many an after-talk among his friends and acquaintances.

We soon dragged the animal out of its singular trap, and after dressing it concluded we had done enough for that day, and that it was time to start home.

We had no intention of retracing our steps, that would be heartless work indeed, but how to find

such a tiny spot as our little camp in the depths of that vast wilderness, where we might pass within fifty yards and not see it, was the question?

Peter, however, was equal to the emergency. Taking an observation of the sun, which still rode high in the heavens, he started off in a straight direct line, and so accurate was his calculation that shortly before sundown we struck our morning trail only a few hundred yards from the camp, and about eight miles from where we had killed the moose.

When we arrived we were received with a great shout of jubilation by Joe, who, without asking what our luck had been, began at once to dilate upon their success and prowess in the day's hunt. "We kill great big moose," "run him down quick," "back before dinner," &c.

I winked at Peter, and he did the same to me, and we quietly allowed Joe to blow away till he was tired. When he finally condescended to ask if we had *seen* any moose, and we told him "killed only two," his jubilant countenance instantly darkened, his lower jaw perceptibly fell, and he looked the picture of invidious, and mortified astonishment.

Paul, however, was greatly pleased and warmly congratulated us. Without more ado, we fell to with great good-will and zest upon the plentiful supper

they had prepared for us. That night was one of the most enjoyable and delightfully refreshing of my whole trip.

Oh, the sweet, sweet sleep before the great fire, after those days of healthy and exhilarating exercise. There is not an alloy of disturbance in it, it is as calm, sound, and peaceful as that of childhood.

CHAPTER VIII.

Lost in the Woods.

THE next morning we packed up our traps and moved off into another section of the country, where the Indians again made a snug and comfortable camp.

Here we remained for several days, but, though we had some excellent partridge shooting, and trapped some valuable fur, and had a good time generally, yet we fell in with no more moose.

So one morning we decided to start for home, the Indians calculating that we would go as far that day as the place where the moose was which they had shot several weeks before, and of which we had dined on our first day's journey out, and loading the tabog-gins with the meat arrive home early the next day.

But for once in their lives they were out in their calculations. We had not proceeded far on our way when I saw that something was wrong. My dusky friends seemed to be at fault. Every now and then they would halt, keenly examine the sky in every

quarter, consult one another, and seem puzzled and bewildered. Finally the truth came out: they did not know where they were—we were lost in the wild woods.

It was hardly to be wondered at, we were in the heart of a dense pinery, the day had broken dark and cloudy, not a sign of the sun could be seen in any quarter of the heavens, and though they had started confidently enough, still they soon became uncertain, and now, for all they knew, we might be traveling in the very opposite direction to that which we wanted to go.

There is a good deal of nonsense written about the instinct of the Indian in finding his proper course through the woods. If he is in a strange country and can't see the sun or the stars he will get lost as quickly as any white man. Neither on this occasion nor any other on which I was ever present did I observe the Indians examine the trunks of the trees, or look up at the inclinations of their tops, or study any other traditionary signs of direction for their guidance. Their reliance seemed to be placed altogether upon the position of the sun, and general "lay" of the country, as it always is with backwoods travellers generally.

At length after considerable discussion Peter announced his intention of going as a scout in a certain direction which he intimated. Pointing to a spot in the sky where, if anything, the clouds appeared to be somewhat heavier, he said he thought there was a big mountain there, and if he could get to the top he might find out where we were, and discover some landmarks by which to guide us. So leaving us with the baggage he started off on the run in the direction intimated.

We had nothing to do but patiently await his return. And a long, weary wait it was of several hours. The day, though gloomy, was very cold. The sky had that peculiar dull, leaden hue which seems to threaten to fall upon you at any moment. It was cheerless and uncomfortable in the extreme.

We were getting out of all patience, when suddenly there burst upon our ears the clear, ringing cry, " ayubàh, ayubàh," and again and again it rang out, echoing over the tops of the trees: " ayubàh, ayubàh." In a moment we were all excitement and activity.

The " tump lines " of the taboggins were thrown over our shoulders, and we were off at high pressure speed in the direction of the ayubàhs. We soon came to where Peter was standing, quietly leaning

on his gun, by the side of a freshly made track of a moose.

It seems that after a long tramp he did find the mountain that he expected, and from its summit he obtained a view over the top of the trees, which gave him the bearings as to the course we were to pursue.

On his way back he came across the track of the moose, which had passed not half an hour before, and on which the dogs were now running with "full tongue." We followed up at "double-quick time," and in about an hour came to where the moose was at bay and fighting the dogs.

CHAPTER IX.

Chased for Dear Life.

It was a lively scene—a perfect Bedlam of mad dogs and moose.

The screaming and barking of the little fellows and the angry snorts and roars of the enraged animal, as he plunged here and there, vainly striking at his nimble foes, were absolutely deafening.

I never saw such an embodiment of infuriated passion as that animal presented. The four dogs gave him no peace. Dodging round him on the crust, they assailed him with their needle-like teeth at every quarter, and with quick, jerky snaps tore out great mouthfuls of hair, and sometimes of skin too. No wonder he was in a rage and a dangerous customer to approach, as I quickly found out.

The Indians held back, and warned me not to go too near, and if I fired, to be careful of the dogs. But in my foolish temerity I advanced quite close, and lodged a bullet in his shoulder. It was the act of a lunatic. In a moment he abandoned his fruitless fight with the dogs, and with a roar, that sounded in my ears like the report of a cannon, made for me,

I was about a dozen yards from him when he charged. I had no time to reload, and even if I had his terrific roar, and the fiendish, murderous glare that shot out from his fiery red eyes, so terror-struck me, that I never thought of it.

For the first time in my life I knew what the word panic meant. The Indians yelled, "run, run," "tree, tree," and run I did, no mistake. I never ran so fast in my life. If there had been sixty hungry, howling cannibals after me I couldn't have run faster.

For about fifty yards I kept up the flight, looking about me as I ran for a tree to climb, for that was the meaning I put upon the cry "tree, tree," the absurdity of climbing a tree with snowshoes on never struck me; when again the shrill yell of the Indians reached me: "behind tree," "behind tree." The warning came none too soon. The moose had gained rapidly on me. I could hear his mad plunges and angry snorts almost at my heels. But, right before me, stood an immense pine, and one more frantic leap placed me alongside, and in a twinkling I dodged behind it. At the same moment the dogs caught up, and their furious attack, and my sudden disappearance, diverted his attention from me.

I quickly reloaded, and peered cautiously round

the tree: he was so near I could have touched him with my rifle. Taking sure aim I sent the ball through his brain, and he instantly dropped like a bullock felled with an axe, and my danger and his life were over.

I had had a narrow escape, one second later and he would have been upon me, and a single blow from his mighty hoof would have broken my back like a pipe stem.

The Indians by this time had rushed up, and I could see by their blanched faces, and glistening eyes, that they fully realized the peril I had been in. They did not dare to fire at the moose while he was after me, for as we were all in a line they might have hit me as readily as him.

Sam Slick uses the expression somewhere in one of his works, "as meek as a wounded moose." That may be true of the animal in his country, but it doesn't hold good on the Upper Ottawa. Here, the moose, when hemmed in and wounded, often becomes most dangerous, and in this mood is greatly dreaded by the hunter. His peculiar physiognomy can assume such a look of diabolical fierceness that, combined with his gigantic stature, it is quite sufficient to unnerve the stoutest heart. A vicious horse, thoroughly enraged, comes the nearest to his appearance of anything I know.

Steve told me a good story about a comrade of his, with whom he was hunting at one time.

They had followed a moose for a long distance, when suddenly he turned the tables upon them and charged back upon the man, and the fellow was so terror-stricken by the animal's look, that, though he had a double-barrelled gun in his hand, loaded with ball, he never attempted to fire, but turned tail and ran screaming for his life; and he would certainly have been killed had not Steve come up at the time and shot the animal.

In Steve's expressive words, "dat moose look just like de devil."

CHAPTER X.

Back to Manyass's.

As it was now late in the afternoon, and we were tired and hungry, we decided to camp there that night.

The next morning broke clear and bright. The Indians knew exactly their bearings, and, as they had now all the meat they could draw, and more, from the moose just killed, we could take the most direct road home, which they calculated we could easily reach that night.

Having skinned and cut up the moose, they loaded the meat in equal burdens upon the taboggins, each man having about three hundred pounds weight to drag after him.

It was easy enough work on the hard crust when the path was perfectly level. But when we consider the number of fallen trees that had to be crossed, and the ordinary roughness of such a wild country, but, above all, the high hills that had frequently to be climbed, some of them so steep that I found it difficult to ascend them without any load at all, it can easily be understood how toilsome and

fatiguing the tramp must have been. However, they pulled manfully through, and towards evening we struck our outward trail of two weeks ago, about two miles from home.

The Indians, who, I saw, were considerably fagged out, left their loads here, saying that the squaws would come for them in the morning.

We then pushed on at a rapid rate, and soon arrived at the hospitable mansion of Mr. Manyass, where we received a hearty welcome and warm congratulations on the success of our hunt.

Peter's wife received him with demonstrations of rapturous delight, and I thought their hugging and kissing would never come to an end.

After a hearty supper and a sound night's sleep, I awoke in the morning in famous condition for my twenty-mile walk to the Farm.

Before leaving an incident occurred which I delight to record as a testimony to the honesty and simple manliness of one of my companions, Paul.

After settling my account with Manyass, I missed a ten dollar bill, which I must have dropped somewhere in going in and out between the two apartments. I was greatly annoyed, and inclined, after my former experience, to be suspicious of foul play; but I was rejoiced beyond measure when, after

searching everywhere in vain, Paul came to me and asked if I had lost anything. When I told him he held out his hand, and simply saying, "here he is, me find him on floor, by side of camboose," gave me the bill. It was an act of sterling integrity. He could easily have kept it, and no one would have been the wiser. A number of teamsters had slept there over night, and were standing about the fire, and going in and out at the very time I dropped the bill, and if he had not given it back I could have blamed no one for it.

The profuse gratitude with which the honest fellow received my donation of a couple of pounds of tobacco, shewed that he thought very little about his honorable and manly conduct. Nor let it be supposed for a moment that he was ignorant of the value of the bill, for those Indians are as wide-awake in such matters, and have as much love for money as any Jew that ever lived.

As I fell asleep that night in my old bunk at the Farm it was with a sigh of regret that my moose hunt had come to an end, and now I was to face again the stern realities of work and duty.

CHAPTER XI.

Home!

Reflections!

It fortunately happened that an unloaded team was returning to the settlements the very next day. By it I decided to take passage, very much to the delight of the driver, who, as it happened, I knew very well, in fact Willie and I had been at school together when we were boys, so the arrangement was mutually satisfactory.

In truth the teamsters, when they discharge their loads at the depots, are very glad to have a companion with them on their long, lonely drive home, occupying generally several days.

I was sorry to hear that a great calamity had befallen my quondam friend Seymo, while I was away on my last hunt. One of C—'s foremen, who, when in his "cups," is a very dangerous man, on account of his passionate temper and gigantic strength, happened to be staying over night at

Seymo's. The two of them got on the "warpath," as they call it in that country, over some high wines (the common drink with those fellows), which was in the place, and in the course of it began to quarrel, and finally came to blows.

Seymo, getting the worst of it, ran for his gun, and attempted to shoot the foreman, but this, instead of intimidating, only made the man furious, and wresting the gun out of his hands, he broke it over the old fellow's head. Not content with this, he drove the family out of doors, and setting fire to the shanty, burnt the whole establishment to the ground. This ruthless act of brutal passion, instead of being punished, or even denounced, was rather looked upon in the light of a good joke by some, and was certainly very lightly regarded by any one. Even Jim, who is one of the kindest-hearted fellows that ever lived, had to have his little joke over it, "It would cure them of the scarlet fever any how," he must needs say. They had this disease in their place all winter.

"Uncle Willie," however, said, that as soon as there was a "slack" day, he would send a gang of men, and put him up a far better shanty than he had before, and on a much better site for a stopping-

place. And as they had saved all their blankets, which was about their only furniture, they would not be much the poorer for the fire.

The next morning Willie and I started on our long drive home. I parted with my friends with much regret, and many expressions of kindness and good-will on both sides. Their hospitality and considerate attention to all my wants, and wishes had been unbounded. And not the least among my grateful remembrances are the manly courtsey of John, the foreman of the Farm, and the famous cooking, and pleasent genial disposition of his clever wife, Mrs. W—.

On account of the advanced season, it being well on into April, we could not return by the way C— and I had come, as the ice on the lakes could not be depended on, so we had to take the round-about land road by the way of Des Joachims, a place on the Ottawa, forty-five miles above Pembroke.

Willie is a musical genius, and always carries his "fiddle" with him, and as we jogged along through the dense forest he often woke up the echoes with its lively strains, and at every stopping-place we came to, he enlivened the hearts of the natives by his merry jigs and reels.

In the evening of the eighth day we arrived at C—'s family residence, where I met with the warmest welcome, and was lionized as much as if I were a second Cummings, fresh from South Africa.

After a day's rest, I started for home and duty, and reported myself at headquarters, on the last hour, of the last day of my furlough.

I was not a little amused at the different receptions I met with from my clerical friends. Some congratulated me most warmly on my improved appearance, and the general tone of vigor and redundant health which animated me. Others were somewhat dubious and lukewarm in their greetings. They were not quite sure as to the orthodoxy of my late proceedings. One, in particular, railed at me in good set terms, for what he was pleased to call "the impropriety and scandalousness of leading such a life as I had been doing for the last three months, that I might have been much better employed than in roaming the forest, sleeping out in the snows, associating with Indians, and other wild men," and much more to the same effect.

With my usual meekness, I said nothing, but, like the Irishman's parrot, I thought all the more, and my thoughts ran somewhat in this wise; "My good

brother, if you would only go and do as I have done you would be a much better preacher than you are; and not only a healthier man, but also a trues Christian. It would tend greatly towards cleansing out the atra-biliousness both of your body and mind, and give you broader, kindlier and sounder views of your fellowman, and of your duty, both to God and the Church."