

is easy to shoot them. So he carried his thirty marten-skins to the fort, to barter them for shot, powder, and tobacco.

"There was no person at the Hope. The dwelling-house was closed, the store shut up, the man in charge had not yet come up from St. John's; now what was to be done? Inside that wooden house lay piles and piles of all that the walking moose most needed; there was a whole keg of powder; there were bags of shot and tobacco—there was as much as the moose could smoke in his whole life.

"Through a rent in the parchment window the moose looked at all these wonderful things, and at the red flannel shirts, and at the four flint guns, and the spotted cotton handkerchiefs, each worth a sable skin at one end of the fur trade, half a sixpence at the other. There was tea, too—tea, that magic medicine before which life's cares vanished like snow in spring sunshine.

"The moose sat down to think about all these things, but thinking only made matters worse. He was short of ammunition, therefore he had no food, and to think of food when one is very hungry is an unsatisfactory business. It is true that 'the moose that walks' had only to walk in through the parchment window, and help himself till he was tired. But no, that would not do.

"'Ah!' my Christian friend will exclaim, 'Ah! yes, the poor Indian had known the good missionary, and had learnt the lesson of honesty and respect for his neighbour's property.'

"Yes; he had learnt the lesson of honesty, but his teacher, my friend, had been other than human. The good missionary had 'never reached the Hope of Hudson, nor improved the morals of the moose that walks.'

"But let us go on.

"After waiting two days he determined to set off for St. John's, two full days' travel. He set out, but his heart failed him, and he turned back again.

"At last, on the fourth day he entered the parchment window, leaving outside his comrade, to whom he jealously denied admittance. Then he took from the cask of powder three skins' worth, from the tobacco four skins' worth, from the shot the same; and sticking the requisite number of martens in the powder-barrel and the shot-bag and the tobacco-case, he hung his remaining skins on a nail to the credit of his account, and departed from this El-Dorado, this Bank of England of the Red man in the wilderness, this Hunt and Roskell of Peace River.

"And when it was all over he went his way, thinking he had done a very reprehensible act, and one by no means to be proud of. Poor moose that walks! in this trade for skins you are but a small item!

"Society muffles itself in your toil-won sables in distant cities, while you starve and die out in the wilderness.

"The credit of your twenty skins, hung to the rafter of Hudson's