

XIII.

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THE British officer in Canada generally manages to sport a sleigh by some means or other, and weeks before the snow covers the ground sufficiently deep to take advantage of this amusement he has provided himself with horse, sleigh, bells, robes, &c., &c., all of which are of course quite new. He then waits with impatience for his first drive, and a suitable day having at length arrived, the horse is buckled to, a fair friend is asked to take part in the trial trip, and off they start for the first run.

The roads at the commencement are level, and the snow in the vicinity not having had time to get beaten down and slippery, all goes well, and he flatters himself how very unnecessary were the friendly warnings of his more experienced brother officers as to the "traces being too long, the breeching not short enough," and sundry other hints as to how to go down hill, turn a corner, &c. "Why," says he, "I don't see a bit of difference between driving a sleigh and a dogcart, except that this is jollier, and, if anything, less chance of an upset."

But alas! the roads are not all level. He draws nigh a hill, which is safely topped, and the descent commenced. The road is now beautifully slippery, and, somehow or other, both horse and sleigh appear to be travelling "crab fashion," the sleigh, if anything, rather in advance. This surely cannot be the orthodox way of going down hill! "Drive into the deep snow on the side of the road," suggests the fair Canadian. All is right again for the moment, and the descent is prosecuted; the horse now appears to be trying his best to seat himself in the driver's lap, certainly using the dashboard instead of the breeching, and our friend at last begins to think that perhaps it is a trifle too long: the horse by this time has quite made up his mind on the subject, as, giving a couple of playful kicks, he sends the dashboard flying. One more kick, and the sleigh is empty, as shewn in the next sketch.