

ing the deer during the period of deep snow, when, perchance, a strong crust has formed. A number of deer may assemble, during severe weather, in a sensible, but of woodland rich in favorite food. The assembled animals, while feeding to and fro, tramp down a certain extent of snow, forming what is sometimes termed "a yard," as do the sheep. When a hunter or a hunterman discover one of these yards disgusting slaughter is apt to result.

A party of men mounted on snow shoes can speed over the snow crust, which is the surest foot-hold, and it is not an easy matter to turn the poor animals to a standstill and knock them on the head with axes or clubs. A shot or a hit will stampede the deer in the yard, and in fleeing they reach the deep snow, thus following forward for a short distance they find themselves trapped and helpless, and capable of doing nothing more than plunging feebly. Aided by their snow shoes the butchers soon overtake the unsuspecting deer in death-glancing need. Needless to say, only a settler wanting meat, or a brute in human guise gives such murder.

Another method, and he who follows it forfeits his claim to sportsmanship. This is, I believe, popular in the South, but I fail to see where the hunted animal has any chance for its life, or where the hunter has to show any skill beyond being able to hit a mark in a somewhat baffling light, and at a distance of only a few paces. Two murderers can best perform this unsavory task, and they hunt afoot, one under his gun being fired over the other's shoulder.

At night, through the dark woods, the fire-hunters walk or ride, one man bearing a blazing fire-pan in front, which is fed with fat pine knots or other suitable fuel. Behind the pine knots, the hunter has concealed a rifle with a shotgun charged with buckshot. The light from the fire-pan reaches some distance ahead, and presently it "shines" the eyeballs of some animal which has halted to gaze wonderingly at the fiery invader.

Two sorts of creatures, from horse or cow down to broad-faced owl, may be "shined" during a night's hunt, the hunter trusting to their experience to tell him what the owner of the glowing eyes may be. Green hawks frequently have to pay for a call, or a heifer, as a result of fire-hunting, but men well posted in the butchery seldom fail to recognize a deer's eyes.

The animal appears to be fascinated by the torch, and will stand and stare curiously for some time, providing the hunters keep reasonably quiet. In the gloom just behind the torch-light, the pan-bearer finally marks a leas of deer, by his reflecting light from his pan. By their size, color, and the distance between them, he knows that they belong to a full-grown deer. The two men cautiously advance, until they are near the shining eyes as they can safely venture that the man with the shot-gun levels on the dark space between the eyes and a storm of buckshot kills or wounds the deer as the case happens to be. If the hunter hurls a fall and a struggling in the undergrowth, they can safely venture that he has not been in vain; but sometimes a lightning rush through the cover, and a crashing of twigs growing rapidly fainter, tells that the game has only been wounded, or has been missed outright. In any case, fire-hunting has no place among honest sports, and, unhappily, it is very deadly.

Upon a par with this method is the "jacking" or "floating," so common upon northern lakes during the first of the open season for deer. The animals take to the water to drink, or to feed upon lush aquatic growths, and fall inglorious prey to the fire-hunters. In this case two men sail forth at night in a canoe, or

skiff, one man sitting, or kneeling, in the bow and the other near the stern, with a lantern forward, a light or rifle, and a torch or "jack-lantern," rigged in front of him. As a rule the "jacks" are arranged so that the light can be shut off or turned on at will, and sometimes the light is furnished by a small lantern fixed on the stern's aft.

The most important matter is that the light should be thrown ahead strongly while leaving everything behind it in dense shadow. The canoe is propelled, not by rowing or down a stream, or within range of the shore of a lake, until game is located. A cautious advance upon the wondering animal, a roar of a gun and a hit or a miss, complete the story of what is, despite the assurance of its statistics, simply an outrageous piece of pot-hunting.

Another method equally unsportsmanlike, is lying in ambush within easy range of a spring or a "salt lick," and putting the unsuspecting deer which may happen to come in search of salt or water. This requires no more skill than an ability to tell from which quarter the breeze is blowing and to post one's self accordingly, and is fired from a dead rest.

Coursing deer with fleet horse and gallant hound is an entirely different matter. In certain portions of the South and West this method is possible, and a man could ask for no more thrilling experience than may be found in a wild fire gallop, with the fleetest of quarries and noble hounds in front, and his "good horse" under him as keen in the race as his excited rider. The densely forested condition of the wilder portions of the northern country, where deer yet abound, and the fact that the American deer prefers to hunt, when he is hunted, in a kind of irregular method, so common in that country where no horseman could possibly follow hounds with safety or pleasure, forbids coursing ever finding favor with the people best able to support it.

And now having glanced at some of the irregular methods, we come to the two regular styles of deer-hunting—driving with hounds and stalking, or as it is called in America, "still-hunting."

I am aware that my opinion of the relative value of these two methods will clash with the views of many men sportsmen, yet, after having enjoyed a fair share of "hounding" and of "still-hunting," I have no hesitation in declaring for the latter as being the sportsmanlike way of hunting the deer.

Any man with fair shooting ability and owning one or more dogs capable of running a fresh track, may be a successful "hounder" of deer, providing he knows enough to select a proper "runway" (regular path of deer) in the woods, or an advantageous point upon the shore of a forest lake. Deer have a habit of running to water, if possible, when chased by dogs—and this, when chased by dogs—leads from bitter experiences with these scourgers to deer life, the wolves.

This habit and the well known fondness deer display for certain selected routes, or "runways," leading from point to point in the forest, are the weaknesses which the "hounder" takes deadly advantage. A man knowing the "runways" (always easily discovered) of a tract of woods, can post a gun where one runway tops a ridge, and another where the trail-giving swimmer ends its sufferings.

The picture of "hounding" is not overdrawn, and, while the excitement of the wait while the game is afoot is keen through the ringing clamor of the pursuing hounds is enough to madden even sluggish blood, the final shooting of the game always caused me something closely akin to regret. In "hounding," moreover, a large tract of game is necessarily disturbed, and the game in it frightened in all directions.

to begin. Having reached his chosen point, he releases the dogs and works through the cover until a fresh track is found. The scent may be somewhat difficult to pick up at first, but the dogs chase long and then an hour long until a suitable number of traps are set, and the hunter is sure of their game and are running in full cry. The work of the man who handles the dogs is done for the present, and he can either hasten to some other place he has reserved for himself, or work leisurely toward the guns.

Meantime, the men posted at the prevailing points have been awaiting developments with what patience they possess. Some of them will play for a certainty way, and they will keep peering about anxiously, starting nervously every time a nut falls, or a mouse or squirrel rustles in the dry sweep of the cover to right and left and anxious eyes, but the game stall just him unawares; and the man watching the lake will scan every yard of visible shore and open water, and fidget, and scurry, and wonder if the game has come his way, or favorably toward the others. Every one of them hopes hard that he'll be the lucky man, and about the time when they feel that patience has ceased to be a virtue, a woodcock sprints and again it rises, sweet and far—the wondrous voice of a hound.

Every man's heart stirs in response to that sound, growing louder and clearer every moment. Now it swells rich and powerful as the chase crosses some high passes; anon it softens to a muffled tongue as the running dogs slant down deep ravine, or toil in fierce haste through tangled nooses. Nearer and nearer the blood-stirring of the sports, louder and louder the red thudding of the dogs roar forth their maddening warning, till at last, like a great billow of noise, the cry rises above the last hill and crashes in full power amid the trees in view of the hound. Bears the hound vigorously, hands clutch on weapons nervously, eyes flash and sharp—he is coming—he is coming—that avalanche of trumpet tones. It is glorious.

It has been, so far; but now comes the objectionable part. A great noble, hardy brute, trembling with mingled fright and the weariness of a long burst of speed, crashes past the man on the runway, and in quivering terror at the sight of an unexpected foe almost within striking distance.

If the man does not experience "buck-argue" and get crazily rattled (as he very frequently does), he can pull the trigger freely, and with his shot-gun. Should he miss it clear or wound it (these things have been done), the chase continues. Soon the dogs speed past the excited man and the deer on and on, and the hound plunges bravely into the swim for its life.

It would be safe now from dogs alone, for deer are rapid and almost tireless swimmers. The man who has seen the water has seen the quarry. The closing act of the drama is something for which I have no taste. Well and rapidly as the deer may swim, it cannot escape the pot-hunter pursuing in swift canoe or skiff, and a moment's shot will find the quarry within a few yards of the struggling swimmer ends its sufferings.

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fortune, but is only a conservative estimate of the amount saved in

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The successful qualifications for success in this branch of sport are simple enough. If one can shoot fairly well—say, can hit a deer with buckshot anywhere under fifty yards—and can control his horses when the pinch comes, shoot all she/he has to do is to remain patiently at his stand and keep a sharp lookout. The guns do the waiting—the dogs do the rest. Of course, when the shot-gun goes place to the rifle, the difficulty of hitting the deer is greatly increased, and a stronger element of sport is introduced, but even then there is no glory that I can see in pumping lead after a swimming deer.

How different are the conditions governing "still-hunting." Here is a fair matching of instinct of a high order, aided by speed, endurance, keen sight and keener nose, after finished woodcraft, patience, perseverance, judgment, microscopic observation and skill with the rifle. The man possessing all these qualifications necessarily has the advantage of the deer, but it is he lacking of one, or more, and he will never possess the honor of a successful hunt. In the sport, the wiry, enduring frame, the st-like step, the coolest judgment, the keenest eyes, that see everything almost without looking—the steady nerve and the ripest knowledge of woodcraft, all play a part in the hunter's success. It is one who can successfully still-hunt a wary old buck in difficult cover, when there is no gun on the ground to deaden foot-falls and plainly betray the route taken by game is entitled to claim the honor of being a master of the craft.

Such a man is seldom met even in the best game districts; I know and have "still-hunted" with three of the veterans who knew every phase of forest life, who could read "sign" minute as a leaf displaced, or a slight abrasion on a rock, as plainly as I could read printed page. They were born still-hunters and hated two things equally—the tongue of running wind, and the hammer sound of deer on the runway or in the water. Any of these men would put a bullet through a trailing hound with more satisfaction than they would kill a fox or Ontario.

A glance at a bit of sport in Western Ontario may show what still-hunting is like under ordinary conditions. In the portion of the province which lies between Lake Erie and Little St. Clair is a magnificent tract of the lakes that it is mainly unbroken miles of heavy forest. Placid, almost currentless creeks and bordered ponds mark it here and there, and one side of the tract is so little above the level of the lakes that it is mainly water, now, in many places but a few unbroken miles of heavy forest. Placid, almost currentless creeks and bordered ponds mark it here and there, and one side of the tract is so little above the level of the lakes that it is mainly water, now, in many places but a few unbroken miles of heavy forest.

Since the days of "Forrester" the region has afforded capital mixed stock and the game-lift embracing deer, turkey, grouse, duck, quail, dove, cock, quail, mouse and sundry warblers. It is of course, not so good at present as it once was, but a still-hunter can find deer and turkey in the timber, and the liver of

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