



## OUR FIRST HUNTING TRIP.

A STORY FOR BOYS.

IT was on a bright spring day, in the month of May, when two boys, Charles Douglas and Will Jones planned a hunting excursion for two or threedays. It was on Monday that they made their plans and by Wednesday they were to be ready to start.

On Wednesday the eventful day dawned bright and clear and they started off in high spirits.

They travelled toward the North West, until noon, when they came to a small stream, near which grew quite a number of trees, in the shade of which they stopped and proceeded to get dinner.

After having refreshed themselves with a hearty meal and cool draught of water from the stream they continued on their way travelling until about five, or half past five o'clock in the afternoon, when they came to a small lake or pond, where they discovered numerous deer tracks, and determined to stop for the night and perhaps a day or two.

They first began to look for a place to pitch their tent which they soon found, the place being a shady spot in among some trees and not far from the lake.

While Charlie prepared supper Will proceeded to put up the tent and make things comfortable for the night.

Will had put the tent up and just finished feeding the horses, when Charlie announced supper to which they turned with exceedingly good appetites. Though it took them quite a while to clear up after supper it was still early for bed; nevertheless they concluded it best to "turn in" as they were somewhat tired, having started very early and travelled at a good "jog." I think they must have travelled as far as fifty-five or sixty miles, at least.

After breakfast the next morning they fished for some time when Will looking at his watch found to his surprise that it was getting near noon, so leaving Charlie to get dinner, Will took his rifle and went to look for some fresh venison.

I will now let him proceed in his own words.

"I took my rifle" says Will "and started to follow the tracks of the deer. I had not gone far when I struck into a trail, (or path) which looked as if it had not been long since they had passed."

"I now examined the tracks and found as I supposed, the direction in which they had gone. Following the tracks for a mile

or more and not seeing anything of the deer I began to be discouraged and was about to turn back thinking I had followed the wrong way when as I suddenly came to the top of a little knoll I saw not more than two hundred yards ahead of me in a little valley surrounded by woods on one side and the lake on the other, a herd of five or six deer feeding as quietly as cattle. I was standing by a large rock which lay by the side of the trail and crawling behind this I concluded to watch them for a few moments.

While watching them, I noticed two large bucks which were the nearest to me, and looking to see if there was anything to afford me better shelter and bring me within nearer range, I saw a large pine to the right of me which had been upturned by the roots and lay in such a position as to be just what I wished for. As I crawled toward this as noiselessly as I could three of the deer raised their heads and I began to think I would have to be very careful indeed, if I got a shot at them. After a hard pull I reached the tree and from this I was not more than seventy or eighty yards from them. I now found a place to rest my rifle in and taking steady aim fired at the buck. At the report of the rifle they all started, and bounding forward, passed within a few feet of me.

Instantly cramming in another cartridge I fired again, this time bringing down a doe. As the smoke had not yet cleared away, I could not see distinctly whether I had killed the buck or not, but as I drew nearer I found to my surprise, that I had killed him. Examining to see where the ball had struck, I found it had passed through him a little back of the shoulders, killing him instantly.

Taking out my knife, I now cut their throats, so as to let them bleed freely, and then shouldering my rifle started for camp proud of my success.

I had not gone far however, when hearing a crashing in the bush I stopped and listened. The noise drew nearer and presently a large bear emerged from among the trees.

I instantly dropped behind the large pine and waited for events. The bear slowly advanced to the deer and proceeded to make a meal; having waited ten or fifteen minutes and being tired I determined to 'shoo', but on looking to see how many cartridges I had found I had only two, and knowing

that bears were hard to kill, my resolution began to weaken. As I said before I had left Charlie getting dinner, but being tired of waiting and afraid I had lost my way or something had happened to me, he determined to follow. I had just began wishing myself in camp with Charlie, instead of watching a bear, when I saw somebody's head above the top of the knoll and then the form of Charlie slowly appeared in view.

I could scarcely keep from laughing, (scared and tired as I was) to see his surprise on finding himself so near to a bear. I now watched, to see if I could find out what he intended doing.

He stood for a few moments watching the bear, and then as if suddenly collecting his thoughts he retreated a few steps, and disappeared behind the rock.

While waiting anxiously, for what seemed to me to be an age, and not hearing anything from him I determined to fire, thinking to let him know that I was near and supposing he had at least five or six shots. Taking aim I fired and then followed such a roar as I had never in my life heard before. There was no doubt but what I had struck him, and peeping from my hiding place to see the result I saw him tearing around frightfully. He would first rush on one side of the deer, then on the other, then sitting upon his haunches would roar terribly.

As I had expected I soon heard from Charlie, for, after waiting a few moments my shot was followed by a second, which rang out loud and clear and peeping again from my hiding place I saw the bear fall, supposing him to be dead we both sprang forward I exclaiming at the same time to Charlie. "Charlie! I congratulate you on your good shot, and for releasing me from such a dangerous position."

There was time for no more words for suddenly to our surprise and honor the bear saw us and raising himself on his haunches looked us full in the face, for we were but a few steps from where he lay.

We both instantly cocked our rifles, and drawing back a few steps fired again, but only one of us could have hit him (I think I missed him for I was somewhat nervous being very tired.)

Now followed a fight such as I had never witnessed before or have I ever seen since. How we ever escaped being killed is more than I can tell. All I know is, that we used our knives as well as we knew how, that Charlie gave the last blow which ended the bears life, that the beech of my rifle was split in pieces and that such looking boys you never saw. We were bespattered with blood, had so many scratches we didn't get rid of them for a month afterward, and our clothes hung in rags. As soon as we were rested we cut the best parts from the deer for our suppers, and taking the buck's horns and the bears hide for trophies we started for camp. You may be sure we went to bed as soon as supper was over. The next day we were so stiff and sore from our fight, that I didn't go out at all, but Charlie did make out to go in the afternoon, but came home looking tired and discouraged saying he had killed nothing, and had not even seen so much as a cat to shoot at. I replied, "so you didn't have very good luck."

Well, "we'll both try it in the morn-