

FIN, FUR, AND FEATHER

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Snipe Shooting.

CONCLUSION

Half crouching, he dared not step backward, lest the noise might frighten the bird. He dared not look at us, lest once doing so he might lose the faint scent of the snipe; and thus undecided, yet decided, he stood a picture of life, once seen never to be forgotten. His nose was held up in air, as if to invoke the assistance of the mild fresh breeze to help him retain the scent. His ears were slightly cocked, as if some slight noise might disclose to him the hiding-place of the wary bird. He looked steadily before him, the pupils of his eyes dilating, entranced by the scent of the hidden object. His tail stood straight out behind him, like a rod of iron; no lashing of it now, from side to side, until at times the tip was red with blood, from reeds and rushes, from grass and brush beating against

his sturdy sides. His fore foot raised until its ball seemed almost touching his side. But look, he moves! The snipe has skulked away from his first hiding place, emboldened by the silence of the pointing dog. Skulk, glide, steal away, my eccentric friend; the nostrils once filled with your delicate scent will not give you up, but will follow you tirelessly, until you attempt to escape with your swift moving wings. Slowly, cautiously, never for an instant relaxing the vigor, in stiffness of the muscles of his body, the dog creeps forward. How quietly he moves; how gently, how noiselessly, he puts down first one foot and then the other in the soft soil. He fears almost to put them down, lest the grating of his feet and legs on the dried grass should arouse the bird. He is moving in a westerly direction now, and the breeze will aid him in the scent.

Apparent the bird is some thirty feet ahead of him. The cross wind blowing from the south brings a new