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ABOUT GOATS—AND BOYS

HERE they are—goats and boys—“quite a natural combination,” some one may declare; but do not be hasty in drawing inferences or in making conclusions. Not all goats are as sensible as some boys, and surely not all boys are as sagacious as some goats. But, to my narrative.

During the recent Newfoundland Conference at Carboneau, I took a fancy to goats, and made up my mind that I wanted some goat pictures. Interpret “goat” as an adjective or as a noun, as you will, it's all the same to me.

Now there were a few sedate and demure old “nannies” within easy range of my camera; but these I did not care for; I wanted goats—real live young “Billies,” if you please—and I wanted them in their natural haunts and following their habitual practices and customs.

of Carboneau; but as I approached they receded. Over rocks, along the edge of the bank, scaling a precipice, on and on they trailed me; but I kept going.

Said I, “All right, old chaps, if you take me to Freshwater, I'm with you.” And they headed for the next cove. Around corners, up and over great stones, in and out of crevices, sometimes with only foothold for a goat (four or two legs doesn't matter here), on we went.

So I changed my tactics. “A man is surely a two-legged goat to try to catch four-legged ones by chasing them,” I said to myself as I made up my mind to do some coaxing. At first sound of my voice those wide-awake animals seemed to look at me out of the corners of their eyes, and one actually seemed disposed to make faces at me.

I rather think that he did; but I just

“Ha! Ha!” I laughed. “So you are disposed to do as I do, even if you hesitate to do just what I say.” And the goats watched me, and listened complacently to my remarks.

Well, to make a long story short, we all seemed to improve on acquaintance, and before long I got my pictures without any serious protest from my horned and hairy friends.

And when, afterwards, I soliloquized over the incident, do you know I thought that getting boys is considerably like getting goats. Look at those bright and frisky “kids” as they smile up at you from their grassy den. Some days after I got my goats I took a notion to get some boys.

“Did I get them?” Why, there they are. “How?” Just about as I got the goats.

I wanted them. I started out to get them. I went where they were. I didn't



So, of course, I had to go where the goats were. And that led me quite a long distance from the church, I assure you. The kids I wanted weren't around the sacred edifice just then.

“Did I find them?” Surely. I got half a dozen splendid negatives. “Did I find them easily?” did you ask? Not very; that is, I located them at a distance easily enough; but do you know those goats seemed timid of me. Think of that! Actually afraid of the approach of a preacher. I changed my clothes and went out after them again. The very cut and color of my coat seemed to make matters more promising, and I hoped to get within easy camera range of my subjects. But they led me a merry chase. I had spotted them on the very edge of the rocky bank overlooking the waters of Conception Bay and the beautiful harbor

winked back at him, and we had no falling out over it. In fact, I have an idea that it would hardly pay to quarrel with a goat—to get on the wrong side of him, so to speak—so I did my best to allay the suspicions of my quarry, and assured them that there was no danger to them lurking within my innocent picture gun. My assurances, however, seemed, for some time at least, to be all unavailing, and farther on towards the precincts of Freshwater the company retired, while I, perseveringly, and withal hopefully, followed after, encouraged by the old-time adage, “If at first you don't succeed, try again.”

But I found before long that they weren't wild, after all, but just timid. So I sat down and opened up a conversation, at long range, it is true; but they seemed to understand my language after a while, and some of them sat down, too.

chase them. Neither did I lecture them or tell them that they were “bad boys” because they didn't come. I gained their confidence, promised them something nice, and then kept my promise, and—well, I got the boys. And you may get them, too; but you will please remember that whether with goats or boys you must use “common sense,” and that I sometimes fear is what many of us must lack. Go after your boys!

You will find it most interesting. I assure you. The hunt will grow upon you until you are fairly thrilled with the pleasurable excitement it creates. And it will pay. You will be the healthier in soul for your exercise. And the boys! What their value as men none can estimate; but men are grown up not made, and to grow men you must have boys. Therefore, *Get your Boys!*