

chosen a small brook out of which to form an artificial lake with infinite labour, where natural lakes were at their disposal, seemed something of a mystery. Two dams had been built to the height of about four feet, chiefly of mud about five feet thick at the base and two at the apex; the total length of these gigantic walls was at least one hundred yards. Imagine the industry necessary for such a construction. Then there were two houses composed in a most skilful manner of mud and sticks, that rose to the height of seven feet, and were at least twelve in diameter. The dams enclosed two ponds, in each of which was a house, the upper, doubtless, intended as a citadel or refuge in case of being driven from the other. In the middle of their hut they have a landing, where they lie with their heads together all day (like 'little boys', Joe said), and their broad trowel-like tails in the water, for they are nocturnal in their habits. They are said to carry mud on their flat tails as well as with their forepaws pressed against the body. We found some enormous beech trees felled by them of nearly eighteen inches in diameter, and a pile of food consisting mostly of limbs of the beech and birch submerged in the water to last through the winter. The entrances to their houses were all under water, and they had numerous sallyports or holes under the roots of trees, where they could find refuge in case of attack. A very inhuman way of taking them is to drain off their dams and send in a dog to drive them out—a dog that knows well how to avoid their terrible incisor teeth. The poor animals flounder helplessly in the shallow water and are easily knocked on the head. Their castors, or oil bags, are much prized by hunters, emitting a very pungent smell; when mixed with camphor they prove fatally attractive in traps to bear and lynx.

All along the brook we saw numerous fresh marks of moose; fresh tracks and newly bitten bushes. In fact, we once must have been nearly upon a moose, for we saw the green chewed leaves he had dropped from his mouth and heard him crackling in the timber at some little distance, but saw him not. He had caught our scent no doubt. We had just crossed some meadows that were well beaten with their tracks and had seen numerous marks in the shingle; so that we were startled, but hardly surprised, when on turning a bend we beheld before us, at about two hundred yards, a fine bull and cow standing in the river. I got my rifle ready and leaped into the river; meanwhile the bull had partly hidden himself in some thick growth at the bank. The bullet hit in the neck bone; he fell like a log. We pitched tent in a cosy, sheltered spot near by, protected by a fine growth of hemlocks. The springy moss furnished the most luxurious bed it ever has been my lot to recline