

open ponds and brooks in search of otter and beaver.

One March morning two boys, Arthur and Fred Harley, the one about 16 and the other 18 years old, were spending a few weeks in a settlement on the north-east coast of Newfoundland, shooting the northern bird known as the great salt water duck. The coast, about twenty miles or so from the settlement, was said to be haunted by wild dogs: indeed, these animals had sometimes actually dashed through the village in their search for food, frightening the inhabitants old and young. Once they seized a little boy not far from his home and tore him to pieces, so that every one living there was in mortal dread of the vicious creatures.

The two boys set out early in the morning, their intention being to shoot seal in a cove about ten miles distant. They took with them a heavy gun each, a pair of snowshoes, a pair of skates and enough provisions for the day. The course lay across a stretch of bleak barrens covered with snow, over which one could not pass without snowshoes, as the crust was thin and brittle: and as a long chain of ponds and lakes stretched along in the same direction for twenty or thirty miles, they brought along their skates. It was a clear, crisp morning, and two hours' travel, now on snowshoes, again upon skates, brought them to the cove. There were several seals bobbing up and down in the clear water and they shot three or four, but the wind having veered so as to blow off land, they could not obtain their prizes, and so left the place and set out across Island Head, about five miles further on, because they knew that in the shelter of this cape there was a bight where they could always find bottle-nose divers and big salt-water duck. They used their snowshoes for only a short part of this tramp, as long stretches of smooth, steel-blue ice lay across almost to the cove. As they drew near the place they took off their skates, hung them across their shoulders and approached noiselessly, for the ducks are very wary. A thin screen of scrub fir and spruce hid their approach, and through this they crept on hands and knees to get full view of the bight; but, instead of seeing clusters of sea birds, as they expected, in the calm water, between the ice and the shore, the whole beach seemed to be moving, and Arthur whispered to his younger brother, while clutching his arm:

"The wild dogs! I wonder if they have seen us?" But very clearly they had, for the off wind had carried their scent to the keen noses of the pack, and immediately the whole herd turned in the

direction of the boys, their noses thrust in the air sniffing. There were probably about sixty of them, all long lean brutes, with shaggy hair, sharp noses, rather short ears and shy, skulking eyes. For a few seconds they ran back and forth on the beach, their heads now turned down, but constantly keeping their eyes upon Arthur and Fred, who began to retreat back into the bushes. As they neared this shelter they saw that about a dozen of the dogs, some of which were large, and evidently the leaders, made up the bank, followed by the rest in a compact body. Then from all their throats came sharp crying noises, somewhat like the crying of a dog and the yelping of a wolf combined; the tumult rose and fell, the leaders commencing the cry and all the rest following.

It was very plain that the pack was famishing with hunger, for the snow in all the region for 100 square miles about was very deep, and the reindeer, hares and rabbits had gone further south where they could find food. The brothers made sure their guns were ready, and Arthur, laying his hand upon Fred's shoulder, said:

"Now, these brutes are going to attack us; be careful about your aim. Fire when I fire, for we must not let them get too close. We can get four from our two charges; you fire at the right and I will take the left. If we can keep them scared off till we can get up to the ice we can easily escape on our skates." They both turned, stood and faced the oncoming pack, but as soon as the ugly animals saw them, they stopped coming directly forward and spread out to the right and to the left, then moved onward with the intention of surrounding them. Seeing their move, the boys ran as fast as they could up the slope, but they had no sooner started than the most unearthly cries arose everywhere in the air from the pursuing herd, and every dog started in pursuit at a long, loping gallop. They soon got ahead of the fugitives, and there the two stood in the snow, surrounded by creeping, half-crouching beasts, who seemed afraid to rush upon them directly, but tried to approach them by stealth, with their lolling tongues and hungry eyes, whenever their backs were turned.

"They are now within range, Fred," said Arthur; "you take those two big fellows there," pointing in front. "I will take two on this side." Both at once presented, taking sure aim; then there was a simultaneous report, then two other shots, one a little after the other, and four of the mongrels sprawled upon the snow. One of them only was dead, for the three others rose, and with

piercing howls and yelps went backward to the rear of the pursuing party. The boys immediately threw out the old cartridges and put fresh ones into their double barreled guns, then dashed onward, for the circle of dogs had widened as the beasts took fright at the report of the guns. They succeeded during the panic in making a headway of a couple of hundred yards and broke through the circle; then they wondered why their pursuers all crowded together about the body of their dead comrade, but they soon saw that the famished creatures had begun to devour it. Only eight or ten of them, however, could feast at the same time, and after much yelping, biting and jumping, those who were not engaged in eating again started off in pursuit.

They were growing bolder and bolder, not galloping away so far ahead as they did at first, but coming directly for the two young hunters, and they approached them somewhat in the manner of a fawning tame dog who is afraid to approach his master, walking in a crouching manner, with fore legs thrust out and muzzle down. They never looked steadily at their intended victims, but thrust their heads from side to side as if trying to reach them unawares. The cartridges in the boys' guns were loaded with seal shot and would carry effectively sixty yards, so as soon as the more daring ones came within range four more shots rang out over the snow. This time two of the animals lay dead and one of the others went hobbling and howling away, Fred having missed with one of his barrels. The whole hungry tribe at once formed in two divisions around their dead comrades and, as before, began feasting. Then the boys discovered with great consternation that they had no more shells loaded with seal shot, so they were obliged to put in those having small duck shot, which would be almost useless fired into the tough hides of these animals. While loading they ran with the speed of deer and they had now reached the top of the slope. Here the snow was soft and deep, so they lost a couple of minutes in binding their snowshoes to their feet. When they were ready to start about two-thirds of the pack had again surrounded them and began to close upon them from every point. They were in terror of letting the dogs get too near to them and yet did not want to fire with their small shot at too far a range, so they waited until five or six of their assailants had reached within twenty or thirty paces, then crack, crack, crack, went the guns again. A couple of the dogs fell, but got to their feet again almost instantly, and limped off from the attack, but the noise of the