

ror. His convulsive scrambling raised him, the next instant, beyond reach of that punishment; but immediately the great bull reared, and struck him again and again with his terrible hoofs, almost crushing the victim's maimed haunches. The bear bawled again, but maintained his clutch of desperation, and finally drew himself up to a safe height, where he crouched on a branch, whimpering pitifully, while the victor raged below.

At this moment the bear caught sight of Crimmins eyeing him steadily. To the cowed beast this was a new peril menacing him. With a frightened glance he crawled out on another branch, as far as it could be trusted to support his weight. And there he clung, huddled and shivering like a beaten puppy, looking from the man to the moose, from the moose to the man, as if he feared they might both jump at him together.

BUT the sympathies of Crimmins were now entirely with the unfortunate bear, his fellow prisoner, and he looked down at the arrogant tyrant below with a sincere desire to humble his pride with a rifle-bullet. But he was too far-seeing a guide for that. He contented himself with climbing a little lower till he attracted the giant's attention to himself, and then dropping half a handful of tobacco, dry and powdery, into those snorting red nostrils.

It was done with nice precision, just as the giant drew in his breath. He got the fullest benefit of the pungent dose; and such trivial matters as bears and men were instantly forgotten in the paroxysms which seized him. His roaring sneezes seemed as if they would rend his mighty bulk asunder. He fairly stood upon his head, burrowing his muzzle into the moist leafage, as he strove to purge the exasperating torment from his nostrils. Crimmins laughed till he nearly fell out of the tree, while the bear forgot to whimper as he stared in terrified bewilderment. At last the moose stuck his muzzle up in the air and began backing blindly over stones and bushes, as if trying to get away from his own nose. Plump into four or five feet of icy water he backed. The shock seemed to give him an idea. He plunged his head under, and fell to wallowing and snorting and raising such a prodigious disturbance that all the lake shores rang with it. Then he bounced out upon the beach again, and dashed off through the woods as if a million hornets were at his ears.

Weak with laughter, Crimmins climbed down out of his refuge, waved an amiable farewell to the stupefied bear, and resumed the trail for the Nipisiguit.

For the next two years the fame of the great moose kept growing, adding to itself various wonders and extravagances till it assumed almost the dimensions of a myth. Sportsmen came from all over the world in the hope of bagging those unparalleled antlers. They shot moose, caribou, deer, and bear, and went away disappointed only in one regard. But at last they began to swear that the giant was a mere fiction of the New Brunswick guides, designed to lure the hunters. The guides, therefore, began to think it was time to make good and show their proofs. Even Uncle Adam was coming around to this view, when suddenly word came from the Crown Land Department at Fredericton that the renowned moose must not be allowed to fall to any rifle. A special permit had been issued for his capture and shipment out of the country, that he might be the ornament of a famous Zoological Park and a lively proclamation of what the New Brunswick forests could produce.

THE idea of taking the King of Saugamauk alive seemed amusing to the guides, and to Crimmins particularly. But Uncle Adam, whose colossal frame and giant strength seemed to put him peculiarly in sympathy with the great moose bull, declared that it could and should be done, for he would do it. Upon this, scepticism vanished, even from the smile of Charley Crimmins, who voiced the general sentiment when he said—

"Uncle Adam ain't the man to bite off any more than he can chew!"

But Uncle Adam was in no hurry. He had such a respect for his adversary that he would not risk losing a single point in the approaching contest. He waited till the mating season and the hunting season were long past, and the great bull's pride and temper somewhat cooled. He waited, moreover, for the day to come—along towards mid-winter—when those titantic antlers should loosen at their roots, and fall off at the touch of the first light branch that might brush against them. This,



"Like pile-drivers his forehoofs struck downwards."

—Drawn by Arthur Heming.

the wise old woodsman knew, would be the hour of the King's least arrogance. Then, too, the northern snows would be lying deep and soft and encumbering, over all the upland slopes whereon the moose loved to browse.

Along towards mid-February word came to Uncle Adam that the Monarch had "yarded up," as the phrase goes, on the southerly slope of Old Saugamauk, with three cows and their calves of the previous spring under his protection. This meant that, when the snow had grown too deep to permit the little herd to roam at will, he had chosen a sheltered area where the birch, poplar, and cherry, his favourite forage, were abundant, and there had trodden out a maze of deep paths which led to all the choicest browsing, and centred about a cluster of ancient firs so thick as to afford cover from the fiercest storms. The news was what the wise old woodsman had been waiting for. With three of his men, a pair of horses, a logging-sled, axes, and an unlimited supply of rope, he went to capture the King.

It was a clear, still morning, so cold that the

great trees snapped sharply under the grip of the bitter frost. The men went on snowshoes, leaving the teams hitched in a thicket on the edge of a logging road some three or four hundred yards from the "moose-yard." The sun glittered keenly on the long white alleys which led this way and that at random through the forest. The snow, undisturbed and accumulating for months, was heaped in strange shapes over hidden bushes, stumps, and rocks. The tread of the snowshoes made a furtive crunching sound as it rhythmically broke the crisp surface.

FAR off through the stillness the great moose, lying with the rest of the herd in their shadowy covert, caught the ominous sound. He lurched to his feet and stood listening, while the herd watched him anxiously, awaiting his verdict as to whether that strange sound meant peril or no.

For reasons which we have seen, the giant bull knew little of man, and that little not of a nature to command any great respect. Nevertheless, at this season of the year, his blood cool, his august front shorn of its ornament and defence, he was seized with an incomprehensible apprehension. After all, as he felt vaguely, there was an unknown menace about man; and his ear told him that there were several approaching. A few months earlier he would have stamped his huge hoofs, thrashed the bushes with his colossal antlers, and stormed forth to chastise the intruders. But now, he sniffed the sharp air, snorted uneasily, drooped his big ears, and led a rapid but dignified retreat down one of the deep alleys of his maze.

This was exactly what Uncle Adam had looked for. His object was to force the herd out of the maze of alleys, wherein they could move swiftly, and drive them floundering through the deep, soft snow, which would wear them out before they could go half a mile. Spreading his men so widely that they commanded all trails by which the fugitives might return, he followed up the flight at a run. And he accompanied the pursuit with a riot of shouts and yells and laughter, designed to shake his quarry's heart with the fear of the unusual. Wise in all woodcraft, Uncle Adam knew that one of the most daunting of all sounds, to the creatures of the wild, was that of human laughter, so inexplicable and seemingly so idle.

AT other times the great bull would merely have been enraged at this blatant clamour and taken it as a challenge. But now he retreated to the farthest corner of his maze. From this point there were but two paths of return, and along both the uproar was closing in upon him. Over the edge of the snow—which was almost breast high to him, and deep enough to bury the calves; hopelessly deep, indeed, for any of the herd but himself to venture through—he gave a wistful look towards the depths of the cedar swamps in the valley, where he believed he could baffle all pursuers. Then his courage—but without his autumnal

fighting rage—came back to him. His herd was his care. He crowded the cows and calves between himself and the snow, and turned to face his pursuers as they came running and shouting through the trees.

When Uncle Adam saw that the King was going to live up to his kingly reputation and fight rather than be driven off into the deep snow, he led the advance more cautiously till his forces were within twenty-five or thirty paces of the huddling herd. Here he paused, for the guardian of the herd was beginning to stamp ominously with his great, clacking hoofs, and the reddening light in his eyes showed that he might charge at any instant.

He did not charge, however, because his attention was diverted by the strange actions of the men, who had stopped their shouting and begun to chop trees. It amazed him to see the flashing axes bite savagely into the great trunks and send the white chips flying. The whole herd watched with wide eyes, curious and apprehensive; till suddenly a tree toppled, swept the hard, blue sky, and came

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