



DEER

WHETHER you shoot deer yourself, or just eat venison as an anti-H. C. of L. you will enjoy this one-who-was-there account of a deer-hunting trip north of Parry Sound.

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Photographs by Boyd.

stove in one corner of the cabin and had discovered a cooking stove lying in the bush about half a mile distant. The cook-stove had been too heavy for them to move, so they had left it there until the main party arrived. The camp was very comfortable and, as it was situated only twenty feet or so from the bank of the Naiscootyong River, a splendid supply of cold, clear water was available.

Eight o'clock found a hungry and tired bunch in the camp. But the fatigue proved stronger than the hunger, and the hunters fixed their cots or clothed their bunks and slept. Next morning the task of getting the things in order was completed, and by ten o'clock everything was in its place for a two weeks' stay. Some of the boys had found the bunks uncomfortably hard, and in the morning piled in a thick layer of boughs. The writer preferred the cot, as he had been nearly frozen the first night, so cold, indeed, that he had, about two a.m., crawled in with two of the bunch to get warm. The choosing of the cot, though, was unfortunate, as it is a mighty cold thing to sleep on and, as a second trial proved, not nearly so comfortable as a bough-bedded-bunk.

Very early Monday morning the hunt started. The sleepers were dragged out of bed about 4 a.m. to find breakfast nearly cooked. By six o'clock—or just as the sky was turning from black to grey—we left the camp and followed the guide to the places he designated as “stands,” or “runs”—“stands” for us and “runs” for the deer. And “stands” they proved to be for three or four days.

The Thursday following our arrival one of the bunch went to Shawanaga for Pete, an Indian guide, who was supposed to have come to us a couple of days previously. Pete landed that night and we went to bed feeling satisfied that Pete would lead us to where we might expect to get “de beeg buck.” And Pete did—at least if “de beeg buck” wasn't where Pete took us he wasn't anywhere else, because, in the opinion of most of the boys, Pete led us over all of Parry Sound District at least twice. His favourite hunting grounds were around Buck and Crooked Lakes, which were situated at distances, varying in the opinions of the walkers, of from five to ten miles from the camp. The trip out in the



morning wasn't at all bad, but the trip back, lugging the game, was very tiring. Distance never worried Pete. The slim figure of this old bushman of seventy-eight Indian summers, clad in corduroy breeches, flannel shirt, red canvas coat and corduroy cap, could be seen at the head of the party on the way out and well to the rear of the party on the way home when anything was to be carried. Pete absolutely refused to carry anything but his rifle and his lunch. He probably considered it beneath his dignity as a guide to “tote” anything, or perhaps he thought the money would be forthcoming just the same whether he “toted” or not and he decided not to “tote.”

WHEN you inspect the carcass of a deer the other fellow shot you say to yourself, “Huh, that's easy.” Then you try it, and much to your disgust you miss. It isn't just like putting a couple of pellets of shot into the body of a rabbit at twenty yards with a cylinder bore shot-gun. In one case you have dozens of chances, and in the other just one. You usually miss that “one.” The majority of shots have to be made quickly, too. Then there is that pleasurable but mighty inconvenient excitement when the deer comes within sight and range. “Buck-fever,” some call it. Ten to one, on your first deer, you'll either pump all your loaded shells over your shoulder without firing at all or the muzzle of your rifle will describe such a large circle that the deer could jump right through it without getting touched. You laugh! That's right, the joke's on me this time, but wait until you try it. If your first deer is as large as an elephant you may knock a point off his horn or the tip off his tail, but that's as close as you'll get to a vital spot—just see.

Within two hours of going onto the stand the first morning the writer had a shot at the head and horns of a deer at about sixty yards—and the writer missed him. But to his excited imagination the deer went down. Unfortunately, though, the “going down” proved to be the “going away,” and the only souvenirs of the exciting moment were the tracks in the moss—and an empty cartridge. The second deer disappeared too rapidly for a shot.

THE third try was at one running up the river at a distance of about 150 yards, and in sorrow I register three clean misses. Immediately after these misses I brought down a very small bird from the top of a very large tree with my first shot. Upon my making this shot, Pete, who was with me, said, “Good shot, good shot, you shoot too fast.”

Now, is that the trouble with the average would-be-deer-slayer? Does he shoot too fast or does he, in his excite-

DEER hunting is a serious business. Of course it's sport, but it's business, too. A glance over the items taken North on a recent hunting trip by our party of deer-slayers will prove that.

It is almost unbelievable, the amount of provisions eleven mortals with, we presume, ordinary mortals' stomachs, can consume. The task of the commissary department is certainly no light one. It, in this case, had to supply a case of canned tomatoes, ditto corn, ditto evaporated milk, couple of dozen heads of cabbage, three bags of potatoes, two sides of bacon, part bag of onions, turnips, beans, sugar, flour, tea, fifty large loaves of bread, etc., and even this wasn't enough. Twice we were short of various supplies and one of our number had to journey to Byng Inlet or Parry Sound to obtain them.

Then, of course, cots, some mattresses, blankets, and quilts had to be taken, for the greater part of the party was absolutely new to the game and didn't intend to “rough it” any more than necessary. The prospect of sleeping on the cold, damp ground, protected from rheumatism and kindred ills by a layer of pine boughs a few inches in thickness, and covered only by a light overcoat and the starry firmament, did not appeal to the novices. So, clothes and bed-clothes there were in abundance. Some slight addition to the “tote” upon arrival.

Fortunately the cooking utensils, of which there was quite an assortment, were packed in one box and, although the box was fairly large it was light and was moved without difficulty.

We left home for the North on Saturday, Oct. 20th, bound for Naiscoot, Parry Sound District midway between Byng Inlet and Point au Baril. The first and only change was made at Bolton, where all the luggage was transferred—I use the word “luggage” in preference to “baggage,” as it was “some lug” both going and coming.

AFTER a trip of almost 160 miles from Bolton we arrived at Naiscoot. Two or three of us hurried to the baggage car and handed out the “stuff,” while the remainder handled it on the platform. After the train had left we got a flat lorry from the section foreman, loaded a part of the goods and headed down the track for camp. After about five minutes of walking we reached our “getting off place” and then we “packed” our belongings over a rough road to camp.

Dan and Baze, two of the bunch, had left a couple of days ahead of the main party to locate and fix a camp. Fortunately, they had been able to obtain a shack, or rather a log cabin, well roofed and floored, about twenty by thirty, and in it had built bunks and a table. They had placed a small box

