

CHAPTER XXVIII. FISHING THROUGH THE ICE.

A SHINING February morning and a great white, shining world — white as the soul of a child! Over it all an infinity of flawless blue, with never a token to prove that from it fell, but a few hours before, the world's fair garb of snow. Eastward blazed that gold-faced god who makes a typical winter day the wondrous, indescribable thing it is.

It was cold out, and I knew it. My argument with a devilled kidney had been interrupted more than once by sharp reports like pistol-shots, which told that the frost had touched a tree, or started a nail in the clapboards. When the kidney had acknowledged getting the worst of it, moccasins, heavy pea-jacket, fur cap, warm gloves, were donned, and forth I fared to find what such a peerless day had in store. The air was keen as Eastern lance and glittered with myriad diamond lights; it was as exhilarating as iced wine, and three chestfuls of it started me running down the snowy road in sheer exuberance of animal spirits. Presently a merry jingle of bells sounded and a merrier voice exclaimed, "Look out! or I'll run you down."

No need to look round, for I knew the voice; so I merely answered, "You couldn't run a lame dog down with that old skate!" Then I ran as if the