

recent period, Beavers were abundant in all the Northern, Middle, and Western States of the Union, as the large number of their dams, and the beautiful "beaver meadows" caused by the filling up of their ponds with alluvial matter, sufficiently indicate. But they retire at the approach of man; and the gradual clearing up and cultivation of the soil has driven them nearly all from the country. In the upper and lower provinces of Canada, however, they are still found in abundance.

There are several methods of taking Beaver in steel-traps. A few of the most successful I will endeavor to describe.

A full-grown family of Beavers, as I have said before, consists of the parents (male and female), their three-year-old offspring, the two-year-olds, and the yearlings, — four generations of four different sizes, occupying one hut, and doing business in one pond. When a trapper comes upon such a pond, or one that he has reason to believe is inhabited by a large number of Beavers, his object should be to take them all; and, in order to do this, he must conduct his operations so that when one Beaver is caught it will not have opportunity to alarm the rest; for otherwise the whole family may leave for parts unknown. His care should be directed therefore to two points, namely, first, to the setting of his traps in such a way as to take each Beaver while alone; and, secondly, to arrangements for drowning them as speedily as possible after they are taken. To secure the first point, he should not set his traps very near the dwelling of the Beavers, but should select places at some distance up the pond on some point or neck of land projecting into the stream, where the animals will pass and repass, but where each will be most likely to be alone. The trap should be set close to the shore, about three inches under water, and should be carefully secreted by a covering of some soft substance that will not interfere with its springing. For bait, a small portion of beaver-castor (a milky secretion found in glands near the testicles of the male Beaver) may be left on the bank near the trap. If the trapper's approach was made by land, all foot-prints should be erased by drenching with water. To secure the second point, the chain