

moss, then the ball, which he invariably recovers from the carcass of his game, if he has hit it, or from the snow, where he will search all day till he find it, if he has missed his aim. As they have generally no means of re-moulding their bullets, this repeated firing of the same ball produces a bullet of a variety of shapes, which would be very uncertain in its results at any reasonable distance; but then the Eskimo, on account of the smallness of the charge of powder, is obliged to approach his game within distances that would appear ridiculous to one who has not seen the operation of approach. You must not forget that the Eskimo hunts under far greater difficulties than his congener, the Indian. The Indian has a country in which want of cover in his hunting operations is the exception; the Eskimo hunts where there is absolutely a want of cover. When he approaches the seal, he does so over the surface of the ice; he is the only prominent object on that spotless surface; when his approach is over the land, what might be inequalities in summertime, have been drifted full of snow in the winter season; and at all times there is a complete absence of such cover as is afforded the Indian by trees and shrubs. His methods of approach are very similar to those of the Indian, the principal difference being that they have to be executed with far greater care. In the case of the seal, who very rarely comes to the surface of the shore-ice anywhere near the shores themselves, because of the dangers that may be hidden behind the heaped up masses which border it, in the shape of a waiting Eskimo, he is therefore generally seen about a quarter of a mile off the land. The intervening space is as unobstructed as a billiard table. The seal, with his tail to windward, is able thus to *watch* the direction from which

"scent" will travel only short distances, whilst from the opposite direction he would receive timely notice of an Eskimo's approach by the "scent" which will be carried down by the wind. The Eskimo enters on the field of ice at a point which is intermediate between these two directions, and laying down on the surface, propels himself towards the seal by means of vigorous kicks when he sees that the seal is not watching, or has not at first noticed his appearance. At a very short distance it is quite impossible to distinguish between the Eskimo and the seal—their appearance and actions are so similar—an effect that is produced in the first case by the Eskimo having habited himself with an outer coat which has all the seal's peculiarity of marking. Up to a certain point the seal has only taken occasional notice of this object; shortly he is conscious that it has got nearer; presently this is a matter that admits of no question; so the Eskimo occupies something like a quarter of an hour convincing the seal by a capital imitation of his every action whilst sunning himself, as he is doing at present, that he is not the enemy in disguise he really is. Having been successful in this, careful watching for the moments when the seal is not directly regarding him permit of a further approach. The required distance is eventually overcome. The Eskimo and the seal being now not separated by more than fifty yards, the shot is fired which is capable of proving fatal at this distance. It sometimes happens, as might be expected, that the Eskimo misses his shot. One cannot help being struck with the wonderful similarity between his manner and the excuses he will offer on this occasion to his friends for the failure, and the same reasons and excuses that account for the biggest fish in civilization being lost in the landing.