

and jist arter I'd took out a fine old dog otter, I ge'ed en a clout in the head and pitched en down for dead—then turns round to soi my trap, and when I turns about agin he was gone !”

“Where was George?”

“That's not all. Jarge was up on a nap pickin' berries, and when I looks up I sees en lyin' down behind a alder bush, turnin' and twistin' hisself ivery way for me to kum up. I puts up my hand for en to be still, and up I creeps on my hands and knees; and there, dead to windward of us, kummin' down the mesh, was a fine old doe, like a big cow—as fas as butter, and grate big horns upon her as big as I iver see, with a tree year old buck by her side, and a fawn. We lied still—quat like a partridge—and up they kums feedin' away, till they kummed within ten yards of us, when the doe turned her broadside to us. I'd put in some swoil shot, and I levelled right behind the fore-shoulder, drawed the trigger, and me 'gun capped;—the mainspring of her had slipped out, and she wouldn't throw the hammer strong. With that the deer springs up and faces round for the bush, and looks dead into it. We was as still as eggs. In a few minits they went on feedin' agin. I puts on a fresh 'cap and levelled agin. She capped again!—and with that they jumps up and runs across the mesh to a little nap a hundred and fifty yards away. I shoved a bullet into the gun, and, tarmented as I was, I pulled agin. She went off this time, and so did the deer;—'twas too far. Oh my! oh my! I lost a great chance!”

“This has indeed been an unlucky day. Never mind, there's better luck in store. I cannot understand why there are so many single birds about this ground. I've only seen thirteen birds to-day, and they have been nearly all single.”

“I can tell, then. You see, sir, the waufs were in about the soldier's look-out last week, and I expects they scattered them. I never seed finer sign of birds than there is on the Stony Ridge and Flakey Downs.”

“How is the ship ground?”

“There are plenty of birds there, but I know you'll like the other ground best.”

“All right then, there we'll go. Come boys, off with the skins of some partridges and get some soup under way. I see Robert has got a meal of potatoes there, put them in and some bread and anything else you can get, 'for the good of the voyage.'”

“What a pity we haven't a musk-rat to give it a flavour, aye John,” said Robert, with a sly look at me; “that would make it high.”

“Why Robert,” said John, “you don't mean to say you'd put a musk-rat in the soup?”

“To be sure man, we cats anything in here. Did ye iver taste baver? Its the finest mael ye iver made. Well, the musk-rat feeds the same as the baver, and I don't see why they shouldn't be as good; but I must own I never ate one, the name somehow is again it.”

We soon made a hearty supper on our partridge soup, &c., put a few logs on the fire, and after a whiff of tobacco, coiled ourselves up on the boughs, and I was soon in the land of forgetfulness to be awake