

The terrified deer runs in all directions, following their beaten paths through the snow. The hunter stands by and fires at the animals as they pass.—These slaughters take place generally in the month of March, when the snow is deep and covered with a crust, upon which the dogs can run and the men walk easily with their snow-shoes, while the unfortunate deer with its sharp feet sinks through at every bound, wounding its legs and marking its course with blood.

The laws for the protection of deer prohibits, under a fine, the killing of them at any period between the first of February and the first of September, but it unfortunately happens that this law is seldom enforced, and in consequence great numbers of these animals are slaughtered in their yards at a time of the year when neither their skins nor their flesh is of any value.

In still hunting or stalking the deer in the woods, it is necessary to practice great caution. When the first snow falls, the hunter follows their tracks as silently as possible until he can get a shot, which is not his good fortune every day. An old buck when he knows you are on his trail, will lead you many a weary mile without favouring you with a view of his majestic person. At first the track is found, and traced perhaps several hours until the hunter is within easy rifle shot, when the breaking of a fallen branch beneath the feet is sufficient to put the animal upon his guard. He listens eagerly, and his quick eye soon catches the outline of his pursuer, and after regarding him for a moment, he sets off at a dashing speed. He runs several hundred yards, then stops, listens and watches again. The hunter approaches, but the eye of the deer is the keenest in the forest, and you may follow on the track a whole day and never get a sight of the intended victim, although he may be at no time more than one quarter of a mile in advance.

Another method of hunting the deer practised in Canada is by driving them into the lakes or rivers with hounds. When pursued by the dogs, this animal at once flies to the water, his instinct perhaps influencing him to break the scent by crossing a stream. Some of the party are stationed at those points where the deer have their favourite crossing places, and when they approach may get a shot. This method, as well as every other, is not always successful. Often the deer takes a long round through the forest and run towards some distant water, in which case there can be no sport that day, and often the dogs are led so far away that they do not return for several days, and are, in fact, occasionally lost altogether.

Hunting with a lantern is also practised. A tall cylindrical cap of birch bark, with an opening in front, is placed upon the head, a lighted candle is placed inside so that the light is immediately over the brow of the hunter, and thus whilst it attracts the deer shines along the barrel of the gun when aim is being taken. The deer sees the light, and remains gazing steadily at it, while, at the same time, his eyes appear in the dark like two coals of fire. An easy shot may be thus obtained. This method, or one similar in principle, carrying a torch instead of a lantern, and gliding along a river in a canoe at night, is also practised with much success.

The deer when suddenly started in a field, does not make off at its full