

turn out bad, by and bye. Tell me, what is the distance to your cabin?"

"My cabin may be about twelve miles from where I live."

"Oh, that's nothing; we'll reach it before nightfall."

We walked on, in silence, for about five or six miles, when my companion, again addressing me, said—

"What the deuce!" said he, "look there; is not that a deer track?—see there, chum."

In truth, before us lay a long track, lost in the distance.

We followed the track, and hurried on our pace; we walked on for upwards of three hours without perceiving anything; the night was fast approaching, and we took the road to my hut where we arrived at dark.

As you know, the deer occupy a track of about three or four leagues in this place, it is usual for huntsmen to erect a hut, on the limits, containing a stove and all things necessary to render it comfortable; sometimes we passed whole weeks in this manner.

We entered the place, struck a light, made a fire, despatched a part of our provisions with an appetite undiminished by our recent walk, lit our pipes, and began to feel a little lonesome, when my companion, animated no doubt, by our desolate situation, and by the prevailing silence, broke out suddenly.

"Do you believe in spirits," said he.

"In spirits, you clown," replied I, laughingly.

"What! you laugh; ah well! I tell you there are such things."

"Have you seen any?"

"Yes sir—that is to say—no—but others have seen them for me. I could tell the name of the person who did; she could tell you as I do."

"Well! and what have you seen?—What has she seen?"

"It's awful what she has seen. I'll tell you all about it. It was on a night in the autumn—it was as dark as in the—"

He had not time to finish the sentence, when frightful howls were heard a few paces from the cabin door. My companion trembled, but quickly recovered himself.

"Chum," said he, "wolves,—my gun."

He rushed out of the cabin, and I followed with my fire-arms. We looked around us on every side—nothing could be seen. Shortly after I heard the distant howling of wolves; we re-entered the hut, and the Jersey was about to continue his ghost story, but seeing me stretched upon the pallet, where we were to rest, he followed my example and we were soon fast asleep.

The next morning before sunrise we were afoot—not the slightest cloud was to be seen; a few stars glistened here and there—we had every prospect of a beautiful day before us.

"Chum," said my companion, "after having slept so well, I hope we will be able to run well. If I could only take down, at least, three deer—how I wish I was that dog there."

"Get ready and let us start," said I, "without so much bluster; perhaps you may not see even one; how, then, are you to kill three?"

"You haven't forgot your spectacles, I hope."

"No! no; everything is there," (pointing to the knapsack.)

These spectacles, generally green ones, are absolutely necessary to the sportsman, if he wishes to escape getting sore eyes. It is by no means an uncommon thing to see persons, who have had the imprudence to neglect their use, become blind for several days, from the glare of the snow, during which time they suffer acutely.

Breakfast over, we started off. After having strayed hither and thither during the whole morning, without seeing anything, we came to the conclusion to separate,—each taking a different direction. You can understand; this gave us a double chance. We parted, then, promising each other to meet again at the hut, if we did not happen to do so before.

Off I went, then, towards a spot where I had been successful more than once. I took care not to breathe a word of my intentions to my comrade; for you see, a hunter, like a musician, possesses at heart a sort of a jealous rivalry towards others.

I walked on for about an hour. Arrived at the point I had made for, I could see nothing; however, I resolved to wait there a little. This spot was a lake, from which, at various intervals, arose slight eminences. Placing myself in ambuscade behind one of them I remained there. I was beginning to feel the time very long, when suddenly I perceived a deer running, or rather flying towards me, leaving behind him a track of blood upon the snow—I presented my gun, and couched in joy. On he came—I fired, and the deer fell.

I went up to it, the ball had entered his heart; but, what has wounded it in this way, said I, examining one of its legs, from which poured a stream of blood.

I had not to wait long—my companion came up as fast as his legs could carry him, and blowing like a whale.

"Ah, chum, master—you've hit him; much obliged to you for the trouble—but it was I who commenced his destruction; to me is the honour due."

"But where would he have been now, my brave, if I had not been here?"

"Oh, what's this about! I have good legs, I would have caught up to him; he was fainting fast."

"Tut, tut; your gun is still loaded."

"Look there!"

At this instant we again sought cover of the little hillock. Coming towards the lake, like a moving forest, were a hundred deer, wending their way carelessly and quietly, sometimes browsing upon the bushes or tufts of moss, that here and there peeped above the snow; they advanced as sportively as so many dogs, stopping occasionally to sniff the air on every side.

I hastened to reload my gun—they were on the lake—they were getting nearer—"Hold yourself ready," said I, to my companion; "we will fire together."

"Oh, chum, look at them! I'm ready."

They were directly in front of us—bang—two deer remained upon the spot, the rest vanished like a shadow.

"Behold my spoils," said my companion.

"How! your spoils? and do my shots go for nothing?"

"Behold my spoils, I repeat. Did not I tell you as much this morning. Well, look at them."

"Listen, my brave boy, who killed the first?"

"I did."

"You're a—toad," said I a little roughly, for he rather nettled me.

"Ah, master—any other name but that if you please."

You see this epithet to a Jerseyman is what that of *Jack Bull* or *roast beef* would be to an Englishman.

"Don't get angry," said he; "I'll explain the thing to you. When I left you I had not gone five hundred paces when I perceived at least sixty deer. I wounded one and he came in this direction. Had I not wounded him, he would certainly have followed the rest, and flown towards the opposite point—there, chum."

"But who felled him?"

"Oh, why didn't you let him alone? he was mine."

"I tell you it is not so; we'll see. And how can you say that these two are yours?"

"Very easily—I had two balls in my gun."

"I had three."

"Possible, master—but you aimed too high. I saw that."

"Mortal to a—" I was going to say the words, but I could not give expression to my contempt for the man.

"We'll arrange about it,—we'll arrange about it," said he, and so the dispute ended.

As you are aware, it is seldom that similar altercations do not arise among the sporting fraternity on such expeditions. Each one has the modesty to believe himself the most expert of the number, whether as marksman or pedestrian; and if his success does not equal his boasting, he had a bad gun or he fired at too great a distance, or the priming was bad, his snowshoes were too large, too small, or too heavy; in short, he has a thousand excuses to give.

"There!" said I, "I think that's enough for to day; let's cover these carefully and return. For

you know, gentlemen, the foxes would have had an agreeable festival had they got hold of them."

"But, chum, it's still early; I'll bet you'll knock over three more before dark."

"Ah! well, you can remain. I will go and bring the *comitick*" (a sort of sleigh, drawn by dogs, in use at Labrador) "and the dogs, to take this load to the house. To get there more quickly, I will leave you my gun; I have plenty of time before night-fall, and shall return by moonlight, and bring a man with me."

I cut out the three deer's tongues to bring them with me, by the way of triumph. This is a thing a huntsman never forgets.

"In case you go away, don't forget to bury the defunct," I cried to my companion, and started off, on my return journey.

The weather was most beautiful,—ravishingly beautiful—disencumbered of my gun I felt as light as a feather. The snow-crust, over which I trod was yielding as sand, but not deep enough to incommode my pace. It was charming to see how quickly I went—I almost flew. I should add, that what gave me an additional stimulus was, the three tongues, of which I had possessed myself. Three tongues, thought I—the idea kept me in a transport of joy; with what pleasure would I display the three jewels of my crown,—for I was as happy as a king. What happiness would I not enjoy in spreading them before my friends!

I did not feel as if I was walking at all, so overjoyed was I, and I never noticed the thick fog forming insensibly in my rear. I only observed it when great snow flakes began dropping through the air, and the sun had already disappeared. I hurried on, for I doubted the safety of this atmospheric effect in Labrador. I knew the danger which generally followed it, and I had still a good part of the road before me. However having examined the points of the horizon—ah, bah—said I—it will be nothing, I am certain. I was mistaken; soon the wind increased and whistled loudly, and the snow drifted furiously. I respired with difficulty, still on I went. When—all of a sudden—the snow seemed to give way beneath my feet; I felt as if flying through the air. I was overcome—suffocating—choking; I shook the snow off myself several times, but felt it coming afresh upon me.

That I had fallen from some precipice I had no doubt; but from what side I had come I could not say. Where, then, was I to direct my steps? I could scarcely see my hand before my eyes—it was already night—what ought I to do—perish?—No! said I—I must not lose hope yet. What gave me some courage was that the cold was not very intense.

I took my snow-shoes from off my feet, and used them to dig a hole in the snow, a sort of ditch, in which I seated myself, having wrapped a large shawl around me, which I had been using as a sash, so that I might not be choked with the snow. I then covered my retreat with my snow-shoes, and confiding in Providence, I thus awaited the fine weather; or at least, the light of day.

I was tired; my eyelids closed in spite of all my exertions to keep them open. I did not wish to sleep; for had the cold fastened upon me, I would have run the risk of perishing. Constrained then to keep awake I set myself to think of the delightful hunt I had just achieved—of the effrontery of my Jersey companion, who pretended that the full merit belonged to him; and finally, I took to castle-building in the air. Two or three hours had elapsed; suddenly it seemed to me I no longer heard the wind—I uncovered my face and raised my head; judge of my surprise when I found that all around was calm. The heavens glistened with stars, and the moon contributed the glory of its soft light to the scene—in an instant I was on foot, my snow-shoes on, and my shawl around my waist—

Involuntarily I almost danced for joy—when I found myself face to face with a man; who do you think? My brave Jersey.

"Where," said I, "do you come from?"

"From the cabin, chum?"

"But, tell me, then, were you on the road during the great storm?"

"By my faith was I."