

his minnow a few inches, the apparition glided forward, and I drove the spear downward with all the force and speed my arm could impart. Through the wooden handle I felt the crush and grind of steel through bones, and knew 'twas well. The shaft swept round in response to a failing, swirling rush, and we promptly lifted from the hole a dead fish, for the spear had cut the spine just at the junction with the head. The fish was by no means as heavy as many I have seen, but it was large enough for our ambition, and, best of all, we had it safe.

That was spearing as it is apt to average upon those lucky days when everything works just right, but not seldom there are trifling mishaps and once in a long while a truly perilous experience.

One sunny morning two of us snapped skates to boots and started for the bay, where fifty or more Frenchmen made a business of winter spearing. We anticipated great results. But we had a long distance to skate, and did not reach our shanty before noon.

The big frog-eater in charge greeted us warmly and said: "Oui, dis grate day; but you should bin here before. Mebbe vataire milky 'fore long."

We didn't care a continental whether the water might get "milky," and in brief time the Frenchman left us alone. When we first shut ourselves in our little cabin, everything appeared black as tar, but gradually our eyes grew accustomed to the strange half-light from ice and water. My comrade first took the spear, while I worked the decoy-minnow. A board formed a seat, and we sat side by side, he