

while the butt-end is, high in air, thrown over some branch in the vicinity. When the fisher is caught, his vigorous pulling immediately loosens the fastening of the light end of the tree, which forthwith flies up, suspending the trap and the astonished cat helplessly between heaven and earth!

Our portage was comparatively light, and might have been exceedingly pleasant, but for the fact that it rained inveterately; and, although it was hard to say what difference that made, except on the appearance of things, the trapper gave it as his opinion, and we verified it, that walking was very much more fatiguing on a wet day than on a dry one. Of course we were all dressed for mid-winter, for when all weather is to be taken in one suit of clothes, they must be clothes of proof. The mode of our progress was, with Murphy ahead as leader, moving along over the ground, or logs, or whatever the footing might be, at a rate which quite left me, John Smith, behind; and in this he only showed the remains of the still greater agility of an earlier day. Tom Brown was not left behind, his Canadian and Californian training and well-knit frame made him able to follow close with apparent ease. The path, which is quite unmarked—for what human footprints will last six months, the probable average interval between the travellers over this portage—and lies now over moss, now, in crossing a *slash*, over logs generally following them out lengthwise, and involves jumping down or up, say three feet, from one to another—this while loaded with *tumpline* or gun! Had it been all level, the city pedestrian—for most city people are comparatively good pedestrians—would have kept easily abreast with the country athletes. I had much satisfaction, however, in the frequent, very frequent, resting places which, with savage instinct, our guide constantly made for us, when I, John Smith, felt as little desire for his halt as I had done for the rapid motion which made him blow. Quiet, unwearying, plodding in regular hours, is the road to success in St. Paul Street, while a readiness for un-

bounded exertion to be relaxed, when possible, into the most supine laziness, is an essential part of a close dependence on untamed nature, and agrees closely with the habits of those races of animals and men which live by prey. The most interesting thing in this walk was the observation of the marvellous acuteness with which Murphy, while it was hard to do anything but watch one's footsteps, noticed every few steps the marks of the recent presence of some animal, and could tell by footsteps hardly visible when pointed out in the deep lichen, how the bear had passed, or where the mink had gone, or how long since a white hunter or an Indian had set a trap in this domain of Murphy, who claims as his own, all the region of these lakes and tributaries, except Devon's Lake, whose water happens to find exit a different way, and which he would claim in vain, so long as Devon, a patriarchal hunter, and boys live there. The fief had been for years rented from a squaw, who was its recognised owner among the rovers of the hill-country until she passed away full of days and honor, and her heirs had shown a desire to bring the lease to a close. Murphy doubted the title of the heirs (although had they continued the lease he might not have done so), and had defended himself from their demand, which appeared in the form of two men with brandished tomahawks, with his hunter's knife, wherewith he had spoiled the face of a young brave. After that encounter the war was carried on by hieroglyphics, each party leaving in the way of the other the most ominous of pictures—figures made with red chalk on trees—so as emblematically, if not artistically, to represent the adverse party, with the knife of his enemy (a small chip carved into this shape), sticking in his heart. It was now Murphy's full resolve to clear this part of the country of beavers and whatever other game he could get, sparing none for "seed;" as he did not know how soon discretion might become the better part of valor. The next most interesting thing in this walk was the stories which Murphy