

(Continued from page 1096.)

"Oh, you draw again, sir, or not?"
"Will we say as well finish up the day by trying a bit longer; not that I think it much good, somehow."

And so it proved; one or two small covers were drawn blank, and during this trotting from one to another the Squire found time to illustrate a few easy lessons as to the science of hunting in a pleasant, chatty way, which won the hearts of his listeners. On the way home, too, he managed to "talk hunting," and when any was appearing to be a pedant, and when the last of his field turned off as he neared the paternal roof, a thoroughly good understanding had been established all round.

The above venenously recorded run was not mentioned in the local journal of the following week, but it was noticeable that the next time the Dabry hounds met, the younger members of the field did not nearly so difficult to control as they had been on former occasions.

The following short dialogue between the Squire and old Dick may serve as a who-who—

"Capital idea of mine, wasn't it, Dick?"
"Well, sir, I can't say that they young 'uns ain't all the better for it, sir; but these hounds knowed it worst right, sir, and they looked at me as to say this ain't no fox he be making believe to hunt—now now is it—and I didn't get it in my 'eart to tell 'em it was a Drag."
"Heh, Dick, not a word, we'll always speak of it, as the Christmas Eve Fox please."

HUNTING FOR CHRISTMAS MEAT.

A Tale of British Columbia.

"GREAT Joseph! the day after to-morrow be Christmas, and we had gathered around the fire in the bankhouse after supper, some playing piquet, others reading and talking, all smoking, when Joe the tenant, a French Canadian who had been out at the above exclamation. As is usually the case in mining districts remote from civilization, no one had given a thought about Christmas heretofore. But Joe broke us as it were in the card party broke up, the readers dropped their books and papers, and for about ten minutes not a word was spoken. Each was too busy with his thoughts of other Christmas masses in years gone by to speak to his neighbor. At last old Maurice Lawlor broke the silence with "Darn Christmas, anyway I never had a good Christmas in my life. Always drunk away like a hotten Chinese, or drunk as a biled owl."
"What do you call a good Christmas, Maurice," asked McFarlane. "Well," answered the old man, "a 'raie jam up good dinner. None o' your darned pork and beans, but a good big turkey, and plum pudding, and mince pies, and lots of other fellys here talk about they had at home before they came to this God-forsaken country. Maurice always raised coule, 'scent drag him out of it. Then Ryan spoke up. "Look here, Maurice, Paul (the cook) can make as good plum pudding and mince pies as anybody I guess, and if you'll go out to-morrow and shoot a deer, we can keep Christmas in good style, with venison instead of turkey."
"Darn yer eyes! Do you think I could hit a deer wild a rifle? I might fetch 'im wild a club if he'd wait for me to get close enough to 'im." "Well, but," said Kirk after a pause, "what's the matter with a couple of the gang goin' out to-morrow and shootin' a deer. I can't go because I'll be too busy shootin' horses, but," turning to me, "you can go the hunt won't be runnin' to-morrow." "I go," says I. "I never saw a deer in the bush in my life. I'd be like Maurice—the deer would have to wait until I could kill it with a club."
"I tell you what we do," says Joe, who had not spoken since he first broke upon us, "Kirk he show my horse in de forenoon tomorrow. In de afternoon we go up, wit my hos and wagon, Findlay creek. We stop de night in de ole horse house, in de mornin go on up to de hay stack. Dere be plenty deer at de stack you bet. We get back a little after noon and have roas' deer for supper."
"The Push may have something to say to all this," I rejoined. (In mining camps the foreman is always the Push.) "O! the Push all right, he no say anything when he going to get good feed de deer."
The Push, who had been in the cook house making out some grub accounts with Paul, at this juncture opened the

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Next afternoon about three o'clock we three started out, each armed with a Winchester and plenty of ammunition. In addition Bob and Joe had each a good hunting knife slung at his belt. In the wagon we had grub enough to last us two days, fodder for the horses, and our dogs, blankets. There had been a slight fall of snow the night before which had not thawed during the day. Consequently our wagon travelled along almost noiselessly. We proceeded somewhat slowly, keeping a good lookout for fresh deer signs; but, with the exception of a track or two crossing the trail, we saw none.

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Toronto Board of Trade Building.

door and walked in. In a few words he was made acquainted with our plot, and he heartily agreed to let us carry it out. But the great question was who should go? Most of the men could not be spared, and those that could were, like myself, somewhat green at hunting. There wasn't a dog in camp. Kirk's dog, as usual, having gone off on a trip on his own account, and had not as yet returned; and Jim White, "Old Stubbhorn," had gone to his own claim months before, taking his dog Quartz with him. Some one suggested that if Bob, the over-seer of the mine, were to go, we could ask him to go along. "Bob'll be down to-night," says McFarlane, "he told me so when I was up for the last load." It was settled that Bob, Joe and myself should try for a deer or two. Shortly after Bob came in and agreed to make one of the party.

Just as it was getting dusk we reached the house Joe had spoken of. It had been formerly the headquarters of the Hydraulic mining camp, and was therefore a good sized building. The windows were all nailed up, but the door stood open. We quickly unloaded all the blankets, etc., and carried them into the house; and while Joe was taking care of his team, Bob and I busied ourselves about the supper. We quickly had a good supper, although the house had been inhabited for several years. Just as we were about to retire, Bob told me we had finished frying the bacon and were up to a table, a plate, fork or spoon. We simply placed the frying pan on the floor and squatted around it, each cutting his own chunk of bread and laying thereon slices of bacon. Suddenly Bob said, "Joe, what are you going to do with

THE POET AT CHRISTMAS.

She spoke of Santa Claus, ah! look!
It made me feel upon the rack.
She'd like me to eat a sack of mince pies,
Or else a bucket.
I felt the hot blood surging in my veins,
It was as when I ate mince.
What could I do but sit and blush,
With empty pocket?

Al, could she know the poet's woes,
Who sits alone in the night, but sees in prose,
She'd choose some cheaper things than
These.
To fill her stocking.
But, after all, I'll not complain;
Man cannot wish his fate to change.
Come here, my dear old watch and chain;
We'll go a-hawking.

your horses to-night?" "Leave 'em out by de wagon," answered Joe. "It may come on to storm before morning," rejoined Bob. "Den I put 'em in de ole stable." "They wouldn't be much better off here than outside. I tell you what you do, bring 'em in here. The place is plenty large enough and they will be comfortable." So it was agreed. After finishing our dirty deposit they were brought in and tied in corners farthest away from the fire. The balance of their feed was put before them, at which they nuzzled contentedly. We then lit our pipes and proceeded to lay our plans for the day.

After a good deal of palaver, it was decided that as soon as it was light enough to see, Bob and I were to take our rifles and walk along the trail until we struck the pine thickets a couple of miles further on, which we were to explore thoroughly, while Joe followed after with the team in about an hour's time. This being the first hunting expedition I was ever on, I wanted Joe to go along with Bob, while I would take care of the horses. But Joe wouldn't listen to it. He said I might never get such a chance again, and I should make the most of it. He was a good-hearted fellow as Joe, and finally I yielded to him. After he had caught up to us, if we were not successful we were all to proceed with the wagon as far as the bridge. There we would leave the horses in the old shack, and all three cross the creek and go to the haystacks. The hog had been cut the previous summer for the use of the horses at the mine and concentration. Up to this time but little of it had been used. In fact no one had been near the stacks for about a month previous, and we were almost certain to find deer about there. The only trouble was they stood in the centre of a plain about four miles long by two wide, and as level as a floor. There was not so much as a shrub that a man could hide behind. After considerable talk, we concluded to be guided by circumstances. Then each one rolled himself in his blankets and lay down before the fire to sleep. The novelty of the situation, and the number of the horses at their bay, as well as the hardness of the road, kept me awake for a long time. I lay thinking of the deer I was to slaughter the next day, and wishing I might, by chance, come across a bear. Finally I dozed off to sleep. Next morning, long before daylight, Bob roused us up, and getting the fire into a bright blaze we soon had breakfast over. By the time we had finished the first streaks of dawn appeared and the promise of a fine day. Leaving Joe to pack up, Bob and I shouldered our rifles and stepped out into the cool frosty air. After a brisk walk and as the sun was just coming up we reached the pine thickets; these we cautiously and thoroughly explored. We found plenty of deer trails but all were leading away from the stream up into the mountain. One place we found where a couple had either got wild of our coming or had started early for the feeding grounds. Bob concluded it was no use following them as we might have to travel for miles