

CHAPTER XX

Back to the Farm

THE minutes which passed as Joe and his friends lay in the hollow into which the upset of their sleigh had thrown them proved, as they rapidly increased in number, that plans, however carefully made, do not always become accomplished. It had been agreed between the little hunter and our hero that it was their plain duty to capture Hurley; for was he not an escaped criminal, a murderer, a brute who sought to slay them? But try as they might to circumvent the rascal, he outwitted them.

"It aer one of them tarnation difficulties that one don't realize till one comes up agin them," said Hank after a while, for immediately on their upset Hurley had caused his own team of dogs to be pulled up short, and had himself taken advantage of a hollow. Hidden in it, he bobbed up every now and again and sent a shot swishing over the little party, while apparently the bullets fired by Joe and his friend had no better effect. They were, in fact, merely wasting time.

"Doing no harm, and just keeping us here till his men come up to join him," ventured Joe.