

encamped nearer, the beavers would at once have detected them by their exquisite sense of smell, and have probably moved off in a body to some other situation, or dispersed themselves among the numerous creeks and swamps in the vicinity, until the danger was over.—After several nights' careful watching, the usual and favourite resorts of the beavers were discovered and marked, and the traps were set accordingly. Many were taken in the steel-traps, dead-falls, and other contrivances which were employed to ensnare these harmless animals; but the survivors becoming very suspicious and wary, the gun was used, as the last resort, and two moonlight nights finished all that remained in the pond, the few who escaped the indiscriminate slaughter removing to some more secure position.

During the winter the trappers shifted their quarters several times; and when the lakes were frozen, and the snows had become sufficiently deep and solid, they brought up the stores left *en cache* on "tobaugans," or light sledges, made of the white maple. They had traversed nearly the whole of that unexplored country, in an extensive circle, breaking open the beaver-houses, and capturing whole families, and trapping stragglers who had taken up their abode in the banks of swift-running streams, or on the margins of the "thoroughfares," both which are generally open during the winter, unless in very severe weather.—But while pursuing the beaver as the principal object, the party had not been unmindful of the other fur-bearing animals which came in their way; and, of these, the marten (the sable of America) appeared to have been the most numerous. The places which these lively little animals frequent are easily discovered after a light snow, and then traps are placed at intervals across the paths they use. These traps are built of a few logs, so arranged that when the marten attempts to take away the bait laid for him (generally part of a partridge or some other bird); he with very little force pulls down a small post, which supports the whole weight of the trap. If the animal be not killed by the weight which falls on him, he is confined until the hunter despatches him, on going his rounds, which he usually does every morning.

When the winter became somewhat advanced, they watched carefully for the otter, the fur of which, when in full season, is extremely black, glossy, and beautiful; the skins, therefore, bear a very high price. Otters are generally found near falls or rapids, which but seldom freeze, and in the latter part of winter are

always open, as there they find plenty of fish, and the open water gives them free access to the shore, to which they frequently go, to devour the fish which they have caught. They are easily traced, on these occasions, by the broad deep furrow which they leave in the snow on the banks; and these places are sought out and marked. Nicolah said they frequently succeeded in killing the otter by concealing themselves within reasonable gunshot of these landing-places, on a clear frosty night, and waiting their coming out of the water.—Once or twice otters had been seen on the ice during the daytime, eating fish, or playing with each other, when a successful long shot had been made; but these were rare occurrences.

The flesh of the beaver supplied the party with fresh meat during the winter; it was described as being very good; and the tails, which are almost a mass of fat, and greatly prized by English epicures, Nicolah spoke of as being exceedingly luscious, and most excellent eating. By way of variety, they occasionally ran down a cariboo, on snow-shoes; but as these animals are rather lean in the winter, the venison was mentioned with great contempt: "It was so dry and stringy," said Wahpoose, one of the party, "that it was like eating an old moccasin; besides, it wasted more fat pork, to cook it, than it was worth!"

The trappers had remained somewhat longer in the woods than they intended, in consequence of abandoning the old canoes they had brought up from the Baie des Chaleurs, and being compelled to build new ones, in order to descend to the St. John with the valuable packs of furs which they had accumulated. They had been very short of provisions for some time, and their ammunition was so nearly exhausted as to be husbanded with the greatest care. The clothes with which they had entered the forest were completely worn out; and their garments were now composed of the remains of their blankets, and the skins of the cariboo, dressed as soft as glove-leather.—The trappers were all very thin, much sunburnt and smoke-dried, yet bore the appearance of being in good health, and possessed of great strength and activity, with the power of enduring almost any amount of fatigue; upon the whole, they seemed more like sailors returning from a long voyage to some distant and unknown region, than men who had merely been some one or two hundred miles into the interior of "the land we live in."

The discussion of the events of the day, and the interest we took in listening to the tales and