HUNTING THE BLACK-TAILED DEER

BY
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THE black-tail's great curiosity is one of the disadvantages under which it labors in the fierce struggle for existence, compared to the white-tail. The latter, when startled, does not often stop to look round; but the former will generally do so. The first black-tail I ever killed was obtained owing solely to this peculiarity. I had been riding up along the side of a brushy coulie, when a fine buck started out some thirty yards ahead. Although so close, my first shot, a running one, was a miss; when a couple of hundred yards off, on the very crest of the spur up which he had run, he stopped and turned partially round. Firing again from a rest, the bullet broke his hind leg far up and went into his body. Off he went on three legs, and I after him as fast as the horse could gallop. He went over the spur and down into the valley of the creek from which the coulie branched up, in very bad ground.

My pony was neither fast nor surefooted, but of course in half a mile

He stopped and turned.

overhauled the three legged deer, which turned short off and over the side of the hill flanking the valley. Instead of running right up on it I foolishly dismounted and began firing; after the first shot—a miss—it got behind a boulder hitherto unseen, and thence over the crest. The pony meanwhile had slipped its hind leg into the rein; when, after some time, I got it out and galloped up to the ridge, the most careful scrutiny of which my practised eyes were capable failed to discover a track on the dry ground, hard as granite. A day or two afterward the place where the carcass lay was made known by the vultures, gathered together from all parts to feed upon it.

When fired at from a place of hiding, deer which have not been accustomed to the report of a gun will often appear confused and uncertain what to do. On one occasion, while hunting in the mountains, I saw an old buck with remarkably large horns, of curious and beautiful shape, more symmetrical than in most instances where the normal form is departed from. The deer was feeding in a wide, gently sloping valley, containing no cover from behind which to approach him. We were in no need of meat, but the antlers were so fine that I felt they justified the death of their bearer. After a little patient waiting, the buck walked out of the valley, and over the ridge on the other side, moving up wind; I raced after him, and crept up behind a thick growth of stunted cedars, which had started up from among some boulders. The deer was about a hundred yards off, down in the valley. Out of breath, and overconfident, I fired hastily, overshooting him. The wind blew the smoke back away from the ridge, so that he saw nothing, while the echo prevented his placing the sound. He took a couple of jumps nearer, when he stood still and was again overshot. Again he took a few jumps, and the third shot went below him; and the fourth just behind him. This was too much, and away he went. In despair I knelt down (I had been firing offhand) took a steady aim well-forward on his body, and fired, bringing him down, but with small credit to the shot, for the bullet had gone into his hip, paralyzing his hind-quarters. The antlers are the finest pair I ever got, and form a magnificent ornament for the hall; but the shooting is hardly to be recalled with pleasure. Still, though certainly very bad, it was not quite as discreditable as the mere target shot would think. I have seen many a crack marksman at the target do quite as bad missing when out in the field, and that not once, but again and again.

I have never made big bags myself, for I rarely hunt except for a fine head or when we need meat, and if it can be avoided do not shoot at fawns or does; so the greatest number I have ever killed in a day was three. This was late one November, on an occasion when our larder was running low. My foreman and I, upon discovering this fact, determined to make a trip next day back in the broken country, away from the river.

We breakfasted hours before sunrise, and then mounted our horses and rode up the river bottom. The bright prairie moon was at the full, and was sunk in the west till it hung like a globe of white fire over the long row of jagged bluffs that rose from across the river, while its beams brought into fantastic relief the peaks and crests of the buttes upon our left. The valley of the river itself was in partial darkness, and the stiff, twisted branches of the sagebrush seemed to take on uncanny shapes as they stood in the hollows. The cold was stinging, and we let our willing horses gallop with loose reins, their hoofs ringing on the frozen ground. After going up a mile or two along the course of the river we turned off to follow the bed of a large dry creek. At its mouth was a great space of ground much cut up by the hoofs of the cattle, which was in summer overflowed and almost a morass; but now the frost-bound earth was like wrinkled iron beneath the horses' feet. Behind us the westerning moon sank down out of sight; and with no light but that of the stars, we let our horses thread their own way up the creek bottom. When we had gone a couple of miles from the river the sky in front of our faces took on a faint grayish tinge, the forerunner of dawn. All in the valley was yet dark when we reached the place where the creek began to split up and branch out into the various arms and ravines from which it headed. We galloped smartly over the divide into a set of coulies and valleys which ran into a different creek, and selected a grassy place where there was good feed to leave the horses. My companion picketed his; Manitou needed no picketing.

The tops of the hills were growing rosy, but the sun was not yet above the horizon when we started off, with our rifles on our shoulders, walking in cautious silence, for we were in good ground and might at any moment see a deer. Above us was a plateau of some size, breaking off sharply at the rim into a surrounding stretch of very rough and rugged country. It sent off low spurs with notched crests into the valleys round about, and its edges were indented with steep ravines and half circular basins, their sides covered with clusters of gnarled and wind-beaten cedars, often gathered into groves of some size. The ground was so broken as to give excellent cover under which a man could approach game unseen.

At last, just as the sun had risen, we came out by the mouth of a deep ravine or hollow cut in the flank of the plateau, with steep, cedar-clad sides; and on the crest of a jutting spur not more than thirty yards from where I stood, was a black-tail doe, half facing me. I was in the shadow, and for a moment she could not make me out, and stood motionless with her head turned toward me and her great ears thrown forward. Dropping on my knee, I held the rifle a little back of her shoulder—too far back, as it proved, as she stood quartering and not broadside to me. No fairer chance could ever fall to the lot of a hunter; but, to my intense chagrin, she bounded off at the report as if unhurt, disappearing instantly. My companion had now come up, and we ran up a rise of ground, and crouched down beside a great block of sandstone, in a position from which we overlooked the whole ravine or hollow. After some minutes of quiet watchfulness, we heard a twig snap—the air was so still we could hear anything—some rods up the ravine, but below us; and immediately afterward a buck stole out of the cedars. Both of us fired at once, and with a convulsive spring he rolled over backward, one bullet having gone through his neck, and the other—probably mine—having broken a hind leg. Immediately afterward, another buck broke from the upper edge of the cover, near the top of the plateau, and, though I took a hurried shot at him, bounded over the crest, and was lost to sight.

We now determined to go down into the ravine and look for the doe, and as there was a good deal of snow in the bottom and under the trees, we knew we could soon tell if she were wounded. After a little search we found her track, and walking along it a few yards, came upon some drops and then a splash of blood. There being no need to hurry, we first dressed the dead buck—a fine, fat fellow, but with small misshapen horns—and then took up the trail of the wounded doe. Here, however, I again committed an error, and paid too much heed to the trail and too little to the country round about; and while following it with my eyes down on the ground in a place where it was faint, the doe got up some distance ahead and to one side of me, and bounded off round a corner of the ravine. The bed where she had lain was not very bloody, but from the fact of her having stopped so soon, I was sure she was badly wounded. However, after she got out of the snow the ground was as hard as flint, and it was impossible to track her; the valley soon took a turn, and branched into a tangle of coulies and ravines. I deemed it probable that she would not go up hill, but would run down the course of the main valley; but as it was so uncertain, we thought it would pay us best to look for a new deer.

Our luck, however, seemed—very deservedly—to have ended. We tramped on, as swiftly as was compatible with quiet, for hour after hour; beating through the valleys against the wind, and crossing the brushy heads of the ravines, sometimes close together, and sometimes keeping about a hundred yards apart, according to the nature of the ground. When we had searched all through the country round the head of the creek, into which we had come down, we walked over to the next, and went over it with equal care and patience. The morning was now well advanced, and we had to change our method of hunting. It was no longer likely that we should find the deer feeding or in the open, and instead we looked for places where they might be expected to bed, following any trails that led into thick patches of brush or young trees, one of us then hunting through the patch while the other kept watch without. Doubtless we must have passed close to more than one deer, and doubtless others heard us and skulked off through the thick cover; but, although we saw plenty of signs, we saw neither hoof nor hair of living thing.

We lunched at the foot of a great clay butte, where there was a bed of snow.

After lunch we hunted until the shadows began to lengthen out, when we went back to our horses. The buck was packed behind good old Manitou, who can carry any amount of weight at a smart pace, and does not care at all if a strap breaks and he finds his load dangling about his feet, an event that reduces most horses to a state of frantic terror. As soon as loaded we rode down the valley into which the doe had disappeared in the morning, one taking each side and looking into every possible lurking place. The odds were all against our finding any trace of her; but a hunter soon learns that he must take advantage of every chance, however slight. This time we were rewarded for our care; for after riding about a mile our attention was attracted by a white patch in a clump of low briars. On getting off and looking in it proved to be the white rump of the doe, which lay stretched out inside, stark and stiff. The ball had gone in too far aft and had come out on the opposite side near her hip, making a mortal wound, but one which allowed her to run over a mile before dying. It was little more than an accident that we in the end got her; and my so nearly missing at such short

The buck was packed behind.

range was due purely to carelessness and bad judgment.

Neither of my shots had so far done me much credit; but at any rate I had learned where the error lay, and this is going a long way toward correcting it. I kept wishing that I could get another chance to see if I had not profited by my lessons; and before we reached home my wish was gratified. We were loping down a grassy valley, dotted with clumps of brush, the wind blowing strong in our faces, and deadening the noise made by the hoofs on the grass. As we passed by a piece of broken ground a yearling black-tail buck jumped into view and cantered away. I was off Manitou's back in an instant. The buck was moving slowly, and was evidently soon going to stop and look round, so I dropped on one knee, with my rifle half raised, and waited. When about sixty yards off he halted and turned sideways to me, offering a beautiful broadside shot. I aimed at the spot just behind the shoulder and felt I had him. At the report he went off, but with short, weak bounds, and I knew he would not go far; nor did he, but stopped short, swayed unsteadily about, and went over on his side, dead, the bullet clean through his body.

NEXT WEEK:- "A Grizzly Hunt."

FORBIDDEN TEA PARTY.

What Happened at Function Given by a Rebellious Woman.

Tea was not brought over by the first settlers. When the pilgrims landed at Plymouth tea was selling in England at from $10 to $50 a pound. It was a luxury that had been known to Englishmen only a few years.

Early settlers got along without India or China tea for a long time. They used roots, herbs and leaves found in the fields and woods as a substitute for tea. Sassafras tea was a common drink.

Tea was advertised for sale in Boston in 1762 for the first time, according to historians. In 1766 patriots began to take the pledge not to drink tea because of the tax that the English government placed on it. It became fashionable for patriotic ladies not to serve India tea, but as substitutes therefor "Labrador tea" and "Liberty tea."

Captain Page of Danvers forbade his spouse to taste tea beneath his roof as long as the tax remained, but the strong minded and ingenious lady ascended to the flat roof of the house, invited her friends to follow, and there she served tea to them.

Some other ladies of the town fared less fortunately. They used to borrow for their tea parties the big teapot of the once famous Bell tavern. One day after drinking the forbidden beverage the master of the house unexpectedly walked in, jumped to the fire, grabbed the teapot and turned it over, and out rolled a big frog. The jovial patriots at the Bell tavern, suspecting the use of the pot, had placed the frog in it. Some of the dames never drank tea afterward, for it made them sick.

Isaac Wilson of Peabody persisted in selling tea, so the Sons of Liberty seized him and compelled him to walk about town penitently repeating:

I, Isaac Wilson, a Tory be.
I, Isaac Wilson, I sell tea.

The celebrated Boston tea party was followed by tea parties in other New England towns. In Salem soon after the Boston party David Mason was suspected of having had his negro servant smuggle two chests of tea into the home. Patriots entered and searched his house. They found the tea. They gave it to boys, who paraded with it to Salem common and there burned it.

Even after the Revolution the trade in tea was not wholly unrestricted. It appears that in some New England places dealers in tea were required to take out a license.

PSYCHIC HOUSEKEEPING.

In Which Everybody Works, Including Father.

The latest fashion in housekeeping is the psychic variety. Psychic housekeeping is simply a practical system that a Chicago woman has invented, wrought out and made an effective solution of the servant girl problem. In her house everybody works. The guests are hosts, and the hosts are guests, and all take turns at the dishpan and the washtub.

If you should happen to drop in at 5:30 a. m. you would see men and women in the kitchen, with aprons on and sleeves up to elbows, preparing breakfast. You would see one man serving the meal today and another tomorrow. In the evening the same scenes would be repeated.

Between the two meals one man is away painting portraits and landscapes and seascapes in oil, another is healing the sick, others are at the counting house, while the women are entertaining or shopping or calling.

Saturday afternoons men and women sweep, beat rugs, wash and iron and bake dainties for Sunday. And all this reduces the cost of living to $8 apiece a month.

Hitherto the management of the household has been considered woman's especial prerogative. Man has been general manager of railroad and factory and store and mine, but under the psychic system he becomes a general manager of housekeeping, a working manager in name and deed. The first man to hold the office and administer culinary and other domestic affairs is John Forsell, an artist, who lives in a big, square house at 1041 Waveland avenue, Chicago. The mistress of the mansion is Mrs. Forsell, yet she does not say "my home" when she speaks of it, but rather "our home," thereby wishing it understood that every occupant of this unique habitation is as much the "boss" as she herself. She is the inventor of psychic housekeeping, a kind which she asserts is adaptable to two or more families or to one family and its relatives or friends.

A Dainty Pincushion.

A charming little pincushion for baby's table is fashioned to look like a baby shoe or bootee with the cushion fitted into it. It can be made of white, pale blue or pink canvas, the cushion to be of silk in the same color and the lacing of the shoe in bebe ribbon to match.

Any worn out shoe can be ripped apart and used as a pattern. Where a tiny one is the only model available it will be necessary to cut the new goods larger, while following the general outline, as the cushion should not be too small.

Sleeper Sleeping Robe.

Challis is one of the best materials for making a little sleeping robe when traveling on a sleeper. It can be made as roomy and comfortable as a wrapper, with all the appearance of a pretty dress. Select a bordered effect—tan with a brown border or white with blue. The corals with oriental borders are handsome, and you can find dark colors that are as handsome as the very best figured materials on the market.

COAL CO. TO GRAZE CATTLE.

Will Feed and Care for About 4,000 Head by Contract.

Lock Haven, Pa., June 6.—Down in the hard coal fields of Pennsylvania where the Lehigh Valley Coal Company owns and operates some of the mightiest anthracite colliers, and employs thousands of men and boys in and about its mines, some wonder may be expressed that in another section of the Commonwealth this same wealthy coal company has gone into the business of grazing cattle. But this is a fact. Up in this section, extending over sections of Clinton and Centre counties, the Lehigh Company owns over 5,000 acres of wild lands from under which the bituminous coal is being taken, and from the surface of which the timber has been stripped by the lumbermen these dozen years or more. This week, in all the newspapers of this section, the company printed an advertisement to the effect that these 5,000 acres of wild lands would be thrown open to grazing purposes at the rate of $1.75 per head of cattle, the company to guarantee the salting of the animals at regular intervals, and a general guardianship against cattle thieves and fires.

This new departure is in line with a business that has grown to extensive proportions over the wild lands of this section, only, heretofore, the Lehigh Company lands have been taken possession of by cattle "rustlers" who drove herds of steers into the great acreage, watched and attended them and reaped a neat harvest of toll from the owners of the cattle, who were glad to have them thus cared for.

Now the company proposes that this revenue shall come into its own treasury, and has employed reliable men whose business it will be to perform the duties of rangers over the pasturage, see that salt is placed for the cattle in the proximity of the springs, where they gather to drink, at least once every two weeks, and to keep a general supervision over the herds.

The question of identity, however, lies entirely with the owners of the cattle, and it is required by the company that every steer be branded with the private mark of the owner, so that at any time an accident occurs to any of the cattle, or should they stray away, the mark establishes the identity of the owner, to whom report can be made. And the mark is more important still in the fall, when the work of rounding up the cattle occurs. Then men on horseback are employed to play cowboy and go in and out over the ranges, gathering the cattle in groups so that the owners can pick them out and drive them back home.

A season on the ranges makes the cattle as wild as their forebears were on the Western plains, and the roundup is always attended with great excitement and not a little danger, for the steers often turn on the horsemen and put up a stiff fight for the retention of their liberty on the ranges. It is not infrequent that the cattle must be lassoed, and thus led off to civilization—and to market.

But all this extra work and trouble must be attended to and paid for by the owners of the cattle, as the company's responsibility, as were the responsibility of the "rustlers" before them, ends with the salting and the herding of the cattle.

It is expected that at least 4,000 head of cattle will be offered for pasture on the Lehigh lands, these coming from all parts of Centre and Clinton counties, while it is not unlikely that carloads of "feeders" will be shipped here from Clearfield county. Farmers and cattlemen see in the Lehigh Company's new departure the beginning of making the pasturage of cattle more than the haphazard business it has been under the direction of the "rustlers," for with the care that is assured form the Company's direction of the work, owners of cattle over a great area of country will be glad to avail themselves of the opportunity to put cattle out in the wood ranges rather than to pay for high-priced grass pasture in the farming sections.

Indeed, the Lehigh's innovation of going into the cattle pasturing business opens the door to vast opportunities, not only in this section of Pennsylvania, but all over the sections where the timber has been cut off, and where the wild lands give excellent grazing to cattle.

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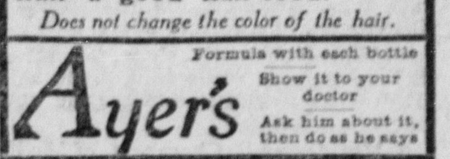

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