

MARCH 26

1892

**MY FIRST HUNTING ADVENTURE.**

By Machias.

The winter of 1862 was a famous one for the deer-hunters in some of the lumbering districts of Maine. The deer were more numerous than they have been since, and the snow during the first part of the season, fell in just sufficient quantities for the success of the hunter. So plenty were the deer, that many a sportsman was led to take a trip into the logging woods for the first time, ardently hoping that it might be his good fortune to "bag" at least one.

I need not stop to tell by what particular means the hunting excitement had affected me; but the result was that one pleasant Monday morning, towards the last of February, I jumped upon a sled that was bound for the woods, fully armed and equipped, to "try for a deer."

A ride of about twenty miles, over good, hard sled-roads, brought us to the logging camp where I had been invited to make my headquarters, and Jerry, the blue-nose cook, was just taking up dinner when we arrived.

I was especially gratified to find that there were no other hunters stopping at this camp, and that the deer were quite plenty in the immediate vicinity. The cook said he could stand by the camp door, and point out, within three hundred yards, the places where more than half a score of deer had been shot during the winter, and where he had seen them very often in full view of the camp.

During the afternoon, I went out to the works to look about a little, and found the tracks so plenty, that in some places the ground appeared like a well trod sheep-yard, especially among the prostrate tops of trees cut some weeks before; and, coming back, I met the teamster, who said he had just seen a monstrous buck, a short distance from the landing. Of course, I was all excitement.

That afternoon, however, I saw nothing in the woods larger than rabbits and partridges, but passed them by as altogether too small game to waste time and ammunition upon. So no deer was killed that day.

After a very early breakfast the next morning, I started for the works a little in advance of the choppers, to try my luck, feeling sure that the deer had come in among the old tops during the night, and that they would not be very likely to leave, until started out by the men.

But I was too late, for a mongrel dog belonging to one of the crew had gone out just before me, and spent his morning in chasing the deer, just for the fun of the thing. This was provoking, especially to an excited boy, for the deer had been there. Their tracks were numerous, and the miserable puppy was still yelping in the farther part of the works.

Four days passed, and with all my hunting, all I had not seen a deer. Very naturally my ardor and hope had perceptibly diminished; but affairs took another turn, presently.

At dinner, Friday, the crew lingered longer than usual over their tea, with the exception of one, who, for some reason of his own, started out towards the works, as soon as he had disposed of his pork and fish.

Just when the rest of the men had finished their dinner, footsteps were heard outside, and the man referred to, came rushing into the camp, in great excitement. Springing in at the door, he seized a gun hanging near by, and with a hasty "Come on, men," rushed out again.

We all sprang to our feet, seized our guns, and, as we hastily followed the fellow, some one hailed him:

"Hold on, John! What's the matter? What's up?"

"Whole drove o' deer," replied he, without stopping. "Much as ten or a dozen of 'em



crossed the road, down into the V piece. Just gone along, too."

With some difficulty John was prevailed upon to stop a minute, and then we quickly devised a plan for surrounding the drove.

The deer had gone into the V piece, as it was called; a piece of land of a shape indicated by its name, and containing about forty or fifty acres.

This piece was bounded on three sides by good, hard roads. After the men had taken their positions so as to surround it pretty well, the mongrel dog was started upon the deer tracks. He knew just enough to use his leg-ability.

I was standing alone, at a junction of two roads, at one corner of the V, near the river. In a few moments I heard the men shouting,—

"Here's one"—"There he goes"—"Fire, Jim"—"Where are they?"—"They'll get by us"—apparently in great excitement.

Presently the barking sounded nearer, and then a fine large buck burst into view, running directly towards me, his large eyes glistening with a brilliant green lustre. Turning a little from his course when he saw me, he bounded into the road not more than twenty yards at my right.

Of course I had resolved to do wonders; and so as the deer struck the road, I took a hurried aim with my double-barreled fowling piece, and pulled the trigger. Much to my disgust, no report followed. The powder in the tube had become damp, and so did not report on the instant.

Surprised and chagrined, I was taking the piece from my shoulder as the deer bounded away unharmed, when the shrieking puppy came into view. Just at that instant the treacherous barrel exploded, and the bullet, evidently seeking some sort of game, ploughed its way across the dog's back, making the hairs fly, but not injuring the skin. His feelings were terribly hurt, and he at once made for the camp, yelping his indignation as he went.

As I was loading the empty barrel, several of

the men, who had heard the report, came up, and my story was soon told. The next movement was to follow the rest of the drove. The men started off in different directions. I went alone on the road to the river.

I had gone but a short distance, when I found tracks where a deer—possibly the one I had seen—had come into the road and followed it in the direction I was going.

On arriving at the bank I could see where the animal had crossed the river and gone into the woods on the other side, and after peering into the bushes in the vicinity, I crept carefully down the bank. In a few moments I saw the object of my search lying but a few rods from the opposite bank. He was behind a large tree, the trunk of which hid a part of the back and shoulders from sight. I at once aimed at his neck.

The slight click made by cocking the gun, had reached his ears, and raising his head high as possible, he began snuffing, and moving his

ears to and fro, to ascertain the cause of the noise. Just at this instant I pulled the trigger.

One glance after the explosion showed me the deer apparently disabled, lying on his back in the deep snow. Rushing across the river, I stood my gun against the big tree, drew my hunting knife, and seized the old buck rather unceremoniously by the nose.

But he was not dead, and did not seem to approve of such familiarity. With a desperate effort he sprang up, and turning fiercely upon me with a loud snort, raised his fore feet to strike.

I have since learned, what I did not know then, that an old buck, slightly wounded, is a dangerous antagonist to face; and certainly, this old fellow looked, at that moment, fierce and formidable enough to intimidate stronger nerves than mine.

Self-preservation was my first thought, and seizing my gun by the muzzle, I struck a heavy blow, knocking him nearly over, and smashing the gun badly.

Before he could recover himself, I sprang out of his reach, and as I looked about for a club,



he turned off to the river.

Five or six feet from the bank, I found a dead otter, and wrenching it violently from its hold upon a tree, started in pursuit of the fugitive.

The bullet had gone through his neck above the bone, inflicting a severe wound and severing some of the large cords in such a manner that he could not lift his head to a natural position. But for this he would no doubt have escaped after all. As it was, I overtook him about eighty yards from the scene of conflict, and he at once attempted to turn upon me.

But the snow was quite deep, and his movements labored, so that I managed to deal him a blow that brought him to his knees, and dropping the root in my excitement, foolishly jumped astride his back. Fortunately, the blow had partially stunned him, and firmly seizing his ear and drawing his head back, I used the knife, which is the hunter's last resort, and the noble old fellow became my first hunting trophy.

I cannot tell how excited I was during this, my first adventure, but my friend, who was the "boss" of the logging camp, declares that coming down to the rolling-tier with his hand-spike on his shoulder, he was just in time to see me as I jumped astride the old buck. He says that, with cap in hand, I vented my feelings in three loud, lusty, and prolonged cheers. Perhaps I did. I was not in a sufficiently calm frame of mind to verify the statement.



For the Weekly Welcome.

## LITTLE BOY BLUE.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.

He was not the one dear old Mother Goose wrote about, but only a sort of namesake. His real name was Arthur.

He had a great desire for a horn just like that owned by his favorite Little Boy Blue, in the picture book. When the warm days came, and a horn could be taken out of doors with its noisy music, papa brought home a fine one; and when Arthur put on his new blue blouse he said:

"Now, mamma, I am a really, truly 'Boy Blue,' my own self, and I know I could keep cows out of the corn better than the story-book boy did."

"Don't be too sure," said mamma; but the new Boy Blue said, "I am sure," and ran out to blow his horn at nothing, just as loud as he could.

Not very long after this, papa said at breakfast,—

"I would let Bess and Brownie feed awhile in the lower pasture if I had any one to keep them from getting into the corn-field."

"Where's Jack?" asked mamma.

"He must go on an errand, and Rob must go to the field with me," was the answer.

Here was Arthur's chance. "Oh, papa," he said, speaking very fast, "I can watch the cows. I'm Little Boy Blue, you know, and I've got my horn."

"Yes, and there's a haystack in the field, too, and you would go to sleep under it fast enough," said papa, laughing.

"But truly, I wouldn't," said Arthur, "and I'd like to play Boy Blue, 'cause I know I could do better than the book-boy."

"I'm not sure," said papa, "but I might try you. You may take your horn and play about, near the haystack, and watch the cows. They will hardly care to leave that nice grass, but if you see them coming toward the corn, blow your horn and I'll send Rob to drive them back. We

her curiosity was excited; she began to read it was the means of her conversion to her d



will be in the next field, where we can hear, though we can not see. Can you do that, till Jack comes back?"

"Course I can," said Boy Blue, looking as if he felt able to do much more, if he had a chance.

"Get your hat and horn then," said papa, "and come." So off they started.

"Now, little man, if you get tired, don't lie down in the hay, for you will surely go to sleep, the sun is so warm. If you get too tired to stay, blow your horn and Rob shall come and let you go to the house. I don't want Boy Blue to have too much to do."

Boy Blue was in the habit of playing by himself and could do it happily, so he was not lonesome though left alone. He stood and watched the sheep awhile; they were "in the meadow," to be sure, but, un-

like the Mother Goose sheep, they were just where they belonged, and needed no care.

Bess and Brownie stood a long time knee-deep in clover, as if they never meant to move.

Boy Blue played "sojer" as he said, with the haystack for a fort, and "whispered little toots" on his horn, as he searched 'round.

Soon he spied the cows coming toward the corn, and called Rob, with a loud blast. The bossies were turned back without getting a smell.

Boy Blue felt well pleased with himself, and began raking hay.

But at last he grew sleepy in spite of everything.

"I won't blow for Rob, yet," he said. "papa said I mustn't lie down, but I can sit. 'Course I won't go to sleep anyhow."

He tossed off his hat, and sat down, holding his head very straight, but—would you believe it?—in about a minute his horn fell from his hand, and he was fast asleep, never knowing that the cows had started for a taste of corn-leaves.

Soon Jack came home, and drove Bess and Brownie back, while Arthur slept on.

"Why, here's Little Boy Blue, under the haystack, fast asleep," exclaimed papa, at

noon. Then he carried the sleeper home, and just as he laid him down, the blue eyes opened.

How ashamed was Boy Blue when he found that he had slept, after all his boasting!

"No great harm was done, though there might have been," said papa; "but you should have called Rob, as I said."

"I wasn't very tired, and I was sure I could watch just the same," said Arthur.

Then mamma spoke. "Our Little Boy Blue is very often too 'sure' of things. I hope this will be a lesson to him, and he will learn not to *promise* too much for himself, but to *do* just as he is told."

### UNSUSPECTED.

Deep in th' unconscious bosom of the Earth,  
Smoulder unseen the unsuspected fires  
That in the destined fullness of the Time  
Shall burst impediments, and with a crash  
Loosen the pent-up earthquakes, and o'erwhelm  
Fanes and cathedrals, palaces and towers;  
Or, more beneficent, shall open up  
The subterranean and imprisoned springs,  
Whose healing waters shall refresh the earth  
With fair fertility of flower and fruits.

So in the depths of penury and scorn,  
A child may come into the teeming world,  
A ploughman's or a shepherd's boy perchance,  
Or beggar's brat, abandoned in the mire  
Of wicked cities, starving and forlorn!  
Beneath its squalid rags that child may hide  
A heart to feel; beneath its unkempt locks  
A brain to think. Forth from that heart and brain  
May flow the burning thoughts that stir mankind,  
And in his own or in a future age,  
May rouse the nations to revolt at wrong,  
And topple down the mightiest tyrannies.

And so a child that plucks the wayside flowers,  
Or loiters in the unwelcome paths of school,  
One of a million born in mean estate,  
May have a hidden fountain in his mind,  
That in a coming day may trickle forth  
With healing freshness on the arid soil  
Of the world's apathy and ignorance,  
And be the parent of a noble art,  
That like the radiance of the noonday sun,  
Shall carry fruitful light where e'er it shines.

Another without counsel, friend, or guide,  
May, in despite of rude perennial toil,  
And cold discouragement, rob Rest and Sleep  
Of precious hours; thrice precious to his heart,  
That give him time to muse on hidden things  
And seize the secrets of the universe.

By toil and inspiration he succeeds,  
And nature's laws, eternal as their God,  
Unknown before, disclose their mysteries  
And break upon the world as clear as morn;  
To change the daily current of our lives,  
Or join long hostile nations in the bonds  
Of contiguity in Time and Space,  
And fuller knowledge, teaching fuller love.

CHARLES MACKAY.