

# A Russian Wolf Hunt.

BY TOM BOLTON.

During the winter of '82 business complications made it necessary for me to take a journey into a wild and remote part of Russia. The house with which I was connected had some very unsatisfactory dealings with one of its branches, and things had come to such a pass that a visit from a member of the main establishment had become imperative.

It was late in January when I had to make my start, and the weather had been unusually cold. I could travel 750 miles out of my journey of 1,000 by rail; but the balance of the trip would have to be made by sledges, not a very rapid or convenient mode of transportation, though it has the advantage of enabling the traveler to regulate his time as he feels disposed. Being extremely fond of field sports, and knowing that the section of country I was going to visit would, in all probability, contain plenty of game, I carried my Colt's breech-loading shotgun and a fine Winchester repeating rifle, with a good store of ammunition for both.

Well, I arrived at the end of my railroad journey without any accident or incident other than the regular daily skirmishes for meals and hot tea at the not overleas stations. We were fortunate in having a clear line, no snow having fallen for over a week—rather a remarkable circumstance in Russia—so we were not compelled to dig out any snowbanks, though this form of amusement is by no means unusual. The morning after my arrival at Udalla I sent to make arrangements for a sledge at the post station. This was soon done, and in an hour I was clear of the town and fairly started on the second half of my long journey.

In Russia the sledges are generally roofed over—especially those used for traveling—somewhat after the fashion of our buggies, and are very low, so that, provided there are plenty of rugs and furs, one can make a trip comfortably enough, and even sleep at his pleasure. The picture in the mind of travel of this description is of three horses abreast, gayly dashing along in fine style; but in my case the actual facts were very different. Before we had gone two *versets* from Udalla, the road became very bad, for the snow was deep on each side of the track, and though the track itself was broken, the snow was in great lumps. Over these the sledge thumped and banged, while the horses stumbled and floundered along as best they could. The driver, meanwhile, consoled himself by alternately cursing the horses, the road, and his bad luck at having to come out, with an occasional *oytd* at me for a crazy Englishman who wanted to kill something so badly that he had to go hunting in the dead of winter; my language and *impedimenta* giving rise to various unfounded rumors, while every one speaking English is put down as an Englishman by the peasantry in this part of Russia.

We reached the post-station, at the end of our first day's travel, long after night-fall. After a hot supper, I continued my journey all night, taking a number of naps, but no regular sleep, because, as soon as I began to doze, I would imagine my ribs to be a corduroy road, and my vertebrae a troop of army mules crossing it and kicking off flies. However, I managed to get along tolerably well, all things considered, and had the satisfaction of knowing that my unfortunate driver was having considerably the worse time of the two.

During the fourth day's journey, while we were passing through a very extensive forest, several wolves came out into the road and followed us a mile or more, but at quite a respectful distance. Their number was too small to cause me any uneasiness, though my driver did not at all like their presence, and the horses betrayed their alarm by their evident desire to hurry along. One large black fellow tried to get up some excitement, and howled most dismally, so I made my driver stop, while I got out my heavy Smith & Wesson revolver. Taking a rest over my left elbow, I let fly at his shoulder as he stood sideways to me, and had the satisfaction of seeing him stumble forward, and take to the timber again with his friends at his heels. My driver told me that a sledge had been attacked by wolves on this very road a couple of winters before, and both horses and passengers eaten up, but that the wolves had been rather scarce since.

I had heard much about wolf-hunting as practised by the Russians of the Steppes, viz., driving a sledge through the woods and over the plains with a piece of meat dragging behind to attract the wolves, thus giving the hunters in the sledge an opportunity to kill them. I had promised myself to try this plan and have some sport in spite of the fact that my driver told some blood-curdling tales of the fierceness of the wolves when banded together and made desperate by hunger.

It was nearly night on the fifth day, before I arrived at my destination, and, as may be imagined, I enjoyed a good night's sleep, as well as a much better supper than I had been having.

The following morning I had to attend to the business that had brought me so far. I soon discovered that only prompt action would save us heavy losses, so I at once discharged the local manager, as well as two collectors, whose honesty I had cause to suspect. This threw much work on my hands, so I had very little time at my own disposal. However, I managed to make the acquaintance of a Captain Komanoff, who owned a small estate in the neighborhood, and who was devoted to sport in all its branches. When I mentioned my desire for a wolf hunt to him, he laughed and said he had been on several, and had generally had good sport. He added that he would arrange to go with me whenever I should be ready.

In the course of ten days I had the rather complicated affairs pretty well in hand, and as there had been a damp fall of snow, followed by a frost, I concluded I could spare time for my hunt. Accordingly, I notified Komanoff, and one clear, calm night we entered an open sledge, that is, without any top, and with three good horses harnessed abreast, set out.

I carried my shotgun, with a bounteous supply of cartridges loaded with small buckshot, thinking it a better weapon than a rifle to use at night, while Komanoff had an army carbine, carrying a large-sized ball, with which, he told me, he had killed many a bear and wolf. Each of us was also armed with a revolver and heavy hunting knife. The driver whom we had engaged for the night had a couple of pistols and a knife in his belt, and as he was a plucky fellow and

had hunted (or been hunted by) wolves before, we were pretty well prepared for anything. Ivan (the driver) took care that we also had a small basket of lunch and a bottle of brandy, so we were quite in the humor to make a night of it.

The snow was well crusted over, and easily bore our horses, thus making a hard, level surface to travel over, also reducing the chances of a capsize, which, if one were pursued, might give the sport a very different ending from that intended. When well out from the village and near the edge of the timber, the bait (in this case a quarter of a calf, well rubbed with *assafoetida* and bound with straw) was thrown over and allowed to drag at the end of a stout cord about forty feet behind us.

It was certainly a grand night, the moon being at the full, and the reflection on the snow made objects almost as clearly discernible as in the daytime. Far up on the northern horizon the Aurora Borealis alternately flashed and paled, now throwing up bars and rays of violet and gold, and again diffusing itself over the heavens in a soft but ever-changing glow.

We had been riding slowly along for a couple of hours, when Komanoff remarked: "I am afraid we shall have our trip for nothing; the wolves don't seem to be about to-night, and yet this wood is a famous place to look for them."

"Don't be uneasy, Captain," said Ivan; "I am going to make a circle and cross our track again, and I think you will have some shooting yet."

The words were hardly spoken before we heard, far off to our right, the long-drawn, sepulchral howl of a wolf. He had evidently struck our trail, and the well smelled good, so he was yelling for his friends. The team was at once stopped, while we listened and heard several more howls in response. The horses heard them too, and at once showed their fear by an attempt to get away, but Ivan had them well under control, and only permitted them to walk, not wishing to blow them before the beasts began to gather.

"I see a wolf," said Komanoff; "look away back there on our track, right under the moon. Ah! and there are several more; I think they will come along now."

Looking back, I saw several black objects coming out of the timber, which we knew to be wolves, and the way they increased in size showed they were following us at full speed. Every now and then several more would dart out of the woods and join our pursuers; but not a sound was heard, for wolves, unlike dogs, run mute. We now prepared to receive them, and we removed our heavy outer coats so as to allow us a better chance to shoot. The horses were allowed to trot, though it was all Ivan could do to hold them, as they were pulling the sledge by their bits, whilst they showed by their rolling eyes and quick backward glances, their extreme terror.

Our friends in the rear now numbered fully twenty, and to my surprise they came rushing boldly on, as though we were no more to be feared than some timid deer which they had cornered.

When they had come within thirty yards I gave the foremost my right barrel and instantly followed it with my left among the pack. I saw the leader's tail go up as he plunged forward on his head, and Komanoff exclaimed that two more had dropped to my second shot. I fully expected that the rest would scatter in all directions, but they did nothing of the kind; they simply fell upon their defunct companions, and tore them to pieces almost before they had done kicking, and then immediately resumed their pursuit of us.

When Komanoff saw this he looked rather grave, and told Ivan it would be well to head for home. "For," said he, "when they eat each other in that manner, it's a sign that they are starving, and should a large pack gather, we would have a poor chance of escape."

Accordingly, Ivan let his team go along at an easy gallop. The wolves were again coming along in hot pursuit, and were almost in range, when Ivan uttered a shout, and the horses made a sudden swerve, so that the sledge was nearly upset. Komanoff and I were thrown in a heap in the bottom, his gun being discharged by his fall, fortunately without doing any damage. Quickly recovering ourselves, we saw that a fresh and large pack of wolves had come out of the woods, and had nearly run into us, causing the team to bolt at full speed. I fired right and left into the thick of them (they were only a few yards away), while Komanoff began to empty his revolver.

This fusillade checked them for a few moments, till our original pack had come up and joined them. Then, having devoured the slain, they came for us again with redoubled vigor, their appetites having evidently been sharpened by the taste of blood. As they closed upon us we fired as rapidly as we could load, but without alarming them at all, only a few stopping to bury the dead (in their stomachs), while the main body tried to come up with our horses and sledge.

Komanoff now cut our bait loose, for we had had all the fun we wanted. As the wave of wolves, as one might say, rolled up over it, we fired into the thick of it, and, as they were in a dense mass, must have done considerable execution. But they were only delayed a moment, and on they came again, their long, tireless gallop soon bringing them up with us.

It was indeed a fearful sight, and enough to shake the stoutest nerves. There was that vast pursuing horde, *creez* with hunger and wild with lust of blood, dashing after us relentlessly as death. Their long black bodies swept over the snow, the hindmost constantly leaping over the foremost in their eagerness to press on, their eyes a shine, with great flecks of foam on breasts and sides, while the gimpes we caught of their long white teeth showed us just what our fate would be should there be an accident to team or vehicle. Komanoff turned to me and said: "If they ever pass us and leap on the horses we are dead men. Keep cool and shoot only those that try to pass your side and I will do the same on mine."

So we dashed on for a mile or so, keeping up a rapid fire, and shooting a number of our dusky friends. They were thoroughly in earnest, and made repeated attempts to get at our horses, but so far we had been able to foil them, when suddenly a big gray fellow dashed past on Komanoff's side (who missed him), and flung himself on the outside horse. Ivan shot at him as he did so, but the horse swerved and stumbled, breaking both traces before he could recover himself. The wolf fell as the ball struck him, but our team was now almost unmanageable, and we were liable to be upset at any moment. Fortunately Ivan kept his head,

and succeeded in turning his horses towards a deserted charcoal-burner's hut, which he knew, and applied his whip lustily, so we dashed forward with renewed speed.

"I know where he is going," said Komanoff, "but our chance is small unless the door be open; but it's our only hope now, therefore be ready to jump the instant I do. Take you the arms, while I help Ivan with the horses."

A short distance farther and we sighted the cabin. The door was ajar, and as we pulled up I tumbled out the guns, robes and lunch-basket, and with a revolver in each hand faced our pursuers.

Our sudden stop and the rapid crack of my pistols seemed to confuse the pack, and checked them long enough to enable my companions to cut the horses loose. They instantly dashed off through the forest, a portion of our hungry assailants after them in hot pursuit, whilst we ran into the house and barred the door in the face of those that remained. In a few seconds there was a perfect cloud of wolves round us, some of them frantically digging at the walls, and others trying the door with their teeth. Fortunately it was a stout one or this story would never have been written.

After resting a little, we found a chink or two in the walls through which we could shoot, and again opened fire. After we had knocked over some twenty-five or thirty of them, the survivors drew off, though they still continued to prow around and fight over the bones of the dead, for all we shot were instantly devoured by their companions. Meanwhile we had contrived to start a fire, and having eaten our lunch we lit our pipes and waited for day to break, thinking then our savage foes would raise the siege. In this hope we were not disappointed, for as the morning light became clear the wolves sneaked off one by one, casting, however, many wistful glances in our direction. We gave them a few parting shots by way of farewell, and as soon as the sun was fairly up we came out of our house of refuge and started on our five-mile tramp for home.

We had not proceeded far, however, before we met a well-armed company of men coming to look for us, as one of the horses had reached home and they judged from his condition, as well as the cut harness, that we were in a scrape of some kind. We arrived home safely, and after a good sleep were none the worse for our adventure. The other two horses, however, never turned up, but the bones were found in the forest the following spring not far from the hut, just where the poor animals had been pulled down.

This experience cured me of all desire for wolf hunting, and though I spent several months at the post, and had plenty of sport, I never cared to see a wolf again.

## His Ponticized Foot.

There is a time to keep silence, but it was evidently not the right time in the case of a boy who lives in a country town. He got a splinter into his foot, and in spite of his protestations his mother and his grandmother decided to place a poultice over the wound. "The boy resisted vigorously. 'I won't have any poultice!' he declared stoutly. 'Yes, you will, Eddie,' declared both mother and grandmother, firmly; and there being two to one, at bedtime the poultice was ready. If the poultice was ready, the boy was not, and he proved so refractory that a switch was brought into requisition. It was arranged that the grandmother should apply the poultice, while the mother was to stand with the uplifted switch at the bedside. The boy was told that if he 'opened his mouth' he would receive that which would keep him quiet. As the hot poultice touched the boy's foot, he opened his mouth. 'You——' he began. 'Keep still!' said his mother, shaking her switch, while the grandmother applied the poultice. Once more the little fellow opened his mouth. 'I——' But the uplifted switch awed him into silence. In a minute more the poultice was in its place, and the boy was tucked up in bed. 'There now,' said his mother, 'the splinter will be drawn out, and Eddie's foot will soon be well.' As the mother and grandmother moved away triumphantly, a shrill small voice came from under the bedclothes—'You've got' it on the wrong foot!'

## Shorthorns for Profit.

Mr. J. W. Wise, of Stephenson County, Ill., writes in relation to Shorthorns as follows: "Where is the breed that makes beef like the Shorthorn, gives milk rich in cream, that will keep on moderate rations, withstand the winter's cold, and yet is so gentle in disposition, and that in traveling to the shows performs its mission so perfectly? Every breeder should do all he can to encourage the fair and shows, for by so doing he helps the business in which he is engaged. Strike the fairs and the agricultural papers out of existence, and we would have a blank that could never be filled. So, breeders should rally together at the fairs and do the work which falls to them well. If you are an officer in an association, or a superintendent of a department, or an exhibitor, or a man-of-all-work, do your work thoroughly, conscientiously. We should not be engaged in stock-raising for the money alone, but because we like it. We should feel proud to be known as encouraging the raising of a better class of stock, and as assisting in the work of introducing improved breeds among the farmers and stock raisers. I have noticed that whenever farmers give the thoroughbred a fair trial, they are as enthusiastic in the matter as anyone; for they learn of their value in the way of improving their stock. The value of a good Shorthorn bull, properly managed, can hardly be estimated.—[Prairie Farmer.]

## A Word To Little Girls.

Who is lovely? It is the little girl who drops sweet words, kind remarks, and pleasant smiles, as she passes along; who has a kind word of sympathy for every girl or boy she meets in trouble, and a kind hand to help her companions out of difficulty; who never scolds, never contends, never teases her mother, nor seeks in any way to diminish, but always to increase her happiness. Would it not please you to pick up a string of pearls, drops of gold, diamonds, or precious stones, as you pass along the street? But these are the precious stones that can never be lost. Take the hand of the friendless. Smile on the sad and dejected. Sympathize with those in trouble. Strive everywhere to diffuse around you sunshine and joy. If you do this you will be sure to be loved.

Charles King, of Middleton, Mass., has not lived 108 years in vain. He has 600 descendants.

## AN IDAHO WONDER.

### Discovery of a Floating Island on the Dome of the Continent.

John Tomlinson, of Bannock, Idaho, told a reporter recently that there is a real floating island on Henry's Lake, Idaho. The lake is situated on the dome of the continent, at a depression in the Rocky Mountains known as Targee's Pass, in honor of the trapper who discovered it. It is oval in shape and has an area of forty square miles. "On first appearances," said Mr. Tomlinson, "the lake, the waters of which are as clear as emeralds, seems to have no outlet. It is surrounded by solid ground, on which are groves of pine and

### LUXURIANT MOUNTAIN GRASS.

On the western edge lies what appears to be a hollow pool connecting it, and from this, obscured in a growth of shrubs, rises a small creek, the source of the north fork of the Snake River. Now, on this lake, and sometimes seen on the north side and sometimes on the other, is this curious floating island. It is about three hundred feet in diameter, and has for its basis a mat of roots so dense as to support large trees and a heavy thicket undergrowth. Decayed vegetation adds to the thickness of the mat and forms a mould several feet in thickness. On the edge of the floating forest, in summer time, may be seen a luxuriant growth of blue joint grass, the roots of which form so compact a mass as to support the weight of a horse. Any number of men have no difficulty in walking about on it. Further back among the trees you might build a big house and make a garden and do whatever you please. You would be just as solid and safe as though there were not fifty or 100 or 200 feet of water under you. There is a willow thicket near the center of the island, and scattered among these willows and contiguous to them are a number of aspens and dwarf pines. These

### CATCH THE BREEZES

which float over the island, and act like sails on a boat and move the 300 foot body hither and thither over the forty miles square of water. This shows why you may one day see the island on one side and the next day on the other. It is the queerest thing I ever saw. You pitch your tent some evening on one side near the island and are pleased with the beautiful prospect. There is the island only a few rods from you, covered with trees and grass. The next morning you wake up and the island is gone. You look far away to the other side and there it is, its trees bending gracefully in the wind. Along in the afternoon it returns, or it may take an easy jaunt off at an oblique angle from you. Henry Lake is exceedingly picturesque. Around it rise snow-capped peaks, among which are some of the highest of the continent's backbone, partly covered with a verdure of forest and grass and showing here and there formations of granite and unique basaltic columns. During the hunting season the waters of the lake swarm with wild fowl. There are beaver there too, and plenty of big game may be had in the adjoining mountains.

### TELEGRAPHIC TICKS.

The Arabs have burned and evacuated Handoub.

It is proposed to take a team of Caughwaga Indian lacrosse players to Australia next May.

Owing to the continued rush of creditors the Ohio & Western railroad assigned to Gen. James A. Hall.

It is said that leading French financial houses are trying to form a new company to complete the Panama Canal.

A shooting affray, which is likely to result fatally, took place at English River, east of Rat Portage, yesterday.

The Constitution of the Japanese Empire was proclaimed by the Emperor at Tokio yesterday amid great enthusiasm.

The Gentiles were successful in the municipal elections at Ogder, Utah, gaining the first victory of the kind over the Mormons.

The Postmaster-General, in reply to a question in the Commons, definitely disposed of the rumors regarding a two-cent postage rate.

### Von Bulow's Sharp Way.

Here is one of the latest stories of the great von Bulow. He was walking one day in Berlin when he met a man with whom he had formerly been on somewhat intimate terms, but whose acquaintance he was desirous of dropping. The quondam friend at once accosted him. "How do you do, von Bulow? I delighted to see you! Now I'll bet that you don't remember my name?" You've won that bet," replied von Bulow, and turning on his heel he walked off in the opposite direction.

It would be curious indeed if the Samoan difficulty really did at last eventuate in open hostilities. Both Germany and the States are defiant. Nations play the game of war for high stakes now, and the game often turns on a trifle. What an opportunity it would be for France. No doubt both sides have already considered the probabilities of France taking a hand. But perhaps this very probability will deter Germany from pushing her demands too far. France and America have before this been allies.

When the scientists deal with the early history of the earth, its formation and development, they have the general public pretty much at their mercy. Professor Boyd-Dawkins has been discoursing to a Manchester audience on some of the early geological conditions of the globe. He told his hearers that, as off the coast of Great Britain the depth of the sea was from 500 to 600 fathoms, and at the bottom, mountains, hills and valleys were all as plainly marked beneath the water as they were on the land, so evidently the large tracts of the earth's surface covered now by the sea must once have been dry land. Earthquakes, though seldom felt in certain places, were really as plentiful as blackberries. The similarity in density and weight of Mars to the earth, and the general conditions of the two bodies being pretty much alike, convinced him that life in some shape or other must exist there. Possibly creatures like those which once inhabited the earth and of which relics were preserved in museums, existed in Mars, the conditions being favorable for those forms of organic life.

In abort, Professor Boyd-Dawkins left the impression that there is a very wide margin for speculation about these matters and no positive information to check a lively imagination.

## Politeness in the Home Circle.

True politeness is founded on consideration for others, yet it is so much a matter of form or habit that politeness is sometimes shown where there is no consideration; it is sometimes neglected where there is affection and every reason for kindly consideration. Thus, in the intercourse of near relatives made familiar with each other by daily meetings there is naturally less formality than between people who are only thrown together by the chance of a few hours or days at long intervals. But along with the laying aside of formality some necessary features of politeness are sometimes sacrificed by relatives and very close friends. The youth who is careful to salute his lady friends and acquaintances according to the usages of good society sometimes forgets to pay the same respect to his sister, not because he is wanting in affectionate regard, but because he has grown so familiar with her that it seems awkward to him to treat her in any formal way. Yet when he meets her in company he should, out of his consideration for her, be markedly polite and attentive.

Although politeness necessarily follows to a great extent set forms, it should have its origin in affection for the individual, or, in a more general way, in consideration for others. When the young man begins to behave at home with less politeness than he exhibits abroad, there is much danger that gradually he will lose that consideration for his immediate relatives which he should have and exhibit. He may begin by entering the family room without formal greeting; absorbed in his own thoughts or pursuits, he will soon begin to leave his sister and his mother to look out for themselves in the small affairs of life, and gradually but surely he will cultivate a selfish disposition in home affairs that will make him a bad or indifferent son or brother. It is a small matter in itself whether a young man finds a chair for his sister or mother when they should be seated, anticipates their wraps, and offers them the thousand little attentions without which and in his absence they could get along very well by their own exertions, but it is not a small matter when neglect of such attentions lessens his consideration for them, develops his selfishness, and gradually undermines the affection that should unite the family. Politeness in society between acquaintances or friends is demanded by custom. There is no need to remind that it should be exhibited. Politeness at home and between near relatives, even between husband and wife, though of much more importance in every way, is not so obviously necessary, and is too often neglected.

## Drunkness in Belgium.

Belgium still holds its own as the most drunker country of Europe. On an average each man, woman and child consumes yearly 240 quarts of beer and 13 quarts of spirits. It may be that Bavarians drink more beer than that, and Russians more spirits, but taking both together the Belgium record is unrivalled. The Government is at last aroused to a sense of the evils of the situation, and some restrictive laws are to be put in force. The right to collect by legal process debts incurred in drinking-houses has been abolished; it is forbidden to sell drink to persons under sixteen years of age, and to sell anyone liquor until he is drunk is made a crime. The effect of these laws will be looked for with interest. It can scarcely fail to be for good.—[N. Y. Tribune.]

## Too Good to be Good.

"I am in terror," sighed poor Mrs. Goodmother, "every time I hear the bell ring; I know I'll hear something dreadful about Jack. I'm sure he's been in some awful mischief."

"What makes you think so?" asked her husband.

"Oh, he came straight home from school this afternoon, sat down and studied his lessons for to-morrow for nearly two hours and has been as good as an angel ever since. Dear, dear! what has the boy been up to, I should like to know?"

## Why he Did it.

"What do you put these long sticks in that roast beef for?" said a lady to Mr. Duddleston the butcher.

"They serve a purpose," replied the gallant butcher.

"What purpose?" persisted the inquisitive purchaser.

"Why, to make it skewer," said Eastland.—

## She Wouldn't be Beaten.

A brace of "lovers," anxious to secure each other's shadow ere the substantial faded, stepped into a photograph car on the line of the New Haven Road one day last week to sit for their "pictures." The lady gave precedence to her swain, who, said she, "had got to be tuck fust and real natural." He brushed up his tow head of hair, gave a twist or two to his handkerchief, asked his girl if his shirt collar looked about right, and planted himself in the operator's chair, where he assumed the physiognomical characteristics of a poor mortal in a dentist's hands and about to part with one of his eye-teeth.

"Now, dew look purty!" begged the lady, casting at him one of her most languishing glances.

The picture was taken, and when produced it reminded the girl, as she expressed it "just how Josh looked when he got over the measles!" and as this was not an era in her suitor's history particularly worthy of her commemoration she insisted that he should sit again. He obeyed and she attended him to the chair.

The poor fellow tried to follow the indefinite injunction.

"La!" she said, "why you look all pookered up!"

One direction followed another, but with as little success. At last growing impatient and becoming desperate, she resolved to try an expedient which she considered infallible, and exclaimed:

"I don't keer if there is folks around!"

She enjoined the operator to stand at his camera; she then sat in her feller's lap, placing her arms around his neck, managed to cast a shower of flaxen ringlets as a screen between the operator and her proceedings, which, however, were betrayed by a succession of amorous sounds which revealed her expedient.

When this "billing and cooing" had lasted a few minutes the cunning gal jumped from Josh's lap, and clapping her hands, cried to the astonished artist:

"Now you have got him! Put him through!"