

from its mouth, when we were seen by some Indians, who made signs for us to approach the shore.

After some hesitation we landed, and, to the disappointment of the Frenchmen, were received in a most friendly way by the Indians, who treated us with roasted ducks and venison. They furnished us a guide for a small reward, and we resumed our course without entertaining any further alarm on account of Indians. The weather was delightful, and we enjoyed ourselves as well as early travelers ever did. The river afforded splendid scenery; at times it flowed through large prairies, that formed a boundless area of fertile country, covered with luxuriant grass, and on which we frequently saw deer and elk feeding. Water fowl were abundant, and we could feast on them at every meal; while the river was swarming with excellent fish, that often formed a delicious addition to our other fare. There was no difficulty in killing game along that beautiful stream. Hardly an hour of the day passed but we had opportunities to shoot deer from the canoes, for it was the latter part of June, and in the heat of mid-day the animals would come down to the river, where in the shade of small groves that lined the river, they found a cool retreat. One of our party, a diminutive Frenchman, had a long Canadian duck-gun, of which he never ceased boasting; yet seldom confirmed his words, by making use of it. The barrel of the gun, independent of the stock, was full five feet in length. I had curiosity to see how it could shoot, and asked the owner to let me try it. He let me have the gun, and I loaded it with a heavy charge of powder, and seven slugs or pieces of bar lead, and then laid it beside me, in readiness for the first good shot.

Many chances offered where it was easy to have killed deer, but no notice was paid to them, and we continued to paddle up the river until near noon, when, just as the canoe passed around a head-land, I observed a noble stag, standing knee deep in water, on a bar, near the outlet of a small stream. He was about seven hundred feet from the canoe, with his side toward us, when I raised the long gun and fired. The deer dropped without a struggle, and, on hauling him ashore, we found that