

**A-HUNTING OF THE  
DEER, AND  
OTHER ESSAYS**

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A-hunting of the Deer, And Other Essays by Charles Dudley Warner

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**CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER**

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The Riverside Literature Series

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A-HUNTING OF THE DEER  
AND OTHER ESSAYS

BY

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER



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## CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER.

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

LIKE Mr. Aldrich, who played with his boyhood in *The Story of a Bad Boy*, Mr. Warner has treated himself as a sort of third person in *Being a Boy*, the scenes of which are laid in a primitive Massachusetts country neighborhood. The place which stood for its portrait in the book is Charlemont, near the eastern opening of the Hoosac tunnel. Here Mr. Warner spent his boyhood, removing to the place, when his father died, from Plainfield, in the same State, where he was born September 12, 1829. He was five years old when he was taken to Charlemont, and he remained there eight years, and then removed to Cazenovia, N. Y. His guardian intended him for business life, and placed him after his school days as clerk in a store, but his intellectual ambition was strong, and against all adverse fates he secured a collegiate education at Hamilton College, where he graduated in 1851. His college many years later conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Letters.

When he was in college he showed his bent for literature by contributing to the magazines of the day, and shortly after graduating compiled a *Book of Eloquence*. For the next half dozen years he was busy establishing himself in life, choosing the law at first as his profession, but really practicing the various pursuits which should finally qualify him for his predestined vocation as a man of letters. He spent two years in frontier life with a surveying party in Missouri, mainly to secure a more robust condition of body; he lectured, did hack work, wrote letters to journals, looked wistfully at public life and oratory, opened a law office in Chicago, and took what legal business he could find.

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It was while he was there, living by miscellaneous ventures that J. R. Hawley, now U. S. Senator from Connecticut, was attracted by the letters which Mr. Warner was contributing to his paper, the *Hartford Press*, and invited his correspondent to remove to Hartford and become assistant editor of the paper. This was shortly before the opening of the war for the Union. When Mr. Hawley entered the army, Mr. Warner became editor in chief; and when the *Press* became merged in the older and more substantial *Courant*, he became one of the proprietors and editors of that paper.

In that position he has ever since remained, although of late years he has been relieved from much of the office work of an editor. It was in connection with his journalistic duties that his first real stroke in literature was made. He was busy with the political discussions in which the press was involved, and most of his writing was of this sort. But his morning recreation in his garden suggested to him the relief of writing playful sketches for his paper, drawn from this occupation, and the popularity attending them led to a collection of the sketches in the well-known volume *My Summer in a Garden*.

In 1868 Mr. Warner went to Europe for a year and turned his travel-experience into sketches which were gathered into *Saunterings*. This was the beginning of his more distinctly literary life. He found his pleasure as well as his recuperation thereafter chiefly in rambling and in noting men and things. His more distinctive books of travel growing out of this habit have been *Baddeck and That Sort of Thing*, which is a humorous sketch of a journey in Nova Scotia and among the scenes of Longfellow's *Evangeline*; books of eastern travel, *My Winter on the Nile* and *In the Levant*; rambles chiefly in the Spanish peninsula under the name *A Roundabout Journey*, and a number of papers relating to American life and scenery gathered into the two volumes *Studies in the South and West* and *Our Italy*,



a warm eulogy of southern California. A genuine love of nature has borne fruit in the Adirondack sketches *In the Wilderness*, from which the contents of this selection are taken.

By a natural transfer of his own habit into a more purely literary expression, Mr. Warner wrote a book, half story, half travel, entitled *Their Pilgrimage*, which carried several characters from one watering-place in America to another, enabling him thus to sketch manners and make observations in a light, satiric vein, on some phases of American life. This venture it was that led him probably into the more positive field of fictitious literature, and he produced *A Little Journey in the World*, which, under the guise of story, was really a serious inquiry into the tendencies of social life when affected strongly by the insidious influence of wealth, especially newly-gotten wealth.

For the past few years Mr. Warner has had an editorial position on *Harper's Monthly*, and many of his contributions have been made to that magazine. The light, suggestive essay, best illustrated by his *Backlog Studies*, is perhaps the form of literature with which he is most identified, but the serious side of his nature is never held distinct from the humorous, as the vein of humor also runs through his more solid work. His interest in literature has always been strong, and has led him into the delivery of forcible addresses at college anniversaries and into the editorship of the *American Men of Letters* series, to which he has contributed a volume on Washington Irving, who was his first great admiration in modern literature. His interest in literature and travel has not been that of a dilettante. His humor is scarcely more prominent than his earnest thoughtfulness, and he has given practical expression to his thought in the part which he has taken in public affairs in Hartford and in the moving question of prison reform.

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## A-HUNTING OF THE DEER.

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If civilization owes a debt of gratitude to the self-sacrificing sportsmen who have cleared the Adirondack regions of catamounts and savage trout, what shall be said of the army which has so nobly relieved them of the terror of the deer? The deer-slayers have somewhat celebrated their exploits in print; but I think that justice has never been done them.

The American deer in the wilderness, left to himself, leads a comparatively harmless but rather stupid life, with only such excitement as his own timid fancy raises. It was very seldom that one of his tribe was eaten by the North American tiger. For a wild animal he is very domestic, simple in his tastes, regular in his habits, affectionate in his family. Unfortunately for his repose, his haunch is as tender as his heart. Of all wild creatures he is one of the most graceful in action, and he poses with the skill of an experienced model. I have seen the goats on Mount Pentelicus scatter at the approach of a stranger, climb to the sharp points of projecting rocks, and attitudinize in the most self-conscious manner, striking at once those picturesque postures against the sky with which Oriental pictures have made us and them familiar. But the whole proceeding was theatrical. Greece is the home of art, and it is rare to find anything there natural and unstudied. I presume that