

like a good many things in this world, appears all right till it's put to trial. Well, besides the swampers there's the choppers. They fell the trees—two to a tree. They cut in with their axes, and chip down, as they call it: that is, they make a slanting cut above the straight one that reaches down to the first cut, and by-and-by over goes the tree with a rush. They stand only a little one side, for they can tell almost exactly how one will fall, and any accident is very rare. Then they cut off the log the length they want, cut off a few of the lower branches perhaps, and leave the top behind. Then the log is ready to be hauled off. The teamster, with his six or eight ox-team, hitches the logs to his bob-sled, and hauls them to the river. They are hauled right on to the ice, so as to be all ready to start when the ice goes out. The life at a camp is a pleasant one; they live well; they don't have any great luxuries, but good, substantial victuals. They don't eat much butter, but molasses, pork, beef, and salt fish, they have in abundance. They drink both tea and coffee. The way they carry up potatoes is a little queer. You see they would freeze, if they weren't prepared beforehand. So they have fish boiled and potatoes boiled and mixed together, so that it makes hash fish. It is put down into barrels, and if it freezes it does no harm. They heat it over the fire, and it is all right."

"Well, now, tell me about the river-driving; isn't that hard work?"

"Sometimes it is, when the logs get into a jam; then there's a good deal of danger. But the lumber-

men are a courageous set of men, and never draw back from anything. It's very exciting getting off a jam, but they like it."

"Isn't there great loss of life?"

"There is some, but not so much as anybody would think. When the logs run down well, the men follow in batteaux. You've seen those sharp built, flattish bottomed boats, haven't you?"

"Yes; I've sailed, or rather been poled along in the Aroostook river in one."

"Well, the men will run over falls in them, in places where it would make a man's hair stand on end to go, if he wasn't used to it. If they hit a rock, they must get swamped, of course, but they can generally steer over safely. They sleep right in the open air at night, wrapped in a blanket, perhaps under their boats; though sometimes they have a rough camp put up at a narrow place, or near falls, where they usually have jams. These men can balance themselves almost like a rope-dancer. I've seen them stand on a log, with a long pick-pole, a pole that has an iron in the end of it, and steer that wet, slippery log anywhere, no matter if it keeps rolling, as they often do, over and over; the man keeps stepping too, and shoves the log just where he wants it to go. They can throw these poles, too, as accurately, and with as good aim, as a Nantucket whaleman would his harpoon."

Esther listened with evident interest. "They are a fine hardy-looking set of men," she said, "and look as if they might do almost anything that required steadiness of nerve. But now, one thing more. It

puzzles me to know how you get your logs separated from other people's, for they all float down the river together."

"Oh, we have our own mark on them; and when the logs get to the boom—do you know what a boom is?"

"Yes; piers and logs placed across a river, to keep the logs from going farther, isn't it?"

"Exactly. Well, when they get there, they are separated and rafted out. We have to pay the owners of the boom for it, what is called boomage. If we don't pay, the boom owners can sell the logs."

"I should think a good many logs would get lost."

"Well, I suppose they do. There are a great many leaks in the lumbering business, but we do a large one, and calculate to make enough to pay. It's like navigation; you either make or lose a good deal. It's a business that I like, for you can go into it strong."

"I suppose," said Esther, "that the logs are floated down from the boom to the saw-mills."

"Yes, they are. You've been into saw-mills, haven't you?"

"Quite often," replied Esther. "I always feel interested to look into the mills, to see those great saws move so steadily through the logs. It always reminds me of the movement of a steam-engine, and conveys the same idea of power."

"Yes, they are powerful," said the Colonel. "There's been great improvement in saw-mills, of late years."

"Not in the beauty of the buildings," said Esther, smiling.

"No, they are only shells, to be sure, though they're very strong; but finishing up is of no consequence. But the saws cut through a log six or eight times where they used to cut only once; so that it makes eight boards in the time it used to take to make one. There are thirty of those great saws going at once, sometimes, in a mill, under one roof, and a grand sight it is. It looks the best at night, when the torches flame out and shine on the water, and the men, in their red shirts, are at work tending the saws, getting up logs, and piling boards. You know they keep the mills going all the time that the water is high enough."

"I should think it would wear the men out," said Esther.

"Oh, they have two gangs, one for the day-time, and another set for the night-work. Did you ever see them get up the logs?"

"Yes, I have. They are hauled up those inclined planes that lead into the water, I believe."

"Yes, they're fastened to iron chains, by having an iron spike, which is called a *dog*, driven into one end of them several inches; then this chain is fastened by a wheel to the carriage, as the frame on which the logs rest as they pass under the saw is called, and it is hauled up by the saw, which at the same time goes on making boards."

"It's very interesting to watch the men at work," said Esther. "I always like to see them, as the saw cuts steadily through, and the log slides slowly along, put other logs in the place of the last ones, and edge

the boards and slide them off. Then the lath machine, where they make laths of the slabs, I always like to watch. They don't seem to waste much in the mills."

"No, nothing but the edgings which they trim off the outside of the boards, and those drift down the river and make fire-wood for poor folks. It looks well to see the men raft boards, don't you think so?"

"Yes," said Esther, "there's no part of the operations of a mill that is uninteresting to me. I don't wonder that they like their business. There is something exhilarating to *me*, even, in the roar of the water, the whizzing of the saw, and the crashing of the logs. It always makes my blood run quicker to look on."

"It gets to be more of an old story to the workmen," said Gordon, "but still they like it. You see some of the same men work all winter in the woods, logging, drive logs in the spring, and if they get the drive down early enough, work in the saw-mills in the summer. So you see they have variety enough."

"But I wish you could see a saw-mill at night. I have seen them when I've been riding late, on the opposite side of the river, looking as if they were illuminated, and so bright and cheerful that it really seemed like seeing an old friend; they look as pleasant as a light-house to a sailor."

"I *have* seen one at night," replied Esther, "and it left quite a different impression on my mind from that of which you speak. It was when I was quite a child, and riding with my father at night; as he left no opportunity unimproved to show me all that pertained

to his business, that of lumbering, he took me into a mill which we were passing.

"It was rather dark out of doors, and when he led me over the bridge that leads out to the mill, and the red glare of the lights streamed full in my face, I shuddered, and clung closer to his hand."

"The various sounds of which you speak—the whizzing saws, the crashing logs, and the roar of the water—struck an awe over me, and as I looked on the stalwart frames of the workmen, in their picturesque garb, working in the lurid light, I could hardly realize that they were mortals; and as I shrunk closer to my father's side, the idea of the beauty of the scene was lost in its grandeur and wildness. I had been reading fairy tales, and it seemed to me almost as if I had a glimpse into the interior of the earth, where gnomes that I had read of were piling the mammoth piles which, burning, would burst out in the flames of myriad volcanoes."

"It always left a vivid picture in my mind; but now, smiling at my childish impressions, I remember only the beauty of the scene, and when I began to make the acquaintance of the heathen gods, I felt as if I had already had a glance into sturdy old Vulcan's workshop."

The Colonel smiled. "I never have any fanciful or spiritual thoughts about these men," said he; "I look on them as practical mortals, and as fine specimens of mortality too."

"The lumbermen are a good deal like the sailors in character, aren't they?" asked Esther.

"Yes, some. They are just as fearless and jovial, but I think they are rather more intelligent. They are generous, but not such spendthrifts as sailors. They like a spree, but don't make that, their whole business when they get out of the woods. They have a great fancy for beauty, and as they don't see ladies for so long a time when they are in the camp, they all look handsome to them when they do get out, and they are very apt to compliment them, when they get into the city."

"Yes," replied Esther, laughing, "no matter how plain a woman is, she stands a chance of getting any passable feature complimented in the streets of Bangor, in June or July, by the red-shirters, when the city is full of them. They often follow a woman for a considerable distance, commenting on her various charms. We know it is only meant for mischief, and don't mind it at all. I like the looks of those red shirts; they look so comfortable, but yet I shouldn't think they would be warm enough for these cold winters."

"Oh, they keep putting on one after another till they have on five or six at a time, and even more. They are warm, and not too clumsy. Their dress is for convenience; now, those long thick boots, that reach up to the knee, are capital things.

"But I guess you've heard enough of this, now. Have you made up your mind to go into the business? Because, if you have, and would like a partner, why, I wouldn't object to taking you in, myself."

He looked at her in a quizzical way as he spoke.

Esther laughed. "Thank you! I dare say it would

be more profitable than school-teaching, but I doubt whether I should be so well fitted for it."

"Oh, I have no doubt that you would make an excellent partner; one that would just suit me."

"Whey! what you about!" he suddenly exclaimed, as his horse plunged, reared, and came to a dead halt, trembling violently, and apparently much frightened at something which he saw.

"Go lang!" shouted his master in a stentorian voice; but the animal only plunged and backed.

A sudden change came over the Colonel's frank face: he seemed to forget Esther entirely, but whipped his horse unmercifully, without effect. He sprang from the sleigh.

"Don't be frightened," he said, glancing at Esther's pale face, as he hurried up to his horse, dealt him several violent blows with his clenched fist, about the head, and with an oath, exclaimed, "Will you go lang now?"

Esther supposed that he would lead the animal past the swaying, withered branch of the fallen tree, which had so frightened him; but no, the Colonel had no idea of making a compromise with his horse. He sprang again into the sleigh, and this time the animal, with a bound, leaped past the terrible object, as if he well knew that he must obey.

"Now that's what I like," said the Colonel, as he tucked the buffalo robes, which had got displaced during this struggle, again round Esther, seeming in no hurry to withdraw his arm from the back of the sleigh. "You didn't scream like so many silly fools,

though you did look so frightened. It was nothing, only when I want a horse to go anywhere he's got to do it."

"I don't know which I was most afraid of," replied Esther, "you or the horse, you looked so terribly black and ugly."

The Colonel laughed.

"I know it don't take much to get my temper up, but then it's a flash and soon over."

"I shall begin to believe that a ride is the best way to form an acquaintance," said Esther, "for I begin to think that I've known you a long while."

"Certainly I'm glad to hear it. Now that's the best way. Where's the sense in being on your best behavior a few months and then letting the cat out of the bag—show out what you are! That's my notion. You can do it just as well in a few days as in a year."

"Much obliged for my ride," said Esther as they approached Mrs. Simpson's.

The Colonel had a great mind to claim something more than thanks, but a glance at Esther's calm, quiet face seemed to satisfy him that she would be much offended at any familiarities, and he handed her very politely from the sleigh.

He seemed to be in high spirits, and gave to Elvira the kiss that he had meditated bestowing upon Esther, at which that young lady tossed her head, and exclaimed, "Wall, I never!" She looked rather cross for a moment, but speedily recovered her equanimity.

CHAPTER XIII.

COLONEL GORDON.

THE next day after the sleigh-ride, Colonel Gordon left Umcoleus, and though he had been so recent an acquaintance, Esther really felt sorry, for she liked him notwithstanding his peculiarities.

"He's a smart feller," said Mr. Simpson when the family were sitting together in the evening, as the conversation turned on *people*, which is apt to be the case when there is either a lack of thoughts in the minds of the persons talking, or of congeniality, for to discuss the characteristics of others is always interesting to high or low, since it is a subject on which we feel perfectly at home, and therefore are apt to allow ourselves the largest liberty.

"He's a good hearted man as ever was," continued Mr. Simpson, "as free of his money as ef it was dirt, but he won't stand cheatin' nohow. He's alus in law-suits for ever and eternally."

"He's great on fast drivin, and as sure as they hev a law agin it, in the city, he'll be sure to cut on like blazes and drive through the streets as ef the old Harry was arter him; then when they take him up, he knows law enough to plead his own case, and ef