

Fresh and happy the men came forth from their wash-up. Young men who had been cradled on cedar boughs with the heavens for a curtain; old men who, from a loom or a shoemaker's bench, had come out, armed only with an axe and energy that, looked at from our fifty years of civilized comforts, seems superhuman.

Laughing and chaffing each other, without an appearance of ceremony, they seat themselves at table. Grace was said, for they were God-fearing men, those hardy first settlers. The table was primitive, set out under the trees; round blocks, sawn from a goodly sized pine tree, formed supports; boards, sawed by hand, resting on these, the table: it was not as firm as was desirable, but a general good feeling made everything all right. Lower blocks supported boards for seats. A table-cloth, home-raised, home-spun, home-woven, and home-bleached, covered the table, and dishes borrowed from more than one gudewife eked out Margaret's own store. On the table was the barley brose we have heard of, a "real Scotch haggis," a sheep's head with dumplings, and many cakes of many kinds; shaved maple sugar, rich and creamy, sweetened the strawberries; the tea alone was of foreign manufacture.

Philip Maxwell was bidden to a seat and duly introduced; each man heartily shook hands with him; ere five minutes the freedom of the Scotch line was tendered him, also that of a goodly portion of the ninth. He gracefully, and presumably gratefully, accepted this, though inwardly chafing at sitting at table and being waited upon by Jean, who, assisted by three or four lassies, was assiduously "passing things."

None of the mothers or daughters had dinner