

turned one way by coming to openings, and another by the noise of wood-choppers, or ox drivers, and emerged for food to a house that appeared isolated, where I found that in the whole time I had only gained about fifty rods in direct distance. One of my legs having become useless, my supporters had performed the action of a pair of dividers,—one leg standing still, while the other walked round it. Rested and re refreshed, I continued my route till near dark, when I passed through a clearing,—the place of future farms, with five log-houses. Inquiring at the last one for a wood-road leading towards Stanbridge, I again entered the forest, fired my carbine as if I was looking for game, and sunk exhausted. The leg that had been dragged all day, not only refused to be dragged any longer, but the other, which had so patiently endured the toil, refused to drag it. With such mutinous members, and a snow-storm commencing, the greatest of all dangers was remaining thus unsheltered for the night, and I turned back to the first house, determined to risk it with the best story I could devise. As I approached, I met the owner, to whom I said, quite unconcerned :

"I was going through the woods to Truax Mills, but it looks so much like a snow-storm, that I would like to get lodgings in your house."

He looked an instant in my face, and exclaimed :

"Brown ! I know you ; but here you have four friends, and are safe. I have just come from the 'Flat' (Dunham village). You were seen this morning. There is ten thousand dollars offered, and they are all after you. Old Captain Smith was fixing his old gun. I told the old cuss it wouldn't go off ; but he swore he'd shoot you if he see'd you. I daren't take you into my house."

All this was hurriedly uttered, almost in one breath, as he dragged me hastily by the shoulder to his barn.

A council of the four friends was called on the barn-floor. They could devise no means of escape except walking immediately across the fields or woods, ten miles, to

the lines. This I modestly informed them was impracticable, unless they provided for me a new pair of legs. A thick quilt, and a good supper were brought, and I remained two nights and one day in a hole, burrowed far into the hay mow. What a contrast with my previous night's lodging on the snow, under an old hemlock top,—I don't forget what a scraggy one it was,—how few the branches, and how few the leaves ! Young hemlock furnishes capital bedding. I never enjoyed any bed-room like that nest in the hay. The swelling of my limbs diminished rapidly.

Let those who speak of "low" people, and "lower classes," think of the high honor and high mindedness of these four poor but independent men, perfect strangers, not one of whom I had ever seen or heard of before. The two thousand dollars really offered for my apprehension would have paid off the arrears on all their land, and left them a surplus ; but not one entertained the thought, while hundreds, higher up in the world's catalogue, would have sold me like a dog, not for "loyalty," but for the gain,—to be wasted in frivolities.

But luxuries must have their end. The furnishing of food necessarily caused the secret of my hiding-place to be known to the women of the house, who, finding it too weighty, called on others to help them keep it. I moved for one day to another barn. My friend said it was dangerous to stop longer. He had heard a man say he would bet twenty-five cents that I was in one of the barns of that neighborhood. My boots were greased, a thick pair of stockings provided, a good supper eaten, and with a young man for guide, I set out on Friday evening, the 8th of December, to finish my journey to the States.

By the roads it was ten miles to the lines, but supposing they were guarded, we passed through the fields and woods. The snow was some inches deep ; and, through weakness, I was obliged to rest frequently. Great precaution was necessary as we approached the lines, my guide going frequently ahead to inquire our whereabouts, to