

having broken up with one tremendous crash. Huge blocks were first hurled some distance down the river, then piled up one above another until they reached the summit of the bank fifty or sixty feet high, and being deposited there in huge unsightly masses, were left to thaw away drop by drop, a process which it would take some five or six weeks to accomplish. Some of the men had lately returned from a bear hunt, being, however, disappointed of their prey—a matter of less consideration than usual, for Bruin, being but lately roused from his long winter sleep, was in a less prime condition than he would be a few weeks later. Michel, the hunter, had one of his “ugly fits” upon him;—this was known throughout the camps. The women only shrugged their shoulders, and kept clear of his lodge. The men paid him but little attention, even when he skulked in for awhile after dark to smoke his pipe by their camp fire. But on this morning neither Michel nor his wife had been seen outside their camp; only one or two of the children had turned out at a late hour and looked wistfully about, as if long-