

blanket for my feet, and one to sit on, or put over the shoulders, as the state of the weather made advisable; we did not wear our boots, we wore moccasins which were warmer to one who meant to remain in the sleigh; those who were restless and liked to have a walk or run now and then, kept their boots on; one of our blankets was doubled up and sewed up the side, thus forming a bag for the feet. There were 160 men to go to-day belonging to the 3rd, 4th, and 5th companies; these occupied 20 sleighs, 8 in each, 1 for the officers, and 2 with baggage, 23 in all; being the centre companies we had the colours with us; the sleighs we went in were just long boxes with seats in them, the boxes being fastened to two traverse bars, which slipped along easily over the smooth snow or ice; we were seated in twos, facing each other; our firelocks had been sewed up in pieces of canvass to protect them from damp; they, and our knapsacks and accoutrements were stowed away below the seats, and amongst our feet; we wore our baversocks on our shoulders; they contained a day's ration in advance, and something warmer in the shape of a bottle of rum, and a bundle of cigars, with a box of matches to light them. By half past 7 we had all got into our blankets, and looked like a lot of men going to run a sack race; we had a buffalo robe to spread over our knees, and with the other blanket over our shoulders seemed as if we could defy cold; vain thought, as we afterwards found out. We now started, and dashed along the streets, to the music of the sleigh bells, which are hung on the harness of every horse to give intimation of their approach; as the sleigh makes no noise in its progress over the snow, they would be dangerous to foot passengers if they had no bells; numbers of the inhabitants were in the streets to see us off, others peered from their windows, hardly awake, and wondering what all the stir was about; we soon left the town behind, and in a few minutes we were on the river St. John, our road lying across a bay on the river; you must remember that all the rivers in this part of the country are frozen over, and are used as roads; the ice is from 2 to 4 feet in thickness; the roads across rivers are marked by branches of trees stuck in the snow; were it not for this precaution, people would often get lost in the snow storms which occur so often and so suddenly; the roads were very rough and full of ruts, which made the sleighs jolt terribly, sometimes nearly throwing us out; the scenery to day was most beautiful; at one time we were on the crest of a high hill, the country below us broken into hill upon bill, glen upon glen, and all covered with forests of large, beautiful and useful trees, such as the American pine, which may not improperly be called the king of the American forests, it overtops all the other trees, and is entirely destitute of branches, until within a short distance of the top; the average height in New Brunswick of the pine is 100 feet, but in the backwoods they sometimes attain to the enormous attitude of 200 feet. The sugar-maple is another most interesting and valuable tree; it is from this tree that maple-sugar is made; in the months of March and April they generally make their sugar, they commence by boring a hole in the tree two or three feet from the ground, and then inserting a reed in the hole; the sap is allowed to run into tubs; one person can attend to a great many trees; the sap is collected and boiled in large coppers, the scum being taken off, fresh sap added, and reboiled, strained and allowed to cool, when it crystallizes; the fineness of the sugar depends on the skill of the person who attends the coppers whilst they are boiling; the refuse makes a very fine molasses; various other valuable trees grow in these forests, such as the cedar, birch, ash, larch, cypress, and many other varieties unknown in Europe. At one time we got into a glen, with a rock rising at our side 1000 feet, in nearly perpendicular height; although the rock was so steep, it bore a dense crop of trees; it seemed most astonishing where they got nourishment from, there being very little soil; looking up at this tremendous rock, one wishes that he were not quite so near the base of it; you fancy you can see a lump of rock on the face of the precipice just ready to tumble down, and grind you to an impalpable powder; the driver of the sleigh told me the name of this rock, but it has now escaped my memory; we saw numerous clearings, with houses on them of all sorts and sizes, and of all the orders of architecture that have ever been known. Before I go farther I must explain what clearings are; in a few words, a clearing is another name for farm; when a settler comes out and buys a piece of land, he generally finds it covered with trees; his first duty is to build a house for himself, and the next to find one of a larger size to serve as a barn and byre; he then attacks the trees, cutting