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ain't out yet. You can see it smoking there, in the edge of the timber."

This, then, explained a part of the blackened desolateness of the little hamlet. The wall of fir forests which had seemed its protection had proved its dire danger. A belt of charred trees, gaunt as a forest of ebony masts, showed where the fires had blazed along, and came near sweeping away the village.

"It was well the wind went down when it did," the little maid continued sagely. "I expect if it had n't, you would n't have found any of us here. It was just as hot's anything, all round; an' you could n't get your breath."

Looking around, one realized the terrible danger of forest fires in such a spot. The little village was walled on three sides by a forest of firs and cedars, from one hundred to three hundred feet high; and we had come through miles of such forests, so dense that only a few feet back from their outer edge the shade became darkness impenetrable by the eye. There is a sombre splendor about these dark forests of giant trees, which it would be hard to analyze, and impossible to render by any art. Language and color alike fall short of expressing it.

The school was in a rough boarded room which had been originally built for a store. The hats, bonnets, books, and slates were piled on the shelves, and the thirty children sat on high benches, their feet swinging clear of the floor. There was not a robust or healthy-faced child in the room, and their thin, pale cheeks were a sad commentary on the conditions of their lives. Later in the day, as I walked from home to home, and saw everywhere slow-trickling streams of filthy water, blue, iridescent, and foul-odored, I wondered not that the children were pale, but that they were alive. The history class was reciting a memorized list of "epochs," when I went in. They had them at their tongues' ends. I suggested to the

teacher to ask them what the word "epoch" meant. Blank dismay spread over their faces. One girl alone made answer. She was an Indian, or perhaps half-breed, fourteen years of age; the healthiest child and the best scholar in the school, the teacher said. "The time between," was her prompt definition of the word epoch, given with a twinkle in her eye of evident amusement that the rest did not know what it meant. The first class in reading, then read from the Fourth Independent Reader, in stentorian voices, Trowbridge's poem of *The Wonderful Sack*. The effect of slight changes of a single letter here and there was most ludicrously illustrated by one sturdy little chap's delivery of the lines,

"His limbs were strong,
His beard was long."

With loud and enthusiastic emphasis he read them,

"His lambs were strong,
His bread was long."

Not a member of the class changed countenance, or gave any sign of disagreeing with his interpretation of the text; and the teacher, being engaged in herculean efforts to keep the poor little primary bench still, failed to hear the lines.

As soon as school was out, most of the children went to work carrying water. The only water in the village is in a huge tank behind the engine-house. From this each family must draw its supply. It was sad to see children not over six or seven years old lugging a heavy pail of water in each hand.

"I've got all the wash-water to carry this afternoon," said my little guide; "so I've got to be excused from school. My mother did n't wash to day, because she wa'n't well. Most always we get the wash-water Sundays."

"You'll be sure to go down the incline, won't you," she added; "that's splendid. I'd just like to go up an' down in that car all the time. It's