

destination was but 12 miles off, to reach a relief party on the banks of Black River; and some idea may be formed of the difficulty of the route, as it took nearly four days to perform this short journey, for the snow was still deep, and too wet and soft for snow-shoes. On arriving at Black River, a stream about the size of the Jacques Cartier, we found it broken up, and the ice rapidly descending. The relief party had arrived at the opposite side, and the question was, how to get the provisions across which were so urgently wanted by the surveying party ahead. No raft or canoe could have lived an instant amongst such rapids, filled with broken masses of ice. Proceeding for half a mile up the river, I observed a sharp angle in it just at the head of a rapid, in the middle of which was a large rock; on the opposite shore was growing a magnificent pine tree partly overhanging the stream. With some difficulty I prevailed upon the men on the other side to cut down the tree, which fell with a fearful crash, and then floated heavily down, and fortunately jammed across the large rock at the head of the rapid. No time was to be lost, it might remain there for a day, or part in an instant. The tree, although a very large pine, did not reach across the river; there was still a distance of about forty feet on each side to reach the top and butt; the connection was easily performed on the other side, as the water was not so rapid, but it became a difficult matter to bridge from the shore on which I was standing to the top of the tree, as the water was deep and strong, and the bank high: several trees were cut down for that purpose, but although they reached the top of the pine, the rapidity of the stream carried them instantly away. Having a sufficiency of rope I ordered the branches to be lopped off a lofty spruce, to the top of which the rope was tied, and carried up the stream; the