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## THE SQUATTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE HALLS OF THE NORTH," ETC. ETC.

"Oh! don't stop at that man's house, Sir! let us return to the better beaten track."

"What man's—where is he? What are you staring at?"

"There he is, Sir, sure enough! As I hope to be saved, that's *him!* look, look just behind that big basswood stump! No, no, you can only see his hat now. But I saw his face plain enough, and I could swear to it anywhere,—so could any one who had once seen it."

I turned and looked in the direction pointed out by my servant.

But to make my story intelligible I see I must begin afresh.

In the year——I forget what year it was,—I was stationed with a detachment of the——Regiment, at Carillon, on the Ottawa River, at the foot of the rapids from which the village takes its name. I had little or nothing to do and my time hung heavy on my hands. And what made it worse, it was the dead of winter.

I was always fond of field sports, and having heard that moose and other deer had been seen among the mountains in that vicinity, I determined upon an excursion in quest of them. To accomplish my object I applied for and obtained a short leave of absence from my post.

After due preparations made, which consisted in packing up as many little necessaries as could well be crammed into two soldiers' knapsacks, one for myself and the other for my servant, we set off in a sleigh.

It was a fine bright morning, and so early that a twinkling star or two could still be seen struggling with the twilight. The roads were good, as smooth as glass, and we glided along at a rapid rate. It was a beautiful and romantic drive; with the river on one side, whose swift current, with its voice of "many waters," never freezes,

and the majestic mountains rearing aloft their bare and craggy summits far above the dense interminable forests at their base. In a little more than an hour we reached Grenville, at the head of the Long Sault. Here we turned off to the right for the interior of the mountainous regions away to the northward. Our progress now was much impeded by the heavy roads; the inhabitants being too thinly scattered to be able to keep them well broken. If the first part of our journey was beautifully picturesque, this was romantic and magnificently grand. At first we ascended hill after hill, and then a short but steep descent and round a beetling rock or two which warded off the cold nor-wester that we felt so keenly on the higher ground. It was indeed that day a bitter blast directly in our teeth.

On travelling some ten or fifteen miles after we had diverged from the river, the roads became so intolerably bad that I determined to leave my horse and sleigh at the first house I came to, and proceed on snow shoes. About an hour after coming to this determination, in which we could not have made above three miles, when my horse was nearly knocked up, and my patience as nearly exhausted, we were delighted, on reaching the top of a little hill, to perceive the smoke from a lonely cottage curling up, in light and fleecy folds through the thick foliage of the evergreen forest in the swampy valley beneath. On descending the hill we found a solitary track leading off to the left of the road we were going. This we naturally concluded led to the cottage, although we could now neither see it nor even the smoke from its chimney. We were right in our conjectures however, and after plunging through the snow for a couple of hundred yards or so we came out into a small clearing right upon it. The moment we did so, the keen sharp eye of my old and