

ville. Old Bill, our big Irish cook, has finished the dish washing, and has laid the table for breakfast.

"Now, give us a song, Dick Green," says Old Bill to the son of an Irish settler, who has walked two miles through the mud and rain to spend Sunday evening in the shanty.

Dick had been waiting for the last half-hour for an invitation to sing, and for fear some one would commence to tell a story, and the proposal be forgotten, he cleared his throat at once, and in a hoarse voice, with a strong nasal twang, began to recount the adventures and peculiarities of "Bryan O'Linn."

"By the piper that played before Moses on the big bridge at Belfast, you were born for the stage, Mr. Green," said Old Bill, when the song was finished. "If ould Welch, in Detroit, had ye, he'd be making his fortin out o' ye."

"Give us another song," said Pat Sullivan, who had been a sailor on the lakes before he turned lumberman.

Mr. Green declined to sing any more till some one else favoured the company; and accordingly Mr. Sullivan gave a stirring picture of nautical life, with the inspiring refrain—

"You ought to see us howlin' when the wind was blowin' free,
On the passage down to Buffalo from Milwau-kee-c-c."

Other songs followed, by different members of the gang, most of them commencing with the inevitable couplet—

"As I went out walking one morning in spring,
For to hear the birds whistle and the nightingales sing."

After these, in turn, came stories of hair-breadth escapes on the drive in days gone by, and incredible accounts of the endurance of wonderful horses long since departed; till the fire burnt low and its flickering flames sent hosts of little shadows dancing about the edges of the blackened rafters, and one long story was sleepily drawn out to an accompaniment of snores that almost drowned the monotonous voice of the narrator.

Suddenly, however, there was a splashing of horses' feet as they scrambled up the

muddy hill behind the shanty, and a loud "whoa" brought the sleepers back to consciousness. A "cadge" team had come in, and in a few minutes the newly arrived teamster was taking off his dripping clothes before the fire.

"What's the news, Jim?" sang out the foreman, Black Ben, from his nest in a corner next the stable.

"Nothin'," replies Jim.

"How's the road through the bush?"

"Beastly! got stuck twice gittin' up Tom White's hill. The ole mare's awful bar'ky to-night. Had to knock her down twice with a handspike to larn her sense."

"Did you fetch all yer load with you?"

"I left a bar'l of pork at White's."

"Was Tom to hum?"

"No; you see one o' Chester Bronson's youngsters has bin lost since 'bout three o'clock, and the hull settlement's out lookin' fer him, an' Tom's along of 'em."

"How old is the kid?"

"It's little Dan; I've seed him; jess 'bout the size o' your Jack; five or six, p'rhaps."

Black Ben gets up, swears viciously at the projecting edge of a rough slab in the floor on which he stubs his toe in making his way to the fire, and having reached the caboose, rakes out a live coal and lights his pipe. After one or two puffs he takes his pipe out of his mouth and remarks—

"That's pooty rough."

"What's rough?" asks Jim, with his mouth full of cold pork and molasses, and who, in the enjoyment of his "snack," had forgotten all about his former conversation.

"'Bout that young un bein' lost sich a night as this, an' in these cussed woods, whar bars and wolves is thicker'n hair on a dog."

"Chester's in an awful way 'bout the little feller. They've been draggin' all the deep holes in the creek, but can't get no signs of him; guess he's chawed up afore this." And with this cheerful assurance Jim proceeds to "chaw up" his "snack" once more.

Black Ben again put his pipe in his mouth and puffed away for a few seconds in silence. At last he remarked—

"I b'lieve we orter help Chester find his youngster."

This proposal was thrown out in a sort of deprecatory suggestive tone, as if he was asking his men to keep some other foreman's drive from jamming.

"Guess we've got enough'n our own work