

rends in two, and the huge jam, suddenly released, bursts away from the rock and charges tumultuously down the river!

If ever man needed the power of prompt decision, it was the foreman then. To the men on shore there seemed no possible way of escape from the avalanche of logs; and Frank shut his eyes lest he should have to witness a dreadful tragedy. A cry from the men caused him to open them again quickly; and when he looked at the rock it was untenanted—Johnston had disappeared! Speechless with dread, he turned to the man nearest him, his blanched countenance expressing the inquiry he could not utter.

"He's there!" cried the man pointing to the whirl of water behind the body of logs. "He dived."

And so it was. Recognizing that to remain in the way of the jam was to court certain death, the foreman chose the desperate alternative of diving beneath the logs, and allowing them to pass over him before he rose to the surface. Great was the relief of Frank and the others when, amid the foaming water, Johnston's head appeared and he struck out to keep himself afloat. But it was evident that he had little strength left, and was quite unable to contend with the mighty current. Good swimmer as he was, the danger of drowning threatened him.

Frank's quick eye noticed this, and like a flash the fearless boy, not stopping to call any of the others to his aid, bounded down the bank to where the *bonne* lay upon the shore, shoved her off into deep water, springing in over the bow as she slipped away, and in another moment was whirling down the river, crying out at the top of his voice:

"I'm coming! I'll save you! Keep up!"

His eager shouts reached Johnston's ears, and the sight of the boat, pitching and tossing as the current swept it toward him, inspired him to renewed exertion. He struggled to get in the way of the boat, and succeeded so well that Frank, leaning over the side as far as he dared, was able to seize his outstretched hand and hold it until he could grasp the gunwale himself with a grip that no current could loosen. A glad shout of relief went up from the men at sight of this, and Frank, having made sure that the foreman was now out of danger, seized the oars and began to ply them vigorously with the purpose of beaching the *bonne* at the first opportunity. They had to go some distance before this could be done, but Johnston held on firmly, and presently a projecting point was reached against which Frank steered the boat; and the moment she was aground, he hastened to the stern and helped the foreman ashore, the latter having just strength enough left to drag himself out of the water, and fall in a limp, dripping heap, upon the ground.

"God bless you, Frank dear," he said, as soon as he recovered his breath. "You've saved my life again. I never could have got ashore if you hadn't come after me. One of the logs must have hit me on the head when I was diving; for I felt so faint and dizzy when I came up that I thought it was all over with me. But, thank God, I'm a live man still; and I'm sure it's not for nothing that I've been spared."

The men all thought it a plucky act on Frank's part to go off alone in the boat to the foreman's rescue, and showered unstinted praise upon him, all of which he took very quietly; for, indeed, he felt quite sufficiently rewarded in that his venture was crowned with success. The exciting incident, of course, threw everybody out in their work; and when they returned to it they found that the logs had taken advantage of their being left uncared for to play all sorts of queer pranks, and run themselves aground in every conceivable fashion.

But the river drivers did not mind this very much. The hated Black Rapids were passed, and the rest of the Kippewa was comparatively smooth sailing. So, with song and joke, they toiled away until all their charges were afloat again and gliding steadily onward toward their goal. Thenceforward they had little interruption in their course; and Frank found the life wonderfully pleasant, drifting idly all day long in the *bonne*, and camping at night beside the river, the weather being bright and warm, and delightful all the time.

So soon as the Kippewa ralled its burden of forest swells out upon the broad bosom of the Ottawa—the Grand River, as those



BREAKING A LOG JAM.

who live beside its banks love to call it—the work of the river drivers was over. The logs that had caused them so much trouble were now handed over to the care of a company which gathered them up into "tows," and with powerful steamers dragged them down the river until the sorting grounds were reached, where they were turned into the "booms" to await their time for execution—in other words, their sawing up.

Frank felt really sorry when the driving was over. He loved the water, and would have been glad to spend the whole summer upon it. He was telling Johnston this as they were talking together on the evening of the last day upon the Kippewa. Johnston had been saying to him how glad he must be that the work was all over, and that they now could go over to the nearest village and take the stage for home. But Frank did not entirely agree with him.

"I'm not anxious to go home by stage," said he. "I'd a good deal rather stick to the river. I think it's just splendid, so long as the weather's fine."

"Why, what a water dog you are, Frank!" said the foreman, laughing. "One would think you'd have had enough of the water by this time."

"Not a bit of it," said Frank, returning the smile. "The woods in winter, and the water in summer—that's what I enjoy."

"Well, but aren't you in a hurry to get home and see your mother again?" queried Johnston.

"Of course I am," answered Frank. "But, you see, a day or two won't make much difference, for she doesn't know just when to look for me; and I've never been on this part of the Ottawa, and want to see it ever so much."

"Well—let me see," reflected Johnston. "How can we manage it? You'd soon get sick of the steamers. They're mortal slow and very dirty. Besides, they don't encourage passengers, or they'd have too many of them. But hold on!" he exclaimed, his face lighting up with a new idea. "I've got it. How would you like to finish the rest of the trip home on a square timber raft? There'll be one passing any day, and I know 'most all the men in the business; so there'll be no difficulty about getting a passage."

"The very idea!" cried Frank, jumping up and bringing his hand down upon his thigh with a resounding slap. "Nothing would please me better. Oh, what fun it will be shooting the slides!" And he danced about in delight at the prospect.

"All right, then, my lad," said Johnston, smiling at the boy's exuberance. "We'll just wait here until a raft comes along, and then we'll board her and ask the fellows to let us go down with them. They won't refuse."

They had not long to wait; for the very next day a huge raft hove in sight—a real floating island of mighty timbers—and, on going out to it, in the *bonne*, Johnston was glad to find that the foreman in charge was an old friend who would be heartily pleased at having his company for the rest of the voyage. So he and Frank brought their scanty baggage on board and joined themselves to the crew of men that, with the aid of a towing steamer, were navigating this strange kind of craft down the river.

This was an altogether novel experience for Frank, and he found it much to his liking. The raft was an immense one.

"As fine a lot of square timber as I ever took down," said its captain, proudly. "It's worth forty thousand dollars, if it's worth a cent."

Forty thousand dollars! Frank's eyes opened wide at the mention of this vast sum, and he wondered to himself if he should ever be the owner of such a valuable piece of property. Although he had begun as a chore-boy, his ambition was by no means limited to his becoming in due time a foreman like Johnston, or even an overseer like Alec Stewart. He allowed his imagination to carry him forward to a day of still greater things, when he should be his own master, and have foremen and overseers under him. This slow sailing down the river was very favourable to day-dreaming, and Frank could indulge himself to his heart's content during the long lovely spring days. There were more than two-score men upon the raft, the majority of them *habitants* and half-breeds, and they were as full of songs as robins; especially in the evening, after supper, when they would gather about the great fire, always burning on its clay bed in the centre of the raft, and with solo chorus awake the echoes of the placid river.

In common with the rivers which pour into it, the Ottawa is broken by many falls and rapids, and to have attempted to run the huge raft over one of these would have insured its complete destruction. But this difficulty is duly provided for. At one side of the fall a "slide" is built—that is, a contrivance something like a canal, with sides and bottom of heavy timber, and having a steep slope down which the water rushes in frantic haste to the level below. Now the raft is not put together in one piece, but is made up of a number of "cribs"—a crib being a small raft containing fifteen to twenty timbers, and being about twenty-four feet wide by thirty feet in length. At the head of the slide the big raft is separated into the cribs, and these cribs make the descent one at a time, each having three or four men on board.

Shooting the slides, as it is called, is a most delightful amusement to people whose nerves don't bother them. Frank had heard so much about it that he was looking forward to it from the time he boarded the raft, and now at Des Joachim Falls he was to have the realization. He went down in one of the first cribs, and this is the way he described the experience to his mother:

"But, mother, the best fun of the whole thing is shooting the slides. I just wish there was a slide near Calumet, so that I could take you down and let you see how splendid it is. Why, it's just like—let me see—I've got it! It's just like tobogganing on water. You jump on board the crib at the mouth of the slide, you know, and it moves along very slow at first—until it gets to the edge of the first slant; then it takes a sudden start and away it goes scooting down like greased lightning, making the water fly up all around you, just like the snow does when you're tobogganing. Oh, but if it isn't grand! The timbers of the crib rub against the bottom of the slide and groan and creak as if it hurt them; and then, besides coming in over the bow, the water spurts up between the timbers, so that you have to look spry or you're bound to get soaking wet. I got drenched nearly every time; but that didn't matter, for the sun soon made me dry again, and it was too good fun to mind a little wetting."

Frank felt quite sorry when the last of the slides was passed, and wished there were twice as many on the route of the raft. But presently he had something else to occupy his thoughts, for each day brought him nearer to Calumet, and soon his journeyings by land and water would be ended, and he would be at home again to make his mother's heart glad.

It was the perfection of a spring day when the raft, moving in its leisurely fashion—for was not the whole summer before it?—reached Calumet, and Mrs. Kingston, sitting alone in her cottage, and wondering when her boy would make his appearance, was surprised by an unceremonious opening of the front door, a quick step in the hall, and a sudden enfolding by two stout arms, while a voice that she had not heard for months shouted in joyous accents:

"Here I am, mother darling, safe and sound, right side up with care, and oh, so glad to be at home again!"

Mrs. Kingston returned the fond embrace with interest, and then held Frank off at arms-length to see how much he had changed during his six-months' absence. She found him both taller and stouter, and with his face well browned by the exposure to the bright spring sunshine.

"You went away a boy, and you've come back almost a man, Frank," she said, her eyes brimming with tears of joy. "But you're my own boy the same as ever; aren't you, darling?"

It was many a day before Frank reached the end of his story of life at the lumber camp, for Mrs. Kingston never wearied of hearing all about it. When she learned of his different escapes from danger, the inclination of her heart was to beseech him to be content with one winter in the woods, and to take up some other occupation. But she wisely said nothing, for there could be no doubt as to the direction in which Frank's heart inclined, and she determined not to interfere.

When in the following autumn Frank went back to the forest, he was again under Johnston's command, but not as chore-boy. He was appointed clerk and checker, with liberty to do as much chopping or other work as he pleased. Whatever his duty was he did it, with all his might, doing it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men, so that he found increasing favour in his employer's eyes, rising steadily higher and higher until, while still a young man, he was admitted into partnership and had the sweet satisfaction of realizing the day dreams of that first trip down the Ottawa on a timber raft.

Yet he never forgot what he had learned when chore-boy of Camp Kippewa, and out of that experience grew a practical philanthropic interest in the well-being and advancement of his employees, that made him the most popular and respected "lumber-king" on the river.

THE END.

THE UNDYING BOOK.

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