

Philippe looked confidently up at Andy, as he said, "He is not capable de me faire mal when I haf you near to me, mon camarade. They do not forget, and I do not forget too, what you did for me las' winter." His eyes were unusually lustrous as he added gratefully,

"You are my good frien' always."

Andy reddened warmly as he met the lad's grateful look. He took a larger knife of beans than was his custom, and muttered confusedly something that sounded like, "O, that's nothing. You oughn't to mention it. Any of the lads 'ud have done the same." Philippe shook his head in dissent.

They were silent for a little while, but when Philippe a second time heaped the rich beans on his tin plate, he said comically, with a sprightly glance from his dark eyes,

"I haf got de consumption bad dis morning." He accented strongly the -ing in his English words. "It will be my death, I have fear."

"Tonnerre; it's growin on you," Andy returned, gravely regarding Philippe's face. "Don't let it kill you before we get to Pembroke. We could roll you in there in big style."

Philippe's gay smile vanished suddenly. He shuddered slightly.

"Doan' speak so of death. You are too lively to-day, Andy. I doan' like dat."

But here some of the drivers came running up from the river where they had been bathing their heads and necks in the cold water. In a glow of animal spirits, they exchanged rough, hearty morning greetings with Andy and Philippe. The latter quickly brightened up in the genial atmosphere created by the friendliness of their companions, and the morning was much too beautiful for dismal thoughts to obtain a hold on anyone's mind.

The sun had risen and the valley was awake to the glory of it. The last ghostly shreds of the mist were being whirled along the river's level surface by the fresh breeze, but the green mountain-sides were still enwreathed with a silvery cloud of it.

Philippe unconsciously loved Nature fondly, and his young heart was always gayer and more blithesome on a morning like this, when the birds were mad with ecstasy and the sweet woodland flowers were unfolding their petals to the creeping sunbeams.

When the men went down to the river, each taking up his particular work, Philippe bounded after them as lightly as the deer he sometimes hunted. Some distance up the river, where it bent into its course, his quick eye noticed a log lying motionless against the bank. A projecting root had stopped its passage. The greater number of logs had passed the bend and were moving slowly down, but a sufficient number still remained in the bend upon which he might cross the river. He left the other drivers and ran up to the bend, his pike-pole thrown over his shoulder. The river danced on in sun-kissed ripples beneath him as he leaped lightly from log to log. His spirits buoyant and his arms vigorous, he struck his pike-pole deep into the side of the log and pushed it ahead powerfully. It pleased his fancy to think he would give it a thorough start in the race with its more fortunate companions. It glided swiftly past and Philippe made haste to disengage the pike-pole. The log on which he stood rolled gently from side to side, but, as he tugged and pulled at the pike-pole, its motion became wilder and decidedly insecure; his boot-calks were, however, firmly caught in it.