

ROUGHING IT IN CANADA.



N amusing account is given in a late number of the *Brooklyn Eagle* of an adventure in Algoma. A worthy clergyman of that diocese, and a young friend of his, on a visit to the district in and about St. Joseph's Island, got lost in the woods while the parson, accompanied by his friend, was engaged in some of his missionary duties. The whole history is rather long for our columns, but the conclusion we give below, in the words of the writer himself, who is to be known simply as "R."

Darkness found us still plunging ahead, falling down, often hurting ourselves all over, bumping our heads against tree trunks in the mine-like blackness of the forest arches. Suddenly I stopped, and the parson who came up behind me stopped also.

"What?" he asked.

"There's a precipice right at my feet," I said, "if you look you will see the tops of the pine trees close enough to touch with your hand." We drew back and proceeded cautiously around the edge of the abyss till we came to a slope by which we descended to a valley. We found a stream there and quenched our raging thirst, and then made preparations for bed by heaping up the fallen leaves and lighting a fire. The leaves were wet with the rain and the dew, and the fire was very hard to start, as we had no hatchet and all the wood was wet. We finally got a big pile of birch bark collected and set it on fire and piled on branches which gradually dried and crackled.

We were desperately cold and rheumatic, for the night was very chilly and our clothes were wringing wet. The fire only warmed us on the side we turned towards it, and one of us had to keep putting on more fuel at intervals of five or ten minutes.

The night passed very, very slowly. Neither of us could sleep because of the cold and wet and the rheumatic pains in our backs and limbs.

When the sun rose we both started, and I said finally:

"He's got the cheek to get up in the very place he went down in last night."

"That's a fact," said the parson.

We had lost our bearings in the twilight, and had been wandering in the wrong direction between sunset and total darkness.

"Well, we'd better have breakfast," said I, and I lit my pipe and handed a cigarette to the parson.

"I don't think I'll take it," he said doubtfully, "this heavy diet is too much for me, it upset my stomach last night."

I smoked away and when my pipe went out there was light enough to travel by. I climbed a tree and saw far away over the billowy tree tops a long indentation in the forest. I knew it meant the river bed, and I pointed the direction out to my companion. The road was nowhere in sight and we felt that we had better take a certainty and go down to the river.

We were very stiff at first, and walking was painful, and the way led again over rocks and through thickets and swamps of unknown depth. We had no time to skirt them, we had to plunge in and trust to luck. The trees were dripping wet with dew, and our clothes were soaked as thoroughly as if we had fallen in the river. There were millions of green caterpillars on the bushes, too, and they soon covered us from head to foot. It was useless to pick them off, for that only made room for others. We let them crawl where they liked and plunged ahead, anxious only to reach civilization again. I was in the lead, walking hard and keeping perfect silence.

At last the parson spoke hesitatingly.

"R—!"

"Well?"

"Do you think—"

"Think what."

"Do you think it's healthy to walk like this before breakfast?"

In spite of our miserable condition I laughed outright.

"Why," said I, "you don't surely suppose I am doing this for my health?"

"Well, no."

"What made you ask that then?"

"Well, you were keeping so silent I wanted to hear you say something."

"What for?"

"I was afraid you were getting disheartened."

"Not much; why should I be disheartened? We'll be out soon."

"All right."

The parson's anxiety disappeared, and he trudged away contentedly after this. We came to a little river after we had been walking two hours and hailed it as a friend, for we knew it was going to empty its waters in the big river toward which we were journeying. We followed the stream down for two more hours and came to a farm house. Oh, what delight!

It was only a log house, but it meant relief from hunger, and it was also a guarantee against our spending another night in the woods. Two or three cows regarded us with friendly eyes as we approached, and though the dog barked and growled, it was plain that he intended his remarks to be taken in a strictly Pickwickian sense. The farmer was away, but his wife received us, although no tramps ever seen on Long Island looked so thoroughly disreputable as we. She was a tall woman with very black eyes and hair, a bass voice, thin lips, and a silent, intensely serious manner. She heard our story and gave us seats at a table, on which she set a two-quart tin pail full of milk, a pound of fresh butter, and a tea-tray of fine looking tea-biscuits. We ate and drank till the biscuits were all gone, and the woman got us another trayful. We finished them and she had to get more milk and butter and biscuits. Finally we arose, and elicited the information that the river was a mile away, that the road which passed the house