

the river, and saw 20,000 to 30,000 pieces, forming a veritable river of logs.

We spent the whole of Saturday in the bush, and got a very good idea of lumbering operations. Where very extensive operations are carried on by a firm having timber limits, the men are divided into gangs, that may number anywhere from 20 to 50. There is in such cases a superintendent, who goes from gang to gang and has a general oversight of all the work done. Each gang has its own foreman, who enters in a book each evening an account of the day's work. Of late, the most of the lumbering, however, is done by jobbers, who are independent of the regular shantymen. They take contracts to deliver a certain number of logs at the lake or river.

We spent Saturday evening, after our return from the woods, in story-telling, and retired early, for the day's jaunt had been fatiguing. We were not among the "early birds" next morning. When I climbed out my city companions were still wrapped in slumber. I breakfasted and left the shanty to look around, and after strolling about the shanties I went down on the lake shore and noticed a number of men, quite a distance out, fishing. Walking over I found that they were in luck, as the array of speckled beauties they had captured amply testified. Their bait was simply a bit of raw meat.

During the period of our stay in the woods the weather was unfavourable for hunting, and the Nimrods of our party failed to get in their work. Neither bear, caribou, deer, nor fox was seen. Even the half-dozen or so of squirrels that we saw were too nimble to be brought down.



A VETERAN SHANTYMAN.

one veteran of sixty years or so, whose long hair and full beard were almost white. This man has been familiar with the woods since boyhood, and to-day, though he owns some twenty or fifteen thousand dollars' worth of property in a thriving portion of the province, yet every winter finds him at the shanties. He loves the life, and only the weight of years will ever cause him to abandon his old-time winter haunts. We were treated with the greatest consideration by the men, every one of whom manifested a desire to contribute in some way to our comfort and pleasure.

In shanty life, next to the shanty foreman, the most important figure is the cook. If he be a surly fellow, he can make it decidedly unpleasant for the crew. The cook of our acquaintance proved himself to be a prince of good fellows. Attached to each crew there is also a carpenter, whose duty it is to mend sleds and other broken gear.

We had ample time to study the life of the men at the shanties. They work from daylight till dark, with an interval for dinner. When a long distance from the shanty their dinner is taken to them. If possible, the shanties are always built near a lake or river, as was the case with ours. There were some forty-five men in this shanty. It was built of flattened logs, with the chinks carefully caulked with moss to exclude both wind and storm. The floor was made of flattened logs. The roof was supported in the middle by four stout posts, forming a square, and about twenty feet apart. Within this square, and therefore in the very middle of the shanty, was the heart or centre of shanty life—the huge, blazing fire, which, like that of the sacred mountain of the old fire-worshippers, never dies—at least so long as the men

remain in camp. This fireplace is called the camboose. There is no chimney, only a large square opening in the roof, over the fireplace, which not only gives egress to the smoke, but affords perfect ventilation. A strong wooden post, or "crane," serves to support the various pots, kettles and boilers over the fire. At the end of the shanty, opposite the entrance, and also along the two sides, are an upper and a lower tier of "bunks," where the men sleep side by side. At meal time the men sit on benches round the fire, and each helps himself, neither tables nor waiters being required. A point that struck me forcibly as well as favourably was the cleanliness of the men. There is an abundance of soap, water, and towels, as well as a large looking-glass, and always before meals the men have a good scrub. At supper each man takes a pint cup of tea from the huge boiler, and a great slice of home-made bread, hot or cold pork as he prefers, and beans and pea-soup. They have sturdy appetites, and this kind of fare, which to a city man might threaten dyspepsia, is eaten with a relish it does one good to see. The bread, by the way, is the best I ever saw. If during my lifetime the problem of aerial navigation is solved, I should like nothing better than a lightning excursion one afternoon to the shanties, to procure a 10 or 15 pound loaf of that bread with which to regale myself and friends at a 5-o'clock tea. I am sure we should all enjoy it. And, *apropos*, I must not forget the "Scotch buns," so pleasing to our palates. If it were not for fear of my cook I should positively declare that I envied those rough fellows their daily bill of fare.

The fire is the only light needed in the shanty. And when you talk of comfort, put me down for a seat before that shanty fire, with its eight or a dozen pieces of wood, each four ft. long, sending the flames leaping upward toward the skylight, through which, if the flame were not too brilliant, might be seen the stars, keeping their nightly vigil over all. The men smoke, and talk, and sing: some hang up their socks or mitts or other articles of clothing to be dried; some sharpen their axes; the teamsters see that their horses and oxen are properly attended. Presently one slips away to bunk and then another, till finally the fire is deserted, and the only sound that breaks the stillness is the crackling of the burning sticks or an occasional sound from among the cosy blankets.

When Sunday comes the routine is disturbed for a day. There is no ringing of alarm clocks, no morning call for the start. The teamsters have to be early astir to care for their animals, but the rest of the men rise at their leisure. For this day their time is their own, and it is consumed in a variety of ways. Some of the men go fishing in the lake near by, some go farther, to the frozen river, for the same purpose. Some go hunting. Others remain at camp and mend their clothes, spin yarns, or otherwise amuse themselves.

One thing that struck us forcibly in studying the life of the men was the excellence of their behaviour. This is no doubt in some measure due to the total absence of intoxicating liquors of any kind. One of the most rigid rules is that prohibiting the use of liquor by the men in camp. We greatly enjoyed our visit to the shanties and bade our friends good-bye with something of regret.

We left for home on Monday, after a hearty dinner. It was a bright, calm, beautiful afternoon, fully verifying the forecast of the shanty weather prophets of the night before. When we entered the clearings we found that our road had completely disappeared, for a heavy snowfall had completely filled the track. The new-fallen snow was so dazzling in the brilliant sunshine as to seriously affect our eyes. Here and there, however, bushes had been planted in the snow to mark the road, with a view to just such an experience as ours, and we managed somehow to flounder along. The nearer we came to the town the deeper the snow, and just before reaching the latter place a field covered with huge drifts had to be crossed. It was toilsome work for man and beast, for every hundred feet or so we would lose the road and get into a depth of soft snow that made progress next to impossible. Our course was an interminable zigzag. Fortunately we met but one sleigh—fortunately for ourselves and others, for it was with extreme difficulty that we passed this one without disaster. Once off the beaten track there appeared no bottom to the drifts. The lights gleaming over the snow from the windows of the town was a welcome beacon, and the bright interior of the hotel as cheery a place as weary man could wish.