



AT SET OF SUN.

which are to support the load. As the pile grows the horses are made to assist in building it up, just as they did in "decking up" the skidway, while a cant-hook man, the "top-loader," stands ready to receive each log and guide it to its place. It is dangerous work—top-loading. In fact, the lumber-jack is always in more or less danger, no matter what part of the job he is engaged upon. A tree may fall in an unexpected direction and crush him before he can escape, or the butt may leap sidewise as it leaves the stump. An axe may glance and open an artery, from which he may bleed to death. A chain may break and let a log roll back upon him; and in former years it was not unknown for a man working alone to be set upon by wild beasts, though this is a thing that seldom happens nowadays. The danger from falling branches is always present when one

is under the trees, for dead limbs are liable to drop at any moment, without warning, and sometimes without any apparent reason.

But the top-loader is the man who runs the greatest risks, for he has little room in which to work and he is liable at any time to be caught and crushed between the logs, or to lose his footing, or to be knocked off the load and thrown to the ground, perhaps with a log on top of him. Many a man has lost his life while putting the "peaker" on the load. And another dangerous task is that of the men who "break down" the front of the skidway and "send up" to the top-loader; for now and then the logs become cemented together with ice and snow, and in loosening them the cant-hook men are liable to start an avalanche of timber which may crush them before they can get out of the way.