

"Half-past twelve!" said Emma. "How rapidly the time has flown!"

"Hasn't it," cried Kitty. "It always does when one is enjoying oneself."

"Yes," I guess you're right," said Arthur. "Happy moments are the fleetest."

"Well, perhaps we had better act on your suggestion," said Mr. Bickell, addressing Frank. "I think half-past twelve is the dinner hour among the *habitants*, and these men will doubtless be glad of an opportunity of taking theirs."

This we agreed to do, and set off for dinner.

"Let us jump into this sleigh," said young Bickell. "I think there is room for us all."

We all made a rush for the sleigh, which was moving along rather quickly, and, accosting the old driver, asked him to let us on. "*Embarquez donc si vous voulez*," but the old fellow, evidently not desirous of losing any time, did not stop his horse, but allowed us to scramble in as best we could.

"I guess the poor horse will find his load a little heavier now," said Clara, who was endeavoring to maintain her equilibrium on the shaft, which was no easy task on such a rough road.

In five minutes we had arrived at the house, and after paying for the delightful drive, as Clara called it, we went in and had dinner, which consisted of "*des œufs et du lard*" and potatoes, pudding being unknown in this region. After dinner we set out for the sugaries, providing ourselves with a large carpet bag and another smaller one, which the old woman lent us, also a tin can to hold the syrup.

"I wish that old *habitant* was coming along this way again."

"Oh, Clara, you lazy girl. You have nothing to carry, and surely you can carry yourself for at least ten minutes," said Minnie. "I think I shall ask Willie to give you the tin can."

"You might as well save yourself the

trouble, for I'm sure he wouldn't let me carry it."

"There's the old man going into his *cabane*," said Mr. Bickell. "Supposing we cry out to him; the smoke in the *cabane* is so unpleasant and trying to the eyes."

"*Bonhomme, bonhomme*," he shouted.

The man looked around and awaited our approach. When we had reached him, I asked him to fill the can with syrup, as we did not care about going in to be choked with smoke. Frank then put ten blocks of sugar into the bags and asked the man how much we owed him. The sugar weighed six pounds per lump, which, at ten cents, made six dollars, and seventy-five cents for the syrup—\$6.75 in all, which sum we handed him. He told us he didn't often meet with such good customers, and that we had saved him a trip into town.

We decided to divide the sugar at tea-time, and, as we had an hour to spare before starting for home, I proposed a tour around the wood to watch the sap as it oozed out of the maples.

This was agreed upon, and, leaving our bags and tin can in the *cabane*, we started. When half-an-hour had been spent in this way, Mr. Bickell, observing the aspect of the sky, predicted a snow-storm. This struck the greatest consternation into the ladies of our party, and with quick steps we hastened back to the *cabane*. The old *habitant* was there, and, being asked his opinion of the weather, told us that a storm was approaching, and the sooner we started the better.

I took up one of the bags and Willie the other, while Emma snatched away the can of syrup and off like a lamp-lighter, urging us to follow.

"Oh, gracious me! what a mess I'm in. Do come and take the can away, Frank."

Frank immediately relieved her of the tin, and was going to wipe the syrup off her dress, when she ran off, saying,