

but with a tremendous pile of wood burning upon a hearth, from which the smoke escaped through a hole in the roof, I asked for some bread and milk. The woman, eyeing me suspiciously, "guessed" she had none,—“the children had eat it all up.” I had, however, hardly felt the grateful influence of the blazing fire, when a bowl of milk with bread was placed beside me, and at the same moment the frying-pan was hissing on the fire, with fresh pork. Oh, woman! whether in the city palace, or the log-hut of a lone forest “clearing,” in spite of your vagaries, how universally does the spontaneous impulse of compassion gild your character, wherever or whenever distress makes its appeal! Only imagine your adoration of a being, though shoeless, who, with an intuitive perception of your wants, provides you a dinner of hot pork chops, with a dessert of bread and milk, after three days' fasting!

The husband soon arrived, dark and suspicious, like one who had his own reasons for privacy in the forest, and was doubtful of the object of intruders. I professed no knowledge of Canadian affairs, but spoke knowingly of swamp-lands and pine timber, as if I was “prospecting” for saw-logs. He was incredulous; but said each could be true to the other. There were nine children in the family. A little girl remarked there were “plenty of children, but nothing to put on them.” In summer, the absence of neighbors to make uncharitable remarks, made clothing of less consequence; and in winter they could stay in the house. The squatter was, however, industrious, and may have since had a good farm. The big boys in the evening split long shingles for covering a barn, and the father shaved them. One room, with the garret, served for the dwelling and lodging of all. I slept in a bunk, among the smaller children, who knotted up like a nest of eels, quite oblivious to any impropriety of lying heads and points. The woman would take no pay, but said, when I insisted on her accepting two dollars, “I do want a pair of shoes.”

On Tuesday morning, after a hearty breakfast, I crossed the north branch of the Yamaska in a canoe. Three miles walk in the woods brought me to the south branch, up which I walked, until I found another canoe in a clearing, and I was ferried over by a Canadian woman. Proceeding until three o'clock, I reached a clear, cultivated country; and, laying down in a point of woods, slept till dark. My lameness had become extremely painful, but I hobbled along a road leading south. That was always my course,—easily followed in the woods, as the moss is on the north side of trees, and the tendency of the limbs is to the south. This was as plain as guide-boards, and I have always wondered how people can “wander,” or get lost in the woods.—Arrived at a bridge,—I think the place was Cowansville,—I waited for a man approaching to come up, and inquired the way to Dunham. He directed me to cross. Forgetful of my lameness, I did cross, and walked briskly for more than a mile, over the rough frozen ground, when I sank exhausted. There were buildings at the bridge, lighted up, and hence my diligence in passing them. I was afterwards told that a guard kept there had gone in to warm. Again walking on, fatigue at midnight compelled me to resort to a couch in the top of an old fallen hemlock tree, where the scraggy, hard branches afforded so little shelter, that I awoke at daylight fairly stiff with cold. Following the road a short distance, at the sight of farm-houses, from the chimneys of which white smoke was issuing high into the cold air, I struck into the woods, thinking to strike a road leading to Stanbridge, where I had friends. Coming to a log-house, I asked the way to Dunham (which I wished to avoid). “Why, there,” said the man; and, sure enough, it was on my left, apparently not half a mile distant. Again, I pushed back into the woods. The man went soon to the village, and, I was afterwards informed, was told he would have made his fortune had he stopped me.

For four hours I trudged in the woods,