

course on the frozen river, in single file, over an unbroken surface of snow, bounded by an impenetrable forest and lofty cliffs.

At mid-day, a convenient place was selected for a halt on the bank of the river, and preparations commenced for a meal. A blazing fire was soon kindled, over which camp-kettles of soup were shortly ready for our keen and longing appetites. Placing some branches of pine and *sapin* on the snow, we seated ourselves around the cheerful fire and partook heartily of our humble meal; some closing the repast with pipes of the fragrant weed. Again we started on our tramp, much invigorated and refreshed. The toil of dragging a heavily-laden *traineau* compels the *voyageur* to make a frequent halt for rest, the Indian term for which is "*Sag-ga-suagh*," or "*une pipe*," each one indulging in a few hurried puffs, suddenly interrupted by the significant shout of "ugh! ugh!" the Indian signal for continuing the journey.

The short period of daylight at this season of the year renders it necessary to make early preparations for the night encampments. Accordingly, about three p. m., the experienced eye of the *voyageur* may be seen glancing anxiously towards the banks of the river, for a suitable resting-place for the night encampment,—indicated by a grove of hard wood, interspersed with tall, decayed, dry pine-trees, the trunks of which afford ready kindling-material for lighting a fire. A spot being selected, our party climbed the steep bank of the river; and, having reached a sheltered position, a large space was dug out with our snow-shoes, to the depth of two or three feet, and lined with soft pine branches, forming a most comfortable couch on which to rest our weary limbs before the bright, warm, crackling fire, ready to partake of our evening repast. That being concluded, pipes and tobacco, with story-telling, occupied the greater part of the evening, till refreshing slumbers came to our relief.

The *tout ensemble* of this wild, winter, woodland scene,—with the group around the blazing fire, some engaged in their evening

devotion,—would have afforded a good subject for Kreighoff's pencil. The time for repose having arrived, we were soon wrapped in the ample folds of our blankets, a clear, bright, starry sky forming the only canopy over our heads. After a good night's rest, our slumbers were broken by the shrill cry of the *voyageur*, of "*petit jour*," or "early day,"—being the signal for continuing the journey.

On our arrival at Rat River, about one hundred miles distant from Three Rivers, we parted with our Indian companions, who pursued a different route on their winter hunt, reducing our party to three persons. On the third day of our journey from this point, an accident occurred to our guide. In reaching out his axe one night to replenish the fire, he buried it in his instep. His cry immediately awakened myself and companion, and we applied bandages to the wound, which proved so serious as to render him incapable of proceeding to the termination of our journey, now only about twenty-five miles distant. My friend, however, continued the journey alone, in order to obtain aid from the Hudson Bay Company's post, leaving me in charge of our wounded guide. On the second day of my friend's departure, I heard the gladdening sound of a distant shout resounding through the woods, soon followed by the entrance into the encampment of two stout *voyageurs*, with whose assistance my wounded companion was conveyed in a comfortable *traineau* to Weymontachene. The welcome sight of the Company's fort broke into view as we rounded a point of land, and I was welcomed on my arrival by the worthy Chief Trader, Mr. McLeod, and his son, the companion of my journey.

After a pleasant sojourn of a week at the post, engaged in various hunting excursions, I took leave of my kind friends and started on my return with a stout Canadian *voyageur*. We arrived at Rat River on the fifth day after our departure from Weymontachene, having made forced marches, so as to reach Three Rivers before the ice began to break up; but, on arriving at the "Grande