

fession she should have for her spiritual director the next day!—what an octavo budget for Sister Mildred and the nuns!

Lord Winchester, instead of sinking through the floor with contrition, appeared little daunted. He raised his head proudly up, and placing Frances's hand within his arm, demanded of Miss Louisa if she had any commands for him.

This hardihood put the finishing stroke upon Miss Louisa's agitation. She fell into hysterics, and screamed so loud, that the housekeeper, followed by the servants, came rushing in.

But the scene next day was terrible. Mr. Hildyard had been at a political meeting, but the next morning he assembled the whole of the family in conclave.

"Will you," he cried to Frances, after an hour spent in fruitless discussion and recrimination, "will you, or will you not, give up this man?"

"I will not," she murmured.

"Frances, do you remember how I and your mother—there she stands—have cherished you? Do you know that you are entwined round our hearts as never child was yet entwined? Will you outrage this affection of years for the sake of a stranger—and he an apostate?"

Ah! Mr. and Mrs. Hildyard, you now see the effects of your woefully indulgent training. What response does Frances make? Why, she turns away her head, and makes none.

"Frances, for the last time," continued her father, "will you undertake to renounce all friendship with Viscount Winchester—that he shall be to you henceforth as if you had never met? It must be sworn upon the crucifix."

The faint crimson shone in her cheek, and her voice and hands trembled as she replied, in a low tone,

"I will never promise it."

VI.

"If any thing can recall her to a sense of her duty," remarked Miss Louisa Hildyard, as she consulted that night alone with her father and mother, the family priest being alike present, "it will be a prolonged residence in that blessed convent. There her mind may be led to peace. Oh, that she had been brought up in it!"

"You say right, my daughter," acquiesced the priest. "I see no other way to reclaim her; for here, alas! the temptations of worldly life must ever interfere, and counteract all good effects that might be wrought. Place her in the convent. I myself will be her conductor thither, and will offer up my prayers that the step may conduce to her spiritual welfare."

Mr. and Mrs. Hildyard started, and the former smoothed his hand across his brow, as if pain had settled there.

"Your inclinations may be at variance with this counsel," continued the holy father, breaking the silence which had followed, "but will you oppose them to the salvation of her immortal soul? *I see no other way to save it.*"

And so it was decided; but not until the night hours had grown into morning.

"Oh, the holy work that will have been

wrought, should the heart of this erring lamb be won over to a peaceful life, and embrace the veil!" uttered the priest in the ear of Miss Louisa, as he bestowed upon her the night benediction, ere retiring from the council. "We shall say then that that carnal-minded apostate was sent to this house in mercy."

VII.

But three days had elapsed, when a traveling-carriage drove into the outer yard of the convent of the Nuns of the Visitation in —shire. A young lady descended from it, and those in attendance gently led her forward, now through one court-yard, now through another, until the interior of the convent was gained. Then the great gates closed with a bang that almost shook the building, and Frances Hildyard was shut out from the world she had so idolized.

JOYS AND PERILS OF LUMBERING.*

LUMBERMEN not only cut and haul from clumps and communities, but reconnoitre the forest, hill, vale, and mountain side for scattering trees; and when they are deemed *worth an effort*, no location in which they may be found, however wild or daring, can oppose the skill and enterprise of our men.

For taking logs down mountain sides, we adopt various methods, according to the circumstances. Sometimes we construct what are termed dry sluice-ways, which reach from the upper edge of a precipice down to the base of the hill. This is made by laying large poles or trunks of straight trees together the whole distance, which is so constructed as to keep the log from running off at the sides. Logs are rolled into the upper end, the descent or dip often being very steep; the log passes on with lightning-like velocity, quite burying itself in the snow and leaves below. From the roughness of the surfaces, the friction is very great, causing the bark and smoke to fly plentifully.

At other times, when the descent is more gradual, and not too steep, and when there is not a sufficient quantity to pay the expense of a sluice-way, we fell a large tree, sometimes the Hemlock, trim out the top, and cut the largest limbs off a foot, more or less, from the trunk. This is attached to the end of the log by strong chains, and as the oxen draw the load, this drag thrusts its stumpy limbs into the snow and frozen earth, and thus prevents the load from forcing the team forward too rapidly. Should the chain give way which attaches the hold-back to the load, nothing could save the team from sudden destruction.

There is a mountain on the "west branch" of the Penobscot where Pine-trees of excellent quality stand far up its sides, whose tops appear to sweep the very clouds. The side which furnishes timber rises in terraces of gigantic proportions, forming a succession of abrupt precipices and shelving table-land. There are three of these giant mountain steps, each of which

* From "Forest Life and Forest Trees," by J. S. SPRINGER—a unique and truly American work, in the press of Harper and Brothers.

produces lumber which challenges the admiration and enterprise of the log-men. The ascent to these Alpine groves is too abrupt to allow the team to ascend in harness; we therefore unyoke and drive the oxen up winding pathways. The yokes and chains are carried up by the workmen, and also the bob-sled in pieces, after taking it apart. Ascending to the uppermost terrace, the oxen are re-yoked and the sled adjusted. The logs being cut and prepared as usual, are loaded, and hauled to the edge of the first precipice, unloaded, and rolled off to the table of the second terrace, where they are again loaded, hauled, and tumbled off as before, to the top of the first rise, from which they are again pitched down to the base of the mountain, where for the last time they are loaded, and hauled to the landing.

To obtain logs in such romantic locations was really as hazardous as it was laborious, varying sufficiently from the usual routine of labor to invest the occasion with no ordinary interest. It was, indeed, an exhibition well calculated to awaken thrilling emotions to witness the descent of those massive logs, breaking and shivering whatever might obstruct their giddy plunge down the steep mountain side, making the valleys reverberate and ring merrily with the concussion.

In other instances loads are eased down hill sides by the use of "tackle and fall," or by a strong "warp," taking a "bight" round a tree, and hitching to one yoke of the oxen. In this manner the load is "tailed down" steeply where it would be impossible for the "tongue oxen" to resist the pressure of the load. Sometimes the warp parts under the test to which it is thus subjected, when the whole load plunges onward like an avalanche, subjecting the poor oxen to a shocking death.

But the circumstance which calls forth the most interest and exertion is the "rival load." When teams are located with sufficient proximity to admit of convenient intercourse, a spirit of rivalry is often rife between the different crews on various points. The "largest tree," the "smartest chopper," the "best cook," the "greatest day's work," and a score of other superlatives, all invested with attractions the greater from the isolated circumstances of swamp life.

The "crack" load is preceded by all needful preliminaries. All defective places in the road are repaired. New "skids" are nicely peeled by hewing off the bark smoothly, and plentifully as well as calculatingly laid along the road. All needful repairs are made on the bob-sled, and the team put in contending plight. The trees intended for the "big load" are carefully prepared, and hauled to some convenient place on the main road singly, where they are reloaded, putting on two and sometimes three large trees. All things in readiness, the men follow up with handspikes and long levers. Then comes the "tug of war;" rod by rod, or foot by foot, the whole is moved forward, demanding every ounce of strength, both of men and oxen united, to perform the feat of getting it to the landing.

Were life and fortune at stake, more could not be done under the circumstances. The surveyor applies the rule, and the result gives either the one or the other party "whereof to glory." If not "teetotalers," the vanquished "pay the bit-ter" when they get down river. Men love and will have excitement; with spirits never more buoyant, every thing, however trifling, adds to the stock of "fun alive" in the woods. Every crew has its "Jack," who, in the absence of other material, either from his store of "mother-wit" or "greenness," contributes to the merry shaking of sides, or allows himself to be the butt of good-natured ridicule.

But while the greater part of swamp life is more or less merry, there are occasional interruptions to the joyousness that abounds. Logging roads are generally laid out with due regard to the conveniences of level or gently descending ground. But in some instances the unevenness of the country admits only of unfavorable alternatives. Sometimes there are moderate rises to ascend or descend on the way to the landing; the former are hard, the latter dangerous to the team. I knew a teamster to lose his life in the following shocking manner: On one section of the main road there was quite a "smart pitch" of considerable length, on which the load invariably "drove" the team along on a forced trot. Down this slope our teamster had often passed without sustaining any injury to himself or oxen. One day, having, as usual, taken his load from the stump, he proceeded toward the landing, soon passing out of sight and hearing. Not making his appearance at the expiration of the usual time, it was suspected that something more than usual had detained him. Obeying the impulses of a proper solicitude on his behalf, some of the hands started to render service if it were needed. Coming to the head of the hill down which the road ran, they saw the team at the foot of it, standing with the forward oxen faced about up the road, but no teamster. On reaching the spot, a most distressing spectacle presented itself; there lay the teamster on the hard road, with one of the sled-runners directly across his bowels, which, under the weight of several tons of timber, were pressed down to the thickness of a man's hand. He was still alive, and when they called out to him, just before reaching the sled, he spoke up as promptly as usual, "Here am I," as if nothing had been the matter. These were the only and last words he ever uttered. A "pry" was immediately set, which raised the deadfall from his crushed body, enabling them to extricate it from its dreadful position. Shortly after, his consciousness left him, and never more returned. He could give no explanation; but we inferred, from the position of the forward oxen, that the load had forced the team into a run, by which the tongue cattle, pressed by the leaders, turning them round, which probably threw the teamster under the runner, and the whole load stopped when about to poise over his body.

He was taken to the camp, where all was done

that could be done under the circumstances to save him, but to no purpose. His work was finished. He still lingered, in an apparently unconscious state, until midnight, when his spirit, forsaking its bruised and crushed tenement, ascended above the sighing pines, and entered the eternal state. The only words he uttered were those in reply to the calling of his name. As near as we could judge, he had lain two hours in the position in which he was found. It was astonishing to see how he had gnawed the rave* of the sled. It was between three and four inches through. In his agony he had bitten it nearly half off. To do this, he must have pulled himself up with his hands, gnawed a while, then fallen back again through exhaustion and despair. He was taken out to the nearest settlement, and buried.

At a later period, we lost our teamster by an accident not altogether dissimilar. It was at the winding up our winter's work in hauling. Late in the afternoon we had felled and prepared our final tree, which was to finish the last of the numerous loads which had been taken to the well-stowed landing. Wearied with the frequency of his travels on the same road for the same purpose, this last load was anticipated with no ordinary interest; and when the tree was loaded, he seemed to contemplate it with profound satisfaction. "This," said he, "is my last load." For the last time the team was placed in order, to drag from its bed the tree of a hundred summers. Onward it moved at the signal given, and he was soon lost to view in the frequent windings of the forest road. It was nearly sundown, and, had it not been for closing up the winter's work that day, the hauling would have been deferred until next morning.

The usual preparations for our evening campfire had been made, and the thick shadows of evening had been gathering for an hour, and yet he did not come. Again and again some one of the crew would step out to listen if he could catch the jingling of the chains as they were hauled along; but nothing broke upon the ear in the stillness of the early night. Unwilling longer to resist the solicitude entertained for his safety, several of us started with a lantern for the landing. We continued to pass on, every moment expecting to hear or meet him, until the landing was finally reached. There, quietly chewing the cud, the oxen were standing, unconscious of the cause that detained them, or that for the last time they had heard the well-known voice of their devoted master. Hastening along, we found the load properly rolled off the sled, but heavens! what a sight greeted our almost unbelieving vision! There lay the poor fellow beneath that terrible pressure. A log was resting across his crushed body. He was dead. From appearances, we judged that, after having knocked out the "jid," which united the chain that bound the load, the log rolled suddenly upon him. Thus, without a moment's warning, he ceased in the same instant to work and live. It proved, indeed, his "last load."

* "Rave," the railing of the sled.

To contemplate the sameness of the labor in passing to and fro from the swamp to the landing several times a day, on a solitary wilderness-road, for a term of several months, with only those respites afforded in stormy weather and on Sundays, one might think himself capable of entering into the feelings of a teamster, and sympathetically share with him the pleasurable emotions consequent upon the conclusion of his winter's work. While it must be conceded that, of things possessing every element capable of contributing pleasure, we sometimes weary through excess, let it not be supposed that our knight of the goad has more than usual occasion to tire, or sigh for the conclusion of the hauling-season. To be sure, "ta and fra" the livelong winter, now with a load wending along a serpentine road, as it winds through the forest, he repeats his visits to the swamp, and then the landing; but he is relieved by the companionship of his dumb but docile oxen, for whom he contracts an affection, and over whom he exercises the watchful vigilance of a faithful guardian, while he exacts their utmost service. He sees that each performs his duty in urging forward the laboring sled. He watches every hoof, the clatter of shoes, the step of each ox, to detect any lameness. He observes every part and joint of the bob-sled while it screeches along under the massive log bound to it. He examines the chains, lest they should part, and, above all, the objects more watched than any others, the "fid-hook" and the "dog-hook," the former that it does not work out, the latter that it loose not its grappling hold upon the tree. Sometimes his little journeys are spiced with the infinite trouble which a long, sweeping stick will give him, by suddenly twirling and oversetting the sled every time it poises over some abrupt swell in the road. There is really too much to be looked after, thought of, and cared for, in his passage to the landing, to allow much listlessness or burdensome leisure. As well might a pilot indulge irresponsible dormancy in taking a fine ship into port, as for a teamster to be listless under his circumstances. No: the fact is, that, with the excitement attendant upon each load as it moves to the landing, ten times the number of tobacco quids are required that abundantly suffice him on his return.

Then look at the relaxation and comfort of the return. The jingling chains, as they trail along on the hard-beaten way, discourse a constant chorus. With his goad-stick under his arm or as a staff, he leisurely walks along, musing as he goes, emitting from his mouth the curling smoke of his unfailing pipe, like a walking chimney or a locomotive; anon whistling, humming, or pouring forth with full-toned voice some favorite air or merry-making ditty. He varies the whole exercise by constant addresses to the oxen, individually and collectively: "Haw, Bright!" "Ge, Duke!" "Whoop! whoop!" "What ye 'bout there, you lazy—" "If I come there, I'll tan your old hides for you!" "Pschip, pschips, go along there!" Knowing him not half in earn-

est, unless it happens to be a sharp day, the oxen keep on the even tenor of their way, enjoying the only apparent comfort an ox can enjoy while away from his crib—chewing the cud.

Recently, however, the wolves have volunteered their services, by accompanying the teams, in some places, on their way to and from the landing, contributing infinitely more to the fears than conscious security of the teamsters.

Three teams, in the winter of 1844, all in the same neighborhood, were beset with these ravenous animals. They were of unusually large size, manifesting a most singular boldness, and even familiarity, without the usual appearance of ferocity so characteristic of the animal.

Sometimes one, and in another instance three, in a most unwelcome manner volunteered their attendance, accompanying the teamster a long distance on his way. They would even jump on the log and ride, and approach very near the oxen. One of them actually jumped upon the sled, and down between the bars, while in motion.

Some of the teamsters were much alarmed, keeping close to the oxen, and driving on as fast as possible. Others, more courageous, would run toward and strike at them with their goadsticks; but the wolves sprang out of the way in an instant. But, although they seemed to act without a motive, there was something so cool and impudent in their conduct that it was trying to the nerves—even more so than an active encounter. For some time after this, fire-arms were a constant part of the teamster's equipage. No further molestation, however, was had from them that season.

One of my neighbors related, in substance, the following incidents: "A short time since," said he, "while passing along the shores of Mattawamkeag River in the winter, my attention was suddenly attracted by a distant howling and screaming—a noise which might remind one of the screeching of forty pair of old cart-wheels (to use the figure of an old hunter in describing the distant howling of a pack of wolves). Presently there came dashing from the forest upon the ice, a short distance from me, a timid deer, closely pursued by a hungry pack of infuriated wolves. I stood and observed them. The order of pursuit was in single file, until they came quite near their prey, when they suddenly branched off to the right and left, forming two lines; the foremost gradually closed in upon the poor deer, until he was completely surrounded, when, springing upon their victim, they instantly bore him to the ice, and in an incredibly short space of time devoured him, leaving the bones only; after which they galloped into the forest and disappeared." On the same river a pack of these prowling marauders were seen just at night, trailing along down the river on the ice. A family living in a log house near by happened to have some poison, with which they saturated some bits of meat, and then threw them out upon the ice. Next morning early the meat was missing, and, on making a short search in the vicinity, six wolves were found "dead as hammers,"

all within sight of each other. Every one of them had dug a hole down through the snow into the frozen earth, in which they had thrust their noses, either for water to quench the burning thirst, or to snuff some antidote to the fatal drug. A bounty was obtained on each of ten dollars, besides their hides, making a fair job of it, as well as ridding the neighborhood of an annoying enemy. The following account of a wolf-chase will interest the reader:

"During the winter of 1844, being engaged in the northern part of Maine, I had much leisure to devote to the wild sports of a new country. To none of these was I more passionately addicted than that of skating. The deep and sequestered lakes of this northern state, frozen by intense cold, present a wide field to the lovers of this pastime. Often would I bind on my rusty skates, and glide away up the glittering river, and wind each mazy streamlet that flowed on toward the parent ocean, and feel my very pulse bound with joyous exercise. It was during one of these excursions that I met with an adventure which, even at this period of my life, I remember with wonder and astonishment.

"I had left my friend's house one evening, just before dusk, with the intention of skating a short distance up the noble Kennebeck, which glided directly before the door. The evening was fine and clear. The new moon peered from her lofty seat, and cast her rays on the frosty pines that skirted the shore, until they seemed the realization of a fairy-scene. All Nature lay in a quiet which she sometimes chooses to assume, while water, earth, and air seemed to have sunken into repose.

"I had gone up the river nearly two miles, when, coming to a little stream which emptied into the larger, I turned in to explore its course. Fir and hemlock of a century's growth met overhead, and formed an evergreen archway, radiant with frost-work. All was dark within; but I was young and fearless, and as I peered into the unbroken forest, that reared itself to the borders of the stream, I laughed in very joyousness. My wild hurra rang through the woods, and I stood listening to the echo that reverberated again and again, until all was hushed. Occasionally a night-bird would flap its wings from some tall oak.

"The mighty lords of the forest stood as if naught but time could bow them. I thought how oft the Indian-hunter concealed himself behind these very trees—how oft the arrow had pierced the deer by this very stream, and how oft his wild halloo had rung for his victory. I watched the owls as they fluttered by, until I almost fancied myself one of them, and held my breath to listen to their distant hooting.

"All of a sudden a sound arose; it seemed from the very ice beneath my feet. It was loud and tremendous at first, until it ended in one long yell. I was appalled. Never before had such a noise met my ears. I thought it more than mortal—so fierce, and amid such an unbroken solitude, that it seemed a fiend from hell had blown

a blast from an infernal trumpet. Presently I heard the twigs on the shore snap, as if from the tread of some animal, and the blood rushed back to my forehead with a bound that made my skin burn, and I felt relieved that I had to contend with things of earthly and not spiritual mould, as I first fancied. My energies returned, and I looked around me for some means of defense. The moon shone through the opening by which I had entered the forest, and considering this the best means of escape, I darted toward it like an arrow. It was hardly a hundred yards distant, and the swallow could scarcely excel my desperate flight; yet, as I turned my eyes to the shore, I could see two dark objects dashing through the underbrush at a pace nearly double that of my own. By their great speed, and the short yells which they occasionally gave, I knew at once that they were the much-dreaded gray wolf.

"I had never met with these animals, but, from the description given of them, I had but little pleasure in making their acquaintance. Their untamable fierceness, and the untiring strength which seems to be a part of their nature, render them objects of dread to every benighted traveler.

"With their long gallop, which can tire
The hound's deep hate, the hunter's fire,"

they pursue their prey, and naught but death can separate them. The bushes that skirted the shore flew past with the velocity of light as I dashed on in my flight. The outlet was nearly gained; one second more, and I would be comparatively safe, when my pursuers appeared on the bank directly above me, which rose to the height of some ten feet. There was no time for thought; I bent my head and dashed wildly forward. The wolves sprang, but, miscalculating my speed, sprang behind, while their intended prey glided out into the river.

"Nature turned me toward home. The light flakes of snow spun from the iron of my skates, and I was now some distance from my pursuers, when their fierce howl told me that I was again the fugitive. I did not look back; I did not feel sorry or glad; one thought of home, of the bright faces awaiting my return, of their tears if they should never again see me, and then every energy of mind and body was exerted for my escape. I was perfectly at home on the ice. Many were the days I spent on my skates, never thinking that at one time they would be my only means of safety. Every half minute an alternate yelp from my pursuers made me but too certain they were close at my heels. Nearer and nearer they came; I heard their feet pattering on the ice nearer still, until I fancied I could hear their deep breathing. Every nerve and muscle in my frame was stretched to the utmost tension.

"The trees along the shore seemed to dance in the uncertain light, and my brain turned with my own breathless speed; yet still they seemed to hiss forth with a sound truly horrible, when an involuntary motion on my part turned me out of my course. The wolves close behind, unable to stop and as unable to turn, slipped, fell, still

going on far ahead, their tongues lolling out, their white tusks gleaming from their bloody mouths, their dark, shaggy breasts freckled with foam; and as they passed me their eyes glared, and they howled with rage and fury. The thought flashed on my mind that by this means I could avoid them, viz., by turning aside whenever they came too near; for they, by the formation of their feet, are unable to run on ice except on a right line.

"I immediately acted on this plan. The wolves, having regained their feet, sprang directly toward me. The race was renewed for twenty yards up the stream; they were already close on my back, when I glided round and dashed past my pursuers. A fierce growl greeted my evolution, and the wolves slipped upon their haunches and sailed onward, presenting a perfect picture of helplessness and baffled rage. Thus I gained nearly a hundred yards each turning. This was repeated two or three times, every moment the wolves getting more excited and baffled, until, coming opposite the house, a couple of stag-hounds, aroused by the noise, bayed furiously from their kennels. The wolves, taking the hint, stopped in their mad career, and after a moment's consideration turned and fled. I watched them till their dusky forms disappeared over a neighboring hill; then, taking off my skates, I wended my way to the house, with feelings better to be imagined than described."

Such annoyances from these migrating beasts, in the vicinity of logging berths as above named, are of recent date. Up to 1840 I had been much in the wild forests of the northeastern part of Maine, clearing wild land during the summer and logging in the winter, and up to this period had never seen a satisfactory evidence of their presence. But since this period they have often been seen, and in such numbers and of such size as to render them objects of dread.

THE HIGHEST HOUSE IN WATHENDALE.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

HIGH up among the mountains of Westmoreland, there is a valley which we shall call Wathendale. The lowest part of this valley is some hundreds of feet above the heads of the dwellers on the nearest mail-road; and yet, as if such a place of abode was not near enough to the sky, there are houses as high up as they can well be put, in the hollows of the mountains which overlook the dale. One of these small farmsteads is as old-fashioned a place as can be seen; and well it may be so; for the last owners were fond of telling that the land had been in their family for five hundred years. A stranger might wonder what could carry any body up to such a place five hundred years ago; but the wonder would only show that the stranger did not know what was doing in the district in those days. Those were the days when the tenants of the Abbots of Furness used to hold land in the more fertile spots, in companies of four—one of whom was always to be ready to go forth to