East Oregonian.

MONDAY, AUGUST 6, 1888.

IN THE NORTH WOODS.

Work of the Loggers on Little Black Creek—A Vocation That Is Dangerous at Times—Cooks and Their Assistants. Wages.

During the last week in April last spring the snow disappeared from the greater part of Little Black creek, and on April 28 the drive began. On the morning of the 28th the creek was running bank full, which meant a depth of perhaps a foot or fifteen inches over the rifts. The mill men and log drivers, to the number of forty, reached the ground early. While the greater part of the drivers were distributed along the stream to break the old jams left when the water fell a year ago, one gang went to the dumps near the reservoir, and began to snake, as they said, the logs into the running water. These logs floated along, a lively spectacle, till they reached the first rifts. Here they bumped and rolled over the rocks till one long spruce, driven by the weight of water and logs behind, and directed by a glancing blow on a big boulder that reared its black head a few inches above the water, was hurled end on between two big trees that stood close together on the bank. It shot ahead till half its length was ashore and then the end caught among the roots of a big birch. It could neither go further nor swing around with the current, and in less time than it takes to write it the logs behind were piled over and around it and a jam was formed. In a few minutes 500 logs were lodged there. A big, humpbacked man, dressed in an old slouch hat that was on the back of his head, a red shirt open over his chest, brown trousers tucked into the tops of long legged, red woolen socks, and a pair of shoes with spikes half an inch long, came along. He gave one glance at the jam, and then, dropping the cant hook he had carried over his shoulder, went up the stream and came back with an ax. Then he gave nine blows on the up stream side of the long spruce log just where it rested against the tree on the bank. The log broke, and the jam of logs continued rolling and bumping along over the rift.

The logs that lodged along the edges of the stream were allowed to remain. These usually lay with the down stream end further out in the water than the up stream end. By Sunday night there was scarce a rod of bank for twenty miles where there was no log. Where jams had been broken as many as a hundred logs were piled along each bank of the rift within a space of thirty feet. Sometimes the logs would form piles of thirty or forty on each bank, where they would lie almost as if designedly dumped there by the men one on top of the other, the pile not being over two logs long. These piles narrowed the stream until an active man could easily jump over it, and the water would rise up between the piles, crowning in the middle, and of double the depth of what it was above or below this partial dam. Thus what might be called a natural sluiceway, since it was not built by man, was formed, and the logs, guided by the opening sides of the sluiceway, would go shooting through like arrows.

The weather gradually grew colder, and on the fourth day the reservoir was opened. The water came down in a flood. It had got down to a jam of perhaps 500 logs below what is known as the old Baxter mill, an abandoned structure, and had lifted up the mass, but had not cleared the one key log which in this case held the jam. The key log was lodged end on against a rock square in the middle of the stream, and the other end was somewhere under the logs, above and against the bank. One of the Wall boys ran out on the jam when he saw that it would not move, and, finding the key log, put his cant hook on it and gave it a twist. It failed to move. Then he threw his whole weight on it, and the log rolled over so easily that he tumbled into the water, right under the logs as they came rolling and plunging down. Two companions had started out to help him, but as the logs moved they started back to the shore. When they looked around again Wall was nowhere in sight. He had disappeared under the logs, and they thought he was being ground to pieces upon the stones of the rift. But he was not. He had clung to the forward end of the first log that he could get his hand on, and in a second more he bobbed up between two hemlocks, and a little latter he was standing on the bank and saying: "The old man will give me thunder for losing that cant hook, won't he?"

The resources of civilization, as O'Donovan Rossa would say, are lessening the dangers of log driving. Dynamite is used not only to blast the rocks from the beds of the creeks, as it will be used this year in Little Black creek but when a jam is formed in a large stream, and it is plainly seen that one log holds the jam, a charge of dynamite blows the smithereens out of that log, while the loggers look on from a safe distance, instead of going down into a gorge by a rope and taking the chances of getting ground up after the jam starts.

The log drivers get from $2 to $4 a day and board. They work from daylight to dark. To feed and lodge them so as to get the greatest amount of work from them requires foresight and care. Six comfortable shanties were built along Little Black creek, before the drive began, from three to five miles apart. The shanties were manned with a cook and two to three assistants each, and stocked with stacks of corned beef, pork, ham, flour, potatoes, tea and coffee. The cook and his men got $2 a day each. Breakfast was served by lantern light to the men who lodged in hemlock bunks in the shanties. Then the men were off, and the cook and his help turned to and cooked the first luncheon. It consisted of bread and butter, meat, and tea and coffee. Each assistant strapped a pack basket filled with bread and meat to his back, and took a huge can of coffee in one hand and another of tea in the other. Tin cups dangled in a bright profusion all over him. One assistant went up the creek with his load and the other down. As the snow averaged two feet deep in the swampy bottoms along the creek, the task of the assistant was not enviable.

Wherever he found a driver he served to him all the food he wanted. This first luncheon was served at about 10 o'clock. Another like it was served to the men along the banks and on the jams between 2 and 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Supper was served at dark. It was really a dinner, for the men in addition to the bread, meat and potatoes got some sort of sauce and a pudding. A look at the quantity of food that an old driver will eat in a day would make a dyspeptic groan, but if the ordinary dyspeptic could merely follow a drive, let alone lending a hand with a cant hook, he would, under the invigorating influence of breezes laden with the perfume of spruce and balsam boughs and of the influence of sunshine and spring water, get a like appetite himself.

Without the Middleman's Aid.

Every morning there comes to the house in which I live a fine, hale old man, with the fresh scent of country lanes about him, who brings an abundant supply of vegetables, of a quality one can only find in the most expensive green groceries and fruit stores. He makes a business of serving the products of his little market garden across the North river to a choice list of customers in certain apartment houses of the better order. He sells all that he can deliver, and the prices he gets, while reasonable enough to satisfy his patrons, are sufficiently liberal to compensate him handsomely. There are other men, I notice, who make a specialty of milk, eggs and other fresh table commodities, which they deliver after the same fashion, directly from their farms or poultry yards. They pay no tribute to a middleman, nor are they under any expense for a city shop. They begin by drumming up custom in good houses and, as they serve the best of material are not long in establishing a profitable connection. After this it is plain sailing with them.

The business of putting up preserves and jellies seems also to be extensively followed by rural housewives, who seek their industry in much the same way. Some of them advertise in the family papers. The majority employ a drummer to beat up custom in town. The fact that they can afford the expense of advertisement or the salary of an agent, and still make a greater profit than if they sold their products to the shops, may serve as a slight hint of the proportions of gain that fall to the middle man or retailer. A man in Fordham who has quite an extensive fruit farm, which, thanks to his passion for improving varieties, produces some of the finest fruit in the country, informs me that he now gets nearly three times as much for the product of his orchard, which he retails himself, than he did when he sold it to a fruiterer. And still his customers get it cheaper than they did from the fruit shop.—Alfred Trumble in New York News.

Race and Mental Disease.

In an article entitled "Race and Insanity," published in The American Journal of Insanity, Drs. Bannister and Hektoen, physicians of the Illinois eastern hospital for the insane, express the opinion that there is little doubt but that insanity is influenced by race. From the statistics of three institutions in which insane persons are treated they draw the following conclusions. 1. That in the white race the depressive types of mental disease are most frequent in the Germanic and Scandinavian peoples, and least so in the Celts; the reverse of this appears to be the case as to the exalted or maniacal types. 2. That general paralysis is not a disorder to which any race is immune, but one that depends upon causes independent of racial or national peculiarities. 3. That the well known fact that insanity is much more common among the foreign born than among natives in this country is not to any great extent explainable by the shipment of the defective classes of Europe to America.

The "cranks" and epileptics and other neurotic individuals do not appear to be represented, in due proportion even, among the foreigners in our asylums. The cause of the excess of foreign born insane in this country is, it seems probable, to be looked for mainly in the fact that, supposing the immigration to include only its proportion of persons below the average of mental strength and flexibility, the change of scene and associations, the difficulties of beginning life among them, disappointments, homesickness, and all the other accidents and trials that befall the new comers, together contribute to break down mentally a vast number who under other circumstances would have escaped, and largely contribute to the mass of insanity in this country.—Science.

Charcoal Burners of Cuba.

During the first day of our excursion our quest was rewarded with nothing in the shape of deep wood sights or tenantry, though the very earth seemed filled with songs and calls of negritos, mayitos, cabreros, zorales, totises, chinchinguacos, solviros, pioreras, savaneros, canarles and mocking birds, which frequent the more open districts and plantation trees and hedges; but as we neared the denser forests, along towards nightfall, we came upon a little settlement of people well worth going a long distance to know.

These were the Cuban carboneros or charcoal burners. As all of the cooking and much of the manufacturing requiring heat in the Cuban cities are done with charcoal, charcoal burning provides a sort of a livelihood for a small and picturesque class, who fell timber and burn charcoal at will in the countless island forests. These carboneros comprise some queer people. Most of them are inoffensive and hospitable, but many are refugees from the late revolution, for the Spanish soldiery deem it wise not to disturb anybody in these almost inaccessible haunts. So, aside from insurgent refugees, in nearly every carbonero's camp will also be found, if you happen to be in company with those whose sympathies are with a certain flag which waved defiance to the hated Spanish red and gold over the blood swept fields of Caniaguay, here and there a noted bandit who could never be taken from among his swarthy friends.—Edgar L. Wakeman's Letter in Philadelphia Times.

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