

"The bear!—call the dogs!" vociferated the apprentice, unslinging his gun, and looking wildly around him, before setting off with the others. I pride myself upon my generalship at that time, in not moving one peg, for had I done so, the contents of the young reprobate's rusty gun would in all probability have been well aimed at the object at the top of the stump, and I could not blame any one to administer me a dose under such circumstances. Yet the apprentice was, perhaps, in some danger as well: flesh and blood could not stand the imposition of being put up for a target in that manner, without retaliating. Had the scamp fired, he would have been opened upon in return in good style, I fancy. The matter ended properly, by his fears getting the better of him, so as to bring his legs into most appropriate play. He ran well, particularly after stumbling upon the dogs, and after Cribb, making a dash at him, gave one energetic growl. This finished the work: we heard a succession of quick sounds, like a man taking the step, hop and jump; then a crash in the dry twigs of the swamp, and a general rush over every thing, and the apprentice vanished. Mingo gave one prolonged relaxation to his cachinatory organs at the result, and then we settled ourselves steadily to the work in hand.

We sat and sat, still as the echoless forest itself, until about ten o'clock. The moon had got up, but we could not distinguish each other, and I had some thoughts of slinging my rifle, and breaking up the Indian council of war, or rather the Quaker meeting, by backing myself down the rustic ladder, and retiring, leaving Mingo to do his own watching if he chose. But that was the moment when the question arose whether I could retire in safety, or not; for hearing a rustling sound of the oats, like the wind disturbing long grass, I cast my eyes down, and saw a dark object alongside of the stump on which I sat, which I at once took to be a man. It was, however, no man, for he was moving slowly towards the centre of the field, and I could perceive as he passed along, that he moved his arms out on either side, and drew the tall oats within reach of his mouth. He was standing erect and moved himself slowly along, while at the same time I could hear him drawing the heads of the oats through his mouth, and grinding his teeth on them. This was the identical gentleman of whom we were in search, and of course it was my bounden duty to lift up my rifle, and pour devastation down upon him, to the best of my slender judgment and ability; but for the life of me, I could not lift my gun. My boots struck lightly on the bark of the tree as they hung down, and the noise caused him at once to stop feeding, and, as I thought, to turn round facing me. My presence of mind then returned, and I slowly raised my rifle and fired. Now I knew I could not miss him, for, from long practice, I can point my gun, at any object I can