

to a halt, in order to obtain an explanation of the unlooked-for interruption.

In a few moments a colt was seen gliding, like a fallow deer, amongst the straight trunks of the pines; and in another instant, the person of the ungainly man described in the preceding chapter came into view, with as much rapidity as he could excite his meagre beast to endure, without coming to an open rupture. In their short passage from the quarters of Webb to their attendants, no opportunity had been furnished the travellers, to look upon the personage who now approached them. If he possessed the power to arrest any wandering eye, when exhibiting the glories of his altitude on foot, his equestrian graces were quite as observable. Notwithstanding a constant application of his one-armed heel to the flanks of the mare, the most confirmed gait that he could establish was a Canterbury gallop with the hind legs, in which those more forward assisted for doubtful moments, though generally content to maintain a lopeing trot. Perhaps the rapidity of the changes from one of these paces to the other created an optical illusion, which might thus magnify the powers of the beast; for it is certain that Heyward, who possessed a true eye for the merits of a horse, was unable, with his utmost ingenuity, to decide by what sort of movement his pursuer worked his sinuous way on his footsteps with such persevering hardihood.

The industry and movements of the rider were not less remarkable than those of the ridden. At each change in the evolutions of the latter, the former raised his tall person in the stirrups; producing in this manner, by the undue elongation of his legs, such sudden growths and diminishings of his stature, as baffled every conjecture that might be made as to his character. If to this be added the fact, that in consequence of the *ex-parte* application of the spur, one side of the mare appeared to journey faster than the other; and that the aggrieved flank was resolutely indicated, by unremitting flourishes of her bushy tail, we finish the picture of both horse and man.

The frown which had gathered around the handsome, open, and manly brow of Heyward gradually relaxed, and his lips curled into a slight smile, as he regarded the stranger. Alice made no very powerful effort to control her merriment; and even the dark, thoughtful eye of Cora lighted