

We have left a record in the mud which the savages will not be slow to decipher."

"What's to be done now," Edward inquired.

"My idea is to wade up the stream. The fewer tracks we make, the harder it will be to follow us. They will be uncertain whether we may not have diverged from the river."

"That is the only course," said Arthur. "If we can only elude the devils till dark we may be able to double on them. It is most unfortunate, though, that our presence has become known to them."

The party accordingly took to the water, taking care to step on the stones, so as to leave as few traces as possible of their progress, in hopes that the Indians, on losing their trail would be somewhat disconcerted, and consequently delayed in the pursuit; for they felt no doubt that they had discovered their foot prints.

"I think it likely we are safe from further pursuit to night," observed Lee, turning round to speak to his companions, who were struggling behind him in the bed of the stream. "It is a full half hour since I last heard them, and it is now too dark to follow our trail."

"I incline to the same opinion," said the elder Thornton; "nevertheless if it be possible I think we had better go on a mile or two further. Should we be fortunate enough to meet with a tributary to the stream, we might give them the slip."

Scarcely had the words passed his lips, when looking down the stream, which was visible for a quarter of a mile, a scene met his eyes which at once dispelled all idea of rest or safety. Flashing and sparkling, like so many fire flies, through the woods and on the water, many lights were distinctly to be seen, crossing and recrossing each other.

The pursued looked at one another in silence, as the unwelcome truth flashed across their minds that the savages were still on their track. It was enough to try the nerves of most men. What wonder, if consternation was depicted on the faces of the younger members of that little band, when looking around them, they realized the perils and discomforts of

their situation to the fullest extent. On either side a dark and unknown forest stretching out for hundreds of miles, unbroken as yet by the woodman's axe; before them a rapid river, up whose uneven bed it had been difficult enough to make their way by daylight, and in which it was now next to impossibility to find a footing, by reason of the deepening gloom.

"What's to be done now?" demanded Edward, recovering from the first effects of the surprise.

"The question is more easily asked than answered," his father replied. "That we cannot advance with a tithe of the speed they can, by the aid of their torches, is but too evident; and that we dare not avail ourselves of similar aid in picking our way over the rocks and windfalls is equally apparent."

"And we have no time to deliberate. What is done must be done quickly."

"What would you advise, Arthur?"

"Let each one shift for himself, as best he may. There is no alternative."

"Grace," exclaimed Captain Thornton, mournfully, as if he foresaw evil in the separation of the party.

"Grace," echoed his son, somewhat defiantly.

"Grace!" they all repeated emphatically; and the name became a watchword, strengthening every heart by the repetition, by removing their thoughts from their own situation to that of the fair being whose recapture they had sworn to effect.

In another moment the party had separated. Captain Thornton and Philip proceeded a short distance further up the stream, and finding a fir tree growing near the bank, they swung themselves into it from the water, and by cutting off some of the branches above their heads and placing them under them, they were enabled to make a tolerable screen.

After thrusting his powder flask under the moss growing over the edge of the bank, Arthur proceeded to a deep hole immediately under a rapid, not far from where they stood. Here he prostrated himself on his back, and placed a large stone on his legs to keep them under water. Where the river flowed over the stones, it was scarcely deep enough to cover