

experienced hand like me, the next time, for if you tried it again you might fail of a chance."

A short time now brought Helen in safety to her home, and Alice learned her sister's danger and deliverance, at the same time. Fauna returned without any difficulty the same evening and brought back an experienced surgeon, under whose care Mr. Blachford's recovery was rapid.

CHAPTER XIX.

Pray you, if you know

Where in the purlieus of the forest stands

A sheep cote, fenced about with olive trees?

West of this place, down in the neighbour bottom

The rank of osiers by the murmuring stream,

Left on your right hand, brings you to the place:

But at this hour the house doth keep itself;

There's none within.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

ONE of the most exciting symptoms of approaching spring to the forest dwellers of Canada, is the commencement of sugar making. Mr. Blachford had employed Yankee Joss to make it for him in the bush, he being considered the best sugar boiler in the settlement. Accordingly he brought his kettles and ladle and set to work with the assistance of a young French Canadian, tapping trees, and hewing troughs to catch the rich juice as it flowed from the wound. Over his huge fire he raised a roof of logs and branches to protect it from the weather, and knocked up a rude shanty close beside to serve as a sleeping place for himself and his comrade. One fine day Helen and her sister, Rhoda Werfenstein and Frank, had paid Joss a visit, and were returning home, when Rhoda proposed that they should extend their walk to a tumble dam which was at a little distance, where Max had told her the most fantastic and beautiful icicles were to be seen. Alice and Frank willingly agreed to accompany her, but Helen declared herself tired, and said she would wait their return at the foot of the knoll so often mentioned. It was a warm bright day early in April, the snow had suddenly disappeared, and the glowing Canadian sun had partially dried the ground. Seating herself on a fallen tree beneath a cluster of young hemlocks, Helen gazed around her. The light feathery foliage waved in the breeze, which breathed the first whispers of spring; soft moss, and trailing evergreens "with polished leaves and berries red," interspersed with the hepatica or snow-flower, the first blossom of the American spring, carpeted the ground; the deep, clear, blue of the sky gleamed down through the rich green of the hemlocks, and the glorious sun with his golden rays wove their bright hues into the most splendid embroidery, ever wrought even in Nature's loom; a wood-pecker was aid-

ing Father Time in the destruction of a venerable maple close at hand, a handsome black squirrel was swinging himself on a hickory bough, little nut-hatches ran up and down a tall swamp elm, and at a little distance the shrill chattering cry of the squirrel was heard. Miss Landon somewhere expresses a dislike to evergreens, whose dark hues among the lively hues of summer trees, she considers

"A frown upon the atmosphere
Which hath no business to appear
When clouds are bright and skies are gay;"

But had she seen the Canadian hemlocks she would scarcely have extended her censure to them. In the midst of winter, when the snow covers the ground, the forests in which they abound never look bare and leafless; their bright green branches giving a peculiar air of life and cheerfulness to the landscape. A tall hemlock on the edge of a clearing, rising high above all its fellows of the wood, straight as an arrow, its trunk wreathed about at intervals with its verdant boughs, reminds one of some graceful triumphal column on which leafy garlands had been hung, and wearing on the summit a coronal more magnificent than the rest. If it stands at a distance from other trees its branches spread around, and as it is then apt to assume a conical form, it looks at a distance not unlike a pyramid of broad green feathers. Thus thinking, Helen rested in the mingled beauty of sunshine and shade which surrounded her, with the dog Jason at her feet, till a loud halloo in the wood at a little distance dispelled her musings. At the same moment the dog sprang up, snuffed the air, whined and then with one deep long-drawn cry of rapturous delight darted towards the house with the swiftness of light. To explain the agitation of the dog, it is necessary to relate some matters which had taken place since Helen and her companions left home.

Shortly after their departure, three figures might have been seen emerging from the wood, and advancing towards the cottage. The foremost of the party, with whose quick eager movements the others seemed unable to keep pace without more exertion than they chose to employ, was a handsome youth whose age might be about sixteen, judging from his face, though his figure was tall and athletic beyond what is generally seen at that period of life. His glance was piercing and bright as that of an eagle, but his haughty and finely-formed features were softened by the sweetness and good humour which played about his mouth, and a cast of bold but most engaging frankness. He carried a short rifle and gazed