

the beech woods. He thought it might amuse your ladyship, and so he tamed it, and sent it to me, in a basket filled with moss, with some acorns and beech mast, and hickory nuts, for him to eat. The little fellow has travelled a long distance; he came from the beech-woods, near the town of Cobourg, in the Upper Province."

"And where is Cobourg, Nurse? Is it a large city like Montreal or Quebec?"

"No, my lady; it is a large town on the shores of the great Lake Ontario."

"And are there many woods near it?"

"Yes, but not so many as there used to be many years ago. The forest is almost all cleared, and there are fields of wheat, and Indian corn and nice farms, and pretty houses; where a few years back the lofty forest grew dark and thick."

"Nurse, you said there were acorns, and hickory nuts, and beech mast in the basket. I have seen acorns at home in dear Scotland and England, and I have eaten the hickory nuts here, but what is beech mast? Is it any part of a Canadian ship?"

"No, Lady Mary; it is the name that is given to the fruit of the beech tree. You have seen the beech tree in England—the nuts are enclosed in a rough and somewhat prickly husk, which opens when it is ripe at the top, and shows two or more three-cornered shining brown seeds, in a smooth, tough, leathery skin; these fall out, shaken down by the wind when it waves the boughs. Hogs fatten upon these nuts, and squirrels, and dormice, and wood-chucks, gather them into their granaries for winter stores; and wild pigeons, and wild ducks come from the far north, at the season when the beech mast fall, to eat them; for God teaches these, his creatures, to know the times and the seasons when his bounteous hand is open to give them meat from his boundless store. A great many other birds and beasts also feed upon the beech mast."

"It was very good of your brother to send me this pretty creature, Nurse," said the little lady; "I will ask Papa to send him some money."

"There is no need of that Lady Mary. My brother is not in want; he has a farm in the Upper Province, and is very well off."