

districts send forth learned, eloquent, and original men, are here so cut up by local difficulties, that they who follow them are in the best instances only equal to the most ordinary practice of principles implicitly received from others. The doctor, lawyer, or minister, of whom we speak, does not harbour the remotest idea that it would be practicable for him to innovate or improve. Arriving at his profession through many difficulties, with little help or counsel, his highest ambition is gratified when he finds that he can understand what has been propounded by admitted authorities. That he, whose youth was spent in handling the hoe and the broad-axe, should reach such a pinnacle of renown as to comprehend the doctrines of Blackstone, of Boerhave, or Calvin, is such an interval crossed, that it satisfies his most eager aspirations. If in these provinces, in a century teeming with inventions calculated to abridge labour; if in times when so many receive at least the elements of instruction; if under such circumstances, few but men of mere routine are produced by the professions, what must have been the case during the first century of North American annals! The period was marked by many conflicts with the savages, in which no doubt as much courage and skill were shewn as stand associated with fights better known in history. There are few occasions that take stronger hold of the feelings than such events, where perhaps the actors on one side are a respectable family, deep in the woods, surprised in the midst of their peaceful avocations, by an inroad of yelling and unmerciful barbarians. There are fearful numbers against them; their assailants are strangers to pity; those of them that escape immediate death will be exposed to ingenious and protracted torture; the combatants are few in number, but the fact that it is unsparing warfare renders the scene very exciting. There were many such events scattered over the period to which we have referred. In another way too there were aspects singularly suggestive. What can be more so than to behold man entering deep into the forest, and superior to the dread of the Indian, the wild beast, and the difficulties of the soil, founding there his little colony, his small empire, each member of which is to find the struggle less arduous? Then and now, North America presented thousands of such situations. He who surveys these, having much feeling, and coming from some centre of refinement, has his sentiments of wonder painfully excited. He cannot comprehend how one can bear to live so far from the haunts of men, how he can support such perpetual intercourse with mere trees, how he can endure such variety of occupation, or how he can consent to carry on so many branches within his own little circle. The *mental* history of this time does not contain much interesting matter, because it is the annals of those who were placed in situations not favourable to close thinking. The *physical* history would be very different; it would abound in situations singularly suited to create and to exhibit fortitude, endurance, and self-reliance. The narrative that told from authentic sources the gradual progress by which these bold