

"Where are Nelly and Harold?" Mr. Welch exclaimed.

"I saw the canoe close to the shore just before the Indians opened fire," the watchman answered.

"You must have been asleep," Pearson said savagely.

"Where were your eyes to let them Red-skins crawl up through the corn without seeing them? With such a crowd of them, the corn must have been waving as if it were blowing a gale. You ought to have a bullet in ye'r ugly carkidge, instead of its being in ye'r mate's out there."

While this conversation was going on, no one had been idle; each took up his station at a loophole, and several shots were fired whenever the movement of a blade of corn showed the lurking-place of an Indian.

The instant the gate had been closed War Eagle had called his men back to shelter, for he saw that all chance of a surprise was now over, and it was contrary to all Red-skin strategy to remain for one moment unnecessarily exposed to the rifles of the whites. The farmer and his wife had rushed at once up into the look-out as the Indians drew off, and to their joy saw the canoe darting away from shore.

"They are safe for the present, thank God!" Mr. Welch said. "It is providential indeed that they had not come a little farther from the shore when the Red-skins broke out. Nothing could have saved them had they fairly started for the house."

"What will they do, William?" asked his wife anxiously.

"I cannot tell you, my dear; I do not know what I should do myself under the circumstances. However, the boy has got a cool head on his shoulders, and you need not be anxious for the present. Now, let us join the others; our first duty is to take our share in the defence