

be such as it would be unadvisable for me to hear, sent me in to my mother. Our guest did not take his departure until late in the afternoon. After he had gone, my mother heard the narrative at second-hand from my father; but it was not until some months afterwards that the particulars were imparted to me. They were to the following effect:

After alighting from the buggy in which he had ridden with us from "The Shooting Star," the Bald Eagle strode into the interstices of the thicket of underbrush where the two ruffians from the Landing were hiding. Upon reaching the spot where they had ensconced themselves he sternly demanded of them what they did there. They replied that they had been to the Ford, and had stepped aside on their way homeward to rest themselves, and to partake of the contents of a bottle of spirits which they had procured in the village. He told them they lied; that he had overheard their colloquy in the barn; and that unless they left the neighbourhood with all imaginable expedition he would acquaint my father with what he had heard, and have them arrested for the crime they had contemplated. They seemed to be thunder-struck. A guilty conscience is easily imposed upon; it never occurred to them that the evidence was insufficient to convict them of any offence. After deliberating together for a few moments they promised compliance with the demand made upon them; stipulating, however, that before taking their final departure they should be permitted to return to the Landing for certain articles of clothing which constituted the whole of their worldly possessions. They anxiously enquired whether or not he had mentioned to any one what he had overheard, and seemed much relieved when he informed them—untruthfully, as the reader is aware—that he had not. He ordered them to be off at once, and announced his intention of never losing sight of them until they were fairly out of the district.

The three started to walk to the Landing. When they came to the hollow in the road where Norman and I encountered the squaws, one of them suddenly stooped down, and picking up a huge boulder, hurled it at Sebastian's head with all his might. It struck him just above the left ear with full force, and stretched him senseless in the middle of the road.

When he came to himself, Doctor King was bending over him, and pouring a restorative down his throat. Upon attempting to rise to his feet he found that he was dizzy, and unable to stand alone; so the Doctor carried him home in his gig, dressed his wound, and kept him at the Eyrie all night. The two assailants were no doubt of opinion that the blow had been fatal, as it unquestionably would have been if administered to a skull of ordinary thickness. They would probably have dragged his body down the bank, attached a great stone to it, and sunk it in the river out of sight, had they not been alarmed at hearing the approach of the Doctor's gig. It was quite dark, and the Doctor had seen nothing of them. The latter personage was for going at once to the Landing, and delivering the rascals up to justice; but Sebastian would not assent to such a proceeding, stating that he very much preferred to settle with them himself. He had always been accustomed to redress his own grievances, without invoking the majesty of the law. At the urgent request of his patient, the Doctor promised to keep silence about the affair; and next morning, Sebastian, having apparently quite recovered from the effects of the blow, started for the Landing.

Upon his arrival there, he found that the birds had flown. He learned that they had been drinking at Price's tavern up to a late hour on the previous night, and had not since been seen by any one about the place. By some means known only to himself he contrived to get upon their trail, and tracked them from the Landing to the Ford: from the Ford to Port Burlington: from Port Burlington to Niagara: thence across the river into the interior of the State of New York. At Lockport they for the first time became aware that they were being hunted by the man whom they previously believed they had killed. Knowing the character of him with whom they had to deal, and being no doubt haunted by a vague dread of the consequences of an encounter with him, they adopted all sorts of devices to throw him off the scent. I can readily believe that from thenceforward every hour of their lives, whether sleeping or waking, was passed in mortal fear. I

can imagine how, month after month, they shulked about from town to town, striving to baffle the wily pursuer; and striving in vain; for, twist and turn how they would, ever in their wake followed the footsteps of the avenger. It is probable that the Bald Eagle was conscious of the vague terror that his pursuit inspired, and purposely prolonged the chase in order to prolong their anxiety. At all events, he apparently made no very strenuous exertions to come up with them, else he might have overtaken them long before he did. He laughed savagely as he narrated to my father how, no sooner did they fancy that they had thrown him out, and that they were at last in a place of security, than they would receive an intimation that he was only half a dozen miles off, and making straight for them with unflinching tenacity of purpose.

I am unable to give any further details of the prolonged pursuit. Suffice it to say that, if his own word is to be believed, he at last overtook them. Where the encounter took place he declined to say. He further declined to give any information as to how he had avenged himself. "Never you mind," said he to my father: "they won't cut up any more o' their shins. They deserved all they got. That was an awful clip they gin me, an' I wasn't goin' to let 'em off. If I'd had to follow 'em to the middle o' the earth, I was bound to have satisfaction. My head ain't never been quite plumb since the cussed stone hit me. I find that it has affected my mem'ry. I seem to forgit things I oughter remember. I have small amounts o' money hid around here and there in different places in the woods, an' oftentimes I can't call to mind where to find 'em. I have to keep a written amorum in my pocket to tell me where they be."

"But you didn't kill the men?" exclaimed my father, interrogatively.

"Not likely. But don't you ask any questions, 'cause it ain't nobody's business but mine. Any man as runs agin Sebastian Gee runs agin a chunk."

It was of no use. No additional information could ever be extracted from him on the subject. This much, however, is certain: the two ruffians were never seen or heard of again in the district, and their fate remains a mystery to this day.

Sebastian laid no injunctions upon my father to keep silence respecting so much of the story as he had thought proper to communicate; but it will easily be understood that my father did not consider the subject an attractive one to talk about, and never mentioned it to any one except my mother. As has already been stated, it was not until some time afterwards that I learned, from her lips, the particulars which I have here set down.

CHAPTER XI.

MENTOR AND TELEMACHUS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the Bald Eagle's quasi-denial, my father was very much disposed to believe that the two umquilesojourners of Burtch's Landing had met with foul play at the hands of the man who had so pertinaciously hunted them down. It would have been difficult, indeed, for any one who was cognizant of such facts as were known to my father to arrive at any other conclusion. It was not reasonable to suppose that such a pursuit as that in which the half-breed confessed to having engaged—a pursuit involving a long succession of toilsome journeys on foot: a pursuit extending over several months, and followed up to the last with all the savage relentlessness of a Corsican's vendetta—it was not reasonable to suppose that such a pursuit had terminated harmlessly. It was by no means probable that he had spent week after week and month after month in tracking his enemies from place to place for mere pastime. He must undoubtedly have had some very definite purpose in view in following up such a trail; and what could that purpose have been unless revenge? He admitted that his labour had not been in vain. He acknowledged that he had overtaken them; and his persistent refusal to give any particulars as to his final encounter with them formed an additional ground for the gravest suspicion against him; more especially when accompanied by his positive assurance that they would trouble no