

At noon when he came in from work his sister had returned, and he was anxious to know how Fanny had borne what he intended as a punishment, but was mortified when she told him that she had never seen her in better spirits. This was, however, a mere artifice of Fanny's, to retort the pain he had inflicted by his absence. Out of humor with himself and every thing else, he went out where he had a number of men engaged in piling up logs. About 3 o'clock, as he was busily engaged in driving a team, he was much surprised at the well-known sound of his father's horn, an unusual thing at that hour.

"There is something wrong at home," said William; "here Robert, drive the oxen till I come back." Saying this, he threw down the whip, put on his coat, and walked hastily towards home, puzzling himself to discover a cause for the alarm. His suspense however, was soon ended, by a dreadful certainty.—His sister met him, breathless and agitated: "Fanny Homes is lost in the woods," fell upon him like a thunder-bolt, and transfixed him to the spot.

We shall leave him there a moment, to recover his self-possession, while we inform the reader that the valley where the wild currants grew in the greatest profusion, was about a half mile within the boundary of one of those large and uninhabited tracts of forest that are often found, even in the neighborhood of thriving settlements. The two friends had separated, where two paths led to their respective homes.—That taken by Fanny, was not only intricate, but was also intersected by others which led into the forest. Mrs. Homes, alarmed at her daughter's absence, had sent a servant to the valley; who, unable to discover traces of her, proceeded to Mr. Parnel's, with a hope that she had accompanied her friend, and by this means the alarm was given.

William now flew home, took down his rifle, put some bread in his pocket, and dashed into the forest, madly resolving never to return without her.—When he arrived at the valley, her parents were there before him: when he saw their looks of despair, and heard the name of 'Fanny! Fauny!' resounding through hill and dale, he exclaimed in tones of thrilling agony, "Oh! if I had been with her, which was prevented by my wretched folly, things would not have been thus."

With a heart almost bursting, he left those whom he could not relieve. He had not proceeded far before he found a path which the wanderer had marked with her footsteps; but it was soon

lost among the leaves that covered the ground. Travelling on in the same direction for several miles, he came to a creek, the banks of which he followed, examining them with the closest scrutiny, and at last discovered that she had crossed the stream; but the dark shades of evening had gathered around and he could see no more. To kindle a fire in the shattered trunk of a tree, was the work of only a few minutes; then stripping some bark from a neighboring hickory, he made a torch, with which he perambulated the neighboring woods, calling upon his Fanny! but the owl alone responded to his cry. Weary and dejected, about midnight he returned to his fire; but the howling of the wolves in the distance, were like daggers to his heart. Fancy represented to his tortured imagination, the form of his beloved Fanny torn to pieces by these savage monsters; he then fell down on his knees and prayed in an agony of supplication to Him who alone could save her from their ruthless fangs.

(To be Continued.)

## THE COUNTRY BACHELOR.

BY JOHN NEAL.

Bill Simpkins was a clever sort of a fellow, living in one of our country towns, with money enough, sense enough, and just education enough, to be a pretty respectable sort of a man. Bill wasn't much of a dandy, though he did have money. He was a great gawky-looking man, with a puritanic face, which some of the girls, by way of a joke, called a hatchet face. He wore cowhide boots, a homespun coat, and a streaked handkerchief, that was tied with such a knot as none but Bill Simpkins could tie.

Bill, to use his own language, always had a ternal longing after the girls.—He never ventured to be very intimate with any one but his own family since he was two feet high; yet there was not a girl in the neighborhood whom Bill had not edged round, or stuck up to. Bill didn't do his courting by making his visits on a Sunday night, and sitting down in the kitchen, talking nonsense, pulling fingers, or casting sheep's eyes; but when he saw a girl that he took a shine to, he dressed up in his best bib and tucker; tied his cravat in his best knot; greased his boots; run a pipe stem through the locks of his hair about his ears, so as to curl them up like a cigar, and then strutted off to the dear one's house. Yet Bill never had the courage to enter a house, though he has sworn to do it a thousand times. Often, to be sure, he would get up under the windows and

peep in to see what Polly or Kate was about; and he has even taken his jack knife out to knock on the door, so as to hear the "come in" of Squire Topknot, but he never but once had the courage to knock, and then his heart failed him and he run off full tilt, as soon as they bade him come in. All the while, there was not a girl in the neighborhood who had not made quiltings and got up serapes on purpose to get Bill Simpkins there. Squire Topknot's daughter, Kate, had got a half a dozen quilts all made up, on purpose for him, I was going to say. Poll Jones had had quilting after quilting, and she always had her eyes pretty sharp on Bill whenever he came with the rest of the 'fellers.' The fact is, Bill Simpkins had two or three good farms left him by his father, and he had a house too, all fitted up; and therefore he was a slick prize to any of the gals that could catch him. Bill was no fool of a beau neither, when he was in company. All the gals owned he was the cutest fellow for a scrape, just get him set out, that ever danced a double shuffle, or played hunt the thimble. The ruination of Bill was his bashfulness or sheepishness as the girls called it. Put him alone and he couldn't say his soul was his own. I have known him to go home many a time with Suky Dyer, and for a mile and a half on a stretch, all he could find to say was, "My plaguey bad going," or "'tis quite shoshy," or something of that sort.—One cold night, I believe he did get hold of Suky's hand, but it frightened him so that he blushed back to his ears, and felt very much like a fool.

Bill was now getting to be in his 29th year, and began to feel quite serious. 'There' said he to himself one day, 'here was Kate Topknot, I might have had her, and she was a whale of a gal. I remember well when she turned up her plaguey black eyes to me, when the moon shined right in our faces, and said (oh how I felt) "Mr. Simpkins, this is the very time for falling in love. 'Tis hard to keep one's heart from going pit-a-pat!" What a fool I was, I didn't pop the question then. I know she wanted me too. I only said—yes 'tis, Miss Topknot; and looked askilling as I could, and squeezed up her arm a little. Oh, you fool, Bill Simpkins why didn't you tell her she was was the gal you liked, and not go like a great booby, and kiss the coat where her arm touched. But she's gone now—she was married three years come next Christmas night.

"There was"—(Bill continued his soliloquy) "Poll Jones, I liked Poll; she was a masterpiece for fun, and