

"Well, Lady Mary, the old man had a cap of otter skin, of which he was very proud, and wore it on great days. One day I was playing with it and he said—'Otter funny fellow; he like play, too. He catch fish, too, sometimes. Indian go hunting up Ottawa, that great big river, you know. Go one moon-light night; lie down under bushes in snow: see lot of little fellow and big fellow at play. Run up and down bank; bank all glass ice there. Sit down top of bank; good slide there. Down he go splash into water; up he comes. Down go another into water; out again. Funny fellow, those.' And then the old hunter threw back his head, and laughed till you could have seen all his white teeth, he opened his mouth so wide."

Lady Mary was very much amused at the comical way in which the old Indian talked.

"Can otters swim, nurse?"

"Yes, Lady Mary. The good God, who has created all things well, has given to this animal webbed feet, which enables it to swim; and it can also dive deep down in the waters, where it finds fish and mussels, and, perhaps, the roots of some water-plants to eat. It makes very little motion or disturbance in the water when it goes down in search of its prey. Its coat is thick, and formed of two kinds of hair; the outer hair is long, silky, but stiff and shining. The underpart is short and fine, and warm. The water cannot penetrate to wet them,—the oily nature of the fur throws off the moisture. They dig large holes with their claws, which are short but very strong. They line their nests with dry grass, and rushes, and roots gnawed fine, and do not pass the winter in sleep, as the dormice, and some squirrels, and raccoons, and bears do. They are very innocent and playful, both when young and even after they grow old. The lumberers often tame them when young, and they become so docile that they will come for a call or whistle. Like all wild animals, they are most lively at night when they come out to feed and play."

"Dear little things; I should like to have a tame otter to play with and run after me; but do you think he would eat