

AN INDIAN STORY.

-It was a sultry evening towards the last of June, 1722, that capt. Harmon and his *muster* rangers urged their canoes up the Kennebec river, in pursuit of their savage enemies. For hours they toiled diligently at the oar—the last trace of civilization was left behind, and the long shadows of the striking forests met and blended in the middle of the broad stream, that wound darkly through them. At every sound from the adjacent shores—the rattling of some night bird, or the quick footsteps of some beast—the dash of the oar was suspended, and the ranger's grasp tightened on his rifle. All knew the peril of the enterprise; and that silence, which is natural to men who feel themselves in the extreme of mortal jeopardy, settled like a cloud upon the midnight adventurers.

"Hush—softly, men?" said the watchful Harmon, in a voice which scarcely rose above a hoarse whisper, as his canoe swept round a ragged promontory, 'there's a light ahead!"

All eyes were bent towards the shore. A tall Indian fire glimmered up amidst the great oaks, casting a red and strong light upon the dark waters. For a single and breathless moment the operation of the oar was suspended; and every ear listened with painful earnestness to catch the well known sounds, which seldom fails to indicate the proximity of the savages. But all was now silent. With slow and faint movements of the oar, the canoes gradually approached the suspected spot. The landing was effected in silence. After moving cautiously for a considerable distance in the dark shadow of the party at length ventured within the broad circle of the light which at first attracted their attention. Harmon was at their head, with an eye and a hand quick as those of the savage enemy whom he sought.

The body of a fallen tree lay across the path. As the rangers were on the point of leaping over it, the hoarse whisper of Harmon again broke the silence.

"God of heavens!" he exclaimed, (pointing to the tree)—"See here!—'tis the work of the cursed red-skins!"

A smothered curse glowed on the lips of the rangers as they bent grimly forward in the direction pointed out by their commander. Blood was sprinkled on the rank grass; and a human hand—the hand of a white man—lay upon the bloody log.

There was not a word spoken, but every countenance worked with terrible emotion. Had the rangers followed their own desperate inclination, they would have hurried recklessly onward to the work of vengeance; but the example of their leader, who had regained his usual calmness and self command, prepared them for a less speedy, but more certain triumph. Cautiously passing over the fearful obstacle in the pathway, and closely followed by his companions, he advanced stealthily and cautiously to the light, hiding himself and his party as much as possible, behind the thick trees. In a

few moments they obtained a full view of the object of their search. Stretched at their length, around a huge fire, but at a convenient distance from it, lay the painted and half naked forms of twenty savages. It was evident from their appearance, that they had passed the day in one of their horrid revels; and that they were now suffering under the effect of intoxication. Occasionally a grim warrior among them started half upright, grasping a tomahawk, as if to combat some vision of his disordered brain, but unable to shake off the stupor from his senses, uniformly fell back into his former position.

The rangers crept nearer. As they bent their keen eyes along their well-tried rifles, each felt sure of his aim. They waited for the signal of Harmon, who was endeavoring to bring his long musket to bear upon the head of the most distant savages.

"Fire!" he at length exclaimed, as the sight of his piece interposed full and distinct between his eye and the wild scalplock of the Indian. "Fire and rush on!"

The sharp voice of thirty rifles thrilled through the heart of the forest.—There was a groan—a smothered cry—a wild convulsive moment among the sleeping Indians; and all again was silent.

The rangers sprang forward with their clubbed muskets and hunting knives but their work was done. The red men had gone to their last audit before the Great Spirit; and no sound was heard among them save the gurgling of the uot blood from their lifeless bosoms.

A PERSIAN ENTERTAINMENT.

An account of a dinner party in Persia, with statements illustrative of the manners and customs of the people, we derive from Alcock's Travels in Russia, Persia &c.

Shortly afterwards we were informed dinner was ready, and we were again summoned to the state rooms. Lest the reader should fancy such a state room contains much handsome furniture, it may be well to explain, that a very pretty carpet, which is most studiously kept clean, serves as a substitute for the tables, the sofas, and the chairs of Europe. The prince, his brothers, and friends, sat on one side of the room, and our frank party opposite them. The dinner consisted of a pillaw with partridge, some balls of forced meat wrapped in vine leaves, called *giaprakia*, and little bits of mutton roasted on a skewer of wood, and called *kibob*, tolerably good, and several basins of sherbet. (an oriental name for lemonade,) and the most delicately carved wooden spoons were used, as silver utensils coming under the class of innovations, are forbidden. The Persians use their right hand only to feed themselves with, and the dexterity with which they take rice between their thumb and fore finger, form it into a sort of little ball, and toss it into their mouth without touching any part of their beard, is most astonishing; one of my companions was inclined to try the same experi-

ment, but scattered the rice all over his face, and down his neck-cloth and was forced to recur to the more civilized practice of employing a spoon. Nothing can be more painful, as well as disagreeable, than sitting cross-legged on the floor, and being obliged to bend over in order to eat one's dinner. Not less singular than the mode of eating were the arrangements for sleeping; the floor of the bedroom was laid for about thirty persons; consisting of ourselves, our Frank servants, and the other visitors of the Khan. Very little preparation is required by the Persian to lie down to rest; he throws off his large loose robe, the shoes are always left outside the room, his nightcap is the black lamb skin, which on no occasion leaves the head and he reposes without further ceremony, having first smoked his hookah. Among the visitors at the prince's was an unfortunate man who had held some appointment under the government, and had had his eyes put out as a punishment, for this is not uncommon among them. There is a story, almost too horrible to relate, that the town of Kormaan having rebelled, three pounds weight of eyes were ordered to be sent to the late King, Aga Mahomed Khan. We felt Makoo particularly gratified by our visit, and by a civility and kindness on the part of the prince and his brothers, which we could hardly have expected. He is necessarily suspicious of all strangers, and but we were introduced to him under very favorable auspices, it would have been more probable that we had been confined in a dungeon than received with hospitality and attention.

According to the doctrine inculcated by Mahomet, the women are not only excluded from all society, but go about so little that a traveller might pass through the whole country and not see a female face, as the Persians are, perhaps, even more jealous than the Turks. The Armenian and other Christian women living amongst them, are obliged to conform to Mahometan law in this respect, and cover their faces, and wrap up their figures in a large sort of domino or *feratgee*, in the same manner of the native women, or they would be insulted. So naturalized are the Christians to this custom, that it was the cause of a great disappointment to us upon one occasion. An Italian doctor, who had been lately married to an Armenian, was polite enough to endeavour to induce his bride to uncover her face for our curiosity and amusement; but his best efforts to persuade her it would not be improper were in vain: the lady even smoked a *kaliaun* (the Persian hookah) whilst we were in company with her, but kept it under her veil; it was altogether a ludicrous scene: in vain we told her that it was unfair she should have the opportunity of seeing us through the little holes of her dress, and that we could not be permitted the advantage of seeing her, even with her husband's consent. She felt it would be extremely indecent to show her face; and we were obliged to satisfy ourselves with the assurance of her