

to his parents' personal effects, including a certain amount of plate, jewelry, and other articles of interest and value, some of which belonged to his mother, he could discover no sign of any document or other clue to what he desired to know. He had, personally, searched in every conceivable place where such evidence might exist, but all without avail. Could he have so lowered his pride, he might even have gone down into Lincolnshire, and bearded his supposed relatives in the old Hall of the same name as the family. That of Etherington was one of remote nobility and landed position for centuries, and raised to a baronetcy by the late King. Thus he might have discovered what gulf it was that had separated his father from his kin. He must, he realized, have cousins of his own age, and this idea appealed to his sense of loneliness, as was natural. But he had not done so; and here he was now, embroiled in what appeared to be a long and bitter war in the New World, and he realized that there were chances that he might never see the old land again. He might even die without solving those doubts as to his origin which now and again began to take strange shapes in his brain. He now, however, made one resolution, that so soon as an opportunity offered itself, he would, without revealing his suspicions, question the Governor, his father's old friend, and discover through his aid, some clue to the mystery.

As he made this resolve, he emerged from a dense woodland, where the shade of the oak, maple, beech, elm and basswood, under which he had just passed, gave place to a low shrubbery, and there in front of him lay