

years, inspired by the various excellencies in my wife's character, I labored assiduously to correct my faults. I forgot my self-importance as far as possible, and endeavored to promote the happiness of all around me, even at the sacrifice of some of my own cherished inclinations. Imperfect as were my efforts, they were sincere, and with my Margaret, at least, eminently successful. Never was the pure light of our domestic happiness dimmed for a moment even by the overflowings of that wayward self-will which had so often brought tears to the eyes of my poor mother. How indeed could I have lived to tell this sad story, if to all the rest were added the recollection that I had ever inflicted one pang on that loving heart?

It was my intention, when I began this record, to have passed over the incidents of my early life, and to have recalled little more than the horrible catastrophe which has darkened the sun and extinguished the stars to my blighted soul for so many years. But with the attempt to say anything of myself, human feelings and the natural longing for human sympathy revived at once within me. Recollections of the entire past flooded my soul, and would have vent. Far different have long been my contemplations, and who does not know that rebellious thoughts bring their own just misery with them? The very consolation which I experience in the recital of my sorrows, reproaches me with the insane folly of having withdrawn myself from my kind until I am no longer fit for their communion. But I must not lose time which I feel will be but short.

My father-in-law had large contracts connected with internal improvements, and, besides keeping his accounts I frequently superintended the labors of his workmen in the quarry and in the forest. The latter was to me an ever new delight. To explore its tangled thickets, to roam through long branch-roofed vistas until the resounding strokes of

the woodman were lost in the distance; and then, amid the hush of noonday twilight, to give myself up to romantic musings or to solemn contemplation, was among the very few enjoyments that could reconcile me to leaving my happy home, even for a day.

On one of these occasions, when I had strayed until hunger overtook me, and I had begun to think the way home would seem too long. I came unexpectedly upon an Indian wigwam. Its inmates, a young man and his mother, received me with grave courtesy; and, at my request for food, the white-haired squaw set before me corn-bread and succatash, with a calabash of water, which was nectar to my eager thirst. The young man, a tall and well-looking specimen of his race, was one whom we had employed in searching for timber suited to our purposes, and I took this opportunity to engage him to explore a new and wild tract for some trees of great size which were necessary at that time. His manner wore that cold and stern indifference which veils the fiery soul of his race; but he promised compliance and I left him, having in vain tried to press upon himself and his mother some compensation for my refreshment.

In consequence of my commission, Indian John, as this young man was called in the neighborhood, came several times to my house, and upon one occasion crossed my wife's path as she was going out. It was then that I learned that Margaret had a deep and unconquerable dread of an Indian.—Her family accounted for it by the circumstance of her having been frightened by one when a child. The occurrence, as repeated to me, did not seem likely to have made so lasting an impression on the mind of a girl brought up on the outskirts of civilization; but it proved to be indelibly imprinted on her imagination, and was supposed to have been the first cause of her delicate health. A country girl entrusted with the care of her when four or five years