

ed to have fallen victims to the fury of some tempest many years ago, and that we were the first mortals to intrude upon their gigantic remains. The twilight was settling rapidly upon the objects around, and the vistas of the forest were dim and undiscernible in the thick shade of the foliage; we could with difficulty see a step before us, and were about desisting from our toil, with the intention of throwing our fatigued bodies down upon the damp moss, which grew in rank luxuriance where we stood, when, to our great joy, we discovered the faint glimmer of a light through the trees, causing a temporary renewal of our strength, and urging us to strain every nerve for the purpose of reaching the place whence the flame issued, thinking it an encampment of Mohawks, who we fancied to be hunting somewhere in that direction.

"After struggling for some time over the impediments in our way, we gained a part of the stream which was illuminated by the blaze of a fire on the high rocky cragg opposite, over which the pent-up water broke in a beautiful silvery cascade; while the ceaseless sound of the fall, reflected from the caverned ravine, and the upright boles of the pines, fell with a plaintive murmur upon the ear. A tree thrown across below the cataract, enabled us to pass over, when, on pursuing a path that led to the summit of the eminence, to our surprise, we beheld before us a small log cabin, such as settlers furnish themselves with in this primitive country. Before the door sat an old man of very remarkable appearance, and an aged dog, whose furious barks and hostile demonstrations, were with difficulty restrained by his master, who appeared to be considerably disconcerted by our intrusion. After some hesitation, upon learning our plight, he desired us to enter his habitation, where our curiosity was somewhat increased by the unusual character of its furniture;—but, in the first place, I must give you a description of the extraordinary proprietor of the cabin, whose strange, yet interesting "*tout en semble*," I shall never forget.

"His form, which, at one time, must have possessed great strength from its broad, massive proportions, was bent by years, and it might be, suffering; and the deep lines upon his countenance were softened by the long gray hair and beard, which seemed to have been untouched for a lengthy period, as they covered both breast and shoulders with their thick, graceful curls, imparting a dignity to his features which we seldom see, save in the representations of the ancient Patriarchs; but, contrasted with their calmness, his small grey eye

burned at times with an intense brilliance which left the impression of a mind slightly tinged with insanity. On such occasions, which happened when any thing seemed to stir some deep cord of feeling within, the whole character of the face was changed; the flesh upon the shrunken cheeks and round the mouth appeared to contract, as by a spasm, leaving the attenuated profile sharp and rigid with an expression of extreme misery, which was frightful to behold. His outer clothing consisted of a robe of deer skin rudely manufactured and confined at the waist by a leather girdle from which depended a well-used hunting knife. Altogether his appearance was singular and picturesque, as the strong glare of the fire which had been kindled outside the entrance to avoid the annoyance of black-flies and mosquitoes shone full upon him.

"The inside of the cabin contained but one apartment; the bare rock, upon which it had been erected, serving for a floor; the walls were hung round with the peltry of several animals mingled with steel traps. Upon their appropriate pegs rested an unsheathed sabre and a gun, but the one was eaten with rust, and the lock of the other was broken. In one corner a pallet was constructed of green boughs upon which a few skins were thrown. Two woodsman's axes were hanging in becketts at the side of the chimney, and over the mantelpiece a strange dissimilitude to the other articles, hung a rich gilt frame, the picture of which was concealed by a faded silk handkerchief, attached to the upper part of the painting.

"Excited as our curiosity was by the novelty of every thing, we, however, restrained our remarks, and set about preparing a repast, which you may imagine we were not backward in attacking, qualified as our broiled deer steak was by hunger, and a dish of fine potatoes of last year's growth, reared in a small piece of ground which the old man had redeemed from the wilderness, and planted with his own hands. We were astonished at the easy fluency with which our host replied to the questions put, after his restraint had wore gradually away; though he avoided all allusion to his isolated habits, and seemed to dislike any reference to a former period. His ideas, though at intervals incoherent and visionary, were clothed in forcible, eloquent language, evincing the highest powers of thought and expression, mingled with a degree of polish, which education and intercourse with society only could have imparted.

"Upon being asked if he alone lived there, he answered—