

for she never left the house when her mother was absent from it without her express permission. And now she was gone,—lost to them perhaps for ever. There stood the wheel she had been turning; there hung the untwisted hanks of yarn, her morning task; and there they remained week after week, and month after month, untouched,—a melancholy memorial to the hearts of the bereaved parents of their beloved.

It were indeed a fruitless task to follow the agonized fathers in their vain search for their children, or to paint the bitter anguish that filled their hearts as day passed after day, and still no tidings of the lost ones. As hope faded, a deep and settled gloom stole over the sorrowing parents, and reigned throughout the once cheerful and gladsome homes. At the end of a week the only idea that remained was, that one of these three casualties had befallen the lost children,—death, a lingering death by famine; death, cruel and horrible, by wolves or bears; or, yet more terrible, with tortures by the hands of the dreaded Indians, who occasionally held their councils and hunting-parties on the hills about the Rice Lake, which was known only by the elder Perron as the scene of many bloody encounters between the rival tribes of the Mohawks and Chippewas. Its localities were scarcely ever visited by the settlers, lest haply they should fall into the hands of the bloody Mohawks, whose merciless disposition made them in those days a by-word even to the less cruel Chippewas and other Indian nations.

It was not in the direction of the Rice Lake that