

## XII

### THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

**I**T was perhaps midway between the time of our earlier fishing excursion and the expedition which brought us to September's eve, that there came to us an awakening, disturbing message: one whose warning would not be ignored, strive as we might to disregard it.

The atmosphere was charged with it, the clouds showed it forth, and both sea and winds proclaimed it loudly.

Secure in the warmth and the brightness and all the other genial influences of summer, we had gone heedlessly on our way, as if our happy holiday were to last forever. But on the day of the warning, there was a sharp sudden change, and even while August was but half spent, a frosty breath made itself felt.

"It is cold to-day; cold, cold, cold," said an aged villager on the morning of the awakening day. "Autumn will soon be here."

"Let the ladies pay no heed to him," said