

for the Indians will be very angry when they find that he has gone from the village.

"Will not Winona tell the Englishman," asked Osborne of the girl as she was stepping out of the cave, "where he may find the dwellings of the Acadians?"

Winona paused for a moment and then said: "The Acadian is no friend of the English chief's people. The Englishman is safer in the woods."

"Perhaps," answered Osborne anxiously, "he may guide the Englishman to the English fort."

The girl shook her head dubiously and then said, pointing in a north-westerly direction: "Two hours' march from the river lives the Acadian; but let the English chief watch till the old man leaves the house and then ask the pale-face girl the way to the English fort. But Winona must go, for her companions will wonder what keeps her away."

Then Winona abruptly left the cave, where Osborne remained for some moments buried in thought, for the words of the girl showed him that his difficulties would be as great as ever when he had reached the cabin of the Acadian, on whose assistance he placed his principal reliance for the success of his adventure. As his eyes became accustomed to the gloom of the cave, he noticed that it reached back for a considerable distance, for he could see a faint glimmer of light where there was probably a crevice, or another opening similar to that which had enabled him to enter. In the middle of the cavern a spring of beautiful limpid water bubbled from the earth and trickled along the ground till it formed a perfect little rill, which worked its way through the pebbly ground. The sides and roof of the cave shone fairly resplendent with stalactites of every size and hue, wherever a fitful ray of the rapidly descending sun struggled through the fissures.

CHAPTER II.

Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of shadow and sunshine

Ran near the top of the trees; but the house itself was in shadow,

And from its chimney-top, ascending and slowly expanding
Into the evening air, a thin, blue column of smoke rose.

—EVANGELINE.

Osborne rose next morning numbed with cold, for he had not ventured to light even a few chips to warm his hands on the previous evening. However, a run through the woods would soon warm him, and might bring him to the cottage where he would, perhaps, be able to procure the food he required, for he had nothing to satisfy the cravings of his appetite except a few scraps which he had secreted before his flight from the village. He had little time to lose, for the Indians would soon be in full pursuit, and he must put as much distance as possible between himself and them. He listened attentively for a few moments and then he heard no sounds outside,—it was just daybreak. He concluded that the Indians had not prepared to start—for he was close enough, he judged, from the noises of the previous night, to hear their movements—and that it would be the wisest plan for him to make for the depths of the woods without any further delay. Following the directions given him so imperfectly by Winona, he kept within sight of the river, and then, at the end of half an hour, during which he made little progress, for he was obliged to move with the greatest caution while he was so close to the Indians, he turned off into the forest. He found it very difficult to keep anything like a straight course; but, fortunately, his experience, gained on several hunting expeditions, enabled him to find his way without making many divergencies. Coming at last to a place where the ground rose to a considerable elevation, crowned by lofty spruces, he climbed one of the tallest of the trees, and there he was able to take a most complete survey of the surrounding forest, which stretched away beyond, and was only relieved by a faint glimpse of the ocean shimmering in the distance, close to the horizon, and by the silvery line of the river, like a ribbon amid a wilderness of green. At first his exertions were unavailing; but he repeated the experiment several times till he was finally rewarded by the appearance of a small clearing, still full of blackened