

so Clarence concluded, from the few loiterers she observed about, and the unaccustomed quiet that succeeded. The chief she had not beheld since the occasion of his memorable speech, and she felt a great relief from his absence, which had been infinitely increased by that of his wife, the malignant old squaw, before alluded to, who had gone that morning, on a visit to her kindred on the other side of the river, leaving the captive in the gentle custody of Waswetchcul, who did the utmost that lay in her power to diminish the grief and hardship which she saw, clearly, was breaking the fair stranger's heart. Often in the night, the only time that she could do so without observation, would she go over to where the captive lay sobbing, with convulsive vehemence, and passing her arms round Clarence, kiss her forehead while she strove, with the most endearing arguments which her language was capable of affording, to chase away the sorrow from her friend, and when she found her efforts of no avail—for Clarence knew not a word of what she said,—then could she also weep, and strive to bear a portion of that anguish she could neither dissipate nor assuage.

After a brief absence the Indian girl re-entered the hut, and gliding to the hearth, she drew a brand from the smoking embers and blew it into flame, then approaching Clarence, the latter saw that her face was flushed with excitement, and that her eyes were sparkling with unusual light, as she put a small strip of bark into her hand. Was it a dream? or did she in truth, behold what entranced every faculty with amazement and delight? On its smooth white surface were traced, in familiar characters, these life-restoring words—

“Courage, dearest—there is help at hand.—Follow the messenger without delay, to him who will offer protection with his life.”

Clarence read the scroll, and then uttering a cry of joy, sunk into a deep swoon.

By the aid of a little water sprinkled over her face, Waswetchcul succeeded in soon restoring her to sense, when, enveloping her fragile person in a blanket, and concealing her brown hair beneath the low tippets of a squaw's cap, the girl put her finger to her lips, significantly, to enjoin silence, and beckoning the willing Clarence to follow, passed quickly out of the cabin.

Pressing her hands tightly over her heart, to controul its violent throbbing, and folding the mantle closely around her, the timid captive trod swiftly in the footsteps of her conductor,

secure from observation by the completeness of her disguise. But her courage almost failed her and she trembled with agitation, as they passed through a lane of wigwams, at the doors of which, several elderly Indians sat listlessly smoking their long stone pipes; and she was scarce able to avoid screaming with terror, as a tiny arrow from one of the children, struck her shoulder and bounded harmlessly from the thick envelope, against which it had been playfully aimed. The loud shout that hailed the successful marksman, only added to her apprehensions, but she was immediately screened from further view by some low cedar bushes that fringed the confines of the encampment.

Waswetchcul, removing one of the enclosing palisades, motioned for her companion to pass through, after whom she immediately followed, and having replaced the picket, led the way among the birch trees covering the ascent of the hill beyond.

Clarence, almost bewildered with the rapidity of her flight and the dangers she had just escaped, saw that her conductor was joined by an Indian whose figure she could barely distinguish in the gloom; but where was he? and who were those advancing towards her, in the garb of her foes; was she the victim of a vain delusion? O no! A voice that made her thrill with long unfeigned rapture, whispered her name; the next instant she was clasped securely in her lover's arms, and weeping hysterically upon his faithful bosom.

CHAPTER XVII.

As the soldier held, in a fast locked embrace, the form of his rescued love, he felt himself amply repaid for his toils in her behalf, but there was but little time allowed for fond endearment then.

“*Enavant! Enavant!*” muttered the deep voice of Pansaway, and imprinting a wild kiss upon the lips of his betrothed, Edward lifted her in his arms and hurried speedily away from the dangerous vicinity.

Relinquishing his precious burthen, when she had sufficiently recovered not to need any further support, Edward breathed words of comfort and encouragement into the ear of Clarence as they traversed the woods with rapid haste, guided by the Indians in advance, after whom stalked Dennis, in high spirits, indeed all were much elated at the ease with which the most difficult part of their project had been effected, namely, the abduction of the captive from one of the strongest villages of the Millicete.