

be at a loss to account for the escape of the two last, or for the heavy wounds inflicted on the Vermonter and the Huron, the latter of whom reached the goal, to use a vulgar expression, more dead than alive. The quantity of torture, preparatory as well as finishing, is always measured out by their opinion of the relative merits of those who are to suffer—he that is deemed worthiest receiving most. Thus the Huron, a warrior known and approved, capable of fasting six days in succession, and feasting the next seven without intermission, went from the arena another Lismahago. My Vermont friend, a woodsman born, hardy, athletic, and sinewy, could, they thought, judging from physical appearances, be nothing less than a warrior, and as such, entitled by right to the greatest civility they were capable of showing. I was very well—by no means a poltroon, but my hands were white, which was very much against me; besides, they had seen me once or twice on the march betray symptoms of weariness. Of Donald and Teddy their opinions were very low, so low, that the unhappy men, through their utter unworthiness, escaped all compliments, save that paid by my uncle Toby to the fly,—“Go, poor devil.”

Though every blow given seemed intended to end life, in no instance was the wound it produced even near being mortal. So practised are they in this species of torture, and at the same time so careful of inflicting deep wounds, that death, as far as I have heard, was never known to happen in one of these gauntlet races. “Even,” saith one, who had many opportunities to know, “when they seem to strike at random, and to be actuated only by fury, they take care never to touch any part where the blow might prove mortal.”

When we had undergone this castigatory punishment, and had arrived at the camp, we were not led about, as usual, from tent to tent, by way of show and for further torture, but were carried at once to a cabin, and guards placed over us.

We owed our escape for this day, doubtless, to the late hour at which we arrived, it being dusk when the race took place. Food was now produced—the best that could be found in the camp, and in quantities that would have fed a score, for whatever be the torments to be practised upon