

which the Canadians and Yankees make such liberal use in their housekeeping.

After a few moments spent in contemplating the busy life below them, whose sounds at that distance could not reach their ears, our party resumed their walk, and speedily reached the river again, from which their path did not deviate till they reached the foot of that hemlock-clothed knoll which gave a name to Mr. Blachford's farm, and in whose tiny lakelet the stream had its source.

CHAPTER XV.

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
All are but ministers of Love,  
And feed his heavenly flame.

THE DARK LADIE.

THE intimacy between the inhabitants of Hemlock Knoll and Leafy Hollow daily grew stronger; but Fauna seldom joined in the forest walks and drives, or social evening amusements of the rest. Each day she became more silent and sad, more capricious and self-willed. Her lonely rambles in the bush, and absences for days and even nights no one knew where, which on the arrival of Max she had discontinued, she now resumed, and even to the entreaties of Max, she remained inflexible. Perhaps, at another time, he might have devoted more of his energies to the task of winning the Indian girl back to her former light-hearted happiness, but now, though he often anxiously reflected upon her future fate, and beheld her altered demeanour with intense pain, a deeper and more absorbing emotion filled his soul, throwing every other thought and feeling into comparative shade. This was his love for Helen Blachford. That love at first sight, which so often sung from the days of Marlow and Shakspeare to our own, is to many, but as the visions of old romance, as unreal as beautiful, yet is felt at times even now, by some spirit cast in a more ethereal mould than the generality of the beings of earth, and gifted with that clairvoyance, as the beautiful superstition of old taught, to recognize at the first moment of meeting the kindred spirit for which, till then, it had vainly yearned. A love which born in a moment is yet deathless as the soul from which it emanates!

But what were the feelings of Helen towards the young painter? She believed them far removed from love, which she was persuaded she was incapable of ever feeling again. Had she deemed it possible that she could again experience that passion which had caused her so much

mortification and pain, she would have avoided the society of one whom she would then have feared, as dangerous to her newly found peace; but secure in her dearly bought indifference, she believed, that cold calmness, which was but the blight that the harsh wind which had withered the garden of delight her fancy had created had left behind, would remain for ever. She knew not that such indifference was like the frosts of the early summer, and while the heart is yet full of youth's elastic and self-vivifying power, is doomed to melt before the sunshine of hope and joy. At times a suspicion of the feelings she had excited in the breast of Max crossed her mind, a suspicion which the picture she had seen in his painting room the first day she had visited it, and which had never since been visible, seemed to confirm; but again the quiet gravity of the young German, so unlike the passionate enthusiasm evident in the looks and words of her former lover, and the soft gentleness of his manner to all as well as to herself, made her banish the thought.

It was now the end of September, that month whose beauty in America can never be sufficiently eulogised. The purity yet softness of the atmosphere, saturated with a hue of mingled gold and amethyst; the changing glories of the clouds; the various beauty of the bright-tinted leaves, to which the gorgeous hues of the maples, presenting innumerable shades of straw-color, orange, pink and scarlet blended in rich magnificence add a splendour unknown to the autumn scenery of the British Isles; the brilliancy of the nights, when large lambent stars, surrounding their radiant queen, gleam down through purple depths—no words could pourtray.

Towards sunset on one of these beautiful days, Max, Rhoda, Helen and Alice had climbed the green tumulus in the orchard and found Fauna seated beneath the lofty cedar. Contrary to her general custom of late, she did not fly from their approach, nor did she move when they seated themselves by her side. Rhoda, to whose restless spirit rest was always irksome, soon led Alice away to search for ripe pears, but Max, Helen and Fauna remained on the mound.

"Dear Fauna," said Helen, "if you would sing to us now how sweet the strain would sound, while heaven and earth is filled with such a delicious light."

"And do you wish it?" asked the Indian girl, looking at Max.

"Certainly, Fauna. Can you doubt it?"

And immediately Fauna sang to a wild and plaintive air those stanzas of Keats, beginning,

"In a drear-nighted December."