

ing to his great first law, he commenced an abstruse calculation of the loss of caloric he would sustain by the unfortunate accident; which, with the prospect of his main supply being shortly exhausted—for the black bottle gave indications of being very low in spirits—was becoming a source of much uneasiness to the feelings of the philosophical Irishman.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE Indians impressed upon their companions the necessity of preserving the utmost silence and caution, as they moved on, for they were now approaching the haunts of the Micicete, and knew not at what moment they should be called upon to act, as it was thought very possible that they might fall in with detached stragglers or hunting parties. The clouds that had prognosticated, for some time, a change in the weather, now condensed the moisture with which they were surcharged, and watered the woods with a heavy shower of rain, rendering the plight of the party any thing but agreeable, as they journeyed on under the forest trees, which afforded little protection from the watery deluge, for every leaf multiplied the torrent, by gathering the drops, spout-like, and transmitting them in huge globules to the thirsty ground. Every bough which was shaken slightly in passing, sent a shower-bath upon the heads of the travellers, and in a short time they were completely drenched, their heavy packs gaining additional weight by the fluid which they absorbed; so that, though the weather soon became more favourable, and the bright sun shone upon the woods, still they felt fagged and uncomfortable. At length they emerged at a cleared spot upon a bend of the same river, at a higher part of which they had bivouaced the night before, and the rapid, shallow waters sparkled and danced along cheerfully in the fresh morning beam.

Here they halted among the ancient ruins of what, as Pansaway said, was once a village of the Acadians, though it appeared to have been deserted for many years, the only traces remaining of man's having once abode there, being a few grass-covered heaps of stone, a number of crumbling logs, and an old, shrivelled, worn-out moccasin.

After a reconnoitre of the place, to assure themselves of its security, a fire was lighted, and blankets and outer garments, being rung out, were suspended upon stakes before the flame. Edward and Dennis employed themselves in drying their soaking hose, but the restless natives were wandering among the

mouldering fragments of the French settlement, which they seemed to regard with deep interest and curiosity. Old Pansaway had seated himself upon a stone, beneath the shade of a large cedar tree, situated upon the verge of the surrounding forest, and he seemed absorbed in thought, for his head rested upon his hand, and his features had assumed an expression unusually grave and mournful. Making a sign to his son, who stood with folded arms at a little distance, the young warrior was soon at his parent's side, when, motioning him to be seated, Pansaway addressed him in these words;

"Would you ask, O my son! of a people whose hearths are deserted, whose foot-prints are washed away?—Listen, and be wise.—Thy father's heart is a grave where the deeds of the past lay buried; their dim ghosts, travelling to and fro, have worn a pathway down into its depths. Where are the *years* that have gone—where are *their* grassy graves?"

"Whither has the smoke vanished—like a dead man's breath? Why are the ashes cold? Roll back, O moons of my youth! for the night is dark and mine eyes are growing dim."

"Thy father was like a green twig of the forest that delighteth in the fulness of its living joy, and he had heard of battles and of men, but his arm was tender, and his knife red only with the game he had vanquished; for the grass grew in the war-path of the Micmac, and though the hatchet was not buried, yet had it become edgeless and rusty. So he said to himself, I will go away from my people and tarry among the tribes of the sunset, and learn to be a warrior, that I may have honor when I return. Therefore, when the snows melted, thy father left the hunting grounds of his brethren, and wandered by strange paths among tribes that were friendly to his own.—And he found that the earth was very big, and that the country of the Micmac became a little wart, upon its side, with a shape like a *wallum-quetch* * claw; and, likewise, that there was no end to the nations and the languages; and that the sun never set, but was only hidden by the hills and the trees.

"These are the red tribes of the sunset, and they are numerous,—yea, very strong!"

"First are the Mohaws, or tribe of the bear, these are nearest the salt water, and the Souriquois; the Oneidas, the Onondagoes, the Cayugas, the Senekas are next, on this side the great river that runs from the big lakes, near the

* Lobster.