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gave him a string wherewith to fasten it, an operation which he had scarcely concluded, when the inspiring shouts of "Tally-ho," "Gone away," "Forward," rang on his ears. "Rattling Bess" seemed to understand the sounds as well as ever alderman knew a dinner-bell; and away she went at full gallop, convincing Monsieur Perrot, after an ineffectual struggle of a few minutes on his part, that both the speed and direction of her course were matters over which he could not exercise the smallest influence.

On they flew, over meadow and stile, ditch and hedge, nothing seemed to check Rattling Bess; and while all the field were in astonished admiration at the reckless riding of the strange courier, that worthy was catching his breath and muttering through his teeth "Diable d'animal, she have a mouth so hard, like one of Mr. Alltripe's bif-steak—she know her business—and a sacré business it is—hold there! mind yourself!" he shouted at the top of his voice, to a horseman whose horse had fallen in brushing through a thick hedge, and was struggling to rise on the other side just as Rattling Bess followed at tremendous speed over the same place; lighting upon the hind-quarters of her hapless predecessor, and scraping all the skin off his loins, she knocked the rider head over heels into the ploughed field where his face was buried a foot deep in dirty mould; by a powerful effort she kept herself from falling, and went gallantly over the field; Perrot still muttering, as he tugged at the insensible mouth, "She know her business, she kill dat poor devil in the dirt, she kill herself and me too."

A few minutes later, the hounds, having over-run the scent, came to a check, and were gathered by the huntsman into a green lane, whence they were about to "try back" as Rattling Bess came up at unabated speed. "Hold hard there, hold hard!" shouted at once the huntsman, the whips, and the few sportsmen who were up with the hounds. "Where the devil are you going, man!" "The fox is viewed back." "Hallo!—you're riding into the middle of the pack." These and similar cries scarcely had time to reach the ears of Perrot, ere "Rattling Bess" sprang over the hedge into the green lane, and coming down among the unfortunate dogs, split the head of one, broke the back of another, and laming two or three more, carried her rider over the opposite fence, who still panting for breath, with his teeth set, muttered, "She know her business, sacré animal."

After crossing two more fields, she cleared a hedge so thick that he could not see what was on the other side; but he heard a tremendous crash, and was only conscious of being hurled with violence to the ground; slowly recovering his senses, he saw Rattling Bess lying a few yards from him, bleeding profusely; and his own ears were saluted by the following compassionate inquiry from the lips of a gardener, who was standing over him, spade in hand: "D—n your stupid outlandish head, what be you a doin' here?"

The half-stunned courier, pointing to Rattling Bess, replied: "She know her business."

The gardener, though enraged at the entire demolition of his melon-bed, and of sundry forced vegetables under glass, was not an ill-

tempered fellow in the main; and seeing that the horse was half killed, and the rider, a foreigner, much bruised, he assisted poor Perrot to rise, and having gathered from him, that he was in the service of rich Squire Shirley, rendered all the aid in his power to him and to Rattling Bess, who had received some very severe cuts from the glass.

When the events of the day came to be talked over at the Hall, and it proved that it was the Squire himself whom Perrot had so unceremoniously ridden over,—that the huntsman would expect some twenty guineas for the hounds, killed or maimed,—that the gardener would probably present a similar, or a larger account for a broken melon-bed and shattered glass,—and that Rattling Bess was lame for the season, the Squire did not encourage much conversation on the day's sport; the only remark that he was heard to make, being "What a fool I was to put a frog-eating Frenchman on an English hunter!"

Monsieur Perrot remained in his room for three or four days, not caring that Mary should see his visage while it was adorned with a black eye and an inflamed nose.

Soon after this eventful chase, Reginald obtained his Uncle's leave to obey his father's wishes by visiting Paris for a few months; his stay there was shortened by a letter which he received from his sister Lucy, announcing to him his mother's illness, on the receipt of which he wrote a few hurried lines of explanation to his Uncle, and sailed by the first ship for Philadelphia, accompanied by the faithful Perrot, and by a large rough dog of the breed of the old Irish wolf-hound, given to him by the Squire.

On arriving, he found his mother better than he had expected; and, as he kissed off the tears of joy which Lucy shed on his return, he whispered to her his belief that she had a little exaggerated their mother's illness, in order to recall him. After a short time, Ethelston also returned, and joined the happy circle assembled at Colonel Brandon's.

It was now the spring of 1797, between which time and that mentioned as the date of our opening chapter, a period of nearly two years, nothing worthy of peculiar record occurred; Reginald kept up a faithful correspondence with his kind uncle, whose letters showed how deeply he felt his nephew's absence. Whether Monsieur Perrot interchanged letters with Mary, or consoled himself with the damsels on the banks of the Ohio, the following pages may show. His master made several hunting excursions, on which he was always accompanied by Baptiste, a sturdy backwoodman, who was more deeply attached to Reginald than to any other being on earth; and Ethelston had, as we have before explained, undertaken the whole charge of his guardian's vessels, with one of the largest of which he was, at the commencement of our tale, absent in the West India Islands.

CHAPTER V.

An adventure in the woods.—Reginald Brandon makes the acquaintance of an Indian chief.

It was a bright morning in April; the robin was beginning his early song, the wood-pecker darted his beak against the rough bark, and the