

was headed by the chief, who had already given sufficient proof, both of his devotion to his people, and of his knowledge of those arts which their condition now chiefly required he should possess and be ready to employ.

There was but one power that could prevail against this resolute band. It was that which Ahtomah dreaded, and there was but too much reason for the young chief's fears.

But the first hours passed away without any cause of alarm, or any other interruption to the repose of the elements, than a few gusts of wind which at intervals still rushed down from the mountains. But these, encountering no resistance from the slender birches, or the tall firs which bent before them as they passed towards the plain, left no evidence of their force, while their continuance at intervals, without any appearance of a tempest, seemed to indicate that though the tops of the mountains might be subjected to the fury of the elements, the shelter which the camp enjoyed, would happily preserve its occupants alike from the effects of the storm, and from the wrath of the dreaded demon.

But the seeming security that prevailed, was only the forerunner of alarms which soon needed all the courage and fortitude of the red people. It was near the dead of the night; and while the taciturn warriors within the grove, watched in groups around the suppressed flames of their concealed fires, when the precipitate step of some one approaching was apparent to every ear. It was that of a scout. In a moment he stood in the midst of his fellow warriors, the associates of their chief. Of words there was little need. The haste with which the warrior entered the grove, betrayed the motive of his return. But, after a moment's silence, he thus addressed himself to the successor of Ottawah.

"Chief of the red tribe," said he; "the Micmaes, like the snake in action, and like the insects of summer in number, lie concealed within a few short arrows' flights of our encampment; a wary band approach our defences."

More words had been vain. The warriors suppressed the sudden exultation which now filled every breast.

A second scout arrived from an opposite direction. His tidings were the same. And, finally, all that had been missing, appeared; and every one brought the same intelligence. Two parties of

the enemy were advancing upon different points of the grove.

The warriors now saw, with renewed admiration, the effects of the grand movement which had been made under the direction of their chief, with the importance of the works which had been raised for their defence. They might be attacked in opposite directions, or on all sides; but they were no where unprepared, and could be no where taken by surprise. They were opposed by a host, in number unknown; but they were within defences capable of repelling any human force that their imaginations could present to the most desponding among them; and all was ready.

The word was hardly given by their chief, for the warriors to form into such divisions as had been appointed, before every disposition of the forces was made; and the two strongest parties, headed severally by the scouts that had given the alarm, were placed in opposition to the immediate danger which threatened; while a select band was formed, and held in readiness for any occasion for their special services that might arise.

The light of the fires by which they had sat, was now totally extinguished; and no sound was heard, save now and then the crackling of small branches of dry wood, on which the moving parties, in their haste, were not able to avoid pressing.

The Micmaes, as it was evident, were approaching the grove, unacquainted with the preparations that were made to obstruct their passage. The skilfully-planned defences would have required a minute knowledge of the ground, and close inspection by day, to be entered or attacked with advantage, by night. They were all placed within the grove; so that they could not be seen at any distance by day; and it was impossible without the light of the sun, for an assailant even to discover their existence, before his steps were arrested by the obstruction which they offered; while the small passages left open, were confounded by intricate windings, through which the warriors might only pass in single file, for the purposes of retreat, or a sortie; and they might be easily closed against an approaching foe.

The interval between the alarm and the event of the first strife was of short duration.

It was no sooner apparent that the course of the assailants was arrested by the obstruction they encountered, than the party of red warriors, that