

handle of the little basket with the graceful trailing runners of the lovely twin-flowered plant, the *Linnæa borealis*, which she always said reminded her of the twins Louise and Marie, her little cousins. And now the day began to wear away, for they had lingered long in the little clearing; they had wandered from the path by which they entered it, and had neglected, in their eagerness to look for the strawberries, to notice any particular mark by which they might regain it. Just when they began to think of returning, Louis noticed a beaten path, where there seemed recent prints of cattle hoofs on a soft spongy soil beyond the creek.

"Come, Hector," said he gaily, "this is lucky; we are on the cattle-path; no fear but it will lead us directly home, and that by a nearer track."

Hector was undecided about following it; he fancied it bent too much towards the setting sun; but his cousin overruled his objection. "And is not this our own creek?" he said. "I have often heard my father say it had its rise somewhere about this old clearing."

Hector now thought Louis might be right, and they boldly followed the path among the poplars, thorns, and bushes that clothed its banks, surprised to see how open the ground became, and how swift and clear the stream swept onward.

"Oh, this dear creek," cried the delighted Catharine, "how pretty it is! I shall often follow its course after this; no doubt it has its source from our own Cold Springs."

And so they cheerfully pursued their way, till the