

A Tale of The Indian Days.

By J. WILLIAM FISCHER.

CHAPTER III.

A Decisive Moment.

"Yes, weeper, weep !
'Twill not be evermore ;
I know the darkest deep
Hath e'en the brightest shore."

—Father Ryan.

DAYS, dark, sunless days, passed by and the long expected Indian scout had not showed his face. The fond spark of hope which once shone in Eduard's heart was gradually fading away. Hayward pitied him deeply and would have done anything to have dried the tears in his blood-shot eyes.

"Listen," he began one day, "if that red-skinned rascal has really deceived us, nothing remains but for us to search for the lost ones ourselves. God willing—we will find them both again. Two of my brothers have promised to aid us in our search and others will be sure to follow. But there is no time to be lost. We must set to work at once."

"As you wish," answered Eduard, with bowed-down head.

"Good, then," exclaimed Hayward. "I go to make the necessary preparations. We start at daybreak—until then, goodbye, and may God bless you !"

Hayward turned and left the desolate homestead and walked in the direction of his own house—a log cabin, not far distant. As he walked along he noticed a human form stirring about in a thicket of green cedars, that bordered the dusty road.

"Perhaps this, too, is one of these red scheming devils !" he muttered half loudly to himself, and then felt for his rifle and made sure that it was properly loaded.

The stranger had noticed his com-

ing, and when Hayward approached he extended his outstretched hands to him. Taking this as the Indian sign of peace, Hayward addressed the strange form, from where he was standing. "Man, what do you want ?"

The stranger answered and recognized the voice as that of the Indian, who had been paid the ransom! He said that he had searched the woods patiently for miles around and found only the corpse of an Indian brother. There was no trace of the lost ones—mother and child had probably disappeared.

There was such a tone of truthfulness in the honest speech of this son of the wilderness that it left quite an impression on Hayward.

"Has the woman left no clue as to what became of her ?" asked he, thoughtfully.

"None," came the answer. "Woman go away, poor Indian find no clue. Horse gone too."

"And what do you think has been the fate of the unhappy woman ?" questioned Hayward, sadly.

The Indian was silent for a while and then began: "Had wolves torn them to pieces, Rivenoak find blood; had she run away, Rivenoak find footsteps. Fear, fear Iroquois take her away."

"Can Rivenoak," questioned Hayward further, "show us the village of the Iroquois ?"

"Rivenoak not blind—not blind," murmured he, slowly.

"Will you help white man to find his wife again ?"

"Pale face shoot Rivenoak, when he see me."

"No," promised the hunter, "he would not dare to do that. But stay here awhile and I will go back and tell him all I have heard."

Rivenoak seemed satisfied and sank down on his knees into the