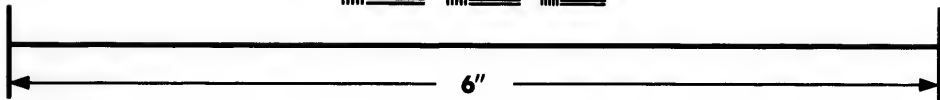
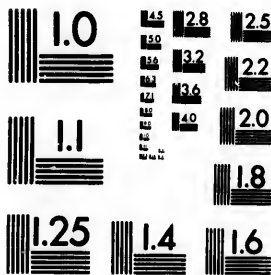


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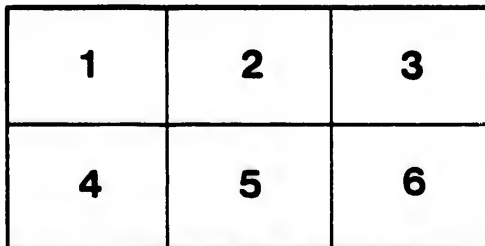
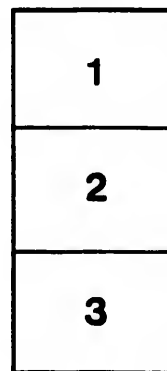
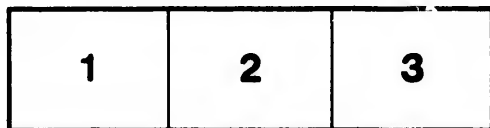
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THE
FORTUNES OF A COLONIST;

BY

PHILIP RUYSDALE.

LONDON:
THOMAS CAUTLEY NEWBY,
30, WELBECK STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE.

1854.

FREDERICK W. MONK, PRINTER, FAVERSHAM, KENT.

array census book. I doubt if
the author ever saw W.B. - he
has probably seen the name in
the story which - but
never saw, perhaps few of
the occurrences mentioned
really occurred. W.B.

is a sketch of the
story which and which
has been obtained from the State

THE
FORTUNES OF A COLONIST.

CHAPTER I.

TOWARDS the centre of the peninsula of Furness, there is a little market-town of considerable antiquity, though undistinguished by any natural feature from most others in the realm of Great Britain.

An ancient tower, on a slight eminence, arrests the eye of the traveller as he draws up at the "Red Lion" for a glass of mine host's especial, and the ruins of a celebrated abbey lie within a short morning's walk of the place, where he may regale himself still more exaltedly.

The surrounding country, insipid enough in its general features, abounds, chiefly perhaps from its

peninsulated position, with "old families" of the middle as well as higher stations of life; and many of the houses contain, mixed up with the mansionry, or immemorially attached thereto, or lurking, peradventure, in the deep-coloured old chests, chairs, and presses, that compose their garniture, evidence to which the "pere de famille" might point in corroboration of his pedigree.

To such a mansion, as my natal domicile, would I, for a moment, draw my reader's notice.

The rude archway in the centre attests its antique date; and when you enter thereat, and proceed to the sombre hall, and low-ceiled chambers, on due inspection of the fire-grate, oak beams, wainscots, and furniture, still more will it be seen, to an observant eye, the three centuries and more that have passed in peace over its roof and walls. Still it is anything but a pretending edifice; and the family who erected it, and for a long series of years made their abode therein, have passed from the cradle to the grave, through a tranquil succession of generations equally unnoticed in the annals of fame. The limited, though time-honoured estate, that acknowledged their ownership, was the wholesome sphere they lived in; and their ambition reached no higher than the temperate profit and enjoyment connected with it. That their

constitutions were healthy, their days happy and contented, was the natural consequence of a sober and simple life; and when the city-bred wit would indulge in a laugh at its monotony, their general usefulness and integrity left a clear balance (in the eyes of the wise and good) to the worthy "freeholder's" credit.

My father's estate being limited and the family numerous, it was found, even under his able and diligent management, to be insufficient, as his sons grew up, for their maintenance and education in the style he desired.

This difficulty, as I had come last into the world, was naturally felt in most force with regard to myself; and became considerably increased as I grew older, by the impossibility of discovering in me any distinctive trait or peculiar quality that might guide them in the choice of my future destination.

Rambling (if I may judge from the many homilies it earned me) must have been at that time my most conspicuous talent; one, too, which was by no means dimmed for want of assiduous cultivation. As it is a faculty, however, usually accounted far from conducive to success in life, the promise it put forth so early by no means edified my parents or helped to lighten their perplexities.

These being then in full force, and myself about

ten years old, they were providentially relieved of both one and the other by an unexpected offer of a bachelor uncle, with whom we had had but little intercourse, to take charge of me. Into his hands I accordingly passed; became part of his household, and being treated with the prodigal kindness often met with in this relation of life, and, in particular, allowed the full indulgence of my peripatetic turn, soon came to regard his mansion as my home.

Being situate not far from the sea-shore, the latter became the favourite scene of my juvenile strollings; and day after day, the shell-paved sand, the pebbly beach, the storm-bleached cliff, and wild meandering stream, would hold me in their charmed communion, and impress my childhood with images that have long out-lived that happy period.

Thus growing up under no control save "my own sweet will," and indebted for what tuition I received to the condescension of my uncle's butler, I reached my fifteenth year, when, at my parent's instance, I was duly translated to one of the large public schools of the country, where, for three years longer, the daily fag that was to lay the foundation of future proficiency was gone through with perhaps more than the usual amount of repugnance.

Though I still look back (as I believe is the case

with most) to my school days with much complacency, my progress, I am fain to confess, was by no means more than ordinary, if even it reached that degree; but being considered, at the end of the term aforesaid, sufficiently imbued with humanity to qualify me for my next step, I exchanged (being then in my eighteenth year) the service of Alma Mater for that of Æsculapius, being duly bound to a respectable medical practitioner, with whom I remained some years longer, toying with the rudiments of a noble, though to me thoroughly distasteful, science.

It needed but this uncongenial course of life to carry to its full height the love of rambling which nature had implanted within me, which had grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength; and at length, from my course of reading, taken a permanent direction towards a quarter which more than any other had captivated my imagination from my earliest years. That quarter was America—and Nature must have written, as Experience has graven, the name upon my heart.

Every book, every pamphlet, every paragraph I could meet with, upon the subject, was perused with the utmost avidity; and in the intervals of leisure from my daily duties, I made myself master of the history, geography, and peculiar traits of that

interesting country, which its sublime natural features, the noble race by whom it was first peopled, the fields of adventure that lay open in so many directions, gave, to a spirit like mine, irresistible attraction. As may be readily supposed, the drudgery of office had but little chance of success against a rival that came into the field with so many advantages, and when an opportunity offered of terminating my thralldom, at the end of my fourth year, not a sympathy remained to shew cause against my availing myself thereof.

During this period, my father had died and a division of family property taken place; my own share of which was (with a slight reservation) vested in securities that proved to be unsound; and not long after the expiration of my apprenticeship, a few hundred pounds, opportunely rescued from the quicksands, was all that remained to garnish forth my prospects of the future with. Under these circumstances, I formed the determination of emigrating. Now, there was an old schoolfellow of mine, the son of a merchant, whom unforeseen family disasters had led to entertain a similar project. We laid our heads together, and agreed to go out in company. This person's name was Butterworth, and as our proceedings for the next year or two were pretty much

in partnership, I may as well give the reader a slight portrait of him. He was a short, porsy little man, of remarkably round formation, which rotundity seemed to extend even to his spirituals. As he looked at you, it was with an expression that said, "My friend, I'll be round with you;" and, indeed, the sincerity of his soul was that of supernal natures, as the exactitude of his ways was like that of the spheres they are fabled to inhabit. Slow in undertaking an affair, he was steady and single-minded in its prosecution; which might arise in part from a want of that discursiveness of mind which is common to many, and, perhaps, a more pleasing than profitable attribute.

But the quality that first conciliated my friendship for him was the quiet, imperturbable good humour that seemed almost to enshrine him. I do not think I ever saw this ruffled; and, in the conditions of life we were now entering upon, it was to me a virtue inestimable. At school, he had been a plodding and indefatigable student; storing his mind and memory to their utmost capacity and continence—with what?—a truly extraordinary cargo for the backwoods—Greek plays and poesy; they were the stars that ruled his destiny—the genii that cheered him in good and evil times, and supplied the loss of fortune. This

was much. Then, I suspect, the benefit was not confined to him, but extended, as it were by refraction, to myself also ; for seldom could I hear his involuntary recitations, but the spirit moved me to "cap" them with my own. This, if I happened to be drearily disposed, would insensibly wean me from the ungrateful theme, and carry us back to school again, where we did not fail to lay in a stock of light-heartedness for the use of the time to come. Nay, it was a positive refreshment only to look at his round contented visage, though a cursory observer would have taken it to savour much more of modern tallow than ancient Greece.

That a person of this character should leave very readily the comforts and gratifications of an old and supercivilized country, for the toil and privations of one comparatively wild, may strike the reader as somewhat extraordinary ; but will appear less so when we consider, that, notwithstanding his unquestionable scholarship, our estimable friend was naturally deficient in the talent of laying it to account. He laboured under a constitutional awkwardness and inaptitude for teaching others, and this added to a natural shyness and aversion to everything like bustle, together with the pressure of his pecuniary circumstances, decided him, at my suggestion, upon taking the step I have above spoken of.

I joined him, at the port of Liverpool, on the 16th of March, 1811; and employed the remainder of the month in laying up a store of necessaries suitable to our means and the life we were henceforth to lead. These, consisting of substantial apparel, carpenters' tools, fishing tackle, fire arms, and bedding, together with provisions, including several cases of preserved meats, and a small store of dainties likely to be agreeable on the voyage, were safely formed into divers strong packages, and deposited towards the end of the month under the hatches of the fine fast-sailing schooner "Sampson," bound for St. John's, New Brunswick, and to sail, weather permitting, on the 1st of April, then next.

I had anticipated some trouble in getting my friend aboard, as the parting from his family I knew would be a trying ordeal to him. They had, however, broken up some days before our intended departure, and he was now living temporarily with a cousin, in more flourishing circumstances than himself, which facilitated the measure wonderfully. The ship, eventually, was to sail the fourth day after that specified, having hauled out of dock the evening before.

I had been aboard several times to inspect her accommodations, which were as comfortable as the size of

the vessel (about 270 tons) would allow, and everything being prepared, I called on my friend at his relations, and walked down with him to the ship's boat, which was waiting at the pier-head. It was a bright, breezy, bustling morning—a few showers, that had fallen over night, swiftly evaporating from the pavement under the influence of a smart breeze, and cheering sun. None but the busy classes were astir; here, the dapper merchant's clerk hied past in his fresh brushed suit, steering with the agility of youth among the mops and sand-boxes, wherewith the housewife was beautifying her portals for the day; there, the carter stalked loweringly by the side of his sluggish teams, venting grim oaths at his horses eyes, from a stomach yet unsolaced by its breakfast, or gazing with vacant stare at the walls of the neighbouring warehouse, as the cotton bales crept up them to their destined floor. From the shipping arose that confused murmur of men and mechanism so peculiar to docks, whilst the yard gates were clustered thick with seamen from every clime, offering their incense to the morning from pipes that seemed kindled at the fire of Vesta.

All this was but the every-day scene of the place; yet slowly and observantly we passed through it, conscious that it was the last glimpse we should have,

for many a long day, of life in fatherland. Already was the craft in view that in a few hours would waft us from it all, and the boat lay even now at the pier stairs in waiting for us.

The scamen had become impatient, fearing they should lose the tide, and I descended forthwith into the stern sheets of the little craft, where I sat silent and absorbed till they should put off. As if in echo of the thoughts that filled me, I fancied a passage of Euripides came floating with the April breeze from the top of the pier stairs, "ὦ δαίματ' Ἀδμητῆι," which, smartly followed up by a stentorian appeal from one of the tars, "Now, master, is that a boggart you're holding on to," put an end to my trance, and shewed me my friend resting against one of the pier buttresses, and apostrophizing in ancient Hellenic his natal abode. "Come, sir," quoth the more suasive of the boatmen "time and tide wait for no man—you must spin yer yarns aboard." It was with some difficulty, however, we got him disenthralled, and safely lodged in the jolly boat's seat of honor next to myself. Two minutes more, and we were aboard the "Sampson," Captain Cotsgrave, which shortly after got under way, and, after rounding the Black Rock, entered upon the, to us, untried perils of the Atlantic.

A voyage over this vast sheet is susceptible of but little variety. The sun that ruled the day, the moon that cheered the night, the stars, and ocean—the highway of the King of Kings—we travelled on, were to me old and endeared acquaintances, which were greatly to be preferred to the motley complement of a passenger ship.

On the evening of the seventh day we saw the last loom of the coast of Ireland. The moon, which was near the full, rose slowly in the vessel's wake, lighting up our track, and kindling, with its mystic lamp, innumerable memories of the land we were leaving.

Bereft of all bitterness (for at this hour, the past presents but its more tender phases) they crowded thickly upon me, and lighting a cigar, I gave myself up fully to their influence. It was past midnight when, after a thousand reveries of home and youthful happiness, I descended into the cabin, where I found my friend in the extremities of sea-sickness. Throwing my cloak over his rather scanty envelope, I entered my own berth, and in a few minutes was lost in what I much wanted—a slumber that should give me temporary oblivion of the past—insensibility to the present and future.

CHAPTER II.

For twenty-eight days, from our leaving port, nothing could exceed the beauty and serenity of the weather. The charms of an unclouded sky were mirrored in the brine we traversed, and, when broken up for a moment by our vessel's prow, were, with the stately craft itself, multiplied a thousand fold in the troubled water of her wake; offering an apt counterpart of the poet's "broken mirror." It was, I think, on the evening of the twenty-eighth day, that I was sitting astern, in silent contemplation of the moving scene, when the captain touched my shoulder, and pointed out an iceberg rather to the northward of our

course. "I thought," quoth he, "I had got clear of the vermin, but it seems not; and the one you see is I fear bringing bad weather with it." The sky, in its back ground, was certainly thick and gloomy; but the floating isle itself gleamed, in the setting sun, with extraordinary brightness. As we approached, I kept my eyes fixed upon the beautiful object, and, as we were about to pass it, fancied I discerned something in motion at its base. My telescope was soon out, and by its aid I distinctly perceived a polar bear busily engaged, apparently with some prey it had found or captured. Under the impulse of the moment, I asked the captain's permission to pursue it. Though of an accommodating disposition, he made some scruples about the matter. "I don't like the look o' the weather," said he, "to the nor'rards, and strongly advise you to let the bear alone, as it's an ugly customer at all times; but, if your mind's set upon having a rap at him, I will lie by for an hour, and order my men to return at gun fire."

Ten minutes' row in the jolly-boat landed me at the most accessible part of the berg—the sailors keeping an offing of about 50 yards. It was with the utmost difficulty I could keep my footing, or make any way upon the frozen surface, and more than once came near fracturing a limb, and breaking my

gun. The form of the ice, too, interposed obstacles which, at a distance, were imperceptible, slippery, fantastic masses, opposing me at every step; and though I had marked the lair of my quarry, by a higher than ordinary pinnacle, it cost me considerable labour to discover it. Aware at length I was approaching the spot, I walked cautiously along a narrow cleft which afforded access to a kind of natural quay, nearly on a level with the water, and occasionally flooded by its breakings: scarcely drawing breath, I arrived at the end of the fissure, and on reconnoitering a recess which had been shut out by a projection of ice, suddenly discovered my friend Bruin within a few paces of me. Luckily, his head was hidden still; and, not liking this extreme familiarity of position I retreated a short distance as quickly and noiselessly as I could, and endeavoured to scale the rear of the eminence behind which the animal was hidden. It was in the form of an irregular curtain, and, with the exception of a single aperture, swept entirely round him, but so extremely slippery as to baffle every effort I made at ascending, loaded as I was with my firelock. With great difficulty, I gained a footing upon a layer of ice that stood out like a cornice from the rest, about six feet from the level below; but finding the position not sufficiently high I determined upon

mounting the opposite side. Whilst in the act of descending, the animal, whose acute scent had informed it of its danger, entered the fissure and made directly towards me. It was high time to regain my perch, which I had no sooner reached than it came up below, and, rising on its hind legs, attempted to scale my position. Not a moment was to be lost—for as the beast stood upright its snout was but a short distance from my feet. Taking rapid aim at its head, I fired—the smoke cleared away, and still Bruin held his ground with his paws in most unpleasant proximity to my legs. With somewhat more deliberation, I levelled again at its eye, and compelled him to quit his hold, with a disapproving shake of his head, and retreat to the defile below, where it ranged about infuriated with its wounds. This opportunity I took to load again with the utmost expedition, and had just charged one barrel when my shaggy foe shewed signs of returning to the contest. Luckily, whilst rising again to the attack, a more vulnerable part of his body was exposed to my aim, and the third shot pierced his heart; precipitating him amongst the fragments of fallen ice which strewed the ravine. Before descending to inspect my fallen foe, I took the precaution of re-loading, as I had heard these animals were wonderfully tenacious of life, and even then

made my approaches with the utmost respect. The enormous brute however lay on its frozen couch, perfectly dead; its features still instinct with the untameable ferocity of its nature.

It was the most formidable looking creature I had ever seen; near eight feet in length, with limbs of corresponding volume; and I could not help feeling, as I contemplated the ponderous carcass, that I had achieved something worth talking about at the winter firesides I hoped yet to enjoy in old England. But here the question occurred to me—what was I to do with my bear now I had killed him? To carry him aboard was out of the question, even if I could have prevailed upon the two seamen to leave their boat and aid me, as it would have taken at least twice as many men to move him. It was however high time to decide, for the sea was rising fast, and already, as I stood by the side of my passive prey, showers of monitory spray came thickening every moment upon me. I resolved, at least, to carry off the scalp and paws, and was in the act of severing the latter with my hunting knife, when a loud peal of thunder broke over my head and seemed to shake the iceberg to its centre. A thick gloom swiftly, yet stealthily, stole over every object around, filling the chasm with almost funereal darkness, and my mind with the most

dismal presages. The mouth of the cleft was close at hand, and through it I darted in a vague alarm on to the quay I have before spoken of. The scene that met my view remains graven on my mind to the present day as fresh and vivid as at the moment I beheld it. The ocean, which had been so mirror-like at the time of my landing, was now breaking with portentous violence over the little plateau, bringing down from time to time, with a fearful crash, masses of ice that had been enfeebled by long exposure to a vernal sun. These I heeded not—steeled to every apprehension but one—my view was bent seaward; and who can picture my dismay, when, by a vivid flash of lightning that seemed charged with vengeance on my insensate vagaries, I discovered the ship's boat, with the two seamen, under way direct for the vessel? In vain I hailed them—in vain called till my voice became hoarse and finally refused to obey me. The storm, which was fast approaching its pitch of fury, bore away the words almost from my mouth; and the relentless little craft heaved steadily onward, till the growing darkness took away both it and the schooner from my view, and with them the last ray of hope from my heart. I must have been gazing in a state of stupor, in the direction where they had disappeared, when a furious sea swept clear over the area, and bore me,

senseless, against the precipice that walled it in. It was daylight when I recovered my consciousness—a sombre and sullen daylight—and a still more miserable consciousness. I rose stiff with bruises, and shuddering with cold; not from the comfortable hammock I had been accustomed to, but a rugged cranny in the face of an icy precipice, whither I had been tossed by the scornful billows like the veriest seaweed that encumbers them. By a providential change of the wind, or position of the berg, I was no longer on the weather side, and to this circumstance I probably owed my not being washed off, or dashed to pieces, by the awful seas which must have broken upon its shores throughout the whole of that dreadful night. Perhaps the place into which I had been thrown was the only one in the whole islet that could have afforded safety—that could afford it still—for yet the storm was raging, and the dawn, though lowering, revealed, too plainly, its hideous features and direful handiwork. With a painful effort, I sat upright in my niche from which, in the present state of the elements, it was imminently dangerous to stir; and looked around to make sure that what my eyes beheld was not the imagery of some obstinate and dreadful dream. My first glance was in front, where the evening before the comfortable schooner was

riding within gun-shot—not the faintest semblance of it was now to be discerned. Then I remembered, that the island I was on was a floating island, and no sooner did this thought flash upon me, than, regardless of the falling fragments, I jumped up, like a madman, rushed through the chasm in which the carcase of the bear was still lying, and scaling heights that I should have shrunk from contemplating in cooler moments, gazed about in every direction for the absent craft. Sometimes, an envious peak would intercept my view, and then, with almost the rapidity of thought, despite my aching sides and the overpowering violence of the gale, down I would descend and gain the wished-for height, to gaze only on the hopeless heaving of the black and angry deep. It was but for a few moments that positions like these were tenable, so furious was the hurricane still, yet this sufficed to show me that not a sail was within ken, or in the nature of things could possibly, for two minutes together, keep its station against that rolling flood and resistless blast. The utter hopelessness of my situation now forced itself upon me. Wherever I turned my eyes the conviction entered and froze up my soul. And was my sun then doomed to set here? My fine dreams and gilded anticipations of the future to meet with a sudden grave in this horrific iceberg?

How bitterly the thoughts of my endeared parents and happy home now came across my mind. How tenaciously their images clung—how freshly their affectionate counsellings recurred—to my too faithful memory.

I could not even find a gloomy consolation in looking towards the land of my birth, and where all that remained dear to me now abode. In the turmoil of the elements, the points of the compass were undistinguishable; for not even the sun, that cheers the beasts themselves, could be seen. These thoughts and emotions, which followed one another in my mind much quicker than I have been able to describe them, would work me up to a pitch of frenzy. I would rave wildly at the rushing winds—curse the hour that I was born—my evil fate—and the fatuous impulses that led me into these needless perils. Then I would cry aloud to Heaven—not in the tones of supplication, but of invective. I had been early taught to pray, but in the great and imminent danger in which I was, I found myself unable. A state of exhaustion would follow these violent mental convulsions. Unguided by volition, I would wander, in charmed security, through the islet; and then, regardless of my bruises—regardless of the elemental conflict around, sink upon some icy block in a state of complete stupor.

Thus the whole of that dismal day wore on, the storm still raging unabated; when towards evening, my energies quite spent, I sought unconsciously the place where I had passed the preceding night. On entering the chasm, which led to it I came upon the body of the bear I had killed, and regarded the innocent author of my misery in speechless bitterness: had I possessed the power, I believe I should have cursed him aloud, and all his progenitors up to the Ark; but, exhausted with my wretchedness, I passed the hateful object with a shudder, and entering the cavern I had left in the morning, sank in despair upon its frozen floor.

The few hours' slumber I had were troubled with frightful dreams, and at length I awoke, about midnight, with an acute pain in my limbs. The storm had much abated—the vapour that had canopied the sky was torn asunder in many places; and through the scudding rack, the moon, now a day or two past the full, began to gleam upon the still agitated brine. It was a kind of comfort to behold this luminary, for in a situation like mine darkness is the king of terrors; and from my cheerless lair I watched it until the progress of the planet, or the shifting of the berg, deprived me of its light. Towards morning I again fell asleep, and did not awaken till a dazzling

sun had risen from the deep and threw its full splendours on my face. I found myself so stiff as scarcely to be able to sit upright—this was partly from cold and partly from the contusions I had received the first night of the storm; but, cheered by the sun, I looked about me with a somewhat diminished sense of misery. The first object that struck me was my unlucky gun, jammed fast in a crevice of the ice; and though it was positive torture to move about I managed to hobble to the place and extricate it. The piece had received but little injury, though both the charges were saturated with water, and, of course, of no use. These I therefore drew and supplied by fresh ones; for, by good fortune, the powder in my horn still remained undamaged; and I had taken some dozen balls with me from the vessel. I also took off the locks and dried them, after which I laid the piece aside, and heaved a deep sigh at my desolate prospects. Starvation, by cold and famine, stared me in the face. My shooting coat was too thin to afford protection from the thrilling cold of the ice at night; and in the shape of provision I had nothing with me but a small piece of liquorice. I had eaten nothing for (as I believed) forty hours, and this, with the keen air of the morning, rendered me almost ravenous. I bethought me of the bear I had killed; and the sun

having got out, and my pains become rather more easy, I crept to the place and went to work with my hunting knife. The animal had a thick coat of yellowish white fur which I thought would afford me at least a warmer bed than the bare ice, and therefore determined, if possible, to appropriate it. This was more easy to purpose than effect, for the carcase had become so stiff as to render the labour of detaching the hide one of great difficulty. Impatient at the little progress I made, I cut off a portion of the meat and set my wits to work to devise some means of cooking it. I had a burning glass in my hand that would explode powder; but for fuel—where was I to find fuel on an iceberg? Or, if found, light a fire on frozen water? The thing was self-evidently impossible, and I was constrained to satisfy the cravings of hunger with the raw flesh. It was not so nauseous as I had expected, and I felt much recruited by my meal. It took me nearly the whole of that day to get off the bear's hide; but when it was accomplished I was astonished at its enormous size, being not far from eight feet square, but extremely stiff. This I dragged through the cleft on to the quay, which, now the sea had gone down, was perfectly dry; and having taken another hearty meal of the meat, I lay down, with my gun by my side, upon the warm fur,

and forgot for awhile my forlorn condition in a deep slumber that lasted till morning.

The third day dawned upon my sojourn in the icy isle, and brought with it the same sickening sameness in the prospect. For the time, the task of providing for the necessities of my situation in some measure secured me from the invasion of desponding thoughts; but no sooner were these satisfied than they recurred in full force upon me. Shortly after daylight I took my gun and traversed the iceberg, wherever it was practicable, for the purpose of choosing some elevated position where I might best command a view of the ocean, and avail myself of any opportunity which the mercy of God might offer for my deliverance. I knew that this was the season when traffic became frequent with the American coast, and I had the satisfaction to find that the wind still continued for the most part in a favourable quarter; so, that except on the supposition of being within the influence of some current, which, at this distance from shore, I did not think likely, everything that could so far influence my fate was in my favour. Some auspicious sail might, ere long, repay my anxious watch. Curiosity might bring it within hail, or within hearing of the discharge of my firelock. This picture took entire possession of my imagination, and stimu-

lated me in my search for a suitable look-out. From the movements of the floating mass, it was a work of some difficulty to choose one which should, at all times, afford an unrestricted sea view ; but at length, towards noon of the day in question, I succeeded in my endeavours. Wishing to secure the very first chance that might turn up for my redemption, hither I bore a portion of my bear skin, in order to protect myself from the piercing winds and still more numbing ice ; and here I determined to watch throughout the greater part of every day. The shadows of evening were gathering round the berg before I quitted my icy pharos, so pleased was I with its discovery ; and it was with a certain degree of cheerfulness that I took my way once more to my sleeping berth, on the quay, where, as I turned in and rolled myself up in my bear-skin coverlet, I felt that the little seed of hope had pushed forth a shoot within me. The following morning I awoke with an indescribable nausea in my stomach ; the pains also in my limbs were very troublesome ; however I made shift to get up, and without taking any food hied to my watch-tower, near the top of the iceberg, where I sat for several hours, intently questing on every side for the ship that was to be my salvation. Early in the forenoon I made certain there was a speck, to

the southward, that had recently come within sight. Could it be another iceberg? Its movement was evidently too rapid for such a supposition. How I longed for the spy-glass I had left aboard ship, to make out what that scarcely perceptible object might be. I took for granted it was some blessed bark proceeding to its happy port, whilst perhaps at that very moment many a human eye might be directed through the telescope upon the icy mass so unnaturally tenanted by a fellow creature—unconscious of the fact, and incapable, by reason of the distance, of observing it. Scarcely knowing what I did, I waved my cap and hailed them, though the distance must have been many leagues, almost beyond the sound of a cannon shot. As long as the object was visible, I vainly exhausted myself in signalling it. By degrees it waned and at length passed away; imparting a double loneliness to the broad, deep, and glittering isle, and a darker despondency to my feelings. For some time I watched, to make sure it had indeed vanished; and then, descending from the eminence, wandered with a troubled spirit about the lower portions of my prison. An intense thirst had oppressed me throughout the whole of the morning, which I could only inadequately satisfy by sucking pieces of ice as I walked along. My sickness also had increased

in severity. Overcome by this, and the dejection of my spirits, I sat down upon a block of ice—I knew and cared not where—and, crossing my hands on the muzzle of my fowling piece, surveyed my inexorable jailor, the ocean, with feelings among which hope once more refused to enter. Nowhere—far as the eye could reach in the impassive brine around, or equally impassive ice—could she find aught whereon to rest for a single moment. Nothing could be seen that might afford her the scantiest aliment. Everything within ken seemed cold, glittering, barren, and unsubstantial; and gladly would I have exchanged it for the gloomiest cavern of mother earth. My disorder increased so fast, attended by such a confusion of faculties, that I feared I was becoming delirious, and should shortly go mad; as had been the case of many I had read of in situations similar to mine. Remembering that tobacco had been the means of recovery to Defoe's hero, in his desert island, (though, as the reader will infer, not using his judgment in its administration), I thought I would make trial of it. I had a pouch of the herb in my pocket, as well as the stump of a pipe, and having ignited it with my burning glass, fell forthwith a smoking. This, in a few minutes, brought on a violent fit of retching, after which I again fell asleep, and did

not awake until after the sun had gone down. I then felt much more composed and cheerful, and extremely sharp-set as to appetite. To stay, for a moment, the cravings of hunger, I got out a bit of liquorice, and whilst introducing it to my mouth was surprised to see the skin of my hands all fretted and partially peeling off. This, I fancied, was the effect of my sickness, and could not well divine what to attribute it to. It could not have proceeded from my rheumatic pangs, or buffetings, on the night of the storm; for there was but little pain, and no contusions whatever on the parts affected. I referred it therefore to the quality and quantity of the food I had last eaten, and, accordingly, felt a strong disrelish to partake further of it. That night I contented myself with the liquorice, though it was a sorry substitute for a meat supper; and was, beside, nearly consumed. Already I had been two days and a night without food, and now the only alternative before me was a choice of deaths—death by fasting, or death by eating.

The little confined cave where I had hitherto lain I quitted this night for the open quay; having taken a dislike to it from the suffering I had experienced there, as well as from the constant dripping from its roof, produced by the warmth of my body. The

latter situation was more cheerful ; and now that the weather was calm, and the nights remarkably light, I could lie there in safety, on my bear-skin, and derive a gleam of comfort from gazing at the distant planets, which I fancied might be still keeping watch over the fortunes of the emigrant.

This night I was unable to sleep, being tormented with the pangs of hunger, as well as with the cold, which, in spite of my fur covering, pierced from the icy soil through my half famished frame. Now and then I fell into a kind of doze, from which, in a few minutes, some passing pain would awake me. It was during one of these semi-slumbering moments, that I fancied I beheld objects moving in a mysterious manner along the edge of the plateau in front of me. At first they seemed scarcely distinguishable from the ever heaving plane on which my eyes had been perpetually resting ; then, assuming a more definite form, they appeared to glide with a scarce audible noise ; now together with, and now athwart each other, across the glassy level, at the extremity of which I lay. These symptoms put my senses thoroughly on the alert, and I thought I could detect a sort of blowing noise—such as that produced by the heavier animals in the act of breathing. By and by they ranged themselves side by side, in regular

order, on the edge of the ice, to the number perhaps of half a dozen—either to sleep, or watch, like myself, the face of Nature in her loneliness. All at once I comprehended what they were—seals—which, like the polar bear, were harbouring on the iceberg, and subsisting on the fish they caught around it. One of the number lay rather higher and apart from the rest, probably as sentinel. I could see his sober mild eyes glancing drowsily in the faint moonlight, as he held his watch for the benefit of the community. Poor fellow! he little thought what a dangerous member of it there was near him. Slowly and noiselessly I raised my piece, levelled at the breast of the animal, which its elevated situation in part exposed, and the next moment had the satisfaction of seeing it roll dead in its attempt to reach the water.

The rest of the herd plunged into the ocean before I could discharge a second barrel, and I saw them no more. The seal I had shot was an invaluable prize; it removed the prospect of immediate starvation, for I knew the animal was eatable, and had been considered good food by the northern nations of Europe. After turning him over to make sure he was quite dead, I let him lie till daylight, and then, with my knife, carved myself a breakfast, which amply com-

pensated for my previous fast. I may as well remark here, that no ill effects whatever followed this repast; the seals meat proving perfectly sweet and wholesome. Shortly after my meal, I once more sought my signal station, covering over, as I went, with fragments of ice, the carcase of the bear, which, both living and dead, seemed born to be my bane. I found the sea rather rougher than the day before, and a smart breeze at work which, small thanks to it, had carried away my fur mat during the night. It was so bleak, that in a couple of hours I was fairly driven from my post, after convincing my reluctant mind that not the faintest object was visible in any part of the horizon. On returning to my sheltered quay, I again feasted heartily on my seal; for constant exposure to the keen air, and cold of the ice, dealt with my stomach in a way none can conceive who have not experienced the same influences. After the second meal, I comforted myself with a pipe of tobacco; and then proceeded to take off the pelt of the slain seal, thinking it would be a desirable complement to my bed clothes. This labour occupied great part of the day, but, when achieved, furnished me with a complete defence against the cold thrill of the ice when I lay down.

Before finally composing myself to rest upon my peltry, I thought I would make one last observation from my look-out, ere the gathering darkness should prevent it.

It was a sudden and unaccountable impulse that led me to the spot. Not long before, I had inwardly resolved, in a fit of sullen despair, to lie down on my furs and there await, without a further struggle, the issue, whatever it might be, of my destiny—the hour when I could have commanded the best view of the horizon had been silently suffered to go by, and yet, suddenly, without any appreciable motive, and contrary to my original determination, up I started, under a vague impulse, to my look-out. No sooner had I mounted, than there, betwixt me and the still half crimsoned west, I beheld a three-masted vessel, loaded with canvass, nearing—no—already some miles past my floating prison. For a moment, I stood gazing at it in a kind of stupor; then seized my cap, waved it, shouted, and gesticulated like a madman. Not the least movement was perceptible aboard the craft, nor any change in its course. I seized my gun—once—twice I fired; looking in vain for its effect upon that fading ark. The wind was, unhappily, several points abeam; and the vessel held its course, without a

shiver in its sails, towards the light that still lingered in the west. In a few minutes more the night, which descends so rapidly in these latitudes, would shut it out altogether from my view. As a last stroke for my salvation, I unscrewed the top of my powder-horn, and emptying its contents on the ice ignited them from the pan of my fowling piece. One vivid glare of light burst forth, and, at the same instant, I felt my cap blown from my head, my face and hands scorched with an intolerable smart, and my eyes nearly deprived of sight, by that ill-fated explosion. Here was the climax to my miseries.

I may not describe the condition in which I reached the quay that evening; few would thank me for the picture. Desperate in mind, disfigured and tormented in body, I shudder still at its very recollection, and my pen hastens on with a quickened speed in its narrative.

I might have lain, perhaps, an hour and a half, on my bear skin, in this unenviable plight, the night meanwhile darkening around, when I fancied I heard the splash of seals, plying in the water near an adjoining point. The sound had no interest for me now, yet still that splash—splash—forced itself upon my ear, with extraordinary regularity, for some

minutes. At length I listened in good earnest—they must be close under those neighbouring ice blocks, I thought. Hark! what was that sound? God in heaven! it was a human voice. Suddenly, a boat shot from behind the point; and, in tones that thrilled upon my ear like the harmonies of heaven, a sailor exclaimed, “Here, Jem! here’s a rare wharf—out and look for your Jack-o’-lantern, man—and harkee! when you’ve found him, bring him to me, and I’ll put him in my baccy-box for a pipe-lighter.”

“You’ll have your joke, Bill,” returned the other, “but seein’s believin’ with me, for all that; so if you’ll just keep within ear shot, I’ll rummage this bit of an ice-hill, and shew you my warrant, too, afore I’ve done with it.”

At this moment, a little dog, which had leaped upon the ice, commenced a violent barking as I approached, and the seaman, alarmed by my uncouth appearance, retreated, in some trepidation, towards the boat. A few words however were sufficient to set the true-hearted fellow at his ease; and, to me, his hard hand-grasp was a foretaste of election hereafter. But few minutes were suffered to elapse in exchanging my icy prison for the jolly boat, which

under the steerage of the boatswain, after about an hour's pull, brought to under the lee of the barque 'Christopher,' coal-laden for Halifax.

The moment I gained her deck, I threw myself upon my knees, and offered up a prayer of heartfelt gratitude and thankfulness to Him who ordains our trials and deliverances.

CHAPTER III.

For some days after my deliverance by this vessel, I was unable to leave my hammock; and during this time, received the kindest attention from the captain, whose name was Thurlow—a man of frank and generous disposition. There was also, to my great good fortune, an army surgeon aboard, rejoining his regiment in Canada; by whose skill and care my former health and strength were not long in being restored to me. Being however totally unprovided with every necessary, I was extremely impatient to arrive at my destination. The captain had kindly pressed upon me several articles I most needed for

my personal comfort, and would not hear of any remuneration for my passage; as, to use his own words, he considered my preservation an act of God, which it was the duty of His instruments to carry out freely, for His sake. All the return he asked for, was the recital of my perils and adventures on the iceberg, which he would listen to in deep thought.

“I was half in doubt,” he remarked one day, after I had concluded my little history for more than the first time, “whether to believe my seaman’s tale; and was disinclined to trust the boat so far from the ship, at that late hour. I set down your signal as some of those meteoric phenomena so familiar to navigators in these latitudes, and had already refused to entertain poor Jem’s first application. He however pressed it with such pertinacity, and supported it with such singular reasoning, that I finally gave him permission to take the jolly boat, and row once round the iceberg. You are aware it was he who alone, of the whole ship’s crew, observed your signal; and I now admire the fellow’s constancy and good feeling, in sacrificing every consideration rather than leave a stone unturned by which he might benefit a fellow creature. I suspect there was something unusual in the impulse that moved him in this matter;

and it may, perhaps, be worth your while to hear his own version of it: however, you are under much more obligation to him, than to me, though we feel pretty much alike as to the result."

My eyes had suffered much from the consequences of the explosion; but, by the judicious treatment of my medical friend, the inflammation was got under, and my sight perfectly restored in about ten days after I first came aboard. I could now walk the deck with something of the satisfaction I felt when pacing the schooner off the coast of Ireland; though my late experiences certainly had the effect of sobering the sentiment. It was my wish to have a little quiet discourse with the sailor to whom, under the Almighty, I owed my preservation; but, for the few days I had been able to get above-board, various circumstances had combined to frustrate my intention. One evening however when, in consequence of thick weather, we were under easy sail, with little or no work to be done, I went forward and found my seaman squatted on a coil of cable, quietly smoking his pipe. As there was no prospect of his being immediately employed, I took a seat near him; and after touching again on the great service he had rendered me, asked him his name—James Collins—and found he came

from the same part of England as myself. After a little further conversation of this kind, I desired him to relate in detail the incidents of the evening of my escape.

“Why,” says he, after a preliminary hitch and expectoration, “as we neared the iceberg, about half-past five, I found good reason to believe there was something not quite right about it.”

“What induced you to entertain such a suspicion?” I enquired, rather astonished at the man’s sagacity.

“I have a counsellor, here, sir,” replied he, patting affectionately a little spaniel that lay nestled upon his sailor’s jacket, “whose larning’s never at fault. I always have her with me on the watch, and give her as comfortable a berth as I can. Well, she was lying on my pea coat, just as you see her now, as we drew towards the iceberg, when, all at once, she fell a boxing her compass (by this I understood the sailor to mean she began questing about) in every direction; by and by up she got on her legs and took the bearings of the berg, just like a captain in her majesty’s sarvice. At length out came a regular whine—well, thought I, this is scentin’ extror’ny, and didn’t know at all what to make of it. That there was something in the wind, I knew well enough; for Gyp has always told me a true, and once a solemn tale. I got quite

uneasy at the dog's ways, and—God forgive me—swore at her, roundly. What Gyp!" quoth the remorseful seaman to his dog, "is she snug, lass?—there's a rare Gyp!"

The dog just turned up the white of its eyes at its master, and relapsed into a contemptuous indifference to the emotions of two people whom she had so strangely brought together.

"I set it down for a bear," resumed the man, "which was larger game than Gypsy had been accustomed to; and thought what a desolate cretur it must ha' been—out at sea, on an ice-block; without oars, sails, or compass; grub, or grog; and nothing but a fur coat to its kit. I little thought the bitch was scentin' mortal man, on that fearsome ice-hill. Howsomdever, I detarmined to call up the captain, and tell him what Gyp was about: but whether he was uneasy at being wakened, or didn't believe there was any particular reason for troubling himself about the matter, he sent me back in a tantrum, and ordered me not to come again on such a fool's errand. But I knowed better than the captain, and Gyp, there, knowed better than either of us. Well, we had passed the iceberg, may be a mile or two, when I fancied I seen a flash like that of a gun-fire, but heard no noise with it—a moment after, there was just such

another, but it was so faint, I could not be certain; and I knowed the captain would have made light of the matter, if I had gone and told him—but in about five minutes more I seen a regular flare up, and as this was a sign as could'n't be mistaken, I felt it would be neither more nor less than mortal wickedness to stave the matter off any longer. So I went boldly once more to his berth, and told him what I had seen; and that formerly I had found life dependin' on signs and tokens o' this sort—for there's a tale hangs by this dog that would prove all I have said, and makes me rue whenever I look at it. I payed out my mind, sir, quite freely to him; for I felt the sin of shilly-shallying when, may be, the life of a fellow cretur was at stake. At first he was angry at being awakened again, but that's human natur' in a hammock all the world over. After a bit o' palaver he came round and told me there might be summut more than ordinar' in what I had seen. I might go with the bo'sun and two hands in the jolly, and if I brought back either a bear or a Christian, Gyp should have double rations as long as we remained at sea; but that if it proved all moonshine, she should be tied up and have a round dozen on her postecrum for making a fool of me, unless I chose to

put in my own as bail. I would ha' done that for Gyp, and more too," added the honest tar with some warmth.

"Well, sir, ye ken the rest. Gypsy has got her double rations, that's sartain, and for myself I feel none the worse for a light heart under my frock. D'ye see the cretur' now sir," said he, pointing abruptly to the spaniel, "how she has left her half-picked bone, and is scenting abeam as if she'd be asking the wind how many days it is from home—she's been at it more or less all the arternoon—now I'll bet my 'bacey box agin the captain's crownometer——"

"Nay, Collins," broke in the clear, manly voice of Capt. Thurlow, "I can't spare you my chronometer—a captain without his chronometer would be something like a ship without a crew, or a body without a soul—a kind of anomaly in nature."

"Aye, aye, sir, a crownometer's only useful to them as knows its natur', which is just the case with my spaniel bitch here."

"Yes, but one can't navigate merchant ships across the Atlantic with spaniel bitches, Collins."

"And one can't scent Christians on icebergs with crownometers, Capt. Thurlow."

"Well, your dog has earned its double rations I

admit," observed the captain, turning with a laugh to me, "if it always carries this nose for large game, it need never fear scenting the cat with its other extremity."

The seaman winced under the allusion, as if he had received a compliment from the boatswain on the corresponding part of his own person; and replied rather pettishly, "The bitch is but a bitch, sir, a beggarly, scurvy, good-for-nothing jade; but she does well enough for a plain sailor (adding in an under tone) till he comes to be captain, and gets a crownometer."

"But suppose there should be occasion, my plain sailor, to find out where your ship lay, after such a gale as this we've had, blown, may be, hundreds of leagues out of your course, and ready, any moment, for aught you know, to run your nose aground, and send crew and cargo to the devil; what kind of a navigator would your whelp there make? Now my chronometer tells me we are just three days' sail from Halifax, with plenty of sea room to work there in; and that's a thing worth knowing, to the commander of a 400-ton ship, with eight and twenty souls aboard, including your own."

"And my spaniel bitch, Captain Thurlow," returned the sailor, with a sudden energy, resembling

inspiration, "tells me, that if you hold on hereaway for two hours longer, you'll be ashore."

Scarcely had the captain uttered his loud discordant laugh of derision at this speech, when the cry of "Land on the larboard bow!" from the man in the chains (for, from the mast head, not even the deck was visible), thrilled through the ship, and filled every breast with alarm.

For some days past, we had been involved in a fog, often met with in this latitude, that had been gradually thickening, and now shut out every object beyond a few fathoms' length of the ship's side. The wind had, in a great measure, fallen; leaving the craft with but little way on, and rendering the water tolerably smooth. A few short earnest orders were given by the captain, to wear the ship round; but before the slightest alteration could be affected in her course, we were aground. The land, we had so suddenly fallen in with, stretched away, in a monotonous line, to the east and west, and seemed to consist of little else than sand, at a slight elevation above the water; into which its shores descended with an almost imperceptible slope. On this bank the ship had run, without any sensible shock; and lay now immoveably fixed in the soft ooze of which it was composed. The captain was of opinion it had

not sustained any injury; and that, if the weather held fair for twelve hours longer, he should be able to get her off the ensuing flood tide. In the meanwhile, the army surgeon and myself, being little better than idlers aboard, undertook a little excursion to the *terra firma*. We took with us a small pocket compass, as the night was closing in and might hide the vessel from our view. After walking up the bank for about three hundred paces, we arrived, as we thought, at the top, and looked abroad as far as we could, by the waning twilight, into the interior. Nothing met our view but dreary mounds of sand, rounded off by the breath of the tempest, and curtained in at about a cable's length, on every side of us, by the ever-brooding fog; to which a young moon imparted a slight degree of lucidity. Here and there sprang up a tuft of spear grass; its insignificance magnified by the mist, like that of man by ignorance and superstition. For about an hour, we walked on, through scenery that might have rivalled the realms of Tartarus, in desolation and silence: yet I felt a kind of pleasure, after my long incarceration on shipboard, in once more leaving my footprint on its natural element, notwithstanding the beggarly disguise in which it now presented itself.

About seven o'clock, by the surgeon's watch, we

thought it prudent to turn back; and accordingly shaped our course, as well as we could, the way we came. The sandy hillocks, however, possessed such a general sameness, that after the first hundred yards, neither of us could be certain we were in our former track. Fortunately, so great was the stillness, we could hear, now and then, noises aboard our vessel; and directing ourselves by these, shortly got a glimpse of her lantern; and reached the summit of the beach just as the tide was beginning to make. When we got aboard, we found the whole crew busily engaged in preparation for getting the vessel off. A hawser had been carried out astern, and the hands stationed at the windlass ready to heave the moment the water should get the necessary height.

This we had not long to wait for, as it rose with great rapidity; and, on the captain giving the word to the men, to our great joy, the heavy craft backed slowly from her oozy lair, and floated once more upon the deep, the handmaid of resistless intellect. The remainder of our voyage was productive of no event worthy of any particular mention; except, that on the day after our fixture in the sand, the captain took an observation, and found the place of our mishap to be the north eastern extremity of Sable Island; whither the ship had been carried in the fog by cur-

rents that had escaped our observation. On the morning of the 12th of May, we entered the port of Halifax; and being desirous of reaching St. John's with as little delay as possible, landed as soon as the ship had taken up her moorings, after a farewell interview with my generous friend the captain, and his staunch subordinate, Jem Collins. Upon the latter, by dint of a handsome *douceur*, I had prevailed, though with infinite difficulty, to make over to me the animal that had done me the signal service of saving my life; but never did I see a man so rueful at taking leave of a brute associate. The time was a busy one, and he, as well as the rest of the crew, was engaged in the necessary duties of the ship; but as I took little Gypsy over the side, in my arms, I could see his eyes fixed wistfully on the animal, and his heart yearning piteously through them. In happy accordance with my desires, a stage was about to start, shortly after I had landed, to the town of Windsor, the port of embarkation, on the opposite shore of the Nova-Scotian peninsula; and after a good luncheon at the hotel, I found myself traversing, at the tail of two active horses, the first portion of the continent whose magnetic shores I had come so far to visit. I mentally acknowledged that it fulfilled all my hopes, high as they were pitched; and

throughout the thirty miles of which the 'traject' consisted, my eager glances, right and left, rested on the most romantic scene of mingled rock forest and cultivation that I thought I had ever yet beheld. It was the height of spring, and the lavish vegetation of the country, gay with new donned verdure, diffused a gladdening influence around, which rendered every furlong of my journey in the highest degree pleasurable. From Windsor, the passage of the Bay of Fundy is (or rather was, at the day I am writing of—steam of course having now superseded them) performed by sailing packets. Entering one of which, on a fine moonlight evening, I arrived, a little before midnight, at my destination, St. John's.

My first object, and one attended with much anxiety, the next morning, was to seek out the "Sampson," and ascertain the whereabouts of my friend and luggage. Captain Cotsgrave was fortunately aboard, and, as it happened, in the act of unloading the latter, when I encountered him.

"Is that the last Bob?" he was enquiring of the seaman below, as he steadied a package that was being hauled up from the hold. "It seems to be a barrel of biscuit—poor fellow! he'll never stow another into his belly."

"There captain," I returned, clapping him smartly

on the shoulder, "I beg leave to differ with you; I feel all the inclination in the world to put one into it this moment, and hope to have your assistance in disposing of a bottle of wine as well."

The face of blank astonishment that was turned on me, at this salutation, may be safely left to the readers's imagination, as well as the hearty fit of laughter it produced from myself. To the hotel we forthwith repaired; where I gave the honest seaman a full account of my adventures since I had parted from him; not without manifold questions on his part, and a display of much natural emotion. I found he had, as I had taken for granted, been driven from his station off the iceberg by the force of the gale; and the two seamen, who accompanied me to it, had affirmed they had waited long after the time enjoined them, and experienced the utmost difficulty in regaining their vessel.

OF A COLONIST.

CHAPTER IV.

ON the evening of the 14th of May, Butterworth and myself once again met over a comfortable bowl of tea to compare notes from the period of our separation, and lay our plans for the future. The poor fellow had, in common with the whole ship's company, given me up for irretrievably lost; and the pleasure of our meeting derived additional zest from its being so little anticipated. We both felt that the ties of friendship were tightened anew, and our hearts invigorated for coping with the difficulties we were now on the eve of encountering. After reviewing our little magazine of goods, we got out a chart of the

province, and held a long consultation as to the comparative merits of its different settlements. Under the apprehension that no land, available to our scanty means, could be met with between St. John's and Fredericton, we decided upon pushing forthwith to the latter town, and thence exploring the country in the direction of the river. Our effects were accordingly shipped aboard a sloop that was bound up the river the following morning, and at dawn of day we embarked in person. What were my companion's sensations, amidst the varied scenes we passed through, I know not; but, for myself, I felt as though I were moving in an atmosphere of romance—so great were the changes—so rapid the transition. I was in a cheerful frame of mind—everything around responded to my mood. As we passed up the noble river, the reviving year seemed to tell of the sweets it had in store for us; whilst Hope, that indestructible charlatan, beckoned blythely to the promised banquet. I had neither the talent nor inclination to beshroud the present with anxious divinations of the future; the path to the latter seemed strange and fantastic, but, being bright and specious, I hastened unreflectingly along it, sped by the winged impulses of youth, which scarce allow the feet to feel the ground they tread on. The distance between St.

John's and Fredericton, so quickly mastered in the present day, by the power of steam and constructive art of man, was, at the period of our journey, slowly and laboriously traversed by small flat-bottomed craft, propelled up the stream by human strength, reinforced, when the weather allowed, by sails. This is a very tedious process; but, at the same time, affords opportunities for examining and enjoying the scenery to a far greater degree than when at the mercy of a dashing steamer; which, like the genius of modern times, intent on business, hurries up the flood in utter disregard of the manifold beauties that line its course. For some distance beyond St. John's, the banks are stony; thrown into the most fantastic forms, and clothed with dwarf spruce; but, as you approach the capital, bold and well-wooded headlands succeed, severed by smiling plains and fertile valleys, which the abodes and improvements of man contribute still further to enliven. Fredericton, which it took us a week to reach, is charmingly situate on the right bank of the St. John's; and here we remained two days, chiefly for the purpose of depositing our goods in safe keeping, and gaining information, from the colonial agent, respecting the district we were about to visit.

I also took an opportunity of calling upon a person,

to whom I had brought a letter of introduction from England, and asking his opinion and advice as to the selection we had made for our settlement. These were favourable, as respected the cheapness and fertility of the land, but suggestive of sundry difficulties arising from its remoteness and scanty population. These disadvantages, however, we made light of, being two able-handed men, and having a large degree of confidence in our own energies; besides being tolerably well provided with all needful accessories.

Having heard a good deal of the baneful effects of ague upon the constitutions of new settlers, I was desirous of fixing upon what is called the *intervale* land of some hilly and elevated district, for the site of our new location; and, with this object, proposed we should push our researches in the direction of a range of distant hills which lay north of the capital; and thence along their roots, until we should fall in with a suitable locality. Butterworth, though rather inclining to a situation nearer the provincial metropolis, agreed to accompany me in this exploratory journey.

Our first step was to procure the temporary services of some person more experienced than ourselves in the ways of the wilderness. This was a matter of some difficulty; every one, in this busy land, being

seemingly engrossed with his own proper business and advancement. However, at the suggestion of the acquaintance above spoken of, we applied to a denizen of the neighbouring woods, who dwelt about a day's journey from the town. We found him cutting firewood by the side of his log-hut; an operation he still continued, with the *non-chalance* of his caste, after we had introduced ourselves to his notice. As he gradually comprehended the nature of our proposal, his strokes grew fewer and farther between; and, at length, turning leisurely round, he bade us enter his humble abode, and confer on the matters we had broached over an easy pipe. He appeared to be a hard weather-worn son of the soil, short in his speech, and rough in his manner; but possessing the valuable qualification of experience in woodcraft, acquired through many a long year of wanderings and hardship. He had, moreover, a thorough acquaintance with the province, having been born within its limits, and spent much of his life in its woods; so that we could not well have met with one more suitable for our undertaking. This we had little difficulty in moulding him to; the love of adventure being never extinct in people of his calling, and the ties to his present location being of the slenderest kind. Upon the recommendation of

our new acquaintance, we equipped ourselves with good blankets, and provisions for a fortnight; and the morning but one after our interview with him, embarked once more on the St. John's, in a small river craft, with the intention of ascending the stream until we should arrive at the *embouchure* of its tributary. Several days were consumed in reaching this point; the noble stream we breasted developing to us, as we proceeded, scenery of the most majestic character. Our conductor would land from time to time, to ply his rifle in the adjacent woods; and, as we lay by towards evening beneath their hanging foliage, rejoin us generally with some trophy of his sylvan prowess. This would be discussed with appetites unknown in Lancashire; whilst, with true Lancashire foresight, we husbanded our little store of preserved meats for the evil day, whenever it might arrive.

I hope it may not be deemed by my reader as abating from the dignity of history, or my own, if I confess here to a tender *penchant* for the Virginia weed. Many were the benefits I, at this time, owed to my faithful "meerschaum." Solace and refreshment, in hours of anxiety and toil; defence against the dews of night; immunity from the attacks of ague and mosquitoes. Always the ally, often the stimulus, of enjoyment, I found it a true definition

of a friend—a friend in need—through every stage of my colonial life and conversation. Thus much I am bound to say, in justice to a good servant too often the victim of undeserved reproach.

In the afternoon of the third day of our course up stream, we fell in with a small party of Indians, paddling in two canoes in the same direction as ourselves. It had been an object with our guide to procure one of their simple barks for the purpose of ascending the tributary stream: we were now approaching; and I accordingly invited our native friends to accompany us to the place of our encampment, in order that we might negotiate the matter with the aid of our conductor, now absent in the woods. The party, consisting of two families, readily consented, as soon as they understood the nature of my proposal; and kept up with us, a canoe on each side, till we reached the confluence of the two streams, where the larger craft would leave us. Whilst in the act of landing, our guide came up; and shortly afterwards the poor natives (who had carried their canoes upon the bank) added their numbers to the group. A fire was quickly kindled, and preparations made for our evening meal, to which we were all ready to do ample justice.

It is the custom of the Indians, on all deliberative

occasions, to preface their discussions with a solemn smoking bout, and, when possible, something in the way of eating. This I learned from our woodsman, whilst superintending the cookery of our venison steaks at a fire that threatened a similar process to himself; and it gave me a very favourable opinion of the wisdom of Indian institutions. My companion and myself at once acquiesced both in the theory and practice of our brown friends, and turned our attention to the savoury supper that was shortly ready for our fruition, leaving the subject of the canoes to come up in its wake. The wild party we had to negotiate with consisted of two men, their squaws, and children, to the number, altogether, of ten persons: the two former were rather below, than above the middle size; and, though well made, presenting but little of the barbaric dignity attributed to their race in many accounts I had read. This might be partly attributable to contact with the lawless whites of the borders, whose arts and evil forecast seemed already engrafted upon these originally simple children of nature. However, though their native dignity might be gone, their native appetite remained in all its vigour; and a formidable onslaught was made on our extemporized cookery. I was much amused at one of the women, who, with an adroitness perfected

probably by long practice, detached, from time to time, as it might be by accident, fragments of the venison from the rustic spit, and then snatching them, with a shrill cry, out of the brands, appropriated the morsels by way of salvage.

On finishing our meal, we lit our pipes, and, with due deliberation, broached the subject we came to confer upon. The Indians showed considerable skill in backwoods negotiation; and I doubt whether we should have succeeded in effecting our object at all, if I had not, by good fortune, brought with me a neat Birmingham pocket pistol, whose charms at length induced a decision in our favour. The canoe was turned over to us in exchange for this, some powder, and fishing implements; and our woodsman having duly examined and prepared it for use on the morrow, my friend and myself rolled ourselves up in our blankets, and, with our feet to the log fire, courted our maiden slumber in an American forest.

At daylight, the next morning, our guide awakened us; and, whilst we hastily discussed our matin meal, launched the canoe into the pellucid stream, to try its soundness and capabilities. These being fairly proven, we presently seated ourselves, with the utmost caution, in positions dictated by our cicerone; stowing our accoutrements as commodiously as we could

about us; and then embarking little Gypsey, who was by no means an insignificant or uninterested member of the party. It was some time before we could conform to the novel motion of our little craft, or even divest ourselves of a certain degree of apprehension at its apparent frailty. For the first half mile, however, we had little to do but watch the movements of our associate; who, taking advantage of a strong counter current produced by the influx of the river we were about to enter, carried us swiftly along under the leafy bank, until we reached the opening of the subject stream. Here he handed me a paddle, with which I seconded, as well as I could (being but what old hands denominate a greenhorn), his efforts to advance against the current. After passing its mouth, we found the stream, to our great satisfaction, much less impetuous; and, in consequence, our progress much more rapid. All day long, we paddled through an apparently unbroken solitude; opening, every hour, vistas of the most gorgeous and enchanting scenery. On either bank of the river, nature lay stretched in interminable forests; now glistening in their spring liveries, and emblazoned by a sun such as the new world alone can boast of. How far they extended back, it was impossible to determine; but, in the line of our course, every creek and headland,

every hill and level, disclosed their silent, yet imposing clusters—here and there, they even threatened to break the bounds prescribed by nature, and invade the element that was betraying their secrets to the stranger. From time to time, we secured the canoe to some prostrate forest tree; and resting for a space from our labours, fed our eyes on the glorious revelations they had earned for us. With the repose of body, a delicious sense of enjoyment would steal over the soul as the boat lay balancing itself on the fleeting wave; and Nature responded to her votarist from the depths of the surrounding wilderness. I no longer wondered at the fascination which was said, by those who had tried it, to belong to a life amid such scenes as these. I felt it myself, and thought that long and happy days might be the meed of those who, with the knowledge of right and wrong and the support of religion, might choose a sphere of life so void of every seduction to sin. Here they might feel “the penalty of Adam, the season’s difference,” and take it profitably in exchange for the manifold miseries of more artificial life.

There being three to its complement, the canoe was kept pretty constantly in motion; Butterworth and myself taking the paddle by turns. As for our guide, he wielded his implement with muscles that might

have rivalled those of Hawkeye; raising it occasionally to indicate our route, or giving it an enthusiastic sweep as he dilated from time to time on the beauties of the neighbouring landscape. Ever and anon, as we proceeded, some loon, or wild duck, would shoot from its darkling lair, or emerge from the limpid wave, after a sportive dive; and our rifles then waken up the virgin echoes of the place in compliment to the hasty apparition. These desultory discharges, the sound of our voices, and regulated plash of the paddles, with, from time to time, some fitful forest tone, scarcely definable to the senses, were all that broke in upon the slumber of these primæval wilds, and a silence which, whilst it kept the imagination on the stretch, seemed to chide the expression of its rhapsodies. For upwards of two days, our guide persevered in paddling up the stream; the party encamping by night upon the banks, and by day combining their efforts at approaching the blue hills that cradled the head waters of this nursling of the wilderness. At length it became evident, from the narrowness and impetuosity of the current, that the canoe could no longer be used to advantage. A consultation was therefore held at noon of the fourth day, on landing for our frugal dinner, as to the course it would be most expedient to take. We had already arrived at

the swelling and uneven ground which is generally the prelude to mountainous formations; and, as the river at this point (an important consideration) ceased to be navigable with profit, it was thought best to leave the canoe, and, striking off into the woods, explore a tract of ground, which, from what we could understand, was, in every point of view, more favourable for our object than any that had hitherto come within our ken. This step having been duly cogitated, smoked, and decided upon, we bore the bark canoe upon the bank; and, concealing it with brushwood, left the little craft until we should return from our journey, and require its services once more on the water. The guide then ascended the bank, and facilitating his passage through the bush by an occasional stroke with the short axe he carried, led the little party boldly into the *terra ignota* that lay before them. The transition from the bright and jocund water to the deep gloom of the forest wrought differently on each of us. Our file leader seemed the least sensible of its influence. Butterworth, I could see in his eyes, was yielding largely to the spirit of apostrophe, though the "genius loci" impressed his lips with silence. I, myself, as I followed mechanically in their footsteps, felt almost overpowered by the solemnity of the wilderness temple we were enter-

ing. There, on every side, far as the eye could pierce, rose its self-erected columns, endless in their succession—the 'long-drawn aisles' and shadowy arches haunted by a silence that made their grandeur more impressive, and by a gloom that seemed the proper religion of the place.

Even poor Gypsy ceased her gambols as we fairly entered the imposing precincts; keeping strictly at our heels, and limiting her duties to a vigilant side-watch as she trotted along. Our progress through the forest was far from easy; chiefly from the softness of the vegetable soil we trod. This was partly got over, after a little practice, by a proper selection of our footsteps; though, every now and then, both Butterworth and myself would approach the centre of the earth's gravity, at the expense of our own, by a determined plunge some feet deep into the compost of leaves, the spoil of centuries, which constituted the forest pavement. Towards the close of the day, these accidents of our travel began to tell upon us; rendering our progress slower, our spirits less sensible to surrounding objects; though, from the increased abruptness of the ground, these were becoming every moment multiplied, more grotesque in feature, more irritant to the curiosity. From want of practice in forest walking, I became, after five or six hours

exertion, completely jaded—and, at length, a profound dip up to my middle, in the rotten carcase of a fallen pine tree, gave the finishing blow to my energies. With Butterworth's assistance, I crawled from my place of semi-sepulture; and sitting down with him on a sounder log, turned to survey the character of what was likely to prove our resting-place for the night. We both fancied we heard the rippling of water not far off, and determined, as soon as we had recruited ourselves with a hasty supper, to reconnoitre in the direction of the sound. The twilight of the forest glades was now deepening fast; and the absence of our guide, who had started a short time before in pursuit of some deer that had crossed our path, began to occasion some uneasiness, from the possibility of his losing our traces in the darkness. For his guidance, we determined to light up a rousing fire; which might also minister to our own oblectation. Butterworth, accordingly, collected the *materiel*, whilst I, under the inspiration of a keen appetite, produced a canister of preserved meat from my knapsack, watching the while, with some amusement, his untutored efforts at eliciting the fiery element. Presently his art prevailed—"e tenebris lux," ejaculated the little man, with a dramatic air of triumph. The next moment, a fine buck shot, like a meteor, over

the log we were couched against, striking his cap from his head, and scattering, in his descent, the fagots of our nascent fire among the thick-strewn forest leaves: the crack of a rifle quickly followed, and the form of our guide flitted like a spectre by us, in pursuit of the poor fugitive. The spirit of the chase is a contagious fever, which human nature can seldom expose itself too without infection—like the stampado of the distant prairies, it spreads, with electric force and rapidity, through everything, endowed with life, by its nature or position at all accessible to it. Without giving a thought as to the little chance there was of success in a chase pursued at this late hour, or the danger of separation from my comrades, I snatched up my double-barrel, and hurried forward in the direction taken by the guide and his quarry, whose rapid movements over the dried leaves were for a short time audible. I had not proceeded, however, many hundred yards, when my precipitate sally was brought to its natural conclusion—a precipitate full stop—before a barrier of rock which extended, with almost the evenness of a wall, right and left, as far as I could see; and into which the deer and the hunter seemed to have melted away as by enchantment. Whilst halting for a moment to regain my breath, the sound of falling water was

again borne distinctly, by a passing gust, upon my ear. Inferring, from the circumstance, that the rocky wall would probably be found in that quarter the lowest and most surmountable, I skirted its base till I came to a deep fissure, down which descended, in fantastic leaps, the torrent whose murmurs I had heard on our first encamping. From the intense heats that had prevailed in the province, for some weeks past, the greater part of its course was dry; and afforded a flight of natural steps to the high ground above. Up these I scrambled; and, at the height of about twenty feet from the base, found myself on a fresh level, planted thick with gigantic pines, whose shade extinguished the last glimmer of the friendly daylight. Convinced the chase must have passed in this direction, and that our guide would probably return by the same path, I waited some time, in almost pitchy darkness, listening for any sound that might betoken his return. The gentle night wind, toying with the pine boughs, alone met my ear; but, at length, between their trunks, a full-orbed moon rode forth, discovering, at no great distance, a sheet of water, that had hitherto escaped my observation, glistening beneath its tender rays. Traversing the narrow space that intervened, I approached its margin, and was rewarded by a scene of

transcendent beauty. A small lake—of, perhaps, three or four miles in circuit—lay in unruffled tranquillity before me; its opposite shores (which, from the position of the moon, were most discernible) retiring with rather a steep acclivity, till, at the distance of half a mile or so, they terminated in a white headed hill, of but moderate height, but most striking and peculiar outline. Along the roots of this, but so swathed in shadow as to baffle all attempts at defining its character, ran a dell which, widening as it approached the lake, contributed the lively stream that had originally filled, and still replenished, its basin. Near the point of its discharge, there appeared to be either an island, or peninsula (I could not distinctly determine which), of some extent, as I could trace the silver water circling it on nearly every side. Here and there, on its lawn-like surface, appeared the shadowy outline of single and clustered trees. Beyond the isthmus, these became more numerous, till, at a very short distance from the water, both swell and savanna were lost to the eye in a dense and boundless forest. This scene seemed to realize all my dreams—to fulfil all my desires as a place of settlement—and I stood, for a length of time, gazing at it in silent admiration. Many of its features were indistinct, in consequence of a slight vapour which

arose from, and hovered over, the sequestered pool, as well as from the imperfect light from above; but imagination, awakened by the hour and scene, supplied every deficiency, and fabricated fairy fields out of the very mist itself. In a transport of admiration at the lovely spectacle, I could not help exclaiming "Here is my longed-for Eden—here could I pass with pleasure all my days."

"Well, you're not far off the scent there, squire," broke in the familiar voice of our hunter, as he emerged from a neighbouring brake with Gypsy at his heels; "that there's pleasure in the woods, no one will deny, who has ever tasted them; and if there's pleasure," added the sturdy fellow, throwing down a well-grown deer he had killed, "there's profit too, if a fine buck goes for anything in the eyes of hungry v'yers. I caught the cretur at the edge of yon swale, and pulled by the moonlight as it crossed the runner. Now, to my mind, we had better make for our camping ground, and wind up the day's work, hunter fashion, with a taste of the game, and thankfulness to the Lord for spreading our table in the wilderness. Your fri'nd, I take it, 'll be so'thing skeary by himself in these wild woods at nightfall; and a bit o' deer's meat will drive the vapours out of his head, as well as the wind off his stomach. In the

morning, we can push our acquaintance with this spicy bit o' creation; and, if you find it as much to your mind as it is to mine, you'll up with your shanty at once; one might travel a long way further, and meet with a worse location." So saying, the woodsman again shouldered his sylvan spoil, and led the way to our encampment, where we found our companion poring over his attic lore by the light of a large log fire, and nowise verifying the surmises of the guide by any undue agitation at his circumstances. Our lengthened fast and fatigues enabled us to do full justice to our rude but wholesome cheer; and with a draught of pure water, brought from the cascade in our guide's camp kettle, we wound up a repast which a citizen might have deemed gluttonous; but which, in fact, no more than indemnified us for the exhaustion and labours of the day. After our meal we lit our pipes, and, cheered by their gentle incense, conversed freely upon our recent discovery and future projects. An unbroken stillness at length took possession of those vast solitudes—the fair moon passed from us on her westward path, and leaving our nightly watch to the starry sentinels above, each of the party yielded, unconsciously, to the drowsy god, forgetting, alike, the toil of the past and exigencies of the approaching day, in a deep and healthful slumber.

CHAPTER V.

EARLY the next morning, I was awakened by a tap on the shoulder from our guide, who had been up some time, but, in compassion to our 'greenness,' allowed us an hour or two of grace—little needed by his own seasoned frame. "Up," said he, "and see the glories of the woods, whilst the dew's on the 'arth; the birds have been whistling up the sun this two hours, and pleasant music they make to my ears, though ontasteful to those of the sluggard. A blanket's a useful thing to keep the frost and spring dews off a body, but, when wastefully used, is often a corpse cloth to health and true enjoyment. Now there's a br'll

on the fire which one might think it a privilege to breakfast on—as flavorsome a maskinonge as ever man put teeth into ; so, as soon as natur' has satisfied her cravin's, we'll away to the lake whose bounty we're feeding on, and give our eyes their turn o' feastin'."

Our guide's contribution fully justified his eulogium, being a fish of ample size and excellent flavour. Having however an important day's work before us, we despatched our broil with all possible celerity, and then proceeded to explore the place of our projected location. If its features seemed attractive beneath the moonlight of the previous evening, viewed by the undclusive light of day they were found not less worthy of admiration. The eastern side of the lake was yet locked in the lingering gloom of night ; but the peninsula which had so greatly struck me before, and opposite shores, as well as a portion of the watery sheet itself, were illuminated by a blaze of matin light which betrayed their minutest details to the eye. In the latter, even the finny tribes could be seen, from where we stood, cleaving the pellucid element in sport, or quest of prey. We commenced our exploration by skirting the basin on its eastern, or shadowed side, along a band of green sward, enclosed between the water's edge and a rocky dyke, or wall, which ran, for some distance, parallel to it, with

an average span of about fifty paces. Here and there the verdant level widened away from the lake shore, and, embowered by its rocky border, formed recesses of a grotesque and alluring character. Again, narrowed by its sweep towards the water, scarce sufficient space was left for our passage onward to the 'fresher beauties varying round.' The herbage, as we proceeded, and clustered foliage of a thousand shrubs were glittering with the yet thick-standing dews which fell in showers at every motion, and speedily drenched our lower integuments. On reaching the peninsula, we found it to be simply an extension, or expansion into the lake of the sweet plateau we had been traversing. Its area might comprise half a dozen acres at the utmost, but, being thickly studded with clumps of noble trees which confined the eye to details, a spectator, on the ground itself, would have taken it to be much more spacious. From the neck of land that united it to the continent, there opened a magnificent view up the valley, formed by the mountain skirts, and an opposing slope; whilst at our feet, broken by a series of little cataracts, ran the wild stream that threaded its secret mazes, relieving, by its melody and movement, the silence and stagnation so oppressive to a stranger in the wilderness. After employing the whole morning in the work of

examination, we seated ourselves, about noon, in one of the shadowed glades of our nearly lake-locked park, to discuss our dinners, and the course of operations by which we should take virtual seizin of our new fee. It was arranged, that Butterworth and myself should return at once to Fredericton; and, after obtaining what legal assurance we could (the district being as yet unsurveyed), bring up, with as little delay as possible, such of our stores as were most needful for the early stages of settlement—carpenters tools—implements of husbandry (the American axe and hoe, however, we found worth them all put together)—and provisions; whilst our guide, remaining on the spot (which, apparently, he was nothing loth to do), should employ himself in cutting timber for a log house, to be put together on our return. It was also agreed he should remain with us for some time afterwards; and, during the term of our novitiate in the woods, render every assistance we might stand in need of, and himself afford. As he seemed to have taken a hunter's liking to the place, we had the less difficulty in putting these matters on a footing satisfactory to both parties. We proposed setting out the following morning, and in the meantime sought about for a spot suitable for our future habitation. Towards the upper end of the

peninsula, there was a small craggy swell of ground, covered with the only pine grove in its circuit (the other trees being chiefly deciduous), through which ran a miniature ravine, not much wider than an English bye lane, and ending in a *cul de sac*—the sides were rocky and rugged, and its depth might be some seven or eight feet. At the point of its termination, it somewhat resembled a saw-pit, and suggested to us the uses of an excellent cellar. Over it, accordingly, we resolved to construct our wooden mansion. The remainder of the day was consumed in inspecting the residue of the lake shores, which we found clothed with a various growth of hardwood, under the shades of which we wandered till sunset, and made our bivouac for the night. At the appointed hour the next day, we set out on our journey to the provincial metropolis, accompanied by the guide as far as the canoe station. To save the reader details which may be tedious, suffice it to say, that after a week of hard labour, our stores were safely brought up to the place of our location; and the canoe launched in its new sphere of action, which, in memory of an endeared locality, we christened "Loch Furness."

Our woodsman, we found, had not been idle during our absence, having levelled with the ground some

hundred middle-sized pines which were now lying close to the site they were intended for. Taking time by the forelock, we now addressed ourselves to the task of erecting our habitation. Two of the straightest pines, about eighteen feet in length, were laid longitudinally on the side of the hollow before described. Across these were laid a series of shorter lengths, side by side, so as to form a solid and continuous floor, eighteen feet by twelve. On these again, and parallel with the first logs, two more longitudinal pieces were fixed, crossed at the ends by others of equal length to those on the floor. These different timbers were let into each other, at the extremities, by circular transverse cuttings, corresponding in shape to the girth of the upper logs, the hollows being roughly made with the axe. It was astonishing how rapidly the walls of our wooden edifice arose under our simple carpentry; walls, too, which were deficient neither in solidity nor compactness. Here and there a chink would appear, particularly at the mitreing of the joints—these we caulked with moss, and an adhesive clay from the lake. The interior was divided into two equal parts by a wooden partition, in the centre of which was a rude stone fire-place. Our greatest difficulty was in the construction of a chimney, which, after sundry vain endeavours, we suc-

ceeded in forming of stieks and clay, until we had leisure to effect improvements. So soon as the walls had attained their full height, apertures were cut for the door and windows by sawing through the logs, and securing the sides by pieces of split timber, planed off smooth, and pegged against the log ends. Within six weeks we beheld the timber edifice raised, roofed (temporarily with bark), and fitted with small casements, which had been brought with us. Its appearance was rather sylvan than rustic, and quite in keeping with the character of the neighbouring scenery. The interior, though small, was snug; and it was with a feeling of entire contentment and comfort, that, at the close of a July evening, we gathered round our hearth-stone, lit up, *pro forma*, for the first time with blazing pine logs, and drank prosperity to our homestead, which, from the Linns, or Cascades, before alluded to, received the name of "Lindale Cote." Still, though erected, it was yet far from finished, both the floor and walls being left, with the timber, perfectly rough and unbarked, as on the day it was felled, and thus, for the present, we were obliged to leave it, having more important work in hand.

From the cutting down trees, for the purposes of building, a considerable area had been cleared round

our log house, hedged in by the remainder of the pine grove, which furnished a shelter, greatly needed, from the blasts that occasionally swept down upon us from the neighbouring gorge. This cleared part we proposed to devote to the uses of a garden; the low stumps of the severed pines still disfigured it, but the virgin soil, that surrounded them, encouraged us to bestow upon it what little cultivation was needful for the production of a few simple kitchen herbs.

The want we chiefly suffered under, at this time, was that of farinaceous food; our staple diet, salted pork, during the heats of summer, being somewhat too gross for the entire satisfaction of our stomachs. When, however, tired of this, the fish from the lake, of which there were several excellent varieties (viz., maskinonge, a sort of pike—salmon trout, white fish, bass), furnished us with an agreeable change; indeed, the seine was the chief caterer to our table during the whole of the hot months, and grateful we felt for the well-stored larder which "boon Nature" had placed within, as I may say, a hop, step, and jump of our threshold. When our garden operations were fairly advanced, and the little plot fenced round with a zigzag of pine, we turned our attention once more to the deficiencies of our abode. It has been before described as built over a cavity which, at one end,

was open. This remained still in its natural, rough, and uncouth condition; and as the want was severely felt of some place proof against the intense heats of summer, in which to stow our meat and stores, we now set to work at its craggy sides, with hammers and pickaxes, and, by dint of persevering labour, reduced them to some degree of evenness and perpendicularity. The bottom, which consisted of earth, was levelled, and strewed with gravel from the lake shore. When completed, it formed a most commodious chamber, which, when the excessive heats, incidental to the season, penetrated the more pervious superstructure, we found an invaluable and ever ready retreat. In order that we might descend to it without going out of doors, a hole was cut in the flooring of the room above, and the excised pieces, neatly joined together, adjusted to the aperture with a precision that secured it from common observation. In the above-mentioned upper apartment, which had a small light commanding an admirable view of the lake, Butterworth and I stretched our mattresses; and in the other division a bearskin was laid for our hunter, whenever it suited him to sojourn with us; which, however, was at this season but seldom, the hardy fellow preferring the accommodation of mother earth, in respect both of bed and board.

For the preservation of health, during the hot months, I formed a habit of taking a daily dip in the lake at an early hour, and found it an admirable means of securing physical efficiency for the day. This water was of singular purity and softness; such as Diana might have chosen for her bath, or Narcissus for his looking glass; and enclosed in the teapot, presented the Chinese nymph, Bohea, with more than her usual blandishments; taken *per se*, it made a most wholesome beverage, to the habitual use of which we owed much of the immunity we enjoyed from disease. The greater part of the summer was employed in bringing another section of our peninsula into tillage. Nature here offered us a ready-made clearing, and we hastened to shew our gratitude by making the most of it. Nature, too, had fenced it, and thankful we felt for the infinite labour she had spared us in both respects. The greater part of the little territory was, perforce, left green side up; and about the end of July produced us a very fair crop of native hay, which we safely housed in a barn already partially constructed for use. The following year, this building we founded parallel with our dwelling, but leaving an interval betwixt the two which, when walled in at one end, formed a snug and convenient courtyard. This matter took us a much longer time than the

erection of our dwelling-house ; there being no urgent necessity for its present completion, and much of our time being spent in hunting, raspberry gathering, exploratory excursions, &c., as well as an affair that formed a rather interesting episode in my life at that time, and furnished materials for an important chapter of it afterwards. There was, near the centre of our little sheet of water, a rocky islet, of no great size, on which we occasionally landed whilst fishing, or for the sake of diversion; and had erected a log-cabin for casual use and shelter. During the fine weather, we often used the little edifice as a summer-house, from which to survey our white-headed friend, the mountain, or enjoy our tea and pipes, after the toils of the day.

One fine evening, in the beginning of July, Butterworth and myself were seated in front of the little hut, then just completed ; the former reciting some *Alcaics* he had hammered out during the day, and the latter superintending the brewage of some tea, when we heard a shout from the direction of our dwelling, and, on looking thitherwards, discovered our venatorial friend (who had been absent several days), hailing us for the boat. Butterworth immediately put off, and ferried him over ; when a bowl of tea was offered him, and the usual inquiries made as to his

success. The man, though he seldom smiled, seemed that evening unduly grave and pre-occupied—wiped the sweat from his forehead in silence, and gave little heed to our attentions. More than once we had to repeat our inquiries, ere we succeeded in drawing from him, that, whilst returning homewards, he had fallen in with the cabin of a settler, but recently arrived in the country, whose wife lay at the point of death; and, as I inferred from his relation (into which might possibly have entered memories of his own past history), under circumstances of great privation. I immediately formed the determination of visiting the isolated sojourners, and offering what little aid might be in my power.

Early the next day, under the woodsman's guidance, I accordingly proceeded on my design, provided with a few stores such as I knew were always at a premium in the backwoods; among the rest, medicines, and some excellent tea. After a long morning's march through a continued forest, we came at once upon a little clearing, with a rude log edifice in the centre, which the guide pointed out as the abode of sickness. At the end of a log, that lay across the open space with its withered foliage still unsevered, sat, to our surprize, an Indian, with that half-listless, half-dignified, air, so peculiar to the race. Whilst

making our way through the obstruction, our steps were involuntarily arrested by the scene that next presented itself. On a rude bench, overhung by the eaves of an ill-constructed log hut, reclined a female form, swathed in a multitude of wrappers, and supported by two figures whom the cares of an engrossing solicitude prevented from noticing our approach.

One was evidently an Indian woman, and the other, whose elegant bearing belied the meanness of his attire, might be the master of the clearing.

Amid shawls whose costly character strangely contrasted with the rude appliances they were mingled with, was couched a noble looking dog, of the bloodhound species, gazing upwards at the face of the sick person with a fixedness nothing could divert. There, consumption was evidently consummating its ravages. Yet, though bereft of colour and mined by disease, it still bore, in its pure and regular outline, the memorials of former beauty. Her eye—never shall I forget its silent eloquence—was still unsubdued by her disease; there, the soul of beauty lingered still, as in a citadel, proof against its assaults; and, on her husband approaching to whisper some necessary question in her ear, it shot forth a light which seemed to augur victory over even death itself—alas! a short-lived augury. Again, benighted by

the ruthless foe, the transient gleam would fade, and the lips convey, by their significance alone, the reply they could no longer murmur forth to his enquiry. It was a scene of silent pathos, the painful tenor of which was much enhanced by a little girl, of very tender age, making her way to her mother's side, and, by a thousand infantile endearments, pleading for some token of her attention. Whether it might be from emotions akin to those we were ourselves conscious of, the excessive heat of the day, or some change he may have observed in the appearance of the invalid, the master of the clearing, as we were about to draw near, summoned the Indian woman to his aid, and tenderly removed his dying partner within the shelter of the dwelling; whither they were silently followed by the deer-hound, its head depressed as though in conscious sympathy, and its long ears almost trailing upon the ground. After a short consultation with my companion, he went forward with the few little stores I had brought, whilst I wandered to and fro, among the stumps, with feelings much impressed by the mournful scene I had witnessed.

It was a little after noon on one of the hottest days of Midsummer. All animated nature was dumb—tongue-tied by the excessive heat; the forest seemed

fairly to seethe in its intensity; and the air of the clearing, unrenovated by the faintest breeze, was so laden with its aromatic exhalations as to be even difficult of respiration. Everything around seemed in unison with the melancholy scene close by, as though Nature, from the elements themselves, enforced homage to the genius of the death-bed. Yet, a feeling of curiosity would still make its way amid the painful sensations proceeding from external objects. As I looked at the log cabin on which the sun was gleaming with ill-timed lustre, and contrasted the character of its inmates with that of the sphere they figured in, I could not help suspecting their history was one that might 'point a moral' with unusual significance, and imagination wearied itself in vivid but vain speculation upon its details. I know not how many visions of life and its varied vanities it had conjured forth, in all and each of which my new-found neighbours bore a part, nor how many more it might have done, had not the door of the log house opened, and the Indian woman, with noiseless step, approached me. Her air and gestures at once conveyed the intelligence she had come to communicate. The interesting sufferer had resigned her breath shortly after passing the threshold of her abode. Knowing full well the selfishness of sorrow, under

blows so severe as this, I waited only until Jannock and the Indian had returned from a short hunt they had made, for the purpose of supplying the immediate necessities of our neighbour; and giving the native to understand I would, with permission, be ready to assist at the funeral, of which I requested him to give us due notice, the hunter and myself turned our backs on the death-struck clearing, and retraced our course homewards. But two days elapsed before the expected summons came, and, in obedience to it, Butterworth and myself a second time set out for the dwelling of our bereaved neighbour. The ceremony of interment was performed towards evening, myself reading the service according to the Church of England, and the Indian woman and little girl attending as mourners. Poor child—too young to know the nature of her loss—uninstructed in the earliest of life's bitter lessons—she followed with tears that were but the infection of our own sadness; and the infantile smile that would at times break through them awoke our warmest sympathies for her tender age and irreparable loss. Even our hardy guide was affected, and the muscles of his face might have been seen working with emotions he had probably long been a stranger to. The service, as it approached its conclusion, was interrupted by an incident peculiarly

touching. The emigrant's hound had made one of the funeral party, accompanying its proceedings with an intelligence scarcely inferior to our own; and when the first spadeful of earth was thrown upon its kindred element, the animal raised its head into the air and uttered a prolonged wailing cry—repeating it from time to time, as the grave was filled up, in defiance of every attempt to restrain him. Solemnly it sank into the forest glades—the note of that faithful deerhound; more eloquent than the orations of genius, more full of pathos than the richest anthem, it told that the spirit was gone that befriended it, and it followed her with its fealty to the last. The widower meanwhile (whose name I learned was Jermyn) remained apart in his dwelling, absorbed in a sorrow whose alleviation I knew could, for a time, be found only in its indulgence; and when his gentle partner was laid in her last resting place, and the duties we had engaged in completed, the Indian woman conveyed to him the necessary announcement, and brought us his mournful acknowledgments in return. Thinking that the presence of strangers might interfere with the prescriptive privileges of his situation, our little party determined to return—purposing to visit him again after a short interval; and, in the meantime, leaving the two Indians to minister to his wants.

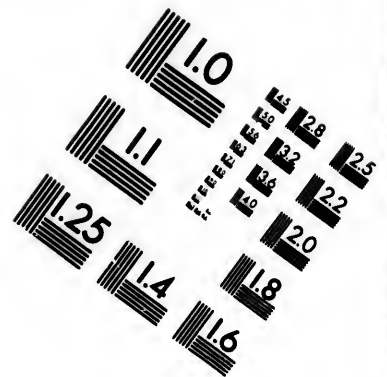
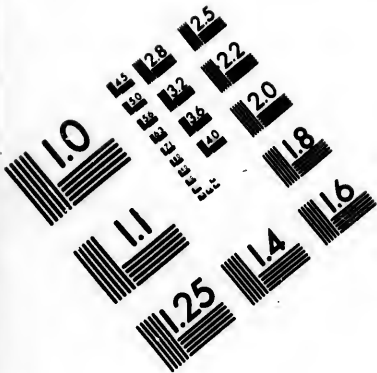
CHAPTER VI.

It was, I find by reference to my diary (for keeping which I often have reason to congratulate myself), just a week after the funeral, that a very singular mischance befell me—nothing less than utterly losing myself in the woods.

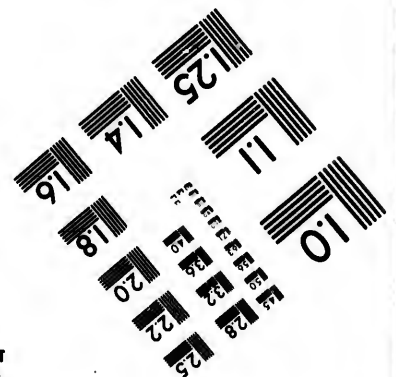
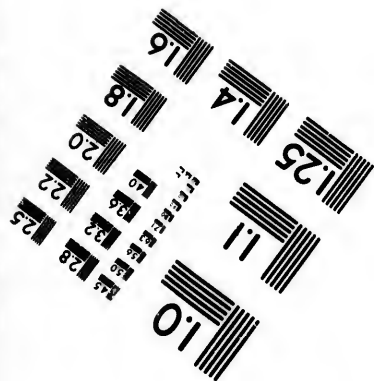
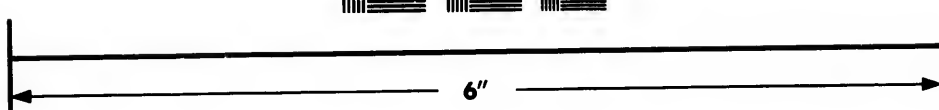
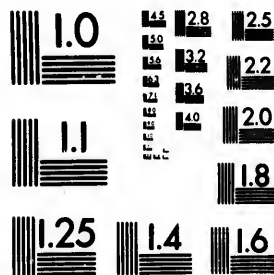
Whilst hoeing away some weeds in a potatoe patch we had formed, near the neck of our peninsula, a Carriboo trotted leisurely up, and stood watching my operations with equal coolness and curiosity—the latter quality was largely shared by myse^lf, though, unfortunately, not with a sufficient alloy of the former ; and, at some abrupt movement I made, the

animal sheered off and was no more seen. It was just before our dinner time, but not wishing to lose so rare an opportunity for sport, I ran to the cote for my gun, and taking a junk of pork, that lay on the table, in my hand, I set off with Gypsy in pursuit of the animal. For some distance, for some distance, lay along the course of the torrent that fed our lake, and then turned short off along a ravine under the skirts of the Hawkshead (the mountain that abutted on our lake), which led into a wild broken region of country as yet wholly unexplored by us. As the spaniel kept its nose well to its work, I followed mechanically on, till the lengthening shades of evening began to tell how swiftly time had sped in the exciting pursuit. I had now reached the summit of a gorge from which, eastwards, might be seen a great extent of country, watered by a pleasant meandering stream; at one of the bends of which I beheld, when on the point of turning back, a small herd of the animal I had been chasing. Making my approaches with due caution, I got a fair shot, from the forest skirts, at a fine buck that stood cooling itself in the shallows of a river. This I succeeded in dropping, though, unluckily, not with a fatal wound; for, rising instantaneously from the water, it crossed the stream and made off, limping into the forest beyond, where all





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further pursuit was now hopeless. Considering the length of the chase, and the promising aspect it had put on towards its conclusion, I had a right to feel disappointed, and I was so. Chagrin, however, is ever an unprofitable sentiment; and the growing darkness prevented me from wasting much time in its indulgence. Seeking out a pleasant glade, at an easy distance from the water, I kindled a fire, made a hearty supper on the junk of pork, lighted my pipe, and after reading the exploits of Tydides, in a pocket Homer, by the waning twilight, resigned myself to the power of the woodland Morpheus.

I dare say many a faun and dryad cantered round my fire that night in astonishment at the queer chum that had got among them; but, forgetting to throw on a timely fagot, it burned out, and, at early dawn, the thick-falling dews awoke me from my slumbers.

Sighting a rather conspicuous hill, which I thought I had passed the day before, as a landmark to direct my course, I turned my steps homewards, calculating to arrive at the cote about dinner time.

Many a weary sun, however, was to rise and set, ere that comfortable meal should be shared by me.

On approaching the eminence, I found not a single feature that I recognised; everything bearing a strange and unfamiliar aspect. So that, after drawing suffi-

ciently near to satisfy myself of the mistake I had made, I took a direction I imagined would rectify it, plunging deeper and deeper into the pathless woods, till at last, whilst crossing a low-lying, and rather swampy flat, my course was abruptly arrested by a deep river. Breathless with exertion, I stood for some minutes on its brink—looked up it, down it, and across it—there was no evading the conclusion. I was not only in a dead fix, but, above all, lost—whether to the north, south, east, or west of our location, utterly ignorant. At first, when this conviction dawned upon me, I felt a queer sort of sensation, similar to what I experienced when abandoned on the iceberg in the Atlantic, though not so vivid; but when I began to consider the many comparative advantages of my present situation, a strong revulsion of feeling took place, and my consternation was turned into something nearer akin to joy. I recollected, in particular, the wish I, in the former circumstances, sighed forth to the unsympathizing waves, that, rather than that sea-girt prison, I had tenanted the gloomiest cavern of the wilderness. From that extremity God had rescued me; and now, though there were plenty of caverns about, I had the happy option of going in or keeping out of them—could order my steps where-soever I chose—had the means of procuring sundry

requisites of life, and was insulated only by my own topographical ignorance—my heart fairly leaped at the favourable contrast, and I doubted not the Almighty would help me from my present difficulty also. Through life, moreover, I had loved to look upon the face of Nature in her loneliness; and, after the first transient emotion, I viewed my condition with perfect calmness, and even relished the air of adventure it had assumed. I felt my energies braced, my sinews compacted, and my heart borne up by the free spirit of the wild wood. Though deficient in some important equipments, I still possessed a good gun, powder (plenty of that, I felt thankful), though only one more ball, my pipe and tobacco, knife, and a strong, though somewhat thin, suit of duck clothes—unfortunately I was without a blan' and had but little left of my provision. Having duly considered all these things, I debated with my wits well set, what was to be done to extricate myself.

As before mentioned, I had got into a low-lying piece of intervale land, shut in by wild rocky hills, and covered with the stupendous forest-growth peculiar to the province. At my feet ran the stream which I supposed to be identical with that on which I had shot the carriboo; it was some twenty yards wide, flowing tranquilly in a deep alluvial channel.

Enormous trees shot up from either side into the heavens; and in the dead sultriness of the day, along its course, might be heard the few sounds of animal life that emanated from those far-spread wilds. At the end of a long vista, darkened by umbrageous pine boughs, I descried a heron perched on a fallen tree, over the stream, lazily watching the water as though baffled by its depth, or overcome by the heat of the hour. This and Gypsy were the only living things I could observe; and my own shadow, as it fronted me on the water, seemed invested, in that lonesome hour, with something of the attributes and importance of a companion.

The plan I proposed, was, to follow this water-course undeviatingly to its efflux, which I took for granted would be into the stream we had ascended whilst searching for a place of settlement, and with which I was, in some measure, acquainted; a course further recommended by the probability of falling in with some settler's clearing in my way. The other side of the river presenting the more practicable bank, I accordingly crossed by a fallen tree that lay pat for my purpose.

From the great exuberance of forest vegetation in this part of the world, the ground is everywhere thickly strewn with the carcasses of trees fallen from

spontaneous decay, or elemental violence; and, to the unpractised traveller, thus productive of much weariness of body and vexation of spirit in his wayfaring. This, and my anxiety to make progress, which kept me moving at an unsuitable time of the day, at length exhausted my strength, and I sat down on the river side a little before sunset to recruit it. After half-an hour's rest, the shades of evening began to steal over the water; and finding little more could be done that day, I collected a heap of rotten branches, and prepared to pass the night on the spot. The woods, hitherto hushed by the heat, began now to find their utterance, and a crowd of confused murmurs arose, among which were clearly distinguishable the restful cooing of the wild dove, and the song of the American nightingale; the frog—a small swamp happening unluckily to be close at hand—the chorus from which became so incredibly loud as at length to swallow up every other sound. The twilight deepened; the dews began to fall dankly on my light raiment; and the mosquitoes—those inevitable pests of a new country—became intolerably vexatious in their attacks. As I have said, the position had been unfortunately chosen; but as the ground was equally low for some distance round, and the darkness too great to allow me to explore it further, the only remedy that sug-

gested itself was a good fire, which I accordingly made forthwith. By keeping pretty well in the smoke, and aiding its effects by that of my pipe, I secured myself in a great measure from my tormentors, and counteracted the noxious influence of the night dews. What remained of my provision supplied me with one good meal more, and, tossing the bone to my faithful follower, I placed myself in a posture of repose, and enjoyed a sound sleep till daylight.

Third day.—Arose betimes, and having nothing to delay me, in the way of breakfast, set forth on my journey with a stout heart, resolved to diminish the distance considerably by that day's travel. The whole morning I kept along the river side which now began to shew descending ground. Rapids and falls became of frequent occurrence, and many a time through the day, wooed by their murmurs, and wearied by my toil, I stopped to listen at the soothing sound, and contemplate, with feelings of delight, the exquisite snatches of scenery that occurred from time to time in my progress. If ever the tide of immigration should set in this direction, as nothing but the most abject ignorance of our noble dependencies, or besotted folly in their management, could have hitherto prevented—many a park-like scene—many an Arcadian

landscape will be here unveiled to the page and canvass of the future tourist. It was at the side of one of these miniature cascades, commencing an exquisite reach of river scenery, that, about an hour before noon, I sat down to rest myself, and enjoy an unstinted draught of the sparkling element that tumbled at my feet. When I had quenched my thirst, the little dog came up and thrust its nose into my hand. "Ah! Gypsy," thought I, "if you only had as much 'nous' as you have nose, you would soon extricate your master from this fix. As it is, Heaven only knows where our wandering and wayfaring will end." As I sat looking scarce consciously at the little cataract, I remarked a splashing in the water below, which, on watching further, I found to proceed from the attempts of salmon to scale the fall. I resolved to try and shoot one, which, by great good-hap, I succeeded in doing; and fetching it from the other side, banqueted deliciously (the cooking was soon accomplished) on a 10lb. fish of exquisite flavour. It had been purchased, however, full dearly, having deprived me of my last bullet. As a makeshift, I hammered a button from my dress into as nearly a round form as I could, and used it for the next charge in lieu of the legitimate pellet. I was sorry to perceive, as I proceeded, that the river had

now taken an easterly direction, which was just the opposite of that desired; deeming it better, however, not to give up the plan I had originally proposed upon light grounds, I still pursued my way along its banks for the remainder of the day; when, a little after sunset, taking warning from my experience of the past night, I encamped (if sitting down upon a fallen tree may be so termed) on a spot that promised exemption from former annoyances by its greater distance from the water. Here I again feasted on my fish—kindled my fire and pipe (which secured me pretty well from the mosquitoes); and if I had only possessed a blanket, and some certain knowledge of my whereabouts, should have enjoyed no contemptible share of that prime blessing to human nature—Contentment.

Fourth day.—The next morning my fish again supplied me with a hearty meal, and stoutness to confront my day's work, but sorely was I puzzled how to set about it. My agreeable guide hitherto—the river—was evidently leading in a direction that would involve me still deeper in the wilderness; and though I supposed it to pour its waters ultimately into a stream I was acquainted with, the grounds of my belief were scarce sufficient to warrant me following it for any length of time in an opposite quarter. To

assist my decisions, I determined to mount a hill at some little distance, whose elevation promised to give me an extensive view of its further course; and, if I found it holding still easterly, to abandon it altogether and pilot myself as well as I could by means of the sun, the moss on the trees, and whatever other aids I could render available. On reaching the hill, I found it exceedingly rugged, its rocky quaintly shapen sides abounding in dens and caves, and littered thick with the dung of wild animals—particularly foxes: clambering up as well as I could to the summit, I found it to consist of about an acre of table land planted with a young growth of firs. The view from here was truly magnificent, but it verified the fears I had entertained with respect to the easterly trending of the river, which I accordingly resolved to quit forthwith. It was with difficulty I tore myself away from the hill top, and the extensive and attractive prospects it commanded. There were plenty of materials around for constructing a wigwam; game seemed to be abundant; and had I only possessed ammunition, and a blanket, I should not have minded, I thought, passing a month or two here. “As it is, my bonny glades,” I said, as I plunged down its wild sides into the woods below, “I must leave you to be creamed by some luckier wight.” O those dark,

silent, everlasting woods—how ill they contrasted with the pleasant stream and free-aired hill I had just left. For the second time, and with increased force, I now began to feel the queer spirit-quelling sensation of being lost. I thought it possible I might never again emerge from that stern and silent colonnade which stretched on every side like a vast cemetery, destined to immure me living, and entomb my remains ere long. Though it was bright noontide when I entered its depths, every object now was clothed in triste obscurity, which, added to the dense setting of the timber, prevented me from seeing above twenty yards in any direction. Guiding my steps, however, by the moss which was observable on the northern sides of its colossal stems, I still trudged along through the yielding compost of leaves, much dejected at the unpromising circumstances of my condition. At length, as night was shutting up the short vistas of view I had hitherto commanded, and I had begun to look around for some suitable place wherein to pass its watches, a distant glimmer caught my eye, and curiosity directed my steps towards it. On forcing my way through a thick setting of shrubs which, agreeably to a law of nature, had sprung up under the influence of the light, a pool of water lay before me—of perhaps two acres in extent—fringed all

round with pleasant copsewood, and literally alive with the vari-coloured wood duck. "Here will I lie to-night," thought I, and stepping stealthily back, I sat down on a hillock and contemplated, at my ease, the interesting scene I had fallen on. In every direction were seen numbers of those gaily plumaged birds; here, paddling about in sportive pairs; there, leading forth broods of callow young; and some, within twenty yards of me, were floating on the water, fast asleep, with the whole of their glossy coating fully exposed to view. In their every movement was seen the vivid action of the wild state, but, withal, an unhesitating, unfearing carriage, that might have led one to suppose the scene a snatch of fairyland, and the figures before me protected by its fabulous immunities. So strong was this impression, that for a length of time, though extremely hungry, I forebore to fire, till a rapacious maskinonge having carried off a duckling almost under my nose—my superstitious scruples vanished, and I pulled the trigger of my shot barrel at a dense group thirty yards distant. The piece unfortunately missed fire, and the noise having somewhat alarmed the birds, but few remained within range, when, with freshened priming, I renewed the attempt. Two of these I was fortunate enough to disable, and wading into the

sequestered pool—for the first time, probably, since the day of its creation, profaned by the presence of man—secured my prizes, and returned with them to my resting place in the copse. Some of this I next cut down, and made of the branches a rude arbour which served to shelter me from the heavy dews; then, lighting a fire in front, I cooked my two birds; ate one, and, after smoking a pipe, lay down on a heap of rushes to sleep. The shadows of night descended on the little tarn; the stars stamped their gold studs upon its surface; and I fancied the waterfowl, recovered from their panic, were again tracing their fairy mazes as before, when slumber fell heavily upon me and sealed up from sight this strange imitation of one of its own visions.

Fifth day.—My breakfast the next morning disposed of my second duck, and put me in some sort of case for pursuing my doubtful and laborious journey. Turning my back, with regret, upon the little tarn (for, amidst those limitless woods, it seemed like an oasis in the desert), I held on, as well as I could judge, in a south-westerly direction, the little dog following, languid and spiritless, at my heels. For the whole of that live-long day, no living thing met my view, though I fancied a squirrel dropped a nut on my cap, as I was resting beneath a

beech, through my dinnerless noontide. I must now have travelled, since commencing my return, above eighty miles; and began to be much discouraged at the little prospect there seemed to be of an early, or even any, termination to it. Having crossed, towards evening, a small rapid stream, I began to ascend some rising ground, which at length ended in a bald hill top, admitting the light and air freely, and offering a welcome terminus to a day of toilsome travel. After sitting down awhile, to recover my breath, I looked around on the immense prospect commanded by my position. It was far the finest of the many I had yet seen, and, though surfeited, as I now was, with this description of scenery, awoke an irresistible thrill of admiration. Below me, far as the eye could reach, spread one boundless ocean of billowy verdure—here, rolling in rounded swells, whose crests were still illumined by the sunset; there, sinking in dreamy hollows, already filled with the thickening shades of night. Varying the waste of green, were seen, singly, or in knots, trees of deciduous kinds, obtruding their blossom-broidered forms, like beauties pleading apart for admiration, till, less conspicuous as the eye advanced, they were finally lost in the sea of pines that rolled in quivering undulations to the horizon.

Not a sound was to be heard from the whole of the vast expanse, save a low and half-hushed murmur, which arose from its leafy quires, like a whispered liturgy, or the interrupted note of some lovelorn cushat, as it summoned its errant mate to repose.

Never before had I beheld so manifest the majesty and glory of the wilderness. Here, indeed, it reigned "supreme of things," with solitude for its bride, and the sun, in its daily course, its august and only visitant.

Above, the sky embodied every hue that varies the artist's palette, or its own ethereal bow, but I could see that the winds, though hushed below, were busy with its vaporous furniture; here, furrowing it into rosy ridges by sudden inroads—there, hurrying it round and round with the circuitous fury of a whirlwind; and anon, scattering it abroad over the firmament in fragments of floss gold.

The great luminary itself was setting in a bay of unclouded ether, from which streamed over the entire landscape a tide of the yellowest light I had ever seen, either in real, or pictured prospects. As it descended to its western lair, dense masses of vapour began to show themselves in the horizon, flushed with those livid hues that portend elemental conflict, and throwing into obscurity, as they advanced, the

glistening scene I had been gazing on. Warned by these threatening appearances, I lost no time in searching for some sheltering place from the approaching storm, and was fortunate enough to find a rude excavation in a rock, that promised protection from its violence.

Soon its premonitory moans were heard about the hill—then came fierce and fitful blasts of wind; and at last the storm burst over it in full fury, accompanied by tremendous peals of thunder. Though not in circumstances to enjoy the progress of a melodrame, being both tired and hungry, the grandeur of the spectacle kept me a wakeful and entranced spectator. Whilst the light lasted, the forest, but late so tranquil, was seen waving and bending with hoarse groans beneath the hurricane; occasionally laid open by some ruthless gust, whose course might, on the morrow, be tracked by a league of levelled timber; but as the night closed in, and the gale approached its climax, the crashing of falling trees alone (save where the cross-blue lightning made momentary revelations of the scene) announced its havoc through the wilderness. Before midnight, it had all passed away; the air became clear and cool; and with a fagged frame, and empty stomach, I snatched a short rest till morning.

Sixth day.—On awakening, the early rising sun disclosed two features in the landscape that had hitherto escaped my observation, but now, in an especial manner, attracted it. One appeared to be a lofty cliff, at a great distance (full twenty miles, I thought), which presented a precipitous front to the sunrise, and reflected back its radiance in tones of yellowish red. As it lay in my intended route, I was extremely glad to meet with so good a landmark. The other object of my attention was of less happy promise, being a long dark line of foliage extending beyond the range of vision, and intersecting my line of march at right angles. I feared it indicated swampy ground, and might necessitate a tedious and lengthy *detour*. Having nothing wherewith to break my fast, I commenced the day's proceedings by smoking a pipe of tobacco, which, in some measure, stayed the importunities of my stomach—and then keeping a sharp look out for anything that might furnish better fare, descended the hill in the direction of my distant landmark. Two hours walking brought me to that portion of the ground which had excited my suspicions on the hill, and now proved them to have been too well founded—an unmistakeable swamp lay right across my course, filled with decayed vegetation, and teeming with amphibious forms of animal and

vegetable life. Was it to be crossed, or rounded, was the question I now had to consider. The latter alternative presented such an intolerable prospect of tedious circuitry, that I could scarce contemplate it with patience; and accordingly resolved on attempting to force a passage across. Securing my equipments about me in the most compact manner, and provided with a long staff, I commenced my passage in a direction where, isolated amidst the marshy ground, several hillocks, crested with enormous timber, offered some degree of help in effectuating it. The first of these eminences I reached with little trouble, but had nearly foundered in attempting to gain the next, some hundred yards distant, having suddenly sunk in a deep mud hole, from which I only extricated myself by laying hold, when up to my breast, of a fallen tree, whose extremity lay luckily within reach. Gypsy I saved, by buoying her over the danger with my staff.

On crossing the oasis I had reached, and attempting to continue my course, I found the swamp so deep, its breadth so great, as to forbid all hope of effecting a successful passage in that quarter, and reluctantly felt myself obliged to return; getting over the mud hole by drawing a fallen bough to the spot, along which we crept in safety. Wearied,

bemired, and disappointed, I now began to skirt the morass, but, from fatigue and insufficient food, at a very slow pace. Here and there, too, branch bays from the main marsh, some of considerable extent, interrupted my progress; and though most of these were found passable, there were some, and those the largest, that compelled me to make fresh *detours*, by which my travel was so much retarded, that six or seven miles in a straight line must have been the utmost I had accomplished, when the pine tops, drawn against the sunset, gave me warning to take up my position for the night. An insulated mound, well clothed with timber, presenting itself opportunely for the purpose, I waded thither, lit my fire, and supped (and I may say, dined and breakfasted, all in one) on a wild pigeon I was fortunate enough to knock over in the tree I had camped under. As the evening advanced, the confused hum that had issued from the marsh by day, became succeeded by a stentorian chorus of frogs; and the mosquitoes commenced their attacks with such asperity and numbers, as to foreclose all hope of tasting the benefits of "tired nature's sweet restorer." A thick yellow fog, too, came out of, and settled above, the stagnant water; fraught, as I knew full well, with 'miasma,' and obscuring the meagre moonlight that

illuminated its sombre precincts. Having, as I have before recorded, nothing in the way of covering but the thin suit I had on, I generally chose out some well-feathered pine for my tent, which served to shelter me from the dews, though of but little avail against the exhalations that were reeking from the quagmire. These settled around me in a sea of vapour, through which might be seen, at intervals, the tops of insulated hummocks and the spectral forms of funereal cedars, vaguely horrific in the dubious light. If ever fire may be thought a blessing, it is in circumstances like these; and by the effective one I built, I remained smoking well on into the night, thinking my pipe might furnish an antidote to the morbid atmosphere I breathed. My thoughts were very busy with past times that night; the various depressing causes I had now for some days been exposed to, but more particularly the dank vapours of the place I was in, predisposing me to wakefulness, and the indulgence in sad and self-accusing reveries. As the hours wore on, voices, the reflex of my own thoughts, seemed to issue from the dim glades about me. "What doest thou here, Philip?" hailed one from a clump of cedars. "With thy gentle birth and tender nurture, why art thou lodged in this Tartarian spot," challenged an-

other; "and abandoning thy country, friends, and home, come to make thy grave in a quagmire," uttered a third voice, low as that of conscience, yet powerful as a trumpet. It was, in fact, the workings of my own mind that made it so, for these representations came home to it with unusual force that night, and made me execrate, from my soul (and even greatly exaggerate), the gratuitous folly that had led me hither, and so often helmed my course.

Seventh day.—At length the thick hazy yellow of the moonlight began to give place to the more enlivening hues of morning; and ere it was well day-light, I got up from my unrestful lair, and set forth once more upon my wanderings. My night quarters, however, had done their work, and I now rose with the stupified brain, shivering frame, and general 'malaise,' which told me, beyond mistake, I was at length fairly nailed by that bane of new countries, the ague. There being little chance of medical, or any other aid, where I was, I had no alternative but to proceed; and two more dreary days I coasted my Stygian foe, no bad impersonation, perhaps, of the forms planted by fable on the banks of its prototype; at times, so weak as scarcely to get one leg before another; at others, feeling as though I were winged with fire and walked in the regions of

the air. One circumstance alone cheered my labour on the latter of these days, the eighth of my wanderings. I found, towards noon, from the different direction of my course, with reference to the sun, that I had at length rounded the marsh, and might now continue my progress in the line I had originally laid for it. This was a privilege, however, which seemed now to be of but barren import, my strength being reduced so low by the joint action of fever, fatigue, and hunger, as to debar all prospect of holding out twenty-four hours longer. That day I tasted no food, nor indeed had now much craving for it, fever and debility overpowering all other sensations. Long before the sun set, I had chosen my camping place on some rising ground a good half mile from the swamp; and having smoked my pipe, not without beneficial effect, took out my knife, and carved on the hemlock, I was couched under, my initials and age, as a last memorial to the world of one, who seemed likely to remain in it but little longer.

That rude inscription may yet catch the eye of some toil-worn woodsman, as he opens his wallet near the spot, and, if of thoughtful mood, perchance divert his axe from one of the noblest magnates of the forest.

It took me a long time this night to collect the materials for my fire, which, though it served

somewhat to diminish the torment of mosquitoes, I found of little effect against the shivering fits of my disorder, even whilst exposed to its fullest glow. Poor Gypsy crept into my breast, the reflexion of her master's misery; and thus, united by suffering with my dumb companion, and communing with my own sad thoughts, the watches of that weary night, the last, I believed, I was destined to spend on earth, passed slowly and solemnly away.

Ninth day.—In the morning, feeling somewhat recruited by its fresh atmosphere, I again ventured to pursue my journey, making however but little progress, and too full of my own morbid musings to give much heed to its direction. As the sun rose in the heavens, however, the features of my route at length arrested my attention. I found myself skirting a ledge of red sandstone rock, from which the morning splendour was reflected in tones of extraordinary richness.

This ledge, increasing in height as I proceeded, at length terminated in a lofty mural cliff, which I immediately recognized as the landmark I had seen from the hill top three mornings before. The features of this spot, as, exhausted by my short wayfaring, I sat on a boulder to contemplate it, made a deep and enduring impression on my mind, from their marked

and solemn character. Above me, in precipitous majesty, towered the sandstone cliff, pierced here and there by cavities resembling the look out ports of some old castle, or border abbey; from which a variety of chance-rooted shrubs stretched out their daring foliage to the day. At its base lay a wide area of the same red-colored stone, flat as a church floor, and utterly devoid of either vegetation or soil, though skirted all round with the rich and crowded foliage of the forest. A deep silence reigned through this impressive scene, which the sun was now brightly emblazoning; and as I rested, feverish and fancy-ridden, against my boulder, I could not help conceiving that what I now beheld was some Cyclopean keep and court-yard, which had once had its wondrous history, and might yet be guarded by still operant spells from the intrusion of either nature, or mankind. Several hours must have passed away as I lay looking at it in this half-dreaming condition, for I found, on arousing myself, the sun had ceased to project my shadow, and its action on my brain warned me to seek out some sheltering place from its heat. I therefore withdrew to the immediate base of the cliff, where a thin dark line was just beginning to announce the turn of day. Poor Gypsy was so weak, as to be unable to quit the boulder I had left; but, creeping

under its shelter, remained eyeing me opposite, scarce twenty yards off, and thus we passed some hours longer, truly waiting upon Providence, whose direct interposition seemed now the only thing that could save us.

As evening drew on, and my disorder advanced into its feverish stage, strange fantastic visions filled my brain, such as arise in that of childhood, after the wilder nursery tales. Sounds, too, seemed to issue from the forest around me—now, the chiming of a church bell mocked my ear with the music of home life—now, the sonorous echoes of a horn filled the air, and fading over the boundless woods, left on the mind glad images of boyish sports. Anon, forms seemed to issue on to the stony flat from the sylvan arcades in front; forms well known, and well-beloved; of some that were dead and gone; and some I had left living behind me, calling on my name and summoning to a joyous reunion; and I was yet feasting on this fanciful fruitage of my own brain, when the hoarse croak of a raven, deep as a death-knell, broke on my visionary bliss, and recalled me to the dire realities of my situation. It was perched on a withered bough, not many feet above my head, eyeing me with the coolness of a sexton, and uttering its boding note, at intervals, with the regularity

and solemnity of a minute bell. Magnified and repeated by the echoes of that sepulchral spot, it smote me with a thrill of horror, and the death I had quietly resigned myself to I now shrank from, attended as it was with such new and abhorrent accompaniments.

Whilst silently meditating these new and revolting features of my condition, a shadow suddenly darkened the air above me, and, with a low swooping sound, one of the fell birds descended on the body of my sleeping dog, whilst its mate, alighting near, hopped up to assist in the promised feast.

This aroused all the wrath that remained in me; and levelling my gun, with a last exercise of strength, I fired my remaining button at the bold depredator. Though probably but little hurt, the shot had the effect of scaring the birds away, and calling Gypsy to me, I gave her safer lodging in my arms.

In a short space, I again lapsed into my trance-like doze, and it was whilst in this state of divided fealty between the inner and outer world, that I beheld a strange figure approach. A human being he was, doubtless, but his visage so overgrown with hair, his attire so rude and tarnished, and his whole appearance so inexpressibly ruinous, that bending, as he walked, under the weight of a deer he was

carrying, I thought I had never seen a creature whose claims to humanity were so little obvious from his outward man. He had half crossed the rocky terrace ere he caught sight of me, lying, as before mentioned, with the little dog in my breast; when, setting down his burden on the rock, he drew near. On coming up, he stood gazing at me for several minutes, leaning on a long rusty firelock, and then, in a low deep hollow voice, uttered the following remarkable soliloquy:—"As I live, here's one of them—'tis strange—I was thinking even now of the many years I had passed here without falling in with a fellow reptile, when lo! on the thought, I stumble on one—dead though—well, better thus—'tis one sly knave the less to cozen the trustful world, and mar God's kindly providence. Aye, far better thus, for had he met me living, the mountain panther might have given him kindlier greeting. He holds his dog in his arms to shield it from the ravens—that, methinks, smacks of the true touch—but had it been like me, he would have left it to their tender mercies. My dusky friends are impatient to fall to—why should I stay them? 'Tis their vocation to polish bones and develope the shining parts of their proud whitewashed cousins. He shudders—there is life in him yet, then, and the particle keeps the fools at bay,

though so rank of their own blest instincts. What shall I do?—take him to my wigwam and go down on my knees for St. Nicholas, or leave him to the beaks of his lords in waiting yonder? See how the fever shakes him! Why, I have caught it too—methought I had left the two-edged sword at home with my dear friend Clem, and my loving lady Su, but now I feel it in me cutting both ways, even unto the quick. Oh! that it would share in twain these mad mismarried natures—pare away the bane that poisons the better plant, or, with one unsparing stroke, quash their fell strife for ever.” As he said this, his frame seemed to labour with deep emotion, and his countenance broke into a profuse sweat, which, after gazing at me awhile longer, he wiped away with his tattered deerskin sleeve. He then, with a quiet exertion of strength, raised me from the ground, and, turning a corner of the rock, carried me away from a spot that had so nearly proved my tomb—the ravens following, for some distance, with hoarse croaks of disappointment.

Proceeding along the side of a well-wooded valley, we arrived, after a quarter of a mile’s progress, at a cliff that stood out from it like a platform, half way down, and commanded an unobstructed view, both right and left along the dell. Here was his habitation. Constructed of trees of medium size,

such as a single man might lift, covered with bark and caulked with moss, to which time had largely added, it occupied rather the rear of the little area, leaving an esplanade in front, just enough clothed with dwarf firs to conceal the sylvan edifice without much intercepting the view from it. A little lake lay darkling in the green depths below, from which the sun had already withdrawn his beams, giving to a demurer light the lone valley and hermit-like abode I was entering under such strange auspices.

CHAPTER VII.

AFTER depositing his burden on a rude couch of dried moss, covered with undressed deerskins, my disposer went forth, and in a brief space returned with the buck he was carrying when I first fell in with him ; then quickly kindling a fire, he set about preparing some broth of the meat. All this time I lay glowing in the fever fit of my distemper, watching, though without the power of making any mental inference, the strange aspect and varying demeanour of my host, as he sat by the fire in silent superintendence of his cookery. His countenance showed much intelligence ; and, despite its uncouth trim, might

once, I thought, have been deemed even handsome, but I found it, when agitated by emotion (and that evening it was so to a remarkable degree), subject to extraordinary and, as it seemed, involuntary fits of distortion, during which its expression was peculiarly strange and repulsive. Many a time, as I lay in my cot, was my attention riveted by the spasmodic play of his features, which, though partly hidden by the unchecked growth of hair (encouraged, perhaps, for that purpose), plainly evinced the convulsive workings of the spirit within; and more than once I beheld his brow beaded with sudden sweat—his eyes lighted with strange phosphoric gleams—and his bearing marked by other peculiarities which, had I at the time possessed the full use of my faculties, might have given me reasonable ground for suspicion and alarm. Ever and anon, however, these fits would clear away (it was a relief when they did so), and I fancied I could then discern traces of a noble mind animating the wreck of a once worthy mechanism. Though so neglected in his own person, the interior of his abode was a marvel of elaborate neatness; producing much the same impression on the mind as the view of a well constructed nest in some dismal thicket; everything about it having the same trim compacted look, though wrought apparently by the

simplest means, and with the most primitive materials; an axe appearing to have been the sole implement employed, and bark and moss (as with its type above mentioned) the chief ingredients of his upholstery.

After serving me with a portion of the broth he had prepared, he again went out, it being moonlight, and, falling into a deep sleep, I beheld him no more that night. On looking about me the next morning, I found him engaged (muttering the while, as though in converse with his own thoughts) in cutting some willow bark, and other herbs, into shreds, of which a decoction was presently made, and, when cold, administered to me at stated intervals. From the first dose I felt a marked amendment, and in the evening found myself well enough to rise from my bed and sit awhile by an aperture that looked out on the rocky area in front of the hut. There I beheld my inexplicable host walking about in the moonlight, with that wrapt air and irregular step that denote a perturbed mind. After one of his rapid passages, he paused not far from the lattice I was posted at, and, with a strength of emotion that seemed now to defy restraint, broke out in the following words:—

“Well, I have saved him—and why? Why should I pick up this waif of a pitiless world—this link of

a chain that has worn away all the verdure from my soul, and I thought to have thrown aside for ever? Did I not swear, on that accursed night when household treason shot its baleful fires through my brain, I would never again set willing eyes on man; but shun him like an extending plague, and seek in the desert a refuge from his poisonous presence? When, though formed of the kindest elements, and full of the generousities that warm our nature, they spurned me from among them, because of my infirmity; when, after burning into ashes the fair edifice of my hope and love, they drove me, for a madman, to these distant wilds, did I not vow to forsake my cruel kind, and turn to the beasts of the field rather for fellowship? And now comes one of these pagans in my path, and, like an incurable weakling, I must play the good Samaritan; bind up the wounds of beings who live by dealing them; minister to the cravings of those who devour their kind; and perchance foster forth some new viper, to search with later pangs the little that is left of my seared sensibilities. Well! for thy sake, my Susannah (for once I could call thee mine—yea, once take lessons of love and religion from your lips), for thy sake will I do it. O could you see your unhappy Edmund now—barbarized in mind and body—a dweller with wild beasts—his life

beset with clouds—its promise irreparably blasted—how would your gentle heart be rung, and those eyes, which, like meteors, still gleam upon him from the past, flow with a staunchless tide of sorrow. Yet much I fear me, were he now to meet them, you would shrink with abhorrence from his wreck, and fly for protection to the unparagoned traitor that has caused it. But a day of retribution will arrive (I wish it not for thee, my Susannah), when Nature will purge away the canker of falsehood from her vitals, and visit the usurper in his Eden with the fire he has dealt so cunningly.”

“Here,” thought I, as I turned again into my cot, “is a vessel struck by lightning, and slowly burning down to the abyss. Unfitness for the world has turned this man into a wolf.” For great part of the night I lay musing on the unhappy fortunes of the lone being whose history had been so unexpectedly lighted up by his soliloquies; and though feeling bound to censure a strain and strength of passion repugnant to religion—yielding an involuntary sympathy with sorrows so deeply rooted—certes, I thought he must have met with some dire calamity—sustained some inexpiable injury—to have become what I now beheld him; and even my own limited experience of human nature teaches me, that in estimating its

amount, equity must be guided less by the abstract and extrinsic cause, than the peculiar organization and capacity of endurance in the sufferer. Some may be formed by nature of fine materials badly blent; and amidst the jars and trials of the world, the doom of these is torment. Who, then, can wonder, that under her remedial provisions, they retreat from a fire that scorches them, and seek, in some calm cloister of the world, a sphere more congenial to their sensations?

This man, I felt assured, had been born with his full share of the milk of human kindness, but it had soured under a peculiar lot, and now abode in his breast a fund of acrid poison.

In the course of a week, I had regained an un-hoped-for degree of strength; and (moved in a measure thereto by the peculiar bearing of my entertainer, who, whilst carefully attending to my wants, abstained from every thing that could be construed into a desire for closer intercourse) I now determined to resume my journey homewards.

The morning of my departure, my host being absent, I seated myself at the cabin door to await his return; full of the delicious sensations of returning health, and of admiration at the striking prospect commanded from my position. My friend (for such

my inner soul esteemed him) had, evidently, an eye for fine scenery. His gun, too, lay propped against the threshold, and, from its condition, seemed to have had pretty constant employment; he was doubtless, therefore, a hunter as well; and I could easily enter into the feelings which had led him to select so promising a field for his pursuit as the fair untrodden valley I beheld. The weapon was a beautifully made though somewhat antique one, single, smooth bore, exceedingly worn and rusted, and, on what is called the grip, bore a shield of armorial bearings which I thought were not unfamiliar to me, viz., those of a Midland baronet whose name was once widely known in public life. Whilst engaged in looking at it, its owner came up; and, by way of breaking the ice of his taciturnity, I observed, "That has been a first-rate piece, sir, in its time, though its better days seem to have gone by."

"Yes," said he, quietly taking it into his hands, "it's rather the worse for the element as well as its master; but as long as nature lasts fire will burn and metal wear, and ruin have her perfect work—inside she begins, and outside she ends, till at length comes the hole, and you get a peep into my lady's chamber. They are queer things—these laws of nature—as you

may come to find, some day between now and chairing time."

"With plenty of game in these woods," I replied, disregarding the lurking bitterness of his remarks, "I dare say you find this life you lead as pleasant as you can wish."

He looked at me for a moment, as though scarce knowing how to take or answer the remark, and then said in the same tone of acerbity, "It does for those it suits, which is saying as much as need be said. These trees are my family circle, and a quiet respectable set they are, for they neither thwart, cheat, bully, nor deride you. Moreover, they never change, save their clothes, of which they get a new suit every twelvemonth, and a new ring; and there they stand in their bravery, that the merry mortal on the rock may take pleasure in their comeliness. Those plants in the court about you are my youngest generation. I put them in (for you see each has its crevice) at two years old, when I first came to the place eight years ago, and we have been growing together here ever since, the green and the grey, on what may be called the best possible understanding; for you see we are founded on a rock, like the good man's house in the parable which the storm blast assails in va in Sometimes, though, it comes down upon us, and uses

the poor green-horns shamefully ; but as for me, you may take it for gospel truth, those are the only moments that bring anything like peace to this queer breast, for you see it is too much astir itself, and the winds as they howl seem factious on my side, and to be lifting up their voices against the tyranny and treason of the world."

As he said this, he went in, and I shortly followed to apprise him of my intention of departing. He received the intimation without comment, and proceeded to broil some steaks of deer's meat, which he presently set before me, saying, as he did so, "Eat, eat, it will give you strength to suffer or sin, to bear or practice, to grind or be ground ; whilst the ware lasts we must keep out the moth and rust, whether it be to decoy others or furnish a fair prey ourselves."

"Now," continued he, when I had finished my meal, and was issuing with him through the cabin door, "remember the ravens, and never again approach this penal rock ; may all who henceforth do so, meet with the blight I live in—find solitude their best friend, or seek in the beasts of the forest for brotherhood. You were kind to your dog, and that has secured you from my curse, but be you the last to remind me of a race I shun, and have no longer any pride in belonging to. Half-a-day's journey hence-

(you can see their smoke over yon distant mount), you will find a camp of Indians, who will guide you to the place you dwell in. Now go, and forget the effigy of your kind you have met with, or remember him only by the warning he now leaves you—if you are blessed with a bosom friend, go down on your knees and beg the Almighty's protection from a traitor."

"I will remember you," I replied, "by the kindness you have shown me, and shall pray the Almighty to reward you accordingly."

"Spoke like a courtier," uttered in the caustic tone that seemed habitual with him, were the last words that fell from this singular being, as he turned on his heel and re-entered his sylvan hermitage. What was his subsequent fate I never positively learned, though various rumours led me to believe he perished some years after in a catastrophe that wrapped hundreds beside him in destruction. His summons would then be short, but Heaven's preventing grace might have forestalled it, and prepared for a realm of rest the self-immolating spirit that had so keenly yearned for, yet so dismally despaired of it on earth.

Guided by the conspicuous landmark he had pointed out, I had the good fortune to reach the native camp in safety. It consisted of three families of Milicite

Indians; one of whom, for a small douceur, willingly consented to guide me onward to my destination, which, strange as it may seem after the above prolix detail of my wanderings, a single day's journey more in the *right* direction enabled me to arrive at.

My unexpected advent naturally gave rise to much friendly felicitation on the part of Butterworth, and a vast number of interrogatories on that of Jannock, whom nothing would content but a most minute and circumstantial description of my entire course from which, after his own fashion, he then laid down its true bearings, so far, that is to say, as they concerned his calling.

As its hardships, however, were too recent to render it the most agreeable theme to myself, or likely to verify for some time to come the poets pledge "*Hæc olim memivisse juvabit,*" I shook him off as early as I could, and midst the comparative comforts of our genial cote endeavoured to efface them from my recollection. After the savage scenery I had been conversant with for the last fortnight, what an air of refinement seemed to ensphere its little area—how superior, methought, were the shrines of civilization to the unbolted barbarism of the wilderness! Yet such is the fugacity of human impressions, but few months were suffered to elapse ere I again courted similar

perils, and wooed to the best of my power what might have been a still more crushing catastrophe.

It was now about the end of July, and the cutting and stacking of our hay-crops demanded the united exertions of our party. The weather being (as it usually is at that time) dry and favourable, the produce of our little park was soon transfigured into a stalwart hay-mow, which promised ample winter feed for the cattle we next contemplated getting. On this latter mission, Jannock was despatched a few weeks later, and returned with a good milch cow and yearling heifer. Both of the animals were suffered to ramble where they chose, picking up a living, and even preserving good condition, in the woods, and returning regularly to head quarters (allured in part thereto by a *bonne bouche* of salt, of which they are very fond) at milking time. The completion of our somewhat capacious barn then engaged all our attention, and by the end of August was effected; providing snug berths for the cattle, and secure storing places for our root and grain crops during the intense frosts of winter. In September, an acre of Indian corn and a patch of buckwheat were gathered in, and another crop of hay taken from the lawn; and in these and other prædial labours, our life passed smoothly along till the advent of the Indian summer

—a season whose charms an European imagination can scarcely realize. It seems peculiar to the American continent; and, in that portion of it which is the chief scene of our narrative, displays itself in full perfection. Along the “litorale” of the province, particularly in the bay of Fundy, fogs prevail more or less through the greater part of the year, though they seldom extend beyond a few miles from the coast. In the locality of our settlement, they were almost unknown; and here, serene at all times, the air, during the concluding weeks of summer, assumed a softness and purity which rendered even respiration a process of enjoyment. At this period, the year, as though conscious of its approaching lethargy, lavishes its sweetest incense, and diffuses its last and choicest blandishments. The atmosphere, though somewhat sharp in the morning, mellows as the day wears on, exhibiting through a tender haze the wonder-work of an American autumn with ravishing effect to the eye. Through the alternate action of frost and thaw, the forest now exchanges its heretofore unmixed verdure for an infinite variety of the most gorgeous colours—red, yellow, sap-green, purple, violet, brown, with a thousand intermediate shades, forming contrasts and combinations of such singular and startling brilliancy, that the eye roams over the scene in wrapt amaze-

ment, and the soul, as it feeds upon its marvels, sighs at its inability to preserve them, save on the magic lens of memory.

This is a season, however, which, by us at least, was to be spent in something else than mere enjoyment of its beauties. Preparations were to be made for a long and untried winter. Fuel was to be got in on a large scale. Our roots (for we had succeeded in raising a fair supply of potatoes and turnips) to be stored up in our new barn, and a multitude of exigencies to be provided for by a timely forecast within this period, which proved not one whit longer than was necessary for these purposes. Indeed, the signs of approaching winter surprized us ere we had yet turned our attention to a matter of perhaps the greatest importance of all, namely the bringing up the remainder of our stores, and purchasing additional supplies for that long and dreary season. The greater part of a fortnight (for, in a new unsettled country, the toil and tediousness of transporting luggage are inconceivable to those who are accustomed to the various facilities of an old one) was consumed in bringing up and securing our entire remaining stock of worldly gear within the walls of our log house, where it was then unpacked, and suitably distributed in its two compartments. For our subsistence,

during the winter, we had purchased several barrels of salted pork and a large supply of good wheat flour.

Our appetites, now sharpened by the cold, no longer revolted at the former article of diet, but rather found in it peculiar oblectation, holding the fattest parts in preference; these, with the produce of our crops and dairy, sufficed to banish every apprehension of famine, or serious privation, from our threshold; which conviction, as it ever and anon crossed our minds, was welcomed with a shrug of heartfelt satisfaction. These important matters concluded, we directed our attention to one scarcely less so,—viz., the better roofing of our habitation. Its present covering was mere birch bark, a material that would seem inadequate to withstand the rigours of a winter in these regions, and we wished to substitute a more durable one of shingles, the usual material in new settlements. We were, however, too late—the snow being already a foot deep on the roof; and so hard frozen, that had we attempted to clear it off, we should probably have brought away our cortical canopy with it. In vain we reconnoitered it without, and eyed it from within—there was no remedy—the season had clearly stolen a march upon us, and hoping for the best, we submitted ourselves to its tender mercies with as good a grace as we could. The tenor of

our life now underwent an entire change. The earth no longer presented its landscapes of varied verdure to the eye—foraged by the vagrant deer and enlivened by the voice of the singing bird. Successive storms had ravaged every glade and locked up the forest from its choristers. The eye, repulsed by the continuous shroud with which the face of nature was overlaid, sought solace in the humblest objects that stood out from it, even to the blackened pine stumps of our clearing; and in the absence of every soundbesides, the ear turned willingly to the murmurs of the neighbouring rill, as it hurried through its icy tunnel to the lake. The latter lovely sheet had shared the fate of all around, and was only distinguishable from the rest of nature by its even and unwrinkled mask of snow. No longer were the legends of the surrounding woods writ in ethereal text upon its face—no more might the luminaries of day and night signal the hours upon its dial plate. Its form and functions were alike cancelled, and to our eyes, unpractised in the “magic” of the American climate, there was something startling in the suddenness and completeness of its transmutation. The neighbouring mountain, though partly benetted in its toils, seemed still to struggle against the white witchcraft of the season. Here and there, on its steep sides, might be seen

cavities and streaks, yet uninvaded by the snow ; and the eye sought with avidity those natural earth tints which seemed the sole relics, and to breathe the sad farewells of summer. During the earlier part of December, the snow storms came thick and frequent, "galling each other's kibes"—a cruel wind from the steppes of Labrador scattered its Arctic freight over the land, driving man to his dwelling place, and setting even the bears in search of shelter. To stir abroad during this weather was to court danger of the most imminent kind ; for as, during the prevalence of the storm, every object, at even a few paces distance, is completely veiled from sight, the inexperienced settler who should be so rash as to venture forth, might wander bewildered over ground at other times perfectly familiar to him ; and, unless specially befriended by Providence, find both his death and winding sheet within hail of his own threshold. For those, however, who, like ourselves, could look out upon the face of Nature from intrenchments stored with every comfort, the elemental warfare without possessed no terrors, and brought little inconvenience—arriving by fits it was seldom of longer than one or two day's duration—and the relish lent by it to our indoor's enjoyments made ample amends for the slight privations it involved. During the day, we employed

ourselves in constructing furniture for the use and adornment of our dwelling, and when its brief reign was over, the blazing hearth assembled us round its precincts, where we beguiled the hours till bed time in listening to Butterworth's recitations from Shakespeare, or the simple but pithy conversation of our hunter, of whose character and history the reader may not be averse to have a brief outline.

The son of a Lancashire skipper, by a Dutch girl, from the lower portion of the province, Bryce Jan-nock, in his own proper person, shared largely the national attributes as well as individual character of each. Born in a cabin on the Miramichi river, where his father was employed in connexion with the lumber trade, Nature, from the first, had stamped him for a hunter. Being intended by his father for the sea, the natural and parental authorities were thus often brought into collision; and our hero, by consequence, into trouble. During the comparatively independent period of childhood, his delight was to wander the livelong day amidst the green wood, launching his juvenile shafts at its wild denizens, and incurring dangers which frequently subjected him to maternal remonstrance and castigation. Often, in flurry and fearfulness of soul, would his anxious parent quest him for hours among the big timber, and dis-

cover him at length, surrounded by a troop of lumbermen, practising his untaught archery against a blazed pine trunk ; when, terror giving place to wrath, the young delinquent would be footed home amidst a concert of Dutch invective, accompanied by the instrumental music of his own bow-string, applied '*con amore*' to his rear. Every attempt, however, to break him of his favorite pursuit proved ineffectual. Still would the little fellow ramble into the forest, and still new bows and arrows spring up from the ashes of their predecessors, whilst, as he grew older, his increased activity set him beyond the fear of any adverse application of his own weapons. It was on a certain summer's evening, in the year of grace, 1780, our hero being then about fourteen, that a family conference was held in the humble cabin of Captain Jannock, whose ship was lying in the offing ready to sail on the morrow, the object of which was to make certain arrangements preparatory to his son's entrance on a seafaring career. The young 'er himself, with whom the sea was no favorite, had some inkling of what was in the wind ; and whilst his parents were deliberating within, had, in a privy council with his own thoughts at the door posts, arrived at a determination in direct contrariety to their's. Great was their consternation in the morning, when Aurora

leaving the bed of Tithonus, peeped through the lattice of the log-cabin, and discovered to Captain and Mrs. Jannock that their son's bed was dis-furnished of its proper tenant. A hasty search was made without effect, and the worthy skipper, unable to tarry longer, put to sea in vexation of spirit, un-accompanied by his should-be conscript. Weeks passed away and still he was unheard of, though the woods were searched around and enquiries made of every party employed in them. Towards the close of the summer an epidemic malady, occasioned by the great heats of the season, carried off his mother, whom grief and anxiety had predisposed to the full virulence of the disorder. To crown the family dis-asters, old Jannock had the misfortune to be taken by an American privateer, the very voyage on which our youngster should have accompanied him, and was supposed to have fallen a victim to the yellow fever, then raging at the port to which he was taken. Our hero meantime, who, under the dread of sailor-hood, had eloped from the parental roof during the night, plunged boldly into the familiar woods, armed only with a horse-pistol (which as a bribe to compliance, had the day before been bestowed upon him), intend-ing to return as soon as his father's vessel should be fairly out at sea. "L'homme propose, et Dieu

dispose." It was young Jannock's fate, the day after his elopement, to fall in with a party of marauding Indians, who (the two countries being then at war) led him off captive into the northern states, where he was detained for upwards of a year; but at length effecting his escape, with a hardihood and intelligence remarkable in so young an individual, succeeded in reaching the beloved haunts of his childhood, only, alas! to weep over the grave of her who alone, of all the world, had endeared them to him. But a new era now dawned upon the young hunter. He was approaching man's estate; and feeling the necessity of exerting himself for his own support, in conformity with the bent and endowments of his nature, determined on offering his services to the fur companies. Being found a valuable acquisition, he remained in their employ for many years; traversing, during that time, some of the wildest portions of the American continent; and in many a scene of danger and trying emergency approving his proficiency in the career he had chosen. Of these multiplied perils and adventures we cannot now enter into the recital. For some years previous to our becoming acquainted with him, he had intermingled his former pursuits with those of the settler, having arrived at middle age and being desirous of some respite from the constant and

harrassing toils incidental to his olden calling. He was now about forty years of age, in the prime of his strength and manhood. Time had not turned a hair on his solid looking head, nor sapped the vigour of a single muscle. His form, which was below the common size, might have lost something of the agility for which he had been remarkable in his younger days, but was erect as ever, and stored with sleeping energies. These, in the ordinary concerns of life, were marked by a phlegmatic composure, and it was only when aroused by peril, or some unusual excitement, that he displayed anything of the "smartness" so commonly characteristic of his countrymen. When, however, thus awakened, he could show a very dangerous amount of that needful quality—exhibit a clear judgment, a strong will, and a courage which, in the most critical straits, fulfilled their behests unmoved. These qualities rendered him a consummate woodsman, and, joined to a native sense of justice, and goodness of intention, justified the confidence with which most, who had ever known the man, felt inclined to regard him. Still he was a medal that had its obverse side. Though on the whole, like the Shakesperean Hector, a man of exemplary patience, he was liable, even as that classic hero when he 'chid Andromache,' to occasional fits of spleen, of which

poor Butterworth was often the innocent cause as well as expiatory victim.

What was the true reason of my estimable friends so frequently coming into collision—whether it might be from the similitude of their outer man (both being short sturdy figures), or their utter dissimilitude in every other respect—I could never satisfactorily determine; having, in my observation of human nature, found results of this kind attributable to both causes.

Such was the individual who for the last six months had made one of our party, and who still, more from inclination than views of interest, continued our active and efficient ally during the stormy days of early winter; of which his simple, but not unimpressive *parole*, contributed much to dissipate the tedium. Sometimes, he would entertain us with a story of past adventure, or essay on woodcraft; at others, when he was in a more serious mood, he would speculate, though with much modesty, on subjects which in our turn we were able to clear up to him. The confines of Lake Furness being well-stocked with the lesser kind of wild animals, by his recommendation we laid a number of traps for the purpose of procuring a supply of peltry. Being frequently successful, a portion of the winter's

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HUNTER'S TALE.

TOWARDS the end of December, two days of furious snow-storms had kept us prisoners indoors, and enabled Jannock and Butterworth to dispose of a large arrear of pelts, the joint proceeds of the former's skill and our numerous traps; when, on the evening of the 30th, there appeared every indication of an approaching lull. Jannock, with his usual instinct, had predicted the change some hours before, and prepared his rifle for hunting operations, as soon as the snow should be sufficiently frozen to bear.

About nightfall, the frost became intense, penetrating into the chamber in spite of all our defences,

and obliging us to keep up an enormous fire, whose cheerful blaze illuminated the apartment, and disposed our hearts to festivity. A round table, the product of my carpentry, was brought to its due position on the hearth; a glass of comfortable toddy brewed for each; and gathering round the fire we lit our pipes, and kept up a long and lively conversation till bed-time, which, tinctured as it was with a strong backwood's aroma, and conveying a good idea of a settler's "evenings at home," may not be unamusing to a Cis-Atlantic reader. Our hunter had seated himself on the section of a pine trunk, at one of the chimney jambs, and after adjusting a hitch in his leggings, easing his neckcloth, and delivering an inaugural address to the spaniel, fixed his attention upon my fowling-piece, which he took upon his knees and proceeded to examine in his usual half musing half amused manner.

"The piece is smartly made, I'll not deny," quoth he, "and for near shots and small game ——"

Now, be it observed (*en parenthese*), I had become somewhat wearied with his frequent diatribes on my honest 'double,' and willing to put a stop to them once and for aye, I rose without saying a word, and placed in his hands the scalp of the Polar bear I had shot. "You may call that small game if you

will, Jannock; but, small or large, the piece you hold knocked over the animal that owned that head-dress; and, I think, you will not readily find one that can do more."

The hunter regarded the pelt with much attention, and at length observed, "Well, this is a newwity, sartainly, I may be said to have had some exper'ence in the woods, having hunted therein for now nigh thirty years, and seen plenty o' wild beasts, from the 'coon to the catamount, but never jid I meet with a white-powed bear afore. Why this is neither Ephraim nor Is'bel; but, Lord! what a breadth o' scalp. I warrant you found him an ugly customer, whatever name he was christened by. Now, as it seems to be an idle time with us all, suppose you give an old hunter the history o' this new cretur, and how you robbed him of his tow wig, and all about it; but first let us try Master Butternut's (such was his quaint version of my friend's surname) cocktail, and drink the health of honest hunters all the world over."

In compliance with our friend's request, I related my adventure on the ice, contained in a foregoing chapter, to which he listened with profound attention.

"Well," observed he, when I had concluded, "it must ha' been a skeary fix every way for a younker

who, I ventur' to say, had seen but little o' the world and wild beasts, being as it were quite fresh and green from the old country. Aye, it must ha' been a skeary fix. This ball was not so badly aimed, though being too big it has blundered and hit the brow-bone instead of the eye. Now old Truegroove here (laying down my gun and taking up his own) would have sent it right in, and, may be, saved another shot. But then we used the greased wad (he here opened a little trap in the butt of his rifle and took out some circular leather patches about the size of a halfpenny) which seems to me to be the rule and ordering of nature itself, for as every karnal has its shell, and every acorn its cup, so every bullet ought likewise to have its patch; the lead comes out more sweetly, and flies more surely; and I only wish this long barrel of mine had a tongue to night that it might tell you what it has done with its wee patch and pellet, in the hands of them as knowed how to use its vartues."

Whilst Jannock was running on in this fashion about his patches and pellets, my eye caught a glimpse of something glittering like glass in the recess he had taken them from, and I was curious enough to inquire what it might be. The hunter gazed for some time in mute abstraction at the object,

and at length, without answering my question, said, in a moralizing and rather mournful tone of voice, "A hunter's life, Master Philip, such as my own was onst, is a pleasant one enough in the main, though, may be, it only does whilst the sinews are spry and the blood brisk in its motion. For why?—if a man lives at all, he lives in the enjoyment of all God's gifts, fresh from his hand, and offered without stint. But then, I'm free to confess, it's this actyve blood that many a time brings him to his ind afore he rightly reckons on finding it. Here, in the settle-ments now, it seems the fashion to die in one's bed, just of stiffness, and length of years; but in the wilderness this we'pon comes from I grieve to think how often I have seen and known the lusty ranger cut off afore his sun-down—in the noon o' life, as I may say, and the height of his strength and enjoyment. Sometimes it's by starvation, and sometimes by wild beasts—by the rifts in the rock and the rapids of the streams—by the knife and by the tomahawk—but gin'rally by his own we'pon, the rifle, falls the hunter and trapper of the far west. Look here," he continued, projecting the butt of his firelock for my inspection, "and tell me what it is you see beneath that bit o' glass. I paid two dollars for getting it put in, now—let's me see—nigh twenty years agone;

and glass oughtn't to grow dim like the eyes of a human cretur."

"Perhaps a lock of your sweetheart's hair," I ventured to surmise.

"No, not sweetheart—not exactly sweetheart—but fri'nds; its the hair of an honest hunter, who once owned this very piece, and of a brave Blackfoot gal—aye, it's all that's now left of them above ground. If you 're wishful to know how it came here, and 'll listen for an hour to a tale o' truth, though one of sorrow, I'll tell you the story of them hair knots, as well as the bonny piece that holds them." After pausing for a moment to pick up some wadding he had let fall, and carefully depositing the same in the little glass panel, he grounded his implement, and commenced his story thus:—

"It's now twenty years and more since I trapped the beaver on the head waters of the Missouri, in company with a hunter of the name of Benyon—here's his letters aft the trigger guard, R. B., for Ralph Benyon, cut with his own knife, and his own hand. Now, the way we followed the game was this. As soon as the winter was over, and the snow gone, the hunters shouldered their traps and rifles, and set out in couples to try their luck on the beaver streams, till the month of July (when the creturs are

changing their fur); after which they gather together, at app'nted places, to sell their pelts and make merry over the trader's stores. At that time, as I have said, my lines was cast in the country of the Blackfeet, atween the Missouri falls and the mountains, which, in p'int o' game was all that could be wished, though not so well wooded as hereaway East. But you must know it requires a smart craftsman to carry on business in them parts—aye a bold heart and a watchful eye must he have—for both man and beast are his inimies; and the Blackfoot warrior and brown bear often make an ind of the kearless and onwary trapper. By day, he lies hid in some secret cove; and steals out at dusk to set his traps for the beaver. At night, he lights a fire to cook his victuals for the next day, or, may be, many days to come. Then, at dawn again, he visits his traps, and brings away the creturs he may have caught in them. If his stomach craves food, and he should be heedless enough to cook it by daylight, down comes the Indian scouter to the smoke; and the fire he kindles to maintain life sarves for his death warrant. If he lets off his rifle at a skipping deer, or to save himself from the clutches of Ephraim, its the same thing. Some prowling Blackfoot may catch the sound on his big ear-drum and ambush the poor trapper for his scalp and peltry.

“ It's altogether, as I have said, a dangerous line o' business, and suits none but bold and venturesome spirits—but if ever there was one in the land of Ameriky, such was Ralph Benyon. Tall and straight by natur', constant practice in hunting had made him swift as a deer and spry as a painter. I used to think his eye as good for 'the game as an Injyn's, but he had a deal o' Injyn natur' about him and some queer Injyn fancies as you will come to find by-and-by.

“ At the rifle, few could match him, except with his own weapon, which was a noted piece in those parts, and, in steady hands sartain death. Many a trial have we had with it, in our summer frolics and winterings, and though I say it myself, it required a nice eye to tell which was truest marksman of the two, for our bullets like ourselves, gin'rally went together. I druv' his'n and he mine, always onderstanding it to be with his own piece, which, as I have said, was a better one than common. Well, more than one campaign had poor Ralph and me agin the beavers, and many's the skin we got from them at the risk of our own; and I remember it was after one of our best seasons that we found ourselves at a trading post in one of the Blackfoot villages, bartering our peltry for lead and gunpowder. Now, these Blackfeet are

so comely a race o' red-skins as any to be found in Ameriky—quite another sort o' thing than poor Toby yonder—but they had lost o' late som' o' their warriors in scrimmages with our hunters, and were sorely set agin the whites at the time we came to their village. Howsomdever, they respect the traders, seeing they make their nation powerful; and under shelter of the tradin' post we rested from our toils and feared no danger. The village was situated in a bend of a middle-sized stream that flowed round it in the shape of a horse-shoe—the innermost part of the ring being a sweet sloping glade, where the warriors held their grand assemblies, the young men their games, and the Injyn gals their dances and merry-makings. You'd have thought it a pleasant sight, of a fine September evening, to watch the young things singing and frolicking among the prairie grass, as gleesome as if life had nothing but joy in store for them, instead of a sore and lasting servitude. But if it was pleasant to such as me, it was pleasanter still to Benyon, who, for want o' so'thing better to do (for it's an idle rollicking time with the mountain men, these summer months), had fallen in love with one of the copper-coloured creturs, daughter of the principal chief of the place. Now, this man happened not to be over-kindly disposed to us, having had a

near kinsman slain by a party of whites, not long afore; however, Ralph set little store by that, but courted the gal at every opportunity, putting on as many Injyn fashions as if he'd chipped the shell a red-skin. You'd have laughed to ha' seen what a smart Blackfoot he made for the occasion, twiddling speeches with his fingers, and piping o' nights at the gal's ear, as if he'd conjure her spirit through the buffalo-hide of her father's tent. Many's the time I've been tickled myself with his doin's.

"But it soon got to be no laughing matter with Benyon, as y' will shortly see, as well as Master Butternut, there, if he'll only keep his eyes open, and not be stroking down peltry he has laid on the shelf an hour ago." (This "mercuriale" was elicited by some very mysterious demonstrations our friend had been making with his expanded palm, accompanied by unequivocal signs of somnolency).

"The grim old chief kept a sharp eye on his darter, and whether it was that he suspected my chum to have been consarned in his brother's death, or from some other reason, it was plain to be seen his face was set agin the courtship. But Ralph, was not the man to be fubbed off i' that way—he determined to make one last trial to get the old fellow's consent, and, if he failed, to carry

off the gal without it. Now, there happened to be a grand shooting match in the village on some occasion—I forget what—and all the best marksmen were there to try their hands; among the rest, the clerk o' the tradin' post, and an Injyn younker of the name of Unau, both of whom were supposed to have a fancy for the chief's darter.

“The prize was a tradin' gun of no great vally, but good enough for the Injyn's, who are no great shots; and Benyon, after a stiff contest with the clerk and Unau—for they all three wanted to show off afore Peep-o'day (that was the spinster's name in English)—Benyon, I say, was the man to carry it off. I think I see him now, coming up with his prize on his arm, and asking me to go with him to the chief's tent, and intarpret his say, as he had made up his mind to bring the business to a p'int. Well, I agreed; but as I didn't know (I wonder what put the idee into Ralph's head) much more o' Blackfoot than himself, we got the trader to do that part o' the business for us. I had my misgivings, too; for there was so'thing about that trader chap that I never liked from the first; his face seemed to be a mixtur 'o' brass and guile; and a man's face is gin'rally a true witness, whether it be for or agin him; but then he was so clever spoken, and so smart in his line o'

business, that people used and trusted him agin their own judgment and inclination; Ralph and me, as well as the rest, in proof o' which, I may say, we had entered into a bargain with him for the loan of two first-rate horses he had lately got in from the prairie, and only just broken for buffalo hunting, which, in case we should have to make a runaway match of it, were to be left at the next tradin' post, and our rifles given up to the clerk as a surety; and the horses at this very time stood tethered in a snug bottom hard by, ready for instant sarvice. I had been a long time tryin' to make up my mind as to the reason and justice of this proceedin' o' Ralph's (I mean his runnin' off with the chief's darter), and hav'nt quite done it yet; but Ralph was an old comrade, and we had done each other some kind and useful turns, and that made me give in to his plans easier than I might otherwise have done; so away we went to pay the old red gen'leman a visit—trader an' all, who seemed quite willing to interpret away the young 'oman from himself, and I must say it gave me no better opinion of him, as it seemed agin the set o' natur'. The chief had just returned from the shootin' match, and treated us quite perlutely, as they al'ays do when they're not scalping you, and we sat down and had a deal of interesting conversation

about the weather and buffaloes, though the cunning old varmint knowed it was neither here nor there as well as we did; then Ralph handed him the prize gun he had won, and asked him through the linguister how he liked it, which was all the same as if he had asked how he liked himself for a son-in-law, for when a man craves an Injyn maid to wife, it's the fashion to compliment the father with a rifle or horse, or some such gift, as an Injyn prizes, and partly according to the young 'omans vally. If he takes them, it's a bargain, and she's handed over at onst to her admirator; if he refuses, the thing's at an ind, and the spark must fish for a wife elsewhere. I thought it was no good sign for Ralph, when the chief put back the piece, almost as soon as it had touched his hands, with a deal o' quiet scorn and contempt; but then it was a smooth bore, and I must say he shewed his sense and onderstanding in doing so. Ralph then looked at his rifle, and I could see it cost him a deal to choose atween that and the young 'oman, but a glance from 'Peep-o-day' over her father's shoulder, detarmined him, and this we'pon I have on my knee was put into the old warrior's hands. Wisteeti (that was his name) eyed it carefully over, as if he found honest 'Truegroove' a very different bit o' metal indeed from the other.

He tried the lock, squinted along the barrel, gauged it with the ramrod, and seemed for the time to have forgotten all about his darter in admiration of the piece. At length he opened this trap, where, as ill luck would have it, Ralph had stowed away a bit o' leather he had better have left out—to say the truth, it was a copper-skin scalp—how got, I never knew—and not so old but it might have belonged to the old chap's missing relation; and I could see, by the sour face he pulled, that the chief's mind took all this in at a glance. So far, not a word had been spoken about her brown ladyship; but Ralph began to grow impatient at the little speed he made in the matter. 'Come to the gal!' he cried to the interpreter, 'Come to the gal at onst! Tell him I considers her a topper, a deal too good for you or that soft-knuckled fool Unau; throw in some powder to the rifles, man—powder and lead both—and if that wont do, add one o' your horses—I don't care if its the better of the two, and I'll pay the vally out o' next year's catch, and tell him,' quo' Ralph, giving way to his masterfu' feelings, 'he had better take my offer now, whilst I'm in the humour of making it, or, by Solomon's breeches, he may lose horse and darter both, and ride an ass with two legs for the rest of his arthly journey.' Well, Kidson the clerk,

rendered it all I 'spose into Blackfoot, though it would come none the sweeter from his mouth neither, but it seemed the old man's mind was made up. He rose from his seat, and handed the rifle back to the intarpreter; then looking over a string o' scalps that hung from his waist, he picked out one with light hair, which he showed the trader with some fierce twatter and face-making, just as if he had said 'you whites and me have been playing at scalps together, and it's quite likely we may do so again. Now, it's clean agin Blackfoot rules to hobnob with them we tomahawk, so you may give Buckeye (that was Ralph's name among the red-skins) his rifle again, and I'll keep my darter for somebody else. There was no more to be said on the subject arter this, so Ralph took his rifle, and we bid the chief good bye.

"Now the plan we had laid for the 'lopiement was this. Benyon had given his sweetie a Jew's-harp, and taught her how to play thereon; and it had been agreed atween them that he should loiter a'rter dark about her lodge in the dress of an Injyn, until he heard her sound the instrument, which was to be as soon as the party (whum it was his next business to invite) had got pretty well corned with the trader's liquors, when the wench was to steal out, and the transaction ended with a bit o' horse-flesh. Well,

Ralph now went round to the chief characters, that is, the most restless vagabonds of the tribe, and gave them a friendly invitation to old Wisteeti's tent, hoping they would excuse a short asking, and sent in the trader among them with plenty o' strong liquors and tobacco. The time soon arrived, and everything happened just as we wished. Away went Ralph to listen for the Jew's-harp, and away went I with a mouthful of corn for the horses. It was a sharp frosty night, I remember, in October, and there was a young moon upon the rise, which for two mortal hours I watched dancing and sparkling on the dark prairie stream, at my toes end as it were; and I was just thinkin' how the life o' man might be likened to that fleetin' water, and his j'ys and his glories to the moonshine upon it, when one o' the beasts I was holding gave a low neigh, and two figures came in sight, who I soon found to be Ralph and his Blackfoot quean. In less than a minute they were mounted on the best o' the two horses, Ralph in front and 'Peep-o'-day' on the crupper, with a bag o' corn round her little waist. I then got upon the other animal and led them quietly into the bed of the river, which we followed for nearly a mile, then up a side stream till we had made a kind of elbow with the p'int we sot out from—this was needful to

cover our place of starting. We then took the plain again, walking quietly along till we got better than another mile away from the Blackfoot lodges, from which we could still hear occasionally, through the clear night air, the whoop of some drunken Injyn, or the yelp of his half-starved dog. We laughed in our sleeves, I guess, when we found the fire-water doing its work; and as the wind, what little there was, blew at our back, we now gave our beasts the rein and went away like the wind over the plain, making for the next tradin' post on the side o' the mountains. The night was just light enough to see our ground, which was little more than a dry wormwood waste, nearly as flat as a race-course, and it would have done your heart good to see Ralph's half-wild steed dash over it for hours with its double burden, just as if it was racing with its own shadow out o' mere sport and watonness. My own beast was the first to give out, somewhere about mid-night, which forced us to halt in a bit of a break, where we hobbled and fed our cattle, and lay by till near day-break, when we mounted again and rode at middling speed for a spell of some hours more, our horses sweating desperately as the sun got up. Shortly afore noon, as the country was getting rough and broken, and there was still a wide plain to cross, we thought it

prudent to alight once more, and rest over the heat of the day. The spot we chose for the purpose (ah! well I mind it) was a knoll at the end of a ridge o' rough hilly ground, which a middle-sized stream struck at the p'int, where we halted, and then skirted along its intyre length. Nearly opposite to us, a ragged rock divided it into two parts, a lesser and a larger, one being a kind o' leap, while the other was but a rapid; and some threescore yards lower down there was a reg'lar fall of some fifteen feet, with splints o' rock and a bit of a whirlpool at the bottom, not quite so big as Niagairy, but so'thin' arter the same fashion. Wall (continued the hunter, drawing a deep breath), at this knoll we got down with a right hearty good will, being considerably sowed up, both beasts and humans. Little 'Peep-o'-day' got out her parched corn, poor Benny unbridled the cattle, and I threw myself on my back and whiffed some negro-head into the blue sky (which is the only cloud that ever crosses it in these parts); but thinking the lovers might have a word to say to each other, after a pipe or two, I went off to the rocks for a bathe. The day had become cruelly hot, with a sun over-head that baked you like a fire-brick. I often think them western wastes must be like the deserts of Araiby, the missioners are so sprog o'

preachin' about, where David and the Philistynes"—

"I apprehend you mean Moses and the children of Israel," interposed I.

"Moses and Joshua! Moses and Joshua!" ejaculated Butterworth, rousing eruptively from his slumbers. "I humbly submit it was Moses who led the Israelites into, and Joshua who led them out of, the desert."

"Moses or Jonathan, its all one," resumed the narrator, rather peremptorily. "As I was a sayin, I had taken my breeches off for a bathe, being quite overlathered with t'il and the heat of the day, and was stoopin' to drink at a spurt o' water that rushed through a split in the rocks, when—whoop!—an Injyn yell rose from the bushes of the little knoll, followed by the cracks o' four or five rifles, and I turned round just in time to see poor Ralph leap into the air, and fall down dead by the water side. You may believe I was considerably taken aback by all this (being but a younker then), and could scarcely bring my senses to believe what they seen and heern, so quiet and peaceful was all a moment before; but I wasn't left long in onsartainty, for whizz came a bullet agin my shoulder blade, just scarring it; and whiz—zle came another, not a hair's-breadth from my ears. Our rifles, as I have said (and here was the devilry of the case), had been left behind as a pledge for the horses,

and I stood almost naked in full view of the inimy; and now, thinks I, my own time's come at last, but they shall have a hunt, too, afore they get my pelt. There was but one step to take, and that was into the water, so, at the second shot, in I tumbled, just as a corpse might, but instead c' floating down the creek I sent my cap on that arrand, and swam round myself to the backside o' the rock, where I hid among some splints and bushes, and watched how matters went on. below. As soon as the Injyns caught a sight o' my cap, they gave another of their infernal yells, and let fly at it with their rifles. Some waded into the stream, as if to seize it bodily, but the current was too strong; and presently the poor fox skin floated over the falls, whither (I could see from their crowdin' about) they thought Bryce Jannock had gone along with it. This was just what I wanted, but I was far from being safe yet, for some of the craftier warriors waded in to examine the rock where I was hiding, and forced me to edge away as they came on, till I was fairly druv' under the water leap, where, the Lord be thanked, there was just room to squat myself, and there I waited my fate with my knife in my hand, determined to make the first that found me pay dear for his prize. However, after making free with my hunting shirt, away

they went to their vagabond comrades, and I felt so'thin' easier in my skin. It might ha' been an hour and a half afore I ventur'd to look out from my cold berth, and then it was with the kearfulness of one on whum exper'ence had not been lost. Everything at first seemed quite silent and deserted, but as I was going to make for shore, who should I see, come trailin' down to the water's edge, but the trader's clerk—just that villain Kidson, and no other—for villain he was, having both laid and hatched this whole bit o' villainy from beginning to ind. My blood b'iled as I watched him stand by the side of the man he had murdered out o' malice and invy; but when I seen him handle the piece that had beaten him the day before, and which poor Ralph and me had fired in fri'ndship so many odd times together, I could stand it no longer; so letting myself smoothly into the water, I swam down till I got behind a p'int, when I landed and crept quietly up to the spot where the wicked villain was standing. I had him down in a twinklin', and if he had struggled should have given him his desarts at onst, but what with the surprise, and what with an evil conscience under his frock, he was as quiet as a lamb, and let me tether him like a bale o' pelts. 'Now,' says I, with my knife at his throat, 'answer me

truly, aye, and quietly, to what I'm going to ask you, or ——.' I seen he onderstood, the 'or,' so says I, 'which of you shot Ralph Benyon.'"

"'Unau,' says he.

"'How many murderin' villains was there besides him and you?'

"'Five Blackfoot warriors and the chief.'

"'Where are they all gone to?'

"'Back to the campment, I reckon.'

"'Where have you left your horse?'

"'Over the top of the knoll yonder.'

"'Well, and what do you desERVE now for your own share o' the reckoning?'

"He seemed pretty puzzled to say; and I was puzzled too, for though I had little doubt it was his hand that brought death to my fri'nd, I could'nt kill him in cold blood; so after buryin' poor Ralph in the sands, I just gave him a shove with my foot which sent him rolling down on to his grave; and there I let him lie, cheek by jowl with the dead; and I thought it as fit a punishment as any I could hit on. So taking the reptyles blanket, and my fri'nd's rifle, I went in sarch of the animal that was to take me from this bloody spot. I had'nt gone many paces when I seen a horse's head browsin' in a clump o' scrub, but on getting nearer there was another head by it that I

did'n't like quite so well—no other than that of Wis-teeti himself. Well, I felt strongly given to go back and tomahawk that rascal Kidson; but it was too late—the chief had seen me—so I advanced upon him with my rifle cocked. The old warrior, however, seemed to give himself very little concern either about me or my rifle, and as I drew near I seen at onst how matters stood with him. There, at his feet, lay poor little “Peep-o'-day” breathin' her last, with a bullet hole through her body!

“Some of the blunderin' villains had done the business for her, quite likely with a smooth bore, which you'll observe, Master Philip, as good as killed two more than was wanted or needful; for the poor old chief seemed to show as little for this world as his darter; and though he was an Injyn, and a warrior, and all that—as I watched him grievin' over his child as she lay on her back before him, I thought it would ha' been a marcy if they had knocked him on the head as well. I felt quite in a takin' myself at the sight, and stood and mourned by his side over poor “Peep-o'-day” as she lay a corpse, instead of a bride, on the lonely knoll of the prairie.

“And that's the ind of their story—which gives me a sore heart whenever I think of it. This is the gal's hair, nigh the catch, and this Ralph's; and I often

take out my wads to look at them, and solemnise on the onsartainty o' life in the wilderness."

The night had got pretty far advanced, as the hunter finished his tale; and the party were on the point of retiring to rest, when Gypsy began scenting at the shanty door in obvious uneasiness, which gradually ripened into a distinct growl.

Jannock held up his finger, and, taking his piece, issued stealthily into the garden plot, from which he shortly afterwards returned; observing, as he laid his weapon aside, "It's as I thought—this keen weather has tickled Bruin from his hole, and he has come down for a few yarbs to keep the life in him. We'll let him sup his fill to-night, and be ready to give him a warm breakfast in the morning. Old Ralph has some exper'ence in that line; and a brace o' young hams 'll be repaying your yarbs with interest." So saying, he stretched himself on his bearskin with a hunter's promptitude, and using his knapsack for a pillow, soon gave token of having courted the drowsy God with success. Butterworth was already lost in oblivion; and, after spending a few minutes in completing my preparations for the morrow, I sought my cot in the hope of enjoying the nightly restorative of nature. It was long, however, ere I attained my wish, and when I slept my slum-

bers were unrefreshing ; broken by nervous twitches, and troubled with oppressive dreams. The form of the Indian maiden seemed to flit before my sight, surmounted with the truculent visage of Wisteeti. Then Jannock's rifle and my own double-barrel presented themselves in envious contrast to my view. At length, and with the most extraordinary distinctness, the figure of the emigrant's wife seemed to stand before me—the stamp of gentle birth, and the graces of an exquisite form, betraying themselves through the homely habiliments that enfolded it. The features, pale and attenuated as in life, were still instinct with that mingled dignity and sweetness I had before found so remarkable ; and her eyes were turned upon me with the same ineffable expression I had witnessed on the eve of her decease. Still, as I gazed, those melancholy orbs met mine, as though with their mute appeal they would fain convey a meaning the condition of her present state forbade her expressing otherwise. With the most absorbing interest, I thought I lay gazing at that gentle and expressive face—index, I deemed, of no ordinary excellence—and vainly endeavouring to comprehend the import of its earnest but inarticulated pleading ; at length, sudden interpretation seemed to rush upon my mind. “Remember my child,” said those eyes, with

their silent regards. "Stranger, forget not my child, bear her to her fatherland, and receive a mother's blessing." "Aye, lady, it shall be done, so may my Maker stead me;" and folding its hands upon its bosom, as though to implore a ratification of the pledge, the figure melted away from my sight.

CHAPTER IX.

THE cold white light of a winter's morning at length streamed through the rude lattice of our log cabin, and summoned me from my broken slumbers. Jan-nock entered with a hunter's "*brusquerie*," and coaxing an extempore blaze from the nearly extinct embers, prepared a hasty breakfast, which was sparingly partaken of by each; after which, though by no means disposed for a lesson "*de re venatoria*," I shouldered my gun and followed the woodsman to the door. There a vast snow-drift threatened to bar all egress; on surmounting which, an atmosphere unusually keen almost beat us back into our snug lair again.

"The wind's laid," said the hunter, "for the present, but I've a notion we shall find the air pretty peckish when we get on to the hill-side. Bruin has finished his dealins with your parsnips, and seems minded to make a run for his hams. Now, as a bear hunt often lasts for days, you'll do well to take an old hunter's advice, and strap a blanket to your shoulders."

The night's frost had sufficiently hardened the snow to bear, and on issuing from the clump of pines that encircled our tenement and garden plot, a scene of exquisite winter imagery met our view, and brought us to a temporary halt. Everywhere around, in its fresh virginity, lay the new fallen snow; mantling alike hill and valley, rock, ravine, mountain and forest, in its white and wondrous livery. The pines and other evergreens around, as well as all the subject vegetation down to the minutest tuft, stood sheathed in coats of infinitely varied guise, which the frost had fringed with the most delicate embroidery; and the morning sun, now shooting down the dell, bespangled broad-cast with its jewellery. The enchanting scene drew notes of admiration from both of us; and with the subtle air of the morning dispelled the langour remaining from the past night, and inspired something of the alertness necessary for the

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occasion. A few minutes' brisk walking brought us to the verge of the forest, our spaniel following up the track with its usual cleverness. When upon the point of entering, Jannock directed my attention to an object midway up one of the outermost pines, somewhat larger than an English partridge, which had been roused by our approach and seemed preparing to take flight.

"There's a fine mark," quoth he, "for your small shot, but (placing his hand on my gun, which I was elevating at the object) it'll be as well to let it alone too, for our game may not be very far ahead, and a shot out of season may lengthen out the chase for hours. See! the cretur's off, now," continued he, as we entered the gloomy forest (for the snow, which imparted increased luminosity to the clearings, only deepened the perpetual gloom of the pine woods), "the less we speechify the better; keep an eye upon the dog, and dont be over 'arnest in outstripping the b'ar; its reason as wins the day agin the beasts, and makes two legs better than four."

After a short passage through the wood, we struck once more the wild-brook course that conducted the supplies of our lake, and had some difficulty in surmounting the obstacles on its rugged borders; now and then, partly from want of breath, and partly from

admiration, we halted and surveyed the natural marvels of our road. These were multiplied as we approached the summit of the gorge, and presented the most grotesque and varied figures. Here, masses of rock, embossed to double their height with snow, threatened an abrupt estoppel to our progress, till arriving at their base, the ice-covered stream that skirted it afforded the wished-for passage. As we pursued its deep and frozen bed, the willow and alder stretched their wizard wands over our heads; the birch, bedraped in snow, drooped gracefully from the neighbouring bank; and the roots of prostrate pines wandered wildly into the pure ether, as though bewailing their exhumation by the storm-blast. On reaching the top of the ascent, little Gypsy was for a moment thrown out by the deviations and doublings of our quarry; but getting again on to the direct track, we followed up the chase, without intermission, till noon; when, at the base of some rising ground, we suddenly came upon a spot where the action of our spaniel shewed the scent was fresher than common. I had, however, by this, become so jaded, with our forced and slippery march, that I was here fain to make a short halt, and suggest to my companion the needfulness of recruiting nature from the contents of our wallet.

"It's been a roughish bit o' ground, for sartain," he replied, "and I dont wonder at it's having taken the wind out of your bellows. The poor bitch, too, I see, is bleeding about her feet, and whining as much from pain as eagerness; but we are drawing our day's work to an ind, I somethink (our honest friend, in his sojourn with brother Jonathan, had picked up a few of his idioms), if we had only the Englisher's hound now to give us a lead——"

His speech was broken short by the report of a gun, that seemed to come from the other side of the little hill we were resting on, and apparently quite near—the spaniel started and barked—my weariness vanished on the instant. "The bear! the bear!" I cried, as I sprang towards the top of the eminence, getting two or three falls in my progress.

"The b'ar! the b'ar!" cried Jannock, ascending more deliberately, but gaining on me at each mishap till we scaled the height nearly abreast, and gazed at the same moment on a scene of the most tragic character.

Below us, at the bottom of a gloomy dell, bordered at each side by pines, but partially clear between, was seen a human form upon the snow, and over it one of the largest sized black bears of the province, tearing and mutilating the prostrate figure with every manifestation of ferocity and rage.

The instant Jannock caught a sight of the state of things, his rifle was raised like lightning, but as quickly lowered again. "It's an onnatural distance," he exclaimed, "for the lead to go with any sartainty, but," added he, after a pause "the man will be finished afore we can get up, so I must e'en pull upon the chances, and leave the rest to the Lord. With this, he again brought up the piece to a 'present,' and almost simultaneously with its discharge, I perceived the bear recoil from its prey, and face towards the position we occupied. Whilst the hunter was recharging his weapon, I rushed down the declivity to the scene of action. This was not far from two hundred paces distant, but favoured by the ground and stimulated by excitement, I found myself, in less than a minute, within my own gun's length of the savage whose wrath we had just provoked by so mortal a challenge. The intervention of the timber had prevented me from getting a fair view of it, until, in fact, I had almost run into its very jaws, and of these it now threatened to let me taste the quality. Ere I could get my gun well up to my shoulder, it was cast from my hands, and myself and my shaggy foe lay rolling on the snow in an embrace far more close than it was fraternal.

From the weight and position of the animal, I was

unable to get at my hunting knife; and I doubt not that a few moments more would have enabled it to balance accounts against me as effectually as had been already done with its former victim, had not a shot that seldom erred sent it spinning by my side with a shock that seemed to paralyse its entire carcase.

“Done in good time,” quoth I, as I shook the snow-dust from my clothes, and then ran to the assistance of the wounded stranger. Attired in a grey hunting suit, he lay upon his frozen couch, apparently bereft of life. One arm was bent backward beneath him, as though dislocated; his shooting coat rent in many places; and from the left ear, almost to the shoulder, both clothes and flesh had been torn away by the teeth of the infuriated animal, and now lay partially pendulous upon his breast, exhibiting a frightful wound, from which the blood, welling continually forth, had deluged the greater portion of his features, and settled in a half-frozen pool on the pure snows beneath. His gun lay at some yards distance; and two or three papers, that seemed to have been scattered in the struggle, I picked up from the ground and thrust mechanically into my pocket. With my comrade’s assistance I raised his head and succeeded in administering a portion of the contents of my

spirit flask; whilst engaged in which office, Jannock, whose eye no emotion could disarm of its vigilance, announced an approaching change in the weather. Masses of clay coloured clouds began to gather over our heads, portending snow—the wind swept harshly through the sombre pines about us, and a premature darkness began already to abridge the brief daylight of the season. Pointing to these threatening signs, which, even from my brief acquaintance of the American climate, convinced me we had no time to lose, the woodsman assisted me to lift the body of the wounded man, and bear it towards the head of the dingle, where he signified we should find a place of refuge from the impending storm. The flakes began to fall whilst we were yet in motion towards it, obscuring every object at even a few yards distance; and had it not been for the practised sagacity of our guide, that spot, so necessary for the safety of the party, had never been reached by them.

Reach it, however, we at length did, and found ourselves under the shelter of a grove of pines, one of which, having fallen over two limestone rocks, in the form of a roof tree, furnished the elements of a rude arbour, open in front, as also partially overhead. The neighbouring hill, however, protected it from the direct violence of the wind; and the scattered pines

that stood around intercepted much of the falling snow. Spreading a blanket beneath this, we laid upon it our helpless charge, whose numerous injuries I then proceeded to examine and assuage in the best manner I was able. The hunter, on his part, (who was now wholly in his element), lit a rousing fire in front; and, piling all the pine boughs, within reach, upon the top of our harbouring place, in a short time rendered it completely weather proof. He then repaired once more to the scene of our morning's encounter; and, after the lapse of some half hour, spent by me in much anxiety for his safety, returned heavily laden with the hams of our slaughtered quarry.

"We're going to have an ugly night of it," he said, as he shook the snow from his person, "or may be two or three, for I have known snow-storms last as long. See how pitchy dark it's getting already, but little past noon; and hark! how the wind ravens among those rocks, like a band o' hungry catamounts. You'll do well, master Philip, to keep under cover of the shanty; for I should not wonder if it was to lay one of these sticks across our fire when we least expect it, in which case you would stand a chance of being killed and roasted by the side of your own supper." Braving himself, however, the danger

against which he had warned me, he proceeded to fill his camp kettle with snow, and place it at the edge of the fire, whither he shortly afterwards deposited some choice slices of the meat he had just introduced, using, for the purpose, a few of the outlying embers. So soon as the repast was ready, he gave a careful look at the prostrate stranger, and observing his evident inability to partake of our strengthening fare, made me a motion to join him, which, as soon as I had finished my surgical operations, I did.

“Ah!” he observed, pointing to the sufferer, “he’s past eating, poor fellow, for many a day, and well it ’ll be, if we can get a drop o’ broth into him to keep the life alow. I’ve got some strong coffee here, which ’ll help to brisken his feelin’s by and by, but as for b’arsmeat, I reckon his stomach’s clean gone for any cravin it ’ll ever have that way again.”

“Yes,” I returned; “and I had very nearly received my own allowance of it too—but for you and Traegroove, I should probably have been at another feast by this, with the Bear for the guest, and myself for the dinner; and you may rely upon my lasting remembrance of the opportune aid you afforded us, for both the stranger and myself are your debtors on this score.”

“ ’Tis little, squire, ’tis little, ’tis no great thing to spill the black Canady b’ar, though, now and then, when they get oversized or hungry, a man must keep his eyes skinned when he pulls on the cretur’ : if you was to see now a real Ephraim, such as Ralph and me on’st—”

We were interrupted by a heavy groan from the stranger, who had by this slightly revived, and, in endeavouring to raise himself up, had strained his injured arm. This I proceeded to secure as well as I could, with thin splints of pine, and wrappings of bark, after which, with some warm water from the kettle, I sopped away the clotted blood from his features and restored to them something of their natural expression. They were deeply pockmarked, and by no means of a prepossessing order, but bore about them still that indefinable something that betokened the man of quality. Setting his feverish frame in as easy a posture as we could upon a bed of pine branches, I administered a small portion of our coffee, which I was happy to see still farther aided in recruiting his nearly exhausted strength. On rejoining Jannock, who had lighted his pipe, I took the glowing ember he tendered me, and followed his example. For a length of time we sat in silence, solacing ourselves with the fragrant weed, and listening to the solemn voice of the tempest as it rose in its might and

dominated over every other sound. The pines groaned fearfully above our heads, keeping us in constant apprehension of a downfall, and the falling snow became piled before our shelter in a quickly accumulating mound.

Ever and anon, we stole a look at our patient, and beheld his eyes fixed upon us with a glassy stare that betokened complete unconsciousness of all that passed before him. At length the hunter laid aside his pipe, and reaching the stranger's gun from a corner of the shanty, examined it with some degree of curiosity.

"It's another o' these smooth bores" he said, thrusting his finger down the muzzle, "and I reckon has been built in the old country. Aye, here's the maker's name in gold letters, and a fine fellow he thought his self, I daur to say, as he turned out the flimsy thing from his smithy. It's master's an Englisher too, I take it, or he would never ha' gone b'ar-hunting with small shot, unless he wanted to get such treatment as would sicken him altogether with the pastime for the futur'."

"Perhaps" I suggested, "it might have been charged with ball."

"No; no, the bore's too big for any ball that ever I set eyes on—besides, I found one of the karnals in yon rasher we've been catin', and I've got another

atween my teeth at this moment, or I'm much mistaken." Here he introduced his gun-pick into his mouth, and shortly presented in the palm of his hand one of the obnoxious pellets that had excited the train and evidenced the truth of his conjectures.

"These pop-guns," he added, consigning the despised implement to me, "was never meant for the wilderness, and he, who carries them, is far more likely to meet his own end, than tame the creturs the Lord has seen fit to set there. Now, from his fine-flourished piece, yon may be a lord's son, used to go a birdin' in his father's clearns, where I've hee'rn the partridges are as plenty as blackberries. Look at that hand—white as yonder snow—any greenhorn might tell it was never bred in these backwoods. No, no," he concluded, with a decisive shake of the head, "from the old country he has come, and it must have been some uncommon scent that has brought him arrantin' hereaways."

In desultory discourse like this, the darksome day wore on, till the towering storm and pitchy shades of night laid strict siege to our lonely citadel, keeping the little garrison at unremitting watch and ward over the life-sustaining blaze without, and their suffering charge within. By degrees our eyes began to gloze drowsily at the snapping brands—the efforts we

made to prolong our vigils became less frequent and effectual, till at length the despot sleep, led on by excitement and fatigue, forced her way into the works, and compelled us to an unconditional surrender to her power. After some hours of that sweet entrancement that robs us for a time of animation to renew its succeeding energies, I was awakened by the movements of my companion, who was engaged in resuscitating our nearly extinct fire. The gale had passed its height, and symptoms of a lull were discernible in the warring elements. At times, the pale disk of the moon revealed itself through the driving vapour as, huddled into shapeless masses, it retreated to its native north.

“The wind has changed,” quoth Jannock, as he threw the last armful of brush upon the sluggish embers; and the snow’s over, and it’s possible we may have an hour or two’s spell o’ clear weather—but I’m not overtrustful of its smooth looks; and it’s quite as likely as not, it may be down upon us again with a fresh hand at the bellows; now a journey home again through this soft snow I consider an impossible performance without snow-shoes, and an unpleasant one with, even if we could leave our sick fri’nd there, which is what neither on us, I take it, has a mind to do. Let’s me see—Mike Leary’s cannot

be much more than three miles from this, and as the road lies through the woods, we shall find the ground pretty clear of this last fall, or——hark! I thought I heard the howling of a wolf—I might make a push for your friend's clearin', which may be a trifle farther, and bring back Injya Toby with a hand-sleigh—it's now nigh six months syne he lost his wife, and—listen!—there it is again, I know it now, there's not another dog in the province has a throat like that—it's the Englisher's buckhound (a deep but distant baying was now clearly audible to windward). Ah! that's a brave beast, and might give a cravin to many an honest hunter. What say ye, Master Philip, is it sounding out a welcome to three benighted wayfarers, or sorrowing over the grave of its lost mistress, as it did when we laid her in the 'arth at Midsummer?" It was, in sooth, a wild and plaintive note, that might well have suggested the hunter's allusion, and strangely harmonised with the melo-dramatic hour and scene.

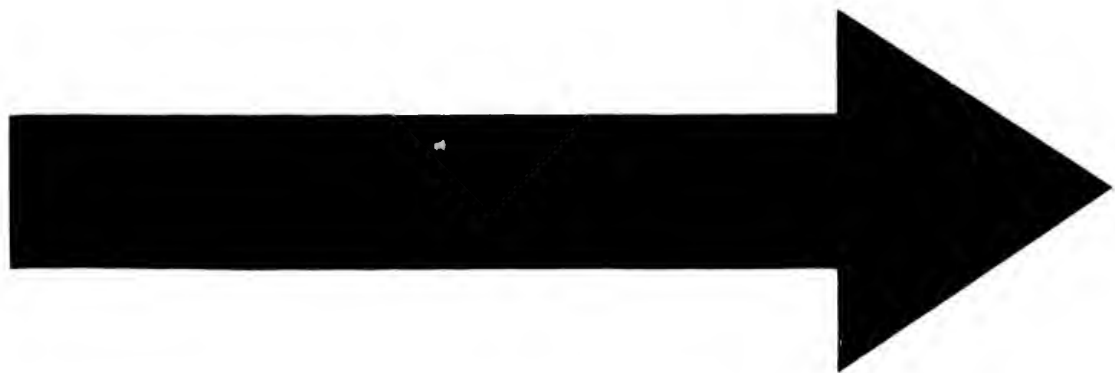
As the heavens became cleared of their clouded garniture, the moon shone down upon our little dell with the intense brilliancy of the climate; and I perceived, with concern, that as its rays fell upon the invalid, the lethargic slumber he had fallen into became disturbed, and the fever that oppressed his

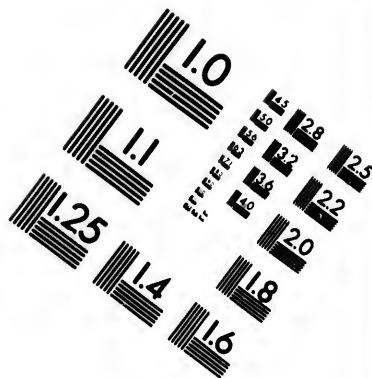
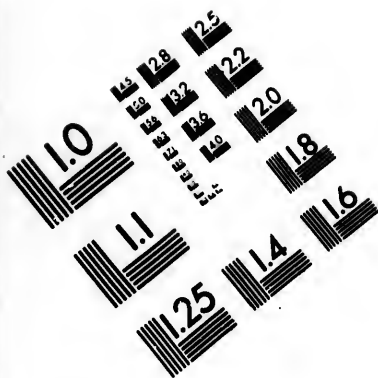
frame augmented almost to the verge of delirium ; he raised himself into a half-sitting position, and casting a restless glance down the sun-dappled vale, towards the quarter where the breeze was still repeating its distant challenges, exclaimed, in a wild unnatural tone, "Blayfield ! old Norman's loose—there are poachers in the park—have 'em up—have 'em up—though it should be the villain Etheredge (I thought the name sounded like) himself ! We'll cure him of deer-stalking—but his deer's dead—ha ! ha !"—and a wild laugh broke from him, provoking a thrill of agony from his fresh and imperfectly bandaged wound. "Blayfield ! the villain's shot me—I have him though—on the hip—on the hip—aye, aye—snug's the word."

Jannock laid his hand on my arm and said, in a subdued whisper—"The poor gentleman's gone demented—this skeary business has touched his wits, and he thinks hisself in the happy hunting grounds—did ye hear what he said about the deer ? Now, if he had only began with a grooved barrel, and backwoods eddycation, I make no doubt ——"

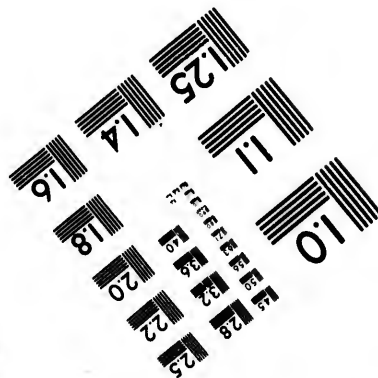
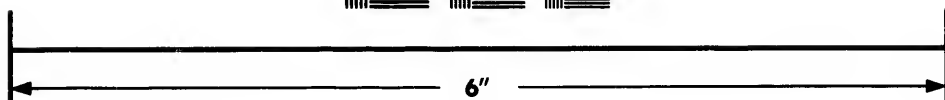
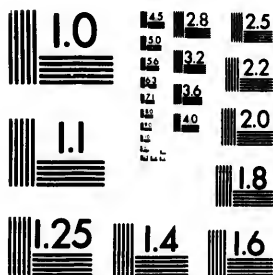
"That his reason's wandering is very certain ; and unless we can speedily procure medical aid, the most serious consequences may be expected."

As Jannock seemed to concur in my opinion, it was agreed that, as soon as the morning should





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become more advanced, he should set off for the neighbouring tavern, and return with whatever assistance he could procure for the benefit of our helpless patient. Accordingly, after a brief interval, he set out. As the moon declined towards the west, and the increased coldness of the air announced the approach of day, I was happy to find that my companion became somewhat more composed, and advanced at times towards a state of healthy consciousness. Whilst I sat watching the simmering utensil that contained the promise of some nutritious broth, he murmured, in a low and altered voice—

“Where are we?—had we not better go in—the weather’s cold.” Then, after a pause—“Was not Blayfield here?—I thought I had seen him!—how’s this?” he added, casting an eye upon his bandaged limb, and became suddenly silent, struck, as it seemed, by a momentary flash of recollection. I spoke to him gently—discouraged conversation as much as I could, and waited with impatience the return of my envoy.

The sun had already risen over the eastern pine-woods, when the wished-for succour arrived, consisting of Mr. Michael Leary, landlord of the tavern before alluded to, Tim Timmins, his negro servant, or help, and my former trusty associate, with whose

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assistance a rude litter was speedily constructed ; and placing the sick man upon it in as easy a position as possible, the party took its way towards the promised asylum, each in his turn sharing the duties of the portorage.

CHAPTER X.

THE rather eventful day (for such was in lives so unvaried as ours), whose history we recorded in the foregoing chapter, concluded the year of grace 1811; and another had now arrived pregnant with the most important issues to our American colonies. Through the left-handed statesmanship of our rulers, the relations betwixt England and her precocious offspring, embittered for long by each succeeding year, had at length assumed that inflamed appearance which left little hope on either side of any effectual solution of their differences save by the dread arbitrement of war. Already, in anticipation of the

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general struggle, bands of armed adventurers from the northern states had spread themselves over the adjoining colonies, harrassing the poor settlers with isolated outrages, and contaminating with their lawless principles minds that had long found peace in the depth of their political *insouciance*.

Even the sequestered neighbourhood of our tale was destined to receive its share of the general visitation; and the tavern that went by the name of Mike Leary's had already more than once been the rendezvous of a troop of these "landless resolute" who, however, whilst concerting schemes of rapine beneath its roof, had spared it from the brand which usually marked their steps, from considerations (the only ones they were open to) of expediency.

Thus much I learned from Leary himself, as we proceeded on our road to his tenement, and also that it might be wise on my own part to prepare for a chance visit from some of his unbidden guests who had already made certain enquiries as to my estate, and condition. This intelligence was far from increasing the satisfaction I felt in lessening the distance to his dwelling — necessity, however, allowed of no alternative, and as I at length entered the humble structure, it was with the air of a man who felt the full force of this consideration. The tenement in

question was constructed of logs after the usual forest fashion, and might be some twenty feet square; the interior was divided into four chambers, as cramped in size as they were rude in garniture. One, being the general assembly room for all comers; the second, mine host's especial; the third, that of the household; and the fourth, used as a dormitory for whosoever might choose to avail themselves of its accommodation, which, at the time we are depicting, consisted simply of a rude box bedstead, that might have served for couch, table, or stool, as occasion should require.

If the appointments of the best bedchamber were on this humble scale, those of the common hall could scarcely be expected to have been better than in fact they were; comprising merely a spacious fire place, rough deal table, and three or four log-ends for its few woodland customers, whose fundamental toughness rendered them indifferent to a hard seat. The master of this primitive hostelry was a Hibernian, who having been implicated in some whiteboy outrage, had expatriated himself as a measure of security.

He consisted of a trunk, squarely set and strongly framed, and a bullet head, from which two eyes stood out in unusual prominence, as though forced from their orbits by the high pressure facetiousness within

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his cranium, and with the unction of which his face seemed to be in a perennial blaze.

“By the powers,” said he, as he deposited the end of the litter in his own quest-chamber, and wiped the sweat from his brow, “this snow’s worse than a Tipperary bog—I fear the poor jintleman ’ll have got shaken out of all enj’ment, nately and tenderly as we’ve handled him—but now he’s safely fixed in the ‘Hotel,’ little’s the comfort he can crave that he wont be getting, all the same as if he had been berthed in ould Dublin itself. ‘Katy,’ he said, to a young damsel who to linemeants that resembled those of the speaker added a modesty and sweetness of manner that rendered her very attractive, “the light worrits the jintleman’s eyes—pin a hankercher over the winder, darlint; and Tim, ye nigger, hie off to Cedar Creek, and bring back Dr. Larkin wid ye, as fast as his filly’s four legs can carry him; here’s a drop o’ the crathur to stow into your black hould, and the sooner it gets into your heels the better—off wid ye.”

“Poor Tim,” remarked Jannock, “by the time he gets to the doctor’s he’ll look like one of yon charred pine-stumps with a twelve-inch snow-cap on his head; for if my eyes didn’t cheat me, there was another storm brewin’ as we came in.”

"O Bryce, my boy!" returned the landlord, tendering him a glass he had been mixing, "I wouldn't lose such a customer as yon," pointing to the adjoining chamber, "for all the darkies and doctors in the province—he's a r'al godsend—a reg'lar goldmine in breeches; and lucky's the day he ever crossed Mike Leary's threshold."

"You've knowed him afore, then, it's like."

"That have I—that have I—he's been here this month back, living like a lord, and paying like a prince. If you'd ha' stepped in o' late, Bryce, you might ha' come in for a taste of his bounty as well as others; he seems to be wonderful free with you hunter folk."

"Little's the bounty I crave from him or from any man, as long as there's deer in the woods, and venison in the shanty, and may be a pinch o' baccy in my pouch for an odd corner of a dull day."

"But if he's so full of the rhino as folk tell on, what on airth can be his arrand hereaways? for the lord knows, though he may be fond o' the hunters, natur' never whittled him out for one himself."

The landlord was silent for a moment—directed his prominent optics to the shingles of his roof, crossed his arms abstrusely on his breast, and beat a devil's tattoo with his heels against the counter on which he had perched himself.

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“What’s his arrand, is it—by the Jakers, and that’s more than I can tell. Some says he’s land hunting, and others, that Uncle Sam has sent him to see how the wind sits among us bluenoses. “There’s one thing I can tell ye, Bryce,” continued Mike, sinking his voice to a whisper—“he’s uncommon thick with these Yankee loafers, who’ve patronized the ‘Hotel’ o’ late. Why man, he’s their king, their kaisar, and can do what he likes with the riptyles, wild and ugly as their condick has been; and as long as he’s under its roof, I never fear their making a bonfire of the “New Cork” as they’ve done at Peter Redman’s no later than last week.”

“Do you look for another visit from the vagabonds, Mr. Leary,” I enquired.

“Why, they’ve been desperate uneasy o’ late, and threaten to make root and branch work with the Britishers, afore the year’s out as came in only this morning. Here’s wishing ye a happy spell o’ the same, Misther Rysle, and better acquaintance with the ‘New Cork’ Hotel. Can you tell me,” continued mine host, after I had acknowledged his civility, “who the settler is yonder, at the Far Pines? We came up into the Bush together, and a nice pretty spoken jintleman he seemed to be, though terribly ill off for plunder; his wife, too, was a particklar fine

cretur, and half kilt my Katy, there, with kindness. Ah! the sweet lady! I heern she 's been laid under the green sod since, and the poor man's quite dumfounded, what wi' grief and what wi' lonesomeness."

Whilst engaged in this discursive conversation, the door opened, and the Milicete Indian entered with a letter in his hand. It was from my friend, Jermyn, and briefly, but earnestly, requested my attendance at his clearing on particular business; the bearer had sought me in vain at our dwelling, where he had passed the night; and directed conjecturally by Butterworth, and helped by his own sagacity, came forward to the tavern, where, in compensation for his labour (for, in the snow as it then was, it must have been of the most trying kind), we proceeded to regale him with such of our host's cheer as best pleased his palate—a palate unfortunately already too well acquainted with the bane of his devoted race. Of this, the individual in question was far from presenting a first-rate specimen, being low in stature and snubbed; and sophisticated by the white man's sorcery into an artificial show of civilization, through which his native instincts would ever and anon peep forth in amusing contrast, exhibiting much the same moral phenomena as he would have done physically, had his outer man been overlaid with whitewash, and patches of his

brown hido developed themselves through the interstices. After draining the cup of cordial presented by his host, he approached the fire, and seated himself, apathetically, by the side of Jannock, who, through a cloud of his own tobacco smoke, had been attentively observing him.

"Well, Toby," said the latter, quietly, and I thought with something of commiseration in his tone, "you have had a weary wade through the snow this morning; another such draught as that, and you'll be taking a swim in the clouds, my boy! How did you leave our fri'nd in the Far Pines, and his his sweet little f'an—does Ruth do the right thing by her? I've been thinking, this fortnight back, of stepping over with some of Master Rysle's nicknacks, and a j'int o' deer's meat, though its little he'll be wanting of that if you pull as good a trigger as you used to do Toby."

"Toby kill a deer still. Young Hemlock sick in him wigwam—no eat—no shoot—no chop—much sorry for squaw—wish see Misser Rysle."

"We will return there together, Toby, as soon as the snow will let us, in the mean time you will do well to take a rest, and enjoy Mr. Leary's cheer."

"Let him alone for that," interposed the landlord, "he can toss off his sling as well as another, and pay

for it too, and that not with Ruth's moccasans and basket-work, as he used to do; but raal silver shiners, like the best jintleman of them all."

"And where do the shiners come from Toby," enquired Jannock; "the Young Hemlock, as you call him, don't seem to be overstored with them, from all I heern."

"'Em come from God, brother," returned the Milicete, with a snivel of affected piety.

"And are going to the devil," rejoined Jannock.

"So much for missionarising—in half an hour more" he added, turning to me "you'll see the cretur as senseless as the log he's a sittin' on; ah, Mike! if you want a trap for Redskins, just bait it with a mug of your fire water, and they'll crowd to their ruin like flies in a pyson pot."

"If the beggars will make bastes of themselves, sure it's their own consarn intyrelly; if I was to show my guests a cold shoulder instead of a hissing tankard, I might as well pull down my sign at once, and clear out again for the ould country; you would be none the worse for another nip yourself, Bryce."

"No, no—I've had my sup and am satisfied; many thanks to you, all the same, Mike Leary. The pipe's the real comforter for us woodsmen. I can whip it out at the close of a day's hunt, or when solemnising

by myself in the wilderness, and when I've done, look aloft with as clear a head and light a heart, and pull as true a trigger as when I began; besides, it serves as a sort o' company when one feels lonesome."

"In a calling like your's, Jannock," I observed, "there must be many occasions when you will feel this lonesomeness you speak of."

"Aye, squire, one feels it at times, when out-lying in the woods, as a hunter must for his meat and peltry, and no other two-legged thing, may be, but the birds above him, within eye-shot of a soaring eagle. In the far west, when I was hunting for the Hudson's Bay folk, I've been a this ways many a time, with nothing but the big pines (and almighty big 'uns they are there there) for *my* cumrades, and the v'ices of the woods to gossip with, for months and months together. It was lonesome—yet there was so'thing in the life, too, that sweetened and disciplyned the thoughts, and in the main I didn't mislike it. Far better I found it, than consorting with a blackguard chum—hark! here comes the doctor."

A stamping sound, as of persons shaking off the snow, was now heard outside the door, which the next moment opened, and in walked, not the son of Galen, but half-a-dozen as wild weather-beaten

uncanny looking figures, as ever crossed a Christian threshold.

Attired in soiled leathern shooting frocks, and each bearing the long American rifle, they might at first have been taken for a troop of honest foresters; but with the lean cheek and sharp lineaments that are often met with in the woodland hunter, there was in these a peculiarly guileful and sinister expression of countenance which instinctively closed on them the door of sympathy, and set the inner man upon its guard. Mingled with the look of overt and abandoned ruffianism, was that of astute and apathetic villainy, which shewed that the spirit of evil had enlisted the hard Anglo-Saxon intellect in its service. There were one or two better physiognomies among the group, it is true; but, on the whole, they were a set whose presence and society one would, if possessing the option, have instinctively and decidedly declined. I at once set them down as one of those marauding gangs, the landlord had spoken of, who flutter on the skirts, and presage the outburst of impending war.

The leader of the party, a tall, wiry, saturnine looking man, on entering, walked deliberately to the fire-place, tossed on it a few additional logs, and turning his back to the comfortable glow, proceeded to examine, with lowering and indirect glances the various occupants of the apartment.

"Wall!" cried he, to the landlord, as soon as he had finished his survey, "is our trump comed yet. You know who I mean—Squire Rhino. He was to have met some gen'lemen here this arternoon on business, so if he's any whar about, you may as well tell him they're ready to trade. Capt. Lane, of the Green Mountains, you may say."

"You mean the English lord, belike Capt. Lane—sure he *is* a trump; he's here; he came in, only a few hours ago, wrong end foremost, and whether he'll ever go out again, right, is more than I can tell till the doctor comes. You see, Mr. Lane, he has had a scrimmage with a b'ar and got terribly tattered about the upper leathers. If it had'nt been for fri'nd Bryce, yonder, we should ha' been all drinkin' at his lykewake by this'n."

The rover looked from the speaker to the party last mentioned with an eye that had evidently a long range of roguery in it, and then said "wall—whar is he—jist step in and say Haggai Lane wants to speak with him—or stop, I may as well go myself; and harkee, Myke, as these gen'lemen look to be made comfortable a'rter their day's v'gin', the sooner you get out your flip cans and heaters the better, as they've a short way of dealin' when matters don't go to their mind." So saying, he coolly

opened the door and made himself free of the sick man's chamber.

A short silence ensued after his disappearance; broken only by the clatter of the drinking utensils laid out by the host in obedience to their leader's mandate, before his vagabond comrades. Presently the liquor began to do its work, unlocking the tongues and awakening the spirit of mischief in its recipients. One of the most ill-favoured of the party, casting an eye upon the now slumbering and insensible Indian, drew a flaming faggot from the fire and applied it to his long and oily hair which was immediately set in a blaze, as quickly however extinguished by another of the august band, with these words—"Ar' ye mad, Jared? don't ye see its Injyn Toby; he's listed in the sarvice, man (winking at the other), and is like to be our main stay into the bargain."

"Yon chap is the Britisher, I reckon, who's settled down in Hawkshead Hollow," quoth another of the gang, directing his friend's attention to myself, "our Captain, I b'lieve, has got a notice for him. D'ye know how he's off for fixings, Steve?"

Instead of answering this delicate question, the party addressed, whose lineaments had a somewhat honester cast than those of his fellows, had fixed his eyes with an enthralling gaze upon our friend Jannock,

who, roused by the outrage on the Indian, had brought his person more within view of the new comers.

"Why, Bryce!" exclaimed the former, rising from his seat, and laying his hand on the shoulder of the other. "Why, Bryce, that a'int you! Yes, it is—no, it aint. Why, old hoss, I thought you was clean rubbed out in that scrimmage we had six years ago with the 'Raphoes, and thunner and lightnin;' there you're a sittin as cool and corky as ever. What's the time o' day, old boy?"

"Well, Steve," returned Jannock, shaking the other's hand with quiet cordiality, "I aint gone under yet, though I warn't far from it neither. I got off with ha'ar and shootin ir'n, and soon made up the hoss and beaver I lost in that spree. The time o' day 's rather late with both on us now I reckon, but we may have a fair spell on't yet afore sun-down. What trail ar' y' on now, Steve?"

The individual thus questioned seemed to be under some embarrassment in replying. After looking on the right side, and on the left, and picking a thorn out of his leathern jerkin, "you must ax our captain," he, at length, said, somewhat costively, "for I reckon it's more than I can rightly tell; but it'll be a share and share consarn, I calculate, or so'thin' o' that sort. Harkee, Brycc, ——"

The speaker's tones here sank to a whisper, and their import was consequently lost. Voices were now heard in the adjoining room, and from the elevation of the tones, so unusual in a sick chamber, caught my attention.

Seated near the door, which had got slightly ajar, I could scarcely avoid overhearing the discourse inside, even though without any desire to play the eaves-dropper.

"You're too impatient Lane," uttered the voice of the wounded stranger. "It can't be three months before the war breaks out; and by that time, if I have any judgment in such matters, he'll be dead and gone—he bears his death-warrant in his face. I saw him only yesterday. I tell you it can't, and sha'nt, be done before."

This was spoken in a loud and excited tone, and I caught a glimpse of a pale hand convulsively clutching the bed-clothes.

"Wall, wall, squire, be it as you wull, though it's hard for a hunter to tarry so long in his tracks—be it as you wull. Now, s'pose the thing's done, what is it to be, squire? The boys and me have talked the matter over, and we think that a thousand dollars atop of the other thousand would be quite reasonable tradin.'

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“You shall have a dollar for every mile you carry her. If you do your duty, it will mount to more than you ask, and make fortunes for every one of you.”

Here an ejaculation of pain broke from the labouring speaker, whether of body or mind I could not tell.

“And when shall we finger the first bagful, squire? These ar’ hard times for poor v’ygers; and the boys, I b’lieve, ar’ so’thin’ out o’ pocket just now.”

“As soon as I can bring my hand to bear upon a bank cheque: now bait me no more, at present, Lane, or that day will never be. Here’s some loose cash to go on with. Now, begone, and send in the doctor when he comes, if it’s only for your own worshipful sake.”

The illustrious Mr. Lane now came forth from the chamber, and seeing me seated in a proximity so perilous for his privy councils, his choler suddenly rose. Seizing me rudely by the collar, he exclaimed “What ar’ ye skulkin’ thar’ for, ye darned ’possum, pryin’ and peerin’ into other folks consarns. You are one of these Britishers, I reckon, as is making their pitch with the Bluenoses; and thinks, may be, your lines has fallen in pleasant places; but I’ve a notice for ye, d’ye hear, and your fri’nd at the Far Pines yonder, as well. I’ll fir’ ye—I’ll ferret ye—I’ll root ye out, rump and stump, afore long, or my name ’s not Haggai Lane.”

Thinking it high time to put a stop to my assailant's irregular proceedings, I made a vigorous grab at his throat, and wrestling together we fell upon the tavern floor, my adversary, for the moment, uppermost. His respectable colleagues instantly started from their seats and cheered their leader in his violence with choice varieties of their professional slang. "Go it, Hag!" cried one; "gouge the darned Bluenose," shouted another; "give him h—ll" roared a third; which benevolent hortations, the ruffian I was engaged with did his best to act upon, it might have proved not without effect, considering the disadvantage of my position, had not a third party come to the rescue and dragged him bodily off with a force he in vain contended against. Honest Jannock, to whom I was indebted for this friendly turn, thus drew upon himself the ire of the whole gang, and matters were putting on a very menacing aspect for us both, when at the door of the sick chamber was seen the form of its ghastly occupant, exclaiming in faint but solemn tones—"Lane, if you wish ever to see my face or finger my money again, molest these gentlemen no farther; they've saved me from death, and whatever benefit you get from that, you may thank them for."

This had the effect of quieting our assailants, who returned to their places near the fire, and roared to

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the landlord for a fresh supply of liquor. Not being desirous of prolonging my stay in this lawless den, whose inmates would doubtless become more apt for outrage with every cup they swallowed, and encouraged by the look of the weather, I determined to proceed on my visit to Mr. Jermyn. Summoning Jannock, I accordingly issued forth from the half-sacked hospice, not without venting an honest malison on its tainted atmosphere and reprobate customers.

Fortunately, we encountered the doctor at the door; which disposed of my last scruple (connected with the state of my countryman) on taking leave.

Sweet and fair were the wide fields of snow which greeted us in their virgin freshness, as we went forth on our toilsome journey to our friend's location; which, as before mentioned, went by the name of the Far Pines.

Under the hunter's pilotage, we struck as soon as possible into the woods, which, though it somewhat lengthened the distance, much facilitated our travel; the track being free from snow. In about four hours we drew near the well-known clearing, a thin line of blue smoke spiring up from the widower's dwelling like an emblem of his narrowed fortunes and faded hopes.

On approaching the door, the faithful Norman

bounded out to meet us, and the bright form of the young girl became visible in the doorway. Joyously she smiled as I gave her a saluting kiss, and enquired for her parent,

“Da—pa—Misser Ry—” and running to him, announced me with a tug at his arm, “Pa—da—Misser Ry.”

“Welcome, my friend,” said her courtly parent, as he rose from the table at which he had been writing, and shook me cordially by the hand, “you are come in good time, and I feel grateful for the favour; a good many cares have been pressing upon me of late, and I shall feel thankful for your assistance in disposing of them.”

I assured him, with truth (for I really felt much interest in the fortunes of his family), that he might count upon my best efforts at rendering it.

“As you will feel weary after your walk, we will defer business till we have refreshed ourselves with a cup of tea. I fear our palace is rather sparsely victualled, but my comptroller, Ruth, will perhaps find us something to get on with.” So saying, he rung a little hand-bell that was on the table and summoned his dark attendant. From absence of mind, which more or less marked his demeanour through the whole of this evening, he forgot to give the necessary directions.

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Seizing the opportunity, I slipped out of the room and put into the housekeeper's hands a fine ham which Jannock had brought over with him, and which I thought might be a welcome accompaniment to our host's tea-tray.

The cottage consisted of but two chambers and a "lean-to;" the latter being occupied by the Indian woman. They were very rudely framed and furnished, the one in which we were, being ceiled, floored, and wainscoted with deal planks rough from the saw, which our host's simple upholstery, though it in part relieved, was very far from concealing. The chimney, like our own, was formed of sticks and clay over a very ample fire-place, in which a brisk pine-wood fire was now gloriously blazing, and a good black kettle on its outskirts sending forth its steaming challenge of "ready, aye ready" to all whom it might concern.

O ye listless votaries of modern fashion! who ransack every clime for materials to stimulate your existence, what would ye give for a single hour of the full-welling emotions of a backwood's fireside? Where, among your scents, can you find a perfume to match the burning pine bough? Which of your melodies can compare with the music of the crackling brands and simmering kettle? Of your pastimes, with the

converse of a helpful wife, or gambols of your dear diminutives, as seated on your knee, or clustering round the board, they yield to that unforced gaiety that speaks of toils completed and repose at hand?

The scene I am at present describing, though far from furnishing a picture of exuberant happiness, nay, though strongly alloyed by the mournful shadow of past events, and sombre anticipations of the future, was, to myself at least, fraught with interest; and as I drew my chair to the little table that held our tea service, and with the infant Laura on my knee, chatted, unrestrained, with her accomplished parent, I experienced a flow of sensations that rendered that forest hearth a scene oft dwelt on afterwards.

My neighbour, seated at the other side of the board, partook sparingly of the refreshing beverage, and conversed freely (though in the subdued tones of ill health), upon whatever topic it occurred to broach; but I could see, that at every interval of silence he fell again into that pre-occupation of mind which, in his present weak condition, must have acted injuriously upon it. I was much struck with his manner, which, frank, yet graceful—easy, yet elevated—bespoke the finished gentleman, and commanded an involuntary respect. His features could scarcely be called handsome, though they left on the observer a

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decided impression in his favour; but I could there perceive (though in his bearing and discourse he betrayed no consciousness of the fact) the approaches of that fatal malady which had cut short his wife's days, and now threatened a speedy termination to his own.

After finishing our meal, I mechanically drew forth my pipe; but, thinking it might perhaps be taking a liberty to use it, returned it to my pocket. Observing the motion, my host requested me to enjoy my smoke without ceremony, and relieved me of the little girl that I might do so.

"You see here," said he, regarding her with deep and earnest tenderness, "the great source of my anxiety—this child must go back to England."

"And ma too, pa—when she come back—ma go too with Lilla."

He turned his head aside for a moment to hide his emotion, and continued—"These American woods, I see very clearly, are as little her element as mine, yet whatever their disadvantages, they have at least the merit of inspiring (perhaps from its being so greatly needed) confidence in our fellow man—a confidence which, I think, in such circumstances, is generally justified. It is this, I suppose, in part (our acquaintance being as it were but of yesterday), that

emboldens me to seek your friendly aid, and confide to you matters of much moment vitally concerning the welfare of my little one. Indeed her entire future, in a temporal point of view, may be considered as depending upon them."

The exertion of talking, and perhaps anxiety of mind upon the subject, produced a consumptive glow upon his features; and that boding expeoration which said clearly enough—you at least will never see Old England again.

"Thinking I might scarcely have strength to hold a long conversation, for I find myself somewhat out of condition of late, I have collected the running memoranda which furnish the brief history of my past life, jointing them together in a cursory way, and adding what was needed to make out the narrative, and bring it up to the present time.

"You will find it all here," he said, going to the writing table, and placing in my hands certain sheets recently put together with evident care. "It is mainly a record of youthful courtship, when we are apt to dwell on our fleeting pleasures, and garner them up for after rumination. A' this will be to you so much 'leather and prunella;' now, as it serves, however, to show in what way our fortunes became connected with a family which must still influence

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them, I place the whole in your hands without further apology. They seem to me the incidents of times long past; for since my arrival in this out-of-the-way nook, I feel as if a moiety of my life had passed away. And now, as my parliamentary powers are not of the best order, I will leave you to peruse the sheets, and take a quiet nap till you have finished."

We had started from the tavern about two o'clock; had taken four hours in performing our journey; and spent about two more in fire-side chit-chat. It was now consequently about eight o'clock of a sharp, clear winter's evening. A full-orbed moon had just cleared the pine tops, and was pouring its pale lustre through the cottage casement. In every quarter there reigned the most perfect stillness, save when from my neighbour's room the sounds of his laboured breathing fell bodingly upon the ear. Lighting my pipe (blest aid of solitude!) with a glowing pine splint, I took up his packet of papers, and perused, with unwonted interest, the following history.

CHAPTER XI.

"My real name is Etheredge, inherited from a younger branch of the noble house of Ardcapell, whom the family oracles affirmed to have come in with the Conquerer. What I knew with greater certainty was, that my father was a plain country gentleman of independent property; and with greater pride, that he did honour to his station, as he would have done to any other. Being his eldest child, I was brought up with the greatest care, and educated in the most approved manner, being sent in succession to Eton and Oxford; at both which scholastic resorts I may say, with truth, I was far from

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mis-employing my time; and, though designed for no particular profession, solicitously addressed myself to my studies; among which the acquirement of modern languages received a more than customary share of attention. This latter circumstance, as will be found in the sequel, had a large influence on my future fortunes.

There is much in human life that might seem to favour the doctrine of predestination, and many a man, I doubt not, besides myself, may trace in his career causes to effects, influencing it, perhaps, to its end; yet, at the outset, completely beyond the range of his speculation. Recreation succeeded study. For a year or two after my university course, I took my pleasure in continental travel; and it was as this approached its conclusion that intelligence was received of sudden reverses having befallen my parents, who found themselves suddenly reduced, if not to absolute poverty, at least to that circumscribed state of living which involved an entire change in my own destination and prospects. I was no longer to be the gentlemen idler, but to earn my living as I best might.

From the previous tenor of my education, I was not long in deciding upon a course which might, at the same time, be consistent with gentility and

conducive to my maintenance. I became a teacher of languages. It was a descending step in the world from the snug position I held, and had looked forward to; but, aware that difficulties confronted with courage are surmounted with success, I devoted myself to the duties of my new calling with a singleness of purpose that might well have guaranteed me this favourable result. Some of my fair-weather friends now disappeared from my view, whilst others attested their sterling metal by manifesting a still more assiduous regard. After due deliberation, however, I became convinced of the expediency of changing the field of my labours; and, furnished with a letter from my father to a respectable legal practitioner in the town of——, I repaired thither with the determination of pushing my fortune in the line I had chosen, unembarrassed by the chills of the present or the appeals of former times. My new acquaintance, by name Dalham, was a man of sterling honesty, which, joined to much professional talent, had earned for him the office of steward to a neighbouring nobleman of immense wealth, but somewhat despotic character. He had held high rank in the navy; and though, in the main, a man of right impulses, might thus have acquired that arbitrary cast of mind and manner which rendered him at least as much

feared as he was revered. This individual it was my fortune (good or bad) to meet one day at the table of my legal friend; and, after a very pleasant and protracted interview, we parted, as far as I could judge, with a mutually favourable impression. Some days after this, in pursuance of a note to that effect, I waited upon Mr. Dalham, who informed me, confidentially, that he had of late had several communications from the Earl of Leighton (such was the peer's name), with respect to myself; and concluded by presenting an enclosure he had received that morning, bearing my address.

"If I may judge," he observed, "from the tenor of his lordship's enquiries, though I have no absolute authority to affirm so much, I should say he was anxious to engage your services as tutor to his daughter, a young lady of sixteen, and, as I hear, of very amiable character.

"The event will show" I replied; "this billet contains an invitation to wait upon him this afternoon, which, of course, I shall feel much pride and pleasure in doing."

It was somewhere about five o'clock on a fine spring evening, that I found myself, for the first time, approaching the confines of Leighton Park, one of those sweet sections of old England, where mediæval

grandeur and modern elegance are united amidst scenery foremodelled by the hand of Nature to give the utmost effect to their alliance. Lawns, on which the vernal green was already gaining upon the brown drapery of winter, spread far and wide before the eye; bounded in the distance by extensive woods, and studded irregularly with groves of ancient oaks, which, as I stopped at intervals to view them, with their low breathed sighs and interwoven boughs, seemed communing together on the glories of the feudal days. Here, flowed a purling rill pouring its obsequious waters round their roots; there, through their verdant shades, swept a stream of greater volume, solacing the forest Titans in their gloom with its low and deep-toned melody; whilst, glistening in the distance, and viewed by snatches through the intervening glades, spread a sheet of ornamental water, which I was loth to think artificial, contributing the charms of contrast to the view and giving its full expression to the edifice that was at length discerned upon its banks—the stately pile of Leighton Castle. Though naturally anxious on the subject of my projected visit, I could not avoid lingering from time to time to admire the scenic beauties of my walk, and this might have rendered me somewhat later than I should have been in reaching the peer's abode. At

length, when upon the point of turning the corner of the park wall towards the lodge gates, a barouche suddenly drove through them at full speed, and each party being concealed from the other until almost at the point of contact, I narrowly escaped being run down. In the vehicle were a gentleman and a lady, the latter of whom uttered a suppressed shriek as the danger was most imminent. They were Lord Leighton and his daughter.

The carriage immediately drew up, and his lordship, after a brief apology, said "Some unexpected business has called me away for a short time, but; you will favour us with your company at dinner, and in the meantime may, perhaps, find amusement in inspecting the park and picture gallery."

"Your lordship is very kind, and I will gladly obey your pleasure," I should have said, but did not; for at that moment my eyes rested on the countenance of his companion, which the sun, just setting over her father's park, illuminated in all its glowing loveliness. The barouche drove on—the radiant vision passed away—but not so its transcript on my memory. Through the remainder of my ramble, it would ever and anon intrude, enriching every scene I passed through with a new and inexplicable interest. Not wishing to enter the mansion till it drew near the

appointed hour, I sauntered through the grounds at random, surveying the edifice from different points of view, and endeavouring to digest the details of its architecture. It was of that mixed, or rather two-fold style, occasionally to be seen in the more feudal districts of the kingdom—an old grey castle, dating, perhaps, from the time of the first Edward, presented boldly to the setting sun, its rounded towers and connecting wall, fringed with decayed machicolations, and pierced by an imposing gate-way. This was the nucleus of the pile; the remainder of which, characterized by the frequent gable, bold bay windows, angular arches and grotesque decorations, announced a date of at least three centuries later. There could be no amalgamation of such incongruous elements, and none was attempted—the effect and interest of the whole lay in their contrast, and few could survey the fabric without recognizing its force, and reverting in imagination to those vanished ages of which each of its component sections stood at once the relic and remembrancer.

The dinner bell at length sounded out its summons, and I shortly found myself seated, one of a not very numerous company at the board of the hospitable earl, where, with the easy unconstraint yet dignified courtesy of high life, a dinner remarkable rather for its excellence than amount was effectually dispatched.

Lord Leighton being a widower, the honours of his table were done by his daughter (Lady Laura), who, though quite a girl and full of the mercurial spirits of her age, went through her functions with that innate and untutored grace which is so excellent a thing, when natural, and so vainly aped (aped only to be travestied) by art. A short time after the conclusion of the repast, I was summoned to attend the earl in his library, when Mr. Dalham's surmises were shortly verified by a formal proposition being made on the part of his lordship, that I should undertake his daughter's tuition; the terms to be of my own making. Feeling, of course, no disposition to decline such an engagement, these were settled on the instant, and I was forthwith inducted into office, and introduced to my youthful charge.

The following morning found me waiting her arrival in our future school room, which was no other than the scene of our previous conference, the earl's library. As some little time elapsed ere she appeared, I had leisure to examine it more closely than before. It was in one of the round towers of the primitive old castle, of which it constituted an entire ground-floor section. Its form was consequently nearly circular, and comprised an area of twenty feet in diameter. The greater portion of the floor, of polished

oak, was occupied by a massive table of the same material, which had been partly intended for, and had doubtless answered the purposes of many a rent-day.

Wainscoting the walls all round, were several thousand volumes of the most approved authors; their monotonous array garnished with crimson hangings, and varied at intervals by statuettes of merit, specimens of ancient armour, and a few rare relics of long extinct animals, on which the morning light was now blythely streaming through embrasures where the archer and arquebusier of yore dealt death on the beleaguering foeman. These had been partly bevelled off on their weather edges so as to widen the apertures, and admit the day more plenteously into the sanctuary within. It was still, however, but dimly illuminated, throwing a kind of spell upon the spirit as you entered, and inviting to poetic ease and dreamy contemplation.

A step approached, and my pupil entered. She might have been upon the verge of her seventeenth year, and, in her deportment, still showed much of the sprightliness and *espieglerie* of the girl. Her form of moderate height, and somewhat slender outline, would have riveted the gaze, in the most crowded assemblies, by its faultless symmetry and graceful

carriage—the latter displaying that elegance of attitude, and ease of motion, which seemed to spring rather from abstract volition than the agency of any mediate physical mechanism. A profusion of raven hair shadowed a brow and swept a neck of exquisite shape and colour, flowing, in unfileted freedom, nearly to her waist; whilst, to add full effect to these more passive charms, an eye of oriental size and power poured its living magic on the soul, and completed as potent an *ensemble* as ever threatened demolition to an adventurous male heart of twenty-six. An air of mingled amiability and archness animated this lovely tenement, the one tempering the other, and imparting to all she did an agreeable piquancy, which kept the interest awakened by her presence ever alive and unabated.

Those who would behold her portrait more at large, will find it (unless sequestered by parental regret) gracing the banqueting hall at Leighton, and surveying from the canvas the festive scenes once hallowed by the lovely original.

In less than five minutes after her entrance, the table was covered by the fair debutante with grammars, vocabularies, and all the other aids of early literary aspiration, as well as a vast number more that were in no wise necessary for the occasion.

Taking up one of these latter, which I think was Goethe's 'Goetz von Berlichingen' she claimed my assistance in translating it. With a grave countenance (for I felt that that, and an inflexible adherence to my duties, could alone carry me safely through the ordeal I dimly saw in prospect), I suggested that it was usual for beginners to begin at the beginning.

"Ah!" said she, "I fear my gifts, then, will do me little service, being, like cousin Cyrus's hunters, better at making for the goal than considering the means of getting there. My father, however," she added with assumed hauteur, "often compliments me on my performances, and is much given to arraign the wisdom of those who differ with him."

"But in that case, it is my duty to observe, your ladyship will be likely to end where you should have begun, which, in the issue, will betoken but indifferent progress."

She looked a moment at me, as I spoke—the mock displeasure of her countenance, belied by the arch expression of her eye—and pointing, by way of rejoinder, to a passage in the book she had selected, requested me to read it.

"Yes," she observed, seating herself with a comic air of gratification, as I concluded, "I see I shall like Goody (is that what you call the man) very much.

Some of those words resemble such as I have heard fall from Gammer Green, who I know to be of pure Ditch (I hope my pronunciation is orthodox) derivation, for the name stands on some of our Leighton records as old as the conquest, which, I suppose, is proof positive, though, if you would wish for more, I will conduct you, some day, to the common where the Greens at present vegetate in much verdure."

"Well, Gammer Green, and how do you fare to-day? 'Ech, Leddy Lowry! the sight o' you's aye good for sair een, nobbut sic like; and hoo's th' 'arle this bra' mornin'—steek t'yett t'ill Bobby; and set her Leddyship a stool. Ech! this is smittle luck for an auld body—and what's your leddyship's wull the' morn'?' What think you of Goody Green's parlance, Mr. Etheredge, is it Sexon or Celtic?"

"In the main, very genuine Teutonic, and——"

"Therefore, as you find Leddy Lowry's already acquainted with the rudiments, we may proceed with this other Goody, who will doubtless discourse equally excellent music—pray who was Mr. Goose von Buryshingen—?" and in this way my promising pupil ran on till I was fain to compromise the difference, and read aloud to her a portion of the original drama, on condition of her acquiring a certain number of declensions and conjugations against the next

occasion. Buried in an enormous arm-chair, whose quaint and massive make was in singular contrast with the shape of exquisite grace that occupied it, she listened with an affected gravity till I had done, and then observed, with reference to the subject of my prelection—

“ They wore armour then, it seems, in those days. Do you imagine Mr. Burlyshingen’s was anything like that ?” pointing to an old Roman helmet in a recess of the apartment; “ I wonder how he would have looked in it—perhaps you would oblige me,” reaching down the article and presenting it for the purpose, “ by putting it on. Ah! that has been a shrewd knock, I doubt—and this cuirass”—she continued, which, after complying with the first portion of her demand, I was forthwith obliged also to don—“ I suppose this was used (assisting my clumsy efforts in getting it round my trunk) to ward off the darts and pistols that they meet with in battle. They were sent as a present to my father by the Duke of Whistleberg, and may have belonged to Mr. Goose himself, as well as this formidable lance (placing an old broom handle in my hands.) Mercy! how strange he must have looked, Do you think, now — Oh! here’s papa,” she cried, on hearing an approaching footstep; and darting towards the door,

rushed into the arms of her father, who at that moment entered the room."

"Why, Lau!" he exclaimed, casting a scrutinizing glance over his daughter's head at the burlesque figure presented to his view "if this is the way you learn German, Mr. Etheredge will give you up as an unprofitable bargain. I fear you will scarce find my daughter of a very studious turn," he added, turning to me.

"As she grows better acquainted with her authors," I replied, divesting myself, as well as I could, of my grotesque equipments, "she will learn to appreciate them more as they deserve."

The young lady in a low tone, here spoke something in her father's ear.

"By the way" added the latter, "my girl reminds me we are to have, next week, a re-union of our neighbouring county friends. You will, perhaps, do us the favour to assist at it?—Friday, I think, is the day, and — good morning, Mr. Ether —"

"Lebe wohl," quoth the young lady, dropping me a demure courtesy, and having replaced my mail in its niche, and mused for five minutes on the recent by-play, I took up my hat, and so terminated my first lesson in Teutonic to an earl's daughter.

The Friday alluded to, was the first of May, a season annually celebrated at Leighton by games, dances, and other festivities in the park; for his lordship was one, who, as his position was originally founded on their strength, venerated, with his whole soul, the usages and inspirations of the olden time. A May-pole had been erected on the green of the little hamlet of Leighton, and early on the old memorial morning, I found myself, amidst a numerous throng, looking on the merry mazes of the rustic dance, as, bedizened in the usual fantastic style, the villagers circled joyously round the symbolic mast.

A better method for attuning the spirit to a day of jollity there cannot be. The early and healthful hour, the dewy breezes from the neighbouring fields, laden with all their vernal exhalations, and the animating nature of the exercise, when enjoyment is reflected from every face, impart a stimulus to existence which is, perhaps, equalled by no other excitation. These sports at an end, the motley crowd bore away towards the adjoining park, where displays of archery awaited them. Shaping my own course towards the same point by a private pathway, I encountered the gamekeeper, Blayfield, who was engaged in securing a particular meadow where a bull was usually kept.

“ A rare day this, sir,” said he, in answer to my salutation, “ for the quality folk. May be, you’ll be trying your hand yourself, sir, at the butts. I’m just securing old Grizzle in his pasture, with a double lock, for the younkens may be getting in and playing tricks with the old tartar, and he has been rather lungously disposed of late.”

I told him, that even had I felt inclined to shoot, I was unable, from not having any weapon at hand; when he kindly offered his own rifle, a trial with that arm being one of the morning’s diversions. On arriving at the arena for the sports, the targets were already to be seen, with their paint and blazonry, glistening through the neighbouring groves; and groups of archers in appropriate uniform, chiefly gentlemen of the vicinity, stood ready to compete for the prize—a silver arrow, to be received from the fair hands of Lady Laura. After a very fair display of skill, it was finally awarded to Mr. Cyrus Farleton, a nephew of the noble host, but in many respects a very different character; being of a restless intriguing spirit, ever engaged in some vain scheme of aggrandizement, and hesitating at no sacrifice, not even that of common honesty, in its pursuit. Of an agreeable person and accomplished manners, he still, however, possessed a certain influence in the

neighbourhood, enhanced by the generally prevailing belief of his being the sanctioned suitor of the young heiress, and the future dispenser of the family patronage.

The archers at length laid aside their bows, and the crowd collected in eager groups to witness a trial with a still more noble weapon—the rifle. The competitors in this, as in the previous contest, were all gentlemen, the prize being a rather showy rifle, which Blayfield, at his young mistress' side, was already exhibiting to a knot of wondering neutrals.

The odds were much in favour of the winner of the archery prize, young Farleton, who was considered to be an adept in the use of the weapon. I had myself, however, had some experience with it—rifle shooting having been, during my college days, almost the only diversion I much indulged in or cared about. And the keeper's speech having put the idea into my head, I resolved to try my chance on the occasion among the rest. My chief adversary, Farleton, as was anticipated, had hitherto pulled much the best trigger; and when I shouldered my piece, it was with but faint hopes (having been long out of practice) of drawing a better. Good luck, however, flew with my ball, and the voice from the target duly recorded it. I was adjudged the winner,

and conducted towards the fair arbitress to receive the meed of my success. Just at this juncture, my opponent (for in that character I was henceforth to regard him) came up and eyeing me somewhat superciliously, observed, " You may, perhaps, not be aware, sir, that the contest is open only to gentlemen who use their own weapons ; you must excuse me for remarking that the piece you hold appears to be that rather of a keeper than a gentleman."

As, notwithstanding the insolent tone of this remark, I could not but admit its truth, I found myself disqualified by the laws of the sport, from being the recipient of a prize which, under the circumstances, I certainly coveted.

The disappointment was, however, but momentary, and a kind look from the amiable umpire made ample amends for it.

I may say here, that not long afterwards (the circumstance, perhaps, being partly referable to events that occurred in the interval), I received a handsome and most excellent rifle, with many kind and flattering messages, from Lord Leighton and his daughter. The hour of dinner at length arrived. Several tables laden with varied and substantial cheer, and adorned with evergreens, had been laid out in an embowered glade of the park ; and hither, in an indiscriminate

throng, drew both performers and spectators in the foregoing games. The Mayers in their motley dresses, the archers in their green uniform, the country nymphs in their gayest attire, and dames of high degree in habiliments all more or less allusive to the occasion.

Hither, also, trotted certain favourite hounds which had been gambolling at large about the scene of the morning's amusements, and, circling round the board, investigated their chance of largess in the faces of its hundred occupants. One, however, a young blood-hound, seemed to attach itself solely to its youthful mistress, who presided (the observed of all observers) over the centre table; couching with a demure gravity at her side, and utterly impassive to the impertinent uproar of the bipeds and quadrupeds around.

The scene recurs to me as though it were but of yesterday. It was one of the merriest banquets I ever witnessed; and when the lady portion of the company had retired with their fair president, a scene of boisterous revelry ensued, which incapacitated many a willing pair of legs for the dances under the greenwood that wound up the festivities of the day.

At length evening began to trace her sober heraldry on the green surface of the park, and well satisfied with the joyous scenes I had witnessed I turned my

steps homewards. The path I followed lay along the margin of the artificial lake before spoken of, and which presented a short cut to a mineral well, in some repute for its medicinal virtues, and a draught from which I thought might furnish a wholesome climax to the various potations of the day. The little vault from which it gushed was already in view, when I became aware of a light female figure rapidly approaching, almost at the same instant that a deep and menacing roar resounded from an open oak grove in her rear—there was mischief in the sound, and it filled me with a vague dread for the safety of the advancing individual whom, as she drew near, I fancied I recognized. Yes—there was no mistaking that fair and slender form which, winged with fear, now neared me with the speed of a frightened wood nymph—it was my pupil, Lady Laura Farleton. Running towards her, “the bull’s loose!” she said faintly, as we met, almost spent with exertion and alarm. “Look,” pointing to the advancing beast, “it see’s us. O, Mr. Etheredge, we’re lost—it’s mad!” I had a few minutes before marked, as I passed along the little lake, a skiff drawn up among some reeds on its margin, scarce more than a hundred paces in my rear—to this I urged her ladyship to run, whilst I diverted the attention of her pursuer. It was in

vain; the only answer I received was the sinking of her fragile form, overcome with terror, in my arms. Another tremendous bellow rent the air, and I beheld our grizzly foe tearing along, at full speed, towards us—its tail twisted, syphon shape, over its back, and its head level with the ground—the very incarnation of mad malignity. Raising the insensible maiden in my arms, I made with all the speed I could towards the point of safety—succeeded in reaching the lake shore, and depositing my lovely burden, swiftly but safely in the little skiff, had given it one vigorous push into deep water, when I felt myself hurled as from some engine into the air, dashed into the water, and my last moments of consciousness employed in fruitless efforts at respiration.

CHAPTER XII.

I WAS recalled to the use of my faculties which, it appeared, had undergone a serious estoppel, by the rich light of the sunset, as it passed into the chamber where I lay and lighted up my quaintly fashioned couch through niches in a wall of enormous thickness. Upon the latter, wherever I turned my eye, were seen figures and devices of a fanciful and grotesque description. Knights approving their mettle against fiery dragons or felonious giants; forests teeming with wild beasts that might equally have set at nought, the efforts of the hunter to destroy, and the naturalist to define them; and castles

with "loop-holed grates, where captives wept," but where they would have shown more sense in rejoicing at their comparative security amid such troublous and dismaying scenes. Here stood a piece of antique furniture, simple in its construction, but quaint in its appearance, such as children survey with wonder but learn to use with ease; and in one corner of the room I beheld a cradle on which a spider now had spun its enormous web, prefiguring on the bower of infancy the instincts of a less amiable age. In short, everything around seemed to breathe of the thoughts, the sports, and the innocence of childhood; and the deep-toned hues of evening fell lovingly on the little panorama, like a light from the days it memorized, a reflection from the halcyon hours of early life.

To this apartment I was confined by the serious injuries I had received, for the best part of a month, which, as I gradually got better, passed by with but leaden pace. One evening towards its end, after sipping my broth, and running over for the twentieth time the heroic achievements on the wall, which, from some cause or other (possibly a fancy I had of its having been the scenery of Lady Laura's childhood), possesssd for me a pleasing interest, I heard voices on the lawn in front, and, utterly

wearied with my long occultation I wrapped my roquelaure about me, and went to the window. Immediately underneath were the figures of her ladyship and her cousin Cyrus, the latter of whom appeared to be reading as they walked along, from a letter he held in his hand, making (as far as I could collect from the dumb show) appeals now humourous, now pathetic, to his fair companion, which were generally returned with a negative movement of the head, and sometimes with a high tenor laugh in which I thought I could detect a latent earnestness, and even slight degree of excitement. The sentiment infected myself; my spirit, I knew not wherefore, worked strangely through the languor and exhaustion of the outward man, and resting against the massive sides of the embrasure, I surveyed the scene more attentively.

The park of Leighton lay stretched like a map before me, and the sun just hanging over its distant woods, was flooding the fairy landscape with those delicious hues in which the splendours of parting day are so exquisitely mingled with the repose of the coming night. The shadows from the nearer oaks were stealing towards the old tower I tenanted; the breeze was playing its hymns amidst their foliage, and, mingling with its symphonies, came the softened

note of the cushat, like the ejaculation of Nature in her restfulness, the vocal embodiment of her repose.

To me, however, despite my weariness, the tranquil scene without brought little of its own quietude. I felt myself moved in an unaccountable manner by the excited laugh of my young pupil, and the dumb manifestations of her companion.

The idea possessed me that it was a love proceeding; and though the parties soon passed from my sight, I paced for hours along my chamber, under an excitement I could not analyze; and plunged in those romantic reveries that find their natural prey in a convalescent situated as I was. Yet, ever and anon, a silent catechist would enquire, "What hast thou to do with Lady Laura and her matrimonial projects?" and silenced for a time by its pointed interrogatories, I would repair once more to the embrasure, and tranquilize my soul by a fresh draught from the soothing influences of the scene without, till fancy again commenced its unlicensed rambles, and my breast vibrated with that tenor laugh, to a degree that almost led me to believe witchcraft at work in the apartment. As evening wore on, sounds, as of festivity, came from the interior of the mansion; and again I thought I could detect the silvery intonations that had reached me from the lawn—they were

banqueting then, and that fair young creature brightening every eye and receiving every homage but my own. At length, as the tell-tale murmurs died away, I lay down on my wearisome couch and was watching the moon as it rose slowly to its "pride of place," in the firmament, when the sounds of distant music fell upon my ear, and drew me again to the window.

Of the precise quarter from which it came I could not assure myself, but some cunning hand was evoking melody that fell with ravishing sweetness upon my ear. Opening the lattice, I stepped into a balcony which, abutting on the round tower at its point of junction with the newer part of the building, ran along the face of the latter to the extent of several windows. It was from one of these that the sounds proceeded, and near which I stopped to listen.

A voice that I now recognized, accompanied the music which thrills my ear at the present moment as freshly as when beneath the light of an English moon, and amidst the odours of an English May evening, I stood on that balcony listening to it. My curiosity had already led me within the sound of a voice that possessed an inexplicable charm for me—one step more, and I should behold the fair minstrel

herself: negating for the nonce the promptings of propriety, I made it, at the precise moment that the harpist had brought her lay to its close. Attired in the demi-toilette of the hour, a form that might have vied with the fairest of God's workmanship, or the most laboured productions of the human chisel, was reclining on an ottoman—her arm resting on the instrument she had been using, and her eyes bent upon the ground, as though in thought, pensively pursuing the sentiments inspired by her chaunt: a mass of raven hair flowed from her uncoiffed head, and rippled over a shoulder whose snows were dimly revealed by her attire; but an air of melancholy and dejection sat upon her features, which, characterized as they usually were by high glee and exuberant spirit, struck me with astonishment. Could this dejected beauty be the sprightly belle whose laugh seemed still to echo from the ball room?—the ruthless romp who could not refrain from burlesquing her very tutor? It was even so; for I now beheld her heart evincing its emotions undisguised, and sadness in that lovely face was evidently struggling with its native lustre. A returning sense of propriety, and the fear of compromising one so greatly valued, now induced me to withdraw; and fortunately, for I had scarce regained my chamber when my old

attendant entered and proffered the last assistances for the night.

The following day, despite Dr. Greener and his medical anathemas, I resumed my professional duties in the library, and was not long in discovering a very marked change in my pupil's demeanour. It might have been the result of her late fright, regard for my own convalescence, the reserve of womanhood, newly supervened, or some event that had possibly happened during the last fortnight; but the light-hearted gaiety, that had characterized our first interview, had vanished, and was, henceforth, no longer to attend them. To the accident that was still recent in our remembrance, she once, and once only, made a slight allusion; and it was with a staidness and reserve that I scarce knew in what way to interpret. For months, from this time, I attended regularly on the appointed days, bending myself, as much as possible, to the business of instruction, and steeling my feelings, as well as I could, to the altered manner but still fascinating charms of my pupil. Observing a coldly respectful demeanour, I commented freely—now in the language of praise—now of reproof on the progress she made in her studies; though faithless, indeed, was the latter to the feelings which deified, from my heart's core, the all she was and did.

A year might have passed in this way, during which my visits were made with a punctuality guaranteed by that best of all sureties, a good will. The days of my attendance were looked forward to with a degree of expectation that could have sprung but from one sentiment; though of this my conscience yet acquitted me of having given any overt demonstration.

The unbidden joy I felt at approaching the scene of my duties, was, as yet, the secret of my own breast; but keenly would it work within me as I traversed the short league of my daily walk. To the enchanted eyes of love, every object that meets their gaze is enchased in its golden atmosphere. The landscape is invested with a deeper glow; and each particular feature—the trees, the brooks, the wild flowers by the wayside, the heavens above, the turf beneath his feet—appeal to the senses of the lover with an emphasis and force that seem rather the effect of *gramarie*, than the reflection of nature in its true colours and proportions.

About this time, the Ardeapell peerage became, by the death of its last holder—the last, also, of the elder branch of the family—the subject of a tedious lawsuit. There were several claimants, of whom my father was one; with so clear and palpable a right

that, had it been seconded with adequate pecuniary means, would have ensured a speedy decision in his favour. This, unfortunately, was wanting; and several years elapsed ere a final decision was arrived at.

To make the story short, he at length succeeded in his object, and became the lawful Lord Ardcapell for the short remainder of his days. Intelligence of his death reached me not many months since; and the present holder of the title is now tracing his memoirs under the shingles of a backwood shanty.

It was at the commencement of this litigation that my assistance was demanded in elucidating the family pedigree on which my father rested his claim. Records were to be examined, and investigations made abroad; and I was hastily summoned from my agreeable routine of duty for the purpose.

At the close of one of our ordinary interviews, I carelessly notified this to Lady Laura; requesting her, as I took up my hat for departure, to acquaint the earl with the circumstance, and that, as I could not assign any definite limits to my stay, he would be pleased to dispense with the ceremony of a formal leave-taking; adding a humble hope that the result of my labours would meet with his approval. On making the communication, she remained, for a moment, silent; but the colour visibly forsook her

cheek; and the voice of the heretofore haughty beauty faltered as she said—"We were not aware you were about to leave us so soon—had you not better see my father? he will be at home to-morrow—this is so sudden;" and she rested, for support, on the corner of the adjoining book-case.

I replied, that the business on which I was bound would scarce admit of any delay, and that her studies were now so far advanced as hardly to require further assistance from a teacher. (Strange and infatuated speech—it would have been the height of my felicity to have taught her daily for life.)

"Oh," she returned, with a faint smile, "I feel myself very far from perfect yet; but my father, I know, will be desirous of seeing you; he takes great interest in the Ardeapell trial, and thinks the right is clearly on your side. I have, besides, some exercises which you have not yet looked over—if you will wait a moment I will bring them."

In a brief space she returned, and put into my hands the little book of manuscript exercises she alluded to. "You will do me the favour," she said, turning over some of the pages, and as she did so a mass of her raven hair fell on the mutually holden volume, "to correct them during the leisure moments of your travel; and when you return you must, of

course, come and deliver me your opinion upon them, otherwise your duty to your old pupil will be but half performed."

"If Lady Laura commands it, I must and will."

"She does," replied the maiden, faintly but audibly, and extended her hand for a parting salute.

In the exultation I felt at these flattering testimonies of her interest, I pressed it, with the fervour of a devotee, to my lips, and tore myself away from the apartment.

It is needless to dilate on the details of my journey—suffice it to say it was eminently successful; and after a short visit, on my return, to my parents, I again found myself, on a fine Midsummer evening, treading the enchanted league that led to Leighton. As I skirted the well-known domain, and drew near the scene of my former ministrations, my breast laboured with a variety of contending passions. What would be my reception by Lady Laura whom I had not seen since the evening of our interesting adieu? Could any feeling of resentment have been bred by my presumption on that occasion, or would the youthful emotions of her heart continue such as I then interpreted them? A few steps more would determine. The party at the castle were at tea; and, on being ushered into the saloon, her ladyship, with

her father at her side, was doing the honours of the table with her usual grace and effectiveness. A slight flush suffused her face as I entered, and the old earl (who, as my father's prospects, in reference to the peerage, began to brighten, had shewn towards me an increased regard) gave me a very cordial reception.

"Welcome back, Mr. Etheredge," said he, "I fear my girl has made sad lee way with her German during your absence. You must do what you can to bring her up to the wind again in her foreign lingo, before Master Cyrus there asks her to say 'yes' or 'no' before the parson, in plain English; which, I take it, will be some time in the autumn. You must attend at the wedding too, and receive his thanks for finishing off his lady bird."

The latter part of this speech went through me like a shot; and I observed a quiet but saddened smile steal over the features of the young lady at the allusion.

The meal passed less cheerfully than it had promised at the outset, and the conversation became forced and desultory. Cyrus Farleton, who was present, and between whom and myself there was an untold but instinctive antipathy, seldom opening his mouth but to make some sneering sarcasm or discourteous comment, whenever the earl's interroga-

tories directed the discourse upon myself and recent travels. At length the guests, one by one, quitted the room, and I found myself alone with its fair presiding genius.

"You have heard your father's desire, Lady Laura," I said, "that I should again assist your studies; may I hope, it will be your pleasure, to ratify his will?"

"Being a minor, my father's pleasure must, for the present, stand for mine."

"In all conceivable cases?" I enquired, "will it then be Mrs. Cyrus Farleton's pleasure to gratify her tutor by a vote of thanks for his attentions to Lady Laura?"

"For some of the latter," she replied, giving me a meaning glance, "Mrs. Cyrus' might find some difficulty in fitly expressing them,— but, perhaps," she added, throwing a shawl around her person, "you may like to see the park, after your long absence?" I, of course, assented; and we shortly found ourselves winding along its delightful avenues. I ventured to make some allusion to the earl's speech upon her intended nuptials, but it was received with such marked repugnance as to prevent me urging the matter further. For a space of several minutes, we paced the paths in silence, yielding to the elysian

power that had benetted us—my breast labouring with suppressed emotion, and the mien of my companion marked by a tender abstraction, an almost infantine gentleness, which evinced the triumph gained over her high spirit by the all o'er-reaching god, in my behalf: added, to her unmatchable grace, it might have brought an anchorite on to his knees before her, and made me wish that the silent dream which so well indulged my bliss might last unbroken for a life time.

“ I have read over,” I observed at length, “ your exercises, dear Lady Laura, more than once, and kept them by me as a sort of talisman against mishap.”

“ If they have proved such, pray keep them still; would that I could command a spell of similar virtue. Do you know any, Mr. Etheredge, that may guard a poor maiden from dangers disguised as benefits, and enemies who would seal her misery under the mask of friendship? See” she said, shuddering with instinctive dread, “ there is the spot where a young maiden was saved from death by her preceptor; but perhaps he suffered too much from his chivalry on that occasion to admit of any further display of it in behalf of so ill-starred a subject. I fear” she added, glancing with concern at my arm, which its

former injury, aggravated by a recent strain, obliged me to wear in a sling, "that you have scarcely yet recovered from the consequences. See! the scarf, too, has come undone," and bidding me stop, she carefully adjusted the disordered bandage—her angelic bearing, whilst engaged in this angelic office—the meeting after an unusual absence, and the tender influences of the hour—all combined to throw me off my guard, and bending over the fair ministrant, I impressed my lips, with a pilgrim's fervour, on her forehead.

"There, see another item for Mrs. Cyrus, to book against you!" she exclaimed, with an air of mingled rail and reproof; "but I fear I may be needed at the castle; I must now return."

It is unnecessary to pursue further the details of a true-love courtship, to which our interviews were now inevitably leading, or to extenuate what may appear questionable in the circumstances attending it. Love is not a casuist, and being blind, was never famed for scrupulosity; I could, however, plead with a clear conscience, that though unblessed with worldly wealth, which in youth we are apt to appraise at a different value from that attached to it in later life, in birth and breeding, the disparity of our condition was inconsiderable.

Against the presumption of which I might have

been arraigned, I placed, as an off-set, the undue coercion to which the young lady had been subjected from her family, who seemed to be sacrificing her affections to their mistaken views of aggrandizement. Of the earl's consent to an union, there was not the remotest chance; and, had I entertained any doubt upon this head, a note I unexpectedly received from him one morning, enclosing a bill for 100*l.* and politely dispensing with my future services, would have dissipated it. A billet to his daughter, somewhat unguardedly worded, had reached his hands, and awakened suspicion as to the nature and progress of the relations between us. The die had, however, been cast.

From time to time, during the beautiful nights of summer, we achieved our stolen interviews; and at one of these, which I shall never forget, concerted measures for effectuating a step which seemed now the only one left us—a clandestine marriage.

It was on a sweet August evening that I stood waiting the beloved one at the usual trysting-place, an unbrageous oak, in front of the ancient portion of the castle; from which, as it was usually untenanted at that late hour, there was little danger of being overlooked.

At length she approached; her active step

accelerated by an indefinite alarm. I led her, protected by her mantle from the evening dew, to the seat under the witness oak; and for hours we sat in silence, prolific of the most blissful reveries. The moon, the lovers' luminary, had risen over the old castle tower, steeping the scene around in its tender effluence, and imparting to our joys a witching tone, an illimitable scope, that mocked the power, and forbade the thought, of utterance. As we gazed at the antique walls in front of us, their long defunct inhabitants seemed again to people them; and, in the low murmurs of the passing breeze, the spirits of twenty generations to address the last representative of their race. There was her nursery, too, with the cradle and solacements of her childhood—and the nurse's care, the parents' love, the luxuries and endearments of her palace home—her prospects as a lady of rank and expectant heiress—all, possibly, to be sacrificed by the step we were now contemplating—inspired me, for the fair creature at my side, with an impassioned tenderness and sanctity of regard that excluded every sentiment of selfishness.

“My Laura, my own,” I whispered, as I folded her tenderly to my breast.

“Speak not,” she lowly murmured, “my Walter, my own—speak not yet awhile.” Her hood had

partly fallen back, and her features, illuminated in all their youthful glory by the tell-tale planet overhead, reflected the silent workings of her soul as it sought, from the scene around, the scene of all her earthly experiences, and the hour, the farewell hour—in which the past, the present, and future, seemed all to be concentered, their last legacy of inspiration.

At times, some vagrant deer would steal into view, and giving us a startled stare proceed in its noiseless quest of forage; or the owl pour a passing whoop into our ears as it swept on its nightly circuits from its lair on the neighbouring tower. At length the castle clock struck the hour of midnight.

“To-morrow then, my Laura, at this hour,” I said, after we had finally determined upon the long-mooted measure that was irrevocably to unite our destinies, we leave old Leighton for awhile.”

“For ever,” she responded in a low tone, but fixed and presentient look.

“I will await you at the nearer wicket, and if any thing should occur to interrupt——”

My speech was cut short by observing a rough, hairy paw, laid suddenly upon the lap of her I addressed.

“What is it?” she enquired, in alarm, without venturing to turn her head from its resting place on my bosom.

Her favorite hound had tracked us out, and was now showing its endearments in the unsophisticated guise of its nature.

“Ha! it’s poor Norman come to pay his *adieux* to his mistress.”

“Oh! then the keepers are out; for Norman always accompanies them on their rounds. I had better return.”

“At this hour then, to-morrow, dearest?”

A faint “yes” escaped from her lips, and the anxious maiden returned with hasty steps to the mansion that was but one day longer to acknowledge her as its mistress.

So soon as I beheld her enter it in safety, I shaped my course in an opposite direction. Voices, however, were now heard approaching; and presently, one, which I knew to be that of Cyrus Farleton, ordered me, in a strain of vituperation, to halt. By this I felt convinced he must have seen and recognized me, and at that moment, more especially, I felt no disposition to submit to the insolence of my old and now acknowledged enemy.

“Here he is, Blayfield!” he shouted to the keeper, “run to the wicket and stop the poacher’s escape.”

“I believe you know I am no poacher, Mr. Farleton, and I give you fair warning I shall not submit to be seized by you.”

My pursuer (who, I suspect, had some inkling of the secret interview he had so unseasonably terminated) still came on, his manner excited to fury by my words. "Run forward, Blayfield, and stop the deer-stalking rascal at the wicket; by — he shall pay for his whistle this time;" and, coming up, endeavoured to collar me. My temper had been somewhat raised by the various circumstances last related, and a scuffle ensued, which ended in my opponent measuring his length on the park sward, and my beating a quickened retreat homewards. I will not dwell on the precautions I had to observe the following day against an arrest that would have totally deranged our plans, or on the almost intolerable suspense that racked me till the hour of our appointment arrived. Precisely at midnight a chaise was in waiting at the park wicket, and soon after I had the happiness of driving off with my betrothed to the town of Liverpool, where our union was shortly solemnized with due legal ceremonial. Thence we proceeded onward to the metropolis, where we resided for upwards of two years after our marriage; providing as well as we could for our maintenance from the profits of my professional labours. I must not forget to add that the faithful Norman followed its mistress spontaneously from Leighton; adhered to us

through our subsequent movements, and has remained to be my fellow-mourner over her grave. The earl's resentment, at our stolen marriage, we were, in some measure, prepared for; and patiently awaited its exhaustion by time, and the returns of natural affection.

In the disappointed Cyrus we found a far more baleful foe; and to the various annoyances that befell us, from his sleepless malice, seconded as it was by the delegated influence of his uncle, is due the last ill-fated step we took, of emigration; the later results of which your own personal knowledge will save me the painful task of chronicling."

CHAPTER XIII.

I was naturally surprised, and, I may say, not a little affected, at the details of my friend's personal history—a tale of true love under the circumstances being, at the present day, a thing of such rare occurrence as to give it all the history of romance, and enlist my warmest sympathies. After musing awhile upon its import, I laid the sheets aside, and, stealing softly through the silent threshold, repaired to the adjoining glade, where I well knew the funeral of the past summer would leave its significant memento. There it lay—revealed from the surrounding surface by its mound of frosted snow—the grave of the gentle

Laura—the peer's daughter—the prospective heiress—the accomplished beauty. Fresh from the recital I had read, she came again before me, clothed with all its imparted interest—a picture of youthful promise, and blandishment, and love—the flower of maidenhood, the object of universal homage.

And here, O contrast! in this desert spot, unmourned, unhonoured, unregarded, but by one—here, with her highborn hopes, her fascinating charms, her joys, and her sorrows—she lay, thus early, and for ever, sepulchred at my feet. “I'll fated Laura!” I mentally exclaimed; and as I stood beside her snow-wrapped grave, with the pure-eyed stars above me, and the voiceless woods around, I registered my vow, “Though deserted by those on whom Nature asserts her dearest claims, there is one who will lock thy memory in his heart, and realize, for the beloved one left, the fair prospects now closed for ever to thy view.”

Being somewhat wearied with my day's journey, and recent hunting expedition, it was late the following morning when I arose and rejoined my host. The breakfast things were still on the table, untouched; and the little chamber was strewn with papers, among which I found him anxiously engaged in searching, his countenance showing evident marks of vexation.

"I'm afraid," he said, after the usual salutation, "that our evil genius is still following us. I have lost a most important paper,—my sheet-anchor, in fact—though I distinctly remember—but, we will sit down to breakfast, and despatch our business afterwards."

The little Laura came in as we were discussing our meal; and, as she gambolled about our knees, was an object of increased interest to me. She seemed about three years of age, and, I fancied, might be very like what her mother had been at her years, having the same expressive eyes and raven-hued locks, with the artless and enchanting grace of manner peculiar to her age. Poor child! she was but a fragile bark to enter alone on the wild voyage that awaited her; but Providence has care of such as these, and guides, from their gossamer sails and slender prow, the tempests that deal wreck to the stronger-sided cruiser.

On finishing our meal, my host turned his chair to the fire, and, taking his daughter on his knees, said—"You will have looked over my little chronicle?"

"I have read it attentively over," I replied, "and, I think, shall not speedily forget it; it confirms me in the disposition I had felt to serve you."

"It is my intention, by God's will, to return with my chick to England this next summer, as it is there

only that her interests can be effectually forwarded ; but if Providence should forbid this (and I cannot but consider the event as extremely uncertain), this valued charge I consign, my friend, to you. She is the heiress to two titles and immense wealth ; and it is my firm belief, that at this moment, by law, her path is clear and open to it all.

“You will already comprehend matters as far as my memoranda extend—now listen to the sequel. Lord Leighton, shortly after our marriage, made a will by which he disinherited his only child, my wife, in favour of his nephew Cyrus. It was an act of sudden resentment which, sooner or later, I thought him not unlikely to revoke. By late advices from Mr. Dalham (who, poor man, I fear, by my instrumentality, has lost the earl’s favour, and with it good £500 a-year as steward), I am informed that his lordship has fallen into a precarious state of health, and that he believes him, upon what he thinks sufficient grounds, disposed to cancel this adverse will ; by which act, in case of his decease, this young lady will be reinstated in her original rights as heiress. Being, however, but too well acquainted with the character of the nephew, I feel convinced he will not abandon the expectations he has been led to form without a struggle. Now, supposing him thus bent, I foresee

two moves by which he may endeavour to foil us—one, by getting up a suppositious will (he is quite equal to it)—the other, by disputing the identity or even legitimacy of my child. The first may be effected through the agency of boundless bribery and unscrupulous legal chicane; and the individuals to be feared, in this regard, are the party before mentioned, and an attorney of the name of Bolter, whom Lord Leighton (doubtless at his nephew's instance) has employed in the place of his former steward Dalham. He, it will have been, in all probability, who has been charged with the execution and cancelling, if cancelled it should be, of the adverse will; and, in case of his contemplating fraud, will have abundant means at his disposal for the purpose. The other course open to our presumed opponent, it was my object, in this interview, to enable you to meet effectually by means of certain certificates, which, though carefully secured with my own hands only two days ago, are now—will you believe it?—altogether missing. I have searched these papers (pointing to the mass strewn over the chamber), individually, over and over again, and, unless some necromancy has charmed my vision, they are nowhere to be found amongst them. I do not exaggerate when I say that I would cheerfully give up the few

remaining hours yet in store for me to regain those missing documents. Can some baffling fiend be dogging our steps even in this blind corner of creation?" he suddenly exclaimed, with so strong an emphasis as to startle the little occupant of his knee, who looked up at her parent's face in some alarm.

"Do you find," he presently continued, disengaging from his breast a miniature portrait, and poising it on the mantel-piece before us, "Do you find any resemblance there to this little one?"

I certainly did find a very strong one, the difference in age considered, which I accordingly admitted to his lordship.

"If anything should occur to me, I beg you will take careful charge of this, and preserve it to other days for the benefit of its little semblance; who can say it may not, some time or other, do her substantial service?"

"You will find," he resumed, after a long pause, "My friend Dalham a most able and efficient coadjutor, and may rely implicitly on his friendship and good faith in prosecuting the important work I have shadowed out to you. Let him be your counsellor in all things."

Though, in my heart, I thought it but too likely

I should prove his lordship's deputy in these matters. I exhorted him to look on the more pleasing side of the picture, and hope to superintend his daughter's interests in person; "and," I continued, "under your correction, my lord, I would submit, that as we seem almost the sole denizens of this wide district, and the present locality to be unfavourable to your health, we might incorporate our households; and, by your taking up your abode with us at Lindale, be greatly advantaged on both sides, and in many ways. I believe it to be very salubrious, and am persuaded you would find the step beneficial both for yourself and the young lady. (I wished above all things to remove him from the scene of his bereavement, of which every glance out of his window must remind him.) These woods, moreover, during the summer, are liable to extensive fires, from which our water frontage affords an effectual refuge. And, more than all, there are rumours, nay, very palpable signs of a war about to break out between our neighbours and us, and that, too, before many months are past. It is true there is little in these woods to tempt the cupidity of an enemy, but who can answer for the caprices of any marauding band, such as infest defenceless districts at these seasons? Already, I am given to understand, acts of incendiarism have been committed; and,

indeed, met myself, but yesterday, a gang I believe capable of any enormity; and, in brief, I should scarcely lay my head upon my pillow in peace, were I to think you, in your present isolated state, exposed to similar outrages."

"Your proposal, my friend," replied Lord Ardcapell, "places me under great obligation to you, and I will turn it fairly over in my mind. My anxieties in this quarter (parting the dark tresses of his child upon her brow) already predispose me towards it. The snows, however, will, for the present, protect our roof from fire; when the hot weather comes, and it begins to get combustible, I will remember your kind offer, and, perhaps, avail myself of it. I shall hope, however, to see you more than once in the mean time."

Having despatched business as far as existing circumstances permitted, and being anxious to reach home (ah! thought I, for the first time, how much more comfortable it would be with a wife and child to welcome one back to it), I shortly after proceeded on my return—the distance was about ten miles, and, though alone (Jannock having gone forward the day before), I found it but short, my mind being absorbed in reflections connected with my late visit. At the threshold of our abode, instead of a spouse, I

encountered my friend Butterworth; his round face somewhat more elongated than usual, which proceeded, I found, from a calamitous occurrence which had happened the night before under his slack sentryship. Our poultry yard had been completely cleaned out by some 'prowling 'varmint,'—not a wing left. As it had furnished almost the only variety to our salted wintered stores, I heaved a heavy sigh at the announcement—"but well," thought I, "cosa d' America," as a Spaniard would say; "let us make the best of what remains"—and I accordingly solaced myself for the loss by a vigorous attack upon the pork barrel. I determined to employ the remainder of this day in laying traps for the depredators, which I had little doubt were foxes. The range I took for the purpose extended about two miles; and the traps were laid where, on careful inspection of the grounds, I thought there was most likelihood of being a "run." Each was secured to an iron chain, attached to a heavy stone or log, baited with pork, and carefully concealed. The evening came on so cold, whilst engaged in the labour, that I had great difficulty in keeping my hands from being frost-bitten. The thermometer, on returning, I found 20 degrees below Zero. As the year advanced, the cold became daily more intense; though, except

when attended with wind, it was till easily endurable; indeed, there were few days when our out-of-doors' avocations, such as hauling home firewood, fencing poles, &c., were not perfectly practicable, and even pleasant. Often, at night, have I turned round in my bed, and looking through the casement on our starlit, snow-swathed lawn, and the various clumps of trees standing out in freezing stillness from its surface, wondered what, if gifted with the power of sensation and speech, would have been their tale of suffering, when even my momentary exposure in surveying them, drew tears from my eyes and moisture from my nose. Often, too, frequently in the dead of night, cracks and splittings might be heard from where they stood, like the convulsive cries of Nature, extorted by intolerable anguish. Oh, thought I, with a shudder, fair and witching as the scene is to the eye, save me, good genii of the hour, from even dreaming of a further acquaintance with it just now. In the morning, after nights like these, the window would be seen crusted and graved with inimitable tracery—a mere type, however, of the wonders exhibited on a larger scale without.

For several days, after laying them, I regularly visited my traps, and as uniformly found them untouched. On the morning of the 8th, however,

an unusual run of luck was in store for me. I have copied the entry from my diary, which, as I have already taken occasion to observe, I now look on as a very valuable memorial:—

“8th January.—Clear and frosty, therm. 15 degrees below Zero. Rose at day-break, and set out, with my double and Gypsy, to examine my traps. In the first, discovered a red fox with one of its feet fast frozen to the iron plate. Being well-fed, I suspected it of being concerned in the recent larceny on our poultry-yard, which earned him a hearty knock on the head; pelt very fine and close. Proceeding through a wood to my next station, I observed a flock of partridges on a beech tree; quietly approaching, killed three at the first, and two at the second shot; drove them to another tree, not a hundred yards off; loaded and again approached—killed two and wounded two, which Gypsy secured; drove them to another tree, and followed them a third time—killed three with the two discharges, leaving but three remaining, which I was loading to despatch, when I found myself short of wads; tied the birds together, and hung them up in a tree, till my return. On coming near my second trap, spied a dark fur in motion, which made my heart jump; ran up and found a Lucifer in limbo; my gun being useless, despatched him with my

hatchet, but not before he had left shrewd tokens of his displeasure on little Gypsy's neck—it was a young animal, and in very good plight. Trap 3. marks of a bear about this; bait gone; trap unsprung. The next had not been touched, though I had thought it the most likely of them all. In the fifth or last, found an animal of the marten kind, with a most beautiful fur, which immediately filled me with acquisitive desires—released it at once from life and durance, and resolved, on the spot, to set several traps with a view to this particular animal. Returning to the place where I had staged my partridges, found, to my astonishment, quietly seated in a fork of the beech tree, a fine black bear busily engaged in feasting on my game. Not being in a condition to do battle for my rights, I repaired with all haste to the Cote, where, by good-luck, I found Jannock just come in. Having put our arms with the utmost despatch into a state for service, sallied forth again in quest of Bruin, who, on seeing us approach, leisurely descended from his post, and made off towards the woods. A long shot from the hunter brought him to a stand, and Gypsy, running in, held him at bay till he could load again. We then advanced once more. Our quarry now stood on its hind legs, shewing a very ugly front and a deal of malice in its movements.

“ Fire at the cretur’s head ! ” cried Jannock, “ and save the pelt. ” Fire at his head, I accordingly did, and lodged a bullet in it, which brought him down on to his four legs, and presently, still lower, on to his broadside, dead. It was with no little exultation that I now, with Jannock’s aid, brought the product of my day’s work before the rejoicing eyes of Butterworth, viz: — One bear (weight about 300lbs.); one loup cervier, one red fox, one marten, partridges, 3½ brace.

Among the winter diversions I had looked forward to, with much expectation, was skating, for which our little Loch promised to be an admirable arena.

It was only, however, during the early winter frosts, that anything of the kind was practicable. Alternate thaws and gales soon broke up the level plane of ice, which, ere long, presented a chaotic surface to the eye, instead of the mirror-like sheet that had yielded us our short-lived pastime. Then came the falling snows, which, at the time we have arrived at, lay full four feet deep, powdered by a top dressing of frozen particles, as dry as dust, and sharp as needles; and offering, altogether, but indifferent skating ground through the remainder of the season.

In this dearth of diversions, our almost sole out-

of-door resource was, consequently, the chase; which, accompanied sometimes by Jannock, and not unfrequently alone, I followed with much ardour during the depth of our long winter.

Equipped with my gun, blanket, and provisions (for past experience had not been wholly lost on me,) I penetrated the country in manifold directions, but more especially that of the Hawkshead, which I thoroughly explored, often passing the night amidst its recesses; and, from that vantage ground, enjoying magnificent views, both by day and night, of the scenery it commanded.

I may truly say, that whilst thus camped in some of its sheltered nooks, with the winterly tableau stretched far and fair below, the weather perfectly calm, and the moon and her myriad "waiting women" shedding their "bright officious light" on the mountain solitudes around, the pine brands snapping at my feet as they cooked a recruiting meal, and my mind, braced by the buoyant atmosphere, agreeably exercised in meditations that best beseem the lonely muse, I have passed moments of that pure delight which tints the web of life with some of its fairest and most lasting hues. That these excursions were often attended with privation, and, occasionally, with danger, was to have been expected; in illustration

of which, marked as it was by somewhat extraordinary circumstances, I will relate the following adventure:—

Proceeding one evening homewards, after a two days' absence in exploring a portion of the mountain (till then but little visited), I was descending one of its snowy slopes when, momentarily beguiled of my caution by catching a glimpse of a figure in motion on our lawn, I felt myself suddenly precipitated to a great depth; and with a shock that for a length of time left me insensible. On coming to myself, I found I was at the bottom of a gloomy cleft, some yard or two wide, and extending in length further than by that dim light I could well determine. Above, but at a considerable height, stretched a long faint streak of light, pierced, immediately over my head, by a single aperture, which was that made by my most unwilling agency in descending to my present position. This line of light was the mouth of the fissure, over which the mid-winter snow lay in a continuous sheet, diffusing, through the chasm, a local twilight that was already rapidly deepening into darkness. As my eyes, however, became familiarized with the new medium, they discovered to me that the walls on either hand, were rock; and ascended, flanging inward, apparently to the height

of some thirty feet, without any visible break or inequality. I was exceedingly bruised and shaken by my fall, but as I lay on my side chafing the injured parts, and ever and anon casting a glance aloft, the prevailing sentiment on my mind was one of unmeasured wonder at having escaped with life.

That I did so, was chiefly owing to the bottom being composed of a soft sandy earth, and my having fallen clear of the few stones that encumbered it. My bones and joints, though shrewdly shaken, were still whole; and I felt, at the bottom of my dungeon, that I had great reason to thank an all-merciful Providence, first, for the non-extinction of life, and secondly, for the retention of those powers by which, if at all, I was to be restored to its enjoyments.

By the little light that was left, I hobbled a few yards with much pain along the chasm, anxiously searching for some appearance of an outlet. The rocky walls, however, preserved, throughout, their uniform outline of self-evident inaccessibility; and I was on the point of giving up my search till morning, when a dark opening, like a cavern mouth, met my eye, and induced me to prolong my efforts a few moments in that direction.

Here I found, however, all in utter darkness; and

was in the act of turning from its repellent shades into the comparative cheerfulness of the main ravine, when, to my great consternation, I discovered two pairs of glowing eyeballs rolling and scintillating in the dark depths of the cave. The reader will scarce need be told that after this revelation I was not long in retracing my steps to its mouth ; indeed, I know no nostrum that could have so suddenly infused life and activity into my members.

Here was a complication of dangers. I was not only imprisoned, but that in the den of some dangerous wild beast, and as I retreated to the spot where I had left my gun (broken, unfortunately, by my fall), the dim sepulchral light, the still remorseless crags, proof alike against exit and appeal, and the remoteness and hopelessness of all succour, carried home to my mind, in full force, the desperate nature of my situation. Nerved, however, by its very extremity, I set to work, as well as I could in the darkness, to repair my fractured piece, the only apparent means of safety that remained. It was completely snapped in two at what is called the grip. This I now spliced with string, and having rendered the piece in some sort serviceable, sat down, in the most defensible position I could find, to pass the night, preparing myself by a short prayer for whatever events it

might bring forth. Slowly and shiveringly it passed away—the two or three stars that came in succession across the aperture, telling of its tardy advance towards morning. At length the long wished-for light began to brighten the snowy canopy above, and being extremely cold and anxious to prosecute my search for an outlet, I got up and explored the ravine in a direction opposite to that I had taken the night before, that was away from the wild beasts den. For about fifty yards, I found it to preserve nearly the same width (the sides just tangible by each hand stretched out), and then dividing into two lesser clefts, which at length thinned away into mere slits; these were separated by a delta of rock, which, at its point, seemed much lower than the lateral crags, being but some fifteen or sixteen feet; and I thought, that by flinging a line over the thin end of this wedge, I might draw myself up from the bottom, and at least snap my fingers at the bears (for such I suspected them to be) below. Line, however, I had none (save the weak whip cord round my gun), nor the means of making any, unless by ripping up my blanket which, in the then state of the weather seemed matter for further consideration. For the present, therefore, I let it alone; and got out my knapsack in the faint hope of finding in it something wherewith to satisfy

the keen cravings of my appetite. A small fragment of cheese was all that rewarded my exploration, and I was slowly engaged in the conjoint discussion of this with my teeth, and projects of escape with my brains, when, whether attracted by the scent of the food, or that it might have been the "breathing time of day" with it, one of the fell denizens of the cave was distinctly visible in motion at its mouth. On the impulse of the moment (for which I immediately afterwards blamed myself), I leveled my gun and fired, whether with damage to the foe I could not then tell, though the shot and the tremendous echoes it awakened from the rocks about had the happy effect of driving the animal back to its lair. Whilst felicitating myself on this fortunate result, and loading my piece as quickly as I could, I fancied I heard the report of another at a distance; and, accordingly, again let off my own in the direction of the opening overhead, in the hope of eliciting an answering signal.

Presently, to my great joy, I distinctly heard a second discharge, which seemed to be that of a rifle; and, after the lapse of half an hour, little Gypsy's familiar bark on the brink of the fissure, followed up by the steady clear voice of Jannock, who exclaimed "Keep a good heart, Master Philip—help's at hand

—your dog's worth its weight in gold—just step aside till we break away the snow to the rock edge; and then we'll let down the blankets. Are your timbers all sound? can you grip them, or shall I come down myself, and ——?”

“Not for your life. The blankets will not near reach the bottom; and were you to get here, there are a brace of bears ready to eat us both up on the spot.”

I then heard the hunter hailing Butterworth with much earnestness, to hasten up; when, again putting his head to the hole, he inquired with a low eager tone, “B'ars, did ye say, Philip? Did ye say there was b'ars down thar'?”

“Keep away from the hole,” I was in the act of shouting out, at the top of my voice, when the snow giving way beneath him, the honest, faithful fellow came tumbling bodily down, much after my own fashion; falling close to me, and nearly extinguishing us both in his descent. Like myself, he was much shaken, but saved in life and limb by the soft sand he fell upon. Notwithstanding his hardy organization, the shock kept him supine and senseless for some minutes; and I was beginning to entertain some misgiving as to his condition, when, at length, slowly reviving, he said, “Ah, Master Philip, this is more like a bird's-nesting school-boy than a grown-up

mountain man; but them b'ars stirs a body's blood past biding. Whar's old Truegroove? Now, if we don't sarve 'em out gruel for this, the laugh 'll go clean agin us. Whar's my shooting ir'n, I say?"

Luckily for the implement in question, it had been left at a safe distance from the place of danger; its owner, with characteristic solicitude, attending to its safety, whilst forgetful of his own, on approaching to parley.

As soon as Butterworth came up, after a preliminary caution to keep his head clear of book notions, and his heels at a safe distance from the crevice, he was directed to lower down the hunter's rifle, together with some junks of pork, off which the latter then proceeded to cut a portion of the fat; and with this, and a slip from his kerchief, to make a sort of rude candle, for what object was to me a mystery; and, I may say—engrossed as I was with my own devotions to the remainder of the provender—one as little cared for, as comprehended. These being at length fairly concluded, I appealed to my friend's hived-up wisdom to devise some effectual means of extricating us.

"We are in a fix, Butty, my boy; fairly locked in mother earth's bosom, and like to be forwarded to father Abraham's. At the height you are, we

must seem diminished into boys—that's Shakespere, I take it: for heaven's sake, set your Dædalian wits to work, and contrive some means of getting us out, and that's myself and common sense!"

"Ah! there's the rub, Phil; and I hope its the only one you are like to come by—'facilis descensus Avernii—sed revocare gradus superasque evadere ad auras, hic labor, hoc opus, est.' At present, my Dædalian fancy can supply little to the purpose but this small twine that lowered your friend's rifle—but which it would be mockery to offer as a safety ladder to such a weighty and conceited personage as himself. He was pleased, but now, to descant upon what he calls my book notions; I hope they will at least, serve to keep me at the right end of the rope; if they did'nt, I should think I deserved a good basting from the other one—a more egregious summerset——."

We were interrupted by an explosion, that sounded deep and hollow, as though in the bowels of the rock. Seizing my piece, I instantly ran towards the bear's den, from which my prophetic soul inferred the sound proceeded. It was filled with the fumes of gunpowder, through which gleamed the faint light of a taper, fixed in the cavern floor. Hard by, in a recess of the rock—where it was at first scarcely

visible—I at length discerned the grim face of Jannock, who, as soon as he beheld me, whispered, “This away, Philip, (your backwoodsmen are ever free and easy) this away; now you’ll see so’thing of our mountain tricks—they’re only cubs tho’ arter all; there’s one of the creturs scomfished, anyhow, and bedad, here comes the other.”

A rough rolling form now approached the light in the earth; but conceiving sudden alarm at the sight of its dead companion, bolted abruptly out of the cave, before we had time to aim; and followed, immediately, by us both. As it scoured along the ravine, a lucky shot from my friend’s rifle brought it on to its haunches; and another, from my double, foreclosed further struggles with its life.

“Load ag’in, load ag’in, squire!” cried Jannock, as I was stooping down to examine the scarce half-grown cub we had prostrated; “for if the old uns come and catch us at this game, you’ll need all your gun’s metal, and your own too, to make a tidy wind up of the business. Lord! what lean atomies. Now” continued he, after again carefully looking at them, “I see how it is, as plain as day-light; their dam’s as dead as themselves—that’s a fact; and you are the man as squinched her no longer ago than yesterday sen’night, and now

starvation has done more than half the killin' for us. Hoot! I wonder old Truegrove went off at such pitiful rags, but then how was it to tell their condition in the dark; there's no seeing a cretur's ribs through its eyes."

We were now hailed in condolatory accents from above. "Tell me, my friends, if you yet draw breath in that cimmerician den—how I may best bestead you; say, will this string serve to unlock your labyrinth, like the clue of old did that of Crete, or shall I go back to the Cote, and fetch a supply of cart ropes?"

"Thanky, thanky, Master Butternut," replied Jannock, in a brisk—and I thought rather ungrateful cadence—"it's little the b'ar used of cart ropes, when he came and went from hither, or of small twine either; and where a b'ar can lead, a backwoodsman can foller; so if you'll just keep your moosical notions inside for a short while, Master Rysle and me will pay another visit to the cretur's den, and see what our mother wit can do for us." The hunter's sagacity now led him to a right solution of our difficulty; the true exit being from the place he had last mentioned; and, after worming ourselves through as rough and tortuous a passage as ever furnished egress (to

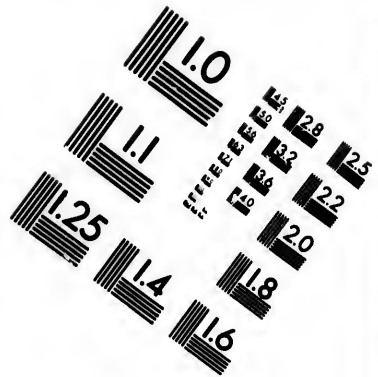
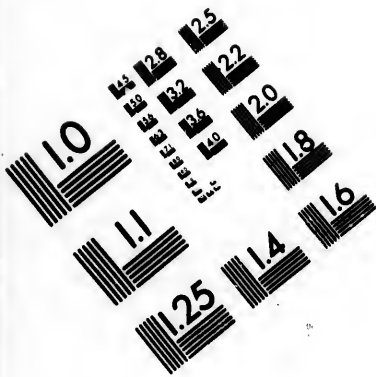
use his own parlance), either to beasts or humans, we broke through the crowning crust of snow, and emerged into upper air, almost under the eyes of our wondering companion.

This was my last excursion to the mountain that winter; the progress of February being marked by furious snow storms, which greatly circumscribed my hunting operations; and the vernal equinox, which set in the following month, bringing them to a virtual conclusion. Strong gales, from the south, then set in; accompanied by a mighty thaw, which dissolved the snow upon our open lands, and so weakened the ice of the lake, as to render the dark ripple of its feeder visible for some distance from its influx. Clear weather then succeeded, with sharp frosts at night, and sunshine during the day, till the beginning of April; when, after a few days of storm and broken weather, winter laid down her long, but blythely wielded sceptre. It will be seen from the above general outline of the season, that it scarcely justifies the dismal impressions that prevail, with regard to it, at home. Though the cold is certainly intense at times, the atmosphere is dry and exhilarating. Rarely, indeed, does a day occur when work may not be performed in the open air; and the chief disadvantage to the farmer is,

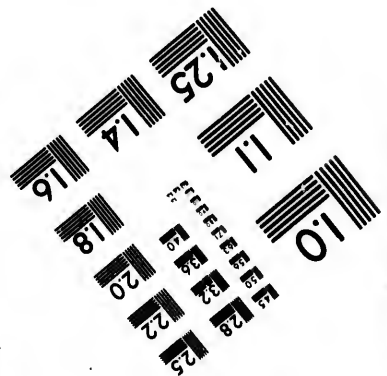
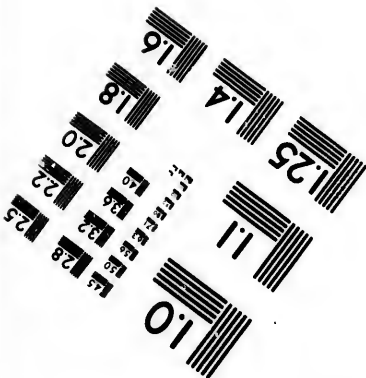
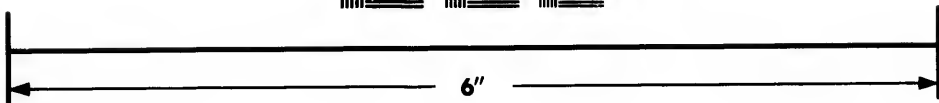
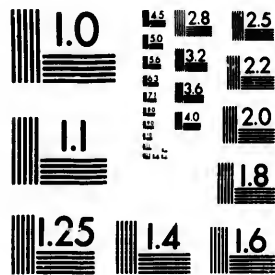
the necessity he is under of making increased provision for his live stock—a ton of hay, with straw, being the average supply for each.

In the month of _____ again commenced our round of farming of _____ vegetation advancing with surprising rapidity, and leaving but a limited space (five or six weeks) for the important work of cultivation. At this time, I purchased a brood mare from my neighbour (such as neighbours are in that part of the world, five and twenty miles off) which, towards the close of the month, dropped me a fine foal; and our resources being otherwise increased (particularly by our autumn purchase of cattle), we looked forward without wincing at the summer toils that were to add still further to our prosperity.





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CHAPTER XIV.

The progress of our narrative has now brought us to the month of June, 1812.

The year had fairly extricated itself from the cold grasp of winter, and, through the enchanting precincts of our settlement, manifested its exultation in a profusion of flowers and perfumes.

On bank and brae, in grove and thicket, on our sunny lawn, and thro' the neighbouring dell, were displayed, in boastful opulence, the triumphal gems of Nature, at length awakened from her long torpor, and quickened, by the fostering warmth, into sudden and full maturity.

Our little island now became a real elysium; the air circulating more freely than on shore, and bringing, with every gust, its grateful freight of perfume.

From this point, too, the full, fledged setting of our lake shore, might be seen to peculiar advantage. Often, as I have lain contemplating the scene at the close of day, have I wished for the pencil of a Claude or Poussin, that I might worthily pourtray its charms for the benefit of those who are conversant only with the tamer shows of civilization. Then the bold rocks, jutting into the lake, spotted and veined with moss and lichens; the gentle slopes between, carpeted with the gay verdure of the season; the graduated fringe of shrubs and forest trees, waving in broad sweeps before the eye; the sparkling streams that poured with petulant murmurs from their glades; the brimming sheet that girded us—here, outstretched like a spotless mirror, there fading away into fairy reaches—whose twilight depths the eye might barely penetrate; our sylvan dwelling opposite, and the savour of civilization it diffused around; these, with the rich light of the sunset (our favourite hour of relaxation), mellowing and enchasing the whole; gilding the white flower, burnishing the red, and, with its westering glow,

giving depth and distinction to every object, would have formed a picture to reward a lengthened survey; and inspire, in others, something of the enthusiastic admiration I have often felt in regarding the original.

Hither, exhausted by our morning toil, Butterworth and myself had paddled, on a certain day of the climacteric month aforesaid, to tide over the sultry hours of noon; when, after making a slight repast on some excellent bass, we stretched ourselves on the ground, and regarded, in drowsy placidity, the scene above described. The cheerful acres of our young crops met our eye, and the two or three kine, we had last purchased, stood looking at us, up to their bellies in water as inert and impassive as ourselves.

The attachment I had originally formed for our sequestered settlement had increased with the pains we had bestowed upon it; and I felt, at this particular time, that, under God's blessing, I could pass many a future month and year amidst its amenities, in contentment and happiness, far from the jostling world—free from its anxieties and disasters.

"Well, Butterworth," I said, as I took out my flint and steel to light my pipe, "we are fairly rooted here at last; there are our crops and yonder are our kine, and nothing remains now but to take

unto ourselves wives, and rear up a virtuous colony in the wilderness. It appears, to my simple perceptions, that this is just the spot for forming a heroic and uncorrupted character——”

“Quem (put in the little man) neque pauperies, neque mors, neque vincula terrent; responsare cupidinibus, contemnere honores fortis, et in se ipso——”

“Totus teres atque rotundus,” finished I, giving him a shove that sent him rolling down the hillock. Picking himself up with some indignation, he said:—

“I tell you what, Ruysdale, the place may do very well for those who have wives, but you and I have none; and to tell you the truth, I find it deuced dull here, drudging all day at the rake and spade, and starving the god-like mind—the *divinæ particula auræ* which—more even than a spouse—may be considered as a man’s better part of its due meed of *nourriture*; for all literary purposes, one might as well be rotting in Tartary, like old Ovid. I believe, too, that bear-hunting blockhead (alluding to Jannock who was fishing within sight, and between whom and himself, as before recorded, there existed something little short of a standing feud) has made away with some of my ‘Ædipus’ notes for his pipe (Butterworth was no smoker), it’s certainly the only way his thick head is ever likely to become acquainted with the muses.”

"Never mind him, Butty, consider the glory of being handed down to posterity in some future Butterworthiad, as the progenitor of a race of heroes and founder of 'Butterworthopolis' *hodie* 'Lindale Cote.' It is true we have no Sabines near to sponge upon for better halves, but, by a suitable advertisement in the Fredericton Gazette, I doubt not, we could raise some fish to the purpose."

"The fish may stay in their pond for me, Philip; give me my books and a towardly mind, say I. After all, a wife can be considered as little else than an appendage susceptible, like any other foreign body, of agglutination and discription; whilst the mind is the man himself, and philosophers opine the condition of his soul hereafter will depend pretty much on the treatment he affords it here."

"You are, then, of opinion, that the soul and mind are homologous entities," returned I, willing to lead him into his philosopher's paradise by its giant staircase of hard words.

"By us moderns, they must be so held, or, at least closely cognate and concatenated, though the glorious old ancients were of a different persuasion, dividing the human being into four parts, of which no less than three were psychogeneric.

"Bis duo sunt homines, manes. Caro, spiritus

umbra. Terra tegit carnem, tumulum circumvolat
umbra. Orcus habit manes. Spiritus astra petit."

"Since that is the case, I ask you, Master Butternut, and request a categorical answer, when your concatenated entities quit their corporeal haycock, (for you know all flesh is grass, which death mows down to hay), in what direction do you expect they'll take, where are they to be heard of, and how are they to be got at?"

"Look yonder—look yonder," interrupted the deep monitory tones of Jannock, touching me with his long rifle on the shoulder, whilst, with his hand shading his eyes, he directed my attention to a figure that stood on the lake shore opposite—

"He's been hailing you this quarter of an hour, whilst here you lie daffin' like two merryanders in a playhouse. It's the young Hemlock, I some think, —put off—yut off, Master Butternut, and ferry the gentleman over."

For some moments, the hunter stood watching my friend's untutored efforts at obeying his behests—muttering splenetically, from time to time, something about "awk'ard greenhorn and paper newities;" then, as he reached the other shore and took in my neighbour of the Far-Pines (for such the summoner proved to be), turned to me and asked —

"Is yon young Hemlock a raal lord, then, squire?"

"That is he, Bryce, a real live lord by this pipe; but I very much fear he'll be a dead one before many months are gone," I added, with a sigh.

"Ah's me, and what will the young fa'n do then, left by herself in this howling wilderness?"

"The young fawn and her father are going to leave us, Jannock, and it's very likely he may now have come over to ask our assistance in clearing out for the old country."

So in effect it proved. I was agreeably surprised at the altered appearance of Lord Ardcapell, the exertion of walking having produced upon his countenance a ruddy glow that simulated the hues of health. After turning round for a moment, and regarding with admiration the magnificent scenery that encircled us, he seated himself by my side on the hillock, and remained for some minutes longer silent from exhaustion. "My time is up," at length he said, grasping me cordially by the hand, "the days of my citizenship in these wilds are numbered, and to-morrow, or next day, at the latest, I quit them for Old England. Further advices have reached me from my friends at home——"

"Lord Leighton is dead?" I hastily enquired.

"Not so; on the contrary, rather improved in

health, and nothing further mentioned as to the will ; but they state that Cyrus Farleton has been for some time absent on the continent, and strongly recommend my immediate return to England whilst matters are in the present auspicious state. Well, I have concluded to follow this advice, and now come to beg the loan of your friend Jannock, for a day, to assist me in packing up my household gods."

"By all means; and I quite approve of your friend's counsel; this is just a case where everything depends upon striking whilst the iron's hot; his lordship's sense of justice may evaporate in the pride of returning health; and should evil advisers gain his ear once more, ——"

"As regards my own personal interest, the disposal of his property is a matter of much indifference; my limited aspirations being already satisfied, and were it otherwise, little earthly chance now remaining of their ever being so; but, as a parent, I consider it an imperative duty to protect and provide for the welfare of my child; were my health only to hold out, I should have little doubt as to the result, but ——" here a violent fit of sepulchral coughing supplied too eloquently the remainder of the sentence. "What a splendid scene is this," he exclaimed, after recovering himself. "To one untouched by the fever

fits of life, a spot like this would be a paradise. On this islet, one no longer feels that shackling sensation that besets me, every hour of the day, in my own clearing (I thought I could give a good reason for this). All my energies seem paralysed by the spirit that pervades that mournful spot. The airs that hymn among the pine boughs, the aromatic fragrance of their cones, the casual flowers that meet my eye, produce, unlike what they were wont to do—for I was once a devout admirer of Nature—emotions of a wild and peculiar poignancy, that set the pulse on the gallop, and would, I believe, were I to sojourn here another six months, verily drive me mad. I have often tried to analyse, and trace up to their source, these strange sensations, which flash through my breast with the speed of lightning, and a potency that, for the time, overpowers every present interest, the suggestions of reason, and even the dictates of religion."

These symptoms, so strongly described by my neighbour, I thought I could account for satisfactorily, by the vagaries of memory awakened by sudden *souvenirs*, the recent changes in his domestic condition, and a moral temperament of a peculiar and, perhaps, morbid delicacy. Not deeming it necessary, however, to enter upon metaphysical speculations, I

contented myself with replying, "The air of this place (though unusually close to night) is certainly lighter than that of the Far Pines, or, perhaps, any other clearing in the main woods; and, could we have prevailed upon you to join our little coterie, it would have added fresh zest to the pleasant anticipations I have formed as to our prospects."

"By the way," proceeded my companion, after a pause, "an extraordinary circumstance occurred last night, which I will relate to you whilst it is fresh upon my memory. I had been engaged in a last vain search for that missing marriage certificate, and was filing my papers by the twilight, preparatorily to packing them up, when happening to cast my eyes towards the window, what should I behold—but pale and bandaged—but, unmistakeable in its fox-like physiognomy, the countenance of my old enemy, Cyrus Farleton! It was but a momentary glimpse; and Fancy, I know, plays strange pranks with us at times; but there it was before me as palpable as your's is now; and, had the oath been tendered me, I would at once have sworn to the reality of the appearance. Though this fair and tranquil scene disinclines one to harbour thoughts of impending ill, I have still a strong impression to the same effect; and it is with no little uneasiness I find myself to day, from im-

perious necessity, absent a few hours from my clearing, with that ill-boding vision so rank and recent on my perceptions."

Though rather struck with the decision and certitude with which he expressed himself, I was inclined, on the whole, to set the thing down, like the other phenomena he had described, to an over-wrought and over-anxious mind; on which the weakened nervous influence, like a slackened check-rein, had ceased to exercise a full and effective controul. I accordingly, in few words, gave this as my interpretation of the mystery, which, without faltering in his own opinion, he owned was that most naturally to be expected from me.

Butterworth and the hunter (who, after disembarking the new comer, had been employing themselves in fishing) now joined us; "Well Jannock," said I, desirous of changing the tenor of our discourse, "What sport have you had among the bass?"

"Why, the fish have had the best of it, so far, squire. The lake's as smooth as a millpond; and I'd engage just now to anchor out on it the biggest scow on the St. John's, with this fishing hook I've been using. No, no, (winding up his tackle) there's thunder in the air, and the creturs of the Lord—

whether in the water or out of it—know, too well, the season of His wrath, to leave their harbouring places whilst a storm's brewing above them."

"Since there's nothing further to be done, then, in the fishing line, suppose you brew us a bowl of tea. Lord Ardcapell will, I doubt not, be quite ready for a cup after his long walk; and harkee, Bryce, give it a good smack of the green, to keep us all awake this drowsy afternoon."

A fire was soon kindled; and, under the stoup of our rustic shanty, the whole group—four in number—were presently seated, sipping the all-reviving fluid, and casting, ever and anon, delighted glances on the magnificent precincts of our tea garden.

Deeper and deeper, by degrees, grew the gathering gloom, and darker, the shadows on the lovely surface of our loch, over which, its array of skirting shrubs drooped like "shent angels" from the waveless strand.

Through the unnatural stillness that had hitherto prevailed, a low and deadened roar of dubious import reached the ear; broken at intervals by dull sounds, as of distant explosions; and the giant forms of definite thunder-clouds rose in the thickened atmosphere, filled with the artillery of an approaching tempest.

Ere long, the wind began to rise in low moans

from the lake shore, and the watery expanse itself to be broken into a multitude of petty billows; as though, fretful at its slow advance, it would rehearse, in sportive prelude, the terrors of the approaching drama. These threatening signs produced an evident uneasiness on our noble guest; who, though scarce well rested from his previous journey, already prepared to set forth on his return, turning a deaf ear to our earnest solicitations that he should tarry till the storm was passed.

Addressing me hastily, as he buttoned his coat over his chest, "I will rely, then, on the aid you have kindly promised me for the morrow; and as my own hunting days are pretty nearly over, and this rifle—taking up a very handsome one he had brought with him—is little better than a show piece in my hands, I will ask your acceptance of it, as a slight acknowledgment of the good offices you have rendered me: it is an unerring piece, the gift of a noble earl, and a peerless lady——"

"Yes," broke in our matter-of-fact guide, "and if you would try your piece now you're gotten it, here comes a buck in the very nick of time; see! ah! that wave has hidden it—there! there! behind you fleck o' foam. What on airth can bring the cretur on this fool's arrand? Stay, (arresting the

weapon I was slowly poisoning) where are it's horns? By the Lord, it's no buck."

"It must be a bear, then," I suggested.

"A b'ar, taking a pleasure dip at this time! You'll sooner find it teaching it's young uns the catechism, I reckon. How bravely it pushes along! egad! that wave was a choker though. Look at it's ears; why that's a dog's head—down with the gun—as the Lord's in heaven, it's the Englisher's buckhound!

A few moments more, and the guide's asseveration was verified by the noble animal he had mentioned issuing slowly from the water; when it staggered, dripping, to where the party stood, and sank exhausted at the feet of it's wondering master. "See how it has torn itself against the rocks," I said, pointing to a deep raw furrow in its shoulder.

"Torn agin the rocks!" repeated Jannock, with the gravity of superior knowledge; "you'll know better than that by and by—that's a rifle-token from the hand of a rogue; but what in natur's this?" taking from the animal's mouth, a fragment of soaked leather, in the form of a child's shoe. In a moment it was seized from his hand by Lord Ardcapell, who exclaimed, in tones of anguish—

"My child! my child! what stroke hath fallen on thee, now?"

I endeavoured to comfort and reassure him, as he passed with impetuous haste to the water side, but in vain. "I know Norman," he replied, to my representations, "the dog would never have abandoned her. My child! my child! what ill hath now befallen thee!" Rushing into the canoe, he put off before I could myself enter it, as I had purposed, and plying the paddle with a frenzied energy, propelled it quickly forward, in the teeth of the rising gale; followed by the watchful, but misgiving looks of both Jannock and myself, for full two thirds of the distance, when we distinctly saw the little barque upset. "There's his death stroke, Jannock," I observed to my anxious companion, "if he never gets another."

"Not so, not so; he's swimming—see! there, he's now got to land, and making along the shore for home."

"Nevertheless, I tell you again, Bryce, that dip's his death blow."

With sorrowful hearts we rejoined Butterworth, whom we found in the garden hut, affording what relief he could to the wounded dog. By dint of wiping, and the aid of a good fire, we soon succeeded in drying the animal, whilst the hunter looked on with a face of indignant solicitude.

"I tell you what it is, Squire Rysle; you may'nt have a nose for these matters yet; but, to my mind, this consarn has a strong smell of brimstone about it. That wound, as is plain to be seen, has come from no friendly hand. Quite likely, it has been the work of a smooth bore, and the blundering tool, belike, has saved the cretur's life. Look how it's scorched, too! Now what on arth can be the meaning of all this?" concluded he, with a non-plussed appeal to us both. The noble hound, as though conscious of having performed its duty, and reckless of human comment on its case, began quietly to lick its injured side; and, I believe, each one of the party formed a fervent wish that the lengthy tongue, employed in the process, could have been gifted for the moment with the power of speech, to forestall the leaden steps of Time in elucidating this new-born mystery.

It presently ocured to me to send off Jannock on the traces of our distracted noighbour, with respect to whom, I could not but entertain the most grave apprehensions.

"That's easier said than done, though," represented the party appealed to, "both you and me saw the canoe upset a good half mile from this; and, unless the wind should set it down this away, the only

chance of reaching shore is by swimming." We went forth, however, to examine into the state of matters, and soon caught a view of the wished-for object driving steadily towards our position before the yet fitful gale, though still several points wide of the direct line. In the course of another quarter of an hour it was within a hundred yards of the islet end, when Jannock having stripped himself, boldly plunged in and brought the hapless barque to shore. The paddle was lost, but luckily that of Butterworth was still at hand, and with its aid I soon had the satisfaction of ferrying my envoy to the other side of the lake on the anxious mission I had entrusted to him; I then returned for my friend, who, with the bloodhound, I shortly after likewise transferred to the mainland.

The storm still held unaccountably off, which enabled us to shoot the passage safely, though now and then some furious little billow would leave its combing in the dancing craft. To the westward, a strangely luminous sky drew our attention, whilst scudding along, as though the sun-set were still rallying its splendors to resist the onpouring genii of the night.

On entering our abode, we lost no time in securing it against the effects of the expected hurricane; and

after drawing a mat to the fire for the behoof of our four-footed friend, I threw myself into a chair, and patiently awaited Jannock's return.

The mind, when thoroughly energized by excitement, and the motive stimulus suddenly withdrawn, is apt to fall back on some favourite, though unconnected, field of thought—some pet theme of habitual interest—and exercise thereon its newly whetted faculties in temporary oblivion of the circumstances that had aroused them. Thus it was that, whilst seated in my arm chair waiting the progress of events, I fell into a deep half-dozing reverie. My thoughts reverting to the days of my childhood, and the quiet Sunday evenings under the paternal roof; when, surrounded by my brothers and sisters, the hours flew by in sacred enjoyments of the domestic hearth. Sleep stealing gradually over my senses impaired the consistency, without altering the tenor of my ideas. Methought the jointly gathered nosegay was again passed from hand-to-hand, the romp and endearment again renewed. I fancied I beheld my mother, in form and habit as of yore, and heard her addressing me in the following words:—

“ Philip! Philip! leave the wildwood

“ Seek again the seats of childhood.”

Then the picture saddened ; the hues of decline were on her countenance, and mournfully she seemed to utter—

“ Philip ! now my days are o’er,
Never wilt thou see me more.”

Anon, the scene was changed ; and I found myself on the sea-shore, watching the motions of a full-flowing tide, as I used to watch it in the days I was dreaming of. The murmurs seemed gradually to deepen upon my ear, and swell at length into a decided roar. A vague feeling of uneasiness crept over me. The deep bay of a hound at first mingled with, and then terminated my slumbers ; and, ere I could collect my scattered senses, the door was suddenly burst open, and in tones that stir the soul to its very centre, the voice of Jannock was heard exclaiming :—

“ Up ! up for your lives ! the woods are a-fire ! ”
After the first mute moments of astonishment, we rushed into the open air, when, despite the vital urgency of the occasion, I could not forbear gazing for some minutes in silent, soul-wrapped awe at the spectacle that met our view. Along the summit of the hill, over which we had so lately been admiring the illusive splendors of “ parting day,” a blazing

band of fire was bearing down upon us with extended wings, devouring the very earth as it came on, and destroying every object in its course, with that sullen roar, controlless power and crackling sound, which may be observed of the king of beasts when rending the bodies of its prey. It seemed the very oncoming of annihilation; and, as the blazing sheet broadened in descending the hill, it might have been likened to a flaming deluge—a fiery Niagara—which threatened to sweep away our homes, our hopes, our very lives, in its career.

Not a moment was to be lost; our hay-grass was, unfortunately, still uncut, and as it almost touched the walls of our abode, and the fire was rapidly nearing it, but little hope could be entertained of the latter escaping conflagration. Butterworth was directed to throw every article of our moveable effects into the cellar, through the trap in the floor above; and this latter, after well drenching it with water, Jannock then covered, as expeditiously as he could, with soil thrown in through the windows; whilst I busied myself in transporting to a peninsulated point at the lake side, a store of necessaries for present use, such as provisions, blankets, &c., which, if hard pressed, might be still further removed to the island. Our live stock was hurriedly driven

to the same quarter, when, with an axe, I cleared away as much as I could of the combustible vegetation around. This accomplished, I rejoined the party at the tenement who, on their side, had done all that human efforts could effect to diminish the chances of casualty, and were now, in silent suspense, gazing alternately at the approaching flames and clouded heavens, whose timely intervention could alone ward off the impending stroke, As yet, but a few drops of rain had fallen; and, as though secure of the connivance of the elements, the conflagration advanced steadily onward, supplied by a parched-up forest with ample and ready aliment.

Here groups of continuous pines seemed to leap simultaneously into combustion; there, straggling trees, apparently beyond the reach of contact, would be inscrutably seized on by the subtle fluid, which, darting from bough to bough, with inconceivable rapidity, would soon wrap the whole in a blaze, and flare in triumphal elation from the top. Through the avenues and open places of the forest, rushed mighty currents of the now risen wind, fanning the blaze to an almost white heat, and producing a roar resembling that of the ocean as it rolls its long swell into a cavern; whilst myriads of lesser flames sent forth, according to their different volume and

consequent consumption of air, a diversity of lighter sounds, blending with the deeper tones in one stupendous symphony, through which the wind piped its howling diapason, and the thunder-clouds above broke forth in frequent and appalling discharges.

At length, the electric explosions deprived the over-freighted masses of their cohesive principle, and to the scanty droppings that had hitherto mocked our hopes, a sudden deluge succeeded which, at the eleventh hour, promised fully to realize them. It was what might be called a pivot-moment of life, on which a man's whole fortunes are often found to turn, and his head and his heart not uncommonly with them.

"Aye, here it comes, at last!" exclaimed Jannock, as he retreated from the downfall to the shelter of our threshold. "And you'll have to do your own mowing, after all, squire. It has been a neck and neck affair though. Yon grass in the swale has got a singeing that 'll leave little for the scythe—but the fire's felt its master; no power on arth could set it alow now, as ten minutes ago no power on arth could have saved it from destruction. But ah's me! the woods have got a whipping they'll never get over, and the old place will scarce look like itself for years to come—hōwsomedever, let us thank the Lord we may lay our heads under our bark roof again:

(which is more than I, for one, ever looked for) and bear in mind his mercies, whilst we open our eyes upon his judgments."

The rain now came down in cataracts, drumming upon our frail roof with a violence that threatened it with demolition, but which to my ears, notwithstanding, sounded the sweetest music that had ever reached them.

Its effects were speedily discernible—the fire was gradually circumscribed in volume, and ere midnight the scene, so lately occupied with its vivid pageantry, had become dark, silent, and characterless.

It was like persons unexpectedly released from the clutch of some terrible monster, that we set about the few duties that remained, ere housing us once more in the shelter so providentially preserved to us; and it needed not the exhortations of our comrade to induce that frame of mind which, amid the extraordinary manifestations of His power, are best pleasing to the Most High, from creatures He has gifted with senses to observe, and an intellect to be profited by them.

As I drove back our cattle to their former lairs, I could not but muse deeply on the uncertain issues of the days of our mortal life; beginning, it may be, with unclouded sunshine, and terminating off

in catastrophes which seem to prostrate every earthly hope, and the far-fixed eye of faith alone can look on undismayed.

Little further conversation ensued after we had entered our habitation, each one seeking his pallet, overcome with the heat and exciting incidents of the day, as speedily as might be.

CHAPTER XV.

Among the various claims on our attention the following morning, one mournful duty stood pre-eminent—that of investigating the fate of our neighbours of the Far Pines; and small indeed was the measure of hope with which we set about it. Our little party discussed their breakfast in unusual silence, each mentally occupied in meditations connected with the recent events, and our pulses still affected by the moral ground-swell they had left.

At length, after swallowing his last morsel, and laying by his platter, Jannock observed, "This

business 'll make a riglar clear out o' this part o' the province. Fri'nd Lane 'll find his work done to his hand, and no thanks craved. Many a fair homestead will now go to the wilderness agin; and young pine trees, by and by, be found growin' among the blackened bones of their masters."

A sudden thought occurred to me. "Do you not think," I asked, "that Lane himself may have had some hand in this affair? You heard what the landlord of the tavern stated, as to his first proceedings, as well as his own threats with reference to myself and our neighbour?"

"Aye, but I scarce think he would have set about the thing after this fashion. It would be like burning the stack to kill the vermin. These fires gets up in many ways—a cearless hand 'll raise half a dozen of a day; now and then, too, the lightening will strike a dead tree in time of drought, when a touch is all that's wanting to do the job, for may be a hundred miles round. If the settlers, in making their pitch, would only keep their eyes skinned, and choose a spot like this, near some lake or sizeable creek, cutting away the nearer lumber, and hoeing up a bit o' fresh 'arth round their logs, a fire like this—though it might damage their clearings—would still be kept out of their

shanties, and many a hopeful household spared to live out their natural time, whose bones—as I doubt we shall find to day—are left to bleach among the pine stumps.”

“You think, then, it will have gone hard with our neighbour of the Far Pines.”

The hunter was silent, and I was obliged to repeat the question. “I somethink,” he then said, in a low but unhesitating tone, “that his time on earth’s at an end; and what I think, since you ask me, I must honestly say. Yes, you may look upon this rifle at your side as the love-token of a friend you’ll see no more.”

“Can no hope be entertained—was there no possibility of his escape?”

“None but the prince of darkness could have got through the flames of last night, after once getting into them; and to their edge I tracked the young Hemlock with my own eyes. No, no—with his clearing right ahead, and his natural feelin’s raised as they was about the child, he has pushed into the fire, and there perished. Well, grievin’ wont mend the matter; all we have to do is, to seek for their bodies, and lay what remains in the ’arth; so as soon as you’re finished, we’ll take the hound and be off.” He then summoned the animal with a low

whistle, but no hound appeared; nor, on searching the chambers, was anywhere to be found; it had been forgotten in the recent confusion, and its absence unnoted till now. "Well, its no great matter, the dog knows its arr'nd, I'll warrant it; we shall find it afore long, on the deadeest trail it has ever yet laid its nose to."

The sun had fairly risen when we set forth from the cottage, on the track taken by the hunter the previous evening, and now shed its clear unfaltering light on a miserable picture of ruined woodlands. The carcasses of lusty pines, bestrewed the ground at every step, prostrated by the blasts of the hurricane; whilst multitudes that had withstood its power, leafless, obtuse, and blackened by the fire, exhibited in an erect position, still more emphatic monuments of desolation.

In the lower formations of the ground, dense mists, the evaporation of the late rains by the morning sun, were still sullenly lingering, as though loth to admit the eye of day to the spectacles of havoc they enclosed; whilst over the whole of the wreck-strewn scene reigned a funeral silence, unbroken either from bird, brute, or insect—by one solitary signal of vitality.

In sympathetic taciturnity, we pursued our way,

begrimed from head to foot by the charred masses through which we had to force it. On arriving at the summit of a hill, about half way between the two clearings, Jannock suddenly halted, and leaning on his rifle, said, "Here it was I first laid eyes bodily on the fire, though I knowed well enough, from the looks of the sky, what was astir as soon as I had passed the Hawkshead. You see yon streamlet, rippling along the swale at our feet; that was the only opening in it anywhere to be seen, and into it the young Hemlock pushed. Why, I some-think I caught a sight of him as he entered. He might as well have jumped into a furnace. From that creek he has never come out; nor, I venture to say, will he be found to be very far in." A low and distant howl was now borne upon the air, which my companion no sooner heard, than he quickly caught up his piece again and exclaimed, "I knowed it! there's the hound, and there 'll be his master; hark, how the cretur' wails! that dog might teach a lesson to many a Christian man."

After striking the stream, and proceeding some hundred yards along its course, we soon found how true were the woodsman's auguries.

On a low point of land, half immersed in the water, lay the object we were in search of; and

beside it the faithful bloodhound ; now in an attitude of fixed observance, and anon wheeling abruptly about, as though, half conscious of some calamity, yet staggered by the unusual appearances, it were seeking for those confirmatory signs so strangely wanting to its chief sensuous organ. Baffled in its involuntary quest, it would then return to the insensate clay, and, raising its head into the air, utter a low lamenting howl ; the dirge of brute fidelity over one who was no longer its claimant, and doubly touching amid the desertion and desolation around.

The body lay on its breast, and presented no signs of combustion, save on the under side, which led us to infer that death had taken place from suffocation in the narrow avenue of air along the watercourse, drawn upon as it was by the flames on either side ; and that the deceased had fallen on the low tongue of ground shortly after they had overrun it, and were still smouldering among the wreck of its vegetation. The clothes alone were scorched, and as we turned the corpse gently over, disclosed in front a glittering object, which I immediately knew to be the miniature concerning which I had received especial charge.

I therefore detached it with all care, and had

the satisfaction of finding it but little injured. We then interred the remains of my poor friend, and marked the spot with a conspicuous stone, brought from the neighbouring stream, that we might again recognise it and erect some more fitting and elaborate memorial.

An equally sad portion of our duties still remained; the investigation into the fate of the little girl. Detaching the mourning dog with considerable difficulty from his master's grave, we pursued our road to the Far Pines with a misgiving and oppression of spirit that we vainly strove to allay, by suggesting various grounds of hope, all too weak to stifle our strong presentiments of evil; and when we drew near to our destination, it was in a silence that too well accorded with the deathlike stillness of the scene that awaited us. A heap of smouldering ashes, represented the dwelling of the late Lord Ardcapell; and the echoes of our own voices supplied the familiar greeting of his household. Around the ruined homestead, the two or three acres that constituted the clearing had been wholly bared of verdure; and the forms of blasted pines, like hobgoblins haunting the scene of an atrocity, closed in the little area on every side, the spectators at once, and sharers of its curse. On examining the burnt fabric, the fire was

found still smouldering among its lower embers, and it was amid the yet glowing cinders of the conflagration that we commenced our exploration for its victims.

Long and carefully—though, on my own part, with a nausea and nervousness of feeling I had never before experienced—we searched amidst the unrevealing wreck, scattering aside the ashes by little and little with our staves, resolute to perform our duties, yet fearful every moment of the disclosures they might result in.

At length Jannock struck his stick against some sonorous object, which, on raising, we found to be an iron culinary utensil; several bones, charred and shapeless, were discovered near it, which the hunter subjected to a keen and anxious scrutiny. He then laid them aside without remark, and resumed the search, which was assiduously prosecuted for some hours longer without any further result either to confirm or negative our fears. Then desisting, he took the iron pan to a neighbouring spring, filled it with water, and, after indulging in a copious draught, seated himself on a log whose comparative sappiness had saved it from combustion; where, resting his hands and head on his rifle, he remained for a length of time absorbed in silent contemplation of the spot.

His figure, in that interval, might have invited the eye and pencil of a Wilkie, as a study of unschooled justice, searching the "hidden treasons of the world," and making a mental recordation of the evidence. At length he exclaimed, shaking his head, in answer to my enquiring looks, "A blind trail, Master Philip—a blind trail, and a black as ever mortal doubled to; but no sign yet among them ashes have I found of the young Fa'n."

"The bones," I sombrely submitted.

"The bones say nothing—they lay nigh the pot, and belike was in it a bilin' for the family dinner; they're 'coon bones," he added, after taking another look at them, "I somethink."

"But these fires are of an overwhelming nature; might not this, with the lives, have destroyed every vestige of its victims?"

"Them 'coon bones seem to say no to that; look ye here, Master Philip—let us open both eyes on the matter; you heerd the young Hemlock, himself, say he had left the Injyn woman with his child—this pot seems to be pretty much of the same tale, falling as it has done with their dinner in: now, long as I have followed the woods, I never heerd of a Injyn burning, be it man, or be it woman, with the legs and arms free. Ruth might have shewn the fire her heels, as

well as Bryce Jannock, when he wakened you up from your dreamin's last night. Lord! how you opened your eyes, squire, when you got out," interjected the speaker, with a low dry cachinnation; "well, it was a skeary sight, and might have skinned an older pair."

"Ruth might have fled, and still left the infant to its fate; even if she had stayed she was but a woman, and with no one else at hand."

"Aye, but that's the very hair of the trigger; there was somebody else at hand, as this dog testifies, with a v'ice that cannot lie. You heerd your fri'nd say the hound would never have left its duties without good reason; and good reason it got, poor cretur, with a wound like that, raking it within an inch of its life. No; there's been a man and a rifle, or some such matter as a smooth bore, as well as a woman and a cooking pot, in this business; and much I fear with no friendly intent, though I cannot think there was ever yet a fiend in the flesh that would have laid deadly hands upon an innocent like that, or left her to perish in the flames of her own cradle. Some of them skrimmagin' landloafers have been here (like enough, Master Lane himself); fired the shanty, carried off the weanlin', and shot the dog to prevent it telling tales."

"But why should they carry off the child?"

"Why? why because they hadn't the stomach to slay her; bad as they are, they mightn't quite like to go to h—ll at a step."

"But how should a dog tell tales?"

"The young Hemlock might answer you that question, without rising from his grave, I reckon."

"But why——?"

"The whys and the wherefores—returned Jannock, somewhat out of patience at my catechism—are known only of a surety to Him who has made the heart of man, and can follow all its windings from their outset to their ind. I only shew you sartain signs which speak plain enough, as far as they go, though that's but a small way. Where the scent lies beyond, the Lord only knows; but truth and justice are good hounds and 'll nose it all out for us some day."

Though cheered by Jannock's arguments, I was far from sharing his convictions, and still kept loitering about the pile of rubbish, giving an occasional poke where I thought it had been insufficiently searched. My companion, however, having come to his conclusion, abstained from making any further efforts, or manifesting a solicitude that would be fruitless.

Settling himself comfortably on the ground against his log, he brought forth his wallet, and proceeded to

discuss its contents. "Come master Philip," he called out, as he coolly forwarded a portion of these to his mouth, "you may give it up, you'll find nothing but the 'gone coon' among them ashes if you was to sarch till doomsday—grievin' I know 's a pleasant thing to a downsome heart, but I never yet knew it quicken a man's wits or help him on with his day's work. A little to your left there, you'll find some pumpkins that the fire has partly run over; if you'll bring one here and can find any more of the 'coon' that's *not gone*, we'll set the pot a bilin', and have more than common doings for our dinner.

"There spoke the old campaigner," thought I, as I obeyed his instructions, though with a stomach but little in sympathy with my task. With the embers of a fire that had devastated many leagues of country, another was shortly kindled, sufficient to cook the simple materials of our repast, which, after doing what justice (little enough on my side) our respective appetites permitted, we placed ourselves in postures of repose, lighted our pipes, and commented more at our ease on the subject and result of our labours.

Among the many virtuous qualities of the Virginian comforter, is that of mitigating the stress of mental emotion; which being the case, it will not surprise the reader to learn that, whilst evolving its

familiar fumes, I felt myself more disposed than before to join in the encouraging views taken by my companion of the dispensation that had brought us hither.

"Yes," said he, resuming his former train of argument, "we shall hear more of this matter sooner or later—but we must brace up; you'll never do much on a broth dinner; meat's the thing for a backwood's belly; b'ar or buffalo; or may be hoss; for you'll find, in this land of Ameriky, people can eat their hosses as well as ride them—that's the stuff for putting force and fierceness into a body."

I smiled to myself as I found the backwoodsman unconsciously following the ratiocination, and almost the words of Hudibras—

"For never yet was mortal cruel
Upon the strength of water gruel;
But who can stand the rage and force
Of him who rides, then eats his horse."

Jannock saw the smile, and attributing it to his favorite "fons malorum," my unrectified "greenness," continued: "You may laugh at folks eating their hosses, Master Philip, but I've knowed the time when I've jumped at a steak of the cretur, as you may, too, some day—aye, and find dog going down your throat to boot."

“It will have to find the road for itself, then, Jannock; and one thing I’ll answer for, it’ll come back again at least as quickly as it goes down.”

The hunter laughed heartily at this speech, and easing his neckcloth about his throat (a habit he had, particularly when laughing), returned — “So you think, squire, so you think; but green as you are now —”

“You think I may be done brown some day, notwithstanding, and descend to dog.”

“Aye, you’ll find it all true if you ever get away to the far west. Now, s’pose a party o’ Blackfoot warriors had been here burning, and scalping, and killing, according to their natur’, and had carried off the young Fa’n to their own country—how far will it be from us, squire?”

“The rocky mountains must be good two thousand miles from this.”

“And you and I, and Toby and Norman here, was to take their trail and follow it up over this two thousand miles, of mostly desert, without a farm or a field to be anywhere seen or met with—human natur’ would soon find it had bowels to fill, but where would it find belly-timber for them? Why—bating a stray deer now and then, or a buffalo when you struck their country—if your provisions ran out—hoss

and dog would be all you would find to stand atween you and starvation. I remember when Steve Wiley and me was out in the Crow country—let's me see, it must ha' been —— . Well, well, (interrupting himself with a slight air of repining), those times are past and gone. Bryce has finished his dealings with the Blackfeet, though if we could only strike the trail of these vagabond loafers, he might shew you some tricks of his trade yet—my word for it, we 'd tickle their posteerums for them afore we 'd done."

A good hour might have been consumed in this fast and loose sort of discourse, each digression winding up with the melancholy theme it set out from; when my companion suggested the propriety of continuing our journey to the Irishman's tavern, where I was desirous of making a few further inquiries upon the subject of our day's excursion.

"It must be two hours past noon," he said, as he re-adjusted his wallet on his person, "but the ground 's so black there's no seeing how the shadow lies—it's a wonder we have seen nothing of the Redskins all this time. Hist!" and laying his hand on my shoulder, he pointed in the direction we were about to take where two figures were seen approaching. One appeared to be the Irishman's negro help, Tim

Timmins, who advanced with unusual hilarity, possibly from seeing every thing around him, for once, clad in his own swart livery ; the other, apparently a stranger under his guidance, who, as he surmounted, in a fretful and unmethodical manner, the various obstacles that lay in his path, we could observe was a short squab little man, with a countenance whose snub nose, supercilious eyes, and self-assured expression indicated a considerable amount of native impudence, though, at the present moment, somewhat deadened and dejected by the dismal scenery and toilsome nature of his road.

He was attired in a suit of black, and exhibited a stupendous shirt collar in which his physiognomy lay deeply imbedded, with an expression which seemed to imply it was the basis of much of his earthly hopes, and that with it fairly up on either cheek he felt "confident against the world in arms." A small sac, or carpet bag, hung from a Bond-street walking cane, over his shoulder, and completed his portrait. The moment he observed us, which was not until pretty close at hand, the grim and grimy (for he had not travelled through the burnt wilderness without getting a taste of its quality) dejection of his features in a measure passed away; and, assuming the air of smug assurance that seemed more

“native to the soil,” he accosted us something after this fashion :—

“Well, my fine fellows, a queer sort of a country this for gentlemen to journey in on professional business—not a turnpike to be seen, with all this wood about, and the parish burned into charcoal under our noses. You seem to take it pretty easy there, with your pipes and kettles, but if you had seen the flames coming down on you in your night-cap, as I did last night (here Jannock gave me a wink), it would have quickened your feelings a little, I suspect. Now, I’ve seen as much as most people, of America, during the last three weeks; and this I say, if you ever catch me setting foot on it again, when I once get clear, you may take and stuff me for a salamander.”

I could see that Jannock, though he kept his habitual gravity, was inwardly tickled at the appearance and address of the new comer; taking upon himself to reply, he observed, “I think you said, stranger, you had seen a most of this new country of our’n—a trifle of three or four thousand miles long by nearly as many wide—may I ask you what struck your fancy, in your travels, most in particklar?”

“Why, my honest friend, at first I was as joyful to see your d—d shores as now I shall be to cut

them: after a voyage of five weeks, one is always glad to stretch one's legs a little."

"I presume," interposed I, "you arrived by one of the ——"

"No, not I, no (this I found was a mere suppletory interjection, which he used without reference to the other party's observations, or even listening to them); I came over in one of the liners—splendid vessels they are, but high fares (however, that's my principals' look out); they feed you like Christmas turkeys. Some splendid women aboard, too (giving me a knowing wink as he solicited, by gesture, a light for his cigar), but, you see, we had such a terrible pitch and toss of a passage, the dear creatures were mostly deprived of the pleasure of my company; indeed, I should scarcely have borne up against the thing, myself, if it had not been for my anxiety to take the small change for my thirty pounds out of the ship's victuals. You may depend upon it, when I left the vessel the balance was on the right side;" and another knowing wink gave effect to the averment.

"You landed, I suppose, at ——"

"No, not I—no—I disembarked at New York, and got most terribly fleeced among those vagabond porters (however, that's my principals' concern, not mine); then, as for a remedy, you might as well seek

a remedy at the fire after burning your hands at the bars."

"And what thought you of New York, Mr. ——"

"Spinks, sir—you may call me—Mr. Lancelot Spinks, of the firm of Dalham and Dobbs, for self and principal, your humble servant to command" (giving me a smart flourishing dip).

"And what thought you of the city of New York, Mr. Spinks?"

"I consider it, my friend, in a state of transition—a mere abstract of a city—a bottle of sick ale—in fact, I know but one merit it has, and that is, the art of compounding mint juleps—though why a neat-handed barmaid could'nt manage the matter as well as your rammish negroes is more than I can understand."

"May I ask if you made a long stay in this same city?"

"Not I, by Jove; you see I had in hand a commission of importance to a gentleman of these parts, but as my mother is always desirous of my enlarging my mind on these sort of occasions, I thought I would just work away the cream of my spirits, after my long voyage, in looking through the country a little, and so to business with a cool head. You may remember, my good friends (if you happen to have had the

advantage of a classical education, though I suppose it's a rarity here), a certain proverb to this effect, 'dum vivimus vivamus' the English of which is 'whilst we live, let us have our fling.' Now, between ourselves, we had been rather hard at it of late in my principals' office ——"

"What does he mean by his principal," asked Jannock, *sotto voce*, "is it his boss?"

"Yes," returned I, in a similar cadence, "a principal is a boss without a cudgel."

"Rather too hard for Lancelot Spinks—so, as aboard ship I took the plums out of the captain's puddings, I now thought an easy jaunt through the more interesting portions of the Union would be no bad set off against a twelve months' drudgery at the desk; besides teaching my principal the difference between an articulated clerk and a hack."

"But might not your commission have taken harm by the delay?" I rather diffidently enquired.

"The law, good sir, has many maxims to settle abstruse points of that nature; one of which is 'nullum tempus occurrit legi;' meaning, that professional gentlemen must take their own time in transacting business. Well, on leaving the city, ——"

"You took, I presume, the course of the ——?"

"Not I, no. I made for the Hudson's, having had

it highly recommended by the gentlemen of the hotel; but found, when I got there—what, do you think?—trees, trees, trees (in a long lugubrious drawl), nothing but trees—trees and rocks, all the way on—trees, rocks, sky and water! Well, you may believe, I soon had my bellyful of this meat, and went ashore for a few days—‘variety is charming,’ thought I, ‘*beatus ille, qui procul negotiis*’—matters, however, just as bad—execrable inns, stinking negro flunkies, damp beds, and black barmaids. I then tried the canal towards Niagara, and not wishing to share the society of your squirting ‘calculators’ (*odi profanum vulgus et arceo*) bought up the boat ‘*pro re nata*,’ as we say in the law, for twenty pounds; but was no sooner aboard, than the dirty double dealing thief of a captain filled it with the filthiest ragamuffins I had yet met with, who, on my remonstrating at the intrusion, called me a darned aristocrat, and even threatened to duck me!—to duck Lancelot Spinks, of the firm of Dalham and Dobbs! if I would not treat them all round to cocktail, which cost me five pounds more—five and twenty pounds for one stage in a vile Yankee canal boat (here the speaker’s countenance oscillated, in much indignation, between his exuberant gills).”

“A very considerable sum, certainly,” I gravely

remarked; "but I suppose, like the other, it would be all your principals' concern (though, if they *had* ducked you, you might possibly have deemed it your own," I was on the point of adding).

"Very true; but how the deuce I am to make it out to him, passes my comprehension. Well, I've been starved in the woods and had to make extra investments in provisions—aye, that must be it—so, being sickened with the canal, I purchased a horse and went on, by the high road, to Niagara."

"And what did you think of Niagary?" enquired the still sedate, but highly amused hunter.

"Oh! a more decent place than I had expected; quite a better sort of establishment, though there were no barmaids their neither, and the beds terribly damp with the drizzle from that confounded cata-what-d'ye-call't. Why on earth don't they dig a canal round the nuisance (its droll enough, too, in the day time), or let the waters off thro' a culvert? But I suppose the poor devils haven't the 'nous.' I dare say, if the truth was known, they're three parts Indian, and the rest jail-bird."

"That being the case, and Niagara being unworthy of your attention, you ——"

"Not I, no; I had had enough of America to satisfy my stomach, I assure you, so determined to finish off my business and get home."

"You seem to have taken a rather roundabout way, though, of doing it, Mr. Spinks," replied Jannock, "it must be a good thousand miles from here to the Falls."

"And corduroy roads, too! that it is, my good fellow, as every bone in my body can testify to; egad! they crack whenever I think of it. Pray can you inform me if a gentleman lives in this vicinity of the name of Jermyn?"

An ominous presentiment crossed my mind as I answered, "I am able to inform you, a person of that name is lodged not very far from this place."

"As my commission has reference to him, I hope we are likely to find him at home this fine day."

"His present habitation he will never quit more: he is dead. I furthermore beg to apprise you, I am his appointed executor, to whom, therefore, any commission you may bear may be safely confided."

"You must excuse me, gentlemen," returned the articulated clerk, with a show of official mannerism, "for observing, that this is an exceedingly irregular mode of proceeding, but as my principal cannot possibly expect me to pass a night among these goblin-like trees (didn't you think that further one nodded to us) and as there is no means in this barbarous region of

entering a caveat, I will proceed upon the supposition as admitted." He then put into my hands a letter addressed to my deceased friend, which I forthwith opened, and turning it against the sunshine read as follows :—

"My dear Lord—for thus you must now allow me to address you—my previous advices will, in some measure, have prepared you for the important intelligence I now have to communicate.

"Lord Leighton has cancelled the obnoxious will; and I had this morning the pleasure of seeing him burn it with his own hands. Bolter is discarded; and his prompter, instead of being on the continent, is at this moment—I have every reason to believe—in America. Knowing, as you do, his character, I feel it almost superfluous to put you on your guard in this direction. Your best course will be (all things considered) to leave the country immediately you receive my present letter, for which purpose I enclose three bills for £100, which you can get cashed at the port of embarkation. Your lordship will receive this from the hands of my clerk, Mr. L. Spinks, who has instructions to deliver it with all dispatch into your own; and will, if agreeable, accompany you back to England. I need not add that my house is wholly

at your service, and my wife will be most happy to take charge of her youthful ladyship.

“P.S.—Lord L., though much shaken by his illness, is now convalescent.”

The letter was signed “P. Dalham.”

It may well be conceived what were my sensations in reading this important missive, as valueless now as the ashes my first emotions suffered it to drop into. Turning to its trusty bearer, and with difficulty commanding my feelings, I said, “It is my duty to tell you, Mr. Spinks, that you have betrayed your master’s confidence, and been the negative cause, at least, of the death of two most estimable persons, whose interests you were especially charged with protecting. Lord Ardecapell we buried this morning with our own hands, and you may be setting at this moment on the ashes of his child; both of whom, had you been faithful to your trust, might now have been alive in their native land. You will do well, sir, for the future, to defer your easy tours till you have attended to the calls of duty.”

Mr. Spinks betrayed, at this address, perhaps as much astonishment as his nature was at all capable of, the black himself scarcely opening a wider mouth for the moment. Disregarding, however, the gentleman’s mental phenomena, and greatly agitated by my own, I picked up the letter and its enclosures,

determined they should be reconveyed by safer hands than those which brought them, and, accompanied by Jannock, proceeded, without further delay, to the distant tavern. The twilight had already begun to swathe the sooty landscape in its congenial pall when we arrived there and encountered our backwood's Boniface at his threshold, grimly surveying the dismal scenery that encircled it. A space of ground (a circumstance that particularly attracted my notice), of, perhaps, twenty yards in width, had been newly turned up by the plough round the log edifice, entirely insulating it from the adjacent pasture land, and thus warding off the fate which had overtaken the latter in common with the rest of the district. Being thoroughly jaded with our arduous and anxious day's work, we went at once into the building, and having ordered some refreshments, sat down with the landlord to partake of them. His answers to the various inquiries we made were, I was sorry to perceive, of an obviously evasive kind, even on points that must have necessarily been within his knowledge; and it was only by some adroit questions, put to the little girl, we elicited a few facts at all bearing on the matter we had come to investigate.

With respect to the supposed incendiary Lane, we found, in confirmation of our suspicions, he had been at the hotel the morning of the conflagration; his

gang attending him, and not since. The Milicete Indian, Toby, had lain drunk under its roof the whole of the same day, and departed at an early hour of that of our arrival. I may say here, he was no more seen or heard of in the neighbourhood of our tale during the remainder of our residence there. Of the wounded stranger, I could get no intelligible account either from father or daughter, whom I therefore desisted from further catechizing, but ill satisfied with the result of my visit. Nature at length claimed her dues, and on a pile of hemlock boughs (a couch much to be preferred at establishments of this kind to their ordinary accommodation) I speedily sank into a slumber that might have defied interruption, even from a second storm or conflagration.

As we were proceeding homewards the next day, Jannock, after turning his thumb over his shoulder several times, shaking his head, and making sundry other demonstrations, as though in silent exposition of the thoughts that occupied him, opened the conversation somewhat as follows:—

“Is 'nt ther' a story, squire, somewhere in Scriptur' of a scrimmage atween Michael and the divel?”

“There's an allusion therein, Bryce, to such an event.”

“And Michael gripped the divel, and got him down, didn't a, and put him in ir'ns?”

"Such is its prophetic tenour."

"Well, to my thinking, the old gin'leman 's got loose again, and been busier with our other Michael yonder than befits the ways of honesty. Can you tell me now, what was the meaning of that s'il so neatly turned up round his 'New Cork,' as he calls it?"

"Perhaps he wished to put in a crop of corn."

"Crop o' corn! he has turned it up, corn and all—no—that s'il tells me another tale. It shews me Master Mike knows more about the fire than he would have us believe, for it 's to keep it from his logs he has made that neat bit o' delving round them."

"Possibly, as a general precaution, which you say is one it is highly expedient to take."

"So it is, squire, so it is, and well he knowed it, for that 'arth had n't been turned up twelve hours afore the fire came down on him—that much I've got from the young gal; and Mike and yon dandy lawyer have been only just in time to save their bacon from singeing."

It was at least a curious coincidence I thought, and he was evidently averse from making those explanations that might have been expected from a leal and honest-minded man.

"Do you think it probable," I inquired, "Leary

may be in league with these ruffians in their outrages?"

"When a man opens his breast to the divel," returned Jannock, with a shake of the head, "there's no knowing how tight he gets hugged; but this you may take for a sartainty—he knowed the fire was a coming, as well as we know it 's a comed; which proves to me beside, what it grieves me sore to think on, that some wicked human hand has fired these woods in malice."

"If such should be the case, and ——"

"Aye," he continued, not suffering me to finish the sentence, "but that's not all; in or near your friend's clearin' has this same fire been raised, be it by whom it may."

"How can you possibly tell that, Jannock?"

"For (without much noticing my question) you'll mind the Irisher told us (ah! Mike, it's hard to hide 'sign' from an old hand), the flames comed up to him from the eastward; whilst, we know, they neared us at the Cote from the westward; and, as they reached both ends pretty much at the same time, over pretty much the same ground, and without particklar favour either way from the wind, it's reasonable to think they set out about mid-way, where we know the dead lord's clearin' te

be—and more still, if they travelled at the rate they was when I met them on his trail, they would have started on their journey much at the same time (going at half speed) as yon scorched and shotten hound did the like, even if we had'nt the pot with the noon dinner in to testify the same thing. Now, I won't say Mr. Lane has been at the bottom of all this; but I *will* say, if it had so happened he had stepped in at your fri'nd's clearin', just accidentally, while he was away at the Cote; and, after helping himself to his spare lumber, set fire to the shanty to hide his divarsions, shotten the dog ——”

“And slain the child,” I put in.

“And, as you say, slain or carried off the child, matters would have fallen out pretty much as we find they have done, and according to Mr. Haggai's well-known gifts, graces, and idees of amusement. If we could only get that old 'coon, at the 'Cork,' to speak out, it would clear away a deal o' brush from the trail; but he'll, may be, have his own reasons for not shewing 'sign;' and there's no making a man's tongue wag agin his will.”

The forester's remarks, savouring as they did of his usual sagacity, made a deep impression on my mind; so much so, that, but for his strong exhortations to the contrary (and every day gave me greater reason

to rely upon his judgment), I should certainly have returned to interrogate our host anew. On reaching home, the catastrophe and its consequences occupied my mind to the exclusion of every other subject; and the more I reflected on it, the more it seemed the result of design, and pregnant with matter of suspicion. The threats of the Yankee reiver, his notoriously dangerous character, the relative hours of his disappearance from the tavern, and of the perpetration of outrage on the home and household of the chief sufferer, the coincidence, in point of time, between the latter and the commencement of the conflagration, conjectured, on other grounds, the probability of its premeditated origin assumed by the hunter, and strengthened by the mysterious disappearance of all who might have thrown light on the matter, or been implicated as accessories, appeared to me to constitute so many evidences of a crime the desolating effects of which now cut away all chance of successfully investigating further.

The following Sunday, after reading over the appointed service (a duty we never omitted when practicable), saw the three denizens of the Cote, seated in solemn conclave, under a wide-spreading beech that topped an eminence of our lawn. An air of exquisite tranquillity marked the day, as though

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Nature itself knew its hallowed periodicity, and put on her fairest smiles to do it reverence.

"To be, or not to be," was the question we were assembled to debate—to stay, or go home; and weighty arguments were not wanting to either side of the alternative.

On the one hand, war had broken out almost at our doors; and its slayings, its pillagings, and its burnings, though thus far averted by Providence, might now any day overtake us. 2. Our force was far too small to cope with any contingency of that kind, and one member of it, to wit, my friend Butterworth, was sorely suffering from nostalgic symptoms. 3. I felt it incumbent on me, without loss of time, to communicate personally with Mr. Dalham on the subject of my deceased friend's affairs. 4. Operating also, in this direction, was the circumstance, that, though much attached to our location, I was now, in a great measure, independent of it as a means of livelihood, from a small competency having fallen to my share by the death of my uncle.

On the other side of the question, the following considerations were not without their force. 1. A natural disinclination to quit a spot wherein hitherto had centered all my earthly hopes and interests; and

that, too, at an unavoidable sacrifice of much property. 2. The entire willingness of our woodsman to abide by us through foul and fair upon the spot. 3. The appeal, still half urged upon my feelings, to make further efforts to ascertain the fate of the missing child; an appeal, however, which was no longer seconded by much hope of success.

Not to weary the reader with the reasoning by which these different views were enforced, the conclusion arrived at, was the following:—In reference to the last consideration, an extensive search—into which our best energies should be thrown—was to be forthwith set afoot, and that done, we should leave the estate for a season under the care of Jannock, and take our departure for England, with the further design of returning to arrange matters more satisfactorily, when time and tide should permit.

In pursuance of the first resolution, we employed an entire week in an assiduous search through the neighbourhood; meeting, agreeably to the guide's prediction, with more than one burnt homestead, and the lifeless remains, instead of the living energies, of many whose co-operation we had counted on for our present turn.

From first to last, however, our efforts were utterly abortive; and relapsing to my former conclusion, that

their object had shared the fate which had overtaken so many beside, we abstained from further endeavours, till the far-ranging eye of retribution should discover some opening into the mystery.

For home, much to Butterworth's felicity, we now accordingly prepared. Jannock was installed chatelein in our mansion, "*durante absentia*;" and, after a farewell dinner, "*sub dio*," on the lawn, my friend and myself turned our backs on the green glades of Lindale, which many a long year was to roll by ere we should revisit, save in the fond retrospects of memory, or the mystic revelations of slumber.

We embarked at St. John's, the 12th of July, 1812, being exactly fourteen months after first setting foot on the American continent.



