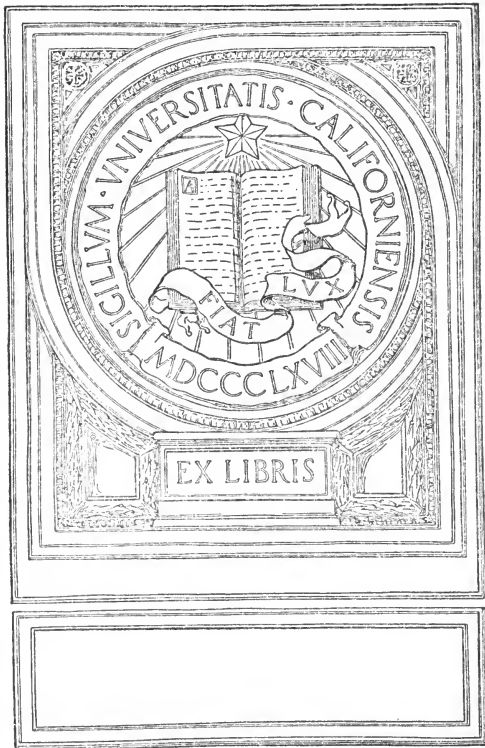


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THE FOREST.



THE FOREST

BY

J. V. HUNTINGTON,

AUTHOR OF "ALBAN" AND "LADY ALICE."

Vago già di cercar dentro e dintorno
La divina FORESTA spessa e viva.

Il Purgatorio.

A milk-white Hind, immortal and unchanged,
Fed on the lawns, and through the forest ranged.

Hind and Panther.

This is the forest primeval.

Evangelina.



REDFIELD:
CLINTON HALL, NEW YORK.

1852.

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P R E F A C E .



WHILE the regular march of civilization, spreading like a “fire among the trees”—to use the fine comparison of a native poet—has devoured the huge forests of North America, and replaced them with cultured territories fifteen hundred miles deep from the Atlantic coast, in the northern part of the State of New York, girt by a belt of villages, rich pastoral, and well-farmed agricultural, districts, lies a region still nearly as wild as when Cooper spoke of it as unknown save to the Indian and the hunter.

A few years ago it happened that I visited this romantic country with an artist. We were both fond of sport, and both extremely domestic in our habits. So we took with us not only

our guns and fishing tackle (although, strictly, I was a borrower there) but also the fairer companions of a summer excursion we were just completing. Naturally, a good many picturesque scenes and lively incidents grew out of this, and as I was then fresh from the publication of a romance, I planned, and wrote the commencement of the present story, while not yet out of the woods.

It was here, in fact, that "Alban" should have begun, and the youthful life of the hero should have been made an episode. The world knows, that, on the contrary, it swelled under my unskilful hands, into a narrative longer than would have been needed for a complete story; and perhaps I ought here to say a few words in regard to it.

It is the mental history of a young Puritan, and the most beautiful and best-drawn characters in it are Puritans, who lived and died such; and if an element of satire mingles in the lovely picture of their piety, remember there is no true satire without a basis of sympathy and love.

It is a glimpse of the human heart, seen like the blue sea off soundings (which has puzzled, and worse, our landsmen critics) with an ugly and awful FACT of human nature ever and anon surging up to the surface, like a monster of the deep, and showing its dark form for a moment in the leaping sun-light, then disappearing to seek its native depths. It makes you dizzy—the unsteady motion, the sun dancing in the firmament, the masts describing segments of circles in the sky, the good ship “heeled over,” and almost laid on her beam ends, under the press of her cloud-like canvass, and threatening every moment to take in a flood over her bows, and the sight of these sea monsters sporting in the brine? Yet out of these visions and perceptions of nature, (our own abysmal nature in a turmoil,) and the struggle to maintain the balance of the soul, spring virtues and a purity of conscience of which the world has but a faint idea.

The sentiment that “underlies” the narrative is the beauty of justice, and its necessity

to man. The most absolute need of humanity is justice—inward righteousness. This intimate and inextinguishable *besoin* of every creature endowed with the capacity of virtue, is that which alone explains the present movement towards a system which pretends to possess and dispense all the treasures of spiritual life. In this view you may perhaps condemn the direction in which relief has been sought, but the thirst itself you must sympathize with and approve. It is *sin*, after all, (if there be such a thing,) that we wish to get rid of, and sanctity that we wish to acquire.

But pray, who implanted this infinite sense of need, and what is its source beneath the sky? Nothing is more certain than that no stream can rise above its fountain. Even the rain descends from Heaven. The tide swells from the attraction of the moon and the sun. Never from nature has proceeded the craving for a supernatural good. The Sun of justice alone by his powerful attraction has drawn up this mysterious spring-tide, — His attraction, joined to the influ

ence of that lesser but nearer Orb, whose light, though only reflected, makes Her "fair as the Moon." That mysterious attraction in the spiritual sphere is called — you know — grace.

Let us not, then, fear to trace this divine operation in a human heart. Let us put aside the superficial notion which demands an earthly chivalrous perfection in a hero. Natural virtue has been the theme of a thousand novelists, and is a pretty thing enough; but infinitely more beautiful, in our eyes, is the virtue which rises on the ruins of natural weaknesses. This is a study worthy not of men but of gods.

But since you like nature, let us turn to her, too. Neither in her forest solitudes, nor in the paradisiacal majesty and loveliness of man, is she estranged from us. Art, too, is ours, and the endless variety of manners in the social state; with wit, if we can command it, and grotesque humour, which the generous and fearless artists of the middle ages built into the roofs of cathedrals; and the grace of the ancient Pagan mythology, which those of Italy, under the

patronage of Popes, nailed, as it were, like a trophy, to the bronze doors of world-renowned basilicas!

In regard to the present volume, it may be necessary to observe that the scenes and manners it describes are all real, although I have used a romancer's license in placing my Indian village.

The incident of the baptism at the stake, spoken of in one place, is related by *Charlevoix*, but Father Isaac Jogues, who performed it, was not martyred at that time, although his companions were.

This holy missionary was, however, afterwards put to death by the Mohawks, and his body thrown into the river of that name; and those who like to connect other associations than those of mere natural beauty with our own country's scenery, may call to mind, as they are swept along the beautiful valley of the Mohawk, that the body of a Christian martyr has rolled down those far-gleaming waters, when they passed through wild woods yet de-

voted to heathenism, and roved by the fiercest of all the native tribes.

I have also, it will be seen, alluded to another actual character, Catherine Tegahkowita, the saint of the Iroquois, called by a French Canadian bishop, the Geneviève of New France. She died in the odour of sanctity, about the year 1680, and many miraculous cures are affirmed to have been wrought at her tomb. About the same time, or rather a little subsequently, arose the persecution in which many of her nation and of her own sex suffered death and tortures for the name of Christ, in the manner spoken of in the story, where, indeed, the circumstances are much softened.

I must also acknowledge my obligation to Mr. Headley's "Life in the Woods" for one striking incident, and in one place for a trait of description so beautiful that I could not resist the theft. It is so long since I read the book that I have a right, perhaps, to use any thing that I remember.

The *moral* of the present tale, or continua-

tion of a tale, is the old adage that *Matches are made in Heaven*:—for this is a love-story, or if you please, the *dénouement* and unknott~~ing~~ of one. A true-lovers'-knot will never untie, till it is pulled in a particular way, and then it slips as easily as a common bow. So, despite the above-quoted article of all true lovers' faith, you must expect the sweet and chainless human will to have its play; and may the practical deduction of every one of us be, that in all circumstances it is best to make not only a just, but a generous use of ours, leaving the result to the boundless resources of the All-good.

NEW YORK, *Sept.*, 1852.

THE FOREST.

CHAPTER I.

An lateat silvis?
Dum dubitat, vidère canes; primusque Melampus,
Ichnobatesque sagax latratu signa dedère.

OVID.

An hour passed by without a sign
Of buck or doe in range appearing.

Vigil of Faith.

IT was one of the first days of October; the hour was about three, *post meridiem*. A thick, whitish mist, the clearing off of the equinoctial, had veiled the sky all day, sometimes had descended in heavy showers, always had curtained the summits of the sweeping mountains, and made opaque the motionless lakes, rendering faint and uncertain the reflection of their wild islets and wilder shores, thick with virgin forests,

then just in the perfection of that autumnal glory peculiar to the western hemisphere. So rich and vivid, indeed, were the tints of the boundless foliage, that even under that sullen fog the nearer shores of the lakes and slopes of the mountains seemed bathed in a glowing sunset. The patches of hemlock winding among the frost-dyed deciduous trees, appeared like the shadows of clouds on a lofty hill-side.

The mountains were the branching spurs of the great Adirondack chain, which runs south-westerly from the northern extremity of the state of New York, and divides the waters which fall into the Atlantic from those which empty into Lake Ontario. The lakes imbosomed in their deep locks, and the innumerable sisters of which freshen all the recesses of the Adirondack, pour out their abounding waters chiefly through the Racket and Sacondaga rivers, giving source in the one to a great feeder of the St. Lawrence, and constituting, through the other, the high reservoirs of the Hudson.

But your attention is more immediately directed to a thickly-wooded point at the lower end, or *outlet*, of one of these wild lakes. Pine, spruce, hemlock, and cedar, here mingle their stiff branches and dark foliage with oaks, beeches and maples, as if they were all of the same race. Below, the scene is

choked with underwood and huge fallen trunks; some deeply-mossed and decaying, others newly fallen. As the light grows stronger by gazing, you perceive, sitting upon one of the latter, a man, apparently (as novelists say) of middle age. He was not remarkable in height. A spare, but well-proportioned frame, was set off by a hunter's dress of dark gray cloth, with large pockets and huge horn buttons, carved with stags and guns. Beneath his fur cap appeared a sufficient quantity of black, somewhat curling hair, a little neglected, perhaps, and a regular aquiline face, dark naturally, but by exposure perfectly bronzed. The eyes of the person we describe were dark-gray and piercing, and their glance was perpetually directed, either over the lake, nearly the whole expanse of which was visible from the elevated spot where he was stationed, or down a particular line through the woods on his left, where a sort of track was distinguishable by the effects of browsing on the green underwood.

Under the partial shelter of a tall hemlock, at some two arm's-lengths from this individual, stood a younger man—indeed, comparatively a youth—taller, and equally slender, but showing a finer type of his species by a more symmetrical development of the shoulders and an elegant massiveness of the chest.

His garb was fashioned much like that of his companion, but newer and more trimly worn; his rather loose and easy hunter's jacket or frock, of dark green corduroy, being buttoned up to the throat, and for a cap he had a large gray felt hat, picturesquely slouched. So far, and in respect of the tawny shot-bag and horn powder-flask slung at his waist, he had the exterior of a hunter or backwoodsman, but his features, refined by meditation, and his thoughtful dark blue eye, as much as the clean gloss of his chestnut hair, and the whiteness of his hands, and of the exposed portions of the neck, plainly testified that he belonged to civilized life. He grasped a double-barrelled gun with a careless air, (a heavy rifle, which evidently belonged to his companion, rested against the hemlock,) and he cast fewer glances at wood or lake; his eye being oftener directed to the richly-coloured eminences that rose to a mountain-height round the shores of the latter, making it just like a punch-bowl.

"Six hours we've been here, Morrell, and have n't heard a dog."

"The rain has spiled the scent," replied the elder of the pair. "I guessed likely it would. Or maybe the dogs is running at the other end of the lake."

"Any way, shouldn't we hear the dog before seeing the deer? For I see you keep an eye always on the lake or the runway."

"Maybe not. Very often the first notice you get is the deer jumping through the brush, and splashing into the water."

"Ah, I wish one would come jumping down the runway," said the young man, looking at his caps and feeling the hammers, which were half-cocked. "I'd have *two* chances at him any way. I say, Morrell, do you never chase the deer?"

"Sometimes in winter, where the snow lies. You wouldn't kill a deer a month, that way, at any other season of the year, unless it was by pure luck."

"We have not had much luck so far. One little doe at Long Lake."

"And that haul of trout at Piseco."

"True; that was splendid. Eighty-four trout in three hours, with the fly, weighing ninety-eight pounds. That was sport, certainly."

"You won't often see better."

"I sha'n't soon forget it. Why, the water was in a perfect foam with their leaping round the boat. Such beautiful fellows! Do you remember, Morrell, when I had two whappers on at once, and you threw down your rod to take them in, that a fellow snapped

at your fly as it lay on the water, and had like to have carried off the whole concern, rod, reel, and all!"

"It ain't every day, at this season of the year, that one gets such a mess of brook trout. But I have eat trout enough for one week. I want to taste some venison. We are *bound* to have a deer to-day, if it is only for the dogs."

"We ought to have something to pay us for standing four hours in the rain."

"Hark! Mr. Atherton," cried Morrell, "there's a dog.—It's Courtney's!"

It came faintly over the water; then it became more distinct, a deep incessant baying echoing among the hills. Atherton showed great excitement.

"Keep cool," said Morrell, taking his rifle from the tree against which it was leaning. "I want you to kill this deer."

"Is it coming into the lake, do you think?"

"Can't tell yet."

There was a sudden leaping of a dark form out of the low wood lining the shore; then a splash. "There's the deer!" said Morrell.

They sprang down the bank. Morrell had to hold the young man back.

"Not so quick. Let him get a little way out into

the lake. If he sees or hears us, he will put back, and ten to one he's lost."

A shallow, fragile, flat-bottomed boat, constructed of very thin plank, and capable of holding scarcely more than three persons, lay partially drawn out of the water, so as to be secured by its bow resting on the sand. Morrell made Atherton enter, and take the seat in the stern; then cautiously pushed the boat out, and lightly sprang in.

"The deer is going up the shore, instead of putting across. I am mighty afraid we shall miss him," he said, paddling out softly and slowly into a reach of shallow water covered with lily pads—the broad, beautiful, dark-green leaves of the water-lily.

For five minutes such was the course taken by the hunted animal, who had come straight down to the lake, and was now evidently meaning to foil the scent by swimming a certain distance along the shore, and then taking to the woods again. But another boat emerged from the shelter of a jutting point crowned with pines, so as to head him off. For a moment he seemed doubtful whether to go ashore again at once, or boldly cross the lake. But Morrell now rose in his boat, and, putting one hand to his mouth, imitated the baying of a stag-hound. The deer, which had not seen Morrell's boat, instantly and decidedly turned from the

shore, and struck across the wide rippling sheet for the opposite hills.

“We’ve got him, by Jove, and a noble buck! As fine a pair of horns as I ever saw!”

Still it was a hard chase; for the deer, soon discovering this second enemy, redoubled his exertions, and, the distance the boat had to get over being twice that to be swum by the animal, the chances were against their getting a fair gun-shot before he would touch bottom and begin to jump again. On the other hand, the rival party, who had been watching the lake, were dashing on to head him off, if possible, and shortly the two boats and the deer were crossing the lake in a line, so that neither party dared fire on their struggling game, for fear that a scattering buckshot might take effect on the other. The deer would have been lost but for Morrell’s tremendous rowing. His sinewy frame rose and fell in the slight cockle-shell with a force that nearly threw it out of the water. They thus gained about three yards on the other boat, and turned the buck a little off his course, so that the three were no longer in a line. Atherton sat in the stern, his gun cocked, trembling with anxiety, and giving notice every minute to his cooler companion of the rapid approach of the beautiful animal to the shore.

“Do n’t shoot me,” said Morrell.

"No," said Atherton, "but I think I could hit him now. Hal's boat is out of the range, but he's a good way off. He's very near the lily-pads now!"

"Fire, then," said Morrell.

The youth raised the gun to his shoulder. The buck gave a little bound in the water at the sight: the boat also leaped forward at the same instant. Crack went the report. The deer rolled round on itself, and the great branching horns sunk in the water. In a minute the boat was alongside, and Morrell had cut the fine creature's throat. Its soft, upturned, beautiful eye met Alban's.

"You've put it into him well. Three shot in the back of the head. By George! Mr. Atherton, that was first-rate. I expected to lose him, fully; and see, in another minute he would have been jumping. Ah, ah! but we were *bound* to have him, for we have been four days at Louis, and we could n't live on that salt pork any longer, no how you can fix it."

Henry Atherton came up, with a guide rowing. One of the dogs was in this boat.

"A fine buck, eh? Good shot, Alban. How beautifully he sank back the instant you fired. One minute so full of life, and the next floating here."

"It was your dog, Courtney," said Morrell, addressing his fellow-guide.

The dog—a stag-hound of pure blood—was already in the lake, and swimming towards the boats. Morrell, showing great strength, lifted the body of the deer into the boat without assistance. The dog was also taken in, whining and panting, and then both parties set out, as they said, for “home.”

It was a row of some two miles up the lake. The sun came out feebly, and gilded the wild scene. All was wood from the water's edge to the lofty and finely undulating ridge of the mountains, except two or three white spots among the deep-coloured foliage, which marked projecting cliffs. The lighter boat first, and then that containing the deer, turned in at a point marked by an aged hemlock, profusely hung with long gray moss, like some old Indian chief with wild gray hair. The boats dragged in the water grass; the guides jumped in, mid-leg deep, to draw them ashore; the young sportsmen disembarked; the guides lifted out the deer.

They dressed it immediately on the bank, feeding the dogs with the offal. The dog which had brought the deer in, lapped the blood. Finally, the saddle, (that is, in the language of the lakes, the whole of the two hind quarters) was suspended by the delicate hocks from the branch of a young tree, and Morrell took the remainder on his shoulders. The young men, who had

watched the operations with interest, shouldered their guns, and Courtney took Morrell's rifle as well as his own. So they moved on in Indian file, by a path, (if such it could be called,) ascending gradually through the wood, and which was indicated merely by a chip cut off from the trees at intervals on the line of sight. In about five minutes they reached a small clearing, or, rather, circumscribed thinning of the forest, where a fire of logs smouldered in front of an open shanty of gray bark, upon the bank of a gurgling brook.

The whole party applied themselves to the preparation of the evening meal. The forest rang again with the blows of Morrell's axe, and the crash of the young trees, as he felled them for fuel. Alban Atherton replenished the fire, throwing on fresh logs with a vigorous arm, and bringing those already half burned into such a position that the air speedily kindled them into a fierce crackling blaze. Live heaps of beech and maple coals presently dropped under the flaming logs. Meanwhile, Henry Atherton had suspended a kettle of water on a forked stick to hang in the hottest fire, and Courtney cleaned a frying-pan, by boiling water in it, while Morrell cut slices of fat pork, which he placed on a huge chip of white hemlock instead of a plate. A tin teapot was produced from the shanty, and promised a grateful beverage.

A great piece of bark, laid on four uprights stuck in the ground, and much warped by rain, was the table, and a log served for chairs. White chips were the plates. While Henry was cutting bread taken from a canvass bag, and Alban was producing some white sugar from a brown paper, voices were heard at the water-side: the dogs barked; presently the newcomers appeared—St. Clair, and the guide who had put out the dogs. This arrival produced a hubbub of conversation; questions about the deer; about the other dog who had chased a noble buck into Piseco, as the new guide averred; and congratulations from St. Clair on Alban's success.

In the midst of this the three cousins seated themselves at the bark table, and the guides served their repast. The first course was brook trout:—the delicious yellow meat was offered in the frying-pan by Courtney. Morrell filled the teacups with rude civility. This was followed by steaks of venison, made tender by pounding, which possibly might not have been so savory as if they had been dressed with wine and currant jelly, and served on silver heaters in New York; but eaten with the appetite of the forest and the lakes, were relished as wild meat is never in cities. A pitchy, smoking, bright pine torch, and the flaming fire, lighted this joyful evening meal. The guides suc-

ceeded their masters, and the latter, flinging themselves upon the balsam boughs of their shanty, discussed the events of the day and the prospects of the morrow. The flame of their fire, and its curling smoke bright with sparks, went up before them among the trees.

The shanty, which may require description, was but a sloping roof of bark, laid on rafters of saplings, the lower part resting on the ground, and the other open to the air. The fire was built opposite, so that the heat, reflected against the interior of the roof, beat down on those reposing beneath; for this rude shelter was only adapted for repose, not being sufficiently elevated even in front to allow a man to stand upright under it. The floor was spread with fresh balsam boughs, forming a soft and fragrant bed, whereon the young men and the guides soon stretched themselves side by side, with their heads under the cool roof, and their feet to the fire. The dogs enjoyed a separate and ruder shelter opposite.

But first the guides rebuilt the fire for the night. Huge logs laid one on another, and supported by stakes driven into the ground, formed a chimney back. Two large stones were the andirons, on which the long green maple fore-log was placed. The wood was then piled on to burn all night and keep the shanty as hot as could be endured. The last ceremony on the part of

the guides was to pass from one to another a certain mysterious black leathern, or elastic, bag or bottle, which they applied to their mouths, absorbing a draught probably intended to counteract the danger of taking cold in their bivouac.

St. Clair, who had been tramping the woods all day to help start the dogs and watch the runways, followed the example of Morrell and Courtney, by pulling off his boots and stretching himself upon the balsam to sleep. Henry and Alban Atherton strolled out a little way into the forest, where they could mark the wild effect of the shanty fire. The third guide, Duncan by name, had departed, having a cabin of his own on the other side of the lake, on whose shores he was the sole permanent dweller.

“We could not have brought the ladies here,” said Henry Atherton.

“Oh, impossible!” replied Alban. “What a fearful screech that owl has. You would say there were a hundred fiends in the forest.”

“They would enjoy this scene,” observed Henry.

“The fiends!”

“Who was talking about fiends? I was speaking of the ladies.”

“Oh, yes, they would have enjoyed it, I dare say. What do you say, Henry, to going on to Indian

Lake, before we return to Hart's? For my part, I am just in the humour for it. I should like to penetrate as far as Racket Lake, of which they talk so much."

"If it were not for leaving the ladies so long. They would think it was hardly treating them fairly."

"We should be gone two weeks instead of one. That would not be much. But I think it would be possible, if you wished it, to take them along—say by the state road to Louis, and then in boats."

"What is that moving on the right?" whispered Henry Atherton.

Something was certainly moving among the trees, though concealed from them by brush. The young men held their breath. Presently it emerged into the gleam of the fire, — one — two dark elegant forms defined against a light background of illumined brush — a doe and her fawn.

"Beautiful! do n't disturb them."

A low growl was heard from the *chienté*, (as Cooper calls it,) where the dogs slumbered. The doe started away. At her first bound the whole wood rang with the furious and sudden voices of the hounds; quick as a flash, three dark, sinewy forms were seen flying over the logs and brushwood; the hunters started up from their beds of balsam.

"Range! Sport! Turk! Here, sir! Back, sir!"

The clearing was in an uproar, which it took some time to subdue. Two of the dogs soon returned; the third was out nearly an hour. Henry and Alban Atherton took their places by the side of St. Clair, who had slept through it all. Towards morning the fire got low. Henry took cold, and snored. Alban was awakened. He perceived that it was either snowing or raining. He got up, dragged a long heavy log to the fire, and threw it on. Courtney started up without really waking, helped him with the log, and flung himself back on the boughs. Alban was thirsty and feverish—a common result of a thorough wetting in the day, cured by a venison supper. A tin mug, full of water, stood on the bark table. He filled it fresh from the brook, drank once, and again, and then resumed his bed. This time he slept soundly till morning light. Roused by the clatter of the guides preparing a venison steak for breakfast, he threw aside the covering from his feet, and sat up. By the fire, and gazing at *him*, stood an Indian, in a blue shirt, buckskin leggins, and a toga-like blanket.

CHAPTER II.

Look, underneath yon jutting crag
Are hunters and a slaughter'd stag.
Who may they be? But late you said
No steps these desert regions tread.

Lord of the Isles.

A GENIUS, the lover of tranquillity — playful with a mirth which shocked the solemn hypocrisies of the world, and mingling satire with sympathy in a way that was little understood — presided over the earlier portion of this tale. We were then forced — it was no enchanter's freak — to reverse our wand, and call up from the deep a demon of unrest, with bat-like wings and discordant cry. A veil, not of soft rain-cloud, nor of sunshiny mist, but of lurid and sulphurous fumes from the infernal lake, with many an indistinct and horrid shape, half-revealed on its pitchy volumes, was drawn over our life-landscape. It has been lifted — those who knew not what to make of the apparition should rejoice — and we find ourselves again, after a

brief space, in the sensible and natural world, on the wild border of civilization.

It was a wilder region then than it is now, not only in the depth of its nearly unbroken forests, but in the character of its inhabitants. It was not even then absolutely unvisited by sportsmen, but they were few in number; some scattered Indians and hardy trappers chiefly disputed it with wolves and bears and crowds of deer and moose. The most advanced post of any thing like civilization was a sort of inn upon the neck of land dividing Pheasant and Big Buck Lakes, rendezvous of hunters, trappers, and the few adventurous sportsmen of whom we have spoken, and the proprietor of which conducted a considerable commerce in game and peltry. A few of the more trustworthy and intelligent of the trappers, designated by him, discharged, when occasion required, the office of guides to those who visited the region in quest of sport, and such were our friends Morrell and Courtney.

"How did you find us out?" inquired Atherton of the Indian.

"Me saw the smoke of your fire."

"Why do you wish *me* to accompany you to your village rather than one of my companions?"

"Exactly," said St. Clair. "That is what I should

like to know; for Morrell says that those Indians beyond Racket are extremely jealous of any white man visiting their villages, or intruding on their hunting grounds."

The Indian, after a moment's silence, crossed his arms on the breast, and said courteously, regarding Alban — "The young chief sleep so, and when he wake, do so," making the sign of the cross.

"Your people are Catholics, then?"

"Catholiques — yes."

"Is the white man who is sick among you a Catholic?" inquired Alban.

"*Non pas,*" replied the Indian with quickness. "The sick chief is a long time friend of my people, but he is like the Indians of the South River before the blackgowns came. He offers the Great Spirit only the pipe of peace," — imitating with one hand the upward wave of smoke from a calumet. "But the little squaw down at Saratoga *Catholique* — he say."

The Indian alternated between the dignified and figurative style attributed to his people on solemn occasions, and the simplest broken English.

"Yes, little squaw Catholic," he added, with emphasis

Henry Atherton and St. Clair laughed with one another, and the Indian gave them a glance.

“And he wants some white man to come on with her.”

“Yes, he pay much money.”

“He wants a servant, then,” said Alban, who had seemed to hesitate. “I am not a person of that kind. You must find one at Saratoga, unless one of these guides will answer better.”

“Got very good guide now,” replied the Indian rather coldly.

“Here is a person, Henry, of whom I know nothing but that he is a sportsman, and his daughter a Catholic, has fallen sick among the Indians, and sends one of them to Saratoga to hire some one to come on with the young lady; and the messenger, without even a letter to prove his character, finding me by the way, protests that I am the very individual required. Really, although my sympathies are much excited by the story, supposing it to be true, I am scarcely warranted in yielding to them on such a call.”

“Of course not,” said Henry Atherton, impatiently ramming down a charge of buckshot; — “you do n’t dream of it, do you?”

This rather settled the matter. Breakfast having been despatched, the young men were ready for a fresh start. Duncan — the guide whose cabin was on the shore of Louis — being an inferior sort of fellow, had

been sent on at an early hour, to back the venison killed the day before, about sixteen miles to Hart's, then a mere house in the woods, as has been said, but furnished from the winter lakes with an abundant supply of ice for the preservation of game. One man being required to start the dogs, the absence of Duncan left but a single guide for the boats which were to watch the lake. Each of the young men had already tried a day's tramping with the dogs, and not one was disposed to undergo the fatigue again with so slender a chance of even a distant shot. But Henry Atherton, proud of his skill with the oar, offered to take a boat alone. A son of Duncan's—a white-locked twelve-year-old—undertook to row for St. Clair, and Courtney was assigned to Alban. The Indian maintained the taciturnity of his race while these arrangements were being made, but when he came to draw his birch canoe out of a sheltered nook, it was discovered that he had a white companion and a dog.

“Me hunt, too, at Louis to-day,” said he.

This disturbed the arrangements, but at last it was amicably settled that the Indian's dog should be put out by Morrell with the others, and that the newcomers should join in watching the lake. The white stranger was a man of ordinary appearance, attired in

an oil-skin cap and box coat, and armed with a heavy rifle.

They dropped down the lake. Henry Atherton took Pine Point—the same station which he had occupied the day before; and it was about opposite this that Morrell got out with the dogs. The Indian, gliding a good deal faster than Courtney, went straight to the point where Morrell and Alban had watched the day previous.

“Cunning them rascals are!” said Courtney. “He knows the best place as well as any of us, I guess. But that fellow with him don’t look-like a real sportsman. He has done many a day’s work in his life, I reckon, by his hands, but it wasn’t in the woods. Well, since that plaguey Indian has gone to the outlet, the best we can do is to take the island; and perhaps,” added he, philosophically, “that is as good as the other.”

An islet of rock, partly covered with bushes, rose in the middle of the lake, about half way between the outlet and Pine Point. St. Clair also moored at this station, whence, indeed, the whole of that end of the lake could be most conveniently watched.

“I hope you will get a shot to-day, St. Clair,” said Alban.

“I’d like to shoot that fellow in the box-coat for

coming in to spoil our sport. Your Indian friend, Alb, said nothing about him when he was trying to persuade you to accompany him on a fool's errand to Racket."

"It was irrelevant matter," said Alban. "Indians do not deal in the superfluous."

They were scarcely settled at their posts before the cry of the dogs was heard, followed by a shot—the sharp, though distant, crack of a rifle echoing among the hills.

"Morrell has killed a deer on the jump!" cried Courtney, starting to his feet.

The dogs now continued to be heard for hours, one while approaching, then retiring. It was very exciting, as the appearance of the deer, and probably of more than one, was momentarily expected. Courtney distinguished the voices of three separate dogs. Finally, one of them, the Indian's, appeared among the willows that edged the lake above the outlet. The Indian crossed over with his boat, took the hound in, and paddling back through the lily-pads, put him ashore again at the runway. The creature instantly sprang away into the forest, which, a little to the rear of this point, was low and chiefly of frowning hemlock.

A half-hour more passed. The sound of the dogs was become more faint, yet Courtney restlessly sur-

veyed the surface and borders of the lake. He made St. Clair and Alban get into the boats, in order to be ready at a moment's warning, and allotted them each a portion of the shore to observe.

Alban did not in his heart believe that they would see any thing that day; he felt rather disposed to go and enter into conversation with the box-coated stranger, to ascertain if the latter knew any thing about the man alleged to be sick among the Indians; with this thought he left off watching, and looked up at Courtney, who stood on a flat ledge of rock projecting over the water. Suddenly the latter's countenance changed. He made a slight exclamation, and sprang down the rocks to the boat.

“The deer is in the lake.”

In fact the Indian's canoe was already gliding stealthily out among the lily-pads. The deer had entered on the same side of the lake where the buck had come in the day before — the opposite side to that on which Morrell had started the dogs. It was a buck, with huge, spreading antlers that bore up nobly over the water as he advanced into the circle of his enemies. He was swimming straight across, which of itself showed that he was a powerful animal, and yet unwearied. He had come in quietly and silently, and was so nearly half way over before any body perceived him, that the

Indian was not in a condition to cut him off; but Courtney and Alban, being in the middle of the lake already by the position of the islet, had a better chance of success.

As on the previous day, the two boats soon got into a line with each other and the strongly swimming game. Courtney rowed furiously, but the man in the box-coat played in a frightful manner with his heavy rifle, pointing it directly at Alban, who called out repeatedly — “Don’t shoot me, stranger! Mind what you are about!” And the box-coated stranger, being at the most beautiful rifle distance, dropped the point of his barrel and looked confounded.

They headed off the deer, who scarcely turned.

“He’s bound to go ashore — that deer — ain’t he?” cried Courtney.

“Shall I fire?” said Alban.

“Let drive!”

The report rang. The buck leaped half out of the water, but kept on his way, though bleeding profusely from the neck. The Indian was now motioning to his white companion to make use of his rifle; but it was with some difficulty that the latter could be persuaded, crying out that he was not near enough; but he fired, however, just as Courtney got his boat round again, to head the deer a second time. It was quite in-

effectual. The ball went dancing over the water for rods beyond the buck's branching head. Courtney rapidly came up again.

"Give him the other barrel!" he cried to Alban.

Alban, who was now in a regular paroxysm of the buck ague, fired nervously, and almost without taking aim. The leaden hail rattled among the great tree-like horns, and cut the right ear, but touched no vital part, and the deer swam on. Courtney, maddened, rowed up and closed with him, for the game was now nearly out of deep water, and if he once touched bottom, was lost, for the guide had left his rifle at the shanty. The excited backwoodsman caught one of the antlers and struck the deer's head with an oar. The mighty buck fought with fury. He knocked the side of the fragile boat with his horns; he got under it so as nearly to overset it twice, till Courtney, fearing to be swamped, quit his hold; but the deer also, taught by this short but severe conflict, abandoned the purpose of going ashore in spite of all opposition, and struck out to run up the lake.

"Now we are sure of him," said Courtney. "Load again, Mr. Atherton."

"I have no more buckshot," replied Alban, much agitated. "I never counted on missing a shot, even if I got one."

“Load with fine shot,” said Courtney, wildly.

Alban did so, but came near putting two charges of powder in one barrel, and two of shot into the other. All this had passed in almost the same time that it takes in relating. And now St. Clair hove within rifle shot, and fired beautifully. The ball glanced off one of the horns, and flew skipping over the water, close by Alban's boat. All three boats were now in pursuit, and the box-coat, having had time to reload, prepared to fire again; but just then Henry Atherton, who had rowed out alone from Pine Point, was directly in front of the deer, and seeing the rifle raised towards him, shouted,—“Don't shoot me!”—and the stranger lowered his rifle again, and seemed to abandon the chase in despair.

Henry Atherton now passed to the right and let the deer go by him, then throwing down the oars, took his gun and fired without effect. Although a good shot, and cool in most circumstances, he could not keep sufficiently so in this exciting moment, besides which his arms trembled with rowing. St. Clair fired again, the ball entering the fleshy part of the neck, drawing blood from the silent and resolute swimmer; and Alban, getting another side-shot, gave his fine charge with a steady and perfect aim, in hopes to finish him. But this deplorable shot only

cut the ear almost to pieces, and closed the right eye.

“Misery!” cried the young man, shocked at the sight. “Get out of this, Courtney.”

But now the Indian, following close, closed with the deer, and catching one of the horns, was about to cut its throat, when Henry Atherton, who, having dropped astern, was now come up again, called out, dropping the oars and raising his gun, — “Halloa, there! no butchery! Drop off, while I fire!”

The Indian, not wishing to run the risk of a scattering charge of buckshot, let go. The deer, exhausted as he was by the chase and loss of blood, following still that deep instinct of escape which no hopelessness can quell in a race that God has made to fly from its enemies, swam on with renewed courage. Just the back of the head, with the wide-branching horns, could be seen above the water.

“I wish he could get off,” said Alban, watching his cousin. “It is too bad to kill him after such a chase. He deserves to escape.”

Henry’s second barrel spoke quick and sharp. The whole charge entered the fatal spot just behind the horns. The head and branching horns sank like lead. The Indian closed in again, seized the tail, and brought the antlers to the surface.

"Now who does this deer belong to?" asked the ingenuous Courtney, as his boat came gliding alongside.

"To us, of course," said the impudent box-coat. "Our dog brought him in. See, there he is whining on the shore."

Such was the case. The Indian's black hound whimpered on the shore of the lake, at the point where this noble buck had entered. The latter appeared a gigantic fellow, with a fine gray coat turned up with white, and the antlers, now you could look at them coolly, seemed as large as moose-horns. There were no fewer than fifteen prongs, or tines, some of them very singular. The Indian and his white companion towed the body ashore to dress it at once, as well as to make good their claim.

"They've got the deer, but you killed it any how," said Courtney, looking at them rather blank. "I'm blamed if I believe that black dog brought the deer in. Why, he wasn't out more than half an hour, and it is n't certain that he was after a deer at all. We shall know when Morrell comes."

"Henry killed him," said Alban. "They never would have got him if it had n't been for us, that's certain."

"Certain," said Courtney. "But ho! — there's

another deer! and coming in at the same place! Now I am sure that big buck is ours."

There was no time to be lost in conversation. Courtney's boat took the lead. The point was to head off the deer (at the distance it seemed like a doe or yearling) without frightening him too soon. But in this, notwithstanding all exertions, they were not successful. The animal saw the boats, and turned back. Alban, who had loaded again with buckshot obtained from Henry, fired ineffectually just as the game touched bottom among the lily-pads. The yearling went frisking, and kicking up its light heels, up the wood-lined shore, and disappeared. A dog opened almost immediately among the hemlocks.

"There! Morrell's dog! I knew it," said Courtney.

Extremely puzzled, the hunter rowed quite into the outlet. In a few minutes he came upon his own dog among the willows on the opposite side, and took him in. This confirmed his previous opinion. The two dogs had each brought down a deer—the fine old buck and the yearling, and *his* dog had lost the scent in the outlet. Nothing could be plainer. Discussing this matter, they rowed back into the lake. Courtney stood up in the boat to survey the surface. "I vow, there's another deer in the lake!" he exclaimed.

Sure enough, the little head, with two straight horns like ears, was seen at a great distance bobbing on the water. It was going up the lake. There was another chase, almost as exciting as the former. For St. Clair and Henry, moored at the island, having relaxed their watch, did not see the deer, which passed them unmolested. Then Courtney came up, pulling like a man insane, and they also started in pursuit. Courtney's dog beginning to speak, he threw him overboard. Then the Indian and the box-coat left their booty to join the chase. It was distressing to see the poor animal distracted amid so many pursuers, first taking one course and then another, when, had it kept straight on from the first, it might easily have evaded all. The exertions of Courtney, and the fact that no one else for a long time saw the game, brought Alban first within gunshot, and taught, as well as calmed, by experience, he was deliberate. It was only a side shot, for the Indian's boat had just turned the deer, but it was effectual. It was the same yearling which had come in before on the other side of the lake; a fact that Alban at first could not credit, until he saw Morrell's dog following in the water; both animals having in that short interval swum the outlet and made a detour through the woods of nearly two miles. In

about twenty minutes more, Morrell appeared on the shore with the saddle of a doe that he had shot in the hills; and then it was ascertained that the big buck really belonged to the other party, for Morrell could give an account of all the dogs. In all this excitement Alban entirely forgot to make the inquiries that he intended, of the Indian's companion.

"Well," said Henry Atherton, as they discussed their supper by the red fire and torch-light, "we have had a successful day at all events. Our party has killed three deer, and one of them the biggest ever seen in these parts, you say, Courtney? It happens to have been brought in by the dog of another party; true, it is *their* deer; but we killed it for them, eh?"

"*They* never would have got it," said Courtney, "if you had n't wounded it by that first shot; for if ever a deer was *bound* to go ashore, it was that buck."

"How he fought you, Courtney!" Alban said. "I declare I thought he would have stove in the boat."

"Aye, that buck was bound to go ashore," said Courtney.

"It was a beautiful shot of yours, Henry, that finished him," said St. Clair.

“First-rate!” said Courtney.

“The beauty of it was,” said Alban, “that Hal had first to row, and then to fire.”

“They are welcome to the deer, since their dog brought it in,” said Henry Atherton, complacently. “We have got venison enough; but I wonder if that chap in the box-coat would sell the horns. I’d give him ten dollars for them, Morrell.”

“I guess you can have them for that,” said Morrell, with a shrewd look.

In pursuance of this idea, Henry Atherton crossed the lake with Morrell to Duncan’s shanty, where it was understood the box-coated sportsman was going to spend the night. St. Clair took it into his head that he would have a night row on the lake. Alban sat under the shanty, and stirred up Courtney to tell stories of hunting and trapping. There was the exciting narrative of the first deer he ever killed, when a mere boy, all alone, with nothing but an axe, on Lake Piseco. How he got a rope noosed round the horns, (for it was a mighty buck!) and how the deer got into the long shallows of Piseco, and began to jump with the boat after him, and so on, quite thrilling to hear. Then the way they hunted moose in the winter, and how they slept in the snow; the number of deer and moose they killed merely for the pelts, leaving all the meat in the

woods, which Courtney agreed was a shame; and the horrible, but regular method of hunting the deer in packs, practised by the wolves. Alban could not but reflect on the singularity of hearing these wild stories, on so wild a spot, so little known, yet within three days' journey of New York.

"I have heard," said Courtney, "that in the old countries a man can't go into the woods and kill a deer, without having permission from somebody."

"Certainly," said Alban. "You have heard what is true."

"That seems mighty queer," said Courtney.

Now was heard some loud shouting; the dogs started and dashed into the forest; after a while voices were heard from the landing. St. Clair had not been able to find it, but had happily encountered Morrell coming back with Henry Atherton. They had not effected the negotiation for the big horns, for the box-coated sportsman was gone; but Duncan had returned from Hart's, bringing notes from the ladies. There was one for Henry Atherton from his wife; and another for Alban from Jane, to whom he had gallantly sent the venison he had killed. The last read as follows:

"Lake Pheasant, Oct. 8, 1835.

"DEAR COUSIN ALBAN,—

"I am delighted to hear of your success at Louis. The compliment you have paid your cousin Jane in sending her 'that beau-tchi-ful saddle,' as Mr. Hart calls it, is highly appreciated, I assure you. Mr. Hart has put it in ice. He says it is the finest and fattest venison he ever saw in his life. I shall be proud enough to send it in portions to my friends, who are all yours. We ladies mope sadly here without you and my cousins, particularly Mrs. Henry, which is natural. There are many vows for your safety, and speedy return.

"Your affectionate Cousin JANE."

"You and Hal are in luck," cried St. Clair with some humour. "You have each killed a buck, and each has got a letter from a lady."

"It's a shame that Mary Atherton did not write you a note," said Henry.

"I think she might."

"And so my Indian friend was not at the shanty?" observed Alban to Henry Atherton, restoring Jane's note to the envelope, and placing it carefully in his pocket-book, the pocket-book itself in his bosom.

"No; he went on to Saratoga immediately after our last race."

“That was very ’cute in him,” said Courtney. “He slept all them three hours we was watching the lake before the big buck came in, as them Ingins do, with one ear and one eye open; and now, you see, he will get through the woods by daylight, and foot it all night on a first-rate road, with a moon till four o’clock. Won’t he be walking into Saratoga by daybreak? I guess likely he will; and all the same for him as if he had started from Louis this morning at six o’clock.”

“Well, to-morrow is Saturday,” said Henry Atherton; “I suppose we shall return to Hart’s in the afternoon, of course.”

“I think so upon the whole,” said Alban, involuntarily putting his hand to his breast-pocket.

“We can get up early, and have one race before we start,” said St. Clair.

They had their race, on a cold, showery day,—truly a race, for Range ran a deer from one extremity of the lake to the other,—Courtney and Alban following in their boat, hearing the incessant cry of the hound, now loud and near, as the deer ran close to the shore, now faint and remote, as it took the back of a well-wooded hill, till finally the sound was lost among the loftier eminences that lay beyond the inlet. The other dogs were equally unsuccessful. Their voices were heard among the hills,

but the deer were not seen. They either would not take the water at all, or they sought refuge in some other lake. At noon, then, our party cooked and ate their last hurried meal at the shanty; they concealed the various utensils against the next time; the guides shouldered the saddles, the luggage, and their own rifles. They recrossed the lake, hauled up and secured the boats, and away all together through the forest, a tough, rough tramp, of some seven miles. At length they struck what by Courtney was called a road, where a lumber wagon received them and their heavy load. It rained torrents all the way. Their driver was an old, white-whiskered Canadian, with a cap of bearskin and a face like a fox. The seats of the wagon were the chip-bottomed chairs of the country, lashed two and two. They drove furiously. At one moment the wagon inclined about forty-five degrees to the right; the next to the left; now they thundered down a hill washed bare by floods; then dashed through a miry valley up to the wheel-hobs. They were drenched outwardly by the rain, inwardly by perspiration, which the labour of keeping their places caused to stream forth in abundance. Alban and Henry managed to protect themselves partially by gathering round them the comforter under which they had slept at Louis. Finally it grew dark, and

still on they dashed, neck or nothing, over the broken and miserable road, flying with one wheel in the air over the rock, and half-capsized the next moment in a gully, but nothing it seemed could upset the lumber-wagon. Drenched and soiled, with slouching hats crushed over their eyes, and dark, untrimmed beards, they sprang out at the long, low, piazzaed stoop of the forest inn. But three lovely women were on the steps, to give them, in spite of all, the warmest welcome that affection and consanguinity warranted.

"I declare," said Mary Atherton, but offering Alban in turn her cousinly lips, "you are positively not kissable."

"Do *you* think so, Jane?"

Jane laughed.

"You are a perfect fright."

"Well, then, I will postpone my kiss till I am shaved and dressed."

"Oh, no, take it now," she answered, in a low voice of suppressed pleasure. "You have got back safe. I am so glad."

CHAPTER III.

True to his church he comes ; no Sunday shower
Keeps him at home in that important hour.

CRABBE.

Quince. Is all our company here ?

Bottom. You were best to call them generally, man by man,
according to the scrip.

Midsummer-Night's Dream.

I return to the loves of Leonard and Margaret.

The Doctor.

SUNDAY is a day which ought to unite all hearts, and bring together those whom variety of occupation and difference of circle and station separate on the secular days of the week. It is, indeed, a beautiful idea, as even the mere philosopher must acknowledge, that men should believe one day in seven to have been divinely set apart for a common rest from labours and the pursuit of gain, with an obligation upon all of uniting in a common act of worship, and meeting, for that end, as equals before their Maker, under a common roof. Sabbaths, and temples,

and the solemn public rites of religion! What would civilization — what would humanity be — without them? Divided by the pursuits, and alienated by the strifes, of the market and the forum, where shall we learn the unity of our nature, our destiny, and our duties — where re-enter into the vast and simple fellowship of our *kind* — if not before the altars of our God?

Sunday, unfortunately, was not a day that united our friends, the Athertons, but rather on which some of the deep incompatibilities between them, latent on other days, became apparent. At Babylon, at the very start of this tour of pleasure, Jane, we may remember, had been saddened “to sit by herself in the old square pew, where she and Alban, in the old times, occupied opposite corners;” and on all their Sunday stations in civilized districts, at least three, and sometimes four, hostile and unsympathizing rites had divided the attendance of this party of six near relatives. At Lake Pheasant, indeed, there was no opportunity for such a separation.

They were situated here somewhat like Lady Alice and her friends at Chamouni, except that they had no Mr. Courtney to intone the Church of England service for them in the apartment, suppose, of Mrs. Henry Atherton; (!) nor was there a rural church where a Puseyite damsel could join a Catholic peasantry in

singing the Rosary and hearing a sunrise mass; but to make amends, there was a little parlour at Hart's, (as there was, our fair readers remember, in the Alpine inn,) where Mr. Henry Atherton proposed to read the morning service of the Episcopal Church at half-past ten; and there was also, at no great distance, a small, clap-boarded country school-house, where, in the winter months, the law of the State of New York, and the genius of the people, maintained a nursery of rudimentary education for the young inhabitants of the district; and which at all seasons served for such religious offices as might be performed at long intervals by a Methodist itinerant for the benefit of a scattered population. It is the zeal and rude enthusiasm of these travelling preachers, which have alone kept up the very name of Christianity in many a lonely region of our half-settled country. If any of our friends had been disposed to profit by Wesleyan ministrations, they had the opportunity, for this very Sunday was that of the itinerant's visit.

The rain of the preceding evening had changed to snow. The roads, never more than tolerable, were in an awful state. On a fair Sunday, previously appointed, the sparse congregation would gather in from many an unsuspected nook in the heart of the forest, from many

a log-hut beside the wild southern road; but so few persons collected on this day, that the preacher contented himself with a hymn and prayer, and postponed the sermon to another occasion. But Henry Atherton, having informed Mr. Hart of his intention to hold an Episcopal service, had quite a congregation of guides, hangers-on, domestic help, and so on, including the itinerant himself.

The latter was a sandy-haired, smooth-shaven individual, meek in expression as a ewe. In him seemed no clerical affectation. A narrow white neckcloth was the only mark of his order, to which he added yellow trowsers, a plain blue coat, and a large old straw hat, lined with faded silk. He seemed good and simple-minded; he had "never seen this order of worship before," he remarked, although he had often heard tell of it. Henry read one of Mr. Soapstone's discourses, which had been copied by Mary Ellsworth in the days of that young clergyman's popularity, and having exchanged his sportsman's gear for a suit of black, passed universally for a minister of "the Episcopal order."

We regret to say that most of the audience showed a strong disposition to sleep, and of this number were our friends Morrell and Courtney. The sermon, indeed, made them prick up their ears at first, particularly as Henry read it with great animation, but as it was rather

over their heads in point both of thought and style, the attention soon fell off again. Those, on the other hand, who could appreciate both the beautiful service and clever sermon, were fidgetty from observing how little either was suited to the capacity of the majority present.

“If the whole had been in Latin,” observed St. Clair, “it would not have been much more unintelligible.”

“And if it had been in Latin it would have been vastly more imposing,” remarked Alban.

“Mummery, I know, is more imposing to a certain class of minds than a reasonable service,” retorted Henry.

“Which is the more reasonable service for an uneducated people—one that they can understand and enjoy, or one that they cannot?” answered Alban.

“I wonder what the Methodist parson would have said to a mass—holy water, candles, Latin and all!” cried Henry, waxing warm.

“Come, Hal,” said his sister, “don’t quarrel with Alban because your service has been a failure.”

“What do you mean by calling it a failure?” cried Mrs. Henry, reddening. “If people have not cultivation enough to appreciate it, the fault is in them, not in the service.”

“The mistake, cousin Mary,” observed St. Clair,

courteously, "was in offering so fine a service to people destitute of the cultivation which is so necessary."

"Precisely," cried Jane, with a malicious smile to George. "Now, for my part, I like the Episcopal form very much, but I should not like being tied to it, year in and year out; and I am sure cousin Mary Ellsworth herself will allow that to such a congregation as her husband had to-day, a warm extempore prayer, and a jingling hymn or two, would have been far more acceptable."

"That is just the drift of what I observed a moment ago," said Alban, smiling — "that there is no rite of worship capable of interesting and edifying all classes alike, except the mass."

This remark drew on a warm discussion, which became so unpleasant at last, that the ladies, agreeably to their instinct for the preservation of peace in such cases, deemed it best to separate the combatants. St. Clair was bitter; Hal lost his temper and was downright insulting to Alban, who certainly said some very provoking things, with more provoking coolness. Jane quoted Scripture, with amusing simplicity and appropriateness; Mrs. Henry appealed to the Fathers (not that she quoted them) but was positive that the Primitive Church was patterned exactly after the Anglican; and Mary Atherton rather scoffed at the whole thing,

and particularly laughed at Alban for trying to convince her sister-in-law.

Alban perceived the ridicule, and was the first to retire from the field. Soon he was walking up and down the piazza, in front of the windows. Henry wondered at his infatuation; St. Clair protested that he had no patience with him; Mrs. Henry thought he was a great deal too positive; Jane believed that Alban was perfectly sincere, and was sure he would one day find it out, if he was really in the wrong; Mary Atherton affirmed that he only talked in that way to be singular, and she wondered that they encouraged him in it.

Just then the subject of their conversation tapped on the window-pane, and invited them all to come out and take the air before dinner.

It was snowing fast, and blowing in gusts. The ladies shuddered, and shrugged their shoulders; but the young men thirsted for the open air, (though St. Clair had already a rheumatism, caught in the soaking drive from Louis,) and their fair companions naturally would bear a good deal for the sake of their society. So, presently, they were all pacing up and down the verandah, rapidly, arm in arm, in pairs, regardless of wind and sleet.

“This is glorious!”

“Perfectly splendid!” said the lady, with a laugh.

“You feel the cold, perhaps?”

“I will tie this handkerchief over my head—just to keep my hair from blowing.”

“How people can bear to live in-doors I can't understand.”

“What will you do when you are immured in a lawyer's office in New York?”

“Well, what I can to keep up the out-door spirit;—ride every day, (my father has bought a horse,) boat in summer, and get every year some weeks for the woods.”

“I am glad you feel the importance of taking care of your health,” said the lady. “I should not like to see you become one of those pale scholars that we read of in novels, and who, I notice, always end by dying of consumption. I want you to be distinguished,” she continued with a sweet emphasis and slight laugh, “but I want you to live!”

“You are very kind, my sister.”

“Is it so very kind to wish my brother not to die?”

He looked down upon her from his fair manly height.

“To tell you the truth, it is not certain that I shall begin the study of law quite yet.”

“What then?”

“My education is hardly finished enough to attack

a profession. I have a notion of spending at least a couple of years at some foreign university, to mellow my scholarship. After that, if my funds hold out, I should like to make a little tour of the principal countries. The noblest fruit takes the longest to ripen: (I have already confessed to you that I am very vain:)—let me, if I am worth any thing, hang yet awhile and mature on the boughs of studious leisure."

These illustrations did not please the girl of nineteen so much as her "brother's" generally did. Truly he was very patient! A couple of years at a foreign university! then a little tour! then three years in the study of law—six or seven in all, before he could possibly be settled! Her heart beat proudly, as it had done once or twice, or more times, before, on this journey, at things which Alban had said. She was almost tempted to drop his arm. But that would never do. There was nothing for her but concealment of such feelings. Had Jane inferred that her cousin was indifferent to her, or cared for her as a sister only, (as he pretended, and she herself pretended to think,) the pang would have been sharp but short. Resentment for her slighted affection would have extinguished the faint, chill flame of a maiden's unsolicited love.

But was it faint and chill?

We must remember that Alban did not appear

to Jane as he does to us — if we have read his earlier history. She deemed him an ingenuous and inexperienced youth; tender, indeed, in his feelings, but shy to all ladies, even to his cousins; and yet, withal, one in whom broke out, now and then, a strange knowledge — a penetration — and a calmness of manly resolve — that puzzled her, and made him a mystery. To her was he kind, nay, devotedly attentive, yet never breathed a word, or directed a glance that conveyed more than brother's love. And Jane had well concealed, or thought she had, whatever feeling she might admit for him beyond a sister's affection. Nor was this precisely because she feared that so he loved her not. She attributed his coldness to his high religious principles, and perhaps excessive virtue. To her, indeed, he stood upon a lofty pedestal, quite above human infirmity. She was a weak, fond girl; he a scholar, a genius, and a hero. And yet with so much in him that was homely, too, and gently familiar; and now and then a glimpse of ardour that surprised! He occupied her thoughts, in brief; and a female nature, pure and susceptible of attachment, did the rest.

Yet we should do wrong to omit among the causes which had fanned Jane's innocent preference into a passion, her knowledge of her cousin's early,

and, as she had been led to suppose, unchanged fancy for her girlish self, the wishes of their friends, their railleries, and the notion, which was rife among them all, that her gentle influence was the destined instrument of Providence to reclaim him from his perversity in matters of religious belief. So she loved him — do maidens need a cause for that?

And Jane had found it out. The blameless secret was known unto herself. So she reflected on her cousin's speech about his future career.

“He certainly loves me better than he does any one else,” thought she. “If he cared for any body too much, he would not feel this insulting contentment. I have let him be too sure of me. And yet I am as willing as he to wait seven years. Haven't I loved him as many as seven already? I am not in a hurry to be married. I wonder if he thinks I am.”

At this thought the maiden's cheek began to burn. It was not the first time, of late, it had told tales. The youth marked the changes on that engaging face, and, certes, he must have been both dull and void of feeling to notice them not; though in the cold air he might account for the reddened cheek by another cause. But the half-averted eye and tremulous lips were expressive interpreters of the dubious glow that spread between them, and,

truth to say, our friend had learned to read in a woman's face as in a book—to do which truly and well requires the calmness which is taught by experience, joined to the sympathy that cannot be taught at all. Alban marked the changes, we say; but just then the dinner-bell rang. Jane, who had caught his glance, and instinctively withdrawn her hand from within his arm, hastily joined the other ladies, as they retreated to their rooms, with a confused feeling of fear and a strangely beating heart.

At dinner, both Alban and Jane partook sparingly of Mr. Hart's delicious venison, although cooked and served that day in the most approved style. And they avoided each other's eyes.

The party sat longer than usual, and the day was so dark and stormy that candles—long, running tallow candles—were brought on before they left the table. And the gentlemen staid after the ladies to smoke;—an innovation in those parts, and one which would have proved highly inconvenient to Mr. Hart's family—indeed, would not have been allowed for any body by its female regents—unless the house dinner had been despatched at an earlier hour.

The gentlemen were scarcely alone before Mr. Hart, who was postmaster as well as innkeeper,

brought in a letter for Mr. Alban Atherton—a letter of many post-marks, just arrived from Saratoga: for the weekly mail had got in. The letter was addressed in a large, tremulous, old hand, but very legible, and the seal bore a shield charged with a mitre and pastoral staff.

The young man broke it open quickly, and read it with eagerness. Before he could quite have glanced at the concluding words and signature, he rose impetuously, and exclaimed that he must start for New York on the morrow.

“Well, you can’t set off this minute, Alb,” said St. Clair. “What is in the wind, man?”

“You know that this is the letter I have been expecting all the journey. I declare I feel compunction to have been spending my time in hunting and fishing and summer idleness, while such a question hung undecided.”

“What question, Alb?” asked Henry.

“’T is no matter:—you would not understand my feeling about it, Hal.”

Alban paced the floor rapidly.

“It is true,” said he, as if to himself, “that I have been trying by this means to allay my impatience and distract my thoughts; but now I return to New York forthwith.”

CHAPTER IV.

He was proceeding in this wild manner, when his invective was interrupted by the man in black, who entered the apartment, introducing his niece, a young lady of exquisite beauty.

Citizen of the World.

“She is my rival in the affections of Antonio.”

Lover's Surprise.

As the ladies proceeded along the open, windy hall to the sitting-room, they perceived that there had been an arrival. The great covered wagon in which they themselves had come to Lake Pheasant, stood before the door. A boy was bringing in a leathern travelling-bag. When they reached the parlour, they found two females in possession of it, and sitting by the fire. As it was the common sitting-room of the inn, which hitherto they had exclusively enjoyed, solely because there were no other lady boarders, they had no right to object. But Mrs. Henry Atherton shrugged her shoulders.

“Let us go up to my room,” she whispered.

“There is a fire there.”

Mary Atherton assented, and both ran up stairs. Jane, after a moment's irresolution, thinking that Alban would probably soon leave St. Clair and Henry to their cigars, waved her hand to her companions, and sauntered into the parlour.

One of its female occupants rose to make room for her. Both were shawled and hooded, but their cloaks had been thrown aside. Jane acknowledged the civility of the stranger with a slight bow, and turned to the window. The covered wagon, after being unloaded, was soon driven into the stable-yard adjacent, and the horses having been taken off, was run under the wagon-shed. The new-comers were going to stay all night then; but what business could females have in this purely sporting region, unless they belonged there, or (a very rare case) accompanied their husbands, brothers, or other male relatives? Yet now Mr. Hart came in, in his good-humoured bustling way, and took such orders about their supper, that Jane understood that they were both strangers and alone. They had asked for a room with a fire. Mr. Hart was sorry that the only bedroom with such an accommodation was already occupied, but the parlour where they were was the common sitting-room of all his boarders, and he hoped they would make themselves quite at

home in it while they staid. Mr. Hart treated them with great respect, but that signified nothing, — females, however unprotected, would be so treated in all the American back settlements. They were both young, and the one who acted as spokeswoman had a sweet, firm voice — a pure, thorough-bred New York accent. As soon as Mr. Hart disappeared, this young lady took off her hood, and let her shawl fall over the back of her chair. Jane, still standing by the window, and looking at her unobserved, saw that she was not only young but beautiful—a faultless native profile, but the extreme regularity of which was relieved by the softness of seventeen, a fine dark eye, shyly glancing, and the whole crowned by a profusion of very dark hair, gloriously disordered by travel. A hand of snow was quickly raised to the last, when the stranger rose hastily and came to the glass; her comb fell out, and dropped to the floor. Her companion picked it up.

“Give me the other comb, Margaret,” she said.

Margaret produced a comb such as was required, from a travelling-bag that lay on one of the chairs, and the young lady drew it through her long raven tresses till they became glossy as silk, when twisting them together with a dexterity that girlhood can alone command, she skilfully fastened them, with the aid of fillet

and comb, in a graceful classic coil. The stranger was elegantly, but very simply, dressed in a habit of fine gray cloth, and all this action betrayed to Jane's observant eye the beauty of her shape. During the process she regarded Jane occasionally, and bore the latter's frank observation with perfect composure.

"Are you staying here?" she asked.

Jane assented.

"And other ladies?"

"Two besides myself."

"And your husbands, I suppose."

Jane blushed:—"One of the other ladies is married—a bride. We are a wedding-party."

"Are there young gentlemen?" said the stranger, with a faint expression of annoyance.

"Two in our party."

"My father left us at Saratoga about three weeks ago, while he went to the Adirondack lakes, to fish and shoot," said the young lady, appearing to think that some account of herself was necessary. "He was then convalescent from a severe illness, and yesterday morning a messenger reached us, with the servant who was with him, with the intelligence that he has been taken very sick again among the Indians, away beyond Racket Lake. I am going back with the Indian messenger. We have come thus far without much diffi-

culty, although the road is shocking, but how we are to get on beyond this I do not know."

"I don't believe that you can get on at all!" exclaimed Jane. "The gentlemen say (for we talked of going with them to a lake only seventeen miles distant) that it is quite impossible for ladies."

"The Indian messenger says that it is very easy for a squaw," returned the young lady. "We can proceed a part of the way on horseback: after that we go in canoes. The only difficulty, I understand, is at the places where they are obliged to take the boats out of the water and transport them round falls—but I am a very good walker."

"But are you aware," asked Jane, "that it will take you two or three days to reach Racket? You must sleep in an open shanty—if you can find one—at least two nights!"

"Oh! I have thought of all that!" said the young lady. "Margaret here will be with me. If I can find some respectable guide—an elderly, married man is what I should prefer—in addition to our good Indian, I sha'n't mind those things."

"You have a great deal of courage—more than I should have. Have you no mother or sister?"

"No sister. My stepmother is at Saratoga. Her health is too delicate for such a journey. My father,

you know, is not aware that I have been sent for." And here the young lady covered her face.

"Do you expect to find your father very ill?" asked Jane with sympathy.

"If I find him living," she answered.

"You have indeed a great deal of courage. Why, if your father should unhappily not be living,—how will you ever get back? What will you do among the Indians—strangers and savages!" exclaimed Jane.

"They are not savages," said the young lady. "Nor shall I seem a stranger to them."

It immediately occurred to Jane that the gentlemen would be proud to form a guard of honour to escort this brave daughter on her adventurous journey. It would take but a week to go and return. But Alban—what would he think of her? A romantic adventure of that sort was dangerous! Jane glanced at the beauty of this young creature, whose courage and filial love made her already too interesting. She was strongly tempted to say nothing further. For a moment she wished that the stranger's room could be got ready before the gentleman came in, and that her story might not transpire. Jane wrestled in vain with these ungenerous impulses. She scanned her new acquaintance from head to foot with the inexorable criticism, counterpoised by the truth-telling fears, of a rival. It was

a young lady all over—simple, gracious, spirited, and fascinating.

The unexpected, familiar recognition by our own friends, of those who are strangers to us, produces a singular impression. While Jane was yet revolving these thoughts, and settling in her own mind how she should manage to hold her own against this dangerous intruder, the gentlemen came out of the dining-room of the inn into the hall, and at the same time the ladies came forth from their room at the top of the stairs to speak to them. Then the ladies descended half-way, and they chatted in whispers. The ladies affected unwillingness to come into the parlour. The gentlemen declared that this was absurd. Jane went out to them, shutting the door after her.

“Halloa!” said St. Clair, who had looked into the bar-room just opposite.—“Here is that Indian fellow who got the big deer from us at Louis.”—And approaching the rest, and lowering his voice,—“I should n’t wonder, Alb, if the ladies in the parlour were the very party that you were to escort to Racket, or somewhere.”

“Let us go in and see.”

“Remember your letter, Alb,” said St. Clair. “What will you bet, Hal, that he does n’t go to Racket with these people instead of to New York.”

"To New York?" said Jane.

"I have received a letter since dinner," said Alban.

"Let us go up stairs and talk that matter over," said Henry Atherton.

"Yes, do!" cried Mrs. Henry and Mary Atherton.

"You had better come in and see the young lady in the parlour first, and hear her story," said Jane.

"What, she has been telling it to you! the forward thing!" said Mary Atherton.

"Let us make up our minds what to do in the first place, and hear her story afterwards," said St. Clair. "No good will come of that plaguey Indian, I am certain, since he got away our deer."

There seemed a general disposition to adjourn up stairs, and hear the stranger's story from Jane, but Alban demurred.

"It is not courteous. Let us go in and see her first."

"What, all of us! That would be rather cruel."

"She is pretty self-possessed," Jane said, "and really beautiful."

"That alters the case," said St. Clair.

So the gentlemen decided to go in, and the ladies perforce assented, Mrs. Henry with matron dignity leading the way.

Rapid exclamations followed.

“Mary Ellsworth! Is it possible?”

“Why, Mary De Groot!”

They embraced, Miss De Groot kissing Mrs. Atherton on both cheeks.

“Mary! Miss De Groot!”

“Alban!”—She gave him both her hands.

St. Clair and Henry also claimed her acquaintance. She shook hands with them both, and then sat down, hid her face in her handkerchief, and cried. Mary Ellsworth poured forth a million of questions. The gentlemen understood the matter better, and Henry Atherton answered for Miss De Groot. Alban turned to Margaret, with ill-concealed agitation.

“How do you *do*, Margaret? Are you alone? You and your young lady? No one but the Indian so far. Ah, very well! we will take care of you. Of course I shall go to Racket with you, or wherever it is you are bound. We will take a couple of trusty guides from this place. Really, you had no idea of our being here! Why, you must have been at Saratoga when we were.—Exactly; you were in a cottage at the United States, and we were at the Pavilion.”

“My young lady will be so glad to see you, sir,” replied Margaret. “Many is the cryin’ fit she’s had last night and to-day, thinkin’ of the journey she was takin’ all alone by herself. But she kept sayin’ that

Almighty God would send somebody to protect her, and sure enough He has sent you, sir, and I'm thinking He knows who is best."

When Miss De Groot had recovered from the first effect of this unexpected meeting, she gave a more full account of her journey and its motives, and told how she had been unable to procure a suitable person at Saratoga to accompany her, all which appeared very rational. She addressed none of her observations to Alban, nor did he say any thing directly to her. But he looked at her almost all the time, and sometimes their eyes met, when Miss De Groot's were instantly withdrawn. Jane saw and heard all.

CHAPTER V.

Ros. Why, whither shall we go?

Cel. To seek my uncle in the forest of Arden.

Ros. Alas, what danger will it be to us,
Maids as we are, to travel forth so far?

As You Like It.

WHEN the bell rang for tea, Henry Atherton offered his arm to Miss De Groot. Tea at Lake Pheasant was what breakfast and dinner were—an affair of trout and venison, and served in the dining-room. Though a superfluous meal in general, it was not so to the newly-arrived traveller. She was too much accustomed to inn usages in the country parts to give more than a glance at the abundance with which the table was covered, but being hungry, she blessed herself, and accepted some venison. That rapid motion did not escape the watchful Jane, and if confirmation had been needed of a suspicion already too strong, when Mary De Groot's hand crossed from her left to her right breast,—like a white dove softly alighting—as

sharp a pang shot through the bosom of the jealous girl, as if a poniard had been plunged into it. As for Alban, she fairly hated him.

The ladies, with the exception of Miss De Groot, declined both fish and game, however tempting, with sarcastic emphasis. St. Clair pressed the offer of several kinds of tart, (in the vernacular, *pie*,) with cakes, sweetmeats, maple syrup, hot rolls, rice-cakes, and so on, but in vain.

“Cousin Jane, let me prevail on you to try this pumpkin pie.”

“No, I thank you, George.”

“Cousin Mary?”

“No, I thank you, cousin George.”

“Cousin Mary Atherton?” — with increasing animation.

“No, I thank you, George.”

“Miss De Groot, you surely will not refuse.”

“Really, Mr. St. Clair, I fear that I must. But I mean to eat some rice-cakes presently, with maple-syrup.”

St. Clair turned to the smart American girl who waited, but who of course (and very properly) considered herself the equal of any body present.

“Pray, Miss Jemima, are we obliged to eat all that is on the table?”

“Not if you ain’t a mind to, I guess.”

“I only asked,” replied George, “because, if we were, I was going to beg you to call in Mr. Hart, to make these ladies eat their share.”

This, as Miss Jemima afterwards remarked, “made her snort right out,” and also spill the tea she was handing Miss Atherton. St. Clair kept up a pretty steady fire of similar jokes, perhaps not very brilliant, but which made every body laugh all the same; the principal point of every jest being the effect of such mere absurdity upon Miss Jemima, and another “young lady” who presided at the teapot which stood upon a side-table. Yet an occasional flash of deeper and brighter humour—a mirth of the heart—betrayed itself in St. Clair’s jests, like a sparkling trout rising among a shoal of frothy minnows, and giving its golden speckles to the sun. Nor was he ever so happy within, as those jests betokened.

“Come, Atherton,” he continued, “we must both stuff as much as we can. I think that you and Alb and I can easily get down a pie apiece.”

But when he proceeded, accordingly, with a maniacal stare, which nobody else could assume, to take a whole one upon his plate, Jemima ran out of the room in a convulsion, whereupon St. Clair gave a frank little laugh, so delightfully unaffected and friendly, that all

laughed with him, and tears came to the eyes of Mary De Groot, for whose benefit this flare-up was principally intended.

“You are charming to-night, George,” said Jane, leaning forward with both elbows on the table, in a genial, Bacchante way which she had at times, and throwing back her soft ringlets.

“It is you who inspire me, cousin Jane,” he replied. “Ever since I saw your eyes so bright on the stairs, that I could not tell whether they were blue or green, I have felt like another person.”

St. Clair stopped, as they were going out of the dining-room, to ask Jemima, with great seriousness, if any body else was to “eat” after them; and receiving a giggling affirmative, rejoined,

“Oh! are they to come yet? How you relieve my mind! Well, Jemima, do impress upon them the necessity of making a clean sweep of what’s left.”

Mary De Groot laughed merrily when she caught Alban’s eye in the hall. St. Clair offered his arm pompously to Jane, and they went in together to the parlour, with a thousand ridiculous airs. Here Alban neglected a good opportunity to place himself by Miss De Groot, but, taking a seat at some distance from her, opened the subject of her journey. He took for granted that he was to accompany her, and Mary, by

silence at least, acquiesced. Mrs. Henry's new-married propriety took the alarm, of course. She communicated her doubts, in whispers, to Mary Atherton and Jane, and then to Mary De Groot herself.

"Mr. Alban," said the latter, immediately, "the ladies think it will not be quite proper for you to be my escort to Racket Lake, and perhaps they are right."

"We will all three accompany Miss De Groot," said Henry Atherton.

"I protest against *that*," cried his wife, crimsoning. "What are we to do — left here alone?"

"Miss De Groot cannot be suffered to proceed alone on such a difficult expedition; that is clear," answered Henry.

"I thank you all for your kindness," said Mary, "but I beg that I may be permitted to go on with my Indian guide and Margaret."

"As far as I am concerned," observed Alban, springing up at the same time, and beginning to pace the room, "it is of no use for any body to talk. I shall accompany you, Miss Mary, to join your father, if you go, whether you desire my company or not. If you conclude to give up the enterprise, I shall proceed without you. Your father is my friend; he is sick among strangers; it is sufficient. So no more need be said."

"I shall be away by daybreak to-morrow," said Mary. "You may be assured of that. The very first question I asked Mr. Hart on our arriving here, was how far he could send us with horses."

"A pretty story to tell your father," pursued Alban, "that I let you come through that wilderness, as one may say, alone, for fear of some imaginary impropriety. If one of my cousins," added he, sinking his voice, "will join us, so much the better; but I go at any rate."

"I shall be delighted to be of the party," said St. Clair. "I want, of all things, to see Racket. I am pretty well *racketed* already," added he aside, with a kind of sweet contortion.

"I referred to our lady cousins," replied Alban. "If one of them would venture to accompany Miss De Groot on this journey of filial piety, it would be a true woman's kindness in my opinion."

"Oh, no, that would be the most unreasonable thing to expect," exclaimed Mary. "I have not the shadow of a claim upon your cousins:—Mr. Alban, you forget."

"That you are a young lady like ourselves, and in such a trying position, is claim enough," said Jane, who had been listening with breathless interest. Jane was much flushed.

"It is impossible for me to go, Mary, or I would with pleasure," said Mrs. Henry, in a low voice.

The ladies got round Miss De Groot, and conversed in whispers. Henry and St. Clair consulted apart.

"If Mrs. Henry could bear such a journey," observed Mary Atherton, "it would be just the thing. Her husband would be with her, and Jane and I could remain here with perfect propriety till your return, under the protection of Mrs. Hart. But, really, I feel sensitive about joining such an expedition with only George and Alban."

"But why?" demanded Jane. "We should not scruple travelling under their protection to New York."

"It is very different."

"What is the difference? I don't see any," said Jane.

"Will *you* then accompany Miss De Groot? You and Alban?" said Mary Atherton.

"George is to be of the party," said Jane.

"Oh, yes, George is to be of the party."

"You would be a more suitable person than I, I allow," said Jane with spirit, "but I thought you objected."

"It is true that I am older than Alban, and it is

well known that George and I have no fancy for each other," remarked Miss Atherton.

"Will you go then, Mary?" said Mrs. Henry.

"Will you go then, Mary?" said Jane.

"If you and Jane think that I had better:—but Jane wants to go herself."

"No!" cried Jane.

"Perhaps," resumed Mary Atherton, with an air of generosity, "Miss De Groot may have a preference. If so, I beg that she will express it. In my heart, Miss De Groot, I am dying to be of the party, and so, for a different reason, is Jane. Choose between us."

"Oh! no! I could n't do that. You are both too kind, and I could never so far offend one as to prefer the other," replied Mary De Groot.

"You have reasons for preferring me, with which Jane cannot be offended," answered Miss Atherton. "She is too nearly of your own age, (seventeen or eighteen, I guess,) and too pretty, to matronize you well. I am older and plainer, and I am not in love with Alban, which Jane is."

"Believe as much of that as you like, Miss De Groot!" said Jane, with a pretty toss of the head, but growing pale.

Miss De Groot turned her dark gray eyes full upon Jane, with a piercing scrutiny. The latter

played nervously with her ringlets, looking down. Miss De Groot withdrew her inscrutable glance.

"I choose Jane," she said. "She will excuse my calling her so, since I am not acquainted with her other name."

"Always call me Jane!"

"You are not offended, Miss Atherton?" pursued Mary.

"Not in the least," replied Mary Atherton, regarding her with a mixture of curiosity and disappointment.

The gentlemen came forward; Henry Atherton was delighted with the conclusion arrived at, and St. Clair, who was to be of the party, was evidently not displeased at it.

Mr. Hart was called in, and his co-operation secured. Morrell and Courtney were to be the guides, in addition to the Indian. As soon as all was settled, Miss De Groot consulted her watch, and pleading her two days' travel, and the early hour at which they must rise on the morrow, bade them all good-night.

CHAPTER VI.

Ros. O Jupiter! how weary are my spirits!

Touch. I care not for my spirits, if my legs were not weary.

Ros. Courage, good Aliena.

Cel. I pray you bear with me; I cannot go no further.

As You Like It.

By the earliest light, old Durand, the Canadian, might be seen upon the piazza of Mr. Hart's inn pacing to and fro in his long, trailing overcoat, and whip in hand. His white-whiskered, fox-like face, and furry cap, gave him the appearance of a wild animal prowling about the door. At the stoop was drawn up the lumber wagon, with six wicker chairs for seats, and a board laid across the front for the driver. There were three horses attached; and the spaces under the chairs were choked with carpet-bags, comforters, and other impediments for the forest journey. The youthful fare breakfasted in haste; but, although the hour was so early that candles stood on the table, Mrs. Hart had provided abundance of hot

bread-cakes, with a rasher of bacon and eggs, and fragrant coffee, with hot milk and fresh-drawn cream. The pies, cake, and sweetmeat, of the preceding night, made a figure also, but passed, as before, untouched.

But St. Clair was absent. The morning had found him with either a pleurisy, or a rheumatism so aggravated, that he could hardly turn himself in bed. This misfortune excited great commiseration and many regrets, which on the part of Alban and Miss De Groot, in particular, were expressed with great liveliness.

“Poor George!” said Jane, hastily swallowing her coffee. “I am really sorry for him. What a disappointment!”

There were no means, however, of mending the matter, and no time for regrets. The ladies kissed each other; the gentlemen shook hands; Alban ran up to St. Clair’s room to bid him good-bye, in his own and in the ladies’ name. Finally, they all got in. The young ladies were placed in the two middle chairs, where the jolting was expected to be least; Alban and Margaret were over the front wheels, and the two guides (Morrell and Courtney) behind. The Indian had gone on at an earlier hour. The men had their rifles, and the dogs went scampering ahead in great spirits, as the old lumber wagon dashed away

over the broken road, white with yesterday's snow. The sun rose, and threw a beautiful light over the patches of clearing along the lake; and the deep green or golden tints of the unshorn hills showed, with a brilliant and strange effect, through the white mantle that lay over them.

A slight embarrassment flushed the cheeks of Alban and Miss De Groot, as they exchanged the last greeting, and drove away from the friends they were leaving behind; nor did it immediately depart as they clattered along in the jolting wagon; but Jane, much gayer in aspect, had an eager, excited air, like a child who, even at the moment of setting out on a ride, fears to be left behind. A more imminent peril soon engaged her attention; for, with no small degree of moral courage, as we have seen, she was physically timid.

"It will kill me to be so jolted," cried she, at first, turning pale, and grasping her cousin's chair. Then, when the wagon suddenly canted into a deep hole, —

"Oh! I shall certainly be thrown out. *Do*, Alban, make him drive slower."

Alban shouted to the old man to drive more gently.

"*Oui, oui*," cried the deaf old Canadian, turning

round his foxy, furry face, with a grim smile, and drove faster than before.

Jane was soon half frantic. "Dear Alban, do make him stop!"

He succeeded in stopping Durand, and reasoned with her.

"My dear Jane, this kind of wagon can scarcely, by any possibility, be overturned. We came just in this style from Louis, after dark. The old fellow knows what he is about. See the firmness of Miss De Groot."

"It is of no use reasoning with me, Alban," Jane replied. "I cannot help being frightened to death when the wagon turns over."

"But the wagon does not turn over, child."

"Let me change places with you, Mr. Alban," Miss De Groot said. "If you could support your cousin, she would feel less alarm."

"Oh, you will fall out, sitting there forward," said Jane.

But the exchange was made, Miss De Groot generously insisting. They dashed on again. Jane was still nervous, but no longer screamed. When they bounded over a rock, or dipped into a gully, or went canting along the side of a bank, at an angle of forty-five degrees, she contented herself with slight exclama-

tions of fear. Under these circumstances there could be little conversation; Miss De Groot had enough to do to keep her new place, and Margaret slipped down into the straw on the bottom of the wagon. Once a partridge ran across the snowy road, and Alban got out, went into the wood with Morrell, and shot it. By and by the road became so bad that the wagon could no longer get on as fast as a man could walk, when the guides leaped out, and pushed on afoot.

The ladies would gladly have walked too; but the miriness of the road put it out of the question. Even Margaret, to whom a bog should have been a native element, after wading a short distance in the mud, miring her stockings and losing a shoe, gave it up and resumed her seat in the straw. In this way they scarcely made two miles and a half in an hour, and the commonplace difficulties of the journey began to be severely felt.

About noon they reached a small prairie, where Morrell and Courtney were waiting for the wagon to come up. The wheels rolled smoothly over the grassy track, which soon plunged into a wood, and became obstructed with roots of trees. The old Canadian turned out at the first clear space, and came to a halt.

“Here the ladies take horses,” observed Morrell, coming up.

“Thank Heaven!” said Mary De Groot.

They rested here about an hour; during which time they lunched, and the horses were fed; and then they got again in motion. The guides led the way, laden with carpet-bags, provision-sacks, extra-cloaks, and coverlets, and their own rifles. The three females were mounted, to the great terror of Margaret, who had never sat on a horse before in her life. Old Durand was obliged to lead her pony. The path sometimes plunged into deep ravines; at others it crossed marshy brooks; as they proceeded, it grew more and more entangled with roots and fallen trees; often it was very difficult to distinguish it from the surrounding forest: yet the guides pressed on without hesitation. They rested every hour. At the first stopping-place, the drum of a partridge called Alban and Morrell again into the woods. A shot was heard, and then another, and they returned with two fine birds. The woods were alive with pigeons, of which they took little notice, after they had shot about a dozen for supper.

By and by they came to a broad swamp, or rather arm of a lake, which overflowed the low lands. The forest was filled with water. Here it was necessary to cross on trunks of fallen trees, which formed a series of dizzy bridges, resting on piers of mud and snag. The horses had to be swum over in the deepest parts. Here

Margaret Dolman showed herself unexpectedly brave and steady, by crossing on the logs without assistance. Jane declared it was quite out of the question, her crossing — she should certainly fall in, — and asked if they could not make a raft, but finally assigned a hand to her cousin and one to Morrell, and was led safely over. Miss De Groot, with some girlish laughter, crossed between Courtney and old Durand. So they mounted again, and on, over higher grounds, the rising shore of a lake. The path was smoother and more solid beneath their feet.

“To judge by what I feel,” said Alban, toiling up an ascent, beside Miss De Groot, “you must be horribly tired.”

“You are on foot and carrying that heavy gun.”

“It is no joke to shoulder it for three hours on a stretch, and keep up with horses on such a path.”

“I could easily carry your gun in my lap. Let me try,” said Mary.

“Thank you! You don’t suppose I would let a woman carry my gun for me!”

“But just for a little while! to see if I can. Come, I would like to do it.”

“You will soon have enough of it,” said Alban, laying it across her knee. “Take care what you do!” he cried, catching it, and half stopping the horse.

"You will be dragged off the horse by the first tree, and get a terrible fall, if you go that way to work."

"I understand now. Let me keep it, I pray you," said the young lady; and she rode on, turning away her face.

He fell back and accosted his cousin, who was pale.

"How soon shall we get to the boats?"

"In another hour."

"Oh, I shall never be able to endure another. I am nearly dead with fatigue. Why may I not get off and walk? I could easily walk an hour."

"It would take you two hours to walk the distance that you will ride in one. Bear it a little longer, my dear Jane. See how well Miss De Groot keeps up. She is even carrying my gun."

"I see that she is," replied Jane.

Miss De Groot looked back and proposed another change. She was riding (what had been given to her as the best horsewoman of the party) a man's saddle — an old-fashioned pillion; — one of the stirrups being passed over to supply the place of a horn.

"I find it very fatiguing to ride so," said she, smiling. "But let me have Jane's horse, Mr. Alban, and do you mount mine, and take up your cousin behind you on the pillion. It will rest us both."

"I can never sit on a pillion," said Jane.

“Indeed you can,” replied the youth, lifting her off the saddle. “And yon fallen tree will serve for a horse-block.”

So the change was made.

“Now clasp me tighter, my fair cousin, or you will surely slip off. There! that’s right. Now don’t you feel secure?”

They made a pretty picture as the party defiled through the leaf-strewn woods.

“Let me not think of any thing but the great end of my journey!” said Mary De Groot, turning her eyes from them as she followed on her new palfrey. “Mother of Mercy! obtain for me that I may merit by acts of perfect self-renunciation thy compassion for my dear father, and thy protection for myself.”

The one hour extended to nearly two. They gained a point whence several lakes were visible at once, imbosomed in a magnificent sweep of coloured hills, from which the October sun had already cleared the snow. They descended for some twenty minutes through a clean grove of purple-clad oaks. In the Fall of the leaf, the penitential season of Nature, the young oaks wear violet chasubles, like priests in Lent. The party at length emerged upon the shore of a lake, some miles in length, and overlooked by the loftiest and wildest summits they had yet seen. Under a low

shanty, or rather booth, composed of four uprights supporting a shed of dry, yellow boughs, sat, motionless as a statue, the Indian Pierre. The bank was high and steep, and below stretched a narrow beach of sand, where three light canoes were drawn up.

The ladies were lifted off their horses; even Miss De Groot confessing herself helpless after the last two hours.

“I can well believe it,” said Alban; — “and now,” he continued, while they leaned against a tree, regarding the boats below, which promised a prolongation of the journey, “do not quite despair. I am going to allow you a half-hour’s rest before we start again. We will spread the comforters, lay carpet-bags for pillows, and leave you.”

“A thousand thanks,” said Mary De Groot, in the sweetest and most courteous tone, in spite of her fatigue.

The horses were stabled beneath a spreading pine, on the fine, soft floor formed by its droppings. It was too late to think of threading back the forest and fording the swamp that night: but old Durand was an ancient trapper, and to him a shanty roofed with dry boughs was a luxury — the superfluous. The guides and Pierre barely allowed the half-hour to elapse. The Indian, as they stood upon the beach, pointed out to

Alban the long shadows of the western mountains already covering the feet of those on the eastern shore of the lake. He returned to the ladies.

Miss De Groot had sprung to her feet at the first rustle of his footstep on the dry leaves of the bank. Jane lay on the coverlet, under the booth, with a cloak thrown over her.

"She says that she must stay all night where she is," observed Mary.

"No doubt you are both very tired," answered he. "You will rest, however, in being rowed up the lake, nearly as well as here, and we shall find much better accommodations, they tell me, on the opposite shore."

"It does not appear to me possible to stay here," said Mary, who was trembling in every limb.

"Certainly not. If it should come on to rain, a shower would drive through those boughs in no time. At the other end of the lake, I am informed, there is a regular bark shanty."

He went under the booth, and knelt by Jane. She never opened her eyes.

"Remember, Jane, that the Atherton blood flows in your veins. Will you be less courageous and hardy than Miss De Groot?"

"You shall not be ashamed of me, Alban." She threw off the cloak, and he aided her to rise.

The guides carried down the various *impediments*. Alban conducted his cousin down the bank, followed by Miss De Groot and Margaret. The latter were consigned to Pierre; Jane to Morrell; Atherton himself, and the luggage, were conducted by Courtney. Jane had here another little fright; for the canoes were so light that they danced in the water like eggshells at the least motion, and it seemed that the softest tread of a lady's foot would go right through their thin bottoms, or a pound weight too much on one side overset them; they were the likeliest to fairy barks that any could conceive. Mary De Groot stepped into hers like a sylph, and sank into her place in the stern without disturbing the soft equilibrium of the buoyant craft; and Alban placed his cousin. The three canoes were soon but specks on the lake to the eyes of old Durand, who watched their progress as he heaped his crackling fire with dry brushwood.

CHAPTER VII.

- Itur in antiquam silvam, stabula alta ferarum.
Procumbunt piceæ ; sonat icta securibus ilex.

VIRGIL.

Lysander. Here is my bed : Sleep give you all his rest !

Hermia. With half that wish the wisher's eyes be pressed.

Midsummer-Night's Dream.

ATHERTON could not resist a feeling of anxiety when he perceived the last gleam of rosy sunlight lift off the summits of the eastern mountains, and tinge alone the long streamers of cirri floating above them, while yet a part of their liquid, gliding journey remained unaccomplished. To land the females on a wild forest shore, and conduct them to a bark shanty in the woods, after dark, was at least an embarrassing prospect to contemplate, on the score of its mere physical difficulties, apart from the feminine fears of his charge, and the fatigues they had already undergone.

Yet the gleam of twilight had nearly faded from

the lake, and the evening star shone bright and not unattended, in the clear expanse above the black and jagged profile of the western mountains, when the skiffs successively touched the smooth sand of a long, tongue-like point.

It was not possible to draw up the canoes upon the shore, as the guides were wont with the light, but far less delicately constructed boats to which they were accustomed; for a hasty step, as we have said, would have sufficed to go through the bottom of one of the former, when not resting in a yielding element; and it was an affair involving some tact to effect a disembarkation of the ladies without a wetting of foot or skirt. It was at length accomplished, however, and the party proceeded up the point under the guidance of Pierre. At its termination a high bank presented itself, which, overtopping their heads, and projecting more above than below, appeared an insuperable barrier to feminine progress. Indeed, but for the long, snaky roots which pierced it, offering a hold to the climber, it would have been difficult even to a man.

Pierre quickly ascended it, and appeared to expect the rest to follow; a squaw with a papoose lashed to her back would have done so easily; the white men were puzzled.

"We never can get up there," said Jane.

"And you certainly cannot stay here all night," returned her cousin. "We must get you up somehow."

The simple Courtney suggested that they might clamber up by the aid of the roots, if they were "boosted" by Mr. Atherton, from whom he appeared to think they would not scruple to accept that assistance. Margaret, in her Celtic innocence, deeming this method feasible, made trial, and, assisted by Courtney himself, in the manner he had suggested, actually gained the top of the bank; but the success of this experiment had rather the effect of exciting the mirth of the young ladies than of encouraging them to repeat it. Their laughter, however, was short and painful, for the detention was a serious matter at that hour; Pierre, from above, was impatient to a strange degree for an Indian: the other two guides were bewildered, and seemed without resources.

"I have it," said Atherton, breaking from a revery. "Courtney, run and fetch one of the boat seats."

A seat was brought, and by Atherton's directions two of the men held it so that a lady could step upon it, when it was gradually raised, till, assisted by two more upon the bank above, she could easily

spring upon the mossy and crumbling edge. Night had settled upon mountain, shore, and lake when this difficulty was overcome. And they stood directly under the eaves, as it were, of a forest of impenetrable gloom.

Pierre plunged directly into it.

"We ought to have torches," Alban said.

"If we know'd where to get 'em," observed Courtney.

"Oh, this is frightful!" said Jane, but in a resigned tone.

The way ascended rapidly, and was proportionably fatiguing, being much obstructed, too, by fallen trunks of trees and frequent underwood, and from time to time by ledges of rock, which it was necessary to make a circuit to pass, and that by rude climbing, while the darkness was of an intensity, of which those unaccustomed to the American forest can form no idea. But for the absolute necessity, it would have seemed impossible to proceed. Regular path there was not a vestige of, and had there been, it would have been impossible in that midnight darkness even for an Indian to follow it. The only guiding circumstance was the sound of rushing and falling waters on their left, which grew more distinct as they advanced; and once the sharp, terror-striking cry of a wild animal

was heard, and every now and then a screech-owl caused the forest to ring with his fiendish alarum.

The wild noises, the rayless gloom, the precipitous and broken nature of the ground, and the labyrinth of logs, mouldering trees, and half-decayed branches, softened by occasional springs of trickling moisture, of which the oozing mountain was full, struck the females with dismay, and inspired uneasiness in the stouter heart of Atherton, for his tender charge, though not for himself.

When this laborious and frightful progress had been continued for about twenty-five or thirty minutes, which seemed at least an hour, Jane, who had borne it all far more uncomplainingly than any of her previous sufferings, just as the ground was getting to ascend more gradually, suddenly sank down upon a half-decayed trunk, and partly buried in the soil, over which she had just been helped, and in a voice of distress declared that she could go no further.

The party came to a halt.

“What is to be done now, Mr. Atherton?” asked Morrell.

“How much further have we yet, Pierre?”

“Leetle way — leetle way!”

“How long will it take us?”

“Five minute — ten minute.”

“Let us make a lady’s chair and carry her,” said Miss De Groot.

“The two men are heavily laden already,” remarked Atherton. “Pierre’s hands are full with the guns.”

“But I will help you make a lady’s chair, Mr. Alban. I am pretty strong.”

“You!” exclaimed Atherton. “I thank you. I can carry her very well myself.”

So saying he caught her up.

“Now, Miss De Groot, take hold of my cousin’s shawl to conduct us; and follow Mr. Morrell.”

They moved on again. Once Alban tripped and came down upon one knee. He rose without having dropped his burden. Over logs, and around them, through a deep brook, wading to the knee, (Mary leaped lightly over it,) up a dry water-course rough with stones, he laboured with the half-fainting girl in his arms. At length he staggered into a small clearing, where, under a low shanty, he knelt and set her down. What passed there we are not supposed to know, but it is our belief that before she unwound her weak arms from his neck, Jane thanked him in the most expressive way that a cousin could; and the ardent answer of the youth was not unwitnessed.

“It has been a hard day for her, but it is over

now," said he, rising, and yielding the place to Miss De Groot, who was already close by their side.

The guides unloaded; the coverlets were spread on the shanty floor. Pierre struck a light from the flint. Dry leaves and punk caught the spark; dry brushwood burst into a light, crackling blaze. Fragments of pine, reeking with pitch, next burned fiercely. Morrell's axe already resounded. A young beech crashed, and, sweeping down, enlarged the little clearing. The long, green branches were lopped off and fed the growing fire, and soon, the tree itself, cut into logs some ten feet long, was piled on in regular order, and the flames curled irresistibly round the mossy, lead-coloured bark.

As soon as the fire was kindled, the Indian gave himself no further trouble; but the white guides, with Margaret, fell to preparing supper; and Alban, who at Louis had always enjoyed the fun and romance of participating in these labours, now looked on with as little disposition to assist, as was evinced by Pierre. He was not idle, however, nor, in spite of his recent toil, surrendered himself yet to ignoble rest. Many and grave, in truth, are the thoughts which occupy the LEADER. The buoyancy of youth sustained itself in his heart, yet the consciousness of authority made him serious.

The shanty was smaller than that at Louis. On the other hand, as the scene became illuminated by the fire, there appeared on one side a dining-hall of superior pretensions. Stout poles, driven into the ground, supported a bark canopy, beneath which was a table of the same material, but, being protected from the rains, smooth and unwarped. The seats were logs squared with the axe, and cushioned with bark, the rough side up, and curling finely over the edges. This lake was celebrated for its speckled treasures, and every year it was visited by a small club of adventurous fishermen, who had built this shanty (so Morrell said) only the last Spring.

As usual, the site had been chosen near a spring of purest water, which, welling forth abundantly, formed a deep and clear fountain, celebrated among the hunters (as it appeared) for its coldness and abundance. Doubtless it was distilled in deep, sunless clefts of the mountain, where the winter's ice and snow never wholly melted. There was something mysterious in that cold, clear, and full current, gushing out of the rocky side of the superincumbent mountain, not like an ordinary spring, but rather the escape of a subterranean brook — the dark and gurgling flood of some long and labyrinthine cave, here bursting into light. The overflow ran over a surface of rock,

and fell into a second basin, worn by itself in the cliff: for the ground, on that side, descended almost precipitously to the lake. Alban explored these localities with the aid of a pine torch. It could not but strike him as an extraordinary spot, and one that must in after times become famous. The vast and toppling weight of the mountain lying above, and sweeping up to the stars; the broad lake spreading below; the steep, circumambient forest; and that cold, gushing fount, made the locality impressive.

Returning to the camp-fire, Alban was struck with the picturesqueness of the scene it afforded. Morrell's spare, sinewy frame, and eagle look, bending over the flame to prepare the evening meal, and Courtney's heavier, although more youthful form, and surly but honest aspect, as he assisted in the same operation, contrasted with the apathetic bronze figure of the Indian, sitting as motionless as if he had really been cast in metal; while the softer glow of the fire warmed and illumined the interior of the shanty, where a red shawl, twisted into some graceful lines, marked the reposing form of Jane, and Mary De Groot, sitting with her feet gathered beneath her gray robe, regarded the group of guides with an abstracted air. On every side, the straight boles of the forest caught the light, and were defined by it against the hollow darkness

beyond. Over head, the patch of dark-blue sky with stars, was intercepted only by the gray smoke that continually went aloft, brightened by many a red spark.

The repast being ready, Margaret stuck a lighted tallow-candle, which promised to run famously, into a notch of one of the uprights of the dining-table canopy. Alban and Miss De Groot placed themselves at the table, for Jane refused to stir. Courtney's brawny hand extended a frying-pan of trout, red and fragrant—Pierre's contribution from the lake.

"Will you say grace?" asked Alban, with a smile.

Miss De Groot complied. The guides speculated on this incident over their cooking.

"She's a professor, I reckon, and he is n't," observed Morrell.

"No," answered Courtney, "I guess he's a professor, but not a member."

"Well, I thought he was a professor," said Morrell, simple with all his woodcraft.

Margaret offered Mr. Atherton tea, but to her mistress a mug of water from the ice-cold spring. To the trout succeeded the plumpest and tenderest of the partridges shot in the morning, served by Morrell in tempting style on a hemlock chip.

"Morrell is an adept in forest cookery," observed Alban.

"I should really enjoy this, if your cousin could be prevailed on to partake of it with us," said Mary. "It distresses me to see that she suffers so much."

Jane, however, accepted from Margaret a cup of strong tea, sweetened with loaf-sugar, but of course unmollified by milk. Alban rose, and approaching his cousin, good-naturedly compelled her to eat some savoury morsels of partridge with which, laughing, but rather despotically, he fed her. She submitted like a wearied child, half crying, but when, revived by the stimulating taste and odour, she demanded a dry biscuit, he let her off.

"A good night's rest will restore her," he said, resuming his seat with a moist and tender gladness in the eye that did not misbecome his manhood.

"I trust so," said Mary, quite fervently.

"We all need it."

"Where are the guides to pass the night?" asked Mary.

"They will build another fire presently, some rods off under the trees, and bivouac by it."

"We shall hang a shawl from the roof of the shanty to make a little apartment for you."

"The shanty is sacred to your use."

"But you are not accustomed to sleep under the open sky. It would be a misplaced delicacy, that should occasion your being disabled by a pleurisy, like Mr. St. Clair."

"Hang your shawl in front, if you like," replied Alban, rather abruptly. "It will serve to keep off the smoke, which is sometimes annoying. But no one will come inside of your fire, after you have retired, unless to replenish it. Your tent is *taboo*, to every thing in the shape of man, of course."

"You are very chivalrous," said Mary.

"I know what is due to two lovely women, in the camp which is honoured by their presence."

"You treat me as if I were a child, to make me say grace," she replied with a smile, as both seemed to have finished their repast.

Atherton coloured slightly, and presently performed himself the duty of chaplain, but not without a certain embarrassment. It was, indeed, a curious trait of his, to be self-possessed in important and unforeseen conjunctures — awkward and nervous in slight, formal acts. Miss De Groot smiled as she rose from her log seat, and they vacated the table for the guides, the Indian, and Margaret.

Mary resumed her place at Jane's side. Atherton half-reclined upon the hemlock boughs at their feet.

Jane, in spite of her tea, or perhaps, in her exhausted state, in consequence of it, had fallen asleep. Sweet is repose after labours, and the talk of friends when free after long restraint.

“How does being a Catholic wear with me, do you ask, Mr. Alban? Really, the question is a strange one to my ears. I had almost forgotten that I was ever any thing else.”

“You have been in a convent since I saw you.”

“As a *boarder*,” replied Mary, with a slight emphasis.

“I had heard as a *postulant*,” said Alban, looking at her.

“You heard wrong,” replied she, with some quickness.

“I had it from so good a source that I could not help believing it,” he responded.

“Well, it was not true,” said Mary, looking away.

“You have changed a good deal in personal appearance since I last saw you,” said Alban, regarding her for the first time with a young man’s frank admiration; “though, indeed, I should have *known* you any where.”—And he smiled.

“I have grown taller; it was natural at my age.”

“You have shot up—not like a weed, precisely—but like a young rose-tree. It is not only in stature

that you have gained, but" — with a demure look — "in other no less graceful dimensions."

"Thank you, sir," replied the young lady, bending very low and laughing sweetly. "There was room for improvement in both respects. I was a slight little thing."

"You have not led a very ascetic life in your convent, I conclude."

"No, only a simple and plain one."

"The good nuns permitted you to laugh sometimes, I conclude, since you have not lost the habit."

"Oh, indeed! I laughed a great deal. Those who measure their piety by the length of their faces would be sadly out of place among those excellent sisters."

"It is consoling to find that the convent agreed so well with your mental, as well as your bodily health."

"Oh! it agreed with me perfectly — as you see."

"What convent was it?"

"The Ursulines at Quebec."

"What! *Not* of the Visitation!" exclaimed Alban, involuntarily.

"I do not understand you," said Mary, with a puzzled air.

"No matter," answered Atherton. "Pray, what took you so far as Quebec, may I ask?"

"Why the Charlestown convent was burned last

year, you know, and it was a choice between Canada and Maryland. Papa, for some reason, preferred the former, perhaps on account of the season."

"The dress of the Ursulines is white, is it not?"

"It is."

"I had a notion — that is to say, I dreamed (a remarkably vivid dream) — that I saw you take the white veil; and I afterwards learned that the dress of the nuns, as it appeared to me, was that of the Ladies of the Visitation."

"My mother was educated in their most celebrated convent in France," said Mary.

"Pray describe the Quebec convent," said Alban.

"You mean the building?"

"Every thing."

"Well, the house consists of three stories, divided into long galleries, with cells, halls, and chambers ranging on both their sides. In the highest story are the cells of the nuns, each having a bed, a little desk, and a chair, and hung with paper pictures of the saints. In the middle story is a large room, finely painted and adorned, where they pass the day together, at needle-work, embroidery, flower-making, and so forth. They dine in a refectory, and all are silent except the nun who reads. Then there is a room fitted as a chapel, where they pray; and a noble hospital, where they

tend the sick. The whole day is laid out so as to be occupied with labour or prayer, or deeds of mercy to the neighbour, leaving only what is necessary to sleep, food and recreation."

"And the heart?"

"Is full too — with the Heavenly Spouse!" said Mary.

This tone seemed more natural to her than her previous gayety — so that Alban involuntarily glanced at her garb: but though so plain, it bore, like her gracefully arranged hair, the marks of studied elegance, as of one by no means disposed to neglect the graces which make her sex attractive. There was something, however, in the air, and which had even moulded the figure, of this young lady, that expressed an habitual resistance and conflict: — a bright resolution in the eye, an heroic carriage of the head, a noble expansion of the chest beneath its grave and simple vesture. In regard to the object of her difficult journey, it did not appear at all singular, or out of place in her, that she showed little or no depression of spirits, that she was cheerful, and open to lively enjoyment of the scenes through which she was passing. Gracious, too, as she was to Atherton, her very friendliness expressed a perfect oblivion of the past. No shade of reserve conveyed a tacit reproach, or revealed a hidden sensibility.

She was perfectly natural, in short, and unconstrained, and seemed more so every moment.

Suddenly she turned the conversation so as to satisfy her own curiosity in regard to himself.

“How long is it, Mr. Alban, since you were received into the Church?”

“I entertain just a shadow of doubt whether I have ever been received at all.”

“How?”

“It is an uncertainty respecting my baptism, which I have never been able to clear up. ’T was but last night that I received a letter from my uncle, Bishop Grey, which leaves me, indeed, in as great a doubt as ever, but makes my course plain. The next priest I meet will set the question at rest for ever, by the act of a moment.”

“Then in all this time you have never been to communion?” said Mary, with a look of wonder and sympathy.

“That has been the trial—besides a little fear I have been in for my soul; particularly once or twice on our journey, when I had a narrow escape with my life. But a grave Sulpician—a learned, wise, and altogether delightful man, whom I met in Montreal—quieted and encouraged me on that score. He approved of my caution, which some clergymen I have

met blamed, and said that I should be rewarded in the end for my patience."

"I am sure you will."

"The heavenly Artist knows the exact moment when the metal is ready to be poured into the mould of eternal charity."

"Most true," said Mary, not without emotion. "What," added she, again abruptly changing the theme — "what is your cousin's religion?"

"She is a Presbyterian, and a very pious one."

"You were brought up together, I believe."

"We passed several years of our childhood under the same roof."

"You naturally love her very much."

"I do."

"She is only your second cousin, I believe."

"That is all."

"Do you hope that she will become a Catholic?"

"Indeed, I see no present probability of it."

"But she cannot be invincibly ignorant, after being in your society for some months."

"Light shines sometimes very gradually into the soul."

"That is not my experience, nor yours, Mr. Alban."

"It shone upon *us* all at once, I know," she said. — "But see! the guides are building the other fire in

the woods," once more changing the conversation abruptly. "I should enjoy this life, methinks. And here comes Margaret. Jane, too, stirs. It is time, I think, that we ladies pitched our tents for the night."

She drew forth her rosary.

"May I not join your devotions?" asked Alban.

"Assuredly. Margaret and I generally say the third part of the Rosary; after that, we sing the hymn to our Lady, and her litany. Shall it be so to-night?"

"As you will."

"Don't you read a chapter in the Bible?" demanded Jane.

"Very often. There is a bible in my *sac de nuit*, Mr. Alban, if you would like to read a chapter for our edification."

Atherton took it, and read the fifth chapter of St. Luke, at which he chanced to open.

"What a wonderful chapter!" said he when he had finished. "How many mysteries of our faith are alluded to in it! *Christ teaches from Peter's boat; sends the cleansed leper to the priests; retires to the desert for prayer; claims, as Son of Man, the power of forgiving sins; declares, against the self-righteous Pharisees, that he has come to call sinners to repentance, and prophesies that his disciples shall fast in the future times.*" He turned to Jane with a smile. "See, in this one chapter, my dear

Jane, the Pope, the priesthood, the monks and hermits, the absolutions, the scandals of bad Catholics, and the bodily mortification encouraged by the Church."

"It *sounded* so, hearing you read it," said Jane.

"Henceforth, then, Jane, you cannot plead ignorance," said he, affectionately.

The voice of melody rose on the wild forest, and drowned the murmur of the waterfall. Mary's voice, not less sweet and rich than of old, was more full-breasted and powerful: at times it quite ran to waste. Margaret Dolman had a good native organ of well-strung treble. The Indian had drawn near at the first sign of prayer, and knelt at Alban's side; and when Mary began to chant the litany, his deep, but not harsh bass—for the voices, even of the male Indians, are sweet in singing—chimed in with power. Morrell and Courtney stood on the opposite side of the shanty fire, listening with great attention. Jane sat retired, beneath the low bark roof, the red shawl half wound around her, and her disordered ringlets hanging in golden confusion about her face and throat. It was a strange harmony of the dark, stern, and rude, with the fair, tender, and cultivated forms of humanity: a contrast, too, of the beauty of affection, and that of heroic will.

The guides threw themselves upon a heap of boughs

by their separate and somewhat distant fire. Margaret hung a shawl along the front of the shanty, and all was soon quiet as death, within this simple tent. Atherton folded his cloak about him, and lay down under the canopy of the dining-table, where, after removing one of the log-seats, Morrell had heaped for the young leader a fresh bed of hemlock, and a pillow of balsam.

CHAPTER VIII.

There by the uncertain glims of starry night,
And by the twinkling of their sacred fire,
He mote perceive a little dawning sight
Of all that there was doing in that quire.
With that he thrusts into the thickest throng.

Faërie Queens.

It yet wanted some two hours of day, and the shanty fire burned low, for nearly seven hours had elapsed since it was built for the night; an immense mass of log, reduced to living coals, maintained, however, a glowing heat immediately in front, and the extremities of a great pine, with which the pile had been last replenished, were still blazing, when the curtain of the shanty was lifted aside, and one of the fair occupants stole forth, and rose to her feet.

All the camp was profoundly quiet. The dogs in their kennel of bark, the guides by their distant fire, and Atherton close by, on his half-sheltered couch, were buried in sleep.

The lady gazed at the last, timidly at first, and then

steadily. The upper part of his person was enveloped in his cloak, and his felt-hat was crushed over his eyes, but his feet were uncovered; and in the earlier part of the night, when the side-heat of the fire reached the spot where he lay, the young man had taken off his boots to dry.

“Oh, what an imprudent youth!” murmured the lady. “How cold he must be!”

Just then Atherton drew up one foot under the cloak, but it slipped down again.

“Provoking!” said the lady. “It’s none of my business, to be sure, yet Christian charity impels me. What damsel in the olden time would not have condescended to do so much for so brave a protector?”

She stooped under the curtain again, and drew forth a cloak, with which she herself might have been covered during the night. After a moment’s hesitation, she approached the young man, and kneeling, waited for a repetition of the movement which she had before observed; when, by taking advantage of it, with a kind of feminine, almost mother-like, tenderness and skill, she contrived to envelop the exposed extremities in the folds of the mantle without disturbing the sleeper. When this had been successfully achieved, she gave one look at his face to make sure that she had not waked him, and rising, glided away into the

dark behind the shanty, quite out of the dull fire-gleam.

Groping along the rock, and parting the bushes that environed it, she came upon the sheltered platform beneath that full spring, whose tumbling waters sung constantly in the night.

Let none blame the lady's kindness. It was only the return (so she deemed) which every noble maiden owes to the knight who exposes himself to danger and hardship for her sake. Where there is generosity and devotion on the one side, there ought to be compassion and kindness on the other. Otherwise all the beauty and dignity of the intercourse of the sexes in high civilization were entirely lost. Such thoughts ennobled, in the lady's own eyes, the trivial service she had rendered; and a princess could not have been more lofty in her humility than she, while covering Atherton's feet with her mantle. And the stockings were stained and damp withal.

The spot where she now found herself has been already in part described. The rock formed a sort of arch overhead, whence, at the height of some ten or twelve feet, the water poured and dripped into a deep basin which it had worn for itself in the cliff. Then it lay in a black pool behind as far as the base of the vault, while the overflow ran murmuring down a stony

descent, thickly bordered with bushes and undergrowth. The forest opened grandly above, with mighty towering hemlocks, hung with straggling moss, and many a star shone in upon the grot, and was reflected in the dark basin. The platform of rock around the basin was encumbered with fragments fallen from the arch. The lady seated herself upon one of these, and dipped up the ice-cold water in the palm of her hand.

“I drink from thy cold veins, O Mountain! Would that my bosom could thereby become as firm as thy rocky heart!”

Whether it was that such thoughts absorbed her or not, when her thirst was satisfied, instead of going immediately away, she continued to sit, leaning with one open hand upon the same stone, and gazing at the vexed, foamy spot in the basin where the water fell. In that natural attitude, with the simple antique flow of her drapery by the light of the shadowy cave, she seemed some nymph of the woody and fabulous Hellas, bending unseen over her star-lit fountain.

How often it happens that having performed some kind or generous action, in a lofty, romantic spirit, we are presently after assailed with involuntary inward suggestions in regard to what we have done, which make us appear to ourselves extremely silly, and cause us to blush at the exaltation of mind which we pre-

viously experienced. In the imaginative fiction of ZANONI, the genius of Bulwer has given a terrible impersonation of this appalling visitant of generous souls, in the spectral shadow which he there represents as haunting the threshold of the Ideal. But in the true and real super-sensual sphere that lies about and encompasses the world we see, the phenomenon is justly attributed to a real whisperer at our elbow, a living and malignant, though invisible, depreciator of our noble actions; nor is it this demon's office merely to represent our good as weakness, but with malicious sagacity, hoping thereby to discourage us from ever attempting the like again, to point out the real faults which have mingled in the good itself, through the imperfection of human nature. It might have been thus with our beautiful and heroic friend.

“Is this thy pride towards one who has once treated thee so coldly?—who now, perchance, is devoted—even plighted—to another? Is this thy vowed generosity and abnegation in *her* favour? With what a pang would she have seen thy silly kindness? And thou hast dreamed of the austerest life which is led on earth by the spouses of Heaven! Oh, foolish virgin! how soon is thy lamp gone out!”

We have noticed the coldness of this fountain. No doubt it was supplied from some frozen reservoir

—some glacier adorning a cavern with its blue arch. What a world was there, unknown save to the chilliest reptiles! The worm, the newt, and the toad, knew of it. The fountain itself was inhabited and purified by the cold-blooded frog, darting, with a miniature resemblance of human motion, like a strong swimmer, through its clear depth, and hiding his green limbs in the hollow, fringed with hairy roots that pierce the earthy margin. But the hand of man could not dip into it without pain.

Yet now the maiden bared and plunged into it her tender arm. Down it went out of sight beneath the black surface which clipped and embraced its rounded whiteness. That was surely in vain. The coldness of a mountain source could not chill a loving female heart, which glowed the more obstinately because its warmth was so pure.

All of a sudden there was a splashing in the brook below, and a rushing among the bushes, and in a moment a number of huge, black forms came tumbling with awkward agility upon the rocky platform.

Alban was dreaming of an Arctic expedition, and thought that he was chasing the white bear over the ice-fields of the Pole. Wrapt in skins, he felt not the keen air; but the vast, crystalline plain on which he moved was so intensely cold that he could not bear

to step upon it. With him was a company of furry Esquimaux, among whom he distinguished Morrell and Courtney. All at once, their joyful gestures announced the discovery of a geyser, or hot volcanic spring, bubbling up under the everlasting snows, and presently he had plunged his feet in the glowing ashes that covered, so he thought, the edge of the crater, when a familiar voice behind him uttered his name in a cry of warning.

He waked; that cry was still in his ear, with a sense of reality which no dream leaves behind it. He sat up and perceived the cloak folded about his feet. The cry was heard again; his name was called in a well-known voice. He sprang up and rushed towards the fountain, but found no one.

“Mary!” he cried.

“I have somehow got below the fall, and there are” — a slight hysteric laugh — “some great bears upon the rock, so that I can’t get back.”

The youth darted away. Without uttering a cry, (which would have brought upon the scene three hunters and as many dogs,) he seized a blazing knot of pine from the fire, and in a moment rushed upon the rocky platform of the basin. The wild creatures scrambled away over the stones of the stream. But one of the cubs, too young to be frightened by the light, lay rolled among the fragments of rock, at play with some-

thing that he found there, and the huge she-bear turned threateningly on her steps. Yet even her maternal fury was quelled by the terror of the flame.

Mary had somehow escaped to the opposite side of the basin, where she stood half-concealed by the silvery column of the cascade.

“Come back to this side, and get away as fast as you can, while I keep this creature off,” said Atherton, advancing boldly into the stream.

While the torch whirled through the air, and the fierce animal made sudden rushes forward, and quick retreats, rising terribly on her hind-feet when the flame dashed in her wild eye, the maiden advanced hastily along the inner ledge of the rock to its termination. The basin was too wide to leap across, and the depth on the opposite side forbade wading. The intense light that filled the grot showed her, as she paused, pale, and disordered in attitude and garments, lifting with the snow-white arm the simple gray robe, measuring the distance before her with a bright, resolute eye, while another maid, her twin and inverted image, gleamed in the mirror of the rocky basin. And her graceful shadow was thrown against the cliff.

It was but a moment; for the cub, which had been playing with a shoe that Mary had lost in her flight, ended by pushing it into the water, and, as if startled

at the mischance, ran off, tumbling head-foremost into the bushes to seek its dam. In a trice all the black forms had disappeared.

Atherton turned to assist his fair companion. The steepness of the rock, and density of the bushes on the side where the waters discharged, allowed no passage except for the rough-coated bears, and least of all for a woman, impeded by her long garments. But mid-way of the back cliff, and just above the water's edge, Alban discovered a cleft where he could rest his foot. Laying down the torch on a rock, he spanned the distance with his masculine stride.

"Now for something that you can step upon."

Among the rocks lay a fragment of a hemlock branch, jagged and stiff. He brought it and laid it across the basin. He tried it. It bore his weight. He planted one foot again in the cleft of the rock. The maiden took his hand, and stepped tremblingly across on the unsteady branch.

"You have lost a slipper—where is it?"

"It has fallen into the water."

By the aid of the torch it was easily discovered, and kneeling, he recovered it quickly, plunging his arm to the shoulder. He dried the soft velvet slipper with care. It seemed that he would have kissed it as he laid it at her feet. If she had been compas-

sionate as a damsel in the days of chivalry, and in a way that would have been approved in the nicest courts of love and gentleness, he was as brave and devoted as any knight. Then he held the torch on high, as if to guard the entrance of the grot, while the maiden, to whom the shanty fire would be a sufficient guide in returning to her place, fled like a bird startled from shady covert, and he was left alone under the overhanging and dripping cave.

The torch still illumined the wet rocks, the hemlock branch, the black pool and silvery fall, but the nymph-like presence that lately filled the grot—life, image, and graceful shadow—was gone, and he hurled the flaming pine-knot into the brook. It hissed a moment, and all was blackness. Alban returned to the shanty, where all was now quiet as the grave again, and resumed his balsam couch.

So passed the night at Cold Spring Lake—the night of their first encampment. The mountain stood over them, truly, like an ancient wizard, with his head among the stars. The waters which flowed from his cold breast were as if enchanted. The forest was conscious of a magic as old at least as Eden.

CHAPTER IX.

Guiding a wet and sodden boat,
With thing half paddle, half an oar,
I chanced one murky eve to float
Along the grim and ghastly shore
Of such wild water.

Vigil of Faith.

THERE are two external causes which of themselves dispose the soul to live for the present in the manner of the Gentiles, and to forget the stern relations which that present bears to an immortal future. One is the splendour and activity of cities; the other, the infinite luxuriance of nature in her forest solitudes. On the confines of that vast and ancient world, dateless and without a history, which the untamed wilderness presents, man seems to belong to the tribes which eat, drink, and enjoy their brief sum of life, in every forest, in every wild stream and lake, or wherever the sun vivifies the moisture of the untilled earth, and fills the very atmosphere with the motion and

the glitter, the soothing hum and ceaseless enjoyment of an insect universe.

The antiquity of the mountains, and of the woods that feed on their maternal bosoms, as on the myriad breasts of the antique Cybele, annihilates the individuality of him who passes through the old wilderness. How long have these streams, too, leaped from the cliffs in foam? How long have these lakes reflected the stars, or weltered under the bright kiss of the ever-youthful sun?

The Germans have a popular tradition that when the Christian Faith overturned the old worship of a formerly heathen country, the ancient gods fled from the genial abodes of men to the recesses of the forest, or hid themselves deep in the heart of the mountains, coming forth even there, only in the hours of dew and shadow; which seems to symbolize that inveterate heathenism of lakes and woods, of mountain and cave, and of the blue-vested night, with her mystic gold-embroidery of constellations, and her milky star-girdle! But there is a process by which even the wildest scenes imbibe the lineaments of faith, and become Christianized, like a hamlet by its rude church, or a city by its overshadowing cathedral towers, hung with sweet-toned bells. The beautiful Horicon was made a font by the early Jesuit missionaries; the converts

of the Indian tribes were baptized in its transparent waters; and it became Lake St. Sacramento, for an eternal memorial that there the Holy Dove has dipped His wings. The acts of sacred penance and the oblation of pure prayers can hallow any spot. Even the movements of our travellers tended to unheathenize the wilderness they passed through. At dawn, at noon, and at sunset, Mary De Groot and Margaret never failed to bow their heads for the *Angelus*, and as they did so, the wild American forest seemed to be impressed with the moral image of Southern cities, where, at the stroke of the wide-sounding bells, the whole population pauses in its business and its gaiety, and amid universal silence, gives one moment to the adoration of the Incarnate Word.

The little camp was early in motion. To-day their journey was to be prosecuted in the boats, and they were obliged to begin by retracing the last steps of the night before. All expressed surprise at the ease of what had seemed so formidable and difficult. Day-light and descending ground made such a difference. Jane was considerably rested, although she declared that she had slept badly for the first three or four hours, after which she had fallen into a sweet morning slumber. Mary was fresh as a lark, and eager to set forward; which Jane was not, from excessive fear

of the difficulties of the way. However, she resigned herself with womanly fortitude to what was inevitable.

The outlet of the lake, which soon presented itself after they had gained the boats, was narrow and winding, filled with rocks, and abounding in rapids and short turns, that made the navigation dangerous and exciting. The scenery through which they passed was varied. Sometimes they pierced a frowning depth of low and seemingly boundless swamp; sometimes threaded a labyrinth of rocky islets; then the scene expanded, and precipitous crags, rising over woods of vivid foliage, bordered their way on either side. The order of proceeding was slightly different from that of the evening before. It was suggested by Morrell that as the outlets were not of easy navigation, it would be better to separate the females, placing one in each boat, that in case of accident there might not be two to look after at once; a piece of foresight which threw Jane into a nervous agitation hardly to be quieted even by her cousin's going in the same boat—an arrangement on which Mary De Groot, but not without some embarrassment, insisted. Every rock they approached, the unhappy Jane expected the canoe to strike and go to pieces, and when occasionally they came apparently near being upset by grazing one sunken beneath the surface, in some of

the short turns of the channel, she caught her cousin's arm with convulsive force, and sank on his shoulder when the danger was past, trembling like a leaf of the silver poplar that quivered on the edges of the forest which bordered their way. She declared, with a paleness that bespoke her sincerity, that it was infinitely worse than the fatigues of the day before, and that she would rather walk or ride a thousand miles than undergo it again. Atherton, indeed, was not without apprehensions, not exactly of drowning, although with those rapids ready to sweep them out of reach of each other, that might happen, but of disabling their boat, which would prove a most serious obstacle to the prosecution of the journey.

The cousins were *rowed* by Morrell. Miss De Groot was in advance with Pierre. It is probable that the Indian was more accustomed to threading a channel so choked with hidden as well as visible rocks; or it might be the native dexterity of the race; but at any rate, his canoe glided along without appearing to encounter the mishaps that befell Morrell's.

At noon they arrived at a portage, where all were obliged to land, and the guides transported the boats round a considerable fall. Nothing could be more wildly beautiful, although for the females difficult, than the walk which they had now to accomplish. At first

they went clambering over rocks; then they had to pierce a vast net-work of vines; at last they descended as it were a precipice, where the ladies required all the assistance of their stronger companions, into a grove lying in the hollow embrace of a huge, rocky amphitheatre, like the Colosseum, only incomparably more vast; at the lower extremity of which, the principal waterfall poured into a still inferior valley in a single sheet of green and white waters, that buried themselves in a cloud of spray, spanned at that hour of high noon by many an iris. The lofty gray crags tottling above against the sky, the crimson splendour of the autumn grove, mixed with dark evergreens, the sparkling, foaming, thundering waters, with their brilliant sunbows, made a scene at which all exclaimed with delight, and even Jane acknowledged herself repaid for her fatigues and her fears.

As the guides were obliged to make two journeys in order to transport the boats below the falls, and afterwards needed to rest, nearly two hours were spent at this beautiful spot. On a bank above, commanding a view of the principal fall, and of the chasm where the waters, after their leap, boiled along in many a white fret and black whirlpool, the travellers took their mid-day repose and ate their mid-day meal. Courtney had kindled in a few minutes a fire of dry boughs, which

diffused a warmth ever grateful in the forest, but especially so near a cascade. A coverlet was spread to sit upon; cloaks and carpet-bags served for cushions. A little withdrawn, but near enough to feel the glow of the fire, some poles cut from saplings, with a blanket of Pierre's, a shawl, and a coverlet, formed, by Alban's care, an extempore tent. Biscuit and dried venison, with water from a bubbling spring, constituted the repast, and the bank where they reclined contributed the red berries of the aromatic winter-green in great abundance for a dessert. For the last of the partridges and pigeons, with the remainder of the trout, had been consumed in the morning. There was a general feeling that some fresh venison would be acceptable.

"Since we shall be here two hours, why can't we put out the dogs?" Alban asked.

"I'm afeard it might detain us," said Morrell, "or else I would. I'd like amazingly to kill a deer in the inlet, or maybe in the lake, for we are pretty near it now."

"If one of the dogs should have a long race, it would be bad, certainly. I'm afraid, ladies, that we shall be obliged to sup on dried meat to-night."

"We might troll for lake trout as soon as we get out of the inlet," said Courtney.

"We might do that."

“The outlet has got to be the inlet, has it?” said Miss De Groot. “That is encouraging, Jane. Is the lake we are coming to now, a long one, Mr. Morrell?”

“Four or five miles, ma’am.”

“And then we shall arrive at another outlet, I suppose,” cried Jane. “Is it any thing like this, Mr. Morrell?”

Morrell confessed that he had never been through it. Courtney said it was pretty bad in one place, at which Jane changed countenance. Miss De Groot consoled her with the skill of the guides, and the certainty that at the very worst, should one of the boats capsize, or be stove in, they would but get a wetting.

“But Mr. Morrell acknowledges that he has never been through this outlet,” said Jane. “And as for a wetting—I beg you will not speak of it—the very thought terrifies me. If I get into the water, I am sure I shall drown, and perhaps be the means of drowning Alban too.”

“If Mr. Morrell’s not being acquainted with the passage is what troubles you,” replied Mary, “you shall change boats with me. Pierre never ran upon a rock once this morning. You and your cousin shall go with him this afternoon.”

“No, it is not fair that you should always be ceding the best places to me.”

"You undertook the journey on my account," replied Mary. "And besides, I am not the least afraid to trust myself to Mr. Morrell." — And Morrell, who was just preparing to return for his boat, made her a rude bow.

"I wish I had half your courage, Mary."

"Oh, pray don't! I think you a great deal more charming as you are — do not you, Mr. Alban?"

"There is something that rather flatters us in a woman's ingenuous cowardice," replied Atherton.

"I told you so. (It is sadly unfeminine to be so courageous, and so self-dependent — as I am.) Be contented, Jane." — And Mary laughed somewhat girlishly.

"I must try to pick off a few pigeons for supper," said Alban, rising.

"If you find any beautiful leaves, Alban, you won't forget to gather them and bring them to me to press," said Jane, who had collected a vast variety of these souvenirs, from every place in the course of their tour.

"Of course."

He took his gun, and strolled off. Both girls followed him at first with their eyes, but Miss De Groot soon averted hers, and directed her attention to the dashing fall.

How it plunged on, with the visible identity of an

individual and self-conscious thing, and not a mere phenomenon; the form perpetual, and the substance never for two consecutive instants the same! Still plunging! still tossing up its jets of foam, its sparkling breath of almost viewless spray, that covers the rocks and woods below with a half-transparent veil. Is there any other life but that which we see here in its liveliest symbol? Are *we*, too, but the form of the ever-flowing, the imperishable and eternal substance, as it dashes down the precipice of Being? Or is there a soul, too, in the cataract? Is it a nymph, with sunny locks and limbs of light and mist, who sits upon that glittering sunbow and dominates the scene?

They are mortals who gaze upon her—creatures of flesh and blood. But strangely mixed with that earthly *πλασμα* is a spark of the pure intellectual light—a ray, not from the sun, but from the sun's Creator. The life which that Light gives shall really never die: then let it not, even here, be subject to the creatures! Sparkling on in union with the humblest elements, let it still assert its heavenly origin. But neither must the present lowliness be despised or ignored, for it is full of uses to the spirit itself, and therein is circumscribed the sphere of humanity, with all its opportunities for patience, for pity, and for love.

“The water is never tired of tumbling there,” said

Jane, observing her companion's gaze to be fixed upon the brilliant cataract. "I wish I could be as unwearied after clambering over these rocks, or as fresh and sweet, as that white and green water, instead of aching with fatigue, as I do — to avoid the mention of other discomforts. What do you think, Mary? Would you like to be a waterfall?"

"No," answered Mary, adopting the light and pleasant tone of her companion, "I like my own human nature best, with all its infirmities."

"You would like to get rid of the infirmities, though, if you could?"

"In good time," said Mary, looking upward, but still smilingly. "At present, I would rather keep what makes me like my kind."

"But if you wished to be loved in a romantic, imaginative way — to be somebody's ideal — those things are very disenchanting, don't you think?"

Mary blushed like the sociable angel interrogated by Adam — "celestial rosy red, love's proper hue" — if any body needs us to quote the very passage.

"It must be a feeble sentiment to be so disenchanted," said she. "For my part" — she paused. "Our Saviour, you know, Jane, was subject to all our sinless infirmities; He was tired, and suffered His sacred eyelids to be weighed down with sleep; in His

long journeys He was often covered with sweat and dust, no doubt. We ought to be glad to be like Him on our pilgrimage."

"Oh, but we never can," said Jane.

There was a silence for some time, when Jane, who had been ruminating on what Mary said, resumed the conversation from a nearer point.

"I wonder," said she, "that you and Alban, sympathizing so deeply in your religious views, have never formed a more lively personal preference for each other."

This was said in a careless tone, but the speaker attentively watched the effect of her words. However, it was so natural for a young lady to blush at such a remark from a female friend, that Miss De Groot's heightened colour and forced laugh did not reveal much.

"Bodies similarly electrified repel each other, Jane. Your cousin and I think too much alike, perhaps, — to fall in love."

"But you did not always think alike?"

"We have always talked most about religion, though, I remember; and it is surely repugnant to Christian delicacy to carry on a flirtation under such a guise. These are things that must be kept apart. I have heard," added she, gaily, "that young Protestant

ministers woo their wives by talking theology:—it would n't be the way to win *me!*”

“But you would wish to marry one whose religious views coincided with your own?” persisted Jane.

Mary laughed.

“Of course. But it is a subject that I try to think about as little as possible.”

“One can't help thinking about it sometimes,” said Jane.

“If one hopes to be married—at least some day; and especially if one rather connects that wish with any particular person,” replied Mary with archness.

“Do you mean that you hope for no such thing?” Jane asked, with spirit, and in a tone of raillery.

“In truth, I have no hope of being married, and no wish for it,” said Mary.

“Perhaps you wish to be a nun?” said Jane, a new light breaking upon her, and speaking with a mixture of softness and curiosity.

“No!” said Mary. “I wish to follow my vocation, whatever it is, and whenever it shall please God to make it known to me.”

“And pray,” said Jane, “how do you expect the will of Heaven to be made known to you on this point?”

Miss De Groot reflected a moment, blushed, smiled,

looked down, and replied with a mixture of archness and melancholy,

“When three things meet—my father’s wishes, the entreaties of a *constant* lover, and the pleadings of my own heart, and when my consent will neither wrong nor pain any one else,—I shall, *perhaps*, resign my maiden freedom;—but this is idle talk.”

The guides returned, bearing the last of the boats. They bore it down the rocks, and launched it below the fall. Atherton came in, not having seen a solitary pigeon. He had a story of having disturbed some partridges, but could not get a shot at them. Pierre was discovered on the rocks below, trying to fish. On inquiry it was found that he had been unsuccessful, and the other guides pronounced that the trout were on the spawning beds about the mouth of the inlet. So the traps were gathered together, and the party re-embarked.

When the new arrangement, by which the ladies were to change boats, was perceived, Pierre at first refused to move. It seemed that he considered Miss De Groot as under his special care, nor would he trust her to any one else. No one before had presumed to dispute an arrangement which Alban had made or approved. Our hero’s pride, or his instinct of authority, was roused. The Indian was obstinate.

"I cannot yield to this foolish fellow," said Atherton, turning to Miss De Groot, "but perhaps, to save us a quarrel, you will change your mind."

"By no means," exclaimed Mary, who was already in Morrell's boat. She rose, and stood in the stern, and addressed Pierre in French, extending one hand loftily towards the distant lake. "I go," said she, "in the boat which Monsieur Atherton has approved, and with the guide whom he designates. Shall I say to my father that you have abandoned his daughter? What will the black-robés tell you when they hear it?"

At this appeal, and seeing her resolution to go with Morrell, the Indian, without a change of countenance, yielded the point, and they got under way, Pierre still taking the lead. The afternoon was consumed in the passage of a long, many-islanded lake. On one of the islands they saw several bears—near relatives, doubtless, of our friends of the grotto. Courtney was eager to land and have a fight for them in the presence of the ladies, extolling the fat and tender meat of the young ones; but the more prudent Morrell withstood the proposition, out of regard to the safety of his dog. Courtney replied that he would risk his. The young man's eye flashed with excitement, which communicated itself to Atherton, who also longed to shoot a bear, if only to pay a debt he owed the race. Morrell

readily submitted to Mr. Atherton, and all were preparing to go ashore, when a look of Mary's reminded our hero that all needless delay must give her pain: — for she hoped that evening to reach the nearest cabin of Pierre's tribe, and hear news of her father. Although she said nothing, therefore, Alban understood her anxiety to get on, and he said, — “No — we shall lose time — on, on!” to Courtney's great disappointment.

This turned out for the best; for passing beyond the islet, the first thing they saw was a deer in the open lake. Mary De Groot was the first to see it, Morrell having got the lead at the Bear island.

Then there was a chase. The ladies were extremely excited. The most refined natures possess a share of those instincts which class man among beasts of prey, and besides this natural venatory propensity, all were stimulated by the desire of obtaining that food for which the open air develops an immense craving. The relentings of female pity only gave a sort of zest to these stern impulses of pursuit. So far advanced was the deer — a buck of ten tynes — that it was by the greatest exertions alone that Morrell succeeded in heading him off, although the light form of Miss De Groot constituted the entire load of his birchen canoe. The hounds, which were with Courtney, kept up a

constant cry, in spite of all the latter could do to quiet them.

"Now," cried Morrell, when the deer turned and showed the back of his head in the long direction of the lake, "we have him. But you must kill him, Miss De Groot. He belongs fairly to you."

"Oh, not for the world!" answered Mary. "Let Mr. Atherton shoot him."

Alban, who was coming up fast, did not pass any compliments on the matter. Only, for fear of the buckshot scattering, he took Pierre's rifle instead of his own gun. Mary De Groot, closely pursuing, saw the branching horns sink like lead before her, even before the sharp report of the rifle reached her ear over the water. The echoes were yet answering from the hills, when Morrell caught one of the horns, and plunged the knife into the unresisting throat.

"The beautiful eye!" cried Mary.

"This is your deer, Miss De Groot," said Alban, coming up.

"It is Jane's and mine. I saw him first, and headed him off, as Mr. Morrell says; and by the same reasoning, Jane, *you* shot him."

Both the guides praised Alban's shot to the skies. Even Pierre ejaculated a note of commendation. The ball had hit exactly in the right spot in the ear, and

had perforated the brain. The deer was got into Morrell's boat by the united exertions of Morrell and Courtney, and the dog of the former whimpered so for his master that at Miss De Groot's request he took him in. Pierre meanwhile took the lead again.

"Was it really a very fine shot of Mr. Atherton's?" asked Mary De Groot, as Morrell cheerfully pulled on.

"Beautiful, ma'am. Nothing could have bettered it."

Mary could not restrain her exultation. She crimsoned to the temples, because Alban had killed a buck with a rifle-shot.

"I am proud of him!" she exclaimed. "Don't you think, Mr. Morrell, that he *is* a noble fellow?"

Morrell assented of course; both in deference to the lady's praise, and because Alban was really a favourite with the guides.

Nothing further occurred worthy of notice during the afternoon. The outlet of this lake did not prove upon the whole nearly so difficult of navigation as that of the other; the "one bad place"—a reach of about half a mile—was passed by Pierre without alarming Jane more than once or twice. Morrell indeed ran several times upon a hidden rock in a rather perilous way, especially considering the load he had; and there was one spot where the men had

all to get out, and drag the boats over some shallows of gravel. Towards sunset, they came out into a lake which surpassed in majesty all the preceding. A blue, sky-piercing summit, centrally rising from a ring of beautiful hills and wooded promontories, overlooked a broad, irregular sheet, nearly fifteen miles across, dotted with islands of rock and mighty timber. The wind, which had been singing in the forest-tops for an hour or more, was blowing freshly on the lake; and over the western shore hung a dark, blue mass of threatening clouds, with a line of saffron-coloured rain between their edges and the horizon. Lightning gleamed on the front of the clouds.

Still they were bound to proceed. No suitable shelter could be found without crossing the lake. The waves smote their frail boats, as they toiled on; the sky soon became black; the lightning vivid. About the middle of the passage, it began to rain in torrents. They were in more real jeopardy than in all their voyage hitherto. Morrell's boat, from the severe concussion it had received in the inlets, took in water freely. Miss De Groot got the rusty tin cup kept for that purpose, and baled. Morrell wished to throw the deer over, as its weight sank the boat considerably, and produced half the leakage; but she would not hear of it. Alban was constantly looking back at

them, in great distress; he was but baling occasionally. He shouted several times to Morrell to throw over the deer, which Mary answered by waving her tin cup. It was too rough to effect an exchange with a lady from one boat to another, or he would have made her take his place in Pierre's canoe. Jane being enveloped in a water-proof cloak, lent by St. Clair, was secure against the rain, but Miss De Groot was soon wet through all her garments.

"Do you think the boat is likely to go to pieces from these waves striking it so hard, Mr. Morrell?" said Mary in a sweet tone, still baling.

"Well, I guess it will stand it, maybe. I should n't be much afraid, if it was n't for that last thump in the inlet. I guess that racked the old shell considerable."

"And do you think the wreck would sink or float, Mr. Morrell?"

"Well, I guess it would float."

"My clothes are so completely soaked that they would not buoy me up long, I fear," said Mary. — There was a fearful creak as the boat fell against a sea. — "It is not going to break, is it?"

"No, not yet, I guess. But I really think we shall have to heave that buck overboard. You see the water comes in fast since that last poke."

"You must consult your own judgment, Mr. Morrell."

Morrell left the paddle, and with a mighty effort heaved the body of the deer over the side, but nearly capsized the boat in doing so. The waves caught it on the side, and broke over it as it righted. It was half full in a twinkling.

"Bale, bale, Miss! as fast as ever you can, while I keep her to the sea. O my good Lord, if I had only another pair of hands."

Mary baled with both hands, she pulled off her sun-bonnet and baled with that; it took up four times as much water as the cup, still the quantity did not sensibly diminish.

"There is a place in the side just under your right knee, Mr. Morrell — no, lower down — where a great deal of water comes in. I observed it before, and now I see a little eddying. If you could only stuff my handkerchief in."

Morrell contrived to do so, working with one hand at the same time. The water now diminished rapidly under the baling.

"You are almost exhausted, Miss."

"But not quite. I am gaining on the water fast."

"Rest a few minutes, while I try if I can't lift this boat out of the water."

Morrell threw all his force upon the broad paddle. The boat seemed really to fly. They gained upon Pierre. Courtney fell astern. Mary set to baling again with the cup. Pierre called out to them several times, and the minute after the boat struck, not a wave, but a rock. The bottom was stove in; the fragile shell of bark was in pieces in twenty seconds. A shriek was heard from Pierre's boat, and another from Courtney's.

"Put back, Pierre. Be quick as lightning."

Alban did not leap in, he did not even rise; he sat still, white as a sheet, but trimming the canoe carefully, and keeping his eye on Mary's form. She and Morrell were only a few yards apart, but the latter had either been stunned, or had lost his presence of mind. Morrell's dog held Miss De Groot's dress between his teeth. Jane cried and wrung her hands. As the canoe came alongside, Alban perceived that Mary was insensible; her head and face were quite under water; her long hair had got loose and floated upon it. A wave dashed her into his arms, and he drew her into the boat. Morrell seized hold of the side, and so kept himself above water, till Courtney came up and took him in. It was nearly dark when this happened.

CHAPTER X.

The friendly outlaw, now taking me by the arm, conducted me into the interior of the hut. My eyes roved round its smoky recesses in quest of Diana and her companion.

Rob Roy.

ATHERTON wished to go ashore at the nearest point, that they might build a fire, and employ without delay all the means they possessed for the resuscitation of their friend. But Pierre shook his head, and kept on up the middle of the lake. Mary might have been two or three minutes (certainly not more) under water. A timid, hysterical girl, who would faint immediately from terror, might be submerged for half an hour with less danger, than one so healthy and courageous for two minutes. The continuance of the full action of the heart, in the latter case, pumps carbonized blood out of the lungs, and all is over.

At first, Miss De Groot lay in the bottom of the canoe, exposed to the torrents of rain, the water swashing back and forth around her at every lift of

the boat by a wave. Alban baled out the water as well as he could in the crowded state of the canoe, and Jane eagerly offered the water-proof cloak in which she had hitherto been protected from the wet, to envelop the person of her friend. With some difficulty he succeeded in wrapping her in it, and taking the insensible form in his arms, placed himself in the bottom of the boat. Her feet being still imperfectly protected, he took off his own shag, which shed the rain, and covered them. This was all that could be done for the present. Thus they pulled on, till it became so dark that they could no longer distinguish each other's faces, and Courtney, though following close behind, had to be guided by an occasional hoarse cry from the Indian. Every few minutes, Morrell called out to know on the part of Margaret how her mistress was, till Atherton enjoined silence. Notwithstanding the darkness, the rain, the waves, the occasional bursts of sheeted lightning which revealed a widely threatening scene, and the terror which the accident that already had befallen was calculated to infuse, Jane, though trembling, suppressed her fears, and uttered not a word unless of tender anxiety for Mary's recovery. Despite a deep confidence which he felt that she would be saved, Alban's heart was a prey to the most devouring im-

patience to reach land, where they might at least ascertain the truth.

As soon as all fresh moisture was excluded, besides that with which her garments were already saturated, the warmth which Mary had never lost began to increase. In the perfect darkness, the first signs of returning animation could not be perceived. She was already conscious before Alban was aware that she breathed. A faint struggle to free herself from his arms was the first thing that gave him the joyful assurance of her life.

“She moves!”

“Thank God!” cried Jane, with a singular burst. “That is all I care for in the world!”

“Jane!” said Miss De Groot, in a voice so low that only Alban heard it.

“She speaks to you, Jane.”

“Mary — dearest!” Jane stooped down, found her friend’s face, and kissed her tenderly. “Keep quiet, dearest; Alban is holding you, all safely wrapt in the oil-skin cloak. We shall soon get ashore.”

In effect, they touched the long-desired shore a few minutes after this, and Pierre leaped out and drew up the canoe.

“Shanty, Pierre?” demanded Atherton, in the laconic English which the Indian best understood.

“Good shanty — very good!”

“Good path?”

“Good! — very good!”

“I can walk,” Mary remonstrated, as Alban lifted her in his arms.

“And I can carry you. Why, you are light as an infant.”

Pierre, with unwonted attention to a squaw, helped Jane along. There was a narrow sand-beach, then an ascending path, soft as the furrow of a ploughed field. When they reached the top of the bank, they saw before them, at some distance, the low black outline of a hut defined against a blazing fire. Meanwhile Courtney had come up, and the whole party reached the hut nearly at the same moment. The Indian pushed open a door in the side, discovering an interior lighted by the fire. Stooping under, Atherton entered with his silent burden.

It was a log cabin, with one open gable, opposite which the fire was piled against a rude chimney-back of stone, designed to aid in carrying off the smoke. The floor was of hard earth, spread along the walls with boughs and skins. Near the fire sat two persons — a man and woman — both of whom sprang to their feet on seeing the visitors, and the latter, observing what Alban had in his arms, pointed to a low couch

of skins, where he deposited Mary de Groot. Courtney, Morrell, and Margaret entered, the two men bearing the luggage, and the cabin was full of persons.

The male occupant of the hut and the guides exchanged mutual recognitions.

“You can give us a lodging to-night, Duncan, and something to eat, I reckon?”

“Why, Morrell, we’ll do what we can. But what youth is this coming to this part of the world with three gals? Squaws are of precious little use here, I can tell you, though I’ve got one to sit by my shanty fire—but Dorothy is pretty near as strong to work as I am.”

The owner of the cabin was a man past thirty, above the middle height, with a sallow complexion, thin, aquiline features, and a piercing but stealthy eye. He was clad in the garb of hunters, as it is seen in the remoter forest—a shirt and leggins of tawny buckskin, and a large cap of gray marten. His female companion might have been ten years younger. Her sun-burnt features, small, half-shut, light-blue eye, and flaxen hair, intimated that she had been *raised* on a clearing. Her garb was simplicity itself, consisting of a coarse white cotton chemise, and a single petticoat of blue cloth; her feet as well as arms being bare, and dark from exposure. This simple cos-

tume set off a form of that vigorous symmetry which is only seen where Nature has been developed by constant exercise, and never subjected to restraint; and her quick movements were of a corresponding gracefulness. She was very much astonished to see so many females, and offered them assistance with a readiness that savoured as much of curiosity as goodwill.

Atherton, however, now advanced to the men, who were standing and conversing near the fire, and proposed, with a courteous air, that the shanty should be abandoned for a short time to the ladies.

"And where are *we* to go?" demanded the owner of the hut. "The nearest tree is a hundred yards, and you'll find it wet enough under the pines to-night, I guess. If your women-folks wants to change their clo'es, they're welcome to tuther end of the shanty, I spose. Nobody here 'll take the trouble to look to see what they're doin', I guess."

This "back-turning" is indeed the established etiquette of log-cabins of a single room, on the rough frontier. Atherton was not unacquainted with the custom, but the proposal to adopt it now seemed to him an outrageous disrespect; and an indefinable insult in the tone of the trapper stirred his blood.

"Look here, Mr. Duncan!" rejoined he, sternly.

“I will pay you to-morrow what you like for the accommodation, but to-night I expect to be master here. These ladies are not used to undress in the presence of men, whether their backs are turned or not, nor do I mean that they shall begin now. So come out of the shanty with us at once.”

At this the trapper stepped back, and took down his rifle from a pair of buck-horns across which it was suspended. His wife screamed. Courtney, who had also looked very fierce during Alban's speech, seized his gun. Pierre rose stealthily to his feet from the position he had already taken near the fire.

“Come, Duncan, don't be a fool, man!” said Morrell with an uneasy look. “You'll be well paid if you're obliging; otherwise you'll get nothing at all.”

Whether influenced by the consideration urged by Morrell, or seeing from the fierce and resolute looks of the others, that the young man would be seconded by his followers, the squatter hung up his rifle again with a sullen laugh. Alban haughtily pointed to the door, and all went out. It was really asking a good deal of a man, to make him turn out of his own dry house on such a night, and stand under a flooding sky. To this effect Duncan was grumbling, and added something in regard to the object of their expulsion, which again so nearly approached disrespect to the ladies,

that Atherton was strongly tempted to knock him down. He offered the trapper the oil-skin cloak.

"Do me the favour to put it on. It will keep you dry. Nay, I insist upon it. I am already wet to the skin, and to me it is useless."

"I don't mind the rain," said Duncan. "I did n't like to be turned out of my own shanty, without so much as by your leave, though."

"It made you feel spunky," replied Atherton, good-naturedly. "Well, that was excusable. Morrell, do you take the cloak. You have been in the lake."

"We are used to being wet, Mr. Atherton," said Morrell, "and I never did ketch cold but once. I was out in the winter hunting moose. Hart had offered me a good sum for some moose-meat to dry for a gentleman on the North River, with the same name as your young lady in there, Mr. Atherton, who has come so near being drowned this afternoon. Well, I killed a beautiful moose calf in the woods north of Louis, maybe fifteen mile. I dressed it on the spot, and set out to carry in the creature's meat on my back, pelt and all. The meat was only the saddle, you know, but I reckon it weighed altogether near two hundred pound."

"By George!" said Courtney. "That was a lift."

"Well, there was about a foot and a half of snow

on the ground, and it was an everlasting cold night. But I sweat so with that load of moose-meat and the skin, that I could n't have been wetter in a July rain; and every two or three miles, I got so hot and so tired that I was obliged to lay right down in the snow and cool off. Well, I guess I did ketch a cold that time—a regular pleurisy that laid me flat for one while.”

“I believe it,” said Alban, laughing.

“I heard that you killed a mighty big buck the other day at Louis, Morrell?” said Duncan in an inquiring tone.

The trappers did not seem to mind the rain at all, now they were out in it.

“How did *you* hear of that? It was a big buck, sure enough. This gentleman's cousin killed it.”

“I saw Enoch Duncan at the Sumac Swamp, and he told me about it. I wonder if it was bigger than the one I killed the other day with the Patroon. That was the biggest buck *almost*, I ever saw.”

“How much did the meat weigh?” demanded Morrell.

“Why, I don't rightly know, but I should judge there could n't have been less than two hundred pounds of it,” replied Duncan.

“The meat of the buck we killed at Louis, would

have gone over three hundred pound," said Morrell, who was not to be out-bragged.

"You don't say! Well, that must have been a bigger deer than mine. Enoch said the horns of your'n were very large. The horns of the Patroon's buck was the biggest I *ever* see, and I kill my fifty deer pretty reg'lar every winter."

"Well, how big were your horns?" said Morrell, cautiously. "Were they as big as them largest horns that Hart has got in his bar-room?"

"Yes," replied Duncan, "I should say they were bigger than those."

"The horns of the buck we killed at Louis," said Morrell, "were as big as any *two* pair of Hart's. Why, there was fifteen prongs! They were more like moose-horns than deer-horns."

"Like elk-horns, you mean," said Alban, laughing.

This knocked up Duncan; he gave in that he had never seen such a deer.

"He swum very near as fast as I could row a boat," said Courtney; "and after there was seven gun-barrels into him, it seemed to make no difference. He showed fight till Mr. Henry Atherton put six buckshot in the back of his head."

"Mr. De Groot killed *his* big buck with the first shot of his rifle," said Duncan.

"Why, that must be your young lady's father, Mr. Atherton," said Morrell.

"Of course," said Alban quietly.

"Is one of the ladies inside the Patroon's daughter?" asked Duncan. "If I had known that, you should n't have asked twice for the shanty, sir. They shall have it to themselves all night, and welcome."

It was marvellous the difference this information made. The churlishness of Duncan vanished in a moment. When the shanty door was opened by Margaret, all but himself went in, and he soon appeared with some fresh trout and venison steaks. On one side of the cheerfully illumined and warm interior, Alban saw, as he entered, a bright vision.

The bear-skin couch had been laid with their own coverlets, which an oil-skin had protected from the wet, and here were seated Mary De Groot and Jane, both in white. Their robes were fashioned alike, neatly fitting, but zoneless; and mingling sister-like together, spread over the couch. So much grace and purity had certainly never before visited the smoky old hut. The scene that followed was rather pretty. Atherton dropped on one knee to take Miss De Groot's hand, which he kissed. She was pale enough, and leaned on Jane, who supported her with an arm. The relation which existed between these maidens and their young

protector could scarcely have occurred in any country but one where females, as such, were guarded by a general feeling of chivalrous respect. The manly qualities which Atherton had recently displayed in the defence and assistance of his fair companions, took away all appearance of impertinence from his unusual salutation. He inquired with the deepest respect how Miss De Groot found herself, and with tenderness if Jane felt no ill effects from her wetting.

"I hope you like our dresses," Jane said, when these inquiries had been duly answered.

"I marvel that you ever wear any thing else."

"Jane has kindly supplied the deficiencies of my wardrobe; the best part of my resources for a change being at the bottom of the lake now, along with Mr. Morrell's rifle," said Miss De Groot, with a somewhat bashful look.

"It is very sisterly, and very right."

The two girls exchanged glances, and Mary pursued, laying her hand timidly on his wet sleeve,

"The least you can do, sir, is to dress for dinner, after our example, in the best your wardrobe affords; but at least in dry clothes."

"Yes," said Jane, "we are anxious about you, Alban; and see, Mrs. Duncan has rigged up a dressing-room for you by hanging our wet dresses across the

shanty on a clothes-line, — who could ever have expected to find a clothes-line here? So go, like a good boy, and make your toilet."

"It is a privilege on which I have not counted, but shall be glad to avail myself of it."

"We get along very well with so young a man," whispered Jane, when he was gone.

"Better than if he were older—to my notion," answered Mary, with a smile.

"True; he seems more like one of ourselves. And then Alban is so brother-like."

"Have you a brother?" asked Mary. "Nor I. Neither of us, then, knows what a brother is like. Not like your cousin Alban, I fancy."

"He is never rude or familiar," said Jane.

"Quite the reverse. He is as courteous a knight as lady's heart could wish."

"Equal to a Southerner," observed Jane.

"And so much authority, when it is needed. You must obey him, after all. I find that very disembarassing — don't you? It is really a rare union — that New England sternness and thoughtfulness of your cousin's, and the chivalrous feeling, like the most generous Southron, as you say, which he has for us poor women. I attribute it, do you know, to the influence of his faith?"

"Is it of so recent date?" inquired Jane, with a slight sarcasm.

"The groundwork — the seed — was in his natural disposition, I grant you; and his high-toned female relatives have nurtured it by their influence; but it is the Catholic religion that has made it shoot out so suddenly into such a perfect flower of knighthood!" said Mary with a smile.

"Well," said Jane, "the principal reason why I have so much confidence in Alban is, that I think he is so pure-minded."

"Nay," replied Mary, with a reddening cheek, as if she felt all at once that the conversation was getting silly, "we confide in him too much if we need that excuse. We should not waive one maidenly punctilio in his favour, were he an angel in human shape; — but hush! our host approaches."

Duncan drew near, with his gray marten cap in hand, to pay his respects to the daughter of the "Patroon," as he called Mr. De Groot. He had been her father's guide at Racket Lake. It was hardly a fortnight since Mr. De Groot had spent the night in his cabin on the very skins upon which his daughter was sitting. Mary started forward with interest at mention of her father, but drew back disappointed when she found that Mr. Duncan's news of him was

less recent than her own. A question or two elicited the fact that the trapper had been dismissed by her father upon his being taken ill, his services as guide, as he said, being no longer required. As her father was not a man to economise in such a case, Miss De Groot inferred that, except as a mere guide, he could not have much valued the services of Mr. Duncan. Nevertheless she said what was proper, and in a very fascinating manner; though Jane's blue eye was loftily bent on the earth, if such an expression be allowable. Alban now reappeared in a dry shooting-jacket and pants, of snow-white corduroy; Duncan withdrew; and the young ladies looked up with a welcoming smile that made the smoky old hut beautiful.

The odour of the broil now filled the cabin. They would have wanted plates at the very moment when supper was served, if Pierre, with a condescending forethought in regard to such wants, which he seldom displayed, had not brought in a lot of pine chips—the cheap crockery of that region—which he had just cut, in all the rain, from the nearest tree. The fatigues and perils, the suffering and exposure, of the day were forgotten in satisfying the keen appetites which these circumstances had rather whetted. They needed no light but that of the fire. It showed the countenances of all flushed with the stimulating repast,

and with the reaction consequent on what they had undergone.

The offer of the trapper to place his cabin at the disposal of the ladies, and seek a shelter for himself and the guides in the forest, was scarcely discussed, although Duncan repeated it with apparent seriousness. On the other hand, the maidens pretended that their place of repose must be at the further end of the hut, in order that it might be screened from view by the extempore curtain which their hostess had formed; but it was urged, with reason, that this arrangement would both deprive them of the benefit of the fire, and also expose them to the smoke and draughts.

“Remain where you are—you cannot be better placed,” said Alban. “With some cloaks rolled up for pillows, and that fine blue blanket, which Pierre has kept so dry in its bark wrapper, to cover your feet, your couch will be alike comfortable and decorous.”

Duncan accordingly laid a couple more skins beside them, for Margaret, and took what remained for the guides and himself, but not forgetting to assign the best to the youthful master. The wearied hunters lay down in front of the fire without ceremony, leaving a place next the wall for our hero, who

presently took it, after wishing his fair companions good-night.

The wife of the trapper had regarded these arrangements in silence. When all had become quiet, as Alban turned his back to the wall, he perceived Mrs. Duncan standing on the opposite side of the shanty. The moment that she caught his glance, she dropped quietly upon the bare earthy floor, as if she meant to lie there. His gallantry was shocked, and his heart pained, at the idea of their hostess being thus neglected. He urged her by signs to take her place beside Margaret Dolman; and when she refused, would have risen to give her the bear-skin provided for himself, whether she would or not, but she waved her dark, well-developed arm with a gesture of almost pathetic deprecation — a gesture so graceful that it would have become a princess, accompanied with a sweet, though wild expression of the sun-burnt features, so earnestly imploring, that with great reluctance he desisted; and the wife of the trapper, drawing her bare feet under her blue petticoat, and making a pillow of her swarthy arm, composed herself to sleep.

CHAPTER XI.

And thus in words distinct it said :--

“So, Cyra, must it be ;
The duties of a wedded life
Hath Heaven ordained for thee.”

All for Love.

THE hut of Duncan differed in many respects from the open, slight tent of bark, under which our fair friends had reposed the night before, or that which the sportsmen at Louis had enjoyed. So did the old skins which formed their hard couch to-night from the soft and fragrant beds of hemlock and balsam which the hunters had heaped in the shanties. The latter were the poetry of this wild life, but the cabin of the squatter presented some of its prosaic aspects.

The smoke came in unpleasantly at the gable end, circulated slowly along the dingy roof, and was carried downward by the draught; the high stone chimney back, and the vast fire heaped against it, struck into the interior a heat that was no less disagreeable than the smoke; cold currents rushed along

the floor to feed this immense combustion with the necessary air. Moreover, the bear-skins were not only hard, but, as Atherton soon found, afforded lodging to other guests—the constant pest of old shanties.

Against such annoyances, custom and fatigue made the trappers proof. The four men, stretched in a line across the hut at Atherton's side, slept as soundly—while a faint steam rose from their clothes, now nearly dried—as if they had reposed on hair mattresses, or swung in cleanly hammocks. But Alban tossed on his hard couch, and vainly invoked the restorer of nature. His brain began to work, as lately it had not been wont in the hours of repose, and many thoughts in regard to their journey, and its probable issue, the incidents of the past two days, and the behaviour, the words, and the looks of his companions, came rushing upon him in a crowd.

He soon perceived, too, by a gentle rustling from time to time, that his fairer neighbours, perhaps from the same general cause as himself, were equally unable to attain a state of forgetfulness. A space of little more than six inches separated the head of his bear-skin from the foot of their slightly elevated couch, so that he could not but be aware of every

movement they made, and after a good deal more than an hour had elapsed since the hut first became quiet, he heard them whispering to one another. He bore this for some time without taking any notice, withheld by his habitual respect; but at last hearing a suppressed laugh, accompanied by a more bounding movement, he could resist the temptation no longer, and, rising upon his elbow, said in a low voice,

“You cannot sleep, young ladies?”

“Not a single wink!” said Jane, immediately sitting up.

“Is your couch too hard, or do you feel the heat too much, or is it the smoke that annoys you?”

“All of them together,” answered Jane.

Miss De Groot whispered something to her, to which Jane responded in the same low voice in which she had answered her cousin, “Nonsense! I advise you to follow my example. I breathe much more freely sitting up. Since we cannot sleep, we might as well enjoy each other’s society, I think.”

“Well,” said Mary, lightly rising to the same posture as her friend, but with a vivid blush, “if you think so, I will consider that this is a sofa again.” And she threw off Pierre’s blue blanket, so that it just covered their feet. “But if we talk,” added she,

we shall wake our hosts and the guides, which, it appears to me, would be selfish."

"You need not be in the least afraid of that," said Alban, rising softly, and coming to sit upon the foot of the couch. "Those fellows would sleep through a parliamentary debate, much more through our whispered conversation. Do you not perceive that not one of them stirs?"

"Mrs. Duncan, however, is waking," said Jane.

"I declare, is she not — lying on the bare ground?" said Mary De Groot, with an expression of horror.

Alban rose and approached the wife of the trapper.

"Go and take my place, next to your husband," said he, in a low but imperious tone. "I insist upon it," taking her hand.

After a moment's hesitation, — a bright blush dyeing her swarthy cheek, but with tears in her eyes, — Mrs. Duncan obeyed.

"What will *you* do now?" asked Jane.

"We will take one of the skins off from this concern," said Mary, playfully patting the couch, "and give it to him."

"True!" said Jane.

"Not yet," replied Atherton. "Let us converse awhile. Perhaps we shall become sleepy at last."

"I wish you would tell us a story, Alban. Do

you know, Mary, that he can repeat whole novels from beginning to end. Come, tell us one, Alban."

"I don't know any that you have not heard; but Miss De Groot is a famous story-teller."

"I, Mr. Atherton!" He did not remember her ever calling him so before.

"Yes, school-adventures of your own, and so on—I used to think you narrated very vividly."

"Oh, that was when the fit was on, and I was in the confidential humour," said Mary, blushing. "I could not tell a story of set purpose."

"When will you be in the confidential humour," he answered, laughing, "if not at midnight in this smoky hut, nobody listening but ourselves, those heavy sleepers at our feet, and each of you girls able to see by the other, the same as by a looking-glass, how well she herself looks in those bewitching little caps! Come, you must really tell us some story of your girlish days, or of the convent, or of the Virginia Springs, where you have been this summer—I am sure you have material enough."

"I should like of all things a convent story," said Jane. "Some beautiful young creature attempted to be made a nun of against her will, and escaping with her lover, for instance—come, Mary!"

Miss De Groot bent down and rested her forehead

a moment upon her hand, with the elbow supported on her knee.

"I could tell you a convent story," said she, looking up, with a delightful glance at both her companions, "but not so romantic as Jane would wish. — Pray, make yourselves comfortable."

"We are," said Jane.

"I am," said Alban.

"I might tell you how I came to be acquainted with the particulars, but you can imagine that, as I go on. So I will begin just as if it were a story made up, and a good deal of it will be word for word from memory as I heard it."

"Charming!" cried Jane. "That is just what I like."

So in a voice of low sweetness, not so ringing and clear as Jane's, not (of course) so deep and murmuring as Alban's, but which fell upon the ear of the listeners like a charm, and with a lulling cadence upon that of the sleepers, deepening their repose, Mary began

Her Story.

"About thirty or forty years ago (Mr. Alban knows the exact year, I dare say) there was a rebellion in Ireland, as every school-girl knows, when

Robert Emmet, whose beautiful last speech is in our reading-books, lost his life with many others. Many more, equally guilty of the crime for which he suffered, had the good fortune to escape, and among these was a young man, the friend of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and named De Montmorency — which, every body knows, is the name of a family in the south of Ireland.”

“They must have been French originally,” observed Jane, who was well read in history.

“Normans,” replied her friend, “who came over and conquered England first, and afterwards got a settlement in certain parts of Ireland, (for they never conquered it,) and, after a few years, became more Irish than the Irish themselves, as Mr. Alban, no doubt, remembers to have heard. One of these Montmorencies, who were great chiefs in their day, Jane, was stripped of his estate by Cromwell, for the double crime of malignancy (that is, loyalty to his king) and Popery, (that is, fidelity to his religion,) and afterwards, in the grateful reign of Charles II., was thrown into prison and kept there till he nearly rotted, (so my story says,) for harbouring a priest as loyal as himself. The rebel Montmorency of '98 (was it not?) was the lineal representative of the royalist of 1650, (that's a date I remember in my chronology,) and having been

educated in France, in defiance of the laws of his country, he either had, or thought he had, good reason to hate the English yoke. How shamefully, Mr. Alban, England has treated Ireland !”

“To rob a Christian nation of its means of self-culture is one of the greatest public crimes that can possibly be committed—you are right.”

“That is just what De Montmorency said, and insisted that ‘such rulers were not a government, but an eternal, hereditary banditti, with the knife always at their poor victim’s throat, and their hand always seizing his purse.’—That is from memory. Well, some of the patriots fled to America, but De Montmorency escaped to France, which was already half a country to him. As he had acquired in his rebel career a taste for military affairs, he entered the French army, in company with other exiles. From their national bravery, all who were not killed got on. De Montmorency became a noted cavalry officer in the wars of Napoleon. Bearing, as it chanced, one of the noblest names of France, he was all the more acceptable on that account to the Emperor, who, in the distribution of rewards after some great battle, gave him a German title, and he became Count Montmorency de Reichsthal.

“Besides that, he had connexions in France. Be-

fore the affair of '98 turned out so badly, while yet in his native country, he had married an *émigrée*, the widow of a high French nobleman who was guillotined in the Reign of Terror. He educated her children as carefully as his own, and obtained a restoration of their estates, although he never became very rich himself, as he was too honourable to use his opportunities of plunder, when given the command of some conquered district or wealthy town. But by and by Napoleon fell, and down went the fortunes of De Montmorency. He joined the Emperor on his return from Elba, and that lost him every thing. His name was erased from the list of French generals; he was obliged to fly from France; he had already lost all the revenues of his German county; he was a poor exile again, as when he first escaped from an English jail.

“In the most ancient convent of the Visitation in France was educated Marie de Montmorency de Reichsthal, the only daughter of this Irish soldier. She was beautiful, Jane, highly gifted, and very pious from her earliest years. From the very first she manifested a desire to consecrate herself to God among the daughters of St. Jane Frances of Chantal; and the noble band of Sisters to whose care she had been committed by a dying mother, already looked upon

her as one of their future associates. As she grew up, her vocation became more and more evident. It was commonly believed in the convent that Marie de Reichsthal had never committed a mortal sin, and some said never a deliberate venial one; and, in short, so good was she, and so single-minded in her choice of religion, that when it was known her father intended to 'marry' her, as they say in France, and that for that purpose the day was fixed when she would be withdrawn from them, the whole convent was plunged in grief, and even the cautious Mother Superior, and the young lady's director, more cautious still, declared that to force her into the world would be to frustrate a plain vocation and oppose the manifest will of God.

"This was about the time of the Emperor's downfall, and Mademoiselle de Reichsthal remained in the convent after the period designated by her father, on account of the troubles, which the good Superior and the Ladies of the Visitation regarded as a pure Providence in her favour. Still more when her father was banished, and her fortune lost, they congratulated themselves that they should at least acquire a saint, and her that worldly adversity would probably open to her the path of heavenly peace.

"The relatives of Mademoiselle de Reichsthal, on the mother's side, were in high favour with the new

government of France, but for that very reason they did not care to embarrass themselves with the care of settling a young lady whose name was disagreeable to the restored family, as that of a devoted partisan of the Usurper, as he was called; and her aunt, more particularly, the Duchess de Rosières, upon whom, in her father's absence, the right devolved of being consulted in regard to her destiny, was quite of opinion that a portionless young person, of partly foreign extraction, and whose father was in hopeless disgrace, could not be provided for so *convenablement*, in any other way, as by taking the veil in a distinguished convent.

“This being settled, it was determined to write to her father, and if his consent could be obtained, that Mademoiselle should immediately begin her probation as a postulant. After some months had elapsed, during which de Reichsthal was not heard from, except a single letter in which he expressed the fear that no other resource but the cloister would ever be open to his daughter, it was thought that she might be allowed to commence the term of trial.

“It was only a few weeks after this that a stranger presented himself at the convent, and demanded to see Mademoiselle de Montmorency. Of course this was refused, when he showed a letter of introduction

to her father from an Irish exile in America, and stated that his sole wish was to obtain General de Montmorency's address. This was readily furnished by the Mother Superior. It was somewhere in Spain, but nobody knew precisely that he was to be found there, as his recent movements had been not a little uncertain.

“And now comes the most romantic part of my story. The stranger, who was an American and a man of large fortune, (I will call him Eugenio, because he was so well born,) persisted in the wish to see Mademoiselle de Montmorency, as he called her. I rather think that he was chiefly influenced by a sort of habit of never taking a denial or suffering a disappointment in any thing he had undertaken. He was going to Spain, he said; he should certainly endeavour to find General de Montmorency; and no doubt it would be gratifying to the latter to receive a message from his daughter by the lips of one who had actually seen her. In short, the Superior referred him to Madame de Rosières. He went away, and she thought she had got rid of him. But the very next day who should appear but the stranger, accompanied by the Duchess herself?

“Mademoiselle appeared behind the grille, meekly listened to the stranger's observations, and requested

him, in the choicest terms of dictated politeness and filial interest, to present her duty to her father, if he should be so fortunate as to meet him, to which the Lady Superior added a letter, written by Mademoiselle herself, to be delivered to the General; and so the stranger took leave."

"That is very interesting," Jane said.

"Very," said Alban.

"Eugenio went to Spain, where he singularly and quite providentially encountered de Reichsthal. The latter, imbibed by a sense of wrong, had suffered himself to be drawn into one of those schemes which preceded the Spanish revolution of 1820, that we have read about in our histories. The affair had been betrayed, and de Reichsthal was skulking in the house of a South American merchant, to avoid the agents of the government. The traveller had a credit on this merchant, and happening, after drawing some money, to remember the Irish exile to whom he had letters, inquired if the merchant knew aught of Count Montmorency de Reichsthal. The banker, who was a Jew, and had relations in New York, at first denied all knowledge of such a person, but on Eugenio's carelessly mentioning some other particulars, the letter from his daughter especially, became more communicative, and finally took him

to his house, and to the very chamber where De Montmorency was concealed. In short, Eugenio, young, wealthy, generous, and a lover of freedom, offered the latter his purse and personal assistance to get out of this last scrape in which his adventurous, confiding spirit, and national want of caution, had involved him. De Reichsthal having been disguised as a servant, by dint of a large bribe to the police on one occasion, they got out of Spain, and travelling together from that time as friends, reached Paris in safety.

“General de Montmorency was resolved to go to Paris, I must observe, because he wished to convert some property he had there into money, in order to repay the sums advanced by Eugenio. The latter was too delicate to refuse, which laid the high-minded soldier under a new obligation, as he understood it. Death most probably would have been his fate, had he fallen into the hands of the Spanish government, or imprisonment for life in some horrible fortress. So he was naturally very grateful. The first thing that he thought of was that his daughter must see and thank the deliverer of her father.”

“Of course,” said Jane.

“It is easy to see what is coming now,” observed Alban, with a smile.

Gradually, and unconsciously, they had all nestled together on the wide couch, like two sisters and a brother, only Alban was a trifle nearer to Mary than to his cousin. Jane listened and looked; Mary's eyes, as of old, sought the roof, the floor, the vacant walls; but her face was all a soft glow.

“When a young lady has become a postulant in a religious order, it is not easy to withdraw her from it, and by the time that de Reichsthal and Eugenio arrived in Paris together, Mademoiselle de Montmorency ought regularly to have taken the white veil. ‘I fear,’ said de Reichsthal, ‘that there may be a difficulty: for those who have once embraced the sacred vocation are supposed to be dead to human ties. But at least I can recommend you to her prayers.’ Eugenio would have disliked the idea of being thanked for any thing he had done as a mere friend and man of the world, had he not been a little desirous to see once more the beautiful novice, who, in a plain black dress, with a white muslin veil over her smooth black hair, had stood before him beside the *Mère Supérieure*, behind the grille of her convent, and said those few words without even raising her meek, beautiful eyes from the ground. He just was curious for a repetition of the scene, I suppose, and wondered whether the nun, as

she was now, would venture to do what the postulant had not, and lift her eyes for a single moment to his face, in thanking him for saving her father from death or a prison.

“It was necessary to be extremely cautious, for although De Montmorency was furnished with a passport very skilfully obtained, he was known too well to hope that he could escape detection if he appeared openly in Paris. No one could be admitted within the convent after sunset, and it was dangerous to go by day. So Eugenio first carried a note from his friend—to the Superior. He was by no means well received, and it was not till he was about to leave, without any satisfaction, that the Superior told him, with the coldness of French high-breeding, that if he or any one else desired any information in regard to Mademoiselle de Reichsthal, they must apply to her aunt, Madame la duchesse de Rosières.

“In short,” pursued Mary, “General de Montmorency himself then proceeded to call upon his sister-in-law in the evening, and learned that immediately after the visit which she had paid to her niece with Eugenio, she had thought proper to take her away from the convent, with a view to introduce her into the society of the capital. Both Mademoiselle herself, and the Superior, had indeed strongly objected to her

being removed before she had completed her period of probation, but Madame de Rosières, being very influential, had easily obtained an order from the Archbishop that her niece should be surrendered to her without delay. Madame de Rosières wanted, you understand, to make a grand marriage for her niece in the new court, and she was sanguine of success, because she was so much more beautiful than almost any young Frenchwoman of rank ever is, and with all that, had received the purest and most perfect education of one. She was no more called Mademoiselle de Reichsthal, but Mademoiselle de Montmorency, and under that name she had been for six months shining, like a bright, silent star, beside her brilliant aunt, in the circles of the old Faubourg.

“So there was no more difficulty about Eugenio being presented to her, or her being presented to him, just as you please. It was rather romantic, and all that, to see her now in an evening saloon of the old Hotel de Rosières, in all the elegance of a youthful toilette, Jane, and hear her pronounce from memory, as before, but with so much grace, the little speech prepared for her, to thank him for the kindness he had shown to her father. Eugenio was captivated, as you anticipate. The manners of France allowed no gradual acquaintance and courtship like ours, so he

made proposals at once to her father. Nothing could have been more agreeable to De Montmorency, who had already resolved to retire to the United States, but her aunt de Rosières, and other friends on the mother's side, objected to it strongly, as they did not conceive that a simple American *seigneur*, as Eugenio was, was a suitable *parti* for Mademoiselle de Montmorency; and, besides, he was not a Catholic. This was a great difficulty, on account of the religious scruples of the young lady herself, and the vehement opposition sure to be made by her director and the Ladies of the Visitation, whose influence over her was naturally very great."

Jane here showed a very lively interest.

"Eugenio had a sort of fancy for the Catholic Church, such as many philosophic persons have, and his eagerness to marry Mademoiselle de Montmorency, very much increased by the opposition he encountered, made him willing to make every promise that could be required in regard to her faith. This smoothed the affair very much, and as her father was certainly going to America, the advantage of having Mademoiselle married into one of the richest and most distinguished families of that country, was apparent even to her mother's relatives. Madame de Rosières, too, failed in arranging another alliance to her satisfaction,

from the embarrassing position of M. de Reichsthal, and so at last the consent of the whole family was gained. For every thing, you know, was arranged between the lover and the friends. Mademoiselle de Montmorency, submissive to the will of her father, and the judgment of her aunts, was content to practise in the most important action of her life that obedience which she had learned to consider as the first of virtues. Not till the marriage treaty was settled, was it even discussed in her presence, and then it was only submitted to her once for her information and silent acquiescence. Her director advised her that it appeared to be the will of God she should remain in the world, since by marrying she would provide an immense *appui* for a father failing in years and nearly destitute of resources; and her filial heart responded at once that this was indeed her calling. She made her retreat; the *trousseau* and wedding presents were provided; the dispensation was obtained; the nuptials were celebrated in the most solemn form, with the benediction and every thing, by a special permission; and — Eugenio — bore away his bride.”

“Delightful!” said Jane.

“Now,” said Mary De Groot, “I must cut short the rest of my story, although it is just here that it begins to be interesting to me. General de Montmo-

rency, I must tell you, took the yellow fever soon after their arrival in America, and died; so that his daughter was left quite alone with her husband in her new country.

“Alas! that I must say it was no happy one to her — though perhaps you will hardly believe it, Jane.”

“I can well understand,” said Jane, “that she and her husband were too little acquainted before marriage, and so might not suit each other.”

“How can faith mate with unbelief?” replied Mary seriously: — “obedience with self-will — simple piety with intellectual self-reliance — humility with pride untamed? Above all, purity nursed in the cloister, how could it bear the idolatries of passion as taught by the poets and romancers of the world! — I should be sorry, for several reasons, if you thought these were my own thoughts or words: — they are those of a person who knew my — who knew all this history, and told it to me. A young American of four and twenty, educated at Harvard, and finished off in Germany, was, my informant said, and I suppose it is true, Mr. Alban, but a polished heathen after all; and the young French-Irish woman, bred by the Sisters of the Visitation, had the Christian type of womanhood as deeply stamped in her soul, as the Blessed *Mère de Chantal* stamped the name of Jesus with the

red-hot iron on her own breast. Yet different as their ideal was, Eugenio did not love his wife more truly than she loved him. He had the sense to see it too, and it only irritated him the more, because she still loved God better. He wished to be her God. He never meant to interfere with her religion, yet he ended by interfering with it notably, denying that he did so. She gradually retreated into the least amount of external devotion that she could without sin, but even then, the perpetual offering of her soul to her Maker, in silent prayer, or meek suffering, or sweet patience, displeased her husband, who saw that it was done chiefly for the love of God, and but secondarily for the love of him.

“By and by,” continued Mary, after a moment’s reflection, “there was a new cause of dissension between them, in their child, dating from the very moment of its birth. Eugenio (to do him justice) knowing nothing of the Catholic doctrine when he married, understood the engagements into which he had entered with respect to the education of his children—if God should bless him with any—in a purely Protestant, or I should say, Mr. Alban, a philosophic sense. That they were to be taught the Catholic religion from their earliest years he expected, but not that they were to be made members of the Church as

soon as they were born, and, as he expressed it, irretrievably committed to it before they were of age to choose for themselves. But his wife's idea was that they should be baptized forthwith, taught to lisp the *Ave* and *Confiteor*, as soon as they could speak, taken to confession at eight years, be confirmed and make their first communion, certainly, before they were twelve.

“‘What, you expect to make complete Roman Catholics of my children, madam, before they are in their teens!’ cried her husband.

“‘Certainly, yes,’ answered she, pale, but trying to smile, ‘before they are a week old. When a baby is christened it is a complete Catholic, *tout de suite*. You know that as well as I, my dear Eugene.’

“‘They sha’n’t be christened, then,’ exclaimed her husband, with a terrible oath.

“‘You do not mean that, I am sure, Eugene. You would never forfeit your word.’

“‘Forfeit my word!’ cried he, angrily. ‘When did I ever promise any thing about christening and confessing, confirming and communing? It is not in the bond. Take the pound of flesh, if you like, but not one drop of blood. I am by no means sure,’ continued he, ‘that I had any right to promise away the responsibilities of a father, but nothing that I have not

literally promised will I grant. I am the protector of my children against the superstition into which you would initiate them, and I will surely be an effectual one.’”

“Ah, well, I think that was very cruel,” said Jane, “and very unreasonable, too; for nothing could be so bad for the children, as to be brought up neither one thing nor the other.”

“That is precisely what Eugenio did not think,” replied Mary De Groot. “He wished them to grow up, as he said, unbiassed towards any religion. But do not think too ill of him, for I am certain he had persuaded himself that he was doing his duty.

“What novenas the unhappy lady kept for the conversion of her husband and salvation of her child! It might be said, indeed, that she prayed for both these objects without any intermission — by day and by night. To obtain them, she made a daily oblation of her own tastes, preferences, and will, to the will of God, as expressed to her first by the Church and then by her husband. Apart from her religion, it seemed that no wife could excel or equal her in the exactness and cordiality of her conjugal obedience, or in the tenderness of her love. She schooled herself to love her husband in his most unamiable moods, with as much simplicity as in their hours of fondness. Although she was in-

different to dress, and averse to ornaments, she strove to please him by both. She endeavoured, not without success, to find points of intellectual sympathy with him, read with untiring diligence, and the utmost efforts to master their meaning, the books which he recommended or praised, and cultivated with assiduity the graceful accomplishments he prized. She would take her infant, and with an air of delight point out its resemblance to its father, and make it crow with delight while she tossed it at arm's-length at his handsome, haughty face, and dark, rich locks, with which she taught the baby to play, though seldom and timidly (whether she stood in awe of him or not) she did so herself. Ah, she was—she must have been—an admirable wife! De—Eugenio—was of course kind at such times, nay, habitually. He was enamoured, I suppose, of his wife, and while the baby was a baby they got on pretty well—sunshine, for the most part, without, even if there was storm within; smiles when together; tears in secret. But when the infant began to form words, which it did marvellously early, a cloud came over the proud sire. The first word it lisped was the name of its Redeemer, and before it could say another, its mother had begun to hold it night and morning on its knees upon the desk of her *priedieu* before a large silver crucifix that adorned it, to fold

its tiny hands in both hers, make it utter as it might the sacred name, and press its soft lips to the feet of the holy image. Before the child had seen its second birth-day, it could 'bless' itself, and say the Lord's Prayer; the Hail Mary soon followed. Then came an outburst of paternal wrath. This was not simple instruction, as Eugenio understood it. It was the formation of habits. The mother's intellect had been rendered acute by her peculiar and painful position, and by the demands of her husband.

"'You ask incompatible things, Eugene,' she said. 'The Catholic religion cannot be taught as you would have it. *Essentiellement*, it commences with forming acts and turning them into habits, before the understanding is or can be fully enlightened. It considers that to instruct the understanding without training the will, would be to infuse a poison. What! shall I teach *ma fille* more late' — she always spoke imperfect English when moved, which irritated her husband, and excited his contempt — 'shall I teach my daughter at a later period that the saints are to be invoked, to be asked why it never invoked them before? Shall I one day instruct it in the need of baptism, to have it ask why it has never been washed in the font? Must I then say, Because thy father believes not so? Will it then find its faith cruelly taken away, and its

whole moral edifice thrown down from the foundations? Shall it imbibe, not faith and obedience, but doubt and self-choice, as the dreadful heritage of these miserable disputes? Better, she passionately concluded, 'take it, feed it with your own doctrine, if you deem any certain, than poison thus the milk of its mother's!'

"It was at this time that Eugenio, to use his own expression, sounded to the bottom of the baptismal font, and drew up the full meaning that lurked in those hallowed waters. Original sin was the slimy bed over which that pellucid flood was ever flowing. This made him angry. What! all the offspring of mankind—of his own race—born in malice and iniquity, the children of malediction and of the nature of injustice! So he drew straight back into—what shall I say?—"

"Pantheism," said Alban.

"I suppose so," said Mary, glancing at Atherton. "There is a fanaticism of unbelief," continued she, "as well as of faith, and far more cruel."

"Most true," rejoined Alban. "As I have said before now, there were really never but two distinct *kinds* of religion in the world—the religion of Cain and the religion of Abel—that which denies, and that which holds, man to be fallen, nature guilty,

and an expiation necessary. Your Eugenio was a Cainite and a Buddhist. But go on."

"It is as you say, Mr. Alban. (Eugenio was only logical.) Weak and timid minds are content to hold an opinion, and not hold its consequences. Strong and courageous minds push things to their conclusions. Let me avoid any more details —"

"Oh, no, they are the most interesting part," said Jane.

"Well," said Mary, "I will come down to the period when this unhappy mother died. It was soon after the birth of a little boy, who did not survive her. Even in these heart-touching circumstances, the cruel Eugenio, as I must call him, refused his wife's last request, that he would suffer their daughter, then about three years old, to be baptized by the priest who attended her, and committed to the Sisters of the Visitation to be brought up in her mother's faith. It was then, having exhausted herself in a fruitless plea, that the dying mother" — Mary paused, and hid her face for a moment — "it was then that my mother said," —

"Your mother!" exclaimed Jane.

"Eugene, I have done all I could. It is God's will that our child shall be left to you, to bring up as you think fit. But when she is old enough, as

you say, to choose for herself, I shall return and claim her choice for the Lord. She will leave your teaching for that of Father de Mornay'—pointing to the French confessor at her side—'and if you persist after that,—your house, even in your dying hour, for the austerities'—they thought she mentioned some order; Father de Mornay said it was the Carmelites, for she rallied again, and added, hoarsely, 'I see her in that garb,'—and she described nearly that of some very severe nuns; but her mind was evidently wandering, and soon after she sank into a quiet slumber, from which she never awoke."

"A singular story, indeed; but you must not let it influence your imagination unduly, Miss Mary. By whom was it told to you?"

"Partly by a sister of Father de Mornay, who also knew my mother. But she was a person of so vivid and impressible an imagination that I should not quite credit all she told, were it not that some circumstances I can confirm, naturally, from my own personal knowledge. But it is getting very late, and Jane, I see, does not like the end of my story so well as the beginning. Had we not better try once more to get a little sleep?"

"Certainly," said Alban. "We are much obliged to you, Miss Mary, for your story."

The girls whispered, then rose lightly from the couch, and despoiled it of one of the coverlets, which they doubled, and as if by mutual consent, spread on the ground in a convenient place. Atherton faintly remonstrated, but it evidently gave them both so much pleasure, that he could not persist in refusing their kindness. The fire had gone so far down that the heat was no longer disagreeable; the smoke had begun to ascend tranquilly, which showed that the wind had changed; and a purer air circulated in the dingy but glowing interior of the hut. The trappers, the Indian, Mrs. Duncan, and Margaret, had slept profoundly on their hard bed, during all the low musical murmur of the young people's conversation and Mary's narrative. The young ladies waited till Atherton had composed himself on the cot they had spread for him, and closed his eyes, and then they too, with a half-conscious attention to grace in the manner of doing it, resumed their sisterly divan. In a very short time, the dewy Power had pressed all their eyelids.

CHAPTER XII.

So diversely discoursing of their loves,
The golden sunne his glistening head 'gan shew,
And sad remembrance now the prince amoves
With fresh desire his voyage to pursue.

Faërie Queene.

It was an old Indian clearing where maize had rustled, and gourds had ripened in the sun before the white man's day. In one direction, a quantity of red stubble, dotted with little, red-brown stacks, indicated a patch of buckwheat; in another, blackened stumps and a loamy soil showed the more recent invasion of fire and axe. The whole was girded by a forest abounding in lofty pines, except on one -side, where a rapidly descending, and in parts almost precipitous bank, led to the shore of one of the deepest bays of Racket Lake, — broad and blue; piercing the forest for miles; bordered by a silvery beach of fine white sand, and bounded, lakeward, by two high promontories, darkly crowned with pines. On one of the loftiest of these

a pair of eagles watched the lake. At the moment (of earliest dawn) when Alban stepped upon the sand of the beach, a flight of wild ducks was coming down the bay, from the shelter of a reedy inlet. The water of Racket, as its general colour indicated, was of a crystal purity, and, notwithstanding the coldness of its temperature, the hardy youth was preparing for a matin plunge.

Pierre was already paddling slowly up the bay, throwing his fly. The long slender rod of iron-wood, light as cork and flexible as whale-bone, flirred through the air; the viewless line swept the surface; and almost every throw obtained a "rise." Then there was bending of the slender rod, and rapid yet cautious reeling. In three minutes or less, a beautiful fellow, weighing from two to three pounds, would be "gaffed" — perhaps two at a time.

"That Ingin has a wonderful fancy for that are way of fishin'," observed Morrell, who was engaged in cleaning one of the boats. "With a stiff pole, a reg'lar fishin' line, and a bit of ven'son on a hook, I'd have half a bushel of them trout while he's ketchin' a mess for breakfast."

"But this is the more scientific sport, Morrell," said Alban, pausing in admiration to see the Indian's skill. "The fishing is better here than at Piseco."

"Piseco is gettin' spiled."

"I wish I had brought my rod down from the shanty," continued Alban, whose enthusiasm was getting excited.

"Shall I run and fetch it?" asked Courtney, readily.

"No, we shan't have time, I'm afraid."

"Swim out to the Ingin and take a few throws with his'n," said Morrell.

The temptation was strong, but the youth glanced upward at the bank over their heads, and resisted it. He contented himself with a quick dive and swim, and, returning to the beach, resumed his clothes.

The bronzed and blue-kirtled Indian noiselessly and gravely paddled by in his softly-curved and thin canoe, skittering the dark rod and viewless line with the most graceful action of his sinewy, blue-vested arm. A large silver trout rises; away speeds the line; whirrs like a pheasant the rapid reel; the slender rod bends, now this way, now that; now he reels in beautifully; again the speckled monster darts away in the transparent depths; again he is drawn slowly but surely to the surface, and Pierre dexterously gaffs him.

While he was enjoying his triumph in silence, and preparing for another throw, another kind of sport, and more exciting, unexpectedly developed itself. One

of the eagles, whose eyry was built upon the top of the loftiest of the pines that crowned the neighbouring promontory, had been poising and planing for several minutes over the bay; sometimes revolving in a slow circle, then sweeping on like lightning. All at once, as the thunderbolt falls, he made a frightful, perpendicular swoop that buried his whole form under the water, which his mighty wings lashed into an instantaneous foam; slowly he rose with a huge salmon trout in his talons — a monstrous and not passive prey. Then ensued a terrible conflict. The weight and muscular force of the trout, struggling in the utmost violence of fear and agony, were so great that the powerful eagle could not lift it. Sometimes the bird-king, with enormous efforts, raised the fish into the air; then the terrified salmon darted through his own element, dragging his relentless foe under the vexed and splashing surface; alternately they were exhausted and alternately victorious; the monarch of the depths and the monarch of the clouds fought alternately in water and in air, and neither could be called victor. Every occupation was suspended to watch this deadly and determined strife: the Indian left off throwing his fly; the guides forgot their boats. At length the eagle, exhausted and despairing of raising his prey, relinquished his hold, and sullenly soared to his eyry, while

the blue surface of the lake closed over his triumphant but not unscathed adversary, whose bleeding sides, even at the distance of the spectators, had been plainly discernible.

Atherton resumed the operation of dressing, which this exciting incident had for some moments suspended. Nothing, in truth, remained to be done but to assume the waistcoat, cravat, and coat—those poetical elements of modern attire, worn by the most magnanimous heroes in life and fiction, and which our hero, for his part, put on with as superb and tranquil a dignity as ever knight displayed in adjusting corslet and mail.

“And what is our course to-day, Morrell?” he demanded, recurring to the more important business which devolved upon him.

“Pierre knows the way, I reckon. Neither Courtney nor I was ever at his village.”

“Nor no other white man, I guess, unless it was one of their own kind from the Canadas,” said Duncan, who had just joined the group. “Not with their good will, I mean; for the Patroon and I was there by a kind of partik’lar favour, you see, in consequence of his bein’ took sick when we was campin’ out, and our fallin’ in with one of their parties.”

“I have heard,” said Alban, “of some of the Cath-

olic Indians being exceedingly jealous of visits from our people. They want to keep out the rum, I suppose."

"That's it," said Duncan, drily. "And the doctrine, too."

"But you have been at Pierre's village, you say; how far is it? and what is our course?"

"You keep down the lake to Racket river," replied Duncan; "then you carry the boats round the Falls — say a mile. Then you paddle down to Crotchet Lake, which you cross, and between Crotchet and Long Lake you have two more portages ——"

"Why, this will take all day!"

"You will do it by noon, I guess, if you are spry; but that's only the beginning. Long Lake is thirty miles long, you know; but you only go a piece of it, before you turn up an inlet, and then you're in for a steady row agin a powerful stream, right through the thickest woods a'most ever I see. Well, I reckon it will take you till near sundown."

"Another tedious — terribly tedious — day's work," said Atherton, looking at the guides. "I had hoped we were nearer the end of our journey."

"Take more hands and do it quicker," said Duncan.

"How would that help us?" returned Alban.

"two paddles are enough in these cockle-shells,"—glancing at the canoes, of which Duncan had two.

"True, Mr. Atherton, but at the portages you will lose less time by having plenty of people to carry things. With four men and three canoes, you would walk round the Falls as slick as a whistle. Or you can take them all, and my wife can go too: she can paddle like a squaw, and carries first-rate."

"I should like to hire or buy one of your canoes," said Alban, who had already taken Morrell's opinion on that subject; "but I am afraid we should not gain much by additional hands. The fewer people we have in the boats, the lighter they will draw, you know, Mr. Duncan."

"I don't know as I'd be willin' to hire out one of my boats, unless I went with it," replied Duncan.

Duncan had evidently made up his mind to join the party.

"What think you, Morrell?" said the young master.

"It is not for us to say, Mr. Atherton. Three men and two boats will do as well at the portages as four men with three."

"Yes; but we are crowded in two boats. And at the Falls, as Mr. Duncan observes, I think it is important to have plenty of people to carry things;

for I don't wish to carry any thing myself, but my gun."

"And now and then a young lady," said Morrell.

"I trust that will not be necessary to-day," answered Alban gravely; "but it is as well to be prepared. What say you, Pierre?"

The Indian was dressing the trout, with a stroke of his knife to each. His impassive countenance indicated no interest in the discussion, but Atherton perfectly understood that he alone was likely to take amiss any augmentation of the number of their party; and it appeared that in this instance he would have the right to object; Duncan was very probably a neighbour with whom his tribe did not care to have intercourse. In addition to the account given by the trapper himself, Alban remembered that before they left Lake Pheasant, Pierre had signified pretty plainly that another squaw (meaning Jane) would only encumber them; and that one more guide was all they needed. But the Indian's sagacity and pride would not suffer him, the former to doubt Atherton's own inclination, or the latter, to oppose one who was sure, he had found, to have his own way: so he coincided apparently with the young man's opinion, by saying, that "more canoe and more guide would make the way easier for the young and feeble:" a

distant allusion to their fair fellow-voyagers, prompted by Indian etiquette. Duncan seized the trout, and ran up to the cabin to expedite breakfast.

The young and feeble, to whom Pierre so delicately alluded, were all ready to resume their journey, when Alban bade them good-morning. They breakfasted in the open air, seated on logs, and Mrs. Duncan gave them, as a great treat, potatoes baked in the ashes to eat with their trout. Miss De Groot spoke with nervous enthusiasm of the wild scene at Racket, and cabin life, but Jane, though seemingly in high spirits, was indignantly occupied with the severe labours which Duncan, it appeared, exacted of his youthful wife, and unmercifully ridiculed her friend's raptures. The poetry of this life disappeared, according to Jane, when you saw what a barbarian it had made of the trapper.

"Do you believe, Alban, that he makes her fetch a log like *that* from yonder woods on her shoulders, while the lazy brute saunters about doing nothing! Can you credit a woman carrying such a thing, or a man letting her?"

"He treats her like a squaw—as he gives her the name," observed Alban, with a look of disgust.

"But every backwoodsman is not necessarily so brutally selfish," said Miss De Groot.

“Ah! you should have heard the pretty contrast Mary and I drew this morning between our host and *you*,” observed Jane.

“Hush!” said Miss De Groot, blushing. “Do not spoil him.”

“I am certainly in danger!” said Alban.

“If you had heard Miss De Groot say that you were the very prince of cavaliers!” pursued Jane.

“I never said such a *thing!*” exclaimed Mary, with a warm and angry native emphasis on the last word.

“Indeed you did! How can you tell such a fib!” cried Jane, laughing.

“I merely said that Mr. Alban had improved very much since I used to know him, not that he was perfection yet,” responded Mary. — “At least that was what I meant.”

“You know best what you meant,” retorted Jane, gaily. “I can only report what you said.”

“I have only performed my duty,” said Atherton.

“Half the beauty of a noble action is to be unconscious of it,” said Mary.

“And so you think I am too conscious” — Alban stopped.

“Of *your* noble actions?” Jane finished for him, and laughed again.

"You both seem inclined to be merry at my expense this morning," said Atherton, flushing up to the temples, but not with ill-nature.

"Not I!" exclaimed Miss De Groot, with warmth again. She hesitated, and looked at Jane.

"Pray, speak out!" said Jane, with a perfectly easy and defiant air. "Am *I* laughing at Alban?"

"I don't know at whom you are laughing," said her friend, "but I am not laughing at any body — and certainly not at you, Mr. Alban," she added, turning to him, ingenuously — "to whom I owe so much."

"Did not I tell you so?" said Jane, with the same malicious air. "Mary wishes to think that your drawing her into our boat last night was an act of heroism that lays her under everlasting obligations."

"It is the part of a generous mind to overrate benefits," said Alban, sententiously.

"And to overpay them," added Jane.

"What an independent life you lead here, Mr. Duncan," said Mary, abruptly. "Mrs. Duncan has been telling me that you raise your own corn and vegetables, (maize, buckwheat, and potatoes, Mr. Alban,) while for meat and fish, when you need them, you have the forest and lake, crowded with delicacies. You need only a little clothing —"

"It is not quite a Paradise!" said Jane, aside.

"I wear the skins of the game I kill, ma'am," said Duncan.

"Like Adam *after* the Fall!" cried Jane, in the same tone.

"Mrs. Duncan's wardrobe, though simple," continued Mary, with a smile, "comes, I suppose, from Albany or Saratoga."

"Mrs. Duncan does not attempt absolutely to rival Eve!" whispered Jane, bitterly, yet smiling to Alban. "The poorest woman-slave must have apparel of some sort."

"My dear Jane, what is the matter with you this morning?"

"Why, you see, dear Alban," she replied, with a fond and at the same time gay expression, that made her seem irresistibly winning, "it is the first frank laugh we have had since we left poor George St. Clair at Mr. Hart's. I would n't choose to spend my life on this wild clearing, I confess, but I am as willing as Mary herself to live in a cabin with you!" — And she laughed again.

Miss De Groot grew red as fire at that, and so did Alban. But the breakfast was ended, and so ended this singular conversation, in which feelings had been betrayed by both the young ladies, that were a perfect

enigma to our hero. Their characters seemed almost reversed, for Mary was timid, embarrassed, and quickly disconcerted; while Jane showed a dashing independence, and a witty, though tender, spirit.

Atherton observed that the trapper took nothing with him from his cabin, but his rifle and axe; but Mrs. Duncan made up a neat packet, in a bark wrapper, containing, apparently, her entire wardrobe.

The little fleet swept out into the lake, — so black and billowy the night before, now smooth and blue. They glided past an island of pines, where, on the top of one of the very highest, an osprey annually built of boughs and grass her huge nest, and gave the isle its name. Point after point, islet after islet, was passed, each opening a fresh perspective of woods and waters. In one of the bays, Courtney thought he saw a deer's head bobbing on the water, and the rifles were all prompt for service, but it turned out to be only a loon. As they approached, the great northern diver disappeared, to rise again far away in the lake. Duncan coolly shot at it, the cruelty of which Atherton somewhat sharply reprov'd, as the flesh of the loon is useless.

“Never fear,” said the trapper. “I’ve known one of them fellows dodge my rifle all day in a lake not bigger than a mill-pond, compared to Racket.”

“A lazy kind of business,” said Courtney to Margaret, “for a man to be shooting all day at a loon!”

“That’s pretty much what Iray Duncan is like,” observed Morrell to Miss Jane.

Except the number of portages, and the distance they had consequently to tramp through a tangled forest, there was little to distinguish this day. Mrs. Duncan, on these occasions, invariably took her husband’s canoe over her head, and carried it a mile or two (as the case might be) of the roughest walking, quite as a matter of course, but to Jane’s great disgust. Alban devoted himself more to Miss De Groot than on the previous days, assigning her accident of the preceding night as an excuse.

She acted differently from the other days, when she had ever declined his arm, or yielded it to Jane. She accepted his assistance now, with that kind of dignity which is half coquetry. A new, still kindness softened their mutual manner to-day; it seemed that the boy and girl revived in them; the genial instinct which their spiritual preoccupations, and the intellectual solitude to which they both had been condemned for a year past, had somewhat repressed, had sprung up afresh; their tones, their words, their steps and gestures, reflected sympathetically the spirit of the wild, fresh nature, whose mosses they crushed,

whose hoar and mighty trunks stretched above them, or, prostrate beneath their feet, gave them an oblique and slippery pathway down headlong ravines, or through briery thickets, and whose ever-trickling waters steeped the elastic soil, and dampened the air of the sunniest glades.

It cannot be doubted that the incident of the evening before had much to do with these delicate changes. Alban had not precisely saved her life by any single act of gallantry, but the general impression remained that she owed him a great deal, and, what was more, that he counted as nothing any thing done for her.

The more girl-like character — the humble, natural susceptibility which Mary thus showed, was not inconsistent with her yielding to a good deal of abstraction, and even sadness, when she was alone in Pierre's canoe. Alban could not but notice it, and ascribed it to thoughts of her father, whom she hoped to see that evening. As the Indian and Miss De Groot were in advance, and she sat in the stern, her back was towards our hero; but he addressed her sometimes on purpose to make her turn; or else, in a bend of the stream, he would get a glimpse of her profile, and it was always shaded, he thought, with melancholy. She had lost her bonnet the night before, and wore only

her shawl over her head. Then he would look back to his cousin, who was with Morrell; and considering her face, which defied the sun and his autumn foliage by the roses of a perennial June, while she threw quite aside her thick green veil, and answered his look with a grateful smile, he pondered the relations between the human countenance and the character of the soul which we cannot see. The distribution of the party to-day, in the canoes, was less social than heretofore, but it was a great object, from the frequent shallowness of the stream, to gain lightness of draught.

They reached Long Lake by the middle of the day, and took their noon-day repose on a beautiful island, covered with a maple grove, the myriad leaves of which, twinkling in the sunlight, were either of the richest crimson or the brightest gold. A broad, sea-like expanse of waters rolled at their feet; coloured shores, hilly, and unshorn of their forests, stretched in endless perspective beyond; while, still more distant, in blue waves and bald peaks, rose and sank along the horizon the magnificent outline of the Adirondack.

Here the men all slumbered away the time of waiting, as well they might, for they had undergone severe fatigue. The hardy Mrs. Duncan and our

friend Margaret wandered off to seek some ripe nuts; for the trees that bore them were mingled with the maples. Atherton lay down at a distance from the two young ladies, under a golden-leaved maple, and either slept or pretended to sleep. But whether awake or asleep, he was out of hearing. The young ladies were not slumberers; they were indeed disposed to chat; and as young ladies, but especially when they are rivals, sometimes will, they talked at first of every subject but that which was uppermost in their hearts.

The beauty of the weather, the fine scenery through which they had passed, the difficulties of the forest path, if path it could be called, the prospect of a fine afternoon, and a safe arrival at the Indian village, were dwelt upon in succession. These topics were touched by Jane in a light, cheerful way, but Mary's tone, and the expression of her countenance, indicated that melancholy preoccupation of her thoughts which we have already noticed. She was ready enough to talk, but it seemed to be for the sake of expelling what are vulgarly called "the blues." A certain restlessness, quite different from her usual state, appeared to affect her.

"You are not quite yourself to-day," said Jane, at last, very kindly, when Mary had answered rather

at random. "You are thinking how you may find your father?"

"That is a part of what makes me — nervous — I suppose I ought to call it."

"It seems to you, perhaps, as if the end of the journey would never come — on account of your impatience to arrive at it."

"Not exactly so. I have enjoyed the journey, and dread its termination, as most do the journey of life. While we are *en voyage*, its hardships have so many compensations that they become dear to us, and we cannot believe the joy and repose of the *patrie*."

"I think we always feel sorry just at the last, when a journey is over," said Jane.

"In social journeys above all," said Mary, "because it snaps a bond, and we are not sure it will ever reunite."

Here the conversation paused, from having got to border, at least, on ground which they were sensitive of treading. Jane turned it to the effect of the sun and air upon their complexions.

"How much Alban is tanned!" said she.

"Burned, rather," replied her friend. "Such complexions as mine tan. Yours and his burn."

"Am I as much burnt as he is?"

“Oh, dear no! Your cheek is just delicately sun-smitten. It but gives your hair a brighter gold, and your dark blue eye a coquettish sparkle, like a country lass. I like it.”

“Poor Alban’s face is quite inflamed, except where that downy brown beard of his protects it.”

“It is—but I like him better so.”

“Why? It is surely not a beauty.”

“It is manly. I remember, too, when his hands were as white as yours, but now they are almost as dark as Mr. Morrell’s.”

“And you like that better also?”

“Why it is a great deal manlier—don’t you think?”

“Perhaps it is; though I was telling him yesterday that he ought to wear his gloves, and he said they were worn out. I offered to mend them, forgetting that I had neither needles nor thread.”

“Margaret has both at your service,” said Mary. “You had better mend your cousin’s gloves, but I would n’t advise him to wear them for the present.”

“I shall tell him how you like his hands better all tanned as they are.”

“Oh, pray don’t! It is nothing to me what colour his hands are of,” said Mary, hastily.

Alban’s cousin smiled at this saying of her friend’s.

When a thought is in the heart it will be drawn out in some way or another, unless one is extremely guarded. The dissimulation of young ladies in regard to certain subjects is as perfect as any thing human can be, yet their jealousy gets the better of it now and then.

"It is not a *sin* by your religion—is it? to have a preference about a young man's hands being white or sun-browned!" said Jane, laughing.

"That depends on circumstances!"

"What circumstances, for instance?"

"Excuse me," replied her friend. "My rules always seem so petty to you, that I shall only scandalize you by stating them."

"Is it not better to have the heart right, and so act *generously and freely*, than to be fettered by such a variety of particular rules?" inquired Jane. "It seems so to me, I confess."

"I cannot be generous except by submitting myself to a rule, or else I am just reckless of my own happiness—as it seems to *me*. Obeying the rule keeps my heart right, and gives me perfect freedom."

"You are such a theologian, Mary, that I see I must never venture on such ground with you. You use me up at once."

"I am no theologian," replied Mary, without taking

notice of the sarcasm, "but I have thought a great deal about some few things which every body objects to me as wrong in my religion. For instance" — she looked up with a fine expression — "to prefer others to myself in every thing that does not concern my salvation, is a rule that frees me from a thousand petty anxieties, and enables me — *as far as I can keep it* — to defy all the sophistries of self-love!"

"That is a noble rule!" said Jane, penetrated. "But who can keep it?"

"You and I — by God's grace! Ah! Jane! why do you not think more seriously about the Catholic religion? I have been wishing to say it all day, but have never found an opportunity before. Do not you see that your earthly happiness depends upon it? You love your cousin Alban — forgive my saying so — and he will never marry a Protestant."

"If I loved him ever so much," responded Jane with spirit, "I would never change my religion on his account, I promise you. Is that your notion of Christian principle? — to change one's religion in order to get married! If conscience did not prevent me, womanly pride would. Fie, Mary!"

Jane turned away her head, as if she wanted to hear no more.

"How you jump to a conclusion!" said Mary

quietly, as one accustomed to be misunderstood. "I did not mean that you should become a Catholic all at once, because you are—unfortunately, I think—attached to one; but merely that you ought to enter immediately upon a serious examination of the religion, which he has adopted from conviction, and is not likely to abandon. Or if you are so deeply prejudiced against it that you cannot do this—why the Christian principle and womanly pride you spoke of, should both withhold you, it seems to me, from trying to captivate his regard:—for that is to act the temptress!"

"On the contrary," returned Jane, with increasing displeasure, "I have hoped all along that Alban's affection for me (which is not a new thing by any means) would win him from these strange ideas, which all his true friends deplore as much as I do."

"It is a design that I have plainly seen through," replied Mary, becoming excited in turn. "Yes, I saw, Jane, that, impelled by an affection which does you no discredit, you were using every art of gentle fascination to insnare Alban's faith. It is just as when, in the early ages, some Pagan girl, or unconverted Jewess, employed her charms to seduce some young disciple. It might succeed with a slave of the senses—some poor votary of woman's beauty, already an idolater in heart; but not with one who, young as he is,

has learned the great lesson of self-mastery. Alban began his career as a Catholic (let me tell you) by a glorious victory over a very fatal and extraordinary bewilderment of his senses and imagination. I never knew — I never *could* comprehend — until very lately, how much it must have cost him. But believe me, he whose first step was to trample on his passions by renouncing a mistress — a bride — far more dazzling to a young man of his disposition than any simple girl like you or me, will never end by surrendering his principles for the sake of a cousin.”

Mary’s lofty tone daunted Jane for a moment, and then the blood of the Athertons boiled up in her veins. The restraints of that conventional suavity which the world calls good breeding had been broken through by one rough truth, and she could not suppress her bitterness.

“It will be easy for Alban to resist my poor charms when he has yours to compare them with, which are superior, I acknowledge, in every respect,” she said. “It does not require such an effort of virtue to prefer a rich heiress to a poor cousin. The little portion which I had hoped would smooth the first difficulties of his profession (for I have never thought of myself *first*, I assure you) is too trifling to be offered in competition with your future estates, I know. I

have no art, either, but just to love him, (as I have done from the time we were children together,) and to betray my affection. You love him, too, but proudly and wisely hide it. Men, especially at Alban's age, prize the heart which they must be at pains to win, while they despise that which they think is already theirs. Nay, never deny that you love him. You may deceive *him* by your haughty self-command, but not a woman and a rival," concluded Jane, passionately.

"Nay, do not be angry with me, dear Jane. Remember that I am two years younger than you. Can *I* be your rival?"

"You are as superior to me in self-control as in every thing else," cried Jane, bursting into tears. "But it is the most insulting charge, that I wish to captivate Alban's senses. I cannot bear it with calmness. To think that you, with whom I have been associating as a friend, should impute to me such a thing! Such a degrading idea!" And Jane hid her face in her hands.

"My dear Jane, you misunderstood me. When I spoke of your insnaring Alban, I did not mean by any unmaidenly arts, but merely by — modest kindness, such as I would not myself scruple to show, were I really your rival."

"We will not quarrel about my cousin," said Jane with dignity.

"God forbid!"

An awkward silence followed this burst. Both felt themselves somewhat aggrieved. Jane, particularly, had the air of one conscious of being the injured party. She gazed very steadily at the blue peak of the remote Tahawus. Her delicate profile could well express resentment. Mary was the first to speak. It was to beg Jane's pardon for having hurt her feelings.

"I am very sorry," said she. "Say you forgive me, for I retract every word that has offended you."

Jane could not hold out against that. The two maidens kissed each other, and perhaps felt a more sincere mutual kindness than before. The ice of their rivalry was broken. It was a kind of luxury to Jane to be able to speak of her feelings.

"I am mortified," said she, "to have betrayed my jealousy; but do not you think, Mary, that you also were a little jealous?"

"I had reason, if, as you say, I am in love with your cousin. But you mistake me there. There was enough of human and female infirmity in what I said, I acknowledge; but no jealousy."

"You are always mistress of *your* secret," said Jane. "But indeed you ought not to blame" — Mary

had not blamed it—"my affection for Alban. It is one," added she, "*that has grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength.* It began when I was only thirteen. We were both converted in the very same revival of religion, and on the same day."

"I dare say," said Mary, with a delightful smile. "Did you use to talk of love in those days?"

"Never openly to each other, you know. We would have been ashamed. But we were always teased about each other, and neither of us ever denied it."

"I dare say not," replied Mary, with a sympathizing laugh.

It rung low and silvery along the shore. Alban heard it under his maple canopy, and rose on an elbow. He looked at his watch, and getting up forthwith, came to them over the rustling golden leaves which thickly strewed the ground.

"You seem to be having a merry time, ladies."

"Jane has been telling me about your youthful days, sir."

"Has she told you that I used to believe she was made of something finer than clay, so that I was surprised at her condescending to support her existence in the same manner that I did, and should not have been astonished had she put forth a pair of

wings some sunshiny morning, and departed from this dull planet?"

"Something like that I might infer," said Mary.

"Fie!" cried Jane.

"Well, allow," said Alban, with a look at the latter, which caused her to turn away, "allow — that there is unusually little to disenchant me now of my boyish illusion."

"It would be easy to dream on, I should think," said Miss De Groot.

"As easy as talking; but at present it is time to prosecute our journey. We have rested here an hour and a half."

And the young man helped his cousin and Miss De Groot down the bank, and into their canoes, with a reverential tenderness that was nearly equal towards them both; but if there *was* a difference, he was more affectionate with his cousin, which was natural, and more timid with her friend.

CHAPTER XIII.

Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of voices,
And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of a river,
Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the Jesuit Mission.

Evangeline.

AT about sundown, as Duncan had predicted, the travellers reached the Indian village. Far apart stood the low cabins, roofed with gray bark, and not many in number. The clearing was of considerable extent, laid out in dry, yellow maize-fields, interspersed with many a crimson copse, and broken by the bends of a stream, half bush-hidden, that reflected the gleam of the western sky, piled to the zenith with the most brilliant cirro-stratus. Its long deep-purple lines, and feathery floating extremities of brightest pink, lay on a clear luminous depth of soft orange, pale green, and heavenly blue.

The party moved on admiringly, afoot, along a narrow path. They crossed a prairie, with half-wild horses cropping its flowery acres; then passed through

a grove of mighty cedars; and came upon a sort of common, round which were irregularly grouped a number of huts, having log walls and bark roofs, with some wigwams wholly of bark, imbowered more or less among fruit trees and hedges of elder. There were some yellow sunflowers, turning their great golden faces to the west; and the bark roofs were spread with yellow corn and gourds. One of the houses was larger and loftier than the rest. It was built of logs with the bark on, and had projecting eaves. The peak of the gable was surmounted by a cross, in whose gray arms twined the highest tendrils of a crimson-leaved vine that crept over one side of the forest church and was trained along its roof.

Pierre stopped at the high, open door of this edifice, and beckoned them all to enter. They had no choice, for he alone of the party knew where Mr. De Groot was to be found. It seemed that the whole population of the village was gathered in the church. The men were on one side and the squaws on the other. The travellers silently distributed themselves according to their sex. Jane knelt down by Mary, her modesty, despite certain scruples, not permitting her to stand alone in a crowd of worshippers.

The principal light came in at the door, although there were small windows, or rather apertures, in the

walls close under the roof; but the projecting eaves interfered with the light from this source. At the further end, in a recess, was the altar, on which the great candles were already lit. They appeared to be real wax, burned with peculiar brightness, and diffused a fine fragrance. The material of the altar appeared to be cedar. It was vested in front with red silk highly enriched with wampum. Its plain but spotless linen hung down pure and white at each end to the platform. The great number of smaller candles of a bluish-white wax, in wooden candlesticks of a graceful design, was very observable. They were not only ranged on the back-altar, but on brackets against the cedar wainscoting of the sanctuary, and calculated, when lighted, to produce a brilliant illumination. The tabernacle was evidently of cedar, profusely carved, and very dark, as if with age. A lamp of Indian pottery, suspended from the roof by a cord of bark, burned before it. The spacious sanctuary was enclosed by a light rail, and spread with a beautiful mat of reeds. Most impressive and inspiring was the sacred decorum of the whole, to the travellers just emerging from the rude forest.

The swarthy congregation were praying in silence; but in a minute or so after the entrance of the travellers, a side-door opened, and twelve Indian boys,

in red cassocks and snow-white surplices, came out, two and two, and genuflecting regularly, stood in order on this side and that. Last of all came a priest in surplice and stole, the berretta on his head, and a book in his hand. They knelt; the whole congregation made the sign of the cross, and the priest intoned the *kyrie eleison*. In a moment the chapel resounded with the litany. It was a full and very loud, but singularly melodious, chorus. The two sexes answered each other, and the voices of the women were very sweet.

At the end the priest read a number of French prayers in a distinct voice, and, while he was so doing, four of the surpliced Indian boys took long reeds and lighted all the rest of the candles. The sanctuary was a blaze of light, for every one of the smaller candlesticks was a triple branch. The cope was laid on the priest's shoulders. Amid the solemn singing of *O Salutaris* by all the people together, the remonstrance—a large one of silver gilt—stood upon the altar amid the starry lights. Then the men and women sang not *Tantum ergo* only, but the whole *Pange lingua*, in alternate verses. Now the strain was wild, profound—a deep, yet not harsh bass—a sea of male voices; now it was high, bird-like, yet open and sweet—the choir of women. Meanwhile incense was offered to the Adorable. The white veil was laid on the priest's

shoulders over the stiff and stately cope; there was a hush;—

“*Panem de cœlo præstitisti eis,*” sung the priest alone, in a thrilling voice.

“*Omne delectamentum in se habentem,*” answered the entire swarthy congregation, like the fall of many waters in a forest.

And now all bow before the LORD Himself in the hands of His servant, while JESUS, the Eternal Pontiff of the Church, signs them from the Throne of God. Oh, blessed welcome of the pilgrims!

As soon as Benediction was over, Pierre rose, and spoke by signs to a very old and decrepit-looking Indian, with long, white hair that hung like a mat upon his shoulders. Having received an answer, he beckoned Alban and Miss De Groot to follow him.

“Shall I come, too?” whispered Jane, for she observed that Pierre was advancing towards the altar.

“Of course,” answered Mary. “You will not desert me now.”

The congregation made way for them courteously. The Indian, Alban, and Miss De Groot bent the knee in front of the altar, and Jane, who came last, was ashamed in this company where all believed, and with all eyes bent upon her, not to do like the

rest, although in her heart she feared it was idolatrous. She tried to make a little prayer to the God who is in Heaven, and thought of Naaman bowing down in the House of Rimmon. But Mary, overcome by a mixture of gratitude and fear, sank on both knees at the low rail, and touched her forehead to the step, kissing the ground. So they entered a crowded little sacristy, where the Indian boys were unvesting, and Pierre was kneeling for the blessing of Father Smith.

“My father, sir?” said Mary, extending her hand. “How is he?”

“Thank God, my dear child, he is somewhat better, we hope, though not altogether free from danger. Your coming, I trust, will be life to him. This is Mr. Atherton, unless I mistake, though I should hardly have known him, if he had not been with you, my daughter. And I am glad to see that you have had companions of your own sex.”

“This young lady,” said Mary, “is a relative of Mr. Atherton’s, who has kindly accompanied me for the sake of the decorum which is dear to us both.”

“May God reward her!” said Father Smith, with a low bow to Jane. “Your father is in our humble presbytery, where an apartment, such as it is, shall be found for your friend and yourself, and our good Margaret, of course. You can come in now, and I

will prepare your father to see you. You will find him much changed, Miss De Groot. Our way lies across this garden."

The sacristy door opened into a vegetable and flower garden of some extent. It was regularly planted with fruit trees, currant bushes, gooseberries, and some flowering shrubs. A few autumn flowers were still in bloom. Beyond, at the extremity of a grass-grown walk, was a long log-house of one story, having very small glazed windows. It was partly screened by a row of mountain-ash, hanging out its bright red berries. In the opposite direction, under the continued sweep of the cedar grove, was a burying ground, with a cross at the head of every grave. In the dim light and distance this could hardly be descried.

They passed along the grass-grown, gravelled walk, two and two, the priest and Miss De Groot leading the way.

"I am so glad to find you here, Father Smith," said Mary, with a face all radiant. "It was so unexpected."

"I as little expected, when sent by the Provincial to visit this ancient mission, that I should find your father here, and so soon have the pleasure of welcoming yourself."

“God sent you, sir, not the Provincial,” said Mary, smiling with sweetness and gaiety.

“Well, my dear child, that is always true, you know,” said Father Smith, laughing, and in his most foreign accent.

“But what an invasion of your house!” exclaimed Mary, checking herself.

“Say nothing about that,” rejoined the missionary, turning round to her, with a slight, graceful, still foreign gesture. “The house, as I told your father, is *yours*.”—Again that cheerful laugh.

CHAPTER XIV.

Now is the day departing, and the whole wood, like the air, imbrowned with shadows, when a new road, with a name most acceptable at such an hour, presents a gentle slope, descending into a vale.

Compitum. The Road of Hospitality.

AN Indian girl—whose straight black hair, passing behind her large, well-formed ears, and filled with red flowers, the latest of the season, hung down below her waist—received them at the door of the presbytery. She had ear-rings, and an immense necklace of wampum and silver beads, from which depended a huge silver cross. Her under dress consisted of a skirt of dark blue broadcloth, reaching a little below the knee and beautifully worked with coloured beads, and of a short, loose tunic of bright-red calico, with a narrower border of the same rich work. A large blanket, or *e-yose*, of blue cloth, the graceful peplum of the ancients, embroidered like the skirt, was thrown over all, and fell in fine folds to her feet. Leggins of scarlet, and tawny moccasins, gay with bead-work, completed her attire.

The room into which she received them was of considerable dimensions for a log cabin. It occupied the whole depth, and was open to the roof. Two small windows of a single sash lighted it, and there was another door leading into the open air, opposite to that by which they entered. A table of dark wood, a dresser of cedar, ranged with earthenware and tins, three or four chairs of wicker-work, and as many large rush mats, constituted the furniture. At one end a chimney of roughly-treated stone projected into the apartment, and there was a good fire burning, which already gave more light than entered from without. At each end there seemed to be a room beyond for sleeping. Such was in fact the arrangement of the house and the extent of its accommodations. The Indian girl conducted the young ladies and Margaret to one of the side-rooms. It was not so spacious as the principal apartment, from which it was separated by a log partition, which had once evidently been the wall of the house. It had also two windows, one on each side, and a door leading into the open air. The furniture consisted of a couple of wicker chairs, a light table of bark, placed under a small looking-glass, and a large mattress, composed of layers of matting, and raised about a foot above the floor on a bedstead, which it entirely concealed. An additional seat was afforded

by a thick mat laid on a large cedar chest. Fixed against the wall over the bed was a wooden crucifix, on which Mary's eyes immediately fastened. Under it, on a plain bracket, stood a small, blue earthen vase, and on either side was a coloured print of coarse execution — the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the Sacred Heart of Mary.

The young squaw intimated to them, in a mixed dialect of broken French and English, that this was to be their sleeping apartment.

She then laid aside her mantle, and proceeded in silence, while the young ladies gladly threw themselves into the chairs, to open the cedar chest, whence she took some bed-linen, with which she laid the mattress, and also enveloped a long bolster that lay at the head. A magnificent white blanket, which she brought to them first to admire, was next laid on, and last a thin spread of bright calico.

Jane could not contain an expression of delight at the prospect of sleeping once more between a pair of sheets. But neither could help smiling when the apparatus for ablution was produced — a dark-blue basin, holding about a quart of water, and an earthen jug of equal capacity, which the young Indian set upon the bark table with an air that said, "Behold how we also understand the ways of civilized life!"

Meanwhile, Margaret, at a nod from her young mistress, had assisted the Indian girl in laying the bed. The latter had appeared to take no notice of this, but she now approached Miss De Groot and asked if "*Elle*" — pointing to Margaret — would require a separate couch. When Mary replied in the affirmative, provided it were not too inconvenient, the young squaw beckoned to Margaret to follow her, and made the latter herself bring in one of the large thick mats from the principal apartment, and lay it in a corner. She seemed to think this was sufficient, and looked for a moment displeased when Mary asked if there was no "*linge*" for "*elle*;" however, she brought out some — a single large sheet — which she gave into Margaret's hands to arrange for herself. When Margaret, without a word, had laid it double, and had placed, by her lady's advice, her cloak at the head for a pillow, the young Indian, who observed Miss De Groot narrowly, produced a blanket without being asked, and finally a large piece of thin calico for a coverlet. By this time it was almost dark, and their swarthy but handsome hostess went out, returning presently with a candle of the same bluish-white wax of which the lights in the chapel were formed. The candlestick was beautifully carved in a dark reddish wood. At the same time she announced to Miss De Groot

that her father was now ready to see her, and Mary rose quickly, and followed trembling.

Mr. De Groot was lying in the room on the opposite side of the larger apartment before described. Although prepared for an alteration, Mary was much shocked at his appearance. It announced one on the verge of the grave. Extreme emaciation and a corpse-like pallor were less ominous than the restless eye of unabated disease. But at least he was surrounded by the cleanliness and comfort so necessary to the sick. Father Smith had warned her that excitement as well as bodily movement was injurious to him; she restrained, therefore, her emotion, kissed him calmly, and said how thankful she was to have reached him in safety.

“You came here alone, Mary?”

“No, sir; Mr. Alban Atherton accompanied us from Lake Pheasant, where we met him with a party.”

“Atherton!” exclaimed her father. “He came with you and Margaret through the forest! A young man with two girls! and an Indian guide!”

“My dear father, a young lady—a cousin of Mr. Alban’s—also accompanied us, and is now here.”

“How old is that young lady?”

“A year or two older than myself.”

“Three girls here! what are we to do with them?”

said her father, impatiently. "I am glad Atherton is come; he will be of more service to me than twenty girls. This cousin of his in particular can be nothing but an incumbrance. Why did you let her come? I thought you had more sense."

"I was influenced, sir, by the motives of propriety, which you yourself suggested just now."

"Why does not Atherton come in to see me?" asked her father, querulously.

She called Alban, who was in the next room. Mr. De Groot received him with coldness, yet seemed less irritable in his presence. He grew calm at once, and listened patiently to what Father Smith said of the goodness of God in sending him his daughter and young friend to tend his sick bed. Together they would be able, by relieving each other, to give all the assistance the invalid required, which was highly desirable, as his own time was much occupied in administering to the spiritual wants of the people. Just then the old Indian with the huge mat of white hair depending to his shoulders—the same to whom Pierre had spoken in the chapel—came slowly in and silently took his seat by the bedside. Mr. De Groot extended his wrist and the old man felt the pulse. It was the physician. Father Smith assured Miss De Groot and Alban that he was a very skilful one, and

not unacquainted with the civilized art of medicine. But for old Vincent's care he did not think that Mr. De Groot would now be living.

"He is the father of Pierre," said the missionary, "and the grandfather of the Indian girl who received you here, and who is Pierre's daughter. They have the care of the presbytery in the absence of a priest, and their own cabin is not distant. Madeleine will prepare your meals, wash your clothes, and perform every office of a servant without considering herself one in any respect. I observe that she is already getting ready your supper."

"And where are our guides?" said Alban.

"They brought your traps here themselves, and I requested Pierre to take care of the men. There was a woman too, I think. They will be hospitably entertained, do not doubt it."

After a little time, Madeleine summoned them to partake of the repast which she had prepared, and Margaret, whom Mr. De Groot showed lively pleasure at seeing, came in to pay her respects to her master.

"Go, eat your supper," said he, when Mary seemed disposed to remain. "Margaret will stay with me."

"Let me give you two rules for your guidance," said the missionary, as they entered the principal room, and addressing Miss De Groot:—"two rules,

do you understand?"—counting them upon his fingers. "Yield to your father's wishes in every thing, and be cheerful. He is a *great deal better*:—do you understand?"

"Yes, sir!"

They sat in wicker chairs round an oaken table lighted with wax candles in carved candlesticks. The fare was simple, but good and abundant: white bread, hoe-cake, hominy, butter, honey, maple syrup, baked apples, dried moose-flesh and venison, a few trout, and foaming mugs of milk fresh from the cow. The tears stood in Jane's eyes at a sight which betokened civilization indeed. She felt that they were not savages, though Indians and Catholics. She stood in no danger of either scalping or worse; and she need not mind the circumstance that not even the door of their bedroom, which opened upon a wood and river, possessed any other security than a wooden latch. Alban inquired if the candlesticks were carved by the Indians.

"It was done by a missionary, a hundred years ago," said Father Smith;—"one of our Fathers, of course. He seems to have done it all with a common penknife. The tabernacle, which you may have observed, and which is really a very curious affair, was also his work. The good father must have had

a particular genius for it, I think. Certainly he has contributed very much to the beauty of the chapel."

"This is a beautiful spot," said Alban.

"But for sin, which intrudes every where, it would be a paradise; and, by the mercy of God, sin is partly banished. Certainly there are some holy souls among these people. Their outside is dark, but the interior is white and clean."

"Have they a priest regularly?" asked Mary.

"They are visited somewhat irregularly, but they never fail to assemble on Sundays and Festivals to sing the choir part of the Mass, when one of their number reads the Mass prayers; and also for Vespers; besides having a daily office of Litanies and Hymns, for which they meet in the chapel, as you have witnessed to-night. They take great pleasure in it. There have been attempts to convert them by Protestants of various kinds, but without success. Their answer to all such proposals is simple: that they like their religion, and do not wish to change it."

"I was not aware till you spoke just now of 'our fathers,' that you were a Jesuit, Father Smith," said Alban.

Jane, who had not perceived the inference, started so that Mary could not help laughing.

"This young lady is a Protestant, Father Smith,"

she said, "and, I suppose, never saw a live Jesuit before. I am sorry that Mr. Alban has betrayed the fact that you belong to the society, for I had hoped that you would win her confidence before she found it out. Now she will be on her guard against your arts."

"I must be so much the more artful," replied Father Smith, with great gaiety, "since I have all your friend's suspicions to work against."

"Oh, you are so very deep," said Mary, laughing also, "that you will easily get round Jane. She will never be able to believe that your simplicity of manners, and apparently unsuspecting gaiety of heart, hide, as they do, the most designing duplicity."

Father Smith coloured, but laughed as before. Mary, who had finished her supper, rose, blessing herself silently, and went to her father. Alban and Father Smith talked about the Indians, and the country, their journey, the scenery, the fishing, and other sport of the region. The conversation was not quite so flowing when Miss De Groot was away. Father Smith and she seemed to be on so good terms, and to comprehend each other so well. Jane thought it over and over. She was obliged to own that the outward appearance of the former was that of perfect unreserve, and that both exhibited a singular cheer-

fulness, which she had not, by the by, observed in Mary before, at least in the same degree. The maidenly reserve of the earlier part of their journey, and the soft sentimental sadness of the latter portion of it, were both exchanged for absolute light-heartedness.

Whether it was natural or right, considering in how critical a state, as she understood, her friend's father was, she did not know, and as it was all a mystery to her, she could form no judgment. She continued to sit at the table after the two gentlemen had pushed back their chairs, while Madeleine and Margaret were supping. The two latter were now very friendly, although the young Indian maintained her air of superiority. Alban had gone out to seek the guides. Father Smith, with a slight apology to the young lady, having turned his chair half round to the table, and taken his *autumnal* from his pocket, had begun to say his office. Jane observed with curiosity, not unmixed with dread, his squarish, foreign-looking head, slightly bald, the gray hair cut close, his piercing, but open gray eye, fastened on the red-lettered page, while his lips rapidly moved, although not a sound reached her ear. Even his much-worn, long black robe did not escape her attention: — that "black gown" so famous in all the Indian missions: — it was, and it was not, her idea of a

Romish priest and a Jesuit. Then she wondered how, being French, his name should be "Smith."

Meanwhile, Madeleine and Margaret cleared away the supper in a trice, washing the things in a pan of hot water, and setting them on the dresser in a civilized way, very consoling again to Jane. But Margaret here gave Madeleine some instruction, which the latter, proud as she was, received with docility. Knowledge is power, and Margaret gained perceptibly upon the haughty young Indian. The latter, however, possessed the advantage in point of physical force, which she evinced by bringing in on her shoulders three or four huge logs to replenish the fire. Just then (Jane noticed every thing of that sort) Miss De Groot came from her father's room, and spoke in a whisper to the priest. He looked up from his breviary.

"Certainly, my dear child. To-morrow morning, you mean? To-night, if you wish it." — Another whisper from Miss De Groot. — "You have reason, my child."

"When Mr. Atherton comes back," said Mary aloud.

"Very well." — And he resumed his office.

Mary returned to her father. Madeleine made up a couple of mat beds on the floor, by supplying each with a blanket, and a bolster stuffed with corn-leaves.

After all was finished, she resumed her stately and rich blue shawl, which the "splendidly-robed" princesses of the Iliad might have envied, and, advancing to Father Smith, dropped on one knee, crossing her arms on her beaded breast. The priest made the sign of blessing over her, scarcely looking up from his book. The young squaw rose, saluted Jane with lofty courtesy, made a slight friendly inclination to Margaret, and departed.

She was scarcely gone ere the priest knelt. He remained in that position but a moment, then rose again and put the book away. Jane wondered if he would now enter into conversation with *her*. As Margaret still sat, though nodding, in one corner, perhaps he would.

She was not deceived. Father Smith began to talk to her, like any other gentleman, but somewhat languidly. He suppressed a yawn or two, she noticed. In fact, as he had watched a good deal lately with Mr. De Groot, and ever rose betimes for mass, the good father was getting sleepy. At length Alban came in, which roused him a little; but Jane, who herself longed for bed as Eve for Paradise, and only waited to bid Alban good-night, immediately retired. Whatever was his reason for doing so on that particular night, Alban kissed her. It was another consolation,

for among all these Catholics she began to feel rather lonely.

A good girl after all was Jane. She was perfectly sincere in her religion, and faithful in discharging its duties. From twenty minutes to half an hour, night and morning, she regularly spent in her private devotions. No prayer said she by rote, and invariably in her self-composed addresses to her Maker she introduced a great many intercessions for those she loved, so that her prayers were a lively exercise of the kindest social affections. Perhaps it was the secret of her long constancy to Alban, that she had always prayed for him. Thus a girl's nature insinuated itself into her hours of communion of God, and the maiden often believed herself fervent when she was but glowing with a tender human sentiment. But with all that, was united a strong sense of duty, a strict conscientiousness, and a real desire to know and serve God.

Margaret came in and took possession of her mat, while Miss Jane was praying and reading her Bible. The candle was now burned nearly to the socket, and it occurred to her that before undressing it would be well to ascertain if Mary were coming soon. Softly opening the door, with the intention of calling her friend, she perceived Father Smith sitting with his

back to the table, while Mary De Groot knelt at it, with a little screen of lattice-work between them. Jane had noticed the last in a corner, earlier in the evening, and wondered what it could be. These make-shifts are common enough in the mission. Mary was in tears. Far away, the door into Mr. De Groot's room was open, and she saw Alban sitting by the bed.

She hastily closed the door. Sincerely shocked to have it brought actually under her eyes to what Mary must habitually submit, she put out the expiring candle, and having betaken herself to that retreat which is our nightly grave, lay thinking of what she had seen. Mary soon came in, disrobed herself silently in the dark, and placed herself by her side. When Jane kissed her, as was their mutual wont before their souls parted company for the night, she felt the tears still on her friend's cheek.

"I wonder," thought Jane, "if he has been scolding her for loving Alban, which I am sure she does, or what it is. — Is your father's state very discouraging?" she ventured to ask.

"I do not feel it to be so, with good nursing. Alban and Father Smith will take care of him by night; I and Margaret by day. That is the arrangement which, I believe, is best for all."

"Why, then, do you weep?"

Mary did not reply for a moment.

"I wish I could believe it was contrition. My dear Jane, I beg your pardon ten thousand times for judging you so uncharitably, and speaking to you so unkindly, as I did to-day."

"Have you been confessing that?" replied Jane, affectionately.

"That for one thing."

"And do you always cry when you confess?" pursued Jane, still curious.

"Not always," said Mary, laughing softly. "You did not think I was such a fool, did you?"

"Confession must be very humiliating," continued Jane, in a tone inviting to confidence.

"Of course — but the sweetness after!" — She paused, raised herself on one elbow, and sung in a clear voice, without a tear or sob in it, to a melody singularly expressive of exultation,

"Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles.
Esurientes implevit bonis; et divites dimisit inanes."

"What does it mean?" asked Jane.

"That humility like yours, dear Jane, is rewarded with spiritual blessings, while pride like mine is sent away empty."

"It is the Song of the Blessed Virgin?"

“Yes, the *Magnificat*, which is always sung, you know, at Vespers.”

“Your religion has something for all kinds of feeling,” said Jane, a little disappointed at this result of her inquisition.

“The bread of Heaven has every taste in itself,” replied Mary, lying down, “but only to the palate of faith. Let us go to sleep, my dear Jane,” she added, in a firm yet tender voice. “If you cannot sleep, try to watch with Christ.”

CHAPTER XV.

Χάρις χάριν γάρ ἔστιν ἢ τικτουσ' αἰεί
 ὅτου δ' ἀπορβεί μνηστis εὐ πεπονθότος,
 ὅποτε γένοιτ' ἂν οὗτος εὐγενῆς ἀνὴρ.

Ajax of Sophocles.

Kindness doth kindness ever more beget :
 And once received creates a generous debt,
 No well-born man hath e'er forgotten yet.

Anon.

WE must retrace our steps a little, to show how Alban passed the first evening at Cedar Lake. We have mentioned that he went forth to seek the guides. His principal design was to pay and dismiss Duncan. Morrell and Courtney he meant to retain till Mr. De Groot was fit to travel, or, should his disease, unhappily, have an adverse termination, until it became necessary to convey his daughter back to her friends and home.

Inquiring the way of some Indian children frolicking by the mystical gleam of a bright aurora, and of whom the boys were in a state of nearly complete

nudity, notwithstanding the cool autumnal night, he was led by a couple of the latter, bounding and kicking up their heels before him, like young imps of darkness, to the cabin where the guides were lodged. On approaching it, he heard, as in the open air, a short, suppressed scream, like that given by one who receives a sudden blow. It was the voice of a woman, and he involuntarily called out. There were gardens all around, hedged with lofty elder.

He found Morrell and Courtney in the cabin of their entertainers. Duncan and his wife were not there, but a squaw went out to call them, and they presently appeared. Mrs. Duncan slunk into a corner, where she seated herself on the floor. Her husband came forward with an air of great respect.

“I do not require your services here, Mr. Duncan,” said Atherton, after some discussion which need not be repeated, “and when we leave this place it will be easy for us to obtain such additional guides or boats as may be needed. How much shall I pay you, then, for every thing, including the accommodations at your shanty, supper, lodging, and all, for our whole party?”

“I suppose a dollar a-head would n't be too much, would it?” replied Duncan. “And guide's wages for me and Dorothy. I suppose two days I ought to say,

comin' and goin': — I don't charge nothin' for the use of the boats."

The other two men laughed, and Atherton slightly smiled.

"Very good. A dollar a-head for our board and lodging at Racket Lake," answered the latter, "makes seven dollars, and guide's wages for yourself and wife for two days, six more. I don't object. And if you choose to part, as you intimated, with the best of your two canoes, I will buy it. I will give you twelve dollars for it. It will be twenty-five in all. Yes or no?"

Duncan accepted the offer without haggling.

"Miss De Groot mentioned to me, as I was coming away, that before you leave she wishes to see Mrs. Duncan — I presume with the intention of testifying her regard in some form. If you mean to start *very* early to-morrow, you had better let your wife go round to the mission-house immediately."

Mrs. Duncan half started to her feet. But her husband observed that they should not get away very early. It was not worth while to trouble Miss De Groot to-night.

"I sha'n't follow back on my tracks," said he. "I mean, now I am here, to go on to the Moose Lakes, to see a fellow there. My wife can stop at the Lake,

if she likes, or Miss De Groot wants her for any thing."

Alban gave the squatter five half-eagles, and with a smile requested Morrell to see that the right canoe was retained.

"Never fear," said Duncan. "You don't suppose I would carry off the best, after selling it to you, Mr. Atherton."

"I should be sorry to think ill of you in any respect, Mr. Duncan," said Alban rising. "Good-night all," he added. "Good-night, Mrs. Duncan."

Morrell and Courtney followed him out, and walked on a little way with him.

"You paid him too much, Mr. Atherton," said the former. "Twice too much. He was n't entitled to any thing for his wife. *You* did n't ask him to bring her along."

"He made her come just to carry his canoe for him," said Courtney.

"A dollar apiece for our lodging in that smoky log-cabin of his is outrageous," said Morrell. "Why, Courtney and I would have slept all night under a tree for our two dollars. I did n't like to say so, though, and it is as well, perhaps, that you paid it, Mr. Atherton, since you don't mind the money; and I would n't have you get his ill-will."

"I'd risk his ill-will," said Courtney. "I'll be blamed if I'd a' given him all he asked."

"You don't know Iray Duncan as well as I do," rejoined the more cautious Morrell. "He's a fellow that I'd as soon have for a friend as an enemy — more particularly in these here woods."

"He's a regular thief," said Courtney.

"I am sorry Mr. Atherton let him see that his purse was so well lined," pursued Morrell. "If I had thought of it beforehand," he added, with a sharp twinkle of his keen eye in the northern light, "I would have advised you not to pay him in money, but to give him an order on Hart."

"His demand was extortionate, I suppose," said Alban with a smile; "but I would have turned him out of his shanty neck and heels that night, with your good aid and Pierre's, if he had not concluded to vacate it for the ladies. I could not dispute the bill after that."

The guides would have accompanied Atherton to the door of the mission-house, but he meant to visit the chapel, and on arriving at the latter, he dismissed them. The great door of the forest church was shut, and bolted on the inside, but on having recourse to that of the sacristy, he found it secured merely by a latch, which was raised by a leathern string. He

entered and groped his way into the chapel. The sanctuary lamp was still burning, and afforded sufficient light to show the sombre, empty interior. He went to the further end, and knelt down by one of the benches.

O happy Faith! Man's best consoler, and his guiding star in the pilgrimage of this world! What are we, indeed, if we have no hope beyond what Nature gives us? It was here in the presence, no longer of woods and waters, and the nightly-sparkling sky, but of the Eternal, clothed in flesh—of the cloud created by the Lord to hide His own countenance—it was before that pale symbol and sign of a present Saviour, that he came to seek new light and strength, to fit him to rise above himself, and all that intellect bestows or passion promises.

Atherton felt that the time had come for his admission to the full privilèges for which he so long had sighed. Here his long initiation would be complete, and the mystery of mysteries would, in a certain sense, be unveiled to his believing gaze:—pledge of the blessed hour when it should be unveiled perfectly and for ever.

The moral of the history of Alban is, that no man should be discouraged because he has to combat with ignoble or insignificant foes; for the victory, if by

the aid of Heaven he is so happy as to gain it, will not be the less glorious on that account. It was not in vain, for instance, that during the two months and more of our hero's renewed intercourse with his cousin Jane, the law of the Church (in his eyes that of God) had been pressing with a steady, equable force upon his obedient will. He had made an immense gain even on the side of this world; for he had acquired a new affection — that of a brother for a sister; and his whole character was ennobled and invigorated, as well by it as by the process through which it had been developed. But, on the side of the world to come, his gain was inestimable, as perhaps will appear when he is called upon to make some more difficult sacrifice. For not while we live is the strife ended or the reward obtained; and with every new advance, rise before us new heights of virtue to be attempted.

(This cannot be perfectly shown in a fiction, for there the law of unity demands a full close of the action, such as is apparently found even in life. So in a true story, faithful love must be at last either disappointed or blessed; generosity must be crowned with either martyrdom or felicity.

While Atherton lingered in the chapel, some one tried the principal door. Next that of the sacristy

was attempted, and of course with success. A man came in, covered. It was Duncan's marten cap. The trapper threw a careless glance towards the lower part of the church, which the light of the sanctuary lamp, full in his eyes, must have prevented his seeing with distinctness, and turned to the altar. His hunter's knife was in his hand. Without delay he threw one leg over the sanctuary rail. Alban's first impulse was to rush upon the sacrilegious robber; but he mastered it, and putting his hand before his eyes, breathed a *kyrie eleison* audibly. He could see Duncan's conscience-stricken start; the limb already over the rail was withdrawn; the robber, unbonneted, gazed at the tabernacle, and then slowly round the chapel a second time. He saw Alban, and evidently either believing or hoping himself unseen, drew back stealthily into the sacristy and vanished.

Atherton was careful, before going out, to pull the latch-string out of the door, which thus, when closed, became effectually locked. He also mentioned the occurrence immediately to the missionary, who, after some reflection, sent an Indian to sleep in his blanket at the door of the sacristy.

And now it was that Mary De Groot went to confession, and our hero, with a firm, happy mind, took her place at her father's side. Mr. De Groot

had asked for him repeatedly during the evening, and began by complaining of his neglect.

"I knew that Miss De Groot was with you, sir," pleaded Alban.

"Was that a reason for your staying away, Atherton? Who is this cousin of yours that has come on here with you?"

"With Miss De Groot, sir, not with me."

"Oh, I understand. I have been questioning Mary about her. It seems that she is only nineteen, very beautiful, very amiable, very fond of you, &c., &c. What I want to know is, what I cannot worm out of my daughter, viz., whether you are equally fond of *her*—of your cousin, I mean. Now, Atherton, don't worry me with boyish shying, but say yes or no, so that a sick man can understand you."

"My cousin and myself were partly brought up together, and her partiality for me cannot exceed the tender affection I feel for her," replied Alban. "But as you probably refer to other views, not to shy about it, sir, our relationship and difference of faith preclude them."

"Have you joined the Church of Rome yet?"

"I have not been openly received."

"Listen to me, Atherton," said Mr. De Groot, springing up in bed. "Put one of those chairs

behind my pillow. Believe what you like;—Transubstantiation, if you think proper;—but do not implicate yourself with a communion which, justly or not, is detested and abhorred by the great mass of your countrymen—by all those with whom your birth and education associate you. This is essentially a Protestant country. Why make yourself an out-cast?"

"Because God has given me the grace of faith," said Atherton, in a very composed manner. "You would have me a philosopher, sir," he added, "but I aspire to be a Christian."

"A pure chimera! And are you prepared to sacrifice to it the hope of my daughter's hand?"

"This tires you, sir," said Atherton.

"Uselessly, you would add. I understand you. You are bent on making yourself a martyr. I have some experience of this form of enthusiasm. Mary has given me a specimen of it. All the natural passions plead in vain to one who considers them as a more precious sacrifice to his principles. Are you listening to what I say?"

"Certainly, sir."

"You know, without my saying it, that I wish my only child to marry," pursued Mr. De Groot. "Otherwise the inheritance of my fathers goes to

strangers. Mary is the first girl in our family for three generations; we have put forth no female scions and the males have run out: my brothers and uncles died young or childless. I think that I have a right to require that *she* shall wed, and transmit our blood, if not our name, to a new stock. I do not ask her to marry a person she cannot love. I am willing to humour all reasonable female fancies. But I saw with pleasure the affection which appeared to have sprung up between her and yourself. Your family, Atherton, was unexceptionable, your character stood high, your talents and knowledge were what I should rather have desired than expected to find, you had sound manly health, and your being poor was a recommendation, as it would make you more entirely my son."

"Miss De Groot is engaged with Father Smith in the next room," observed Alban. "She may overhear what we are saying."

"Shut the door, then."

"I think they would both prefer it were left open, sir, just for the present."

"Oh, very well."

Mr. De Groot remained quiet till the missionary came in to bid him good-night. When the latter was gone, he again requested Atherton to close the

door, and recurred to the subject. Motioning Alban to sit near him, and fixing his eyes on the young man's, he said,

"It is in regard to my daughter that I wish to question you. And I must be plain, for my time is brief. Are you in love with her or not? That you have won her affections is clear enough. What, then, are your intentions?"

Atherton felt strongly inclined to resist this imperious inquisition. The fact was that he had no intentions. But he glanced at Mr. De Groot's pale, anxious face, and felt at the same time pity and a sense of gratitude, which overcame his first impulse of pride.

"It would be great presumption in me to raise my eyes to Miss De Groot," said he.

"I know that," answered her father, impatiently. "But have you presumed?"

"I confess," returned Alban, "that to me she has always been like any other girl — and — I have never checked the admiration she excited, any more than if she had been penniless, or I had been rich."

"Manly! — I like that."

"I love her, but I have never addressed to her a word that implied it," continued Alban, rather haughtily — he scarcely knew why.

"In regard to fortune," said Mr. De Groot, hoarsely,

"I can set your mind at rest. In the first place, I owe my wealth (I may say) to your father. Twenty years ago, when I came to the property, it was greatly involved. The Manor was at nominal rents; the New York farm was unproductive and mortgaged. I offered to sell your father the latter, in order to clear off the incumbrances. He refused, on the ground that if I held on it would make me rich. He did more: he lent me money to improve the estate, which is now, you know, covered with houses, or laid out in city lots, as he then predicted to me, and immensely valuable. So you see there is a justice in your profiting by my wealth," said the Patroon, looking at him kindly, but anxiously.

"My father could not have done otherwise. Your father and he were friends, I have always understood."

"And his son and myself are friends now," continued Mr. De Groot, still very cordially, and almost tenderly. "Oh, this anguish!" murmured he, with an expression of acute pain. "My attack is coming on again."

"This conversation excites you injuriously, my dear sir."

"Never mind that. I want to tell you something more. You must be a little decided with Mary, if you wish to win her. She has got a convent into her head.

But my will is made. If she becomes a nun, she forfeits every thing. You must not let her commit any such folly. Remember, you have my cordial consent to your suit, and I wish you to succeed. Don't let such a girl trifle with you, Atherton, and with her own happiness, too."

"Whatever becomes a man and a Christian I will do," said Alban, earnestly.

"Ah! that is right. At the Virginia Springs the girl played the insensible finely. Suitors fluttered around her, of course, like birds over the unripe fruit-trees. There was one young Marylander, rich, handsome, gallant, of her own faith, who, I thought, would have made an impression upon her. He did not. Alban, it belongs to you to do that, and I am glad of it."

"Do not misunderstand me, sir," said Alban hastily. "I could not interfere with Miss De Groot's vocation, if, indeed, she is really called to the life of religion."

"Then you do not love her after all!" said her father, agitated, yet coldly.

"Not love her!" exclaimed Atherton, with emotion.

"Yes, in the cold New England fashion!—Ah, what ardour Carroll showed! what a noble grief!"

But here Mr. De Groot was seized with a paroxysm that terrified Atherton. He summoned Father Smith.

"He is worse," said the missionary, hastily approaching the bedside. "I feared the effect of these conversations. But he would——"

"Vincent must be called," said Atherton.

"True. Franois should have been here to carry the message, but he is watching at the sacristy door. You do not know the old man's cabin. I will go for him."

So saying, the priest sallied forth in quest of the old Indian, leaving Alban to watch the patient till his return.

CHAPTER XVI.

Among the goddés high it is affirmed,
And by etern word written and confirmed,
Thou shalt be wedded unto one of tho'
That have for thee so muchel care and wo.

Knight's Tale.

THE scene in the sick room, where Alban remained alone, was terrible. The good missionary's anxiety to keep Mr. De Groot from being agitated was now explained. It was no other than a disease, probably an inflammation, of the spinal cord, which had seized this intellectual man. The ultimate origin, doubtless, had been nervous excitement, developing in a low fever; but the immediate cause was a cold taken by exposure when hunting with Duncan at Racket.

A philosopher convulsed! It contained a simple, yet pregnant lesson. What mocking power, derisive of the dignity of man, controls those muscles, — as the imprisoned steam, in the effort to escape, throws the iron limbs of the engine into a seeming agony of

labour! What unseen and merciless organ-blower educes from that heaving chest and strangely-fixed throat those dissonant cries in place of their wonted flowing eloquence! Where is now that sovereign and piercing intelligence of the noble eyes? Rolling at random are the masterless orbs, turning up their white spheres in a ghastly style. So violent was the spasm, that the sufferer would have been thrown out of bed but for Atherton's vigorous aid. There may be no such thing as punishment, nature herself now says to thee, O mighty speculatist! — but assuredly there is such a thing as suffering, even in the world of the All-good. If in this world, why not in the next?

However, it lasted but a short time. A remission soon declared itself. The limbs relaxed; the frame, which had been elevated in a stiff arch, sank down; the eye recovered its lustre, and passed, though enfeebled, under the control of its owner's will and intelligence. The first use which Mr. De Groot made of speech was to breathe his daughter's name.

“Call Mary, — call her!”

It was not till this request had been repeated, and with a reproachful glance at the young man, that Alban, somewhat reluctantly, obeyed. Crossing the vacant intervening apartment, he tapped at the ladies' door. Despite the gravity of the circumstances, his

heart beat with a violent timidity at approaching so sacred a locality as the bower of the maiden he loved. There was no answer, and he tapped again, louder. A light step bounded to the door.

"Who is there?" asked a voice like the silver striking of a clock.

"Your father is worse and asks for you," responded the deep and manly accent.

"I come," said the maiden.

In an incredibly brief time Mary appeared; but the remission had already gone off; she arrived only to witness a repetition of the same frightful paroxysm which we have already described. Again the frame of the sufferer became rigid, with a suddenness and violence of muscular contraction that threw him half out of bed as before; again he uttered senseless cries, and his eyes rolled in blank and ghastly circles.

"Oh! is my father dying?" said she, trembling, and kneeling down by the low bedside.

"I hope not yet."

"Where is Father Smith?"

"Gone for Vincent."

The paroxysm was soon spent, yet it seemed an age to those who watched it. Atherton noticed that the remission was less perfect, and that Mr. De Groot's ever-commanding eye, in particular, did not regain all

its lucid and beaming intelligence as before. He looked at them, however, and spoke.

“Mary!”

“My dear father!”

“That partnership—I want it settled,” he replied.

“Sir?”

“It must be a joint-stock concern,” said he, looking at her painfully.

“He wanders, Mr. Alban,” whispered she.

“I mean that co-partnership—I spoke of it to both the——parties,” said her father, in evident distress for words;—“you must be a partner”—he was plainly searching his memory for an expression to convey his meaning.

Both, no doubt, understood perfectly what he intended, yet neither could help him out. Of course the daughter could not; and the young man was withheld by many feelings, but chiefly by an irresistible sense of shame, very natural to youth.

“My dear father,” said Mary, “try to remember that *God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may have life everlasting.*”

She spoke softly, but bent her eyes steadily and brightly upon his.

“Yes; you and he—” glancing at Atherton—

"have both taken shares in that stock — I dare say it is good — I never — speculated in any thing — of that description," answered her father. — "But you must — join together — one interest —"

The convulsion was already travelling onward again like a returning wave that dashes higher than its predecessor on a tide-vexed beach. In a moment all sense and self-control were submerged, as the breath of a bather is taken away by the wild onset of the surf.

Father Smith did not return till he came in supporting old Vincent. The old man tottered to the bedside, and applied his trembling fingers to the patient's wrist. Alban and Mary exchanged glances which expressed how little confidence they felt in that superannuated Indian, whose form bent nearly double with age, his partial deafness and wild mass of matted hair, gave him an appearance of savage decrepitude rather than of venerable wisdom. Vincent, however, as soon as the paroxysm was over, administered a draught which Mr. De Groot took submissively. It was *Lobelia*, and was followed by its characteristic symptoms of instantaneous vomiting and complete relaxation. Supported during the first by his daughter and Alban, when it was over, Mr. De Groot sank back upon his pillow, utterly prostrate.

But the effect upon the spasms was immediate and marvellous. They never returned after he took the draught, and in about twenty minutes he slept.

As soon as this occurred, the missionary retired forthwith to the outer room and threw himself upon his mat. Old Vincent, too, hobbled into the same apartment and lay down in a corner, folding his blanket around him. Alban and Mary De Groot remained by her father's side.

Alban observed his companion, whose eyes were bent on her father. Her face was flushed with excitement of an unusual character. Mary's lips were beautifully formed but remarkably full, and her mouth was noble and expressive rather than delicate like Jane's. Ordinarily, the full orb and dark gray iris of her beautiful eye expressed thought rather than feeling; — but that sibylline glance was sometimes exchanged in a moment for a lambent fire of female softness, the more difficult to resist because unexpected. It was one of the latter glances that she suddenly, and evidently for some time unconsciously, gave Alban. She had dressed in haste, in the dark, and under the stimulus of alarm. As she sat, bending forward, upon the side of the couch opposite to Alban, many a slight mark of this negligence was visible, that would have been ungraceful in another, but added a charm to her.

Her raven tresses, put carelessly back, half hiding her ears, and otherwise considerably disordered, might yet have been so arranged for their mere flowing and massive beauty at the wish of a sculptor. The neck, hidden by neither collar nor kerchief, by its fine turn and snowy whiteness, carried out this inevitable suggestion of a piece of noble statuary; and the scantier flow of her garments showed more purely the wave-like, unexaggerated outline of that form so bending, modest, and virgin-like.

If the father, emaciated by disease, and prostrated by the energetic poison of the Indian leaf, was an image of death, the daughter, sitting on his low couch, as if that picturesque contrast had been designed by the ever-working, viewless Artist whom men call chance, and gods call Providence, was no less an image of young and graceful life.

Atherton was deeply agitated by her singular, unconscious gaze, although he would not have disturbed her in it for the world: as when a yearling doe (for this happens to all creatures whose instinct is flight) is surprised by one roving the forest, she gazes at him at first steadfastly with her soft, dark eyes in a sort of dream, and he fears to move, knowing that the first step, or a hand put forth, will cause her to spring, startled, into the forest. So the scene

grew every moment more still and quiet, till Alban could almost hear the beating of his own heart.

It might well be that some of this beauty was subjective, growing out of the deep moral tenderness and inward worship of the gazer; another might have perceived only a pretty girl enough, not so neatly dressed as usual, where Alban saw a loveliness and majesty half celestial, and a decorum beyond criticism; and it was certain that, while his veneration for her, put to this test, was raised to its greatest height, his passion was so too, and his manly courage. He thought in his impassioned revery that he saw the hand of Heaven beckoning him on. Every night, for three successive days, it had been as if an angel had brought this maiden to him, as Eve was brought to Adam by his Creator, and at last a voice had spoken by human lips, and bidden him take her, for she was his. Youth is full of illusions, but it might be pious to think that this was not one altogether, since not a hair of our heads but is numbered, and falls in its time as surely as the empire of centuries.

Coming to herself with a slight start, Mary withdrew her glance from Atherton, and saying, with some embarrassment, that her father being so quiet now, her presence was no longer required, but that Mr. Atherton could call her again if it should be necessary,

rose, not without an air of deep modesty. She was obliged to pass him. He sprang up and intercepted her, seizing her hand.

"You must not go," he exclaimed, with an odd mixture of peremptoriness and diffidence, "till you have consented to what your father requires."

"I *must* not go!" she repeated with astonishment.

"Must not, and shall not," he answered with increasing hardihood. "Nay, I must not hurt this soft hand!"—He threw his arms dexterously round her waist and held her imprisoned fast.

"This from you! Fie! Alban, release me this instant!"

"Certainly not."

"Why, what does it mean?"

"Ah, Mary, you know what it means as well as I. I love you. But I do not plead that now. I point to your father, and claim you in the name of filial duty. If you wish him to recover, you must set his mind at rest on this point. You understood him very well to-night; you knew all about it before."

She was perfectly passive, but hung down her head as if ashamed. She even wept.

"Will you make me guilty of treachery to my friend?"

"Jane? She is my sister. A sacred horror fills

me at the bare thought of loving her otherwise. Besides, I have made a vow never to marry an alien in faith: — *long since I made it, when I deemed you were in a cloister.*”

“Good Heaven!” she cried, with a crimson blush, turning to him with infinite spirit, and very nearly disengaging herself. — “Let me go, Alban, or you will force me to take a vow for which you will be sorry.”

“You will not be so rash, I am sure, as to take a vow without the advice of a director,” replied he, with a mocking smile.

“Utter nothing rashly,” said a voice behind them.

Both looked back, and Mary instinctively turned to Alban, with a quick motion, as if she were about to hide her face in his bosom. The missionary stood in the door-way, with folded arms, and eyes fixed on the ground.

“Utter nothing rashly, my daughter. And do you, Mr. Atherton, release this young lady, whose modesty suffers by your rude constraint.”

The Jesuit spoke with that authority which they say the priest never loses, and Mary gave a little start, as if expecting to be immediately released. But the blood of all his Puritan sires boiled in young Atherton's veins, and they were prouder than Castilians, calm as Indian Sachems. He was flushed, too,

with the consciousness of successful love — for every word — every movement — of Mary's had unwittingly betrayed her affection — and strong in her father's dying wish. Instead of releasing her, he seated himself defyingly in the one wicker chair which the room contained, and drew her down upon his knee, in spite of her bashful resistance.

"Alban — this is really unkind — in the presence of another! For shame, Alban, unclasp me."

"Shame and you cannot come together," replied Alban, tenderly.

"You disobey Father Smith!" she exclaimed.

"In the presence of the father who begat you, and who gave you to me, no man shall take you from my arms," whispered Atherton: — "least of all a religious, who dare not touch you, even to save, nor, gray-haired as he is, lift his eyes to you now. *I dare,*" he added, triumphantly tightening that gentle but irresistible embrace which took away all her strength, moral as well as physical. "For I know that your heart is mine, nor do you deny it; and that only plea which you urge for refusing me your troth, is generous, no doubt — noble and unselfish — but one that I cannot admit for a moment."

"It is not the only one," she murmured. "Can I do what Mr. Atherton asks?" she said, addressing

the missionary in an humbled voice, and turning her head slightly towards him.

“Of course. That is — you are bound by no vow?” added the Jesuit cautiously.

“But to disregard what may have been inspirations of grace, father?”

“The will of God is more clearly declared by His providence than by such interior movements, which may proceed from nature after all, or even be illusions of Satan, to inflate us with pride and procure our fall,” said the missionary, with a shade of sternness.

“Fain would I have decided this in retirement — with prayer and wise counsel,” said Mary, glancing at her father’s pallid face, all whitely-dark upon the whiter pillows.

“Every such promise,” said the priest with emphasis, “implies the condition that you do not afterwards elect a higher state. You may safely give it, therefore, my daughter, if, apart from that holy aspiration of yours, you are willing to obey your father.”

“Of course I am,” she replied. “Now, Mr. Alban” — speaking low, “for mercy’s sake, let me go.”

He kissed her so softly that she was barely conscious of it, and released her. She fled with precipitation.

CHAPTER XVII.

The principle and foundation is, that man was created to know, praise, and serve God, and, by so doing, to gain eternal life for himself.

Spiritual Exercises.

“PECCAVI?” said the young man, in a half-penitent tone.

“*Vere peccâsti, fili mi,*” replied the priest, with a slight, grave smile. “May He pardon you who knows our fragility.”

“Tell me as a friend wherein I have sinned.”

“As a friend I have no cognizance of the affair,” replied the Jesuit.

“As a director then,” answered Alban, with humility.

“Your rashness, my son, may have spoiled a saint. A firmer soul, or one more resolute to mortify her own will, I have almost never known in a neophyte.”

“In the marriage state also she may aspire after that perfection,” replied the young man.

“No doubt there will be room for it,” answered the Jesuit, smiling again.

“I would never have interfered with a divine vocation,” said the young man, “but when I found that she was not insensible to love—”

“That proves nothing,” interrupted the missionary, with some quickness—“nothing against her vocation. There is no conceivable weakness on the side of nature, but consists with a true vocation, if God supply the necessary grace.”

“I am aware, father, that we may be called to renounce our dearest affections—but I thought I perceived that generosity towards another, not a pure aspiration after a more perfect state, was the source of Mary’s resistance. Then I felt warranted in exerting a gentle violence in pleading the claim which her father’s choice had given me. If she had felt that I wronged her, she might have escaped—yes—at any moment.”

“In a very few years all these earthly loves will be over, and if you are so happy as to reach Heaven, a long vista of bliss in the enjoyment of God himself will lie before you:—these things will appear very insignificant to you then,” said the priest, laying his hand on the young man’s shoulder.

“But we are on the earth now,” replied Alban,

“and after all, it seems that Miss De Groot has still the right to seek the cloister, if she is really called to it.”

“Had she pledged you her faith at the altar, she would still possess that right, my young friend. So long as she is but *promised*, not *rendered*,” added the priest with emphasis, “she may elect to give herself to the Lord. Remember that, my son!”

“I will,” answered the youth, with spirit. “At the same time, I am not sorry for having evinced to her a manly ardour, which I entirely felt.”

“Well, I do not think there was any sin in *that*,” replied the Jesuit.

But when the next day Atherton signified his desire to use the present opportunity of advancing beyond the threshold, where a singular Providence had so long detained him, the good father interposed a caution.

“Your wish is laudable — certainly you stand in need of all the graces which our good God is ready to bestow — but this is a great step. It imports greatly to your spiritual welfare that you should take it with a soul fully purified from the dross of earthly desires, and fitted by divine contemplation to breathe the air of Heaven, which, in no figurative sense, you will then respire. I would advise you to make a

little retreat from the society of your friends, and pass a few days in meditation and prayer."

"Most willingly," said Atherton, "provided I need not desert my nightly post by our patient's side."

"That need not interfere with this holy preparation," replied the Jesuit. "Rather it is in perfect accordance with the ideas of our holy father, Ignatius, that all the mere outward circumstances of retreat be dispensed with, if occasion serves. You may even meditate with peculiar profit by the bedside of a sick, and perhaps dying man; and during the day, some portion of which you will need for repose, I can secure you as perfect a seclusion as you may desire."

In fine, this was carried into effect. At a distance of half a mile from the mission-house, in a grove overlooking the lake, stood a lonely cabin which had been for a long time uninhabited. The walk leading to it was secluded, lying first over the hillocked burying-ground of the tribe, then through a thick wood, and lastly along the lake shore. It was here that Alban took up his quarters during the day. His meals were brought to him by an Indian boy. He came to the mission only at night, where he saw no one but Mr. De Groot and the missionary.

Mr. De Groot had generally as many as two paroxysms of his terrible nervous disorder during the

twenty-four hours; and they occurred almost invariably in the night; but Alban's assistance was all that he now required, or even admitted. Old Vincent's practice was simple; at every recurrence of the frightful spasms, he heroically increased the dose of the powerful agent by which he had once succeeded in controlling them, and thus procured a remission for the time, although the patient's strength grew daily less. It was in this awful sick-room that Alban made the meditations on Death and Judgment, and the State of the Lost—those great certainties, the former two of which must happen to all, sooner or later, and the last of which may be the portion of any one, for aught he knows. (But it is not our intention to follow our hero through the course of this celebrated discipline—the *Organon* of the Will, as it may be termed—the spiritual geometry of LOYOLA, by which the mind is truly purified from its idols, the passions are calmed, and the voice of God is made audible in the soul.

The purgative and lustral efficacy of meditation and solitude was admitted even by the Pagans; but the acts and sufferings of the Man-God, the ineffable sweetness of His human character, and the infinite majesty of His divine one, alone furnish the matter on which this truly spiritual exercise can be employed,

so as to transform and sanctify the heart. We are strongly persuaded that many — many — of our Protestant friends are so sincerely desirous of loving God, that if they could only know what a retreat is, they would immediately seek admission to a Church which alone possesses or knows how to use so powerful a means of grace.

While Atherton was thus in retreat, our fair friends (to whom we must needs return) never saw him, unless we may except the passing and involuntary glimpse which Mary had of him at mass.

The latter was with her father nearly all day — for occasionally he would send her away for exercise, when Margaret took her place, apparently to Mr. De Groot's great content. There was this peculiarity in his disorder, that he suffered from it most at night, the day being comparatively a period of remission. Certainly, one would have supposed that the cares and society of his daughter would have been welcome to him in these hours, if in any; yet it was evident that he rather suffered than enjoyed her presence. Nevertheless, he was nervous if he missed her at the hour when she ought to appear, but as soon as he was satisfied of her being in the mission, he really seemed to prefer that she should be out of his sight. Some of her attitudes and movements around the room,

or near his bed, appeared to annoy or startle him more than others. Many sick persons are singularly fastidious on this head, especially those afflicted with nervous diseases; but it is commonly some want of grace, some angularity of posture, some awkward or hurried motion, that offends them. What displeased (if it was displeasure) or at all events disagreeably affected her father in Mary De Groot, was, on the contrary, a singular and characteristic elegance in her manner of sitting by his bedside, a noble turn of the head, if some slight noise attracted, or some one addressed her, or the virgin grace of motion that bore her to the table to get something that he wanted, or brought her to his side if he called. Moreover, at that time our young ladies had not learned to supply, by means mysterious to us, the absence of a charm which in other climes all-bounteous Nature has bestowed upon the earliest period of womanhood; but Mary De Groot, though slim, straight, and elegant in figure, inherited with the recent Milesian and Provençal blood that flowed in her veins, a richer gift of form than her American ancestry would have secured, so that, as the bud suggests the rose, she might naturally remind her father of her at whose breast in infancy she hung, and seemed involuntarily to announce herself as the brooding songstress of some

future nest, charming the heart of her mate and giving food to her little ones. And this certainly should have pleased him; yet, in fact, it filled him, as we say, with a strange trouble. But nothing annoyed, or more accurately, frightened him more than to hear her once speak French to Father Smith, whose native language it was, calling him simply, "*Mon père.*"

"My child!" he exclaimed, in a strange agitation, "Never do that!"

Mary herself was pensive, in despite of a certain happiness which must have coloured the existence of a girl just betrothed to one that she loved. It was an agitated kind of happiness, no doubt, mixed with many fears, and these did not proceed altogether from the ordinary source. A generous purpose, which she had entertained from the first rencontre with the two cousins at Lake Pheasant, in the outset of her journey, was still in her mind.

The absence of her cousin, and the sick-room occupations of her friend, left Jane quite alone, except when Mary came out for her daily walk, at her father's bidding. For Jane of course accompanied her, and of the two seemed most glad. The third day, (it was Saturday,) they wandered further than usual, for Mary had been sent forth at an earlier hour, and the afternoon was beautifully soft. They made a circuit

by some fields of yellow stubble, all flickering with *high-lows*, and through a bit of woods alive with woodpeckers and squirrels; they flirred away some partridges, in crossing a long reach of marshy ground, thick with bushes; then they came upon a region of tall blackberry bushes, but all stripped of their fruit by the frost. Jane enjoyed this walk, which seemed easy after their recent experience.

On the edge of the prairie, where the grove of cedars swept away in a half-moon shape, they sat down on a log to rest, and Mary told Jane of her engagement, who fairly fainted.

Mary prevented her from falling, and laid her gently down in the grass. A spring gurgled near. In the forest one is seldom wanting. Mary ran and filled her hands with water. She succeeded in bringing enough to dash on her friend's face. She loosened the belt of her brown linen habit.

"You must think me completely treacherous," cried Mary De Groot, as soon as her friend was sufficiently recovered to listen to her. "You have fallen a sacrifice, Jane, to Alban's principles. You are a great deal more captivating than I am, and he feels it, I am sure. Had you been a Catholic, and not his cousin, I should have had no chance."

At first Jane regarded her with looks of passionate

aversion, then burst into tears, hid her face, and implored her to keep her secret.

"I am a woman," said Mary, "and have some regard for the honour of my sex."

"He already knows," said Jane, wildly.

"That you like him," answered her rival caressingly. "But that is nothing. Alban has no idea, I am sure, of the possible strength of our feelings in such a case."

"At least you love him?—You will confess it now," said Jane, turning away her face.

"I share that weakness with you," replied Mary, blushing.

"Three days ago you denied it."

"I only denied being jealous of you."

"You knew you had no reason!" said Jane, bitterly.

"Nay! I was not so vain. But I sincerely preferred your happiness to my own. It was really so. My purpose in saying what I did, was to warn you of the precipice on which you were playing, unless you opened your mind to the claims of our faith. I had firmly resolved not to be your rival, but every moment, involuntarily, I was one."

"You always claim for yourself a generosity which is impossible," cried Jane, rising and seating

herself upon the log again, with an air of infinite haughtiness.

“Oh, yes! it is possible,” Mary answered, leaning against the great cedar trunk, with a simple and engaging composure. “Love is every thing to you. To me it ought to be very little. According to my faith, the life of the cloistered nun is the highest destiny of woman. If, by an act of perfect abnegation, I could gain the grace to see my vocation to it clear, I should be truly happy. And, besides, I love you dearly—though you hate me, of course, dear Jane:—I know you do.”

“Every word of yours is a stab,” said Jane.

“I do not mean it. I don’t say these things to triumph over you. God is my witness that if my resigning Alban, and taking the veil, would secure your happiness,—so far as the first goes, I am ready to do it now.”

“You would go into a convent in order to leave your betrothed to another! You do not expect me to believe that!” cried Jane, with irritation.

“I did not say that precisely,” answered Mary De Groot. “I cannot make a religious profession without a higher motive than pity for a rival or generosity to a friend; but my own personal happiness I am willing to give up. I would cede my own rights, if I could,

and make you happy. I see that you do not believe it."

Jane shook her head incredulously.

"You are my friend and my sister," pursued Mary, "and I know what belongs to that character. We have laid our heads on the same rough pillow in the wild forest—why doubt that I would suffer any thing rather than rob you of quiet, happy sleep, and make you shed bitter tears in secret? Do I not know what it is?"

"You!"

"Yes. Think you my attachment to your cousin is of no older date than our forest journey? Yet I chose you to be my companion, although I saw you were a rival, and felt how dangerous a one. And I did not love you then as I do now, Jane. Did I not yield to you on all occasions, till to do so longer would have seemed—yes, would have been—a deeper coquetry? Have I taken advantage of your being a Protestant? I assure you, on the honour of a maiden, that when Alban declared his attachment, I would not listen to him at all, until he said that he had made a vow never to marry an alien in faith. Could I do more?"

"You have been very fair and generous," said Jane, convinced in spite of herself. "But I did not

believe that Alban could be so bigoted," added she, resentfully.

"It is not bigotry:—it is good sense and good principle, as you yourself will allow, if you reflect," replied Mary, with a sweet firmness, seeing that Jane was now come to the point where she could bear to hear the truth.

Jane did not dispute on this question.

"What are these strong affections given us for?" pursued her friend.

"To make us unhappy!" said Jane, bursting into tears.

"Well, it is not just to make us happy — that's certain. I have been asking myself the question these last two days. I always had the impression before, that if I ever married, it would be either because I was in love, or because papa so much wished it. But these are not good reasons after all, it seems to me, unless being married is going to promote our spiritual good, and that of others — don't you think?"

"Certainly," said Jane, with great indifference.

"How then can it be well to be married to one who instead of helping you to practise your religion (which I take for granted is true) is likely to lead you astray from it? And then the *others*, for whose sake, the catechism tells us, this holy state was instituted, how

can they," she continued, too innocent to blush — "how can they — be brought up *in the discipline and correction of the Lord*, by parents who are not agreed what that discipline *is*, who don't believe the same faith, nor receive the same sacraments, nor frequent the same church, nor read in the same Bible! Think of my own father and mother. Why! it does seem to me perfectly absurd."

Jane smiled in spite of herself: — "I never thought of it," said she, "in that serious light."

"But is not that the true light in which to view it? Is it not degrading to live in an union defrauded thus of its real, holy end?"

"I have never looked so far ahead," said Jane.

"Nor I, before these last two days. I must own that I have been thinking a good deal, in that interval, of the reasons why Alban ought not to marry you, dear Jane. But if those reasons were away, I could easily resolve to forego the fleeting joys of this life" — striking her breast quickly — her old familiar gesture when deeply moved — "and seek my whole happiness in God."

"But while those reasons continue," said Jane, with an undefinable expression, "you will not for any other motive draw back from your engagement?"

"Ah! I — love Alban!" answered Mary De Groot,

bending down with a timid movement, and hiding her face in her hands.

“You are *plighted* to him, too!” said Jane, rather severely. “Is that nothing, in your opinion?”

“Nothing,” said Mary, quickly, “against the call of Heaven.”

“What then has he gained by your promise?”

“What has he gained?” repeated Mary, looking up with a wondering expression and a deep blush. “It seems to me that he has gained *every thing!*”

Jane wept again. The noble style of Mary's thoughts deeply convinced her how hopeless had been the struggle with such a rival — so much worthier (she said) of Alban than herself. The simplicity of a young girl and the tenderness of a woman blended, too, so strangely with the intellectual vigour that she had always noticed in Mary De Groot, and with her inexplicable force of will. Mary, in truth, was but half-formed yet — but the elements of the noblest and most captivating female character were already discernible in hers. The devoted daughter, the generous friend, the tender mistress, and the heroic Christian, were all there — undeveloped and unharmonized, but each true to its type.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Behold in garments gay with gold
 For other spousals wrought,
 The Maiden from her father's house
 With bridal pomp is brought.

All for Love.

THE rapid course of events had not so much pity as moved the generous heart of Mary De Groot. On Sunday morning (the fourth day from their arrival) the mass was late — for the Indians came from a distance in the forest — and Jane went. The forest church was crowded, and with difficulty were the family from the mission-house accommodated with places close to the rails. And lo! before the service began, but in presence of the swarthy congregation already assembled, Alban, introduced into the sanctuary, made his public abjuration of the errors of Protestantism. Afterwards, in the midst of the sacred pomp of the mass, — for the Indians performed the music of a great French composer of a century and

a half before, with wonderful accuracy — at the usual time, he received the pledge of communion. It affected Jane deeply. The acolytes, with sparkling torches, that surrounded the priest, the rich vestments of the latter, the bell, the low words, the white linen reverently extended, the bent heads of the children of the forest, the rapt expression of Alban and some others who received, the pervading religious awe and firm belief, united to form an impression of the presence of the God of Israel under a new veil, with lingering fears of an idolatrous ceremonial. The fervours and the formalities which she witnessed alike perplexed her. Was it, then, a portion of the skies let down to earth, or an extension of the old domain of heathendom? She was completely lost. The old certainties had been swept away, as by a flood whereon she floated as on a wreck.

A few more days elapsed, and the termination of Alban's retreat restored him again to their society. Mr. De Groot, who was failing rapidly, became anxious that the engagement between his daughter and young Atherton should be carried into immediate effect. Jane's heart died within her when Mary informed her that this question had been raised, and was left to Alban's decision.

“You see now that my promise was something

real," said Mary De Groot, who, of course, wept: and Jane, with white lips, kissed away her tears.

The decision, however, was different from their expectations. It might be that in his retreat a change had come over the spirit of young Atherton's dream, or it might be merely that his calm judgment prevailed over the eagerness of youth, or that he marked the extreme paleness of his intended bride in leaving the decision to him, or he might have been wholly influenced by the motives which he assigned, which were that he was under age, that his parents were unacquainted with his engagement, and that he could not marry to become dependent on his father-in-law. Mr. De Groot set aside these objections with his usual skill. Atherton, he observed, would be of age in a month or two; his father, he knew, was very anxious that his son's attachment to his (Mr. De Groot's) daughter should not miscarry; and the unpleasant situation in which Mary would be left was a sufficient excuse for neglecting some formalities: as to the dependence, his own death would soon put his son-in-law in possession of ample means. It was very difficult to resist this wish of a father to see his daughter's marriage accomplished before he breathed his last and left her among strangers in a wilderness, under the sole protection of her lover.

To satisfy Mr. De Groot, Alban proposed that they should be espoused according to the Roman rite, which Father Smith had suggested was in use among the Indians; Mary said — “O my dear father! let it be so!” — and Mr. De Groot, not without a kind sneer at the young man’s frigidity, acquiesced.

The ceremony took place on the following day. The Indian girls decked Mary’s hair with the latest blooming flowers, of which a few yet lingered in the garden of the mission, and made her wear it on her shoulders in their own fashion. They invested her (for she had no festive dress of her own) with one of their tunics of crimson cloth, embroidered, like its blue *gä-kä-ah*, or skirt, with the richest wampum, and over it threw one of their square blue mantles, or blankets, having a deep border of the same brilliant work. Her shoes also being worn out, they supplied her with tawny moccasins worked in gold beads; and rich pantalets of crimson cloth, fringed and profusely embroidered in the same style, fell over her ankles.

Mary submitted with an indifferent good grace to be thus bedizened, finding that it pleased her Indian friends, who, after all, were the society of Cedar Lake. She looked very beautiful and imposing in the costume, — which belonged alone to the daughters of the highest chiefs: her rich and clear complexion, deepened by

the sun, and her black hair floating in massy waves over the embroidered mantle, consorted well with the vivid colours prized by the Indian maids. The ceremony was almost a mortal blow to Jane; the promise interchanged was absolute; and the solemnity seemed little less than their nuptials.

While the Indian girls were adorning Mary for her espousals, Madeleine, and a sister of hers named Catharine, talked to her of a virgin saint of their own nation, the martyr at once of faith and purity, who had suffered in the heathen times the most cruel torments for Christ, and whose grave (the object of frequent pilgrimages by the women of the tribe) was some thirty or forty miles distant in the forest. Madeleine had often before spoken of this native St. Catharine, and of the miracles wrought by her intercession in the cure of hopeless disease. But now all the Indian girls said that if the espoused Marie would make a pilgrimage to the grave of the virgin Catharine, perform the customary penance, and bring thence to her father a bottle of water from the hallowed spring in which the martyr's blood had been mingled and drunk by her murderers, it would certainly restore him.

They urged it so much that she mentioned it to Father Smith.

“It may be that miraculous cures have been

wrought through the influence of this martyr's prayers," replied the priest. "Mind, I say, *it may be*. There is a case of one of our fathers, apparently well attested, and the traditions of the tribe (if you trust them) speak of many besides. At the same time, my dear child, I doubt the propriety of your making such a pilgrimage just now."

A natural shame prevented her from urging a proposal that seemed enthusiastic. But a day or two after, her father having failed steadily, and a deep anxiety about him having taken possession of all, she recurred to the subject again.

"I am not of that use to my father which I expected," said the young lady. "He is annoyed, even in his present state of weakness, if I attempt to take any of Margaret's duties about him to myself. He often sends me away. Particularly now that Mr. Atherton is here in the day-time, I feel myself almost an intruder."

"What do you infer?"

"Am I not purposely left at liberty to try this means of which our friends here think so highly?"

"You know not what you ask."

"Yes, I know."

"Then you know why I cannot approve it. These severities are not for you, my daughter."

"Yet I must do something for my father," replied Mary with a sudden and unexpected burst of grief.

"Be contented, my daughter, with the inaction which Providence, not your own will, imposes, and which leaves you at liberty for prayer."

"What is prayer without action?" said Mary. "Pardon me, father, but I think you are secretly of my opinion — that I ought to leave my father's bedside for a few days, to make this pilgrimage for his recovery."

The missionary made no answer, and Miss De Groot was obliged to rest content, obedience being the first condition of merit.

She had already commenced a novena to the Blessed Virgin and St. Raphael, whose feast occurred at this time. St. Raphael was the patron of travellers, and it was by him that the father of Tobias was cured. Father Smith highly approved of the novena, and had engaged the whole village to join in it. The Indians had great faith in the efficacy of prayer, but they also thought that a visit to the grave of their own martyr ought not to be omitted. On coming out from the exercises of the novena, which were held in the chapel at evening prayer, all the old women surrounded Mary and urged her to make the pilgrimage.

"I can scarcely expect my prayers to be answered,"

thought she, "if I neglect a means in which these simple people put so much faith. What can I do to prevail on Father Smith?"

One day Atherton was sitting as usual in Mr. De Groot's room, when Mary came in, and, contrary to her custom for the last two or three days, seated herself. Alban was a good deal blanched by the confinement, and from the effect of his retreat. Mary was struck with his paleness. About four days had elapsed since their espousals, and she had not often looked at her betrothed. From the effect of the stupifying drugs which Vincent was now obliged to give, and from weakness, her father dozed. The young spouses passed a half hour (as they had many before) in perfect silence.

"Do you think papa is any better?" asked Mary at last.

"The spasms are less frequent and less violent, but he is more exhausted by them."

"Are the medicines doing him any good?"

"They control the spasms."

"But they return — the spasms return; and his strength is almost gone."

"It is very true."

There was a pause.

"I fear I shall disturb papa if I talk."

“Not at all,” said Atherton, turning to her. “He takes no notice now, even when awake.”

“Does he ever say any thing to you about the future, Mr. Alban? — the future life, I mean.”

“He says that as he came from the hands of his Maker, so he will return, — that God is the Father, and Eternity the home, of the spirit, and so on.”

“He will die so,” said Mary, with emotion.

“I fear he will.”

“And what then, Mr. Alban?”

“*He that believeth not shall be condemned, and there is no other name under Heaven, whereby we must be saved, but that of Jesus Christ.*”

“Those very words are always ringing in my ear,” said Mary. “In a few days — a few days — the fate of my father and your friend will be fixed for ever.”

“What can be done?” said Alban, gently. “Your father has a perfectly clear apprehension of the principle on which salvation is offered in the Gospel, and he rejects it as unworthy of his ideas of God.”

“God alone can change his heart, I know, but then we must do every thing in our power. And it seems to me that we are doing nothing so long as we leave one reasonable expedient untried,” said the young girl.

“You mean something, Mary, — what is it?”

She told him about the Indian saint — briefly but warmly. She kindled with enthusiasm as she expressed the conviction that God would have regard to the honour paid, with a simple heart, to a servant who had hallowed this spot by her life and her death.

“But what would you do?” demanded Atherton, with a very peculiar glance of his hollow, but brilliant blue eye, scanning her from head to foot.

“They want me to make a pilgrimage to her tomb.”

“And leave your father?”

“You are — his son, and dearer to him, perhaps, than I am. He will not miss me.”

“It is true that you will neglect no other office of filial love by performing this; for he suffers you to do nothing for him; — with what obstinacy he adheres to that, I have often been astonished to see,” observed Alban thoughtfully.

“Nay,” pursued Mary, with unusual boldness, “I have sometimes thought that the sight of me brought on his attack.”

“It has looked like it certainly — if the thing were not incredible.”

“Who knows but that it is intended I shall be free to do this very thing?”

"It is possible," said the youth.

"Then you consent to my going?" said she, joyfully.

"I!" said Alban, his paleness yielding to a sudden flush.

"Two of the girls will accompany me. You know that I am a very good walker. It is thought we can return by the third day."

"I do not presume to think that my consent is necessary. What does Father Smith say? Does he approve it?"

"Armed with your approbation, I think I can easily obtain his consent."

"If the Indian girls are accustomed to make this pilgrimage, there can, of course, be no real danger in it, for they are carefully looked to."

"The pilgrimage is performed by them with some austere circumstances, I ought to say," observed Mary in a candid tone.

"Ah!" said he, with a quick look of love.

To expose Mary to hardship was a penance almost infinitely more severe than to take it upon himself. Mr. De Groot's seeming perversity in checking her efforts to be of use in his sick room Atherton had never regretted, for the very reason that it saved her, at some expense of feeling, no doubt, from a confinement

so depressing,—and even more than that. Those frightful spasms, which occurred more frequently than she was at all aware, were a perpetual strain upon the nervous system of the beholder, that a female organization was ill adapted to bear.

“If we undertake to propitiate Heaven by penance, the rudeness of physical suffering cannot be avoided,” said he at last, breaking the silence which these reflections had occupied.

“Of course not,” said Mary.

“You would not take the guides with you, I suppose?”

“If I go, I must have no companions but those of my own sex,” the young lady replied.

“If you go, pray for me as well as for your father, at the tomb of the martyr, and may your prayers be as efficacious as they are pure.”

Alban's consent, in whatever spirit given, having been thus obtained, it seemed that Mary contrived to overcome the objections of Father Smith. For on the second morning after, her father having meanwhile failed with alarming rapidity, Miss De Groot was missing at breakfast, and Jane said in answer to Alban's inquiries, that she had gone away at least an hour before day, with the Indian girl Catherine. He was surprised at this choice of a companion, for Catherine

was only fifteen, and questioned Madeleine on the subject, who answered coldly and briefly. On pressing the matter, he found that Madeleine had refused to accompany Miss De Groot, because the latter wished to take Mrs. Duncan, to whom the proud young Indian objected, first as an heretic, and then as a married woman. She deemed that the pilgrimage should be made by the young affianced, with companions in unbound tresses, after the fashion of the forest maids.

The young squaw's objection had seemed superstitious and uncharitable to Miss De Groot. Mary had occupied her leisure at Cedar Lake in teaching the wife of the trapper the elements of Christian Faith. Compassion, indeed, rather than the need of her services, had induced Mary to retain Mrs. Duncan after her husband's departure. At the same time she made the latter teach her in turn some of her own wild accomplishments. Mrs. Duncan could ride the half-wild horses of the Indians without saddle or bridle, spring over a fallen tree lying half her height, without touching hand or foot, and swim above or under water — which the squaws themselves could not. When Mary was driven from her father's room, having no in-door resources at the Indian village, she spent much of the time, particularly the fine afternoons, in the open air with Mrs. Duncan. Being already a fearless horse-

woman, she soon learned, after the latter's example, to ride a spirited horse on the prairie, holding on by the mane alone. With a steady brain and ready foot, she could presently cross a stream on a slender and springing tree-stem thrown across; or bound over a trunk that lay in her path, without disarranging her flowing garments. After this severe exercise, (in which, perhaps, there mingled some thought of conforming to her father's idea of a complete physical training, and a feeling that she was pleasing him in some way,) heated, but not fatigued, she bathed in the river, as was the custom of the Indian maidens, although the ancestral culture, which her brief convent experience had naturally not enfeebled, did not allow her either to join their frolicsome company, or imitate their aboriginal simplicity of attire. The wife of the trapper caught every new idea with astonishing quickness, and it was curious to observe how while the mistress (as she might be called) grew visibly into the heroic mould, the pupil softened with the moral grace, of womanhood.

But while Mary De Groot thus not only maintained, but actually invigorated her health, like a young luxuriant shoot that flourishes by the side of the decaying parental tree, Alban, as we have intimated, lost ground sensibly, and Jane *wilted*. The

latter—poor girl!—had no other occupation at Cedar Lake but the unwholesome one of brooding over her own thoughts. She was, of course, too timid to think of riding “bare-back,” like her friend, whom she contented herself with watching apprehensively from under the cedars that bordered the prairie; and on the only occasion when she ventured to bathe, came out pinched and blue, and did not recover the shock for many hours. Jane, indeed, was far from well since their arrival at the Indian village. It affected her temper, and altered to sharpness the very tones of her once sweet and ear-delighting voice. In her intercourse with Mary, apparently in her own despite, she often gave way to bursts of irritation, followed by a spiritless compunction. Her eye lost its lustre from solitary weeping and wakeful nights, and though neither thinness nor paleness could altogether annul the charm of features so exquisitely regular, yet upon the whole—for they had been scarcely three weeks at Cedar Lake—her beauty had dimmed most perceptibly, while that of Mary De Groot was more resplendent than ever.

CHAPTER XIX.

I dico a'miei pensier : Non molto andremo
 D'amor parlando omai ; che 'l duro e greve
 Terreno incarco, come fresca neve
 Si va struggendo : onde noi pace avremo :
 Perchè con lui cadrà quella speranza,
 Che ne fe vaneggiar sì lungamente ;
 E'l riso, e 'l pianto, e la paura, e l'ira.

PETRARCA.

I say to my thoughts : We sha' n't much longer go
 Speaking of love henceforth ; since, full of woe,
 This earthly load, like to the fresh-fall'n snow
 Dissolving goes : whence we true peace shall know :
 For with it that fond hope shall disappear,
 Which made us rave so long and vainly here ;
 — The smile, the tear, the anger, and the fear.

Old Translation.

PETRARCH, perhaps, is in Heaven with his Laura, where, if so, he sees that *Sommo Ben*, to whom, he says, her earthly beauty directed him. Sweet are his songs, and (which we have not seen noticed) breathe a healthful melancholy, that, amidst the exquisite lingering over earthly charms, more than attests the vanity of such pursuit. For we do not

forget that Petrarch, the friend of so many Popes, and crowned with the laurel, at Rome, on Easter Day, 1341, with solemn pomp and great concourse, and the applause of the Senate and the people.— was ours. But the aim of poetry in reference to the passions, is a mystery beyond this age.

The novena had commenced on the Feast of St. Raphael, the patron of travellers and angel of healing, and was to terminate on that of All Saints. The exercises began every evening with the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*; for the principal object was to obtain for the dying guest of the tribe the grace of conversion. The Litany of the Saints, the Rosary, the *Salve Regina*, and a short meditation by Father Smith, were concluded by the magnificent function of the Benediction — that blending of sacred pomp and deep tenderness. Nothing could exceed the fervour of the Indians, both men and women.

Jane was an interested spectator. Her mind was naturally drawn to the subject which ever affords a resource to the disappointed affections, and to women often the only one. The sight of a whole population energizing in prayer, so perseveringly, for a single, unselfish object, excited her sympathy, in the same way, probably, that it would have been excited by the contagious feeling of a revival; but the invoca-

tion of the Divine Spirit by that simple and fervent congregation, was surely not without its effect. The exhortations of Father Smith, which she began to understand, containing no direct argument, but many explanations of the doctrines of his faith, sank silently into her mind and heart, like a gentle shower, softening and washing away her prejudices before she was aware.

It was singular that two features of the religion of her friends, which at first had seemed repulsive, the one to her reason and the other to her heart, had acquired a sort of charm for her. These were the dogma of the Real Presence, and the principle of asceticism, including celibacy and the convent life.

The victim herself of passion, she sought the support of an unbending rule; and, with the unsatisfied craving of a disappointed heart, looked for something substantial in Christ, where hitherto she had been contented with an image of her own creating. The immense difference between an ideal object of love—the projected eidolon of a tender fancy—and a real, breathing lover, with an independent life, who came and went, spake or was silent, caressed or refrained from caressing, according to the laws of his own being, and not the wish of hers, was a matter of experience to her. She knew that the last was life; the first a

hollow and exhausting fantasy. At Benediction, when all but herself were bent in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Jane felt a similar difference in the things of faith.

Then the life of the convent appeared to her an image of peace. Its tranquillity, its regularity, its unwearied devotions, its seclusion, all which Mary De Groot had vividly described to her, offered to her tempest-tossed spirit a haven of rest. If she were only a Roman Catholic, which, to be sure, she could never be, she could be at peace in the cloister, she thought, away from that world which had disappointed her, and where every thing now wore the most cheerless aspect. A sense of shame, which always mingles in a woman's disappointment, made solitude seem attractive, and society, where so many would suspect her secret, terrible.

The power which Alban had obtained over Jane's mind, had long been at work to modify her opinions. His explanations always seemed to her clear; his arguments always convincing, even when she did not accept his conclusions. If this had been the case even when his ultimate conclusion had been repugnant to her wishes, how much more when it appeared to her as a plank of safety in the shipwreck of her happiness, and almost, as she fancied, of her fame.

The great thing which troubled Jane was the invocation of Saints, which, in spite of every thing that she had heard said in its defence, appeared to infringe on the sole confidence due to the One Mediator. She expressed this warmly to Alban as they walked in the garden after tea, on the second evening after Mary's departure, when they happened to be speaking of the devotions of the novena.

"I comprehend your feeling, for I once had it strongly myself," said Alban. "Yet at that very time I did not love Jesus Christ so much as I do now, when I invoke His holy Mother and the Saints every day. *Solvitur ambulando*, my dear Jane; which means that there are certain speculative difficulties which are best solved by experiment: that very practice which seems to you adverse to the prerogatives of the One Mediator, springs, in truth, from the strength of our confidence in His mediation. He has said that His saints should reign with Him; we believe that they really do. Every prayer to a saint, therefore, is an acknowledgment of the truth, the power, and the infinite merits of Christ!"

"Alas!" exclaimed Jane, "if I only knew what to believe!"

"You have arrived at that *doubt*, well entertained, which, as a great philosopher has said, is

the first step to knowledge," Alban replied, with calmness.

Margaret Dolman passed them in the moonlight, and entered the mission.

"If I could but feel as simple a faith as that girl!" pursued Jane, sighing, and seating herself on the threshold of the house. "Do you remember, Alban," she continued abruptly, making room for him,—"how we used to sit together on the door-sill at Aunt Fanny's? or have you quite forgotten those days?"

"They are not easily forgotten," he replied, thanking her with a slight bow for the offered place, but not taking it. "We were children then."

"I wish I were a child again at Aunt Fanny's!" exclaimed Jane, spreading out her dress with a quick movement, so as to fill the whole door-way. She laid her head on her knee and sobbed.

"What shall I say to you, my sister—my beloved sister and playmate?" cried Alban in a soft voice, dropping on one knee by her side upon the broad stone step, and caressing her head. "If wishing could make us children again, I too! But time past never returns. Let us use the present well. Our youth is with us now, but it will pass like our childhood. So will our life—our sorrowful life: for a shadow has fallen also upon mine. I can do better than return your love,

since I can sympathize in the grief of its disappointment. For why, dear Jane, should I draw a veil between our hearts by affecting to be ignorant of your secret? How should I be unacquainted with it? We loved mutually once, when we were both children, and it is only that I have been inconstant, while you feel injured and deserted."

"No, no, Alban. It is pure weakness on my part — principle on yours — that has made the difference. How you must despise me! And you have your virtuous Mary to compare me with!"

She sprang up and would have fled to her room; but he caught her dress and detained her.

"Let go," she cried, passionately. "I have some pride left, Alban — some virtue — though I know you doubt it."

"Hear me say a few words — do not let us separate under a mistake!" he answered, with persuasive calmness.

She yielded to a mixture of hope and curiosity, and suffered herself to be drawn down again to her seat, and he placed himself now beside her.

"As in the old times! See, in this fair door-way there is room for Mary too, were she here. We will fancy that she is. And after all, brother and sister need not be so very distant."

“I was trying to turn my affections into a sisterly channel, and it hurt me that you seemed to put another construction upon it.”

“It was myself, not you, whom I was guarding against the dangers” — he smiled tenderly — “of too great proximity. I never thought of your taking it to yourself.”

“I am very jealous and irritable, I know.”

“St. Aloysius of Gonzaga, it is recorded, was of a purity so angelical that he would not look at the face of his own mother,” pursued Alban, smiling again. “No doubt he was inspired to impose upon himself such a rule, in order that youth might learn, by the example of so great a saint, to distrust its own weakness, and be on its guard against the most captivating appearances of safety, in a region full of pitfalls concealed under flowers. What think you, Jane?”

“His conduct strikes me as extravagant, but you assign a beautiful reason for it.”

“A white robe shows every spot. All that I aspire to is ordinary virtue; but to secure that, it is necessary to go a little beyond, and practise the mortification of self in innocent things.”

“You have said enough to soothe me.”

“I too,” added he, gravely, “have a passion to overcome, and am exposed to feel a craving for un-

healthy sympathy. Do you know, dear Jane, that I am far from sure of my espoused ever becoming my bride? I cannot explain to you why. Perhaps it is she who hears a higher call than that of earthly love, — perhaps it is myself.”

“It seems to me,” said Jane, “that you will both be inexcusable if you throw away your own happiness in that manner.”

“You do not know the force of that deep attraction from worlds unseen which enables us thus to stem the current of our passions.”

“It must be great indeed.”

“Eternity and the Infinite God.—these are strong ideas, Jane. Why, what is this mysterious malady, from which we both are suffering, and which we both, perhaps, shall be obliged to cure as best we may?”

Jane thought she knew very well what it was, but she was always willing to listen to Alban, and perhaps most willing on such a theme.

“I call it a malady, because it is no sin, and yet it is not in the order of reason; for we blush to be suspected of it. This is that which causes what is else so beautiful—the timid advances of the youth—the bashful flight of the maiden. Love is not in the order of reason, and if so, then it is no irreparable misfortune to be obliged to overcome it.”

“Ah!” said Jane, smiling involuntarily, “it is easy to talk in that way, but will such reasoning cure any body who is really in love?”

“No; but it may decide us to attempt that cure by other and more appropriate means.”

“And what are they?” asked Jane with a sigh.

“To take away the fuel that this fire in the bosom feeds upon, and to occupy the soul with other thoughts. What excites and nourishes love are the society of the beloved object, looks, caresses, reveries in absence—a million things that lovers know and love delights in. Other thoughts, fit to displace these dangerous employments, are those of Heaven and Hell, of the passion of Christ, the sufferings of the Saints, the use of tribulation and the shortness of life. A very good antidote is to imagine how the form we prize so inordinately will appear in the grave, and to reflect that it is certain to become there an object of disgust. Another is to ponder how glorious a thing in the sight of God is holy celibacy—the life of angels; and to remember how our Lord honoured virginity by His own example and that of His Blessed Mother. It will be hard, my sister, if with all these considerations we cannot rise above our infirmity, and learn at least to tread with patience and serenity the painful way that lies before us.”

"It would certainly be better to do as you say — it does appear that it would help us a great deal."

"There is no more certain medicine in the world, than this, for a heart diseased. Let us fasten our eyes on that unchanging state which awaits us from the moment that we put off the body, and we shall soon see through the illusion that would still conjure up a Paradise here, where Paradise is long since forfeit. It will all be as clear to us as noon-day. Little shall we care to pluck the flowers that fade in our hands. How soon will beauty fade? The maiden who is now adored, in how short a time will her form be loveless, and her now rich locks, become gray, shade a countenance without bloom, or the winning softness that now inspires delight? Such is your fate, Jane, and Mary's, and that of every lovely one. Contend not, then, for a sceptre so soon to be broken, but lift your heart to that country where the beauty of the soul shall shine undimmed for ever."

"Fain would I do so, Alban."

"I use, you see, a brother's right, to advise you, perhaps a trifle too sternly — that is a part of my own self-denial."

"I do not mind the sternness," said Jane, weeping.

"Shall I now show you the other side of the picture," he exclaimed, warmly. "Shall I talk to you as

a *gentleman*? — Then, Jane! my sister and my beautiful friend! how deeply do I feel your noble constancy, which honours you, and of which I am unworthy! How proud I am to have been the object of that pure affection!”

“No, no, no!”

“Yes, yes! a thousand times yes!” he exclaimed, suddenly bending towards her, and kissing her forehead. “It raises me in my own estimation more than I can express. So it does in Mary’s. Lift up your head, dear Jane, and see yourself in that position of dignity which belongs to every woman who is true to herself. Why should you blush for your own truth — your own fidelity! We honour you for it. We love you for it. It was *not* a mere hallucination either. There was something real in it — a tie of blood, an early, beautiful affection, a Providence leading us together in the present time for good. We are not going to part asunder in this world, my sister, but when one obstacle has been removed, (as it soon will be,) to be more closely united than ever — by the most sacred ties.”

“You make me happy now. Oh, that is all I want, not to be left in such cruel isolation!” cried Jane.

“And you forgive my impertinent (but salutary) advice of just now?”

"I would rather you should strike me than let me alone," she replied with a smile. "The advice was good."

"Consider that I soliloquized, and that what I recommended to you was merely the needful remedy for myself."

"Oh, I need it too."

"If you knew just my history and real character, it would dispense you from the use of other remedies against any shade of partiality for your cousin that exceeds a sister's fond regard."

She smiled incredulously.

"I need not recall our childhood again at Aunt Fanny's. But at college for three years, amid my books and student ambition, I lived in a self-flattering way — on your image, Jane."

"You should not tell me so."

"I read hard, as they say in England," pursued he, "chiefly Greek. Pride, self-conceit, and overweening ambition, prompted my studies. First, I seized upon the Poets, and I thought only of being another Homer, Sophocles, and Pindar, all in one; then I got hold of Demosthenes, and the glory of a great orator inflamed me altogether; and, last of all, the Philosophers came up, and nothing would content me but to emulate Plato. In the midst of this" —

with a slightly mocking tone — “I was only a shy collegian, who at any time would have crossed a street or turned a corner, to avoid meeting a face that looked out from under a bonnet. But just at that crisis, I saw Mary De Groot at a fair, and I am sorry to say, dear Jane, that all my long constancy to you, which had kept me at least more pure in conduct than most of my companions, took flight before her dark eyes and girlish fascination, although at the time I deemed that I only admired her as a beautiful child. I flirted; from levity or vanity, with others, till Mary herself cured me by a well-timed exposure of such ridiculous behaviour; then I had a grand passion; — for a noble girl, it is true, and it had like to have been serious, from my mixture of audacity and simplicity, and a high sense of honour (which I really had) joined to the most absurd ignorance of the world; and here my over-vaulting ambition took an Oriental and military turn; — I cannot explain to you all, but it was infinitely absurd; and yet, at the same time that my imagination was exalted in this extravagant style, I felt — to my deep humiliation, then and ever since — the meanest of all attractions — no matter for that. But see, Jane, what a compound of weaknesses you have so faithfully loved!”

“We have all our weaknesses, if the truth were

known," said Jane, whose blush during this recital the pale moonlight had happily concealed. "But it is not every one," she added, "that overcomes them so bravely, and so nobly confesses them."

"Ah! I have had them up to this time, and of those which are more recent I have not courage to accuse myself, even to so indulgent a confessor as you." — And Alban was soon lost in thought. Jane had vanished, too evidently, as he busied his mind, involuntarily, with the recent passages of his life.

Jane sighed as she marked his abstraction, but, after all, there is no comfort like truth, and it is certain that her eyes had an expression of consolation to which they had long been strangers, as she raised them to meet her cousin's still absent glance, beneath the autumn moon. She was nothing to him but a sister, she saw full well, but a sister tenderly loved. The sweet, yet painful, conviction sank deep into her heart. When he presently addressed to her some slight remark, as if he had forgotten what had just passed, she answered in a cheerful voice, which seemed to regain at once its native sweetness.

"It is indeed a beautiful night."

"I wonder if the pilgrims have reached their journey's end," said he, rising. "But here comes Father — Smith."

The missionary approached from the chapel, through the moon-lit garden, with a slow step; the beretta on his head, and his arms folded over his long robe. His eyes were bent on the ground.

“And there,” said Jane, looking in the opposite direction, — “there comes old Vincent, dear Alban. He is coming to see how his patient is to-night.”

Atherton stood tranquilly expecting them. The thought of Mary, and of the hardships, if not dangers, to which she was exposed, was never really absent from his mind; but it was a part of his character (as we have long ago seen) to meet the present duty with the same calmness as if he had been free from every painful pre-occupation. It was a trait that often did injustice to the strength and ardour of his feelings, till you were pressed near enough to his heart to *feel* its impassioned, manly stroke.

CHAPTER XX.

There is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

Hamlet.

THERE was a lively expectation in the village, from the moment when it might be supposed the pilgrims had reached the grave of the saint of their tribe, that Mr. De Groot would show signs of amendment. Moreover, seven days of the novena had been fulfilled. When old Vincent came hobbling out of the mission on the evening we have begun to describe, he was surrounded by a crowd anxious to hear that the patient was better. It caused at first a perceptible disappointment, especially among the squaws, when the immovable silence of the old man intimated that no favourable change had yet occurred. No one, however, asked a question. Madeleine, supporting her grandfather's steps with her sinewy arm, bore herself with a haughtier carriage than usual. She did not believe that the martyr's intercessions would be vouchsafed in

this instance, although the white chief's daughter was performing the pilgrimage with all its penitential severities in the strictest manner.

Alban and the priest came out of the sick room together. They no longer cared to remain there so strictly, as Mr. De Groot for two days had ceased to notice who it was that waited on him. The moon attracted them again into the garden. Jane rose from her seat on the door-sill to let them pass, and then resumed it, as if bent on enjoying like them the beauty of the night.

"He fails from day to day," said Alban, "not rapidly, but surely."

"His daughter should have reached the grave of the blessed Catherine before sunset to-night, and must by this time have consummated the usual penance," replied the Jesuit thoughtfully. "Performed in faith and humility by almost spotless innocence, it ought to merit an answer from the Kingdom of the Saints."

"What is the nature of the penance performed on this occasion?" inquired Alban.

"Miss De Groot, I suppose, did not specify it, and I may as well not," replied the Jesuit, with a look of caution. "Let it rather prevail with Heaven than win praise from men. Do you know that that fellow Duncan is here again?"

"Is he so? Pierre must watch the chapel to-night."

"He pretends to have returned for his wife, and affects to be much disappointed that she is not here. He talks of going after her."

"Does he?" said Alban, quickly. "I shall send Pierre and Courtney on his trail."

"That was one of my objections to Miss De Groot's expedition — although not the chief objection," returned the Jesuit. "If there were only Indians in these woods, women would be safe as in a sanctuary; but there is always in these border forests a class of miserable white men — half squatters, half trappers, and whole scoundrels. — They defraud, corrupt, and sometimes murder the Indians, and will insult a squaw if they have the opportunity. As Duncan has a wife, one hopes that he would know how to treat women with propriety. His reputation, however, is not good in any respect."

"Mrs. Duncan seems a good sort of woman," observed Alban.

"She is lamentably ignorant by Miss De Groot's account, but an angel compared to her husband, if such he be."

"If such he be!" repeated Alban.

"These connections on our wild frontier often

lack the sanction of either civil or religious ceremony. That does not necessarily render them invalid, if the parties act in good faith; but the good faith of such a fellow as Duncan may well be suspected. Miss De Groot was much disturbed to find that Mrs. Duncan, as she expressed it, had never been married. I quieted her on that head by what I deemed a just representation. Mrs. Duncan, after all, is an unbaptized heathen. She could not participate in the holy sacrament of marriage, and as for the civil contract, it depends on the custom of countries. She considers herself a wife, beyond a doubt."

"He is a rascal — that fellow."

"She is under instruction," pursued the missionary, "which she receives, Miss De Groot says, with the docility of a child. She does not know enough to dispute any thing that is told her by a person so superior. One doctrine of our holy religion is as easy for her to believe as another, as it is with our Indians. Happy simplicity! mother of faith! *Ex ore infantium et lactentium perfecisti laudem.*"

"What does that mean?" asked Jane.

"*Out of the mouth of infants and sucklings thou hast perfected praise,*" replied Alban, to whom the question was addressed.

"Oh, a verse in the Bible!" said Jane.

“Very different is the case of our poor patient there within,” continued Father Smith, with a sigh. “He is one of the wise and prudent of this world—too wise to believe what his reason cannot comprehend. I have known him long, and he has always been the same as now, prolific of ideas, profoundly penetrating as to the grand secular bearings of Christianity, but insensible to faith. To hear him descant on some misunderstood period of European history, and vindicate the grandeur and utility of the action of the Church, you would suppose you were listening to a fervent believer, when you would learn, to your surprise, that he regarded it only as a masterpiece of human wisdom.”

“A glorious Sadducee!” observed Alban.

“Alas! yes!”

“If he dies so, he cannot be saved?”

“*Qui non credit, condemnabitur*:—of course not.”

“He is our friend, and Mary’s father—and yet he must perish for ever!”

“If our poor prayers and penances can avail any thing with the Supreme, he may yet be converted.”

“Ah!” exclaimed Alban, “what sacrifice would I not make, to obtain so great a boon!”

At this moment a shriek was heard in the house, and Margaret came flying to the door in terror.

“Father! Mr. Atherton! my master is getting up.”

Jane turned and also shrieked, covering her face.

Mr. De Groot was coming out of his room. Alban rushed past Jane, and the missionary also went in, when he had prevailed upon her to rise, for she was spell-bound by fright and startled modesty.

“Where is my daughter, Atherton?” said Mr. De Groot.

With difficulty they persuaded him to return to bed, although he could not stand without support for more than a minute.

“De Mornay!”

“I am here,” said the missionary, advancing.

“Where is my daughter?”

“Mary has gone away on an errand connected with your health, sir,” said Alban, soothingly. “She will return to-morrow.”

“She was here not a minute ago,” said Mr. De Groot, whose eyes constantly sought a particular spot on the floor.

“Margaret was here, sir, or perhaps you saw my cousin Jane sitting in the door-way.”

“I saw Margaret. She ran away screaming like a fool. I saw a young lady in the door-way too. That was not my daughter. Has any thing happened to Mary?”

"She is absent, sir, on a short journey, as I mentioned just now. She has been gone a couple of days, and we expect her back to-morrow."

"She is dead," said Mr. De Groot. "You will never see her again. She has been murdered in the forest."

"What said your master when he first attempted to rise?" demanded the priest of Margaret.

"Why, sir, of a sudden he sat up, without saying any thing, and looked as if he saw somewhat on the floor. Then at onst he jumped up, and give me a push because I tried to stop him, and made as if he would have picked something up. Then I screamed and run to call Mr. Atherton and you."

"I saw Mary," said Mr. De Groot, quietly. "I thought at first she lay on the floor; but when I got up I perceived a river-bank and trees. Try my pulse, de Mornay."

"How did your daughter appear to you?" inquired the missionary, feeling Mr. De Groot's pulse.

"Half-stripped and covered with blood."

He raised himself again on the elbow, and bent his gaze earnestly upon the floor.

"You see nothing at present?"

"Nothing."

"It was a hallucination."

“I wish it would return,” said Mr. De Groot, “for my satisfaction.”

Alban regarded alternately the Jesuit and the father of Mary, the former not without an air of reproach mingled with resignation. The latter suddenly altered to a death-like whiteness, and fell back in a swoon. At first they thought he was dead. Margaret, whom these circumstances converted into a sort of animal, uttered a howl. Alban ran out and got some hartshorn from Jane, who he knew had some. Mr. De Groot revived. They gave him a little brandy, and when old Vincent came in, after examining the pulse and tongue, he ordered some nourishment to be given him. Let us leave him to their care, and direct our attention to a different scene.

CHAPTER XXI.

O'er fear, o'er thousand forms of pain,
Victorious she stood!
And won the everlasting heights
In streams of her own blood.

Breviary Hymn.

It was towards the decline of the second day that the pilgrims approached the shrine buried in the forest.

They rested on the edge of a small circular clearing surrounded by a sweep of gigantic pines and cypress and mighty oaks. On the left hand, above the highest tops, rose a wall of rocks, precipitous and beetling; at an equal distance on the right, between the boles of the forest, a mountain torrent roared and flashed over a shelving bed. Right in the centre of the clearing was an enormous boulder or isolated rock. Girt by the wide-sweeping circle of ancient trees, it resembled a Druid altar surrounded by giant sacrificers. And truly in the old Indian times it had been often stained with the blood of human victims. Here a Jesuit

missionary, more than two hundred years before, had been tortured and mutilated, and two of his neophytes murdered, after he had baptized them at the stake, with a few drops of water adhering to a leaf of maize. Here Catherine, the saint of the Iroquois, a hundred and forty years before the period of our story, having been gashed with knives in every part of her virgin body, and burned with red-hot gun-barrels and live brands, was scalped alive, her bleeding head covered with hot embers, then compelled to fly, and pursued with blows and missiles till she was finally despatched by the blow of a hatchet, not meant in mercy, but prompted by rage at her fortitude. Her crime was twofold in the eyes of the savage persecutors; refusing to become the wife of a pagan Indian, and persisting in "the prayer." She died praying for her murderers, the purest innocence of life, joined to the severe penances then common among the Indian converts, having prepared her to exhibit that patience under tortures, by which she glorified the King of Martyrs and won a throne of power beneath His feet.

Such was the tale which Catherine, the young Indian girl, sister of the proud Madeleine, and companion of Mary De Groot, now again related in pointing out the very localities. Mrs. Duncan listened with tears, and bestowing on Miss De Groot a glance of

humble veneration, seemed to intimate that her young instructress possessed the spirit of the saint.

Mary was attired in the humblest garb of the squaws. A tunic of red cotton, with short sleeves, and secured round the waist by a belt of undressed skin, reached midway below her knee. Her feet and ankles, bare, had exchanged their natural rosy white for a dark fleshy red, and were soiled also by the decaying or miry floor of the forest, as well as stained by streaks of blood and red scratches. Her dark hair flowed dishevelled on her shoulders and bosom. Over her head she had thrown a blanket of the usual blue cloth, but coarse in texture, which hung down nearly to her feet, and as she leaned against a fallen pine, she held it confined in front with one hand. It is the same garment, ever modest, the most ancient outer vestment of her sex, which we see in the Greek statues of women, and in the pictures of the Blessed Virgin, and which is still worn in the antique manner by the Indian females.

Miss De Groot's rosary was stuck in her rough belt. She carried no other burden, but both Mrs. Duncan and the young Indian had a bundle of moderate size, involved in bark, and strapped on their shoulders by thongs of the same. Mary's face was flushed and warm, though she looked much fatigued,

and her limbs trembled as she placed one travel-stained foot across the other in her attitude of repose. In her eye might be observed an eager expectation mixed with fear. Finally, she put a question to her companions, to which they assented, and all moved forward to the boulder, on which a cross had been planted. Arrived before it, all knelt; Mary took a small book from her bosom, and read some prayers. It was the *Way of the Cross*, and this was the thirteenth station, for as they rose, Mary said, with a deep sigh,

“There remains one more, Catherine.”

“Half a mile further on,” replied the young Indian, taking Mary’s mantle from her. “So far blessed Catherine ran from her enemies. It is the custom to perform this part on our knees.”

Mary threw herself again on her knees and kissed the ground. All did the same. The young squaw led the way. At first, the course was little difficult, for it lay over the prairie; but after it re-entered the forest, at every slow, dragging step the obstacles increased. To get over twisted roots, or creep beneath fallen trees, was less afflicting than to pass the stony brooklets or soft marshy places, which multiplied as they drew near the river. An active man, in his freer attire, would have found himself often at

a loss in piercing the miry thicket, with every resource of strong hand and ready foot. The young Indian and Mrs. Duncan held up their garments above the knee, but Mary, at every step, was obliged to draw her tunic, as well as she could, from under hers. Not a word was said by either of her companions to intimate that she would do well to relinquish a task too severe for her comparatively delicate frame. In pitying her, both seemed to regard her sufferings as inevitable; as we read in Oriental story of some cruel custom enforced without relenting by the nearest friends of the unhappy victim. Once she sunk upon her face in despair, grasping a huge root, whose snake-like involutions and knotty bends formed a network, between the interstices of which a soft, black, adhesive soil, half mud, half water, was alone sufficient to bar her progress.

“Yet here holy Catherine passed,” she thought — withdrawing one arm, covered with mire to the elbow, from a deep hole into which it had incautiously sunk — “here she passed, her head a mass of gore and ashes, her limbs gashed and bleeding, her body burned all over with red-hot irons, while fiends in human shape, her nearest kindred, pursued her with rods, shot at her with arrows, and struck her down with stones and tomahawks. O glorious martyr!

help me to bear my light sufferings in imitation of thee and our common Lord!"

Fortified by these thoughts and by her prayer, the fainting girl renewed her efforts. She came to the brink of the stream. Holy Catherine had passed it before she fell. The water was not deep in appearance, but rushing and arrowy. A hundred yards or more below, the spray of a considerable fall rose in a whitish column. The Indian girl and the trapper's wife still led the way. The former soon scrambled to the opposite bank. The latter, equally agile and more muscular, moved more slowly, fearing that the force of the current might prove too great for Miss De Groot. And still the latter encountered an impediment from which the others were comparatively free. The water took her tunic as the wind takes a sail. Its force was irresistible and she was carried down. Mrs. Duncan attempted to catch her, but herself slipped from the rolling of a stone. Mary was swept away and submerged, but swam energetically. She vainly caught in passing at some willows that fringed the bank at a sudden bend.

"Holy Virgin, save me," she murmured.

The next moment she was stranded on a shallow of sand, among fragments of raft-wood accumulated by the current. Between this and the shore the water

rushed in a deep channel, swift and forcible, not fifty yards above the fall, and a tree lay across at a dizzy height—a slender trunk. Mary climbed up one of the branches to the trunk. Desperation gave her strength. The young Catherine had run to the spot, but now looked on without interfering. With a trembling foot the maiden crossed on the lofty, narrow bridge, where a misstep or a sudden dizziness would have been inevitable destruction.

Beneath some aged hemlocks, on a bank kept green by a trickling spring, was a simple mound with a massive stone cross—the grave of the saint. Inserted in the cross was the rude picture of the last station of the *Via Crucis*—JESUS laid in the Holy Sepulchre—covered with a glass to protect it from the weather. The sun was set, and Mary De Groot, partly recovered, but still panting and sobbing with her toil and danger, read by the fading twilight the appropriate prayers.

An hour or more had passed. They had finished the prayers of the station, said the Litany of the Saints, with the beads, to unite in the novena, and sung the Evening Hymn. In spirit they have placed themselves with their brethren before the Blessed Sacrament, and implored the benediction of the Lord. The moon shone upon the wild river-bank, and made the streaming,

ragged moss—the hoar hair of the aged hemlocks—whiter than by day. The hour had come for the final penance, which Mary alone was to undergo. With great reluctance had Father Smith consented to her performing it, and not until she had begged his permission with tears, that she might leave nothing undone to merit the protection of the martyr and of the Queen of Saints. Yet now that the time had arrived, when nothing else remained to do, her heart grew sick, her womanly soul recoiled. Prostrate upon the grave of the Indian saint, she wept and prayed for the true and worthy spirit of penance.

“I offer it,” she cried, “in memory of the sufferings of my Lord, and in union with His merits, to satisfy for my sins, to conquer the weakness of my heart, and to obtain for my dear father the restoration of health and grace of true conversion. I offer it with this intention, through the intercession of the Blessed Mary, Ever-virgin, and Catherine, the martyr of the Iroquois, at whose tomb it is performed, through Christ our Lord.”

When Mary De Groot had ended this prayer, she raised herself, with a new resolution beaming in her haggard face and trembling form.

“O my father!” she exclaimed, with an enthusiasm that seldom appeared in her—“you have doubted

my loyalty and repelled my affection, but you shall now experience in your last necessity the power of your daughter's love."

Mrs. Duncan had retired to a distance, but the Indian girl remained, and with a pitiless readiness extended to Miss De Groot the "discipline" of her sainted namesake, with which holy Catherine had been wont, a century and a half before, to chasten her body yet unredeemed, mark of that wondrous contrition wherewith divine grace had inspired her. Waving it slightly, as if to show its use, a sort of wild sparkle gleamed in her young bright eye—a quick pant heaved her half-clad, swarthy breast;—then she darted away with the agile movement of a wild cat, and joined Mrs. Duncan. Was the savage yet eradicated in this dark-skinned race?

* * * * *

An expression of ineffable tenderness and pity softened the dark features of Catherine, and seemed to bend her slender form upon itself, as she crouched by the wife of the trapper.

"We go to her now?" she whispered.

"She has not called us."

"Me hear nothing—nothing more!"

They approached slowly, and saw what her father had seen, except that her fair shoulders, though bare

in the moonlight, were spotless as a child's. At first they thought she had fainted, but her face, pillowed on the mound, was rather flushed than pale; her bosom rested on the grave; one white arm, gently flexed, embraced it, the hand still firmly holding the flinty scourge; and her long black hair descended like a veil, mingling with her vesture, and sweeping the surface of the grassy earth.

So slept beneath the sky the exhausted pilgrim, as in the palace of her sire, and the appeased shade of her mother watched, triumphant, by her side.

CHAPTER XXII.

And sternly bade him other business plie,
Than hunt the steps of pure unspotted maid.

Faërie Queene.

It was the eve of All Saints. Many of the Indians observed the fast with great strictness until the setting of the sun. The pilgrims were expected at an early hour on the morrow, in time for the late mass, when the novena, the petitions of which had been already in part answered, was to terminate by a general communion. A certain solemn stir pervaded the village, and the missionary was in the church nearly all day hearing confessions. Here was observed that peculiarity which is so beautiful in the Indian missions—the participation of the whole population in the same acts of religion, and with almost the same fervour.

Early in the afternoon, two Indian maidens entered the sanctuary to divest the altar of the purple

hangings which had been used in the morning on account of the vigil, and to replace them by the white appropriate to the Feast—one of the greatest of the year, or, as it is entitled in the Roman *ordo*, “a DOUBLE of the First Class, with an octave, all proper, *white*.” Reverently they bent the knee, and then with a quiet, business-like air, stripped the altar till nothing remained but the dark cedar. The white hangings, which they then proceeded to attach, had been worked by the indefatigable fingers of the Indian women, in gold beads and silk, and were really very precious. They set the numberless tapers—all freshly placed in the candlesticks; they placed the last flowers of the season—white and blue chrysanthemums. The altar linen hung down still in its simple purity. The cedar shrine of the God of Israel rose dark and high above it, surrounded by the tall, slender, white tapers which soon were to kindle with light in honour of its divine Guest, as the invisible throne is girt about with the starry-shining, angelic multitude. Again the maidens, having finished their task, bent the knee and retired. Thus an order and beauty, like that of Heaven, had established a visible reign among this once savage race, and even the approach of females to the altar, which for good reasons is universal in the American mission, served a happy end in restor-

ing that spiritual equality of the sexes which exists in Christendom alone.

The trapper, Duncan, had come into the chapel, and was a witness of the proceedings about the altar. But about this time Father Smith quitted the confessional, and proceeded through the sacristy to the mission, and the trapper, leaving the church by the principal door, hastily followed him.

Duncan had prowled about the village all day, and had soon become aware that he was watched. He had gone forth to the woods, and perceived that he was followed. The sagacious Pierre, who would have tracked him with the accuracy of a bloodhound, and the fiery Courtney, whose quick blood and practised rifle were dangerous, kept him steadily in view. His wandering away, however, was a feint. It was on his return that he presented himself, as now, to Father Smith in the garden of the mission-house, and desired once more to know how soon his wife was expected.

“You mean to return with her to Racket?”

“Certain.”

“Immediately?”

“Right off.”

“Do you know that she is a candidate for baptism?”

"Got religion here, eh?"

"We hope so."

"Wal, I haint no objection. I was baptized by a Methodist preacher in Lake Scroon, when I was fifteen year old. Went regularly under the water, you see. You sprinkle, I guess, Mister Smith?"

"We baptize," said the missionary, warmly.

"Jes' so. I was dipped, and I remember hearin' the parson say, 'In the name,' and so on, while I was under water. It was rather a solemn time. I shall never forget it. He was a powerful preacher, and converted a power of people in them days. A good man, I guess — though he fell from grace afterwards, and run away with a gal what he had converted and dipped."

"After your wife has been baptized," said the missionary, sternly, "you must be married to her according to the forms of the Church."

"Oh! I don' know about that are."

"It must be so, man!" replied the priest, "Think of this. Miss De Groot will hardly be able to reach here before to-morrow morning. I will baptize your wife immediately, and, after the religious ceremonies of the morning are concluded, marry you. If you mean well by her, as I hope you do, you cannot object."

"No, Mister Smith, you can't come over me in that way, no how. I ain't goin' to be tied to no woman under the sun, so that I can't slip loose if need be:—least of all to Dorothy," replied the trapper, with a grin.

"You must give her up, then," said the missionary, coldly. "She is with friends who will not see her unfairly dealt by. She knows now what a Christian woman has a right to expect, and she will never go with you again, unless you concede it to her."

"We shall see about that," replied the squatter, with an ill-omened redness tinging his sallow face.

"Have you lost all your interest in religion?" inquired Father Smith, willing to propitiate the man for his wife's sake. "You must have had some when you were baptized."

"I have committed the unpardonable sin," replied Duncan.

"You cannot possibly know that," said the missionary.

"Yes, every man has seven calls. If he rejects them all, or falls away after the last, it is all up with him. I have gone back after my seventh."

"The conversion of your wife is a call to you," replied the priest, in a softened tone. "Perhaps you have counted wrong. It were an easy mistake.

Try this once, and see whether you cannot, more truly than ever before, reconcile yourself to your Maker."

"I tell you, Mister Smith, it is jes' as impossible as for water to burn in a lamp like ile." ♦

Here Alban came out of the mission with Mr. De Groot's rifle, which Morrell by his order had been cleaning, and sitting down upon the door-step, began to load with ball. Now that his friend was pronounced out of danger, he already began to think of improving the time by going out for deer. The trapper touched his gray marten cap and sauntered off.

In the village the women were talking over Mr. De Groot's miraculous cure. Duncan joined himself to Morrell and Courtney, who were discussing the same subject. Morrell thought that maybe Mr. De Groot would have got well any way. He did not much believe that the young lady's going forty mile barefoot through the woods had any thing to do with it. He did n't see how it could. He had always heerd that miracles had ceased, and this, if true, would be a miracle. It had happened so. It was just like them patent medicines. When the person what took one of 'em got well, the medicine got the credit, but nothin' was said about them as took it and died.

"Jes' so," said Courtney, who generally inclined to the last opinion uttered.

“Now I think this was a ginewine miracle,” observed Duncan. “When I was a Methodist, I remember one of the elders fell sick at camp-meetin’, and we prayed for him in the prayin’ circle, for a matter of four hours, men and women, boys and gals, all in a heap. There was one woman and two gals had the power tremendyous. Wal — we prayed the elder out of bed, and inter the pulpit, and he never had the least touch of the agur arterwards. Now I reckon that all these bloody Ingins prayin’ for the Patroon nine days, and Miss De Groot goin’ so far to the grave of that are holy squaw, what they murdered fur havin’ religion two hundred years ago, (that’s prayin’ too, and mighty hard,) — its enough to account for her father gettin’ well putty sudden.”

The village assembled at an earlier hour than usual for the evening prayers, inspired by the zeal of the approaching festivity, and by the universal enthusiasm consequent upon the cure of the Patroon. They came dropping in long before the time; Indians in blue tunics and classic blankets; squaws in dark leggins and short blue kirtles; maidens with long black hair streaming on their shoulders; and children of both sexes, with more or less scanty, yet decent clothing, down to the swaddled papoose, on its stiff board, lashed to its mother’s back. It was curious

to behold the possession of the loftiest ideas of the revelation imparted to man by the incarnate LOGOS, with which the highly civilized people surrounding them, the invaders and lords of their country, were almost wholly unacquainted, united with the external semblance of a swarthy tribe, but half emerged from the aboriginal barbarism:—the noblest acquisitions of man in the supernatural world, mingled with traces of the savage state!

The three white hunters came to the chapel together in friendly fashion, and stood near the door. After the *Veni Creator* had been sung, the beads said, the anthem solemnly chanted, while the boys prepared to light up the white forest of candles for Benediction, Father Smith began his instructions, which he delivered in English for the sake of the guides and Duncan; for these were as lost sheep in comparison to the Indians, and the missionary deemed that the opportunity of making a salutary impression upon them was not to be thrown away. Courtney became intensely interested; Morrell gave a close attention; but Pierre kept one eye upon Duncan, particularly as the latter, by a suspicious movement, managed to get next the door.

All at once it occurred to Alban that it was too bad for poor Margaret Dolman to be deprived of the

benefit of hearing this English instruction, which so many who could well supply her place by Mr. De Groot, were unable to profit by. Turning round, he beckoned Pierre to approach him. He wished to send Madeleine to take Margaret's place, but judged it better, in dealing with so haughty a girl, to give the order through her father: for Atherton, by his intellect, his firm will, and his calm manner, had acquired among the Indians almost the authority of a prince. Duncan seized the moment that Pierre bent to listen to the young man, to escape from the chapel.

The trapper slipped round to the mission-garden. He entered the house. Margaret was in her master's room, sitting and sewing. Duncan called her by signs into the outer apartment, and the girl, nothing suspicious, came out to him. She believed that he had news from her mistress. The object of the trapper was to get rid of the girl as speedily as possible, and he attempted to kiss her, whereupon, as soon as she could break from him, to which he offered no violent opposition, she ran into the garden, being afraid to disturb her master by making an outcry in the house. He came to the door of the mission-house, and she fled to that of the sacristy. Margaret afterwards said that as he was one of the guides, and had been in her master's special employ previously, the idea never

entered her head that he ought not to be left with Mr. De Groot. She regarded his conduct, in her simple way, as the impertinence of a fellow-servant, and her only anxiety was to keep personally out of his reach.

The trapper entered Mr. De Groot's room, treading softly in his moccasins. The convalescent slept. His clothes were laid in good order on a shelf; his travelling-bag hung upon a nail. Duncan cut it open forthwith with his hunting-knife, and emptied the contents on the floor. Mr. De Groot's purse, filled with gold for this excursion, tumbled out with the rest, the glittering pieces shining through the silken meshes which they distended. The robber transferred it to his own pocket, seized the watch which ticked on the table, now no longer occupied by medicinal draughts, and retired as stealthily as he came. One moment he gave to reconnoitring at the small window of the outer room. Pierre and both the guides were just turning the further corner of the chapel, but with the air of men who knew not precisely in what direction to look; Margaret, loitering by the sacristy door, watched the house; Morrell made a step forward in that direction; Duncan did not wait to see him meet the girl; the back door offered an egress from the mission, unperceived by any one. He sprang out,

ran across the burial-ground, in full sight of his pursuers, had they been looking in that direction, plunged into the cedar grove, flew to the river. A canoe lay moored by the bank. He sprang into it, and in a minute had gained the opposite side.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Men of good are bold as sackless ;
Men of rude are wild and rackless.

Lie thou still
In the nook of the hill,
For those be before thee that wish thee ill.

Monastery.

MANY circumstances were in favour of the fugitive. Some time would necessarily be lost in ascertaining the precise direction which he had taken, and in deciding upon a plan for pursuit; and this time was the twilight, of which Duncan was able to take advantage in crossing the woods. Above all, he was unencumbered for the present, except by his plunder, while his pursuers would be embarrassed with firearms and canoes.

After a course of about four hours through a dense forest, he came upon the borders of a lake. Close to the water's edge at the point where he struck it, was a canoe among the bushes, turned bottom up. He quickly reversed it. Beneath were a rifle, an axe, a

fishing-rod, a pair of paddles, and a bundle done up in bark. He launched the light craft, flung in the articles and pushed off. Straight across the solitary, moonlit lake he paddled—a distance of some nine miles—to the base of some mountains with forests at their feet. Here opened, as he drew near, an inlet bordered by precipitous, beetling rocks, and bearing along the roar and gusty breath and yeasty foam of a cataract. Approaching as near to the rocks as possible, he disembarked on some low grounds, shouldered his canoe and the luggage, and pushed on. There was about a mile of rugged portage, doubly difficult by night, notwithstanding the aid of the moon. It was close upon midnight; he had travelled for six hours and a half without rest, except the change from coursing the forest to rowing upon the broad lake; but he had accomplished his purpose. That stern satisfaction which men feel when they have successfully executed a difficult and daring project, was his. On the bank of the stream, at the point where he again reached it, a fire was burning under the trees. Having relaunched and secured his canoe, he took his rifle and cautiously approached the bivouac of the pilgrims. The three females, sheltered by a vast heap of brushwood, reposed in deep slumber, before the fire, close to each other; Mary De Groot, enveloped from

head to foot in her blue mantle or Indian blanket, lay between the others, having the dark arm of the Indian girl thrown tenderly and protectingly around her.

The pilgrims were entirely defenceless, and Duncan was a man, desperate from his recent crime, well-armed, and possessing the habitual authority of a despotic husband over one of their number. The young Indian girl no sooner comprehended his purpose than she bounded off like a fawn into the forest, and was out of sight in an instant; but Miss De Groot, wearied and stiff with the terrible fatigues of the route, was in no situation for either resistance or flight; and Mrs. Duncan obeyed his orders with a crouching fear that plainly discovered the recollection of personal violence. Whatever plans this thorough-bred villain had previously formed, the sight of Miss De Groot, starting from sleep, sealed his resolution.

“Down to yon canoe, Dorothy — never mind the traps — and prehaps, miss, *you*’ll prefer to walk down to that are boat to havin’ me carry you, seein’ I ain’t that young chap what carries all the ladies, I believe, as easy and tender as a squaw does her first papoose. Come, miss, I’m bound to be purlite to you, but I’ve no time for shilly-shallyin’: — you must go yourself, or I’ll make you, by golly I will.”

With such words, and a sufficiently decided show of actions to correspond, he compelled her to enter the canoe, and gave one of the paddles to his wife.

"Don't use it any more than you can help," whispered Mary, who was in the stern; for the ruffian, who lay in the bows, still treated her with so much respect as to allow her to place herself where she liked.

"He will kill me," returned Mrs. Duncan, in the same tone, paddling slowly out into the stream.

"Never mind death."

"If I was only baptized, dear lady," replied Mrs. Duncan, hesitating.

"Row!" cried Duncan, giving the poor creature a blow with the butt of his rifle that nearly knocked her into the water. "Put your strength on that paddle, woman!"

"Your desire of baptism is sufficient," whispered Mary: "don't do any such thing."

Mrs. Duncan dropped the paddle, and clasped her hands piteously.

"Kill me, if you want to, Iray. I won't row for you agin Miss De Groot's wishes. It ain't no good you mean, to be takin' her with us."

Duncan cocked his rifle and raised it to a level. Miss De Groot threw herself forward and put her arms round Mrs. Duncan's neck. The action spoke, but she

said nothing. In fact, she had not addressed a word to the robber from the first.

“Hear me now, both of you,” said Duncan, lowering the rifle. “What I want is to get off. I am wore out with this here trampin’ and rowin’ for so many hours as I’ve come, and carryin’ this darned canoe. Do you row for me, Dorothy, as far as I want you, and you shall go back with Miss De Groot, if you like it better than goin’ north with me. But, contrary wise, if you ’re obstinate, I’ll jes’ take you both ashore agin, and Miss De Groot shall rue the day that ever she was born.”

Mary glanced at the rapid and deep river. In the canoe, at least, an escape was always ready. She bade Mrs. Duncan proceed. The latter was fresh, having slept for several hours previous to their surprise. She pulled steadily and vigorously against the powerful stream. Meanwhile, the noble-hearted daughter, folding her mantle closely round her, and drawing it over her face, committed herself to the protection of Heaven.

His long tramp, the excitement of a day during which he had revolved his crime, and the excitement of its commission, joined to a fast of nearly twelve hours, and the draughts of brandy from a pocket flask, with which from time to time he had recruited his

energies, had drawn largely on Duncan's stock of sensorial and nervous power; the cessation of opposition, his position of repose in the bottom of the canoe, the quiet motion, the regular dip of the paddle, and the soft moonlight hours, completed the victory of fatigue and exhaustion. The forests gliding by, and the ripple of the water, blended into a dream. The robber and ravisher slept.

Mary De Groot laid aside her mantle gently, and stepped lightly past Mrs. Duncan. She possessed herself, with inexpressible gentleness, of the rifle which lay in the robber's hollow arm, and dropped it quietly overboard. The axe, which lay partly under him, was extricated with the same bold ingenuity, and shared the same fate. Lastly, more cautiously still, she drew out the knife stuck in the ruffian's belt, and hid it in her own bosom. She resumed her seat, and then, and not before, Mrs. Duncan brought the boat gradually round. There was a slight fear that the temporary loss of motion would wake the sleeper.

"I don't like to do it," whispered his poor wife, "but I should be wicked to help him carry you off, dear lady."

"Very wicked," said Mary, taking the other paddle.

"You will beg that he may not be hurt? They will let him go, if you ask them," said Mrs. Duncan.

"I will," whispered Mary, — "for your sake."

They glided rapidly down with the paddles and the current. In half an hour they lost a distance which it had cost them more than an hour to gain.

The current grows stronger and stronger. They have already passed the spot where Duncan launched the canoe. Mrs. Duncan perceives that here should be a portage, for although she is unacquainted with the country, her general knowledge warns her, from the increasing swiftness of the stream, of the vicinity of rapids — perhaps a fall: and already to her forest ear is perceptible their distant murmur. Nay, even while they discuss the course to be taken, the canoe is involved in a foaming rapid; it shoots irresistibly down a black and arrowy race. They are enclosed between high, overarching rocks — with here and there a cleft; here and there a broken fragment lying in the swift stream. Mrs. Duncan comprehends their situation at once.

"In a few moments, dear lady, we shall be going over the Falls, unless we can spring on one of these rocks."

"Shall we try?" Mary says, throwing aside her dark blue blanket.

"And him!" said poor Mrs. Duncan.

"He aims at your life, Dorothy, and my honour."

“Ah! what will become of his soul, dear lady?”

“Waken him, then, the wretched man — God will protect us.”

“Women! Devils!”

Duncan's resolution was taken with the instantaneous promptitude of the backwoodsman. He stood upright in the frail bark; a motion of his foot dashed it against a rock, on which he sprang. For a moment it seemed that he would be hurled over it into the water by his own impetus, but he recovered himself, and at the same time the course of the canoe was suddenly checked, and the head whirled round. He held in his hand the rope by which he was accustomed to tie it to a bank. Rapidly he pulled in the light craft. Mary was nearest him. He attempted to drag her out, letting go the rope at the same time. His purpose was evident — to save her and let his wife go over the Fall. The struggle was strange and wild, between the fierce bandit and the delicate girl. She grasped the boat with both hands, and planted one foot against the rock. The ruffian passed his arm round her waist; he forced off, first one hand, then the other, but not both at once: with all his violence he could not succeed in shaking her free. Seizing the end of the rope again, by an immense leap he sprang upon a broader rock lower down. The canoe shot past like lightning,

but again it was checked, and he drew it again towards him. Mary had already taken the knife from her bosom, and begun to sever the rope. The blade cut well, but the rope was tough, Duncan pulled hand over hand, uttering savage imprecations. He caught at the prow just as the last strand of cord was parted — but in vain; and Mary, hitherto silent, threw the knife into the stream with a cry of joy.

Two hundred feet of swift water sped between them and the green edge of the cataract.

“Will you be baptized, Dorothy?”

“Yes!” cried the neophyte, bending her head.

Mary dipped her hand in the rushing waters on whose steed-like back they were irresistibly borne, and poured freely upon that humble brow, pronouncing the irrevocable formula. The canoe shot the fall.

Down it went out of sight, like a bit of plank, and the next moment rose out of the foam, and floated on. Mrs. Duncan's strong hands still grasped the fixed seat, and Mary's arms were clasped round her with a drowning tenacity. The trapper's wife was self-possessed. Both the women were panting with their plunge, but unhurt. They suffer the canoe to right itself, and to rise as far as it will. Mrs. Duncan rocks the water out of it. She holds one side while Mary gets in on the other. They bale with their hands. It is fatiguing,

but they gain rapidly; for the thin birchen shell has received no damage. Mrs. Duncan gets in. The moon looks down between the high rocks, upon a boiling fret of waters, glittering in her eye like silver, along which the canoe and the two women are borne, guideless, oarless, but safe.

But just as they were beginning to slacken the baling, and to thank God for their deliverance, a huge stone fell from above, so near them that they are covered with the splash. They looked up. Duncan was running along the cliffs. He hurled down another fragment. The height is so great that he cannot exactly calculate, but he pursues the canoe as it slowly drifts with the pacified current, hoping to strike it, or one of the women, ere it floats out into the open lake, which is just at hand. Another large stone comes. His wife is hit, and falls back, while Miss De Groot shrieks. The fiend, with an exulting curse, ran before to a point projecting like a bastion. Here was a large, loose stone that had fallen from a higher elevation. He dislodged it with difficulty from its bed, and dragged it to the edge. The canoe floated directly towards him, and Mary De Groot, holding the lifeless body of her companion in her lap, saw no means of escape. She kissed the little crucifix attached to her rosary, and gazed,

undaunted, at the murderer. A thousand thoughts rushed through her brain.

“Shall I plunge into the river to avoid that crushing mass? — but if the boat is struck by it, I shall be obliged to seek the shore, or drown. Rather than fall into that man’s power again, I will — die.”

Does her brain swim, or does she really see him leap up upon the dizzy cliff? The sharp report of a rifle shatters the silence, and the body of the ruffian falls darkly, striking the water within a few feet of his intended victim. The canoe passes on beneath the bastion-like rock, and from the shadow of the forest cast wide upon the lake below, a boat glides out into the moonlight, and ALBAN shouts.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Adowne the blackish stream that glided fast,
The faërie boat with finny coursers sped ;
And all those fays that flew above, still cast
Sweet flowers upon the living and the dead.

The Fairy Huntsman.

THE pursuers had taken a course as direct and unhesitating as the fugitive himself. Conducted by Pierre, they had struck at once for the point where he conjectured that the pilgrims would pass the night. A slight delay had occurred at the spot where Duncan had first taken to the lake, from a doubt whether the trapper had not followed the shore along which the women might possibly be returning, or at some intermediate point of which they might be taking their repose. As soon as a careful examination had ascertained the fact that he had really a canoe, his subsequent course was a matter of certain inference.

On arriving at the portage, from the extreme impatience of Alban to reach the bivouac of the females,

and ascertain their fate, he and Pierre pushed on with all speed, leaving Morrell and Courtney, who constituted the remainder of the party, to follow with the canoes. They arrived at the smouldering fire; they found the camp utensils and light bundles of the pilgrims abandoned in such a state as to prove incontestably that they had been surprised. With what terrible anxiety and impatience they waited for the other men to come up, may be imagined. Meanwhile, Morrell and Courtney, from their ignorance of the locality, had both got bewildered in the wood. Alban began to shout, in order to guide them. He sent Pierre back. While he waited alone, and almost desponding, a dark, half-naked form darted out of the thicket—the young Catherine. She had clambered over rocks, climbed trees, pierced a wilderness of vines and briers, to keep in view the boat. With quick gestures, few words, she urged Atherton to retrace his steps, for the two women and their ravisher were already going over the Falls. In a quarter of an hour, Alban and the girl (the latter flying on before like a yearling doe) had repassed the portage. Most fortunately, or rather providentially, Morrell, when he found himself on the wrong track, had, with his usual coolness, retraced his steps, and they found him just emerging from the wood close to the lake.

In a trice the canoe which he carried was relaunched. They entertained slender hopes of any greater success than that of picking up one of the bodies floating below the cataract; but before Morrell had pushed out of the lily-pads, the quick eye of the Indian girl caught the figure of Duncan running along the cliffs. The boat of the women could not indeed be seen, but the trapper's action, and Mary's shriek when her companion was struck down, sufficiently explained the case. A more conspicuous mark for a rifle-shot—a better distance—could not have been offered. Yet Atherton, fearing to miss, would have had Morrell take the rifle, but the cautious guide said that his hand was shaky with carrying the canoe. So Alban levelled, took a quick aim, and fired. With that falling form and flitting soul passed away our hero's youth.

A solemn procession dropped down the moonlit river; now breasting a silver lapse, now gliding through the clear shadow of the lining forest.

Pierre led the advance. The young Catherine sat in the bows, like an Indian girl cut for a figure-head, the "discipline" of her namesake still in her hand. The espoused lovers were side by side in the stern of this canoe. Alban's white hunting-coat was buttoned to the throat, and his shadowy slouched hat

drawn over his brow; his rifle was carefully deposed at his side. Mary was shrouded from head to foot in one of the dark blue mantles of the squaws, so often mentioned, and sent by the repentant Madeleine. In the boat which immediately followed, (Morrell's,) lay a straight, still form, wrapped decently, though coldly, in Mary's own mantle, recovered from the rocks below the Fall. A white handkerchief was spread upon the face. Last, Courtney plied a vigorous paddle, and in the bottom of the canoe (it was Duncan's) lay another form, carelessly bestowed, with uncovered visage, awfully tranquil.

The moon declined. It was when it began to grow dark that Atherton and his companion began to converse.

"Do you know, Alban, that your act to-night—so necessary—so just—puts you in an incapacity for holy orders without a dispensation? I happen to know, from the case of a young man that was the talk in Canada last summer."

"I am aware of it:—as I have no idea of seeking admission to the priesthood, the event does not give me much annoyance in *that* point of view."

"I had a faint notion that you had thought of such a thing, either in your retreat, or since," replied Mary, with hesitation.

"I can assure you that no such thought has entered my head."

There was a pause.

"Jane told me that you thought of going abroad to study a year or two in some foreign university."

"My plan is entirely changed in that regard. I intend to pursue my profession in such a manner as to enter upon its practice at the earliest possible date. Three years to study law seem to me an age at the shortest."

There was another pause.

"You say that Jane is a convert?"

"A zealous one."

"Dear Jane! I love her very much—and she loves *you*, Alban."

"I should be sorry to think otherwise.

"She will have no one but you to love her now. This step will alienate all her friends. And they will say—the world will believe it too—that attachment to you is the cause."

"To which it may be readily answered, that I was already betrothed to another when the change occurred."

"Methinks we should now contend which shall show the greatest generosity, and sacrifice most for the other's happiness."

“Whither does that tend?”

“I will give you up to Jane, and you shall resign me for her. I will allow, for the sake of peace, that the prize of generosity is *yours*,” she replied, with quickness.

“And what do you propose to do with yourself, when this arrangement is concluded?”

“While papa lives I shall always have a duty in the world — but fear not for me: in a thousand ways I shall be abundantly rewarded and consoled.”

“Suppose, Mary, that the case were reversed, and that it were a rival of mine in whose favour this exchange was proposed. Would you — could you — be generous, and take him in my place?”

“Alban!”

“Answer me — for as you would answer, so will I.”

“I would die first! Good Heaven! The case is not the same. I am a woman. You, Alban, have already loved once and again. Jane herself has been regarded by you with passionate feelings.”

“It may be so. But my hour of fickleness and folly is past, I trust. The affection I bear you is changeless as the stars above us. You ask of me, therefore, something from which not merely my fidelity, but my delicacy revolts. No! Like the slave of Eastern story, I can resign you to my Lord without

a murmur, but do not expect me to give myself to another."

And so there was another pause — longer, more still than the former ones. The water rippled along the canoe, and the paddle dipped with its peculiar quiet. Mary had drawn her mantle over her face, so that nothing could be discerned under the hood-like folds but the gleam of the eyes, even so near as Atherton was. This boat, with its freight of youth and love, was almost as still as those which conveyed the dead and the eternally separated.

In fine, it was not until they disembarked at the grove behind the mission that this silence terminated. The walk to the house was short; it lay through the patch of wood and the rear of the garden. Considering that her feet were free from shoe or moccasin, Alban would willingly have carried Mary, but she would not suffer it. She wound the mantle closely round her with one hand, and stepped along with the elastic tread of a forest maid. The young Catherine bounded on before them.

"Forgive me, and forget what I have said," said she, as they approached the outer door of her own apartment, where they were to part company. "If I had known your feelings, I would have died sooner than have spoken so."

She had slackened her pace to say it.

“An apology from you is more than enough. One kind word would have been sufficient.”

“I am quite sure now that I have no vocation,” said she, in a clear voice — “quite sure since last night. I fell asleep upon the martyr’s grave, you must know, and my mother appeared to me again: — do not laugh at me, Alban — I have a proof, in which I cannot be deceived, that I ought to believe the vision true.”

“I dare say,” he replied, with a laugh that came from the bottom of his heart: it was so rich and genial — like his father’s — and seemed to vibrate, but without causing her fear, all around the listening girl.

“Do not embrace me to-night,” she answered, extending her hand, “for I am yet in the garb of a pilgrim, and we have brought such mournful company back! — Must it be so? Well, then — ah! enough! — Brave and gentle friend! In these coming years of which we have spoken, if Alban is constant, Mary De Groot will be faithful.”

Thus life springs up under the footsteps of death; flowers bloom at the base of the sarcophagus; and the youth of the world is eternally renewed.

CHAPTER XXV.

Est enim centrum quoddam amoris Deus, in quo dirigit omnem creaturam pondus amoris.

St. Thomas of Villanova.

I see him stand before the altar with a gentle bride.

Compitum. The Road of Lovers.

“THE novena is over, and the octave too:—I am sorry,” said Jane.

“Every thing on earth must end, you know. In New York you shall make as many novenas as you like, and the octaves will wax and wane, like moons, as the great Festivals come and go.”

“It is strange to have lived so long without knowing the only things worth knowing.”

“They will soon be so familiar that you will forget you were ever ignorant of them.”

“I wonder if it is so in Heaven.”

“Our thrice-happy friend, Mrs. Duncan”—

“Call her Mary Catherine!” said Jane. “I cannot bear that other name.”

"She could tell us."

"If Dorothy is in Heaven, and sees God as He is, why may we not pray to her?"

"So we may. For my part, I do."

"Yet Father Smith sung a solemn mass of requiem on the day of her funeral."

"We never know, of course; but would that I were as sure of Heaven, as I feel that she is there."

"How surprised Henry Atherton will be at the result of our expedition!" said Jane. "I long, yet dread, to see them again."

"By his letter, he would seem not to be unprepared. And poor Mr. St. Clair will be consoled in one point of view, more than he will be grieved in another."

"Hush!" answered Jane. "Do you think that your father is really strong enough to bear the journey?"

"They will contrive a litter for him at the portages, and the rest, you know, is easy. To-day is the ninth of November. The Indian summer is soft, but we must expect nipping weather soon among these lakes, all say."

"Alban saw snow on the Adirondack, the day he was out for deer."

"True, and he wishes to hunt a day at Cold

Spring Lake, on our return," said Mary, with a gentle blush.

"He seems to think of nothing but sport."

"He is young."

"So are *you*, Miss."

"He is a young *man*."

"Is that why he prefers your father's society and Father Smith's to ours?"

"He cares for *something* besides sport, you see—their conversation."

"There they are as usual in the door. Let us go and see if your father is well wrapped up."

"Perhaps we shall intrude."

"Oh, nonsense!" said Jane.

"I am opposed to your narrowing your mind down to the pursuit of an exclusive profession," said Mr. De Groot. "We need some men of a thorough, but more expanded culture. Your original idea of studying for a year or two at a foreign university was a just and sensible one, nor do I see the least reason why you should change it. I wish we had such a thing as a University in this country, but we have not. You must then go abroad to obtain this magnificent advantage, and there is no reason why you should not, for, as you yourself once said, we are essentially Europeans:—we have changed our sky, but not our

minds. As for the expense — you must not touch your little scrip, of course. There is no humiliation in receiving from a paternal friend, who has the greatest possible interest in the development of your talents, the facility of completing your education. My return is to arise from your future glory. Three years is not too much for you to spend in study and travel — in a manly way — *alone*. You will worship in Rome and philosophize at Athens. You shall also see the splendid life of London and Paris, and study the social problems offered by their respective countries. Europe is a great phenomenon. And you must know the Old World — you are capable of reading its cipher — in order to comprehend the New.”

“And what is to become of Mary while ‘Mr. Alban, is doing all this?’” inquired Jane.

“I wish to keep Mary at home till she is married,” replied her father tenderly. “Women should be penetrated with the spirit and imbued with the love of their own country. New York and the Manor, and our own land, will do for my daughter, till her husband thinks fit to show her the rest of the world. These denationalized young ladies, whose native sympathies have been all exchanged for the love of operas, and *bals*, and ‘society as it is in Paris,’ are my aversion, Miss Jane. There is noble female society in Europe,

but there, as here, it is local, and is found only in the shade."

"Well, all I know is," answered Jane gaily, "that if I were Mary, I never would trust Alban across the water for three years by himself."

"Perhaps she has the same opinion as you, of the danger," observed Alban, "but is proud enough to put my fidelity to the test."

"And if her betrothed prove faithless," interposed Father Smith, in his most courteous foreign manner, "you are aware, Miss Jane, that your friend has always a resource."

"Pray, do not speak of that," said her father hastily. "Since the condition no longer exists *on which her mother's threat was suspended*—since I acknowledge that human nature is guilty and expiation necessary—surely my loving Foe has laid aside her hostility, and will suffer me to be happy in our daughter. You were present, my good father—was not such the drift of her dying prophecy?"

The ecclesiastic smiled:—"Ah! monsieur, I told you then that Almighty God would not let such words fall to the ground. I don't say it was a prophecy, mind. But the fulfilment is what I call—remarkable—certainly, remarkable. Yet observe," continued the Jesuit, "I do not say that there is

any thing miraculous in all that has occurred. To be sure, there have been a good many extraordinary coincidences, but every one can be accounted for by strictly natural causes. For example, the dream of Miss De Groot, when at school, was probably an effect of her imagination being excited by an incident which had occurred a little time before, united with the conversation of her schoolfellow on the subject of the guardian angels:—was it not? This schoolmate died the same day on the following year, you will say:—but there is nothing miraculous in that,” said the Father, laughing slightly, and shrugging his shoulders. — “People die all the days in the year, you know! as well one day as another. It was providential, I allow: so is every thing that happens, however apparently fortuitous. I don’t deny that. On the same principle, if you *choose* to consider Miss Mary’s baptism as a fulfilment of her vision, by a kind of spiritual interpretation,” added he, smiling once more, but gravely, “it is nothing more than a coincidence, after all, that it took place on the day predicted. The same secret Providence, by the ordinary operation of second causes, brought about both — the dream and the accomplishment. The same reasoning holds good in regard to your father’s sudden recovery, my dear child. For observe, such crises are

not uncommon in all diseases, and we know too little about the laws of the nervous system, especially in disease, to be able to say that your father, who was in a most sensitive condition, mind! and whose whole consciousness was undoubtedly concentrated upon his daughter, might not have been aware, naturally, by remote sympathy, or overhearing our conversation, that something extraordinary had occurred to her."

"You believe in Mesmerism, sir?" demanded Alban.

"Not at all: neither do I disbelieve any thing that pretends to be purely natural. All I say is that the laws of nature are very imperfectly known to us. Our excellent friend here, may have recovered by the mercy of God, and as a direct answer to our unworthy prayers, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, of course, and yet from natural causes; and the Almighty, who is the real Mover of all such effects, could easily cause the cure to be simultaneous with the consummation of a holy penance, in order that we might give Him the glory, as is due."

"You allow, then, that the cure was obtained by our prayers?" said Alban.

"Of course, my dear friend. You don't take me for an *infidel*—do you?" exclaimed Father Smith, or rather de Mornay, laughing at the idea.

“But there is one circumstance, Father,” interposed Jane, who had listened very uneasily to this explanation — “there is one circumstance, at least — which cannot possibly be accounted for except by a miracle.”

The priest’s countenance was as impenetrable as the Iron Mask, as he replied —

“If you know any circumstance with which I am unacquainted, Miss Jane, — eh? I cannot speak in regard to any thing that I do not know.”

Jane blushed, and so did her friend, who said, rather quickly and reproachfully,

“What depends on my sole testimony had better not be told. God has been very good to us all, I am sure, and that is enough.”

“I think so,” rejoined Father Smith, with a glance of mixed affection and regret towards his spiritual daughter.

“The circumstance about which you affect so much secrecy,” observed Atherton, “is known all over the village, through Catherine. For my part, I cannot help regarding it as a signal act of grace that the only particular, in this long tissue of events, which comes under the head of a positive command to any of us, and one that the person might feel some scruple in obeying, has been attested, beyond the possibility of her doubting the source whence it came. And if you

consider, Father," added he, addressing the missionary, "how easily a lovely friend of ours might have been led by such events to miss her true calling in life, to the danger of her happiness here and her salvation hereafter, you will agree with me that such a clear note of guidance was almost necessary.

"Never mind what they say," Jane whispered in her friend's quite crimson ear. "Perhaps after all you will have the merit and the happiness to choose the BEST PART."

For Jane herself had chosen it—with a prompt and perfect generosity—from the first moment of her conversion. And with a calm, unaffected heroism, she fulfilled her first resolution. In the devoted order which she has since entered, is no servant of the sick and poor, no spouse of the Eternal Bridegroom, no handmaid of the sanctuary, more self-denying, more assiduous in holy contemplation and prayer, and yet more cheerful, more unpretending, more compassionate to the weakness of others, than Sister Mary Catherine.

She claims no merit either in her conversion, or in embracing the religious state: for she thinks that she was led to both by a disappointment of the affections; but her delicacy on that score is one of the last remains of earthly feeling still cherished by the

once soft-hearted Jane: she never speaks of it; and one only knows her sentiments (for hers is not a cloistered order) by an expression which she habitually uses when she hears of any young person of her own sex who has met with a similar misfortune — “When the Spouse of souls woos so roughly, it is a sign that He is in earnest.”

For it is useless to criticise as unsuitable the method by which the Creator captivates the will of His creatures into submission to Himself. Some are driven, some are led. The most common channel of influence, perhaps, is unperturbed natural affection. God deals with those whom he would win, as wise *men* do. He resorts not to extraordinary means, when ordinary are sufficient. It is a divine election which by the love of our natural parents brings us into being and gives us the advantages of our lot; and it is the same grace which makes a human friendship, or the illusion of youthful love, the occasion of our being introduced into a higher life. These human affections are His, and He knows how to play upon them, as a cunning musician upon his instrument, so as to adduce a spiritual and immortal harmony from material and perishable chords.

The heart, O Lover of men, is Thine own! it loves not but by Thy inspiration; and love (which

can find no other satisfaction) ever leads back to Thee, from whom it proceeded. Fount of Love, Thou art also its ocean; and the stream that has fertilized its own peculiar valley of earth,—if it waste not unhappily in the sands of time,—as it came first from Thy inaccessible mountains with their chaste, eternal snows, which melt but waste not, for Heaven feeds them, shall lose itself at last in Thy all-embracing deep. Thou sendest Thy rain upon the just and the unjust, even the rain of Thy grace. What merits not eternal life, may yet be a disposition that conducts to it. We are Thy children before we know it, before we are of Thy fold. In the bosom of our families, in the communion of our Churches, (handmaids and Hagers of Thy true Spouse) captivated for a time by whatever passion, seduced by whatever semblance of our lost EDEN, or our promised SALEM, it is not our wisdom that finds Thee, but Thy wisdom that finds us, and Thy pity that bears us on Its shoulders home.

CONCLUSION.

So far had we written, and here intended to stop, when it was suggested to us that some might feel curious to know a little more definitely what became of Alban and Mary De Groot. The subsequent career of the former it fell within our original purpose to describe at large, but as we have abandoned that idea, it may be well to give it here in brief.

In spite of all Mr. De Groot could say, our hero bent himself forthwith to the work of acquiring his profession. It was as well that he did so. In about a year came the collapse of the land speculation, and the fall of real estate, which most of us can remember; with the crisis of '36-7; and the outbreak of anti-rentism. The tenants of Wallahook refused to pay their manorial lord his rents; they mobbed his collector, tarred and feathered the sheriff who attempted to enforce the law, and rose in insurrection against the military power of the Empire State. Lastly, they defended against their Patroon an infinite number of vexatious suits, that jeopardized his rights, and ate up his income in the very process of securing it. In fine, the few rich farms that pertained to the Manor

itself, and the wiser or more honest tenants, who discharged the obligations by which they held their lands, scarcely sufficed to meet the charges encumbering so old and great an estate, and the expense of keeping up the noble Manor-house.

Meanwhile, rents in New York went unpaid from a different reason, and, without a harshness that so lofty a person as Mr. De Groot would not use, could not in all cases be collected; a huge, floating debt, from building, furnishing, and ornamenting his house, swamped his immediate resources; and, lastly, he had been so imprudent as to speculate in stocks during the inflation of '35. There were times in '36-7, when he was forced to borrow money of old Mr. Atherton to meet his household expenses, and Mary De Groot could dispense no charity that was not hardly earned by the labour of her own ingenious fingers, as if she had been the daughter of a merchant's clerk or a pinched and salaried book-keeper. As time went on, matters grew in some respects worse, as those who recollect the course of events in those discouraging years can easily imagine. The expense of the law-suits was not felt till after a year or two, and the various city losses did not at an earlier period adjust themselves finally into an alarming deficit. There was so much property, that really

nothing but patience was necessary to extricate it; and yet it seemed that a considerable portion of the New York real estate must be sold to clear the rest.

This extreme point of depression in the fortunes of Mr. De Groot was reached in the year '39. Alban was just admitted to the bar; he was twenty-four years old; Mary De Groot was nearly twenty-one.

These long engagements are very much to be disapproved of, of course; their least unhappy effect is to take off all the fine edge of the new intimacy that marriage establishes. This is especially the case where the parties reside in the same city, and move perpetually in the same circle, and where the manners allow so much familiarity between engaged people as ours do. Let us peep, then, at a scene in the Fifth Avenue in the Spring of 1839.

Few things are more beautiful than June in Manhattan, especially in the finer parts of the western metropolis, where massive elevations of dark-brown masonry mingle with trees and gardens. Ten or twelve years ago this could not be seen; but Mr. De Groot's noble mansion then rose with an imposing antiquity of five years in its stately free-stone walls and balconies, and of forty in its fruit trees and shrubberies. In an oriel — a famous oriel — that looked upon the gardens, the tinted windows being thrown open, stood

a gentleman and lady in the flower of their youth. The former stood gravely with arms folded; the latter leaned her head against the oaken window-frame.

“Those beautiful years have passed, never to return!”

“You call them beautiful, although so clouded by seeming adversities, and always to me, at least, rendered restless by hope.”

“So is life, to the end:—it is a saying of your own.”

“True, and therefore life is exciting and interesting rather than beautiful.”

“Our friendship has been beautiful.”

“And shall be, still.”

“I fear the change.”

“And I—anticipate it with a beating heart—the time when I shall at length know you, no longer as the captivating mistress, but as the wife;—when that veil of reserve shall be at last thrown aside, for me alone of all my kind!”

The lady was silent, but her cheek replied with a great deal of warmth.

“Certainly,” continued the young man, in a deep, masculine voice, and calmly buttoning his glove, as if he had been conversing upon some idle topic of the day,—“certainly we have to look forward to the

serious part of life; you, particularly;—I comprehend the magnitude of the change to you, in forsaking the sweet mystery and self-secrecy in which you have hitherto lived, to share your thoughts, your hours, your retirement, and almost your very prayers, with another, and, above all, with one not of your own sex; to acknowledge another as your lord, where hitherto you have been lady of yourself:—yes, it is a great sacrifice. I wish I could spare it you. I would, for your own sake, keep you ever as you are.”

A faint change, between a tremor and a smile, flickered over the lady's lip; she plucked a flower from a plant that stood on the window-sill, and smelled it. She turned to her lover, but with down-cast eyes.

“Good-bye, then! Perhaps, when I go to the convent this afternoon to begin my retreat, I shall tell Sister Mary Catherine that she may prepare me a cell and robe, for that I am resolved to remain for the rest of my life.”

“Good-bye,” answered he, laughing slightly. “You cannot excite my fears. I do not wish you mine except as it is the will of God, and that will must needs be accomplished.”

She moved away to the staircase door, concealed, as we remember, in the wainscotting of the lobby, and

turned only, with one hand on the lock, to offer him the other. It was the spot where, in their earliest acquaintance, she had thoughtlessly jested with him of the pleasant thefts of lovers, and after had blushed at her own words: it was the spot where they had once parted with half-estranged feelings and reserved demeanour, yet with hearts, for all that, not so widely apart. A flood of memories came over her, and she burst into tears. The whole expression of his countenance instantly changed:—passion, pity, kindness, blended in a deep manly glow that overspread his face. She would fain have escaped; but his hand held hers as in a vice. The girl of sixteen, when she used to run up that hidden stair, or pass that shadowy corner of the paternal house, had been prescient, we may infer, of this moment. She bent back silently over his arm that embraced her; she blushed, all wet with tears, as the rose droops its head in a summer shower; but women, probably, can tell whether she was displeased that the repressed tenderness of years burst its bounds at such a parting. An infinite delicacy had so refined their intercourse during those years, that the passion of the youth had all its first freshness, only matured by the long summer of her beauty and goodness; and the first bloom on the modesty of the girl was no less untouched. But this was just

eight days before they were married, and they were to see each other no more till they met at the altar.

This marriage was a determination of the lover, who for six years had the sublime satisfaction of supporting his wife, and etceteras, by his own resolute industry. Since then, affairs have taken a widely different turn, and the whole family, De Groots and Athertons, have been spending several years in Europe, where leisure, study, and travel are forming, let us hope, something great of Alban Atherton.

And if the life-long possession of one who came to him as a beautiful and unsullied virgin, and not more modest than tender, with a mind as lovely as her form, should be a source of real felicity; as it certainly is the liveliest earthly image of happiness, (all the poets and romancers, and the heart of youth, being witness;) what then, again, (it is the secret moral of every tale of love, the soft understrain of every epithalamium) — what then is the bliss of possessing for ever that Beauty more ancient than the hills, and crowned by Itself with stainless youth in the Eternal Heavens!

THE END.

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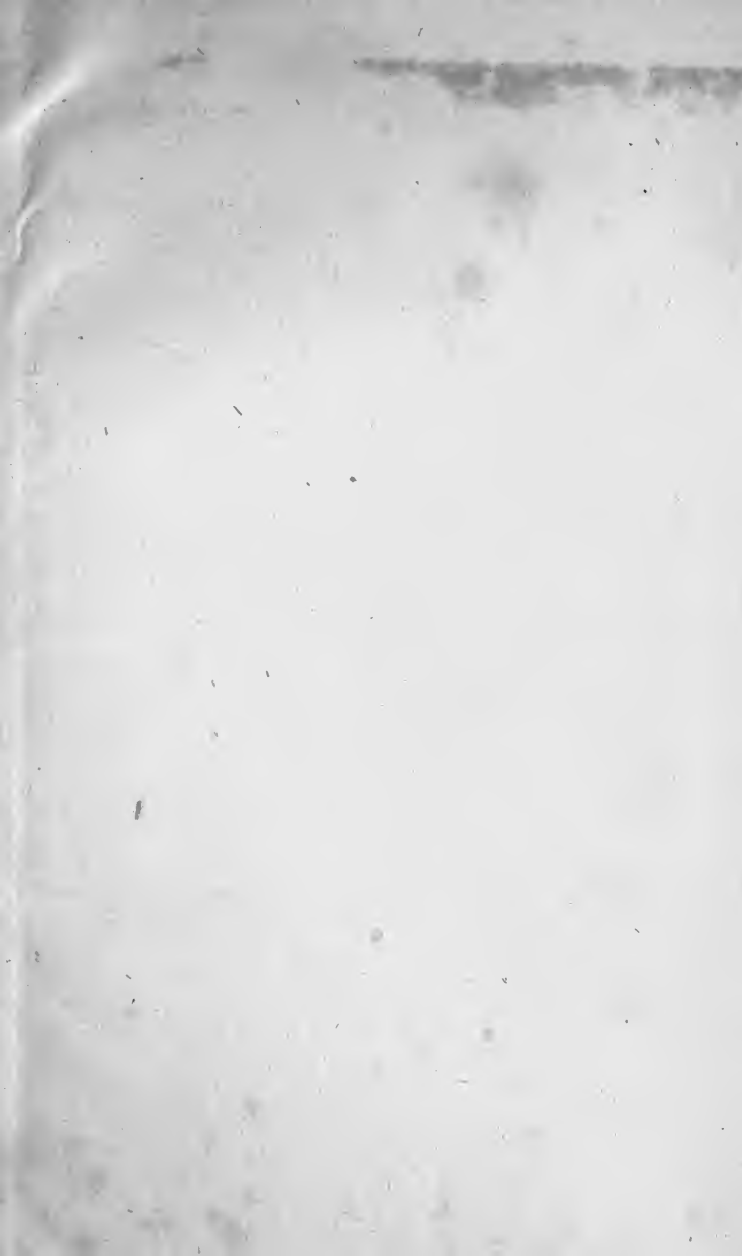
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