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Metallak; the Lone Indian of the Megalloway

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METALLAK:
THE LONE INDIAN OF THE MEGALLOWAY.

BY A MEMBER OF THE SUFFOLK BAR.

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MUTTALLAK;
THE
LONE INDIAN OF THE MAGALLOWAY.

CHAPTER I

In the autumn of '31, the writer of the following sketch had occasion to visit the Magalloway, a beautiful river of Maine. This noble stream, taking its rise not far distant from Canada line, meanders through a wild unbroken forest, some forty or fifty miles, and pours its waters in strange confusion over a shapeless mass of huge rocks, which form a steep and bold precipice, called, in Indian phrase, from time immemorial, 'Eskohos Falls.' After foaming and boiling, for a short time, at the foot of these wild and ragged Falls, and forming a turbulent but delightful sporting place for myriads of speckled trout, it shoots off in a winding course through a rich interval, covered with stately elms and luxurious blue-joint, and at last mingles its waters with those of the Androscoggin, about two miles from Lake Umbagog.

From Eskohos Falls to the Androscoggin, a distance of about thirty miles, its banks are dotted with rudely constructed log houses, and warm hovels,
evincing the hardihood and perseverance of the early settlers. As you pass along up the crooked channel of the river, fat and healthy children are seen playing about the doors, and running through the tall and rank grass—hale and hearty women carrying up water to their humble dwellings, or washing their husband’s clothes near the water’s edge—chubby, sun-burnt boys, with the worm and rod, tempting the cautious trout—herds and flocks quietly feeding on the distant hill-sides—wild ducks proudly crossing the stream, or suddenly taking their flight from its peaceful bosom—and theardy husbandman reaping the rich and golden fields of wheat.

How beautiful are these “rural sights and rural sounds” on a bright day of an ‘Indian Summer!’ In view of such delightful prospects, how forcibly is the truth of the old adage impressed upon the mind, that ‘God made the country, and man made the town.’

The writer deems it proper, in the outset of this narrative, to inform the reader that he has not drawn on his imagination for all his facts, however much he may be indebted to his memory for his wit. The only object he has in view is to describe a ‘life in the woods,’ and to point out some of the peculiar traits which appeared in the character of Mettallak, ‘The Lone Indian of the Magalloway.’ He intends to confine himself principally to facts and incidents as they actually occurred, fully believing in the maxim that ‘truth is stranger than fiction.’ There is a charm in the wilderness which crowded cities cannot afford. Here every thing remains as it was created, unpolluted by the hand of man. Without any further preface, we will commence the narrative, hoping the reader will keep constantly in his mind that what he reads is not all a dream.

Having engaged an old Umbagog trout-catcher to carry me up the river, by the name of Jones, whose bushy beard and tattered clothes bespoke a long life in the woods, I started from the southern shore of Lake Umbagog in a birch canoe, steering a north course, and, after padding our frail bark about five miles, half the length of the Lake, we came to the ‘outlet,’ which forms the Androscoggin river. We descended this stream about two miles, when we entered the mouth of the Magalloway, which is boatable, with but few interruptions, some sixty or seventy miles into the forests towards Canada. We ascended this river about thirty miles, and the second day reached a wild, broken place, called ‘Eskomos,’ the Indian name for ‘Great Falls.’ Here we erected a temporary shelter for the night. Before we retired, I could not resist the temptation which the foaming waters presented, of trying the trout.—I took some dozen of the most beautiful that ever dangled on a fisherman’s hook.

In the morning, old Jones, in Indian style, lifted our birch canoe upon his head, carried it round the Falls, and placed it in the river above. We continued our course up stream for about six hours, when we arrived at an old Indian’s lodge. We entered, and found the old occupant just returned from one of his hunting excursions. His name was ‘Mettallak.’ This old son of the forest received us kindly, and treated us with the best his humble establishment afforded. We made a delicious supper of dried moose meat and trout. Mettallak and Jones were not on the most cordial terms of friendship, but however, we managed to pass the night comfortably, and, in the morning, having engaged Mettallak to pilot me over his hunting grounds, and see me safely ‘out of the woods,’ I dismissed Jones and sent him down the river.

The lodge of this solitary Indian was situated on the western bank of the river, within twenty feet of the water. This spot Mettallak had occupied for thirty years, and although the land about his dwelling was a rich intervale soil, yet not a single foot of it showed the marks of the husbandmen. He had never raised an ear of Indian corn, or planted a hill of potatoes. His whole life had been exclusively devoted to hunting and fishing. He knew nothing of agriculture; it had no charms for him. He looked upon it as a dull em-
ployement compared with the excitement of the chase, or the skill in trapping. Moose, deer, beaver, otter, and other wild game gave him sufficient employ-
ment. He had, during a long life, studied the habits of these animals, and learned their modes of living. Many years' practice in hunting had given
him a keen eye, quick instinct, and sure aim. With all their cunning and
shyness, he had become their master.
Being thus familiar with their peculiar habits, he was always sure of a sup-
ply of meat for food, and furs for market. Neither their fleetness of foot or
instinctive cunning could resist his power or elude his skill. During his long
life in the wilderness, many hundreds of moose, deer and other game had
fallen before his old fowling piece, or been ensnared in his traps. There was
good evidence of his skill in a large pile of moose bones, containing some
two or three cords, which lay in rear of his camp, and reached quite down to
the river. It was literally a "place of skulls." It looked as if an army of men
might have been fed from the flesh which covered these whitened bones.
In front of his lodge, towards the west, a lofty mountain rose, which had
once been covered with a hard-wood growth to its very summit, but the stately
trees had long since fallen before his hatchet, dragged from the steep sides
above, and used as firewood to warm his bark-covered hovel, during thirty
long and cold winters of this high northern latitude. From the top of this
mountain the observer could have a fine view for many miles, over the valley
of the Magalloway, and extend his eye over a vast ocean of forest trees. The
prospect from this elevation was grand and extensive, presenting wild moun-
tain scenery, rich valleys, extensive plains, rivers and lakes.
There was a beaten path running from the river, and winding up the steep
sides quite to the pinnacle of this mountain, which Mettallaik had trodden for
many years. Often had this Indian found his way to this elevated position,
and looked away to the shores of the Umbagog, where he buried his wife,
Keoka, more than thirty winters ago. The memory of this woman was dear to
his heart. He never loved but once, and then he loved with all the powers
of his soul. He had no heart to love again. It was not in his nature to carry
the ashes and cinders of his soul to a new affection. Keoka still lived in his
memory.
One evening, as we were sitting round the fire, which was blazing up
brightly from the stone fire-place in the centre of his lodge, I felt a curiosity
to know something of the operations of love upon an Indian's heart. He was
remarkably talkative this evening, rather more so than usual. He had been
relating to me, in his peculiar manner, some exciting stories about his hunt-
ing adventures, describing the instinctive craftiness of the wild animals he
had entrapped, and his dangerous encounters with wounded moose, his long
journeys, his living without food, lying upon the cold snow, with but little if
anything, to cover him, and his wonderful escapes from dangers which had
often surrounded him.
During these recitals of his hardships, and of his craft and prowess over
the wild beasts of the forest he had ensnared or run down in the chase, his
dark eyes would flash, and he would jump about the camp as though he was
fighting his battles over again. I could not but admire the quickness of his
motions, and the elasticity of his muscles, although he had then been wander-
ing through the forests of Maine more than seventy winters. My curiosity to
hear him 'tell his love' still pressed upon me, notwithstanding I felt a deep
and exciting interest in the stories of the chase. At last I questioned him
about his wife. He immediately sat down, and assumed a sedate and grave
look, gazing intensely upon the fire—not a muscle of his stalwart frame in mo-
tion, except a gentle heaving of his chest.
'How long,' said I, 'has your wife been dead?' He raised his eyes from
the fire, and fastened them upon me with an intensity of gaze which made me
shudder, chilling the very blood in my veins, and almost stopping it in its
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course to the heart. For some minutes he made no reply—a tomb-like silence reigned in the camp. Suddenly the unearthly sound of a large whooping owl came from a distant tree, waking a little grey dog from his slumbers, rousing me from my reverie, and breaking the charm which Mettallak's eyes had thrown over me.

The sepulchral tones of the owl were familiar to our hero's ears. The song of this night-bird changed not the current of his thoughts, nor shut out for a moment his Keoka from the memory of his heart.

With his dark and piercing eyes still fixed upon me, he replied, in broken English, 'Me Keoka has been dead thirty winters.' He then rose up and took down from its fastenings in the roof of the camp, a small, round, hemlock stick, about three feet long, worn quite smooth by many years' handling.—

Upon this memento of his beloved Keoka were thirty notches cut with a knife, the last notch having been made but a few days previous, showing that his wife died in the autumn, thirty years ago, and the anniversary of her death had just passed. This stick was taken from the forest by his wife, some few years before her death, and the bark taken off by her own hands, to be kept as a record of the time of her decease.

This was the only family record to be found about the premises of Mettallak's establishment, and this he preserved with the greatest care. Its loss would inflict a wound upon his heart which time could never heal.

'How old were you and Keoka when married?' said I.

'Me was twenty, and Keoka seventeen,' he replied; but me now an old Indian—never see Keoka again, but see her up there,' pointing to the clear blue sky over our heads, which could be seen through an opening in the roof of the lodge.

I then asked him why he did not get another wife soon after the death of Keoka. He turned his eyes upon me in astonishment, and pointing his long crooked finger directly at my face, as if he intended to make me feel ashamed for asking the question, replied by asking me, 'do white man have two wives?' I told him when they lost one they soon got another. He was silent for a few moments, apparently engaged in deep reflection; at last he broke the silence by saying, 'white man very wicked to have two squaws—Indian never love but one.'

I then inquired how many children he had, and he informed me he had three, one son and two daughters. I asked him where they lived. He said, pointing to the north, 'two gone to Canada, good many winters ago, and the other married white man, and live near the line.'

'Why do you not go to Canada, with your children?' said I.

He shook his black, uncombed locks, and stretching his long and bony arm towards the south, said, 'Me no go to Canada—too much ways off from Umbagog—Keoka down there.'

The true secret was, he would not leave the burial place of his loved Keoka. Many times each year he visited her grave on the shore of the lake. The only thing which marked the spot where his wife was buried, was a paddle, and as often as this signal rotted down, or was carried away, he would replace it by another. This sacred mound, under which were deposited the earthly remains of his loved Keoka, he held in everlasting remembrance. It was a green spot on memory's waste, and thirty years had not dimmed its color.

If we had time or space we might here institute a comparison between Mettallak's love for his wife, and that of the white man, in civilized life.—

The mourning days of the one were thirty years, while those of the other scarcely comprise as many weeks. But our intention is not to read a homily to faithless, forgetful man, upon the duty of loving. Our object is to record a plain, unvarnished tale, and to make a record of things which actually took place but a very few years ago.

After a comfortable night's rest upon moose skins, the only bed clothes
which this humble dwelling afforded, we made our breakfast upon smoked
moose meat and some fresh trout taken from the mouth of a brook which runs
into the Magalloway, not many rods from our lodge. These trout were the
product of my own skill in angling, which I exercised the night before. How
this angling would stir the blood of city connoisseurs of the art! Just before
sunset I walked down to the place pointed out by my old friend Mettallak,
and threw my hook into the water. In a moment, the stream was all alive
and in motion—trouts of all sizes, from tree down to a half pound in weight,
cutting and shearing in every direction, and making the mouth of the brook
look like a great boiling spring. Soon a two pounder flew at the deceitful
bait, and I pulled him ashore. The others were not in the least degree intim-
itated by seeing one of their shining fellows taken so unceremoniously from
his native element. They were ready at any moment I might present the
lure to their quick, sharp-sighted eyes, to dart at it, and fasten themselves
upon the cruel hook. During this exciting sport, I hooked quite a small trout,
and as I was drawing him from the water, a large one, weighing over three
pounds, rose from the bottom, and, with the speed of light, darted at the line,
and I threw them out both together. This is what the scientific angler calls
a doublet. In the space of half an hour I killed a dozen of these speckled
tenants of the Magalloway. My heart relented, and I was determined to take
no more lives that evening. After breakfasting upon these trout, we took
two moose skins, and some provisions, and embarked on board a birch bark
canoe for a voyage up the river. In passing up, Mettallak directed my atten-
tion to a small sheet of water, forming a kind of basin, of some two or three
acres, near the river. In the bottom of this basin grows a sort of water grass
of which the moose are very fond. They wade into the water and dive their
great heads and horns to the bottom, and feed as long as they can hold their
breath—then they raise them and blow the water from their nostrils with a
snorting which may be heard nearly a mile up and down the river.

‘There,’ said Mettallak, pointing to this basin, ‘me know moose come to
eat—see him good many times—me shoot him wenz me want him—he come
just fore sun go down.’

These remarks of my Indian guide interested me much. I felt anxious to
witness the sport of killing a moose.

‘Well, Mettallak,’ said I, ‘when can we shoot this moose? ’

‘Any day,’ he replied, ‘when it’s warm, and just fore the sun go down.’

‘Well then,’ I continued, ‘we will kill him when we return.’

‘Ugh! may be so,’ said he.

We pursued our way up the river, and arrived at ‘Parmachen Lake,’ about
dark. This is a beautiful sheet of water about a mile long and a half mile
wide, often frequented by many kinds of water fowl, otters and muskrats. We
built us a temporary camp, and passed the night very pleasantly.

The morning was cloudy, and indicated rain. If the weather had been pleasant
I should have been anxious to have returned that day, and witness the rare
sport of seeing the moose feed on the bottom of the basin pointed out to me by
Mettallak; but as the heavens wore a threatening aspect, I said nothing about
taking our back tracks.

After breakfast we shouldered our guns, and wandered round the shores of
the Lake, Mettallak taking the lead, I in the middle and his little grey dog
bringing up the rear. His master never allowed him to go ahead; for he had
more confidence in his own quick sightedness than in the instinct of his dog.

We had not passed more than a hundred rods before I heard the deep gut-
tural tone, ‘Ugh!’ In a moment the little dog whisked by me, and crouched
behind his master. Mettallak motioned me to keep still. I did so, all but the
beating of my heart. I dropped upon my knees, and anxiously awaited the
effects of these movements. I knew not on what kind of game the keen eye
of my guide had fastened. I saw him carefully and cautiously creeping along
through the thick underbrush, his dog close at his heels, now gently rising up, and anon stealthily dropping down, his head inclining first one way and then the other. I could hear nothing but the violent throbbing of my own heart. There was not a breath of wind to stir the leaves, and the old hunter made no more noise in his course, than the serpent winding his way over the moss-covered rock. I kept my eyes intently fixed on Metallak, expecting every moment to hear the report of his old fowling piece. He was about three rods in advance of me. His 'faithful dog' had noiselessly crept close to his side, trembling and whining in tones scarcely audible, as though his province now was to charm the game by his peculiar music.

Slowly and steadily I saw the gun rising to his shoulder. The dog began to tremble more violently, and to increase his whining; a moment, and the hills and valleys echoed to the sound of his deadly weapon. Both the dog and his master simultaneously sprung through the thick fir trees, and, in a moment, were lost to my sight. I instantly rose from my kneeling position, and followed after them. I found the old hunter on the shore of the Lake, and his dog swimming through its smooth waters. Soon he returned, bearing in his mouth a beautiful sheldrake. He laid it on the shore, shook the water from his sides, and smilingly looked up into his master's face. Metallak pointed to two more of these noble birds which were fluttering and floundering on the peaceful bosom of the Lake. The dog again plunged into the water, and brought them safely to land.

'Me no kill 'em all,' said Metallak. 'Me kill all but two.' There were five in the flock, and two of them escaped unhurt.

'There,' said the old hunter, pointing out into the Lake, 'there be two—they dive—they swim.' About twenty rods from the shore I saw the two which had escaped the fatal shot, swimming for the middle of the Lake.

'Now,' said I, 'let me shoot them.' The cunning old fellow looked me in the face, smiled, and shook his head.

'Too much way off,' said he, 'no shoot 'em agin.'

'But,' said I, 'they will swim near the shore on the other side, and then I can shoot them.'

He bent his sharp eyes upon me, and a peculiar smile played over his dark features, as much as to say, 'you're green.'

'They no come near bushes agin,' said he, 'they keep off in water.' And they did keep off in the water, two or three gun shots from the shore, and remained through the day.

These birds are somewhat larger than the black duck, and extremely shy. Their color is dark, a whitening ring about their necks, and white feathers upon the under sides of their wings. They are found at all seasons of the year in these regions, even in the dead of winter. In the coldest weather, when the lakes and streams are closed with ice, they may be seen in the outlets of the Lakes, which seldom, or never freeze over, and afford pleasant bathing and feeding places for these hardy birds.

We took up our game and line of march, travelling along the solitary shores of the Lake, without seeing much to excite or interest us, except the beautiful water prospect, and the wild scenery which surrounded us.
CHAPTER II.

After we had reached the upper end of the Lake, Mettallak pointed to a mountain which arose in the distance about half a mile off, and said, 'me kill hutok there—may be some there now.' Hutok is the Indian name for deer.

'Well,' I replied, 'we will go there, and see if we can find some.' We started and in a short time reached the base of the mountain. Here Mettallak made a halt, and turning round to me, said, 'hutok very shy—smell great way off—see quick through bushes.'

I understood this caution from the wily old hunter, and governed myself accordingly. We proceeded slowly up the side of the mountain, wending our way over wind-falls and through the entangled underbrush, until we came to a large rock which projected from the mountain about a third of the way to the top, and ran up nearly twenty feet high. While standing near the foot of this rock, I heard a sort of a drumming noise, not exactly like the drumming of a partridge, although it somewhat resembled it.

'What's that noise,' said I.

'A spruce partridge what white man call,' replied Mettallak.

'There,' said he, pointing to the top of a fir tree, 'see him.'

I looked in the direction he pointed, and upon the top of the tree I saw a dark colored bird, specked with white, his comb and gills of a fiery red, about two thirds the size of a common partridge. While we stood gazing at this novelty among the feathered tribe, he spread his wings, and gracefully hopped from the topmost branch of the fir tree, and slowly descended to the ground. During his passage down he kept his wings in violent motion. This was his mode of drumming, differing from the common partridge, which sits upon a log when he goes through this exercise.

'Let me shoot him,' said I.

'Ugh!' muttered Mettallak. 'Gun scare 'em hutok—me kill him without gun. And upon this he took up a dry branch of a spruce tree, and went towards the bird. He was then upon the ground. Seeing the old man approach, he hopped up into the tree, and sat there quite patiently. Mettallak deliberately went under the tree, and struck the innocent bird to the ground. These birds are very tame; they seem not to regard man as their enemy. Their flesh is black and tough, not making a very savory dish, even after it has been subject to the culinary process. These birds are not hunted for their food, and this is one reason, perhaps, why they are so tame.

After the performance of this feat, which was done more to please me than to gratify any hunting propensities upon such small game, Mettallak ascended the rock for the purpose of reconnoitering, and there he stood on the very pinnacle of this granite elevation, his blanket carelessly hanging upon his shoulders, and fastened at his waist by a moose-skin girdle, looking like some ancient statue representing the god of the wilderness, if heathen mythology furnishes such a deity. At any rate, his proud bearing and noble mien indicated that he felt he was 'monarch of all he surveyed.' He remained in this imposing attitude some minutes, silent, turning his head in every direction, and sending his keen glances along the sides of the mountains, through its ravines, and over its craggy broken ledges; at last he gently sank down, and, cautiously creeping from the rock, came softly to me, saying in a tone just above a whisper, 'me
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see 'em hutok—two hutok,' holding up two of his long copper-colored fingers the more strongly to impress me with the fact that he saw two deer. This information was peculiarly gratifying.

He now began to prepare his gun for the sport, drawing a charge of shot, and putting in its place a brace of balls. 'Now ready,' he said, 'now we go.' I felt anxious to have a shot at these roammers of the forest, and asked the old fellow to grant me the privilege of trying my skill. He looked at me doubtfully, and replied, 'hutok run—he see you—he hear bushes crack—me lead you where you see him good ways off.' This satisfied me, and I very readily yielded to his superior craft and skill.

I followed him until we had crossed a deep ravine which made down a steep of the mountain, and reached quite an elevation upon the other side. Here Mettallak requested me to stop; first placing me in a position from which I could see the deer about sixty rods distant. One stood upon a ledge of rocks about half way down the mountain's side, and the other was cropping some wild grass but a few yards from his fellow.

It was now nearly noon. The sun had burnt away the clouds which lowered in the morning sky, and a slight breeze had sprung up from the north. The day was bright and beautiful. A frost had tinged the leaves of the trees, and given them a great variety of colors. The forest never looked more beautiful. I felt that I should be willing to spend my whole life in gazing upon such scenery. About a mile below me, 'Parmachena Lake' spread out its beautiful sheet of crystal water—the noble Magalloway, bright as a stream of molten silver, meandered through an unbroken forest many miles to the south—lofty mountains reared their cloud-clapped heads to the skies—Umbagog and several other large lakes glittered in the noon day sun, far to the south and east. The whole presented one of nature's most beautiful panoramas.

But the deer—these bright and beautiful creatures attracted my attention more, at this moment, than all other surrounding objects. Mettallak had been gone some time, and every moment I expected to hear the sound of his gun reverberating over hill and valley. The deer that stood upon the ledge of rocks still remained there, the other had wandered round the ledge out of my sight. I kept my eyes steadily fixed upon the one on the rocks, anxiously waiting to hear the sound of the gun, and see the creature take his last leap.

While straining my eyes, and listening most intensely, I saw the deer leap from the rocks, and bound away, but heard no report of Mettallak's gun. Soon I heard the bushes rattle not far distant from where I was seated, and a moment more, both animals rushed by me in the twinkling of an eye, followed by a large grey wolf, a few rods behind. As this ugly rascal passed me, he slackened his pace, turned upon me a savage, hungry look, and then passed on in pursuit of his game.

In a few minutes Mettallak arrived. His old blood was evidently stirred in his veins. His dark eyes flashed out unwonted fire, his shrivelled lips quivered, and his aged frame shook with the storm that raged within him. In his own language he muttered out curses on the wolf, which had driven away the deer. It was some time before he addressed me, he was so anxious to give vent to his troubled feelings in his true Indian dialect. At last he became more calm, and said to me, 'me kill him—me catch wolf—he no more scare hutok.'

'But how will you kill him?' said I.

'Me shoot some time—and if no shoot him—me catch him in trap,' he replied.

Our deer hunt being over, we made our way to our camp from which we started in the morning. While sitting in the camp eating our dinners, Mettallak suddenly placed his head near the ground and listened. Immediately he sprang up, seized his gun, and started out of the camp, beckoning me to follow. I did so. We hastened to a small cove in the Lake, and standing on the southern side, we saw the deer plunge into the water upon the opposite
shore, and swim towards us. My heart was in my mouth; I could scarcely breathe, my excitement was so great. In the hurry of the moment I had forgotten to take my fowling-piece, and there I stood, a harmless inoffensive being, watching the progress of the deer as they swam directly towards us.

Mettallak suddenly put his hand upon my shoulder and pressed me down upon the ground. 'Keep still,' said he, 'me see wolf' where hutok went in water—he soon come round and me shoot him, may be.'

I remained upon the ground watching the deer, while Mettallak was peering along the shore, intently watching the movements of the wolf. The deer soon made the shore where we were, not a rod from us. They came up from the water, stood a moment gazing upon us with their round full eyes, and then darted off into the thickets. Mettallak never turned his eyes upon the frightened creatures, so intent was he in gazing after the wolf. His whole soul was absorbed in a single thought—the death of this savage beast. I sat watching every motion he made, trembling in every limb, and fearing the wolf might escape his aim, I saw him take one step aside to the right, suddenly raise his gun, and the same instant a sharp report went booming over the waters of the Lake.

The little dog was first on the ground where the wolf was dragging himself along. He was careful, however, to keep at a very safe distance, flying round the savage monster, barking and bristling up at him, but quite sure not to come within biting distance. The wolf was fatally wounded; a bullet had passed through the small portion of his back, rendering his hind legs entirely useless. He could raise himself upon his fore legs, and in this attitude he was disposed to 'show fight.' Mettallak walked round him in triumph. 'Ah!' said he, addressing himself to the wounded wolf, 'me got you now—you no more chase deer—no more kill lamb.'

'Mettallak,' said I, 'you ought not to exult over a fallen foe.'

'Me know more of wolf than white man—me seen him good many years—he chase Keoka once—he all one devil—me always kill him,' he hurriedly replied.

During the above short dialogue, this veteran son of the forest exhibited strong and determined feelings of revenge upon the whole race of wolves; and yet when he pronounced the name of his long buried Keoka, the loved one of his heart, a soft twilight of the soul came over his dark agitated countenance, and the tears flowed freely down his bronzed cheeks. The memory of his Keoka, under all circumstances, whether in the excitements of the chase, or at rest upon the moose-skins in his lodge, was the master feeling of his soul. He loved, and he loved but once. The image of the companion of his earlier life was imprinted upon his soul, never to be effaced so long as the blood coursed through his veins, and his heart continued to beat.

The wounded wolf still lived. He had ceased to struggle as when we first surrounded him, and our little dog contented himself by crouching upon his hind legs at a respectful distance, and watching every movement of his savage foe. He laid upon his belly, and kept his fierce grey eyes fixed on Mettallak as though he recognized him as an old enemy.

The old hunter began to reload his gun. This movement roused the beast from his recumbent posture, and he attempted to drag himself from the scene of danger; but he was too weak to make much headway.

I asked the privilege of putting an end to his existence, but Mettallak shook his head, and said, 'No, no—me must kill him.' I could not prevail upon him to let me fire, and he raised his gun, and a bullet passed through his head. The savage creature darted one piercing glance at Mettallak, fell over backwards, and expired on the spot.

It was now the little dog's turn to revenge himself upon the wolf. Soon as his master had fired, the little fellow sprang towards the dead body, stopping within a few feet of it to make himself sure that there was no danger from
the sharp teeth which he had before so much dreaded, and then jumped upon
the lifeless carcase, tearing out the coarse grey hairs by mouthfuls, and doing
all in his power to kill the poor creature over again. His master stood and
looked on the scene with great calmness, smiling to see the little cur so full of fight
and resolution, and willing to let him have a few short moments in which to
gratify a feeling which bore so strong resemblance to his own.

After our courageous, four-footed companion had slaked his thirst for re-
venge, he left the body of the wolf, came towards his master, wagging his tail,
his jaws tangled with grey hairs, his tongue hanging out of the side of his
mouth quivering and distilling big drops of saliva, and threw himself upon his
haunches, looking up into his face and seeming to say, 'there, I'm satisfied.'

Mettallak then took his hatchet and severed the wolf's head from the lifeless
trunk, and we left the scene of action.

It being towards night-fall we went to our temporary Lodge, and there par-
took of some refreshment. While we are engaged in this pleasing exercise, a
bird, somewhat larger than a robin, of light blue color, hooked bill, and well
pointed talons, came and perched himself on one of the stakes which supported
our frail tenement, within three feet of our heads.

'Look there,' said I, pointing to this strange bird, 'what is it?'

Mettallak answered, 'what white man call meat-hawk — me fetch him down.'
Upon this he took a small stick, sharpened at one end, stuck a piece of moose
flesh upon it, and held it towards the bird. The savory smell soon quickened
his appetite, and he hopped from his perch towards the meat. Mettallak gently
withdrew the stick, and the bird followed quite into the camp. He laid the
stick down close at my side, and the fearless little hawk hopped along and
seized the precious morsel, swallowed it, and wishfully looked up for more.
He had no fear of man, and was as tame as though he had been brought up in
a parlor. These birds are seen at all seasons of the year in these forests; but
more frequently in the winter they will hover about camps as food is then more
scarce.

The next morning the sun rose bright and clear. The trees never looked
more splendidly — a white frost, during the night, had formed its beautiful
crystallizations upon the leaves, which now sparkled with the brilliancy of ten
thousand diamonds. The air was clear and invigorating; no sounds, except
the gentle murmurings of the brooks as they rippled along from the hill sides, and
fell into the Magalloway, disturbed the almost oppressive stillness of the forest.

Mettallak had not yet arisen from his moose-skin couch. The fatigue and
excitement of the day previous had wearied his aged frame and he needed rest.
While he was enjoying his morning repose I walked out, and ascended a small
hill but a few rods from our camp. Upon this eminence I stood and gazed
upon the surrounding wilderness. I saw, written in legible characters upon
every object, the power, majesty and wisdom of God. The glorious orb of day
had just risen, his golden beams now played upon the hill-tops, and soon the
mountain sides were bathed in a flood of light. The vapors which rested upon
the calm bosom of 'Parmachen Lake' began to rise and show its mirror sur-
facer. A long, crooked line of white fog, stretching towards the south, marked
the course where flowed the waters of the Magalloway. Along the gentle
slopes of the hills a few fleecy clouds of vapor were seen lingering upon the
tops of the trees, apparently afraid to rise upon the mountain's summit, lest
the rough winds should meet them there. Underneath bubbled the pure
waters of crystal springs in which the wolf and the deer were wont to slake
their thirst, when wearied in the race of life or death. While standing and
gazing upon the beauty and grandeur of the wilderness, how solemn and im-
pressive was the scene before me! This, thought I, is the great Temple of
Worship, not made by human hands, in which the Indian and the white man
may send up to Heaven their morning and evening orisons. Here a holy fire may be kindled upon the altar of the human heart, which no selfish thought can quench, or unholy desire put out. Reader! Did you ever witness a sunrise in the vast unbroken wilderness? How glorious the sight! How sublime and awful the scene!

But, alas! how weak is human flesh! How easily the mind, the immortal mind is driven from the contemplation of serious subjects! How suddenly holy impressions are scattered by some trifling incident!

As I descended the hill from which I had seen the bright sun come up, as it were, from out a vast ocean of trees, a sound struck my ear as though some living creature had disturbed the smooth surface of the Lake. In a moment I was standing on the shore, looking over the water to see what new adventure might be in store. Upon the opposite side of a small cove into which a brook emptied itself, I saw the speckled tenants of the Lake playing their morning gambols — now breaking the calm waters with their smooth, beautiful heads, and anon showing their thin transparent tails above the surface. This was a temptation I could not resist. I hastened to the camp for my fishing apparatus; Mettallak had just arisen from his slumbers, and sat upon his moose-skin, brushing back his long black hair which hung in great disorder over his strongly marked face. As I entered the camp in a great hurry, Mettallak spoke, and asked 'what you see — more wolf?' He thought from my great hurry and agitation that I must have seen nothing less, at any rate.

'No,' said I, 'going to catch trout. I saw them in the Lake.'

He smiled, and said he would go with me. We soon started out of the camp. The Lake was but a few rods distant. On my way I found a large green grasshopper, half way up a stock of blue-joint, much stiffened with the cold, where he had rested through the chilly night. I thrust the barbed hook through his body, and threw him off upon the calm bosom of the Lake, and there made him hop about with more activity than he ever exhibited in his palmiest days. Instantly a small wake in the water appeared, some twenty feet from the bait, and I saw the dorsal fin of a large trout rise above the surface; he turned partly round, suddenly moved towards the grasshopper, and as suddenly stopped before he had swam three feet. I could discover a gentle quivering of his fin while I made the grasshopper dance upon the water. My old friend stood upon the shore silently watching the movements of the trout.

'Move grasshopper away from trout,' said he, 'make 'em think he lose 'em.'

I then drew the bait towards the shore and instantly he darted at it with a sure aim, and fastened himself upon the hook. He ran off a few yards, and I snubbed him, when he rose and leaped from the water, his bright sides glistening in the beams of the morning sun like burnished silver. After playing with him, 'secundem artem,' to the great amusement of Mettallak, who thought every minute I should lose him, I drew him to the shore. His weight was but little short of four pounds; one of the handomest trout I ever saw taken from the water. He was a sight which would have made old Isaak Walton's heart leap for joy, and upset the philosophy of Sir Humphrey Davy.

The morning was now somewhat advanced, the day was warm and pleasant, and all nature smiled around us. I urged Mettallak to prepare for our voyage down the river, for I was anxious to reach the basin where the moose are wont to feed, before night-fall. We went to the river where our birch was moored, Mettallak first carefully deposited the head of the wolf in the stem of the canoe, then seated himself flat on the bottom, and beckoned me to take my place. As the little dog jumped in, his eye fell on the wolf's head, the hair upon his back began to rise like the quills of the 'fretful porcupine,' and his white teeth to show themselves between his curled lips.

'Go way,' said Mettallak smiling, 'wolf no hurt you now,' and the old man shook his sides with laughter at seeing the determined hostility of his dog.
to the wolf. It was the first time I ever saw Mettallak laugh. A smile would sometimes pass over his stern features, but he seldom was known to laugh.

Every thing being now ready, Mettallak took his paddle, and turned the canoe into the channel of the river, and the current carried us gently on our way. Our birch sat like a duck upon the water, and the least motion of the paddle would send her ahead with great speed.

In passing down I saw a square piece of birch bark fastened upon a maple tree which grew upon the bank of the river, upon which were drawn in charcoal, two images, intended to represent human beings, and the figure of a birch canoe, heading up stream. I asked Mettallak what this meant. He replied, 'two Indians gone to Canada, and some more coming.' The explanation was this; two of the Penobscot Indians had gone up the river, and they expected two more of their tribe to follow them. They had put up this rude picture to inform their brethren that they had gone ahead.

We continued on our way down the river without meeting with many interesting occurrences, except now and then a muskrat might be seen crossing the stream, or a few water fowl rising from the water, frightened by the approach of our canoe. We had now so far descended the river that I could see the mountain which rose behind Mettallak's habitation. The sun was apparently resting upon its top, and shooting his mild rays across the valley. Soon his broad, fiery disk sank behind its lofty peak, and was lost to our view. Mettallak had ceased to paddle, and sat in the bottom of our birch listening to every sound which might come over the waters of the Magalloway, or through the valley. All was still. Not a breath of air ruffled the calm bosom of the river, or stirred the leaves of the trees which grew on its banks. Our canoe, being left to her own guidance, had run her nose against the bank, and partly turned round. We remained in this position some minutes anxiously waiting to hear some sounds from the moose; for we were within a half mile of the basin. While enduring this painful suspense a sound came up the river as though some creature was making an effort to clear his nostrils from water. It fell upon our ears two or three times in quick succession, and then all was silent again.

'Mo hear 'em moose,' whispered Mettallak, and instantly turned the canoe down the stream. We had gone but a few rods and the same agreeable music again saluted our ears. As often as this snorting of the moose was heard, Mettallak would hold his paddle still in the water, and when the noise ceased, he would again ply it, and shoot our frail vessel ahead like a duck. We pursued this course awhile, and the noise kept growing more distinct at every stroke of the paddle. We had now approached within two or three gun shots of the moose. I had grown almost light headed with listening, and was afraid to stir a limb, or move a muscle, lest the creature might be frightened from his feeding ground.

With great caution and care Mettallak ran the birch towards a bend in the river, some few rods ahead, giving me to understand that after we had passed round this sweep in the stream we should come in sight of the moose. There was here a wide place in the river, and Mettallak had turned our canoe into the middle of the stream, and given her such a direction that the current would carry her round the bend-ahead of us. His paddle was noiselessly deposited in the bottom of the boat, and his gun was already at his brawny shoulder. The birch glided smoothly along, we passed around the turn in the river, and there, in full view, stood the moose in the middle of the basin. He did not discover us; for his head was at this moment under water. Mettallak waited until he had raised his head. When he did so the old hunter blazed away, and instantly the moose sprang out of the water and pitched down upon his side. He floundered in the water a few moments and limped to the shore. The little dog, soon as his master fired, leaped into the water, and swam for
the moose, and was now snapping and snarling about the noble creature as he lay upon the shore. The poor creature had received his death wound, and on reaching the dry land his strength failed him, and he fell to rise no more. He was a stately and noble animal.

We gathered round the dying creature. He laid upon his side, his head a few inches from the ground, and his large, full, round eyes gazing mournfully upon his murderers. It was a painful scene to witness. Even Metallak, who had seen thousands die, looked on the dying struggles of this noble animal with far different feelings from those which the death of the wolf excited. And well they might be different; for the last look of the moose, as he turned his fading eyes upon us, was full of pity and suffering; while the savage wolf, in his last moments, stared at us with hate and revenge gleaming from his glazed eyeballs.

After dressing our game, Metallak hung upon a tree one side of the moose, took the other and the skin to the boat, and we pushed our way for the Lodge. The sky was clear and the moon was high in the heavens, diffusing her mild beams over hill and dale. As we glided along the gentle current of the river, now and then our eyes would catch a glimpse of the moonlit water, far ahead of us through the trees, looking like burnished plates of silver scattered along the valley. "The scene looked pure as the Spirit that made it."

It was quite late in the evening when the old pilot ran our birch against the bank, close under his habitation. We landed, and soon a fire was blazing within its walls. Metallak cut some thin slices of moose meat, and put them upon the coals, and we made a most delicious supper. There is nothing like the woods to sharpen the appetite. After we had taken our meal of moose steak I could not resist the temptation of viewing the wilderness by moonlight. Metallak had crawled upon his mooseskin couch, and was enjoying that repose so necessary for his aged and storm-beaten frame. Leaving my old companion to his slumbers, I went out and ascended the mountain from which Metallak, for many years, had taken his firewood. Following an old beaten path I soon reached its summit, and as Fanny Kemble said when the Falls of Niagara burst on her view, "Good God! who can describe that scene?"

It was now midnight. I stood upon the top of a lofty mountain, solitary and alone. The clear blue sky was hung in a beautiful arch over my head, bespangled with myriads of twinkling stars, the moon was gliding on her brilliant course through the heavens, a broad expanse of unbroken forest lay far beneath, bathed in soft moon-beams, lakes gleamed up in the distance like polished mirrors, mountains raised their lofty summits in silent grandeur, and the windling Magalloway, from Parmachens to Umbagog, sparkled like a string of pearls.
CHAPTER III.

The whole landscape presented a scene of terrible grandeur. An awful silence rested upon the wide expanse below me. The stars above seemed to be looking down, and reading the inmost secrets of my soul. The silver light of the moon seemed to press heavily upon me. The gentle north wind, as it passed by, felt as though it was stirred by angels' wings. I pressed my hands upon my temples, and trembled with awe. I felt that the place on which I stood was holy ground. Innumerable hosts of spirits seemed to be hovering about in the air. I looked back into the distant ages of the great past, to the time when chaos brooded over the earth, long before the light was spoken into being. to the period when God was alone in the universe! before any worlds were made or intelligent beings created! Where—Oh! where, thought I, did God then have his Throne! The thought was dreadful! I felt as though I could leap from the mountain's top, and fly through the immensity of space. While imagination was thus stretching her pinions, the awful silence of the place was broken by the distant howling of a wolf. The horrid sound, borne along on the night wind over the valley, reached the place where I stood, and startled me from my reverie. At the same moment I heard the barking of our faithful little sentinel far down the mountain. With the nimbleness of the deer, and less than his courage, I hastened down the steep to the camp. There I found Mettallak, bareheaded, with his long black locks streaming in wild confusion over his broad shoulders, his gun in his hand, the butt resting on the earth, intently listening to the howl of the wolf.

As he stood at the door of his Lodge, erect and silent, he looked like the sable Guardian of the Night. 'Hush!' he whispered, and the little dog ceased his barking, and quietly entered the cabin door.

'You hear 'em wolf?'

'Yes,' I replied.

'Me like to shoot him,' he continued, 'but guess he no come near enough.'

We stood a few minutes in silence, when Mettallak muttered out his peculiar 'Ugh!' 'I hear two,' and at that moment I heard another of these night prowlers further down the river. Soon their howling was heard at a greater distance, and they passed off, leaving us to enjoy the remainder of the night in quietness and repose.

No sound is more dismal, more terrible to the heart than the howling of a wolf in the night, amid the silence of the wilderness. It comes upon the ear in tones which strike an awful terror to the soul. Its wailing, long-drawn notes, remind one of nothing but starvation and despair. They sound like the death-knell of every living creature. Those who have never heard the wailings of these ferocious, blood-seeking prowlers of the forest can form no just conception of their horrific yells. No sound that ever broke upon the dull ear of night, not even the dismal cry of the catamount, that terror of the Indians, would so suddenly arouse Mettallak from his slumbers, and stir up his heart with feelings of revenge, as the howling of the wolf. It invariably revived in his memory the recollections of his loved Keoka—the divinity of his soul. He well remembered the time, more than twenty-five years ago, when two of these blood-thirsty beasts followed his wife a long way through the woods, with her first born pappoose strung upon her back, and he swore eternal revenge upon the whole race.
The story, as I learnt it from the lips of Mettallak, was this. His wife was some two or three miles from their Lodge, which was then located near the 'North Bay' of Lake Umbagog, hunting for birch bark for the purpose of constructing a canoe. While she was in the act of stripping a birch tree, with her child stretched out, and bound upon her back, she heard a rustling among the bushes not far distant. Turning her eyes to the place whence came the noise, she beheld a wolf sneaking about and watching her movements. At first she was somewhat frightened, but soon recovered her courage, and threw towards him a pine knot, thinking she might drive the hungry monster away. Immediately he pointed his nose upwards, and began to howl. The dismal sound reverberated through the solitary woods, and soon another made his appearance. They now began to show their teeth, and approach the woman. She seized a dry limb of a tree, and made a retreat. Instantly the wolves encouraged by this movement, pursued, apparently determined to suck the blood of her or her child. She fought them off as well as she could, and continued her course towards the Lodge. But these blood-thirsty savages were not so easily to be driven from their prey. They continued to follow with increasing rage—now springing forward and seizing her blanket, and then retreating before her well directed blows. During these conflicts she struck one of them across the back which seemed, for a time, to arrest his attacks upon her. He lagged behind, and the other was somewhat fearful of engaging in the contest alone.

Encouraged by this favorable turn in the battle, she hurried along with all her strength. She had now left the wolves some distance behind, and, looking back, she saw them together apparently consulting what course to pursue.

She continued her rapid steps towards her home. The wolves, after stopping a few moments, set up a howl as a token of their unabated rage, and pursued their prey. She heard their rapid footsteps and hard breathings close behind her; and, just as they had overtaken her, in the hurry and excitement of the moment, she stumbled and fell upon her face. In an instant the savage creatures sprang upon her back. She felt their hot breaths upon her cheeks, and heard the cry of her child. Driven almost to desperation she rose upon her feet, and with a giant's strength shook the bloody beasts from her back; but not, however, until one of them had opened the jugular veins of her child with his sharp and pointed teeth. The taste of the blood enraged the wolves. She saw the red spots upon the jaws of one, and her child's hair tangled in the jaws of the other. The head of the fainting child fell upon the neck of the mother. She felt its quivering muscles upon her back, and heard its dying gasps close to her ear. Nerved with almost superhuman power, she flew at the wolves and drove them back. Quickened as their appetite was by the taste of human blood, they, again renewed the attack. She struck one of them a violent blow across his blood-stained nose, and he fell quivering to the ground; the other, frightened at the fate of his companion, with his bushy tail between his legs, sneaked off, and left the battle field to the heroine Keoka.

This last struggle took place not far distant from the Lodge, and Keoka was soon within its walls. When she entered, Mettallak met her at the door. Overcome by her exertions, and exhausted with fatigue she sank into her husband's arms, with her dead child still fastened to her back. Mettallak pressed the exhausted mother and her dead child to his beating heart. At this time he knew not the cause of all this trouble; soon, however, Keoka recovered sufficient strength to tell him the dreadful story. He immediately took his gun and went out to see if he could not find the murderer of his child. He knew the habits of the wolf; after he has once tasted blood and been driven from the spot, he will soon return again. Mettallak stole softly along on the trail his wife had left upon the grass and bushes. After pursuing his course a while he looked through the trees and bushes with his keen eye and saw the wolf about two gunshots ahead. He was lapping up the blood of his lifeless child, which
had dropped upon the ground during the conflict of his wife with these blood-thirsty monsters. Mettallak crept along like a snake through the bushes until he reached a large pine tree which stood within a gun shot of the wolf. He gently rose behind this tree, placed the muzzle of his gun against its shaggy bark and took a deliberate and fatal aim. The ball passed through the heart of the wolf while he was licking up the child's blood. He leaped from the ground and, with a sudden, sharp yelp fell dead upon the spot. Mettallak hastened towards the dead body; near by he found the wolf Keoka had killed. As was his custom whenever he slew a wolf, he cut off their heads and bore them in triumph to his Lodge.

Such, reader, is the story of Keoka and the wolves. Although it may not be related precisely in the same broken language in which my old Indian friend conveyed it to me, yet the facts and incidents are not in the least degree changed. If the reader could see the action, the gesticulations, the flashing eye, the knitted brow, and heaving breast of the old Indian, when he reads the story, his interest would be increased, and his feelings deepened.

We must ask the kind reader now to go with us to Lake Umbagog. Mettallak had taken me down the river and across the Lake, and we were now on the shore of the 'North Bay' where he had his Lodge in the life-time of his wife. The prospect from this spot is grand and beautiful. To the south, Umbagog presents a sheet of water about nine miles in length, surrounded by hills and mountains covered to their very summits with forest trees of various kinds.

From the shore of North Bay we passed up a gradual ascent about fifty rods to the place where Mettallak had spent many happy days with his beloved Keoka. Here he had lived upwards of twenty years, and brought up his family. There were scarcely any traces left of his former habitation. Upon the ground about his Lodge from which he had cut his firewood for so many years, a new growth of trees had sprung up, and now appeared to be the first settlers of the forest. I felt a strong desire to see the grave of Keoka. I knew she was buried not far distant.

'Mettallak,' said I, 'will you go with me to Keoka's grave?'

'He turned his dark eyes upon me, and seemed to hesitate. He stood some time in silence, looking as though he felt that the foot of the white man would pollute the sacred spot in which were deposited the earthly remains of his loved one. At last he said, 'me always go alone.'

'But,' said I, 'will you show me where Keoka is?'

He pointed his fingers to the skies, and replied, 'Keoka up there—may be you see 'er some time.'

It may be difficult to assign any satisfactory reason why he was so unwilling to show the grave of his wife. Perhaps he might think that no white man ever knew where she was buried, and if one should find out, he would tell others, and her grave become a great resort. These impressions might have been upon his mind. Again—he might not wish to have any witness his feelings or his actions while standing upon this spot so dear to his memory, and associated with so many thrilling incidents of his past life.

It is no easy work to read the thoughts of one who has been roaming over the wild forests for the long space of three score and ten years. We have no standard by which to measure him. We are acquainted with no one like him. He belongs to none of the professions of civilized life. He is neither a merchant, agriculturist, or mechanic. He knows no art, except the art of building a birch canoe, or making moccasins. He is not a member of any party or sect—whig, democrat, Tyler man or abolitionist—belongs to no church, a member of no human association, subject to none of the prejudices, prepossessiones or false tastes, or fashions which control men in the polished walks of life. He has no religious character, or what the world calls religious. He stands erect and alone before his God, poised upon his own individuality.
Such was the character of Mettallak. Rude and untaught as he was, still he loved his Keoka, and fondly cherished her memory. His love was strong and deep. No human face, however beautiful and fascinating, could, for a moment, make him forget his Keoka, or efface her image from his heart. He believed the Great Spirit made her for him, and for him alone. He felt that no human foot was privileged to tread upon the earth which covered her remains except his own. Although he thought her spirit had gone up into another world, yet he had a vague, confused idea that her body would go up also. He believed he should live with her there, as he had lived with her here. His religion, if religion it may be called, consisted in a simple belief that a Great Spirit existed, and that that Spirit would permit him to live again with his Keoka. He was no atheist. His wisdom, unlike the wisdom of some of the learned in civilized life, never taught him there was no God. He never reasoned himself into such a terrible belief. Although he had no knowledge of that Law which was given to man amidst the thunders of Sinai, or of that Gospel which was proclaimed to the world eighteen centuries ago, yet he looked forward to a future existence with bright hopes and pleasing anticipations.

Mettallak’s reluctance to go with me to the grave of his wife, increased my curiosity to see that sacred place. Once more I importuned him, but he did not seem inclined to hear me. I stepped along towards him, and putting my hand gently upon his shoulder, said, ‘Mettallak, you know I’m your friend, and would do you no injury.’

‘Yes,’ he answered, ‘me think you friend, but white man talk much.’

‘No,’ I replied, ‘I will not talk much. Show me Keoka’s grave, and white man never know it.’

He now began to appear more willing to gratify my curiosity. ‘What for,’ said he, ‘white man want to see Indian grave?’

‘O! said I, ‘your friend wants to see what you love so much.’

He stood a short time apparently in deep thought. At last he raised his head and said, ‘me go with you, if you never go twice.’ I assured him I would never visit the grave again so long as he lived.

‘Ah!’ said he, ‘you young now, may be live a good while, and go after me die.’

‘No,’ said I, ‘I will never go.’ Upon this assurance he led the way. As we were going along I observed there was no path, or any signs of human footsteps.

‘Why,’ said I, ‘do you not have a path to Keoka’s grave?’

‘Me never go same way to Keoka’s grave,’ he replied.

The truth is he was very cautious to leave no trail in going to, or returning from, this spot more dear to him than all the world beside, by which any human being could trace the way.

We passed on about two hundred rods, and at last came to the brow of a small hill embosomed in the depths of the forest. The place was wild and romantic, looking as though no mortal ever visited it before. Below us was a deep gully through which trickled a small brook, and all around was a heavy growth of trees.

‘There,’ said Mettallak, pointing up the eastern side of the hill, ‘there be Keoka’s grave.’

I started in the direction to which he pointed, and passed him. As I did so, he put his hand upon my shoulder, and pulled me gently back, at the same time saying, ‘me go first.’

He would not permit me to be first at the grave. He went on ahead and I followed him. We soon reached a small mound of earth overgrown with large trees, about half way up the hill. There was nothing to mark it as the grave of his wife except an old weather beaten paddle which was stuck into the top of what looked like a small cradle knoll. Near the grave a small bubbling spring issued from the hill-side, and ran down into the gully below. In this spring
Mettallak washed his face and hands, and wiped them with his blanket, a thing I had not seen him do since I had been with him. After he had gone through the process of ablution, he walked slowly and solemnly towards the grave, knelt down, put his hands upon the end of the paddle, and rested his face upon them. In this attitude he remained some minutes. No sound broke the silence of the place, except the gentle purling of the spring-water as it trickled down the hill-side in to the valley below. I stood and looked upon the humble Indian with strange emotions. ‘Ah!’ thought I, ‘does he pray? Does he lift his soul to the Great Spirit, and hold communion with Him? Does he “see God in the clouds and hear Him in the winds”? Does he now feel the spirit which Christians feel when they pray? Is it the love of God, or the sweet memory of Keoka which now fills his soul, and bows him in this humble attitude?’ The answers to these questions are known only to Him who hears the ravens cry, and sees the sparrow when she falls to the ground.

While these thoughts were pressuring upon my mind, Mettallak rose and left the grave. His countenance was solemn, not a smile illumined his dark features, and tears were still upon his wrinkled cheeks. We passed down the hill-side in silence, took a different course from that in which we came, and soon reached the Lake. Mettallak took me across to the southern shore, and there we parted. He went to his solitary home in the wilderness, his memory quickened, and his love for his Keoka deepened by this visit to her grave. Often did he make a pilgrimage to this hallowed place. No storms or tempests, however violently they might sweep over the forests and the lakes, could drive him from these journeys to this sacred mound which rested upon the remains of his wife. Many a time has he been seen crossing the Lake in winter on this holy pilgrimage, when thick snow storms were sweeping over its frozen surface, and tempests upturning the trees of the forest.

CHAPTER IV.

We now pass over a period of three years, at the expiration of which I again ascended the Magalloway, but I found Mettallak’s ancient Lodge burnt to the ground. There was nothing left but its ashes, and the old pile of moose bones bleaching on the banks of the river. All looked waste and desolate. It was nearly dark when I reached the place, accompanied by my former guide, old Jones. As we ascended the bank of the river, a large owl, frightened at our approach, flew from the tree on which he was perched, to another not far distant, and began her night song. Her full clear notes resounded back from the neighboring hills, and were borne along the still air over the sleeping waters of the river, until echo, far in the distance, repeated the gloomy lay as if some answering mate was joining in the song. Old Jones could never endure, with any patience at all, the whoopings of these solitary night birds.

‘Where’s my gun?’ said he, ‘I’ll strip the feathers from that screaming scare-crow before she’s many minutes older, and leave her ugly carcass to be eaten by the ravaging wolves.’ Immediately he stepped towards a tree against which his gun was leaning, seized it, and was about to put his threat into execution, when I took him by the shoulder, and said to him, ‘No, Jones, you shall not shoot that bird. She never did you any harm, and why should you kill her?’

‘I hate her infernal music,’ he replied.
'Why,' said I, 'she's only singing a song of mourning because her old friend, Mettallak, is gone, never again to return to his hunting grounds.'

'Ah! well may you say that,' he hurriedly answered, while a dark shade came over his storm-beaten features, and his dark grey eyes sparkled beneath their shaggy brows with the hate and venom of a serpent.

A deep feeling of resentment was evidently struggling in his bosom, whether against Mettallak or the owl, it was difficult to determine. One or the other, or both had apparently given him great offence.

Jones was a man of very short stature, and this was mainly attributable to the length, or rather to the want of length of his legs. They were long enough, however, to be quite bowing, and well strapped with muscles. His chest was full, shoulders broad, and his large head rested on a very short thick neck. He usually wore a long grey beard, which gave his face rather a savage look.

While the owl was sending forth her strange music from the tree on which she was fearlessly perched, Jones was fretting and dancing on his bow legs, swearing vengeance upon the whole feathered tribe of owls, and occasionally throwing a revengeful look at the tree as though he desired nothing so much as the death of that bird.

'Jones,' said I, 'what is the matter with you? Why all these spasms?'

He made no reply for some minutes, apparently absorbed in deep thought.

'Let us,' said he, 'make a place to stop in, as night is now upon us, and let the owl go.'

'But tell me,' I replied, 'why you hate the owl so?'

'I hate the owl, and her old friend too, as you call Mettallak,' he said with much feeling.

'Ah! Jones,' said I, 'here is a secret—I must have it.'

He looked at me with his sharp, twinkling grey eyes, but condescended to make no reply. I concluded he was not in the right humor to be operated upon then; therefore I made no further attempts to wring from him his secret until we had built us a temporary lodging place for the night. I proposed to erect our camp upon the spot where my old friend Mettallak had spent so many years of his strange life.

'No,' said Jones, 'I will never sleep on the same spot of ground where that old Indian slept.'

I thought it best to humor him, hoping that I might thereby the more easily induce him to divulge the secret of his hate.

'Well,' said I, 'select your own spot. It's all the same to me.'

After we had prepared a bough house, and partaken of some refreshment, I again beset Jones to tell me why he so much hated Mettallak and the owl.

'If I should tell you,' said he, 'you would let it all out down the river, and I should never hear the last of it.'

I promised him most faithfully upon my honor, never to divulge any thing he might tell me.

'Well,' said he, 'relying upon your honor, I will tell you. Some ten years ago, Mettallak used to set traps up and down the river, to catch mushquash and otter. One day, late in the afternoon, I found in one of his traps a large otter. I thought I would take him out and carry him off, and Mettallak would never be the wiser for it. It was nearly six miles down the river from where the old Indian lived. I took the otter from the trap, set it again, and started down river. I had not proceeded far when one of those infernal owls, as though he was sent by the old Evil One himself, set up a hooting over my head, and made the woods ring again. Mettallak knew more about the wild beasts than any white man, for he had always lived with them. He knew that these owls would frequently set up their yells when they happened to fly over a man, or any wild creature in the woods. This wily old Indian was always upon the look-out for game. At the time I took the otter he was coming down the river
to examine his traps. I had not gone more than half a mile before he came to the trap which I had robbed. It looked rather suspicious to his keen eye. It was not set, he thought within himself, precisely in the same position in which he had placed it; besides, he saw some traces of an otter about the banks. As evil luck would have it, at the same moment these suspicions were roused in Mettallak, this cursed night watcher set up her infernal music directly over my head. The sound went up the river, and Mettallak’s eternally open ear caught it, and he started off like a deer down stream. I was walking along with the otter, and this owl would fly from tree to tree, keeping near me, and tuning up her horrid songs. Occasionally I would throw clubs at her, hoping I might drive her away. I was afraid to shoot her, lest the report of the gun might reach the quick ears of the Samup.

In this manner I was wending my way on the banks of the river, when, all at once, I heard the rustling of the bushes, and the sound of footsteps. Instantly the dark form of Mettallak appeared among the trees, bounding along with the speed of a moose. I knew it was in vain to run, for his flashing eye was already upon me. I knew his power of running too well to attempt to lead him in a foot race. I was much agitated, and not a little frightened.—The thought instantly struck me, that I would throw the otter beneath some wind-falls. I did so, but I was too late. Mettallak’s keen eye saw the act. He came towards me. I was almost tempted to shoot him on the spot, but I feared I might miss, or only wound him, and then certain death would be my portion. He went to the wind-falls and pulled the otter out, and taking the creature in one hand, and holding his gun in the other, he placed his savage form before me and stood in silence. His stately form thus confronting me, his dark flashing eye being fixed upon me in a steady, burning gaze, and my own guilty conscience, completely unmanned me. I would have knelt before him, and on my knees asked his pardon; but my pride would not suffer me to place myself in this supplicating attitude before an Indian.

He stood some time in this position, and not a word escaped his lips. At last he broke the silence which almost oppressed me, and said, ‘Me pay you for getting otter this time,’ as much as to say I had stolen from him before.—And if he had said this, he wouldn’t have been a great ways from the truth. No sooner than he had uttered these words, he seized my gun and discharged it into the air—then taking me by the throat, with a strong grip of his bony hand, he whirled me round with as much ease as though I had been a child. I struggled for a moment, but soon found all my efforts would be in vain, and so let him do what he pleased. He threw me upon the ground with some violence, rolled me over upon my belly, and put his heavy foot upon my back as though an elephant had trodden me down. Here I lay, beneath the foot of the savage, not knowing what he would do next, but greatly fearing the result. He then reached towards a bunch of small birch bushes, cut one of the twigs, and gave me a confounded flogging. After satisfying himself, and leaving some marks upon my back, he let me get up.

‘Now,’ said he, ‘me satisfied—go and never steal otter again.’

‘Upon this we parted, and I have kept clear of the rascal ever since. Now you know why I hate these cursed owls, and their friend, Mettallak?’

‘Well,’ said I, ‘Jones, he served you just right.’ He looked at me, and muttering some broken curses upon Mettallak, laid down and soon sank into sleep.

The next morning we started on our route through the woods. It will be necessary here to inform the reader what my object was in visiting this river the second time, as my old friend Mettallak had left his home on its banks. During the summer past Mettallak was found near his lodge in a most wretched condition. He was totally blind. Those bright, flashing orbs, which, for so many years, had watched the moose, and directed his old gun with unerring and fatal aim at the wolves, had now become dim, and lost their fire. When
he was found by some hunters as they passed up the river, he had crawled some distance from his camp into a hollow, where he lay in a state of starvation. His little dog was by his side, and he too was all but starved to death. They took him into his lodge, and gave him some food. He soon revived, and in a day or two, was able to leave his old haunts in company with these hunters who first discovered him. He was taken to his daughter’s, who had several years before became the wife of a white man, and now lived with her husband near the line.

I was now en route to visit my old friend, with whom I had been through so many exciting scenes. From this old theatre of Metallak’s exploits we steered a northwesterly course, and, after two days’ wandering in the woods, we came to an opening where several settlers resided. On inquiry, I found the log house where Metallak had taken up his quarters. Jones had no curiosity to see the old blind Indian, and so we parted. Jones returned home. I needed his services no longer, as I contemplated going back in another direction, through the settlements.

As I approached the house where Metallak’s daughter and family resided, I noticed a little brunette girl, eight or ten years old, playing upon the bank which surrounded this humble dwelling. Her eyes were of a deep, black color—and sparkled with intense brilliancy—forehead high and smooth—eyebrows unusually arching, and distinctly pencilled upon its polished surface, expressing wildness of look—neck rather long, and straight as an arrow—full, rose-tinted lips, disclosing when she spoke a set of beautiful white teeth—tall in stature for one of her age—shoulders finely moulded—form rather slender and graceful, and motions as quick as those of the young deer.

When I approached within a few yards of the house, she arose from the banking, and bounded like a gazelle towards the door, her long hair, black as the raven’s wing, streaming over her bare neck and shoulders, and almost covering her face. As she darted along in the direction of the door, I spoke to her, but she heeded not my voice and passed into the house. Immediately I saw a woman’s dark face presented at a square hole in the logs which formed one side of the cabin, and which was intended for a window. I went up to the door and knocked, and was bidden to walk in. When I entered, I saw Metallak lying upon his own moose-skin, at the farther side of the room, and holding the hand of the little girl I had so much frightened at the door. Addressing the woman, I asked if Metallak lived there. Before she had time to reply, the old blind Indian recognized my voice, and said, ‘Me know him—hear him speak on the Magalloway.’

He raised himself partly up upon his humble couch. I approached him and took hold of his trembling hand. He turned his sightless eyeballs upon me, and attempted to speak, but he was too much overcome to give utterance to the feelings which were struggling in his agitated bosom. His aged frame was convulsed and trembling. I placed my hand upon his back, and gently eased him down upon his couch. He laid a few minutes, and became calm, but he was very weak, and apparently soon to pass to that bourne whence no traveller returns.

The next morning he appeared some better. A night’s rest had given him some energy, but death had marked him for its own. The once strong, active and stalwart frame was now about worn out. Those sinewy legs which had, for so many winters, followed the moose through the deep snows of the forest, had now become unstrung, and were trembling on the brink of the grave. The hand which had constructed so many snares, and set so many traps, was now palsied, and had forgotten its cunning. Those flashing eyes had already sunk in night, never more to survey the beautiful valley of the Magalloway, or see Keoka’s grave.

With a trembling step and beating heart I once more approached his couch. He heard my steps, and that instinct which is more fully developed
in the Indian than in any other human being, told him who was treading so softly to his bedside. As I sat down near him, he reached out his dark, skeleton hand, and it fell heavily upon the moose skin on which he rested. His strength was now much exhausted. I took him by the hand, and spoke to him.

'\textit{Mettallak,' said I, 'do you know me?}'

He replied, with a faint, feeble voice, 'Me know you—you see Keoka's grave—you go with me.'

A smile passed over his wrinkled, emaciated face, and he remained for a few moments silent. His daughter was standing near the couch, with her deep set eyes fixed upon him. The little girl sat on a stool close beside her mother, intently watching every movement, and listening to the gentle breathing of her grandfather. At this moment the door of the cottage was softly opened, and the husband entered and stood beside his wife. He was a strong built backwoodsman, possessing great muscular power, much activity of limb, and a constitution well fitting him to endure the hardships and toils of life in the woods. When he entered the room, Mettallak slightly moved upon his couch, and partly turned his head towards the door. A change had come over his countenance. Nature was making her last effort. The time had come when the ever living spirit was about to leave the earthly habitation it had occupied for so many years, and to pass into another state of being. A dead silence pervaded the humble apartment. Mettallak turned back his head, his shrivelled lips quivered, and, feebly raising his hand, as if attempting to point to the skies, he faintly uttered the words, '\textit{Keoka up}’—the sentence was never finished—his head fell back upon his breast and he expired.

Thus died this untutored son of the forest. Unlearned as he was, and unhackneyed in the ways of the civilized world, he believed in a Great Spirit, and that Spirit had taught him the great principles of right and wrong.—These laws were written upon his heart by the finger of Him who made the wilderness for his home. His religion had its hopes, and imposed upon him its duties. Simple though they were, yet he faithfully performed the latter, and with pleasure indulged the former. He firmly believed that his state in the other world would be made happy by the company of his beloved Keoka. Upon this hope he lived, and upon this hope he died. The refinements and subtilties which are too frequently drawn from religious speculation neither clouded his mind, embarrassed his hopes, or diminished his faith. Great singleness of heart, and steadfastness of purpose characterized the performance of all his moral and religious duties. He was never known to utter a falsehood, or take that which did not belong to him. His chastisement of Jones, who stole his otter, clearly showed that he well understood the laws of \textit{nequum et tuum}. In the finer qualities of his soul, his love for Keoka evinces that he possessed a great share. It is true that superstition, in some of its milder forms, sometimes controlled his actions; but then such superstition is far preferable to downright infidelity, or a vague, uncertain belief in the doctrines of chance and Materialism.

No one of the group which stood around the couch of the dying Indian felt more keenly the pangs of grief than the little girl. Soon as she saw that Mettallak had ceased to breathe, she burst out into crying and sobbing as though her young heart would break. During the time he had resided under her father's humble roof, she had led him about, when he was able to walk, over the fields and through the woods which skirted the half cleared opening. No music was so pleasant to his ears as the sound of the gentle breezes among the branches of the trees, or the soft purling of the brooks, as they rippled down the hill-sides, or murmured through the valleys. Often had her little hand been clasped in his when she led the way on these pleasant excursions.
There was one spot which seemed dearer to the old man than any other. Although he could not see the landscape, however rich the scenery might be spread out before him, yet he felt more at home here than in any other place to which his little guide could lead him. It was situated about a half a mile from the clearing, on a small elevation of land, surrounded by a heavy growth of elms, sugar maples, and yellow birch trees, which threw their branches high into the air, affording in the summer season a cool and refreshing shade. About a mile distant to the north was a pond, covering three or four acres of ground, almost entirely embosomed by a range of small hills which began to rise close to the water's edge. The slopes of these hills facing the pond were covered to their very summits with a thick growth of sapling pines, whose foliage was ever green and verdant. From the south side of this 'crystal fountain' issued a trout brook, which, after winding its way through a deeply shaded valley, formed a beautiful cascade near the spot so much loved by Metallak and his little grand-daughter.

At the foot of this little waterfall little Keoka Wilson, (for that is the name of our young heroine,) would frequently angle for the trout, and draw them out from the bubbling waters, while Metallak sat listening to their music and calling up the companion of his early life. After she had captured a number of these shining tenants of the brook, she would string them on a crooked stick and run laughing to the old man to show him the result of her skill in angling. He would take them, and, after stroking them down with his trembling hand, and feeling out the number, band them back with a smile of approbation beaming from his aged countenance. These smiles were always peculiarly gratifying to Keoka; for her grandfather had shown her how to lure the sly trout to the treacherous hook, and she was anxious to exhibit to him palpable proofs of the improvement she had made in the art he had taught her.

During these excursions, Metallak would often impress upon the mind of Keoka a few lessons in moral duties. And although he was not much learned in the science of ethics, or able to paint out many of the scenes and dangers which might beset the path of a young and handsome girl in her intercourse with civilized society, yet he strongly cautioned Keoka to beware of the craftiness of the white man. This was a never failing text, and he preached from it with all the eloquence he was master of.

Chastity has ever been considered among the Aborigines of this section of our country a great virtue—the immediate jewel of their souls.' Their laws for the punishment of licentiousness have always been more rigorous and severe than those in civilized communities, and enforced with more certainty. Metallak, in common with his red brethren of the forest, looked upon chastity as one of the brightest ornaments of his race; hence his great anxiety to guard his beloved granddaughter against the arts and wiles of the seducer. He feared the power of the white man more than any other; and for this fear he had sufficient reasons, as the following facts and circumstances will more clearly show.

Some two or three years after his marriage with Keoka, according to the laws and ceremonies of the tribe to which he belonged, he was absent from his lodge on a hunting excursion. While thus absent from his home, a white man came to his lodge, and sought a shelter for the night. He was freely admitted to the enjoyment of such accommodations as the Lodge afforded.—Metallak's wife treated him with kindness and hospitality. The white man was on an exploring expedition up the river, and finding this Indian woman alone, he conceived the hellish purpose of defiling the marriage bed of this chaste and virtuous couple; but all his attempts proved abortive. The virtue of Keoka withstood all his vile arts and shameless attacks. Civilization as he was, or pretended to be, yet he was taught a lesson from an unprotected, untutored female. In the morning he left the Lodge with a stingi
consciousness of his own degradation, and passed up the river. He well knew if Mettallak returned before he got out of the woods that his life would be in danger. The penalty of the Indian law for such offences is death upon the spot. There is no wading through a long and tedious trial, and he was well enough acquainted with the Indian's code to know that death would be his portion, without judge or jury, if Mettallak should meet him after he had learned the story of the wrong and outrage attempted on his wife.

Harassed by these fears he hurried through his business on the river, and returned with all possible despatch; but before he did so, Mettallak had arrived at his Lodge and heard the amount of his outrages from the lips of Keoka—from those lips which never uttered a falsehood. With a fixed, unalterable purpose to be revenged for this wrong, Mettallak left his camp and stationed himself on the bank of the river to watch the return of the white man. The wily Indian expected he would return in the night, and constantly kept up his vigil. The second night of his watching he heard the sound of a paddle some distance up the river. The moon alone brightly upon the waters of the Magalloway, and not a sound was heard to break the stillness of the night except the gentle motion of the paddle through the water. Mettallak had placed himself in a position so that he could see quite a distance up stream. Soon the boat, bearing the object of his revenge, made its appearance upon the smooth and shining bosom of the river. Steadily it moved along with the aid of the current and paddle until it reached a point nearly opposite to the bunch of alders in which Mettallak lay concealed, when the sharp report of a gun was heard, and at that moment the white man fell over the side of the boat, and plunged beneath its waters. The boat having received a gentle impetus from the falling body, shot towards the bank of the river where Mettallak had taken his position. He took from it an axe and gun, and threw them into the river and they sank beside their owner. Mettallak went to his Lodge and felt as though he had executed a good and wholesome law. Death was the penalty which he believed to be due to such offences. In this faith he had grown up, and hence he did not feel that guilt pressing upon his conscience which the murderer in cold blood must necessarily feel.

This incident in Mettallak's life was ever fresh in his memory. He never had much confidence in the white man. He judged him, perhaps, too severely. For this single attempt upon the virtue of his wife he pronounced a sweeping judgment upon the whole race. He believed they formed one great community of libertines, seeking the indulgence of the grosser passions, and regarding no law either human or divine. With these impressions of the white man's character still clinging to his mind, it is not strange that he felt a deep interest and even a painful solicitude for the future welfare of the only being who bore his wife's name. He knew young Keoka was destined to mingle in the society of the white man, and to meet the allurements and fascinations of a civilized, but wicked world, without any Indian relatives except her mother, to advise and protect her. Although he never saw her face or form, being blind when brought to her father's house, yet he felt that she was beautiful. Her musical voice, ready wit, playful humor, and aptness to learn those arts in which he had taken so much delight in his early life, and what is more, perhaps, than all the rest, her strong attachment to him, thoroughly convinced him that she would become a beautiful, fascinating woman.

For a period of nearly two years she had been a constant companion of this honest old Indian. She had led him over the fields and through the woods by day, and slept with him on his moose-skin couch by night. During this whole time he never lost an opportunity, when he thought it a good one, to impress upon her mind the necessity of guarding herself against the
tricks and blandishments of the white man. As we have already seen, he had taught her how to ensnare the little trout in the brooks, and, in addition to this, she had learnt something of archery from the same schoolmaster. With her well strung bow and curiously wrought arrow she could sometimes stop the clippering music of the squirrel, and topple him down from the branch to the root of the tree; but whenever she made these lucky hits with her arrow, or drew a trout from the sparkling brook, she was always sure to receive a lesson of instruction from the old man. On such occasions he would caution her against the stratagems of the enemy, drawing wisdom from her childish sports, and finding ‘sermons in stones, and books in the running brooks.’

Thus the months rolled on, and the time had now come when death had laid his icy hand upon her faithful friend and monitor. His heart had ceased to beat, and his lips which had taught her so many simple, yet valuable lessons, were now sealed up in the cold grave. We must now leave her to the care of her Indian mother, and pass over a period of nearly ten years, during which time nothing transpired of much interest to the reader.

CHAPTER V.

In the early part of June in the year '41, a young man was seen making his way over a brook upon a tree which had fallen across the stream, followed by a little red and white dog who kept close to his master's heels while passing this accidental bridge. From his appearance he could not have seen more than twenty-five years. He was dressed with a grey hunting coat with quite a number of pockets upon its front and sides, edged with a black binding nearly half an inch in width, and curled into a variety of forms, round the entrances to these depositories. His head was well guarded against the rays of the sun by a broad brimmed hat made from a root which grows in a foreign country. His trousers were of the same material as his coat, and tightly strapped down; too tightly, for in stooping to pass under a tree which had been torn up by the roots, the part covering the knee had burst asunder, leaving that portion of his leg quite bare. Across his shoulders were strung a basket and a bag — one was designed as a depository for trout, and the other for birds. He had with him a splendid double-and-twist gun, a beautiful fishing rod, and black morocco case containing a good variety of artificial flies, suitable for different periods of the fishing season, systematically arranged in its several apartments.

He belonged to that class of young bloods who pride themselves on their science and skill in fishing. He spurned the idea of shooting a bird sitting, or catching a trout with a vulgar angle worm. Such a mode of operation was entirely beneath his science and dignity. He had been out on this excursion several days, and yet his basket and bag were quite as empty as his whisky flask. The contents of this last appendage had found a grave in his stomach in less than twenty-four hours after he entered the woods, and he was compelled to slake his thirst with pure, unmixed brook water. He had been directed to this brook as a fine stream for trout by a rough old settler at whose house he tarried the night previous to our finding him crossing the stream upon the fallen tree.

After he had passed over the brook, he leisurely pursued his course up the western side. He had not travelled far before he saw, by the motions of his
well-trained dog, that some game was about to be 'put up.' He prepared himself for a shot. His gun was already at his shoulder, while the dog was creeping softly along towards a partridge. Looking in the direction where the dog's nose pointed he saw a bird standing erect, and stretching up her neck to its greatest possible extension. He disclaimed to take advantage of the poor bird in that position, and waited until frightened by the near approach of the dog she rose upon her wings and shot off in a bee-line, when he fired; but the bird continued her flight, not a feather being rumbled by the small globules of lead which went pattering through the leaves. She escaped without receiving any wounds in her delicate flesh, and was in no way injured except being prodigiously frightened. At the sound of the gun, the little spaniel darted off in the direction the bird flew, but soon returned and looked up into his master's face as though he was actually ashamed of him. Muttering some curses upon the quality of the powder, and venting his spleen upon the manufacturer of the percussion caps, our scientific sportsmen continued his way up the brook, surveying the stream as he passed along in the hope of finding a good place where he might try his skill in angling. The truth is, our hero of the gun and fishing rod began to feel some misgivings with regard to his science in shooting, notwithstanding he manifested a disposition to throw the whole blame upon the bad quality of his powder and percussion caps. Although his bump of self-esteem was very strongly developed, yet he had recently witnessed too many practical illustrations not to be entirely ignorant of his want of skill in the use of his gun. His trusty dog had found for him an abundance of game, but he had not, as yet, made but a single good shot, and this, no doubt, was more attributable to chance than skill. He had become almost weary of the sport, and but for his pecuniary pride and vanity would have abandoned it altogether. Whatever might be his own opinions in relation to his skill, he still felt that the world gave him a high character as a sportsman, and this fancied reputation he was unwilling to lose. He thought too the ladies highly esteemed his skill and science in the use of the gun and fishing rod as great accomplishments, affording him a ready passport to their favor. Whenever he was thrown into their society he never failed of introducing his favorite topic — dogs, guns, and fishing apparatus. In his anxiety to please he not unfrequently, in relating his own personal feats, stretched the truth; for if he had not done so his adventures would have been quite dull and uninteresting. To keep up the interest of his fair auditors therefore, and constantly to husband what he vainly supposed to be his reputation as a scientific sportsman, he was quite in the habit of drawing on his imagination for his facts. We are sorry to be obliged to make such a record of any young man, he he sportsman or not, but truth requires it to be done.

Like many other young men he prided himself on a certain reputation, and therefore he was anxious to sustain that reputation at all hazards. Sterne has said that all men are 'hobbyhorsical' and surely the young man whom we have brought before the reader in this narrative was peculiarly so. He had voluntarily chosen a certain character — the character of the sportsman, and was accordingly desirous to shine as such. Conscious that his own skill could not sustain him in this his favorite character, and foolishly believing that the world gave him credit for what he knew he did not possess, he was determined to keep up his reputation even at the expense of truth. Thus he acquired the disgusting, dangerous, and wicked habit of uttering falsehoods, and uttering them too in the hearing of females whom he was more anxious to please than the other sex.

The name of this young man is Frederick Searsmont, an only son of a wealthy manufacturer in one of the largest villages in New Hampshire. His father had given him good opportunities for acquiring an education, but his penchant for the sports of the wood and lake had led him to read old Isaak
Walton more than other authors. He was not destitute of intellectual powers. His mind, if not of the first order, was above mediocrity, his heart was quite susceptible, and his affections strong. His manners were rather pleasing, his person handsome, and his conversational powers rendered his society agreeable, especially when he was not mounted upon his favorite hobby. He had more real confidence in his powers to please the fairer portion of the world than in his science or skill as a sportsman; still he endeavors to sustain himself in his favorite character because he believed this added to his other charms. He felt quite sure that he could make a conquest of any female heart which might interest him enough to develop his power. He was quite at home among the ladies, and succeeded well in pleasing them when he did not descend too largely upon his sporting feats. Females are not quite so destitute of shrewdness as young men sometimes dream of in their philosophy. They have a sort of instinctive intuition of man's character which, if not blinded by love, generally leads them to pretty correct conclusions. Their power of discrimination so far as the operation of the heart is concerned in the affairs and offices of love, far exceeds that of the rougher sex. Whether this power is to be ascribed to the extraordinary structure of their minds, or to the peculiar position which they occupy in society, is a question not so easy of solution as might at first be imagined. No doubt the relation they sustain to the other sex urges upon them the necessity of keeping this power in constant exercise. Their 'weather eye' is always open, watching the appearance of every cloud, and the course of every wind. Woman considers her own heart a valuable treasure, and this she guards with great care and vigilance; nevertheless it has sometimes been bartered for gold.

Young Searsmont had been partially in love with several ladies, but he had never seen one with whom he was willing to pass his life. After a few months of flirtation with one he would become weary and seek another. There were so many flowers strewn about his path that he found it extremely difficult to make a selection which would satisfy him for any considerable length of time. This wayward course had not only induced his female acquaintances to place themselves on their guard, but had also prepared him to wish for some extraordinary development of female character. He felt a vacuum in his heart which at times was painful. He had been partially in love, just enough to make him occasionally feel the necessity of loving with more constancy and fidelity.

While on his way up the brook, after his random shot at the partridge, he heard in the distance the sound of a waterfall. His favorite author had informed him that trouts were very fond of sporting in the boiling and foaming waters at the bottom of the cascades. Feeling a desire to redeem some points in his character which he felt conscious he had lost in his shot, he hurried along the banks of the brook with all the speed which the thick bushes, wind-falls, and other obstructions that lay in his path would permit. The music of the falling waters became more and more distinct as he continued his journey up the stream, until within about a stone's throw of the falls, he obtained a glimpse of the water as it pitched over the cragged rocks and fell into a small basin below.

Having pushed his way through the bushes a few yards further he saw a female seated upon a rock engaged in his favorite sport. She wore a plain calico dress, a large cape-bonnet, and a small apron made from cloth of domestic manufacture. 'Now,' said our hero to himself, 'is an adventure.' Drawing himself softly behind an old elm which towered above his head, and making his spaniel crouch at his feet, he silently gazed at this female angler. She had just drawn up a beautiful trout, baited her hook, and again thrown it into the bubbling water. Soon another trout larger than the first seized the worm, and stretched the line from the eddying whirl down stream. Following the motions of the line with her sparkling eyes, she turned partly...
round and her face was exposed to the view of Searsmont. He was instant-
ly struck with her beauty. Her walk to the place, and the excitement of the
sport, had thrown the red current from her heart into her face, and suffused
her cheeks with a rich healthy glow. Her long black hair, escaping from
underneath the ample folds of her sun-bonnet, which partly thrown back, fell
in thick curling masses over a bosom untouched by the hand of man. He
gazed upon her with a sort of wonder and strange emotions. He saw her fling the shining fish
high in the air. The line became entangled in the topmost branches of a fir
tree which stood near by—the trout broke from the hook, and came wriggling
down through the thick limbs. She rose from the rock on which she was
seated, and made several unsuccessful attempts to disengage the hook from
the tree. Finding her efforts unavailing, she went to the foot of a small elm
which grew close to the fir, threw off her bonnet and began to climb it. Soon
she reached a long tough branch which hung over the entangled hook, and
bending down from this limb she soon cleared it, and descended to the ground.

During this time our young sportsman was agitated by a thousand contend-
ing emotions. He saw her upon the limb reaching down to unfasten the
hook, her hair falling in rich profusion over the top of the tree, and mingling
with its green foliage. He thought he never saw so beautiful a form or such
graceful motions. To his bewildered view she appeared like a goddess of
the woods, bewitching in every look and motion. That aching void which
he had so long felt in his heart now seemed to be filled up. He was in a
delirium of joy, not knowing what to say, or what to do, yet feeling a strong
wish to clasp the strange, beautiful creature to his agitated bosom. At one
moment he was upon the point of rushing out from his hiding-place, and fall-
ing down at her feet; at another a feeling of diffidence, somewhat akin to
awe, would creep through his blood and check this impulse. Thus he re-
ained with his eyes riveted upon this female, his limbs trembling with agi-
tation, and his heart violently beating against his sides as though it would
burst its narrow limits.

After she descended from the tree she again prepared her hook, and giving
the rod a graceful, sweeping motion threw it into the water. Instantly a large
tROUT rose from the bottom of the foaming basin, seized the bait, and ran under
the shelving rocks. At this moment a striped squirrel run chippering along
towards the water, and passing near the dog, roused him from his crouching
position. Before his master had time to stop him, he was in full chase after
the little creature, running and barking, and making more disturbance than
seemed to be necessary for the occasion. This movement of the dog fright-
ened the girl, and she sprang from her granite chair with the bound of an
antelope, dropping her fishing rod, and running directly towards the young
man. He had risen from the roots of the tree behind which he had been
concealed, and now stood out in full view. In her fright and agitation she
did not discover him until she had passed within a few feet from where he
stood. As her dark flashing eye caught a glimpse of his person, she sud-
dently wheeled off in another direction, and bounded through the trees with
the nimbleness of the young deer and was soon out of sight. Our young
hunter stood gazing in the direction she ran long after she had been lost to
his view. It was sometime before he could command his trembling nerves.
He was completely bewildered. It seemed to him the female he had just
seen was not of earthly mould. These eyes, that brow, that hair, that neck
and that form seemed to him to belong to a higher order of females than any
he had ever seen.

After recovering himself from the bewildered state into which he had
been thrown, he went to the rock which had so recently borne this female
angler. He reached out and took hold of one end of the rod. Lifting it up
he found a large trout was fastened to the hook. He immediately drew him
to the shore, and a beautiful fish he was; but he did not think much of the
trout—his whole soul was absorbed with the one who hooked it. At any other time he would have considered it a great feat to have caught such a trout. The rod which she had left was a curiously wrought stick, made from the wood of the white ash tree. It was about fifteen feet long, whittled perfectly smooth, and tapered off gradually from the large and small end. Upon the handle, or large end were engraved numerous figures representing birch canoes, men, dogs and moose. At regular intervals of about three feet from one end to the other were ferrules of porcupine quills stained with a variety of brilliant colors.

Young Seasmont was charmed with the beauty of this rod. He thought it even more beautiful than his own, notwithstanding his was an imported one, and cost quite a sum of money. He looked at it, handled it, and the inquiry rose in his mind,—whose can it be? who made it? It looked to him as though it was not the work of a civilized mechanic. He had never before seen a fishing rod any thing like it. 'Can it be,' he thought 'the work of an uncultivated savage? Did she make it who had run away and left it?'

These thoughts passed through his mind in quick succession, but he could receive no satisfactory answers. On the rock he also found a worm-box partly filled with angleworms, ingeniously made from the bark of a birch tree, of an oval form, and its cover and sides striped with brilliant red and blue colors. On examining these articles which the frightened girl had left, the thought flashed through his mind that this angelic creature he had seen under such peculiar circumstances might be an Indian girl, or some female who had run wild in the woods. But he soon dismissed such thoughts when he recalled to his recollection the symmetry of her form, the gracefulness of her motions, and the beauty of her countenance.

'No Indian girl,' he said to himself, 'can be so beautiful as this female—such a complexion, such hair, and such eyes. Impossible! He could not believe, for a moment, that his heart which had warded off so many 'love-shafts,' could now be pierced by an arrow from such a quiver. His pride was alarmed, and his nerves shocked at the bare idea of being in love with an Indian girl—and yet he felt that the power of love had seized upon his heart for the first time in his life. A great and sudden change had come over the spirit of his dream. He compared his past feelings with those which now sank so deeply into his heart, and his previous attachments shrunk into nothingness. They only served to soften and prepare his heart to receive the impress from love's own seal, and now he felt that this had been indelibly stamped upon his soul.

It was now fast approaching night-fall. The sun had sank low in the west, and no sounds were heard to disturb the quietude of the place except the music of the water-fall, and the distant drumming of the partridges. Our love-smitten sportsman now thought it time to make his way out of the woods. Having carefully laid away his enchantress' fishing-rod, and worm-box, and taking up the string of trout which she had caught, he started for the opening. He reached the old settler's log cabin where he had lodged before just after sunset. The old man met him at the door and kindly welcomed him back again.

'Well, young man,' said he, 'you have done nobly in the trout line, but why hadn't you shot a partridge? My woman wants one to make some broth?'

This was a poser to our knight of the gun and fishing rod. He was much troubled for an answer. He was at a loss how to frame a reply to his old friend's question about the partridge. At last he mustered up his courage and said, 'I thought I would spend the day in fishing, but had I known your wife wanted a partridge, I would have popped one over. I heard quite a number drumming about the woods.'

This answer appeared to satisfy the old man and they went into the house.
The old lady complimented him highly on his skill in trout catching while she was preparing them for the frying pan.

"Why," said she, "they are nice trout, just such as a good nice gal, our neighbor up there, sends us, and she catches them herself too."

This remark of the old lady brought the red blood to our young hero's face, and greatly embarrassed him. He dared not trust himself to speak, and so he remained in silence.

The old lady was quite cheerful and talkative while she was employed in preparing supper, raying Searsmont about going a courting, getting married, and having a family to take care of. But all this fell heavily upon his ears. He did not feel much like taking a joke or giving one. His mind was intensely fixed upon the girl he saw fishing at the brook. Her image was constantly before his mind in the various attitudes he had seen her assume at the brook. Now he saw her gracefully flourishing her beautiful rod, and swinging the shining trout over her head—then she would appear to him in the act of climbing the elm tree, and again her fascinating form would float before his bewildered senses as she gracefully bent over to disentangle her hook and line from the limbs of the fir tree. His mind being so intensely fixed on a single object that he had lost his usual flow of spirits, and did not take his accustomed part in the fireside conversation. This falling off was noticed by his old friends, and especially by the old lady. She saw that something troubled the young man, and at once came to the conclusion that the fatigues of the day had made him feel unwell.

"Mr. Searsmont," said she, "you feel unwell— I know you do— you have got cold, and I will go right away and make you some herb tea."

"Herb tea," thought he, "for a disease of the heart! a cure for love!" and he assumed a cheerfulness he did not feel, thanked the old lady for her kindness, and declared to her he was not sick, only a little fatigued with the day's jaunt, and that a night's rest would restore him. The old man during this time sat leaning against the rock-built fireplace smoking his pipe, and listening to the conversation between his wife and Searsmont. He was a humorous old fellow, and having an iron constitution himself, he didn't think much of a person's being sick or of herb drinks as a remedy. The world went easy with him. Taking his pipe from his mouth and puffing out a volume of smoke that went curling up to the spruce logs which formed the ceiling over head, he thought he would put in his oat and help along the evening's chat.

"Wife," said he, "don't you be worried about the young man; he will do well enough—he's only thinking about his sweetheart that he's left down in New Hampshire. When it comes night the young men are apt to think about the girl. I used to feel just so when I was courting you." And the old man shook his sides with laughter.

"Lat!" replied his wife, "you're always having over some of your nonsense. Young men are not so silly now as they used to be when you was a young man."

The old lady didn't exactly believe in the truth of her last remark, but she thought she would make it to take off the wire edge of what her husband had previously said. With a keener eye and truer instinct than the old man possessed she saw that something was preying upon the heart of Searsmont and she did not wish to have his feelings wounded. She noticed a deep shade of melancholy pass over the young man's countenance, and heard a long drawn sigh escape from his bosom when her husband repeated the word 'sweetheart.'

Disposed to pass the evening pleasantly the old man didn't stop to make such nice observations as his wife did; he was for having some fun. He didn't believe in being devoured inch by inch by the blues, and having our best humors cankered and eaten out by melancholy. No! He was deter-
mined to enjoy life in an honest, jolly manner. It is true he had some faults, and who hasn’t?

\[Vitiis nemo sine nascitur, optimus ille\]
\[Qui minus urgetur.\]

The old man was not driven out of his good humors by the caution, prudence, or sensitiveness of his better half.

‘Nonsense!’ said he, ‘human natur is the same now it always was. A fine dress doesn’t alter the heart. A young man in ruffles and silk stockings loves just as I used to in homespun frock and trowsers.’

‘Why,’ he continued, ‘there’s that gal that catches trout, and sends us a mess sometimes, and a handsome one she is too. Don’t you suppose she would love a young man just as hard in her coarse calico slip and thick leather shoes, as a young lady in the city, dressed out in her silks and satins?—What say you to this, young man?’

Searsmont was greatly embarrassed by the question. His heart beat, and his bosom heaved so violently as almost to choke his utterance, but he nerved himself up and barely replied ‘that he didn’t know much about these things.’

‘Know much about these things!’ continued the old man, ‘if I was as young as you are, and as good looking, I would court that gal above all others in the world. Why, she’s a thousand times handsomer than my wife when she was a gal, and I thought she was a beauty. And again he burst out into loud laughter making the old log cabin ring with his merry peals.

‘I should be ashamed, if I was you,’ said the old lady throwing her large eyed spectacles above the fringe of her cap, ‘to talk and laugh so about that poor gal. You know she has had a good many offers and refused them all. She says she is afraid of the white man.’

‘Afraid of the white man!’ replied the old man, ‘I’d give her a try if I was young as I was once. I’d see if I couldn’t make her feel some little thumping about the heart. I don’t believe there is a gal in the wide world but can be made to love a man.’

‘You’ve got into one of your tantrums to night,’ said she, ‘You talk strangely. When I married you there were a thousand gals that wouldn’t have listened to you a minute about courting. If you had offered yourself to them you would have had shirts enough to last you your life time. Here the good old lady pulled her glasses down over her eyes and looked cunningly up into her husband’s face, a pleasant smile playing around the corners of her mouth, and the borders of her high-crowned cap trembling with her efforts to suppress laughter.

‘Whew!’ exclaimed her husband, ‘you wasn’t the first one I tried by a jug full, and I found them all willing enough; but then I didn’t like the taste of their lips so well as I did yours. I thought there wasn’t quite so much honey in them.’

‘You talk like a foolish man,’ said his wife

Disregarding what his wife said, and intent upon passing off his evening in good humor he continued, ‘speaking of honey, that gal has got enough in her eyes to burn off any wood-lot, and a bosom’—here the old lady suddenly stepped in between the last word her husband uttered and what might have followed, and so the sentence was never finished.
CHAPTER VI.

During the time this dialogue occupied, young Searsmont remained silent, eagerly swallowing every word the old man uttered concerning this strange girl, and finding a swift witness in his own heart to the truth of all that was said. **Honey—fire—bosom:** these words thrilled through his trembling nerves with the speed of light and sunk deep into his soul. While his lips were closed, his heart cried out in the intensity of its feeling, 'Who is she? what is she? where is she?' But no answer came to quiet his swelling emotions. All was as yet in the dark. Even the old man or woman had not breathed her name in all they had said about her. It seemed to him that they studied to conceal her name, origin, and place of abode. This added to the embarrassment which he previously felt. His very soul ached to find out this girl. Often a feeling would rise from his heart to his lips to make the inquiry—but fear, diffidence, or embarrassment of some kind would as often drive it back. He hung on tenter-hooks, and every moment increased his tortures. He remembered what the old lady said about her having so many offers of marriage, and declining them all; and what impressed him still more than all the rest, was the saying, 'that she was afraid of the white men.'

This increased the suspicion which he before entertained that she might be an Indian girl. Her fishing-rod and worm-box looked to him like the handiwork of some savage; yet when he reflected on her beautiful countenance, graceful form, and easy movements, he discarded every such thought from his mind. Then the phrase, 'afraid of the white men,' would again rush into his mind, and rouse his suspicions. He finally drew up a resolution, and said to himself, 'I will inquire of these folks what she is. They can tell me, if they will.'

After the old man and his wife had finished their jokes, there was a pause. This was much more oppressive to him than the garrulity of the old man. He could now hear the thumping of his heart, but he made one desperate effort to break the silence which seemed to press him down to the floor, and with a trembling voice he inquired 'if the young woman who sometimes brought them trout was an Indian girl.'

'An Indian girl!' exclaimed the old man. 'I guess you wouldn't think she is one of the bow and arrow breed if you should see her. I tell you, young man, she's one of the handsomest gals you ever laid your eyes on, and she is a clever one, too.'

'Where does she live?' inquired the young man, with a heart almost ready to burst.

'Live?' said the old man; 'why, she lives in her own house, to be sure. Where should she live but in the log-house her poor father built, who is now dead and gone—and a good neighbor he was too.'

Searsmont had now broken the ice, and he felt greatly relieved. One fact he was quite sure of, that the object of his love was not a savage, or a female run wild in the woods. He was now encouraged to prosecute his inquiries.

'Does she live alone?' said he.

'Well, now, that's a pretty question for a handsome young man to ask!' replied the old man, laughing. 'No, she don't live alone all the time—for sometimes I go up and spend an evening with her, smoke my pipe, and hear r —— s——i——n——g.'
‘Can she sing?’ continued our young lover.

‘Sing?’ replied the old man, ‘sing? why she can beat all the birds in the woods. You never heard such a sweet voice in all your life.’

‘Who learnt her to sing?’ continued Searsmont.

‘I suppose she learnt of the birds,’ answered the old man; ‘for I never heard any thing else sing in these quarters except her and the birds.’

‘Has she no mother living?’ inquired he.

‘No!’, said the old man; ‘her mother died about a year ago.’

‘Yes,’ interrupted the old lady, ‘and she was the best neighbor we ever had—she was so kind, and so obliging, and set every thing by her darter. Poor woman! she died a dreadful hard death, and was sick a good while. I did every thing for her I could, but it was the will of God that she must die, and we must bow in submission to his will.’ Here the old woman wiped the tears from her aged cheeks, and expressed much sorrow and heartfelt regret.

She could never recall that scene to her mind without shedding tears of sorrow.

‘What was the matter with her?’ asked Searsmont, while tears stood glistening in his own eyes.

‘The matter?’ said the old man, ‘matter enough, I can tell you. She had the consumption, and wasted away by inches. Tough and hard as I am, I couldn't look upon that scene and keep from crying, although I don't allow myself to cry very often. There lay the poor woman on the bed, gasping for breath, drawing up her feet, and then suddenly thrusting them down again under the bed-clothes, turning her head first one way and then another—sometimes trying to rise up, but she was too weak—and then looking at her only child with her large, black eyes, that seemed almost to speak out loud; and then her only blood relation was standing close by the bed, stooping over her mother to hear her last whispers, her long silky hair falling down over the pillow, and covering their hands, which were clasped in each other. I tell you, young man, it was a scene to make the heart ache; I never shall forget it.’

After the old man had, in his peculiar way, described the dying scene of this girl's mother, Searsmont ventured to ask another question—one in which he felt a deep and thrilling interest.

Addressing the old man, ‘Will you,’ said he, ‘go with me, and introduce me to this young woman?’

‘Go with you? yes,’ he replied. ‘I'll show her to you to-morrow evening. I can't go before, because I've got to go away to-morrow morning, and shan't return much before night.’

Searsmont ascended a small ladder, which led to a half chamber and half garret in the upper part of this log cabin, and there crept into his humble bed—but not to sleep for the first part of the night, for he had been too much excited during the day and evening for quiet slumber. He laid and tumbled from side to side, trying to compose his nerves, and get a little rest to enable him to bear up under coming events; but the more he courted sleep the further it was from him. He never before experienced such agitation of his nerves, or trembling of his frame. Whenever he closed his eyes, he would distinctly see the bewitching image of the strange girl dancing before him—sometimes she would be hanging from the limb of a tree, her long dark tresses floating in the winds; at other times she would be bounding through the woods like a deer—then again she would see her dark, flashing eyes gazing upon him with a look that pierced his very soul; now he would fall into a gentle slumber, and the music of her voice would come thrilling upon his ears, and he would start up as though he had been pricked with some sharp instrument.

‘Is this the nature of love?’ he would say; ‘then I never knew this passion before. I have always felt strong, but now I'm weak. Sure have I
been that I could win the heart that might conquer mine, but now my nerves
quake with fear. My locks are shorn, and my boasted strength has fled. It
has been said there are more calamities in the world arising from love than
from hatred, and that love is the daughter of idleness, but the mother of dis-
quietude. Who was it that said, 'Love refines a man's behavior, but makes
a woman's ridiculous?' Ah, whoever he was, philosopher or fool, he knew
not the power of that passion as I now feel it.

Thus did our love-smitten hero soliloquize. This humble garret never
before witnessed such agitation and excitement. To chronicle the feelings of
his heart for that single night would fill a volume. The task we will not
attempt.

Towards morning nature became exhausted, and he sank into sleep.—
He rose, but not until some time after the sun had gladdened the world with
his beams. Now the principal part of the day was before him. After taking a
late breakfast, he went out. The morning was bright and beautiful. The air
was mild and bland, and all nature was dressed in her loveliest garb. A new
feeling was born in his heart. The green fields, hills and valleys, mountains
and woods never looked so beautiful and fascinating to him before. He gazed
towards the valley through which meandered the sparkling brook, where he
had seen the being who had wrought such a change in his feelings. He fanc-
cied he could almost hear the music of the waters as they swept over the
rocks, and fell into the little whirlpool below. 'The day is before me,' he said
within himself, 'and I will go and see if that beautiful fishing-rod still remains
where I placed it.'

He took his own rod and gun, and started off to while away the time, feel-
ing a wish to annihilate the day, and bring the evening sooner along. He
travelled along until he came to the brook, some distance below the falls, and
then took his course up stream. He had not proceeded far before the sound of
the falling waters struck his ear. 'It may be,' he mused to himself, 'that she
is there now. I will proceed softly.' It then occurred to him that his spaniel
was rather unruly yesterday. He took a string and tied it round the dog's
neck, and led him along. In this way he carefully crept through the bushes,
until he came to a turn in the brook, which formed a little smooth sheet of
water, surrounded on either side by a sandy shore. This little pond, if we
may so call it, was but a short distance below the basin in which the trout
play their gambols.

As he passed along cautiously among the thick alders that skirted the mar-
gin of the brook, he saw, a few rods above him, the sun-bonnet, which left him
so suddenly the day before, hanging on a bush. Carefully parting the leaves
and branches of the alders so as to obtain a more distinct view, he saw also
the dress of his dulcines, and, at the same moment, he heard a splashing in the
water. Drawing his dog close to his feet, and taking off his hat, he stretched
up his bare head, and there, in that refreshing pool, he saw the head of the
strange girl moving about in the water, followed by a thick waving mass of
long black hair, gracefully floating on its rippled surface. When he first dis-
covered her, she was swimming towards the opposite shore. Even now 'he
saw her charming,' but he saw not half the charms her outward course con-
cealed. Unconscious of her power, she raised her beautiful arm, and, gently
striking the parting waters, turned her floating form.

'That very moment love and chaste desire
Sprung in his bosom.'

Accustomed to love her 'beauteous limbs' in the cooling waves, far away from
human eye, she heeded not his burning gaze, but pursued her backward course.
As she gracefully floated through the liquid element, the envied ripples scarec-
ly touched her breasts.

'Harmonious swelled by Nature's finest hand,'
as if too modest to wanton there—but left them more than half exposed to the
maddening view of young Searsmont.

The beauteous nymph now swam to a rock that lifted its moss-covered top
just above the surface of the pool. Drawing herself upon it, she remained a
few moments, her form more than half concealed in the water, and sang a wild
and beautiful melody. Her clear, sweet voice echoed far over the valley, and
mingled with the music of the cascade. Her streaming locks hung over her
finely sculptured neck and shoulders, and 'half embraced her in a humid veil.'
She finished her song, and again plunged into the willing waters. She now
directed her course to the shore near the covert in which young Searsmont
was concealed. Having reached a shallow, she gradually raised her beaute-
ous form from the water. At this moment our distracted youth, in the beau-
tiful language of one of England's noblest bard,

'Drew
Such mad'ning draughts of beauty to the soul
As for a while o'erwhelmed his raptured thought
With luxury too daring. Checked at last,
By love's respectful modesty, he deemed
The theft profane,'

and gently withdrew himself from the 'soul-distracting scene. With beating
heart and excited nerves, he now slowly pursued his course towards the old
settler's cabin. He almost wished he had remained there, and not ventured
out during the day; for he now felt so much excited that he really dreaded the
contemplated evening's interview with this fascinating creature. For the first
time in his life he now felt that love is a hallowed feeling of the soul, not to
be trifled with or too lightly esteemed. He now saw it in all its purity, un-
mixed by any alloy or debasing passion. All licentious feeling was driven
from his heart, for a time, at least. The beautiful being who had wrought
such a change in his opinions of love, must be, he thought, more pure than
any female he had ever seen. Accustomed to look upon females rather as
playthings than companions, his feelings towards the sex were not so chaste
as they ought to be. He had never been troubled with much diffidence when
chance or choice threw him into their society. From the little knowledge he
had acquired by his experience and observation, he had always supposed that
females were pleased with a rakish character. Early in life he had imbued
this notion, and to the present time had governed himself according to this
standard. The wealth and high standing of his father gave him a ready pass-
port to any class of society which he might choose; and being an only son and
heir apparent to a large estate, his intercourse with females was free and un-
embarrassed. He was looked upon as a good bargain by all those who were
willing to barter their hearts for gold, and not a few of these were found in
the circles where he moved. This kind of respect and attention, no doubt,
gave him erroneous opinions of the sex generally. In this way, and by
these easy steps, he had formed quite a number of attachments, but they were
fickle and of short duration. They never sank deep into his heart, nor enlist-
ed all the sympathies of his soul. But now how changed! He had seen one
who scattered all those false notions and erroneous opinions to the winds. He
felt now that he was something more than a mere libertine. The love he now
had for this enchanting girl chastened his feelings, and inspired him with
more respect for the sex to which she belonged. That boldness, almost bor-
dering on effrontery, which had hitherto been his constant companion, had
now shrunk into modest diffidence, if not into absolute fear. In years past,
when he felt any partiality for a particular female, he had no delicacy about
the matter. With a bold countenance and fluent tongue, he was at all times
ready to 'tell his love,' but now he trembled even at the thought of an intro-
duction to the loved one of his heart. However loose his opinions might have been heretofore, in respect to the operations of the tender passion upon the human heart, he now fully realized the fond dream of the poet, that—

'Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come—
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.'

Our sweet nymph, having wantoned in the waters of her favorite brook, and bathed her beautiful form beneath its crystal waves, once more engaged in the sport of angling. In this amusement she met with her accustomed good luck, and returned with a string of fine trout to her humble home to celebrate the day which gave her birth. It was the fifteenth day of June, and she never let the return of the day pass unobserved. From earliest youth she had been taught by her mother to note the period as each revolving year pointed it out in the records of time. It is true, she had not the means of making much display on these anniversary holidays, neither had she a disposition to do so. It was enough for her to mark the day by some act of kindness to her parents while living, and now they were dead she was content to make a present of some kind to her nearest neighbors, who had kindly assisted her in the cold winter months. These neighbors were the old settler and his wife, whose hospitabilities had been so freely bestowed on young Searsmont during his excursions in these quarters. The old man's name was Michael Brown, usually called 'Old Mike' among his familiar friends and acquaintances.

Before Searsmont had returned to his old friend's cabin, his loved one had been there and made a present to the old lady of a mess of delicious trout, and had again gone home. When he arrived he heard what had taken place, and he felt glad he had delayed his return so long—for the state of his nerves was such that he feared his conduct would have been too much embarrassed to make a favorable impression. Soon after this, 'Old Mike' made his appearance, blustering round, and joking first the old lady and then Searsmont. His day's labor had made him feel jolly, and he was too full of his fun to please Searsmont in his present pensive mood. He thought he needed quiet, or something—in fact he didn't know exactly what he did want. He dreaded the coming interview more than he ever dreaded any thing in his life. He was extremely anxious to appear in his best manner—so anxious, that all his motions seemed unusually awkward to him. His free and easy deportment appeared to have fled entirely from him. 'Love makes a woman's behavior ridiculous!' thought he; 'if so, what does it make a man's?'

'By jingo, wife!' exclaimed Old Mike, observing the trout that lay upon the table, 'that gal has brought us another mess of fish! She's a free-hearted creature as ever breathed, besides being confounded handsome, too. What! seventeen of them? we shall live fat, now!'

'Yes,' replied his wife, 'seventeen—one for every year the sweet creature has lived among us. It's a birth-day present. I can remember when she was born as well as if it had happened yesterday. How time goes away!'

'A birth-day present, sure enough!' said the old man. 'This day she is seventeen years of age—old enough to be married, and blessed be the man who gets her for a wife.'

'I don't think she'll ever be married,' replied the old lady. 'She says she don't want to be married.'

'Whew!' exclaimed Old Mike, 'the gals always talk so, but they don't mean what they say. Why, the first time I went to court you, don't you remember you said the very same thing? You only did it to make one feel the fiercer. It's all nonsense, I say. I know 'em as well as I know the way to our spring, on the side of the hill yonder."

'Nonsense!' said his wife. 'Your tongue runs nonsense enough in all
conscience. I believe my soul the older you grow and the harder you work, more boyish you act.'

"Boyish!" exclaimed Mike. "Why, I feel as young as ever I did!" jumping up and striking his feet together on the floor.

All this time poor Searsmont felt as though he was sinking into the earth. He couldn't now see how any human being could be so lively and full of fun as Old Mike was.

"Young man," said Mike, addressing Searsmont, "did you see this gal when she made us her birthday gift?"

"I had'nt returned," replied he, in a very modest, unassuming manner.

"Wake up! wake up! young man!" continued this jolly old soul. "You must put on your best bib and tucker when you go to see this gal. A faint heart never won fair lady, as the old saying is. You must be wide awake, full of smiles, and say a good many soft, pretty things. She never see many fellows so handsome as you are. Who knows but she'll take a liking to you?"

"Why," interrupted the good old wife, "you talk just as though Mr. Searsmont was going to court.

"Going to court!" replied the old man, "he'll want to court fast enough when he sees her, else he's got no such blood in his veins as I used to have. Old as I am now, if I should lose you, I should be almost tempted to try her myself. The other evening, as I sat smoking my pipe with her, joking and laughing, she brought me a curious little worm-box she had been making that day out of birch-bark—and as she gave it to me, her little finger dropped into the palm of my hard hand—her long hair fell over my shoulders—I felt her sweet breath on my old cheek, and could almost hear her young heart beat. I tell you I began to feel over again my old courting nights. Here the old man burst into a long, loud laugh, which was soon cut short by his wife slapping his ears, and telling him he talked like a fool.

During Old Mike's last speech, Searsmont sat intensely listening to every word he uttered, and feeling something akin to jealousy pervading his sensitive heart. The green-eyed monster had almost taken possession of his soul, and yet his better judgment ought to have controlled this ebullition of feeling; for he might have known, if he had been left to his sober senses, that the old man was only joking and having a little fun with his good old partner. But the idea of her little finger touching the palm of Old Mike's hand, her rich tresses falling upon his shoulders, his hearing her heart throb in her bosom, and what, if possible, was more maddening than all the rest, his feeling her sweet breath upon his cheek, was more than his philosophy could stand up against. He was absolutely convulsed in every limb, and came very near dropping from his seat to the floor; but he recovered from the shock, and pretended he only felt a little sick at his stomach.

Seeing her young guest in this agitated state, the old lady, in the kindness of her heart, flew round the room after her smelling-bottle, the contents of which had not, probably, been renewed for years, and, thrusting it up his nose, very feelingly inquired "if he didn't feel better?"

Searsmont involuntarily threw aside his head, to prevent his nasal organ from coming in contact with the snout of the old smelling-bottle, and, hastily rising from his seat, went to the door, where he found more ample breathing space, and a more agreeable effluvium than that which escaped from the old lady's depository of odors. When fairly out in the open air, and having a little time for calm reflection, he could hardly keep from smiling at the idea of an old musty smelling-bottle being prescribed as a sovereign remedy for a fit of jealousy, or a spasm of love; nevertheless, he duly appreciated the old woman's motives, well knowing that it is not unfrequently the case that physicians deal out their nostrums before ascertaining the real nature of the disease under which their patients suffer.

It was now nearly sunset, and the weather was mild and beautiful. Myriad
of little insects were sporting in the bland and balmy air, the birds were sweetly tuning their evening orisons, the ‘half-extinguished moon’ began to display her silver crescent far to the south, and the distant stars, one after another, twinkled out in the firmament. It was just the time for the heart that truly loves to draw inspiration from every surrounding object.

‘Come,’ said Old Mike, addressing Searsmont, who had by this time somewhat recovered from the perturbation into which he had been so suddenly thrown; ‘come, young man, it’s time we were off, if you wish to see that angel of a gal to-night. I dare say we shall find her at home, for she seldom goes out evenings.’

Searsmont expressed his willingness to go, and he and Old Mike started off for the humble lodge of this singular girl, which was situated about three quarters of a mile from Old Mike’s establishment. The log-house stood upon the gentle declivity of a hill surrounded upon the back side to the north by a thick growth of forest trees, which grew quite near to the dwelling, and formed a good protection against the cold northern blasts of winter. The field in front of the house gradually sloped towards the south, and presented a sort of inclined plane covered with luxuriant grass, shaded here and there, at regular intervals, with large sugar-maples. From the house could be seen a large extent of valley stretching towards the south, entirely covered with forest trees of the original growth. The fair owner of this little domain, notwithstanding she was born, and brought up in the woods, had an innate love for flowers. These she cultivated with great care and simplicity of taste. It is true her garden was not decorated with exotics, but she had domesticated a large variety of wild flowers, which grew in rich profusion under her fostering hand. Every thing about this romantic spot wore the aspect of neatness.

Searsmont and his old guide were fast approaching the residence of this ‘woodland nymph.’ As they were travelling along the path which wound through the field, Old Mike ahead, and the young lover pensively following behind, and when within a few rods of the house, Searsmont was suddenly started from his pensive mood by the voice of Old Mike. ‘Hark!’ said he; ‘the pretty jade is now singing—she’s always singing, I believe, when she isn’t asleep. Don’t you hear her?’

Searsmont listened, but his heart fluttered so he could not hear so readily as the old man.

‘Let us go nearer,’ said Mike; ‘and then you will hear the wild bird swell her pretty throat. I should almost be willing to be swallowed by such a throat.’

This remark was anything but pleasing to Searsmont. He heartily wished the old man would abandon his nonsense, and leave his joking. He now had no relish for such food.

Having advanced a few paces, ‘There,’ said the old man, ‘don’t you hear her?’ At this moment a whip-poor-will near by struck up her song, and the woods which skirted the field echoed back the music. ‘Confound this night-hawk!’ exclaimed Mike, throwing a stone towards a bunch of bushes which grew a few yard distant from them. The bird flew to the edge of the wood, and there again commenced her song. She was now so far off that her music was only faintly heard. ‘Now don’t you hear the sweet creature sing?’ continued Old Mike.

‘Yes,’ faintly responded Searsmont, ‘I hear her now.’

‘Do you find such heavenly singing voices in the thick settled place where you came from?’ inquired the old man.

Searsmont was so charmed with the music as floated along the evening air, and echoed through the groves, mingling with the wild notes of the whip-poor-will, that he made no answer to his friend’s inquiry.

‘What ails you, young man?’ exclaimed Old Mike; ‘you seem to be in a brown study. I tell you to wake up, and put on your best smile, if you wish to show a good front to this night warbler.’
The only answer the old man received to this was, he felt Searsmont trembling hand upon his shoulder, pulling him back just as he had begun again to advance towards the house.

'What!' he continued, 'don't you want to see her?'

The young man tremblingly replied, 'Not now.'

'Oh! then you want to hear her finish her song?' Very well; I love to hear her sing too, although I have heard her a good many times. I tell you she is great on music.'

CHAPTER VII.

The moon had just now disentangled her silver horns from a thick cloud which was floating between her and our listeners, and, throwing a stream of clear, pure light upon the garden and cottage, exposed the fair night warbler, as 'Old Mike' called her, to the view of Searsmont. Never had he seen her when he thought she looked so beautiful as at this moment. She sat in the midst of her flower garden upon a little block of wood her head bare except the rich covering of hair which nature had given her, and her dark lustrous eyes turned upward to the stars as she sang in sweeter tones than ever 'pierced the fearful hollow' of young Searsmont's ears, the following verses:

Here in this soft and sweet secluded spot,
Where mortal foot perchance hath seldom trod,
Oblivious to the world my humble lot,

My books the stars, and Nature for my God,
Forget ambition's toil, and worldly strife,
In the calm solitude of this peaceful life.

O! what to me were wild ambition then,
Or pomp or power, for which the thousands sigh?
True grandeur dwells not in the haunts of men—
In solitude it soars beyond the sky—
Disdains the world's, obeys but Nature's laws,
Looks down with scorn upon mankind's applause.

Oft would I seek at eve yon streamlet's side,
To muse in rapture o'er its sparkling brink!
Bright stream! 't were bliss at eventide,
When western rays in parting glory sink,
To yield life's latest breath, life's latest sigh,
Upon thy beauteous banks, and gently die.

After she had finished her song, she rose from her rude chair, and passed round among the flowers, her hair waving in the gentle night breezes, and glittering in the pale beams of the moon. If 'young Searsmont never knew the fact before, he now became convinced that woman never looks so beautiful as when seen by the soft light of the moon. There is a peculiar charm in the soft silvery
color of moonlight which no other light possesses, especially when it beams on
the countenance of a beautiful female. When shining there, its seems to have
found its appropriate place; at any rate, our young lover thought so. It
seemed to him that she appeared more lovely, more fascinating, absolutely more
irresistible, bathed in the pure beams of the moon, than when he saw her lay-
ing her beauteous form in the crystal waters of her favorite brook. It must
be confessed that he was ill prepared for an introduction to the being who thus
engrossed the powers of his whole soul. If he could have been permitted to
have gone directly into the house, accompanied by his old guide, and there
have been ushered into her presence without form or ceremony, it might have
been more tolerable; but now his ears had not only drank in the delicious
tones of her voice, but his eyes also had feasted on the beauty of her person,
until his nervous system had become sensitively alive to the least touch or sound
of every surrounding object.

Old Mike, utterly regardless of Searsmont's feelings, or ignorant of them,
was still disposed to be rough and humorous. During the time she was singing
her song he was quite still for the music had a tranquilizing effect on the old
man's nerves: but as soon as she had ceased to chant her beautiful melody,
and was promenading among the wild flowers which grew in her garden, he
was for going ahead without observing any particular rules of etiquette.

'Now,' said the old man, 'let us go—she's done singing;' and, attempting
to advance, Searsmont held him by his old frock, and trembled like a leaf when
shaken by the rude winds of autumn, but uttered not a word. His old friend
looked upon him with astonishment. He was not aware of the disease which
was eating into the very core of his heart, and prostrating all his energies. It
never occurred to him that the young man was deeply in love, for he was en-
tirely ignorant of the fact that Searsmont had twice seen this female; besides,
had he known it, he would have heartily laughed at the idea of his falling into
love so suddenly and so passionately as to produce such effects. His notion of
love was that it might, like his old frock, be put on and off as convenience re-
quired. In order to acquire this tender feeling, he supposed it was necessary
to go through a regular process of old-fashioned courtship. True, he had often
heard of 'love at first sight,' as it is called; but then no instance ever occurred
under his observation, and therefore he had no faith in the doctrine. He knew
nothing of those susceptibilities, and that peculiar state of the nervous fluid,
which prepare the heart for such a sudden birth of feeling. Such were some
of the characteristics of Old Mike.

'Come, young man, let go my frock,' said he, 'we'll meet her in the garden.
She's just got lots of flowers, and set 'em out with her own hands.'

'Oh!' replied Searson with a tremulous voice, 'I can't go now; let us
wait until she's gone into the house.'

'Whew! nonsense, boy!' exclaimed Mike, with a voice which not only
alarmed Searson, but reached the ears of the young lady.

Recognizing the well-known sound of her old friend's voice, she immedi-
ately left the garden, and came tripping along with light foot and graceful form. her
long black hair streaming in the moonlight, and her dark eyes flashing with the
brilliance of diamonds, to meet her good friend and neighbor.

Searson, trembling and agitated, had one glimpse of her bewitching face
as she came smiling and dancing towards them. It was too much for his shat-
tered nerves to bear, and he sat upon the green grass behind Old Mike—not in
a swoon, because it is presumed that young men never have such spasmodic affec-
tions; but he fell, apparently deprived of sense and motion. Old Mike not
aware of the peculiar position which his young friend occupied in his rear,
stepped forward to greet the unconscious cause of all his trouble. Their meet-
ing was cordial and happy. The salutations of the evening having passed be-
tween them, Old Mike on turning round to introduce Searson to his fair
friend, found him prostrate upon the grass.
‘Zounds!’ exclaimed he, ‘another fit, I believe. He had a sort of one a few hours ago, but my wife drove it out of him with her smelling-bottle.’

Searsmont was in a kind of dreamy state, but not so far gone but be heard Old Mike mention his wife’s old smelling bottle: this added another shock to his nerves, and actually made him feel sick at the stomach. Our heroine, with a heart overflowing with kindness for the sick and unfortunates seeing the condition of the young man, flew to the house, and soon returned with a phial filled with the essence of a variety of herbs, which she had boiled down, and constantly kept ready for use. It was peculiar decoction of rare herbs, handed down through a long line of ancestry, which her mother had taught her contained the elixir of life. No doubt superstition had thrown many charms over this medicine and given it virtues which it did not possess; still, its effluvia struck the olfactory nerves with very agreeable sensations, and often produced salutary effects.

With this phial in her hand, she hastened to the prostrate patient, and, uncorking its perfumed contents, applied it to his nose. Soon the young man, feeling the ‘delightful savory smell,’ gradually opened his dreamy eyes to the light of the moon. His first thought was that he had been transported to some ‘fairy land,’ and that an angel of mercy was bending over him. It would be entirely futile to attempt to describe his sensations at this moment.

When he opened his eyes he saw the only being on earth whom he loved, bending over him, her hair curling and crinkling in the pale beams of the moon, and falling upon his face and breast. He felt the electrical touch of her fingers as she rubbed his temples with her hand—saw her eyes beaming upon him with Heaven’s own light,—her noble, polished brow stamped with beauty and benevolence strangely and bewitchingly combined—her full, rose-tinted lips partly opened, as if about to utter some word of kindness or of love—her finely chiseled nose gently dilating, and apparently moving sympathetically with the emotions of her heart—and last, though not least, he beheld, partly shaded by her rich moonlit tresses, her heaving, swelling, love-kindling bosom; but we stop. Human language has too much of cold, grovelling earth mixed with it to convey a just conception of such beauty.

Young Searsmont was not long in recovering his equilibrium under such skilful hands. He was soon able to stand upon his feet, and had so far collected his scattered senses as to be able to converse. He felt a strong wish to thank his kind benefactress for her work of charity; but he dared not trust himself to speak. Old Mike, however, soon relieved him from this embarrassment.

‘Well, young man,’ said he, ‘you’ve been pretty essentially doctored this time; it’s lucky that you fell into such good hands. I should almost be willing myself to have a fainting fit for the sake of being doctored as you have been.’ Here the old man again burst into one of his humorous laughs, which had the effect, in some slight degree, of dissipating those diffident, bashful sensations which Searsmont felt creeping about his heart.

‘Now,’ said the old man, addressing Searsmont, ‘let me make you acquainted with your young doctor;’ and, putting his hand on the young lady’s shoulder, he continued, ‘this is Miss Keoka Wilson, and,’ pointing to the young man, ‘that is Mr. Searsmont—and a decent looking couple you are, too.’

Searsmont modestly bowed his head to the fair creature as the old man, in his peculiar way, introduced her to him—and she, gracefully bending her beautiful form, bid him and the old man welcome to her humble lodge. She led the way, and they entered the house together. The apartment to which she conducted them was a small room on the front side of the house, containing a few old-fashioned chairs, a pine table, a small looking-glass, a neat clean bed in one corner, and a wide, deep fire-place, built of large flat rocks. The ceiling of the room consisted of narrow strips of split cedar, shaved smooth, and fastened upon the walls with hard wood pins. The whole had the appearance of neatness and comfort. It is true, the apartment was not so splendidly furnished
as young Searsmont had been accustomed to witness, but the fair owner was every thing to him. He once felt proud that his father’s house was so richly furnished, but now his whole soul was taken up with far different things. This rude apartment appeared now exactly to suit his taste. Every thing which the hand of Keoka touched he thought in the right place.

Soon after they were ushered into this room, Keoka prepared a small stick of pitch-wood, and made a brilliant light in the large fire-place. The flickering flame sent its light over the room, and the whole apartment was soon brilliantly illuminated. There were two windows in the room, and she requested her guests to take seats by them, but Old Mike refused. He preferred sitting in the front entry near the outside door, and also near the one which opened into the partment; therefore Keoka took one window, Searsmont the other, and the old man sat smoking his pipe in the passage way. Thus seated, Old Mike as usual, began the conversation.

‘Well, Keoka, my wife sends her thanks to you for the mess of trout you brought us to-day. We had a fine meal. This young man caught some too, so we’ve been pretty well supplied with fresh fish.’

A blush suddenly passed over the countenance of Searsmont. He felt guilty, because he had not stated how he obtained the trout he brought from the brook the day before. Keoka, noticing his embarrassment,—for she knew he was the young man who frightened her so at the brook,—instantly replied, ‘You’re quite welcome; I couldn’t send them to a better place; your wife, and you, too, have always been very kind to me.’

‘Kind!’ replied the old man; ‘well, we that live in the woods must be kind.

If we were not good neighbors, we should make a poor hand of it.’

‘That’s very true,’ answered Keoka. ‘Those that live in large towns, and have money, can buy every thing they want; but we who live in the woods, must assist each other, and be kind and neighborly. Don’t you think so, Mr. Searsmont?’

The young lover was so much embarrassed, and had been reflecting so much on the string of trout which he stole the day before, that he did not understand the question which his fair friend proposed, and tremulously replied, ‘O! I meant to have told you,—speaking to Old Mike—that I did not catch those trout I brought to your house yesterday, but I forgot it. This young lady caught them, and having left them, I thought I would take them, supposing some wild creature might eat them up if they remained there.

This confession afforded nuts for the old man to crack, and, before the party more immediately interested in the concern could reply, he jokingly, and provokingly, too, rallied Searsmont upon his cunning and craft in taking the young lady’s trout, and pretending that he had caught them.

‘Ah! young man!’ he exclaimed in a laughing manner,—for he had no wish to offend Searsmont,—‘so you felt mighty big, lagging out of the woods a string of trout which Keoka caught, and pretending that your own skill did the business! I’ve half a mind to think that some other of your cock and bull stories about hunting and fishing will turn out just like this.’ After getting off this speech the old man knocked the ashes out of his pipe against the side of the door, and prepared to charge it again. Searsmont in the meantime looked as though he had lost all his friends and all his hopes at the same instant. He could have leaped through the window, and escaped into the woods, if it would have helped the matter. He wished the trout had been in purgatory, or some better place, before he had ever seen them.

The old man was busy in preparing his pipe for another smoke, and did not particularly notice the effect of his remarks had upon Searsmont, but not so Keoka. She saw with pain that the young man was much troubled in spirit, and she was anxious to relieve him from his embarrassment.

‘Now, uncle Brown,’ (she always called him so,) said she, ‘Mr. Searsmont was right in supposing some wild creatures would have eaten the trout if he
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had not taken them, for the minks would certainly have done so, if they had remained at the brook.

This reply somewhat quieted the nerves of Searsmont; still he felt the stings of a guilty conscience prickling to the heart. In the presence of this beautiful, innocent girl, he felt strangely rebuked. Mingling in the society of other females, he could unblushingly tell his large stories, and feel no embarrassment; but now he felt that a single glance of this girl's eye penetrated the inmost recesses of his soul, and discovered his thoughts. He had contemplated telling some of his wonderful feats in the fowling and fishing line, believing the relation of such would be pleasing to Keoka, and raise him in her estimation; but Old Mike had completely upset his kettle of fish—unconsciously, perhaps, but nevertheless the work was thoroughly done, for this evening at least. Our young hero was completely cut off from his favorite topic of conversation. He had fondly imagined that he should be abundantly able to entertain this young female with his feats of arms and skill in angling; the more so, because she was fond of one of the sports at least, and he was not sure but she might equal him in the other. While these thoughts were passing rapidly through the young man's mind, Old Mike sat smoking his pipe and enjoying himself in the cool breeze of the evening. Conversation began now to lag, for Searsmont felt less like talking than he ever did in his life; yet Keoka did her part, and appeared lively through the evening.

'Well,' said Mike, putting his pipe in his pocket, 'it is time for us to be going, young man. My old woman will comb my head if I stay so late. I hate to part such a good looking young couple, and both so fond of catching trout. It's an old saying that birds of a feather flock together. Now I propose that you should try your skill to-morrow, and see who can catch the most trout? I will go with you, and see that there is fair play. What say you to this, Keoka?

'I should delight to go,' replied Keoka; 'but then Mr. Searsmont can beat me, no doubt, with all his fine rigging.'

'Fine rigging,' answered the old man. 'With all his fine rigging, and little bumble-bees and tinsel flies to boot, I'll bet you'll catch two to his one. What say you, young man, will you try and be beat?'

'Yes,' responded Searsmont, 'I will try.'

'Well, then, to-morrow morning, after breakfast, we'll go the brook,' said the old man, 'and have some fun. Come down early, Keoka.'

'I'll be at your house in season,' she replied; and Old Mike and Searsmont took their leave of this fair creature, and started for home.

On their way to Old Mike's residence, Searsmont had a great curiosity to ascertain how this young female happened to receive the name 'Keoka.' He could not recollect that he ever heard the name before. 'It's an odd name,' he said to himself; 'but it is the sweetest name my ears ever heard.'

It is true that a rose will smell as sweet called by any other name; but our hero thought he would not have her name changed to any other, except the last one, Wilson; this he was willing to have exchanged for Searsmont. 'Keoka Searsmont, Mrs. Keoka Searsmont,' he kept repeating over within himself until he was almost upon the point of speaking it out loud; but the presence of his old guide checked him, and he confined his sweet musings within his own bosom.

Curiosity continued to press him until his courage was screwed to the sticking point, and he ventured to ask his old friend to relieve him from this oppression.

'Mr. Brown,' said he very respectfully, and with an uncommon share of reverence for the person addressed, 'can you tell me who gave the young lady, we have just left, her name? It's a singular name, and one I never heard before.'

'Name?' replied the old man; 'why, it's a Scripter name, I suppose, I guess you don't read your Bible often, young man.'
Now Old Mike knew better, but still he felt a disposition to conceal the secret from Searsmont. He preferred that Keoka herself should reveal it, if she chose to do so. Searsmont did not press the inquiry any further, for he did not feel altogether certain but Keoka might be a Scripture name. He knew just about enough of the Bible to recollect that this Holy Book contained a great many odd names, and this was the sum and substance of his biblical knowledge.

As they passed along, and were leaving the field to enter a strip of woodland, another whip-poor-will turned up her solitary song close by the path.

'Sing away!' exclaimed old Mike, 'we've just seen a bird that can beat you all hollow; you aint a priming to her.'

Soon several more of these night warblers, from different points in the woods, commenced singing, and the whole region was alive with their music.

'Go it!' continued Mike, 'she can beat the whole posse of ye. There's some sense in her singing. She knows a thing or two about music. Don't you think so, young man?'

This abrupt question startled Searsmont out a sort of reverie in which he had been dreaming; and he replied, 'Miss Wilson has got a very good voice.'

'Miss Wilson! good voice!' repeated the old man. 'Why don't you say Keoka sings like an angel? I'm inclined to believe you think so, but feel afraid to say it.'

Searsmont made no reply. He was evidently in a peculiar state of feeling. His notions were altogether exclusive. She was not yet his own Keoka. He longed for the time when he could call her so. The great struggle was yet to be passed. He had lost his own heart, but he had not gained hers; and until he was sure that he had made this conquest, he did not like to hear any one lavish praises upon her. It excited a sort of jealousy within his breast, and increased his fears. Such are the effects of love, especially when it first spreads its dazzling halo about the heart. Restless and sensitive, it feeds upon, and is sustained by the very food it most loathes. It looks upon its object as a sacred thing; the breath of human praise must not be upon it; the idol must not be worshipped by many hearts; no other fire can be allowed to burn on the hallowed altar. Thus did young Searsmont feel. Even the praises of Old Mike, almost superannuated as he was, and in a fit state to think more of the grave than of a beautiful female, excited his fears and roused his jealousies. Although he would not have been surprised if the whole animated creation had worshipped the idol of his heart, yet he wished to fall down alone and worship at that shrine. He almost hated his little spaniel for having received the caresses of his adored one, and looking so kindly into her face when she patted him on the head and smoothed down his curly hair. Surely young Searsmont was in a strange predicament, but into such a dilemma does young love bring every heart upon which it operates. He loved, and loved, too, with his whole soul, and this made him fear that every thing else loved the same object as ardently as he did.

With these feelings torturing his bosom, he retired to his humble sleeping apartment. In the gable end of this log-cabin a window opened into his room, through which the rays of the moon entered, and feebly lighted up his rude dormitory. Instead of going to bed, our love-smitten swain took a seat at the window, and looked out upon the wild landscape which lay bathed in moonlight before him. All was silent and still. The moon had sunk far in the west, and her feeble rays scarcely rendered the surrounding scenery distinctly visible. A deep melancholy seemed to have settled upon the fields and woods. A gentle night breeze played about the window, fanning his agitated brow, and ready to bear his burning thoughts to their object on yonder distant hill.

'Where am I? what am I?' he mused to himself. 'Love! yes love! I feel it's power in the innermost chambers of my soul. A fire is kindled there which can never be quenched. Does the world laugh? Yes! Then let it
laugh. Does it pretend to be above this mighty power? to be beyond its control? Ah! it is pride, vain-glorious pride, which directs the finger of scorn. The world may look with contempt upon this power, yet it is the power which controls it. Laugh as much as it pleases, and when it pleases, still love is over all, and controls all. It lies at the bottom of all enterprise; it is ambition's great stimulus. Without it the world would retrograde, and become savage and barbarous. Who can record the feelings of a single heart. Many volumes could not contain them, and yet the world affects to laugh at love. I, too, have laughed, but now I know its influence. It is shut up in my heart, and there the secret is concealed. The world knows it not; no human being knows it. No! not even she who has kindled the sacred flame. But she must know it. Ah! when shall she know it? Oh, God! would to heaven that ordeal were passed!

CHAPTER VIII.

Thus did poor Searsmont muse until his strength became exhausted, and he sank upon his bed, and sought that repose he so much needed. In the morning he was aroused by Old Mike's voice. 'There she comes! there she comes!' he exclaimed. 'That gal is always true to her word!'

Searsmont sprang out of bed, and hurried to the window. Looking across the field, he saw Keoka tripping along through the grass, brushing the dew from its tender blades with the skirts of her dress, and carrying her beautiful fishing-rod in her hand. She wore the same large shady bonnet she had on when he first saw her at the brook. Forgetting to dress himself, he still kept his eyes fastened upon her until she passed directly under the window where he sat, and met Old Mike at the door.

'Well done, Keoka!' said Mike, 'you have got along in good season this fine morning. Your brother fisherman isn't up yet. I'll call him.'

'He's fatigued, I suppose,' said Keoka. 'He can't stand these hard jaunts in the woods as you and I can.'

'You stand hard jaunts?' replied Mike, 'a slender, delicate form like yours? Why, you're more fit for the parlor, as they call it, than the woods. Perhaps this young man will take you off, and show you the great cities and fine parlors.'

'Not by force, will he, uncle Brown?' replied Keoka, laughing.

'Oh, no! not by force at all!' replied the old man, humorously. 'He may make you willing to go. Love, you know, does wonders.'

'I don't know any thing about love,' continued Keoka.

'Well, well,' responded the old man, 'I'll call the young man;' and immediately Searsmont heard Mike's voice calling him to get up. He hurried on his clothes, and while he was engaged in this operation, 'I don't know any thing about love' kept ringing in his ears, and coldly working about his heart, until he had dressed himself and descended the ladder into the room where he met Keoka.

She bid him good morning in an easy, familiar manner. The tones of her musical voice sank deep into his heart, and her familiar, pleasant manner gave him some encouragement to hope that his suit might be successful. Every time he met her, and while in her presence, his diffidence seemed to diminish. Still he felt a heavy load upon his shoulders; quite as much as he could stand up under. She was in high glee this morning, full of life and animation—more
So than Searsmont wished to see her. He wanted her to feel just as he did. He fancied that so much life and hilarity were inconsistent with the mysteri-
ous operations of love as he felt them in his own heart. In this, no doubt, he reasoned well. Keoka did not love. If she had, she would have felt some
degree of diffidence, and, perhaps, a slight touch of melancholy. This would
have dampened her spirits, and thrown over her actions a shade of sobriety;
but now she was all life and gaiety. Her young heart knew no such sorrow.
No causer was gnawing there. Her spirits flowed as freely as the waters of
her own brook. The little blind god had never been suffered to toy with her
heart. No arrow from his quiver had ever reached it. It was whole, pure, in-
ocent, and fresh as it came from the hands of its Creator. No livid spot
was to be seen on its bright surface. The hand of no man had left its print
upon it; the corruptions of human society had not tarnished it. Free and pure
as the mountain breezes that played with her long dark hair, and fanned her
beautiful cheeks, it burst forth in music and song, gay and lively as the birds
of the forest. What a treasure such a heart.

So thought Searsmont, and well he might. But was it to be his? That
was the great question which now absorbed all his faculties. Well did he
reason that her heart contained all the materials necessary to kindle one of
the purest flames of love that ever burnt on human altar. But had he the
power to ignite these materials, and kindle this pure, this bright flame? —
Subsequent events must solve this great question. Gladly would he have
bowed before high Heaven, and asked its blessings upon his enterprise; but
his wayward life had been such that he dared not place himself in that atti-
itude before God. He wished that he was a Christian, that he might be
strengthened with the Christian's hopes; but he felt that his own sins had cut
him off from these sources of consolation and encouragement, and he was
now left to practice such arts as were within his power, and such as his own
experience might suggest. These he was determined to wield with all his
strength. It has been elsewhere said, that he was not destitute of talents, and
it was true he is not. For a young man of his age he was possessed of more
than ordinary skill and tact. Among female hearts generally he could cut a
pretty wide swath, and find avenues to them quite readily; but in this case
he had to contend with the formidable power of past impressions — a power
hard to be overcome. It will be no doubt recollected by the reader, that Keo-
ka had been cautioned by Mettallak, a character that figured somewhat con-
spicuously in the former part of this narrative, to 'beware of the cunning of the
white man.' It is true the admonition came from an Indian; still it may be
none the less impressive on that account; besides, this young girl had the
same blood flowing in her veins that coursed through his, and was also much
attached to him. His mode of instruction might not have been agreeable to
modern rules in fashion among the civilized and educated, but yet he might
have been quite as successful in fastening the great truth which was so near
his heart on the mind of young Keoka as though he had travelled a more ar-
tificial and flowery path. The probability is, that his instructions sank deeper
into the heart of his grand-daughter, by his adopting familiar illustrations,
drawn from things which were constantly before her eyes and which she
clearly understood; but we will not stop the course of our narrative to reason
upon the different modes impressing the young mind, or discuss their respect-
ive merits. That subject, perhaps, belongs to a more sober work than this
pretends to be.

Old Mike, Searsmont, and Keoka had now arrived at the brook; the two
latter to try their skill in angling, and the former to see that there was fair
play. The old man was in high glee, and full of fun and jokes, and Keoka
was as wild as the young deer, and as full of frolic; but Searsmont's mind
was intent on only one thing. Keoka prepared for the sport, and baited her
hook with an angle-worm which she took from her box, adjusting it in such
manner on the hook as to leave the tail free to twist about and squirm near the point. This presented a great temptation to the trout. Searsmont also arranged his apparatus, taking from his morocco case a beautiful fly attached to a delicate hook, and both fastened at the end of a fine white thread drawn from the silk worm. Being thus prepared, old Mike gave off the word, and both at the same instant threw their hooks into the sparkling waters.

While Keoka was gazing upon the little tinsel fly which Searsmont was scientifically skipping about over the bubbling surface of the water, a large trout seized her hook and ran close under the falls. She gave him line a short time, and then gracefully threw the shining creature over her head, high and dry upon the shore. Old Mike raised his voice in a broad laugh, so loud that the roar of the falls could not drown it.

'Ah! yer jade you,' he exclaimed; 'I knew you would beat him. Trout are not such fools as to be caught with that they can't eat, if it does sparkle and shine.'

The old man's prejudices were evidently on the side of Keoka; and Searsmont was aware of this; therefore he felt the more anxious to hook some of the creatures, and show old Mike how easy it is for a man to be mistaken.

'We must'n brag too soon, uncle Mike,' replied Keoka. 'I have often heard you say, that you never crowed until you were fairly out of the woods. Mr. Searsmont may catch the next one.'

Before the old man had time to reply, a small trout darted at Searsmont's fly, and fastened himself upon the hook. He played with him a few minutes, secondem artem, and then drew him ashore.

'There!' exclaimed Keoka, in a laughing manner, as though she was glad of the young man's luck, 'I told you Mr. Searsmont might catch the next one, and he has.'

'Well,' replied old Mike, 'he is a little foolish one, or he never would have been caught with that tinsel.'

The sport went on, and soon Keoka threw out another, larger than the first. Searsmont kept industriously motioning his fly upon the water, while Keoka continued to draw them out, amid the loud laughter of old Mike, until she had caught nearly a dozen. Searsmont was upon the point of giving up, when a large trout, larger than either which Keoka had caught, rose from the bottom, broke the water with some splashing, and seized the fly. Searsmont gave him scope, and he ran up under the craggy rocks which projected over the water; not satisfied with this position, he darted off down stream, making the reel spin like a top. At last Searsmont have him to, and began to reel him up. This was fine sport for Keoka. She had never seen any scientific angling before, and she was much delighted. Searsmont kept his eye on the motions of the trout. At last he turned, and the angler, not being so thoroughly skilled as he might have been, continued to snub him, and the trout broke away.

'There!' exclaimed Mike, 'he held on to it longer than I should have thought he would; but found it wasn't good to eat, and so he let go. I don't blame him for it. He was a fool to bite in the first place.'

Old Mike evidently did not understand how it happened that Searsmont lost the trout, neither did he much care. Keoka had beaten Searsmont most essentially, and that was enough for him.

'Now I'm out here,' said the old man, 'I guess I'll go into the woods, and hunt up some ash timber — I want some to make a cart-tongue. So, if you get tired of fishing before I get back, you can go to making love to each other.' Saying this, the old man had one good hearty laugh, and then started off above the Falls in search of timber.

Searsmont was glad he was gone, but he felt provoked at the last part of his speech. It seemed to him that the old fellow was always saying some-
thing to disturb his feelings or thwart his plans; yet he could not get really angry with him, because he never seemed to design anything.

Now Searsmont was left alone with the being he loved with his whole soul, and in the place, too, where he first felt the inspirations of love. He was in doubt whether to declare his passion or not at this time. There were two theories which pressed with much weight on his mind, and which to adopt and practice upon he did not know. It has been said by some that the female loves because the male, first loved her. Again it has been considered the best policy, in order to insure success to conceal your own passion, and take some preliminary steps; and after favorable impressions have been made upon the heart, then to make the declaration.

Searsmont pondered these theories over in his mind. He had some serious fears that if he fully declared his attachment at this time, that the suddenness of the affair might frighten the object of his love, and leave an unfavorable impression; still he could not think of letting the opportunity pass unimproved. The place he thought a favorable one, and he might not be there again under such propitious circumstances. Finally he came to the conclusion that he would take a middle course, and practice upon both theories at the present time.

Soon after Old Mike departed, Searsmont told Keoka that he was rather tired of fishing, and proposed leaving the shore and finding a good place to sit down and rest. Keoka, willing to gratify him, made no objections. They laid down their rods, and went about half way up the falls, where Keoka pointed to a large flat rock which projected from the side of the bank, and formed a very convenient seat. It was shaded by a broad spreading sugar-maple, and commanded a fine view of the falls, and of the valley which stretched far to the south. On this rock Keoka had spent many hours since her grandfather's death, and in his life-time he often sat there while she was fishing. It was a place dear to her, and associated with many pleasing recollections, but Searsmont knew nothing of this. He was quite ignorant of her history, only knowing that her parents were dead, and she was left an orphan.

After they ascended to the rock, Keoka broke off a branch of the maple, and sat down. Searsmont also took a seat some little distance from her. He was too diffident, too much awed by this beautiful and pure female, to sit nearer. The excitement of the sport, and the warm weather, had brought the roses upon her cheeks, and made her countenance look exceedingly animated. The rich dark shade of the tree spread a soft light over her brunette complexion, giving it a most lovely appearance. She took off her broad bonnet, and exposed her finely rounded head, covered with thick, silky blue hair, which fell down below her waist, and quite touched the rock upon which she sat. Her shoulder next to Searsmont was veiled in a thick mass of hair; the other was more slightly covered. Her whole appearance was perfectly natural and extremely fascinating; and, what made her still more so, she was entirely unconscious of her charms. She had not the most distant idea that she had raised such a tempest in Searsmont's bosom, for she desired no such thing.

Turning her dark clear eyes upon Searsmont with a look which thrilled through his nerves like an electrical shock, she said, 'Let me see your morocoo book where you keep your flies.' Instantly Searsmont drew it forth from one of the numerous pockets in his hunting coat, and, drawing himself nearer to her side, opened it to show her its different apartments, and the arrangement of the flies and hooks. The case pleased her much. Every thing was neat and beautiful, and very nearly in the same order as when imported from England. With her taper fingers she pointed to the different flies, and asked Searsmont to describe them to her. He very readily answered all her questions, and in doing so, it became necessary, as the case was before her, to incline his head towards hers, so that he could distinctly see, and also to make the same use of his fingers that she did. In this way his head not unfrequently came in
contact with hers, and their hands would occasionally touch each other. Upon his arm laid a rich fold of her hair, quite covering his coat sleeve. Her sparkling eyes outshone the dazzling and beautiful flies upon which she was gazing, and her bosom, directly under his eye, was heaving and swelling with the emotions which such splendid artificial works were calculated to inspire.

Searsmont was in a dangerous and critical position. The blood rushed impetuously through his veins, giving rapid and quick pulsations to his heart,—Large drops of perspiration stood upon his brow, and his temples throbbed with violent beatings. Keoka, feeling the agitated and trembling motions of his shoulder, as it pressed against hers, turned up her flashing eyes, and looked him full in the face. It was too much. He instantly seized her hand, and pressing it violently to his lips, covered it with kisses.

Keoka withdrew her hand from his nervous grasp, and rose upon her feet.—She was, in some degree, ignorant of the malady which was preying upon his heart. She remembered the peculiar situation in which he was placed the evening before, and at first imagined the convulsive motions which shook his frame were but the premonitory symptoms of a similar spasm. He still remained seated upon the rock, with his face upturned towards her with a wild, distracted look. Placing her hand upon the top of his head, and gently running her fingers through his hair, she said, ‘Mr. Searsmont, I fear you are unwell, I wish I had my phial here; it might calm your nerves?’

‘O, Keoka!’ he replied with tremulous voice, ‘I am not unwell! Your phial, powerful as it may be to cure the body, can furnish no remedy for the diseases of the heart!’

Not fully understanding the import of his remark, and still keeping her fingers twirling in his hair, she continued, ‘Perhaps I do not know what you mean by diseases of the heart. My mother, and my grandfather, too, always told me that the essences of certain herbs would cure almost any disease, unless it was the will of the Great Spirit that the patient must die.’

‘Ah! my dear Keoka!’ he replied; but before he could finish the sentence, he was interrupted by the ‘dear Keoka.’

‘See there!’ she exclaimed; ‘there runs a mink with one of my largest trout in his mouth!’ and off she bounded with the fleetness of the wind in pursuit of the mink. The little sleek animal was so hotly pursued that he became alarmed, and dropped the trout among the rocks on the shore. Having placed the stolen fish among the rest, and hanging them on a tree secure from any further depredations, she returned to the rock upon which Searsmont still remained.

‘I was sorry,’ she said, ‘to interrupt you, Mr. Searsmont, but this is not the first time these roguish creatures have stolen my trout. I think they ought to catch their own fish.’

Searsmont was thunderstruck with this movement of Keoka. ‘What!’ thought he, ‘does she think more of a single trout than of the great secret of my heart which I was about to reveal? of that secret which oppresses and weighs me down to the earth?’

Her apparent indifference to his feelings, her lightness and gaiety, almost drove him from his purpose; but, ‘amor vincit omnia,’ as the beautiful Latin poet said, so many centuries ago. Nothing would satisfy him but a declaration of his love in this romantic retreat, far from human gaze. He became convinced that now was the time to make known his feelings. He had worked himself into the belief, that, if he neglected this opportunity, all would be lost. With these feelings pressing upon his heart he again seized the hand of Keoka, and was about to unburthen his oppressed soul, when she suddenly withdrew it, and turned upon him such an innocent, but stern look, as made him stagger in his purpose. Recovering from the sudden shock, he exclaimed in a sharp, broken voice, ‘Keoka, I love you beyond the power of language to express!’
"Love me?" she repeated in much surprise; 'love a poor girl in the wilderness, whose home is the humble log-house on yonder hill, and whose pleasuregrounds the little garden in its front and these wild woods and streams? No! Mr. Searsmont, you cannot love such as I am. It is but a dream, which will soon pass away!"

"It is no dream, I can assure you, my dear Keoka!" he replied. 'Truth compels me to say that you are the only female on earth whom I ever loved, and without you my life must be miserable indeed!'

"Ah! Mr. Searsmont," she answered, 'you know not the history of Keoka. If you did you might shrink with horror from the idea of passing your life with her. She has no companions now but the bright birds which greet her with their morning songs, and in the evening she sings to sleep on their roost among the green branches of the trees."

"Will you not believe me, loved Keoka?" he said with great earnestness.— "You are the only being whom I love."

"Here upon this very rock, in view of this beautiful woodland, and in hearing of the music of these falling waters, sat my grandfather, Mettallak, many days, and cautioned me against the crafty wiles of the white man!" continued Keoka.

"Mettallak! white man!" repeated Searsmont, with great surprise. 'Why do you talk thus, dear Keoka? and he attempted to encircle her waist with his arm, and to imprint a burning kiss upon her lips.

"Away! away!" she exclaimed, with a stern commanding voice, and threw his arm from her side with considerable force.

Searsmont felt rebuked. He had proceeded farther than he intended. His feelings were so much excited, and he was so intoxicated with her beauty, that he hardly knew what he did. Keoka had retreated a few steps from him and stood gazing upon him with a withering, scorching look. She appeared to him like an 'accusing spirit' about to give in the account of his deeds to the 'recording angel.'

"Keoka, my beloved Keoka," he replied in a subdued voice, 'I would not do you wrong for worlds. You must pardon something to the spirit of love which no w almost overcomes me.'

"The love of the white man is a snare!" she said with great emphasis.

"The white man again!" murmured Searsmont. 'Why, Keoka, do you speak thus of the white man, when your own skin is so beautiful, and tinged with the white man's blood?"

"My skin is in part tinged with the white man's blood, but not wholly," replied she is a pleasant manner.

"But how is this?" exclaimed the astonished lover. 'None but the purest white man's blood can flow in such veins as yours!"

"Searsmont! flatter me not," she replied. 'Think not to lure me with such glittering bait as you use to catch the incautious trout! It was against these allurements, and such as these, my grandfather, Mettallak, held up his warning voice!"

"Mettallak!" he repeated with great agitation; 'who was Mettallak? where did he live?"

"Mettallak was an Indian!" replied Keoka, proudly, 'and a truer heart than his never beat in white man's bosom! He lived on the Magalloway, yonder, for many years—but at last died, clasping my hand is his, in my father's house."

"Mettallak an Indian, and your grandfather?" exclaimed Searsmont with great perturbation.

"Yes! an Indian! a wild Indian, if you please!" repeated Keoka; 'and I'm named for my grandmother, who died many years ago.'

Searsmont was struck with great astonishment at these apparently proud confessions of Keoka. He had entertained some suspicions, from several circum-
stances, that his loved one might possibly have some Indian blood in her veins, but yet he would not suffer himself to believe it until he had heard the fact announced from those lips he was convinced would not utter a falsehood. Now he was compelled to believe that he loved a female who was half Indian.

This announcement from Keoka alarmed his pride, but did not diminish his love. He was yet the same love-smitten youth. Love had taken too deep root in his heart, and had entwined itself too closely about its fibres to be thus eradicated. ‘Half Indian, or whole Indian,’ said he within himself, ‘I love this girl more than all human beings beside. I must conquer her prejudices, and win her heart. But how? She does not listen to the story of love like other females, and yet she can love, and love ardent, too. Nature made her to love, and to be loved. Has her old Indian grandfather unmade he? Has he fastened upon her mind fears and suspicions that no power, not even love itself, can extirpate? No! it cannot be! Such a heart as Keoka’s must love! It will love me!’

Thus did Searsmont commune with himself. He was enraptured with the conclusions to which his course of reasoning had brought him. Now he felt encouraged for the moment.

‘Keoka,’ said he, ‘your grandfather was right in cautioning you against the power and the craft of the white man. Many of them are crafty and cunning, and would not hesitate to destroy a female friend to gratify their own selfish purposes; but, Keoka, my loved Keoka, there are honorable exceptions.’

This last phrase was pronounced with great emphasis, but the heart of Keoka was unmoved by these soft words.

‘I know he was right,’ replied she. ‘He was my friend, and loved me, and would not tell me any thing wrong. He was an old man, and had seen the wicked actions of the white men.’

‘I’m your friend, and love you, too, as much as ever your grandfather could,’ continued Searsmont.

‘How can you love me so much as he, when you have not seen me but a short time? I was with him many years, and led him about, for he was blind.’

‘Ah! could he have seen your beauty as I see it, he would have loved you more,’ replied Searsmont. Saying this, he gently put his hand upon her symmetrical neck. She suddenly shrank from his touch, as though she felt the viper’s coil upon her flesh.

‘Searsmont!’ she exclaimed, ‘touch me not with your hands when your lips utter such smooth words!’

At this moment the voice of Old Mike was heard just above them, singing out, ‘Well done, young man! you begin to do the thing up in good style.—Nothing like love-pats on the neck. A good beginning. I told you you couldn’t help loving her.’
CHAPTER IX.

Old Mike had arrived just in time to see Searsmont put his hand on Keoka’s neck, but was not near enough to hear her reply. He saw her start back like a young lown, but then he did not think much of that. His notions were not very much refined. He would make love in the same manner as he would execute any other business transaction, going at it with hammer and tongs, laughter and jollity. His sensibilities were not often on the sick list. This swooning and fainting struck him as nonsense and humbug. As a remedy for such diseases, he had just as much confidence in his wife’s old smelling bottle us in Keoka’s plural, and that was just none at all.

The short, sharp admonition of Keoka, together with the boisterous interruption of Old Mike, completely placed Searsmont, *hors du combat!* He knew not which way to turn, or what to say. Motionless as a statue, he stood gazing on vacancy, scarcely daring to lift his eyes on Keoka, or even on Old Mike. He began to feel his want of power to operate on the heart of this girl. It seemed to him that he was farther from accomplishing his object than ever. And, what was worse than all the rest, in proportion as his prospects of success became dim, his love increased, and the flame grew brighter.

‘Strange infatuation of the human heart!’ thought Searsmont. ‘I love that object which will not return my love. It has been said there is a bird which shows the most beautiful tints of her plumage when she takes her flight. I must still hope that Keoka has not flown from me forever. Are first impressions so interwoven with the machinery of the mind that they cannot be blotted out by a higher power? But what higher power is there but Him who created the mind? Why did not my parents teach me to pray when I was a child, so that I might now appeal to that Power for assistance? *Beware of the craft of the white man!* Will not the power of love erase the impression which this simple admonition of an old Indian has made on Keoka’s mind?

*A curse on the memory of old Mettallak!*’

This last thought passed over Searsmont’s soul like a stream of burning lava, scorching and withering every thing in its course which had even the semblance of virtue. He was now driven almost to desperation. He set his teeth and clenched his hands — pressed his feet more firmly upon the rock, brought his fist violently up to his breast, and turned his glaring eyes on Keoka. Calmly she received his look, viewing all this action as a sort of stage effect; for she had been taught by Mettallak that the white man would assume every variety of shape to deceive woman. Not knowing the strange effects which love, in certain stages of its progress, sometimes produces in the heart, Keoka did not once suppose that Searsmont was really suffering all he pretended to suffer in this singular attitude.

‘Why, Mr. Searsmont!’ she exclaimed; ‘you look frightful enough to scare the birds from their roost!’

Now Old Mike put in his voice, as he was ever ready, on any occasion, whether of love or murder, to say something.

‘Young man, you mustn’t lay these things so much at heart. My maxim is never to take more upon my shoulders than I can shake off at my heels. Never mind,’ he continued; ‘in my day I’ve seen terrible sharp lightning come out of a black cloud.'
A single ray of hope from Old Mike's remarks shot into Searsmont's heart, but Keoka's speech was any thing but pleasing. He could draw no consolation or hope from it, put the most favorable construction upon it his ingenuity could form. 'Touch me not!' he kept constantly repeating over in his mind, until it seemed like the voice of a spirit from another world, clothed with a strange, mysterious power. He called into exercise all his powers to drown this fearful voice, but its echoes were still heard in the innermost chambers of his soul. A thick dark cloud overspread his spirit, and spread like a black pall over his heart, shrouding it in gloom and despair. He struggled with all his energies to lift the gloomy covering from his soul, that his eyes might be greeted with a single ray of hope. At last the thought struck him that woman is artful. Keoka might be so. Although she had never mingled much in civilized society, or learned its arts and shared its corruptions, yet nature, the great teacher of the human heart, he thought, had taught her the art of practising deception in matters of love. All this convulsive shrinking from the touch of his hand might be affectation— an art practised to stir up his blood, and increase the flame of his love. He had an uncertain, vague idea that such a law existed and pervaded all animated nature. Pure and unsullied as he believed Keoka's heart to be, still he now hoped it was not entirely exempted from the operation of this law.

'Nature will have its course,' he said to himself, and I yet will hope. It would be unreasonable to expect her to act as though she loved me upon such a slight acquaintance. One important step is taken. She knows that there is one heart that truly loves her. Let this knowledge work out its legitimate effects upon her tender heart, and nine times in ten, if no rival interferes, the result will be favorable.'

With these reflections Searsmont calmed his mind as well as he could, and assumed his usual appearance. During the short period these thoughts were running through his mind, he stood upon the rock; but Keoka, after she made her last remark to him, went down to the water's edge, and amused herself in washing her trou't, and smoothing out the wrinkles which the warm rays of the sun had produced on their bright sides. In the meantime Old Mike had lit his pipe, and was seated near Searsmont, enjoying a comfortable smoke after his jaunt in the woods in search of timber.

After sufficiently regaling himself with the fumes of his old black pipe, 'Come,' said he, 'the day is wearing away, and it's time to be stirring for home. You've stood there quite long enough, dreaming. See! Keoka is down there washing her trout. Wonder if she has washed that little foolish one you caught. Ah! I told you she would beat you. She's death on fishing.'

Having washed the trout, and brought out again their shining spots, Keoka came running to Old Mike, and holding up the string before him, 'See here!' she exclaimed; 'Here's one a mink has bitten with his sharp teeth. While we were on the rock, he stole it and ran away; but I chased him, and he was glad to drop it on the rocks.'

'Ah!' replied the old man, 'while you were on the rock, eh? It's a wonder the mink hadn't run away with the whole of them without your seeing him. Sometimes young folks are very busy. Where's that little one?' and the old man threw a cunning, sly look at Searsmont, and broke out into loud laughter.

Searsmont was now quite restored to his senses. He was determined to receive the old man's jokes in good humor, and to be as sociable as the heavy load upon his heart would permit him to be.

'It is'n't fair to strike a man after he's down,' he replied. 'I acknowledge Keoka has beat me handsomely.'

'Mr. Searsmont is not so well acquainted with the brook as I am,' said Keoka. 'In other places he might beat me.'
'Fiddle-stick!' exclaimed old Mike; 'there is no place where trout swim he could bear you with his tinsel'd humble-bees and silk threads. It is'nt natural. Trout are not such fools, if they can't run on land.' The little fishing party now started for Old Mike's cabin. After they had arrived, Mike's wife felt a curiosity to have some private talk with Keoka. She mistrusted that Searsmont, by his actions, was smitten with the charms of her young friend. A woman's instinct in these matters is much more acute than that of a man. Knowing that Keoka was a very handsome gal, as she called her, she thought it not unlikely that Searsmont had been talking to her about love, whether in earnest or not. The old lady did not have much confidence in these young bloods from thick settled places, who dressed so fine, and put on so many airs; besides, she felt a deep interest in the welfare of Keoka, and sometimes assumed the place of a watchful mother over her, giving her counsel and advice, and urging her to take care of herself. However unnecessary all this might be, still the old lady's intentions were pure. Giving Keoka a wink, the old lady went into the back part of the house, followed by her young and handsome protege. 'Now,' said the honest old lady, 'what did that young man say to you? How did he act when your uncle Brown was gone in the woods, as I understand he left you alone some time?' Keoka manifested a disposition to keep dark, but the old lady's curiosity was the more excited by this reluctance on the part of Keoka to disclose any thing. 'Now, dear, you know I'm as good a friend as you have on earth,' continued the old lady, 'and why should you be afraid to tell me?' 'Why, aunt,' she replied, 'I'm not afraid to tell you any thing; but what is the use to be always talking about these things? I can take care of myself. Grandfather taught me lessons I shall never forget.' 'Did he, dear Keoka, say any thing about love?' continued the old lady, pressing her inquiry with earnestness. 'Yes,' replied Keoka; 'he told me the white men would make a great many confessions of love, and cautioned me to beware of them.' 'I didn't mean your grandfather. Did that young man say anything about love?' inquired the old lady. 'Yes, aunt, he did,' responded Keoka. 'Well,' continued the old lady, lifting her spectacles upon the top of her head, and staring Keoka full in the face, 'did he say he loved you?' This was a direct question, and demanded a direct answer; but it is one which young ladies of true modesty and good sense will always feel some diffidence in answering. Keoka, however, knowing it would be quite impossible to evade her good friend's inquiry much longer, very modestly answered the question in the affirmative. 'There!' broke out the old lady very suddenly, 'I thought that young man acted as though he meant something. I told your uncle so last night after we went to bed, but he said I was always spaying out wonders; so he turned over and went to sleep. What did you say to him?' 'O! I answered him well enough,' replied Keoka. 'I'm glad you did,' continued the old lady. 'He's a stranger among us. You don't now any thing about his moral character. He's a good-looking young man, I must say; but then moral character is every thing, I don't want you to throw yourself away on any young man that hasn't got a good moral character. His father may be rich; but the good Book says, riches take to themselves wings and fly away. He don't know much about providing for a family — if he did, he wouldn't be strolling about the woods here, week in and week out, dressed up in his finery, with his dog and other rattle-traps. It doesn't look well. Now there's Bill Stebbins, who wants you for
a wife. He's honest, and hard working, if he isn't so handsome as this young man. I should rather run the risk of marrying him, and —

Here the old lady's remarks were cut short by her husband. If they had not been, there is no knowing to what interminable lengths she might have gone.

'Come, wife, it's time for dinner or supper, whichever you are a mind to call it. These jaunts in the woods make me as hungry as a wolf!' exclaimed the old man.

This broke up the conversation, and brought the old lady to a sense of her domestic duties. She immediately busied herself in preparing for dinner, and Keoka went home. The old folks couldn't prevail on her to tarry for dinner. She had seen enough of Searsmont for one day at least.

We must now leave Old Mike, his wife, and the young man, for the remainder of the day and following night. Searsmont worried through the day, and bore up under the old man's jokes, who was continually teasing him about Keoka, with all the philosophy he could summon to his aid, and finally retired to his garret with a full determination to renew his suit the next day, when he hoped he should not be interrupted by Old Mike's blarney. We will leave him to his reflections—and they are bitter enough—and will accompany the reader to the humble lodge of Keoka. This blithe and beautiful bird of the wild wood sought the quiet shades of her own log-cabin. She went into her little garden, and examined her wild flowers. Her heart was drawn out in gratitude to her heavenly Father that he had created flowers, and gave her the privilege of cultivating them. She thought of her parents, and of her poor old grandfather—of the many lessons he had stamped upon her memory—of the many excursions through the woods, and beside the purling brooks, they had taken together—of the pressure of his withered hand, as it clasped hers in the hour of his death. 'I will go,' said she to herself, 'and visit their graves.' The sun had just set, and a soft twilight had spread over the landscape, bathing it in its rich and mellow light.

The burial-place of her humble family was but a few rods from the house. It was situated on a small elevation of land among a thick growth of small white pine trees. To this spot Keoka repaired, and there she sang one of her wild, enchanting melodies. There was none to hear the rich music of her voice but the birds, and they were quietly on their roosts in the branches of the trees—all except the night-warbling whip-poor-will, and she suspended her notes to hear Keoka's song.

After she had finished singing she seated herself upon a rough stone which lay at the head of her mother's grave, and fixed her eyes upon a star which had just begun to twinkle in the distant heavens. 'How beautiful is that star!' she mentally said; 'it is alone now, but soon it will be joined by myriads of others. I, too, am alone in this beautiful world, and alone I must remain. I love the woods, the brooks, and the flowers which never-tiring benevolence has spread upon their banks; I love the birds which wake me with their morning songs, and cheer my heart with their evening melodies; I love Him who made that star to shine, and the birds to sing. Love? yes! I love all these; but man I dare not trust my heart to love. He will deceive and trifle with woman's love. My heart he cannot, must not have. A few short months, and it will cease to beat. My spirit will fly beyond that star. But why do I say this? Why do I feel that I soon shall leave all these beautiful scenes in which I love to dwell? my crystal brook—my flowers—my birds—and these beautiful trees? Has an angel whispered this to my ear? I know not; but I feel that I shall soon go where my parents and grandfather have gone. Many times has this feeling stole upon me in the dead hours of the night, and waked me from my gentle slumbers; but I do not dread it—it makes me not unhappy. I shall have a good home in the bright heavens!'

Thus did Keoka muse with herself, until the chill night winds admonished
her to seek her bed. Ever since her mother's death, she had at times a pre-
sentiment that she should not live long; still this did not depress her spirits,
or render her unhappy. She was always the same blithe, lively creature.—
She had no fears of the future, for her heart was innocent and pure.

The next morning she rose early, and husied herself in her little domestic
cares. While thus engaged, a young man made his appearance at her house. He
was full six feet tall, broad-shouldered, sun-burnt complexion, red hair,
light eyes, rather large nose, low forehead, high cheek bones, and quite awk-
ward in his motions. He was in his shirt-sleeves, and evidently on his way
to some employment in the woods; for he had an axe on his shoulder, and in
his hand his dinner tied up in a little brown handkerchief, which might have
once been striped with different colors, but, from long usage, now appeared
all alike. He left his axe and bundle at the door, and entered the house.

'Well, Miss Keoka,' said he, 'I was going to my day's work, and thought
I would call and see you a few minutes. I haven't seen you for some days.
You are well, I hope?'

'O yes, quite well! I thank you, Mr. Stebbins,' replied Keoka.

'Have you seen that young man that's round in these parts, dressed up in
his uniform, and hunting?' he asked.

'Yes,' replied she, 'I saw him yesterday.'

'Well,' he continued, 'what do you think of him? I don't think he's
much.'

'I know but little about him,' she answered. 'Come, walk out, and see
my-flowers this morning.' So they walked out into the flower garden.

'How these plants do grow!' exclaimed he. 'What do you do to them
to make them grow so fast? I guess the land's rich?'

'I keep down the weeds, and water them when the weather is dry,' she
replied.

'My winter rye looks complete,' said he. 'I think I shall have a good
crop; and I have got the logs out for my house, and am now going into the
swamp to split some cedar to cover it with. We must get a cage first, you
know, and then catch the bird to put in it.' He finished the last sentence
with a kind of forced laugh.

At this moment a little spaniel dog came running through the grass, and
crept under the fence into the garden. He ran directly to Keoka, and jumped
up, putting his paws on her dress, and licking her hand.

'Whose dog is that?' exclaimed Stebbins, but, before there was time for an
answer, the owner appeared at the garden fence, dressed in his uniform, as
Stebbins called it, and bearing his gun, fishing-rod, and depositories for his
game. Stebbins was struck with astonishment, and stared at Searsmont as
though he would devour him with his eyes. He had heard of him, but had
never seen him, notwithstanding he said he didn't think he was much. Bill
Stebbins was an awkward, honest, industrious young man, and was a good
deal smitten with Keoka. Under ordinary circumstances, he would have had
a prejudice against Searsmont, or any polished, well dressed fellow, who came
from the city or any large town; but now his prejudice was mingled with
jealousy, a kind of compound which does not set well on any young man's
stomach.

After staring at Searsmont a short time, he bent his head towards Keoka,
and whispered in her ear, 'I wouldn't have much to say to that dandy, if I
was you. I'll warrant he owes for them fine things he's got on his back.'

'Good morning, Miss Wilson,' said Searsmont in a very pleasant manner.

'Your flowers look beautiful this fine morning. You've hired a fellow to hoe
them for you, I guess, by the appearance of things.'

'Hoe them for her?' muttered Bill, in a low voice, and then, raising his
voice and tall body at the same time, addressed Searsmont in a rough, dare-
THE LONE INDIAN.

devil sort of a manner, 'Well, if she has, the fellow, as you call him, knows how to do that better than some folks I know of.' Bill imagined he had got off a little wit this time, and looked at Keoka with a self-complacent smile.

She did not return the smile which beamed upon her from Bill's sunburnt countenance, but very courteously replied to Searsmont, 'Yes, my flowers grow finely this warm weather. You was mistaken, Mr. Searsmont, in supposing that this young man was engaged to hoe my flowers. That's a work I do myself.'

Upon this, Searsmont went round to the gate, and entered the garden.—He passed along close by Bill, and placed himself quite near Keoka. Stebbins felt the warm blood rush into his head. He had half a mind to knock off his fine hat, and cuff his ears; but he kept his temper as well as he could, for he feared to do anything which might offend Keoka. Bill had courage enough to fight at any time, but he was generally peaceable and good-natured. It was not often that he became so much excited as he was on this occasion,
CHAPTER X.

"That's a beautiful wild rose!" said Searsmont, pointing to a bush near by; and, as he did so, the buttons on the cuff of his coat caught in her hair, and carried it along as he extended his hand in the act of pointing to the rose. Seeing her rich hair laying on his arm, he finished his remark by saying, 'but the hair is more beautiful to my eye.'

Keoka reached out her hand and disengaged her hair from the buttons, and threw it back upon her shoulder, at the same time turning her dark eyes full upon his face, replied, "Mr. Searsmont, my hair and the rose are just as they grow, and both have their appropriate places—one upon the head, and the other upon the bush; but flattery has no proper place—at any rate, it has none here,' placing her hand upon her bosom.

'That's right, Keoka!' he needn't think to come it over with you with his soft soap, I can tell him.'

Searsmont turned his head towards Bill with a look of contempt and scorn, and replied, 'Sir, you can speak when you are asked a question, and when you are not, it will be better for you to keep silent.'

Stebbins stamped his foot violently upon the ground, and raised his fist in the attitude of striking, when Keoka suddenly stepped between them and begged them to be quiet. Bill was full of rage and fury; but the presence of Keoka calmed his passion, and he replied, 'I'm not to be scared by any man, much less by such a dressed-up image as he is!' pointing scornfully at Searsmont.

'Let him strike, if he dares to,' said Searsmont, 'and I will make daylight shine through him in the twinkling of an eye!' holding up his gun, and pointing it towards Stebbins.

'Hold!' exclaimed Keoka, seizing the weapon and hurling it to the ground, 'or leave the garden. I will have no blood shed among my flowers. It is the gentle dew from heaven which makes them flourish, and not the sprinkling of human blood.'

The stern manner and noble bearing of Keoka, when she uttered this speech, made the young combatants quail, and hang their heads in shame. They felt as though they were rebuked by a superior power. Her beauty, flashing eyes, polished brow, and stately form, would command the respect and homage of any man, and especially would they affect him or them who might be under the softening influence of love.

Stebbins walked round among the flowers in a slow, measured gait, examining first one flower and then another, apparently waiting for Searsmont to be off; that he might have an opportunity to run him before his lady-love, and thereby erase any impressions favorable to Searsmont which she might have received. Searsmont, on the other hand, had no notion of leaving Keoka until he had further pressed his suit. He didn't once dream that Steb-
bins had called there upon the same business which brought him; therefore he had no jealous feelings towards him. He had no idea that such an awkward, uncouth, green fellow as Stebbins had a heart to love such a beautiful and fascinating creature as Keoka. In his mind, the thing was perfectly incongruous and unnatural. Had he known that Stebbins’ heart was operated upon by the same feelings as his own, it would have almost made him sick of the very name of love—such was his pride and self-complacency.

After poking about a while among the flowers, Stebbins stepped up to Keoka and whispered to her that he believed he must go, unless she was afraid of that fellow, and if she was, he would stay. She told him she had no fear—that he would not attempt to injure her. At last, Stebbins shoul-dered his axe, took up his bundle, and started for the cedar swamp, occasionally looking back, as he passed along through the field, until he dropped over a hill, and lost sight of Keoka and her house.

This movement pleased Searsmont. The coast was now clear from all interlopers, and he was determined to know the worst. He felt that some apology was due to Keoka for his rashness in pointing his gun at Stebbins. If any unfavorable impression had been made upon her mind with regard to his character by this sudden outbreak of his temper, he was desirous of wiping out the stain before he attempted to urge the subject which engaged all the powers of his mind.

‘What kind of a fellow was that who has just left us?’ inquired he. ‘I am sorry I noticed him so much as to make a show of violence which I really did not intend. My only object was to frighten him.’

‘Ah!’ replied Keoka, ‘that is not so easy to be done. Bill Stebbins is a young man of true courage. He has, indeed, rather an awkward outside, but he has an honest heart, and loves truth.’

Searsmont was not at all pleased with this answer to his question, especially with the last part of it. He thought Keoka pronounced the words ‘loves truth’ with a little too much emphasis. This might have been all imagination; still his conscience stung him, and her voice seemed to him louder on these words than on any other part of the sentence.

‘Loves truth, you say, continued Searsmont. ‘Well, but he seems to have quick passions.’

‘True,’ she replied; ‘his passions are quick when he imagines an insult has been offered him.’

‘What came he here for this morning?’ inquired he.

‘Well,’ she replied, ‘he might have asked me what you came for. I know not the particular motives which influence young men’s actions.’

‘O, Keoka!’ he exclaimed, ‘you know the motives which brought me to this delightful spot. I came to tell you how strongly your image is engraved on my heart. Will you, can you reject my love?’ at the same time seizing her hand with a convulsive grasp.

Suddenly withdrawing her hand, she stepped back, and stood before him in calm dignity. He trembled with fearful apprehensions of what her answer might be.

‘Mr. Searsmont,’ she replied, ‘I told you yesterday, at yonder brook, not to put your hand upon me, and why will you continue to trouble me thus? Your love I must reject. My heart beats not responsively to yours. A few months, perhaps, and I shall not be here.’

‘What mean you by this?’ he exclaimed. ‘You are not going to leave your beautiful wild flowers and delightful home for another place?’

‘In God’s own time I must leave all,’ she calmly replied.

Searsmont felt a cold shuddering creep over his heart, and the tears ran
down his cheeks. He could not account for this sudden, strange emotion which rose in his breast—he was unaccustomed to such sensations. Wild and thoughtless, he had never thought of death, or that preparation which is necessary for such an event. It was not so much what the stranger girl said, that wrought these deep feelings in his soul, as the manner in which it was uttered. An arrow of conviction had instantly penetrated his heart, and he stood trembling before Keoka.

'Keoka,' said he, in a low, tremulous voice, 'you spoke of leaving all—did you mean death?'

'Yes,' she replied in a serene and pleasant tone, 'I feel a presentiment that my time among these beautiful flowers and delightful scenes is limited to a short period; but I'm not afraid of death. Are you afraid to die?'

'Oh!' he exclaimed with convulsive heaving of his breast, placing his trembling hand upon her shoulder, and looking intently into her heavenly countenance, 'I do fear the dark passage which death obliges us to take. It looks more terrible to me now than ever before.'

She stood calmly by his side, and suffered his hand to remain on her shoulder.

'Mr. Searsmont,' she continued, 'why should death be clothed with such terrors to the soul? The struggle is short, and the body soon ceases to suffer pain.'

'Ah,' he replied, 'tis not the pain of the body in dying—tis not these struggles, which so soon pass away—but it is the unknown hereafter we dread.'

'Look upon these flowers,' she answered—see how beautiful they appear to the eye! how grateful to the senses! Cast your eyes over these green fields, these lofty trees, and delightful brooks. Why were all these things made to give us pleasure? Does not the same power which created them provide pleasures for another state of existence? Then why dread an hereafter?'

Searsmont felt deeply the simple truths which Keoka uttered; but he now was convinced that his heart had really no relish for such displays of benevolence. He had always viewed these manifestations of goodness as common affairs, and thought no more of them than the air he breathed. His mind had been exclusively devoted to other considerations—how he could best minister to his grosser appetites and passions, regardless of the means by which he attained such ends.

Keoka had noticed that a change had come over him; but the voice of her grandfather was still sounding from the depths of her soul, 'beware of the craft of the white man!' She narrowly watched his movements, and closely scanned the workings of his countenance. She was entirely uneducated, except what nature and her relatives had taught her. The doctrine of instantaneous conversion, either in matters of love or religion, had never been discussed in her hearing. Of different creeds, or modes of faith, she had no knowledge. This, to her, was a bright and beautiful world, and she believed the other would be equally so. Her heart was full of goodness and of love. To believe that Searsmont could love her at first sight, before he knew anything of her mind or disposition, required a greater stretch of credulity than she was willing to exercise. She had never witnessed any thing in the course of her experience or observation to warrant such a belief. That his mind might be suddenly wrought upon in other matters, she thought more probable. If he continued, while under the exercise of the feelings which he now manifested, to urge his love, she concluded he must be still practicing deception; and, if he dropped that subject, she felt bound to throw the
mantle of charity over him, and encourage the good work which had begun in his heart.

'Keoka,' said he, 'that God is good and kind to us is manifestly shown in all the works of his hands; but I've had no heart for such contemplations. I've looked upon them, used them, and made them the means of ministering to my pleasure, without any thought of the great Author.—Thus has my life passed, and it is now spread out before me like a barren waste.'

'You have now,' she replied, 'just begun to live. Hold on to these sacred impressions, and beautiful flowers will spring up in your path; the terrible fear of death will be removed from your mind, and your soul will rejoice in the goodness and benevolence of Him who created you and all things for high and noble purposes.'

'Ah! my beloved Keoka,' he said, taking her gently by the hand—but, before he could finish the sentence, she suddenly drew her hand away, stepped back, and gazing upon him with her dark, flashing eyes, said with a firm, resolute voice, 'Searsmont, I have told you before never to touch me with one of your fingers while such honeyed words are upon your lips!'

'My dear friend,' he exclaimed in great agitation, 'hear me. My remark was only begun, not finished. I was about to say, and will now do so, that I would, by the blessing of heaven, hold on to these impressions, and try to deepen them upon the tables of my heart. I'm not worthy of your love, and I ask not now for it. I will go away, and study to make myself worthy of your friendship, if not of your love.'

This was said with such earnestness and apparent sincerity, that Keoka, with a smile of joy lightening up her countenance, seized his hand, and said, 'I am your friend, and the friend of the whole human family; then, unloosing her grasp from his hand, she continued, 'but I am no man's lover.'

Searsmont now thought it a great pleasure to her such lips as Keoka's declare the word friendship. A short time ago such expressions would have fallen coldly upon his ears; but now there was a power at work in his heart, which, if not resisted by stubbornness of will, or checked by the blindingment of the world, would purify and purify his spirit. He looked upon Keoka as the bright instrument made use of by an inscrutable power to teach him the first lesson in true wisdom. He felt the poverty of language to convey to her the gratitude which pervaded his heart. With a heart overflowing with grateful feelings, and tears streaming down his cheeks, he took his leave of Keoka, and bent his steps for his friend Mike's establishment.

When he entered the house, the old men began his jokes about Keoka—but he had no heart for joking. His mind was now on different subjects. He soon prepared for his journey home. As he was leaving his kind friends, Old Mike took him by the hand, saying, 'Farewell, young man, don't be down hearted. When you come this way again, perhaps Keoka won't be so shy.'

With the old man's last joke ringing in his ears, Searsmont departed.

As might be reasonably expected, after Searsmont left her, Keoka had some strange and peculiar feelings. She began to think that he really loved her. No female heart can remain perfectly indifferent when there is a consciousness that it is beloved, and exclusively beloved, by any one of the opposite sex. This is a 'rule of nature,' and it cannot be overcome. The heart that knows it is loved, will always be more or less affected. The feeling which this knowledge produces may not always terminate in love, and does not; still, there is a different sensation from any before experienced.
Such a feeling Keoka had in her own bosom. She did not love, but she experienced some peculiar emotions. These in ordinary hearts, with proper cherishing, no doubt would ripen into true affection—but Keoka’s heart was not of common mould. The instruction and admonitions which she received in her youth, could not, by any earthly power, be obliterated from her mind. The change which Searmont appeared to have undergone through her instrumentality, strengthened this feeling in her heart, if it did not first give rise to it. He occupied more of her thoughts than any living man, but she did not love. The strongest impression upon her mind was, and had been ever since her mother’s death, that she must soon follow her.
CHAPTER XI.

The summer has passed, and autumn, with its cold winds and frosty nights, has come. The green foliage of the trees has assumed a variety of hues, and the beautiful flowers in Keoka's garden have dropped their richly colored leaves. But where is their owner? where is the beautiful, the bright Keoka? Disease has laid its pallid hand upon her beauteous form; a mortal paleness is on her cheeks, consumption, that fell destroyer of the good and beautiful, has stumped his seal upon her noble brow, and marked her for the grave!

In the month of November, one clear, cold afternoon, Old Mike and Searsmont were seen crossing the fields in the direction to Keoka's house.

'I am quite sick,' inquired Searsmont in great anxiety.

'Yes,' replied the old man; 'I came from there a few hours ago, and my wife thinks she can't continue but a few hours longer.'

'How long has she been unwell?' asked Searsmont.

'She took a violent cold some evening not long after you went from here, while she was singing on her mother's grave, and she hasn't been well since. My wife always cautioned her about taking cold, for she knew her mother died with a consumption; it is a sort of family complaint. I think consumption runs in the blood,' replied the old man.

'O!' exclaimed Searsmont. 'I hope I shall see her before she dies. I want to thank her for what she has done for me a thousand times.'

'Why, what has she done for you?' inquired Mike with some surprise.

'She has taught me to love God!' responded Searsmont in a very solemn tone of voice.

'Well, then,' said Mike, 'you and my wife and Keoka can get along nicely together, if she's living, and I hope she is, for she's one of the best and handsomest girls I ever was acquainted with.'

'Why Keoka and your wife, and not yourself?' replied Searsmont. 'Don't you think religion is a good thing?'

'I don't know much about this minister business,' said Mike. 'I think folks ought to be honest, and take no more than belongs to them. That's the way I've got along through the world, so far; and I'm pretty well along now.'

They had now reached the humble dwelling of Keoka. Searsmont was calm and composed, much more so than he was the first time he visited this place. Softly they entered the house, and there Searsmont saw the beautiful and good girl, lying upon the bed, her head raised up, and her long black tresses flowing over the pillows, and shading them with their rich curls. She was now in a gentle slumber—the thin and almost transparent lids smoothly drawn over her eyes, scarcely concealing their brilliancy—her slightly compressed lips gently moving, as though she was whispering with some ministering angel—her attenuated nose responsively dilating and contracting with her respirations, and her marble forehead sprinkled with drops of sweat.

As Searsmont approached the bed, the noise disturbed her slumbers, and she opened her eyes. A sweet smile passed over her face, and she raised
her delicate hand and extended it to him. He took hold of it, and felt its gentle pressure as she feebly and faintly said, 'I am glad to see you.'

'I thank heaven that I have been permitted to see you once more before death closed the scene,' he replied. 'I come to thank you for those timely admonitions you gave me last summer. They sank deeply into my heart, never to be forgotten. Thanks—a thousand thanks.'

'Thank not me, but Him who is deserving of all our thanks!' she answered.

'You must not talk too much,' whispered old Mrs. Brown; 'it will hurt you.'

Heeding not the kind admonition of the old lady, she continued in a feeble, tremulous voice, 'O, Mr. Searsmont, often during the summer which has now gone for ever, have I thought of you. But a few nights ago I dreamed of seeing you in the attitude of prayer. In the silence of the night I heard your voice pronounce my name, and O, how sweet was that dream. It came over my spirit, and I was happy. Can you pray?'

Searsmont replied by kneeling at the bedside, and, holding her emaciated hand in his, lifted his voice in prayer to heaven. She closed her eyes and moved her lips, but no sound was heard except the fervent outburst of the young man's soul. When he ceased, she clasped her skeleton hands together and pressed them upon her bosom. 'It was not a dream!' she faintly cried. 'Yes, it was a dream—but it is not a dream now!'

The effort was too much. Unclasping her hands, she sank away exhausted. Searsmont took his handkerchief from his pocket, and wiped the drops of sweat from her face. She opened her eyes, and they beamed upon him with unearthly brightness. A smite smile played over her pallid features—a slight twitching seized the muscles of her neck and shoulders, and then all was as silent as the tomb. She had ceased to breathe.

'Calm was her exit.
Night dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft.'

THE END.
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