

But though Smith saved his neck, very few of his countrymen believed he was as innocent as he professed to be.

General Branhholm, who was stationed at Dobbs' Ferry, came down to Tappan several times to see his son; and as soon as the formal acquittal was pronounced, insisted on his asking for leave and going to Philadelphia, where his mother then was. General Branhholm expected to be ordered south with his brigade—as it was essential to immediately check Lord Cornwallis's progress, and he promised Noel an appointment on his own staff. This prospect somewhat roused Noel from the apathetic dejection into which he had fallen, and he set out for Philadelphia with his brother—who had also obtained a short leave of absence—not wholly unable to look forward to the future.

"I must begin again," he said to Jasper, as they were on their journey. "I see him wherever I look. I shall never care to speak of Quebec or Saratoga again, since I can never do so without remembering him, and knowing that every one else is thinking of him too."

Noel insisted on arriving after dark; he could not, he said, endure to be recognised as he rode through the streets. So it was late when they drew up at the Slate-Roof House.

They found Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Fleming and Mary all there. Jasper and Noel were expected, but it was not known when they would arrive, and the Flemings had come to ask for news of them.

Mrs. Branhholm took Noel away, before Mrs. Fleming had time to make many pious reflections on the depravity of our hearts and the danger of setting up idols.

"Your father has wrote me all about it," she said, when they were alone. "I understand it all; you need not tell me what you've felt, I felt it all for you. But no one can cast any reproach on you, my dearest boy, and I hope you never doubted but your mother would still be as proud of you as ever."

It was for the capacity to feel and speak thus on trying occasions, that Mrs. Branhholm's sons thought her the noblest of mothers. As a housekeeper, and in everyday matters, Mrs. Fleming was a much more admirable person; but when Mary's heart ached or her courage failed her, it was to her aunt that she went—knowing that whenever things went wrong, Mrs. Branhholm could show something not far below heroism. She