

Jenny read aloud some history of the old Grecian victories, which mightily revived our spirits, and seemed a prophecy of what our own brave arms may yet accomplish. Then we bethought ourselves to set about and work a pair of colours for Frank, who has the promise of an ensigncy to begin with. So we got leave of my aunt to go rummage her old oaken trunk, which we well knew to be stored with choice bits of silk, and gold thread and flosses, and whatever else we should need.

This trunk is a great piece of antiquity, and is held as a sort of heir-loom in the family. It is of huge proportions, covered with red morocco, now somewhat dingy, and studded thick with brass headed nails, which Chloe now and then takes a fancy to brighten up with great lustre. It stands in a large entry, at the head of the broad staircase, and the key never leaves my aunt's pocket, except on special occasions. There are many legends about this trunk, for it has seen divers fortunes within the last century. It was given to my great-grandmother, W., on her wedding day, well filled with rich dresses, brocades and satins, and fine laces. She was the daughter of a wealthy London merchant, and tradition says, her dowry was a heap of gold her own weight, it being placed in the scales and balanced against herself. If such was the custom now, I am thinking it would not be the handsomest damsels, but the heaviest, who were chosen for brides! If my great-grandmother's father had been more chary of his gold, perhaps more of it would have come down with the old trunk to our day. So Jenny was saying to me, and as we laughed over the old story, I sat down and wrote the following:

That famous old trunk came over the seas,  
Borne up and borne down by many a breeze;  
'Twas once filled with treasures right precious I trow,  
But the bride and the treasures, oh! where are they now?  
Ere the first bloom of youth from her cheek passed away,  
Or time, meddling knave, sowed her tresses with grey;  
Far away from the home where her childhood was blest,  
She fled with the free, to this land of the West.

The trunk still remains, but the gold stayed behind,—  
All, save the pure gold of the heart and the mind;  
And her daughters, if weighed for their dowry, I deem  
Would soon find the empty scales kicking the beam.

But who cares for the dross? we have enough still,—  
All the blessings of plenty and freedom of will;  
Our grandam's shrewd sense, and her beauty in sooth,  
If the men flatter not, and our mirrors speak truth.

I had written thus far, and Jenny was looking over my shoulder mightily amused, when we heard a horse galloping up the avenue in hot haste, and looking out of the window, I saw a man dismounting, who we knew must be a bearer of despatches

to my uncle. He brought an official message from the provincial congress of Massachusetts to my uncle, setting forth the state of public affairs, and the excitement which every where prevails. The President was exhorted to use all his influence in raising troops within his jurisdiction, to reinforce the army now encamped at Cambridge. The congress have disallowed the authority of General Gage, who remains shut up in Boston, with no authority beyond it, and though he has proclaimed martial law in Massachusetts, his threats are defied and ridiculed. Men grow bolder as they are threatened and coerced; and though gracious messages are still sent to the king, and reconciliation is talked of, as if desired and possible, the sight of the two armies, frowning at each other, doth not much look as if they would shake hands and be at peace. The news is on the whole cheering to our prospects, and yet it makes our hearts sad when we think of poor Frank; how many dangers surround him, and how soon he may be called into active service.

June 16th, 1775.—We have wrought so diligently on the colours for our young ensign, that they are now finished and ready to be sent to him. Jenny threw aside her romances and her poetry, and set to work with all her heart, and my aunt took great pleasure in aiding us with her good taste and skill; even little Annie, when she could do nothing else, would thread needles for us. Truly, it is very beautiful, and we look at it with much pride; the azure ground, emblematic of hope; the eagle expressing freedom; the wreath of laurel, and the motto, "Freedom and Union," all wrought with gold and silver threads and divers rich colours, and with each thread was woven fond wishes, and prayers for success and victory.

It has been unfurled, to the admiration of all the country round; and to-morrow will be sent forward to the camp, with some fresh recruits, that have been lately raised. Old Pompey has obtained leave to go along with it, to "give it safe into young massa's hands," he says; and truly, I believe the warm hearted creature would risk any fatigue, or run into any danger, just to look into "young massa's" face again. He will go freighted with many comforts, unknown to camps, for the absent boy; with many fond tokens of remembrance, and love messages enough to fill the largest saddle-bags in the country, if such things could be made tangible and reduced to weight.

We have heard from Frank but once since he left us; he was in high spirits, full of courage, and longing for active service. General Howe has entrenched the main body of his army on Bunker's