

ly and their kind tenderly, and to be good and generous to all living creatures. She held a firm hand in the enforcement of discipline, but it was never otherwise than kindly in its operation. There was a dignity, a majesty, and a benignity in her mien and deportment at all times, which inspired beholders with respect, awe love and admiration, such as afterwards distinguished her illustrious son, who grew up a sturdy youth, well proportioned in person, healthful, strong, courageous, obedient and truthful. By persistent study and home practice he became an expert land surveyor, and at about the age of 16 was appointed to the honorable and lucrative office of public surveyor. When about 19 years of age he was commissioned a major by Gov. Donordlie, of Virginia, and in July, 1775, he was with General Braddock on the battle field of Monongahela, where they were vanquished by the French and Indians. Braddock was mortally wounded, and Washington was the only one of 65 officers who escaped death or wounds, and returned to Mount Vernon much exhausted. Soon after, having occasion to cross the Pamunkey River, near Williams' Ferry, he was met by Major Chamberlain and pressed to accept the hospitalities of his house for a day or two. The soldier declined, giving as an excuse urgent business with the Governor and Council at Williamsburg. Major Chamberlain persisted in urging him to tarry. The young officer still declined, and was about to ride on when the Major brought up his reserve of persuasion by telling him one of the most charming young widows in all Virginia was then under his roof. Washington made a conditional surrender, the terms being that he should dine—only dine with Major Chamberlain and his family. With him was his body servant, Thomas Bishop, who was ordered to stable the horses and have them ready for departure at a specified hour in the afternoon. Major Chamberlain and his guest en-

tered the house. The hero was charmed by the beauty of the person and the fascinating manners and good sense of the young widow. The hours sped swiftly. The guests lingered long at the table, quite beyond the time appointed for the departure of Colonel Washington. Bishop, punctual as time, had waited at the gate with his master's steed with puzzled mind, for its rider had never been tardy before. "Ah, Bishop," writes a fair eye-witness describing the scene, "there was an urchin in the drawing-room more powerful than King George and all his Governors! Subtle as a sphynx he had hidden the important dispatches from the soldier's sight, shut up his ears from the summons of the tell-tale clock, and was playing such pranks with the bravest heart in Christendom that it fluttered with the excess of a new found happiness." The sun had touched the western horizon when he arose to depart. Major Chamberlain, who had watched his lingering in conversation with Mrs. Curtis with amusement and satisfaction said, "No guest ever leaves my house after sunset." The Colonel was not loath to stay. He and the young widow lingered long in conversation in the drawing-room after the other guests had retired and the sun had risen high in the firmament the next morning when he took leave of the fascinating lady and the hospitable host and journeyed on to Williamsburg, completed his business with all possible dispatch and retraced his steps to the Pamunkey, calling at the residence of Mrs. Curtis (who was a widow with two children), at which time their troth was plighted. About seven months later, on his way to take his seat in the Virginia Assembly for the first time, he spent a day or two at her residence, and the time for the marriage was fixed for the 6th of January (old style), 1759, about three weeks in the future. He took his bride, soon after their marriage, to his residence at Mount Vernon, where he owned a large estate, and