

"Hark!" said Dick, "I hear the coach."

Sybil hastily put on her cloak, kissed Mrs. Warren, and had reached the door, when a sudden impulse seized her, and she ran back to say, "Now, mother dear, do forgive me! *Don't* look so distressed!"

Five minutes later, she and her brother were seated in the great coach, driven by a stately black coachman and attended by two servants on horseback.

"Sybil!" said Dick, suddenly, "have you ever heard what has become of Harry?"

"No!" said Sybil, impatiently; "I do not wish to hear. He has disgraced his family shamefully."

"I used to like him, and so did you, Syb!" persisted Dick.

"That was long ago. I did not know that he was a *traitor* then."

"Yet, I sometimes think," continued Dick, meditatively, "that Uncle John was too severe with him."

"If it hadn't been for Harry and men like him, there wouldn't have been this dreadful war. Why couldn't they leave things alone? We were happy enough before."

"Well, but really, Sybil, it doesn't seem just that we should be taxed, and have no voice."

"Oh, I know what they say perfectly well," interrupted Sybil. "It's all nonsense, Dick. Nothing can excuse rebellion—so do *not* argue about it! People are bound to obey the king, whatever happens, and I, for one, will never promise to obey any one else. I wonder how they will feel about this fine 'Declaration of Independence,' when King George has them punished as they deserve."

Dick did not answer, for he was by no means sure of the final triumph of the king, but he did not care to say so to Sybil, for nothing annoyed her more than the idea that the "rebels" might conquer.

She had been brought up in a household where it was thought to be almost criminal to hold any political opinions but those of the most complete and uncompromising Toryism. She was scarcely of age when an event happened that had perhaps added intensity to her political creed. Her granduncle, an ex-

remely wealthy Royalist, died, expressly disinheriting his only son, whom he stigmatized as a traitor and a rebel, and left all his property to Sybil.

Harry Vernon, from his boyhood, had shown a marked interest in all the great political questions of the day, and as he grew older, he joined heart and soul with those of his countrymen who had begun to agitate against the oppressive system of taxation then pursued by the English government. Unhappily, this course of conduct caused an ever widening breach between himself and his father, and though he had been undutiful in nothing else, the intolerant old man could not forgive him, and on his very deathbed had written the words that doomed his son to poverty.

To do Sybil justice, she had had no idea of gaining such substantial benefit by her energetic expressions of horror and indignation at the colonists for their impatient and rebellious attitude towards the Imperial government. Indeed she had been most sincere; she thought her cousin's actions "a wrong and a shame to his family." Therefore, is it to be wondered at that she should take possession of his inheritance with an easy conscience? If she had any scruples, she stifled them with the thought of his treachery, and strange to say, thoroughly enjoyed her newly acquired wealth and all it brought her. She liked to wear rich dresses and live handsomely, and she liked to be able to provide her twice-widowed mother with luxuries, and to give a generous allowance to her young half-brother, Dick Warren.

The house of which Sybil had been mistress for nearly two years, was situated near a small village within ten miles of Boston. It was a beautiful, but by no means a comfortable residence for a family of such well-known Tory proclivities, but hitherto they had escaped annoyance, though Mrs. Warren lived in constant apprehension of it.

On the evening of which I am writing they had been invited to join a small party composed chiefly of Tories like themselves. Mrs. Lane's house was scarcely four miles from their own, but there had been heavy rain for some days,