

KENT KNOWLES: QUAHAUG

after all, it takes very little to send us back to savagery."

"That's so," said Asaph, with conviction. "That's true about everybody but us folks in the United States. We are awful fortunate, we are. We ain't savages. We was born in a free country, and we've been brought up right, I declare! I beg your pardon, Mrs. Knowles; I forgot you wasn't born in Bayport."

Frances smiled. "No apology is needed, Mr. Tidditt," she said. "I confess to having been born a—savage."

"But you're all right now," said Asaph, hastily, trying to cover his slip. "You're all right now. You're just as American as the rest of us. Kent, suppose this war in Europe is goin' to hurt your trade any? It's goin' to hurt a good many folks's. They tell me groceries and such like is goin' way up. Lucky we've got fish and clams to depend on. Clams and quahaugs'll keep us from starvin' for a spell. Oh," with a chuckle, "speakin' of quahaugs reminds me. Did you know they used to call your husband a quahaug, Mrs. Knowles? That's what they used to call him round here—'The Quahaug.' They called him that 'count of his keepin' inside his shell all the time and not mixin' with folks, not toadyin' up to the summer crowd and all. I always respected him for it. I don't toady to nobody neither."

Hephzy had come in by this time and now she took a part in the conversation.

"They don't call him 'The Quahaug' any more," she declared, indignantly. "He's been out of his shell more and seen more than most of the folks in this town."

"I know it; I know it. And he's kept goin' ever since. Runnin' to New York, he and you," with a nod toward Frances, "and travelin' to Washin'ton and