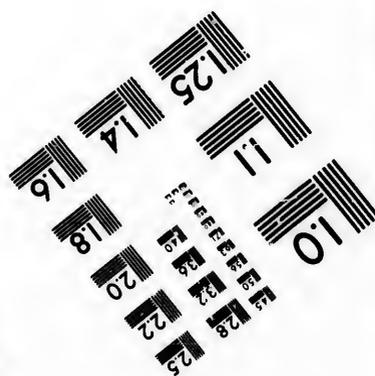
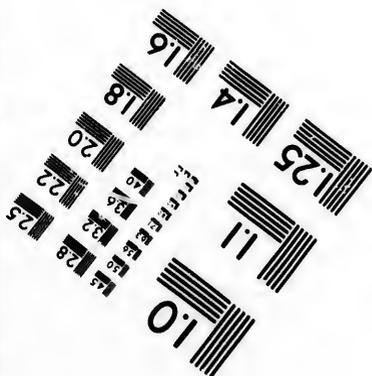
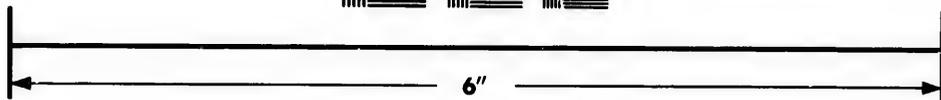
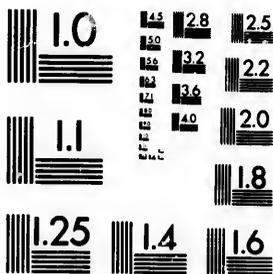


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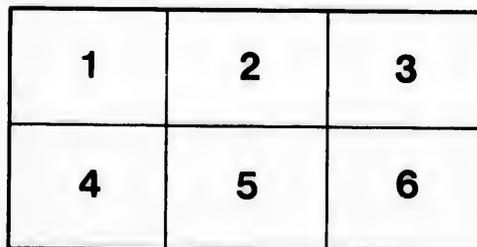
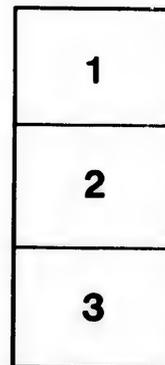
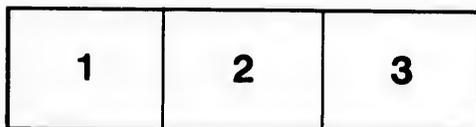
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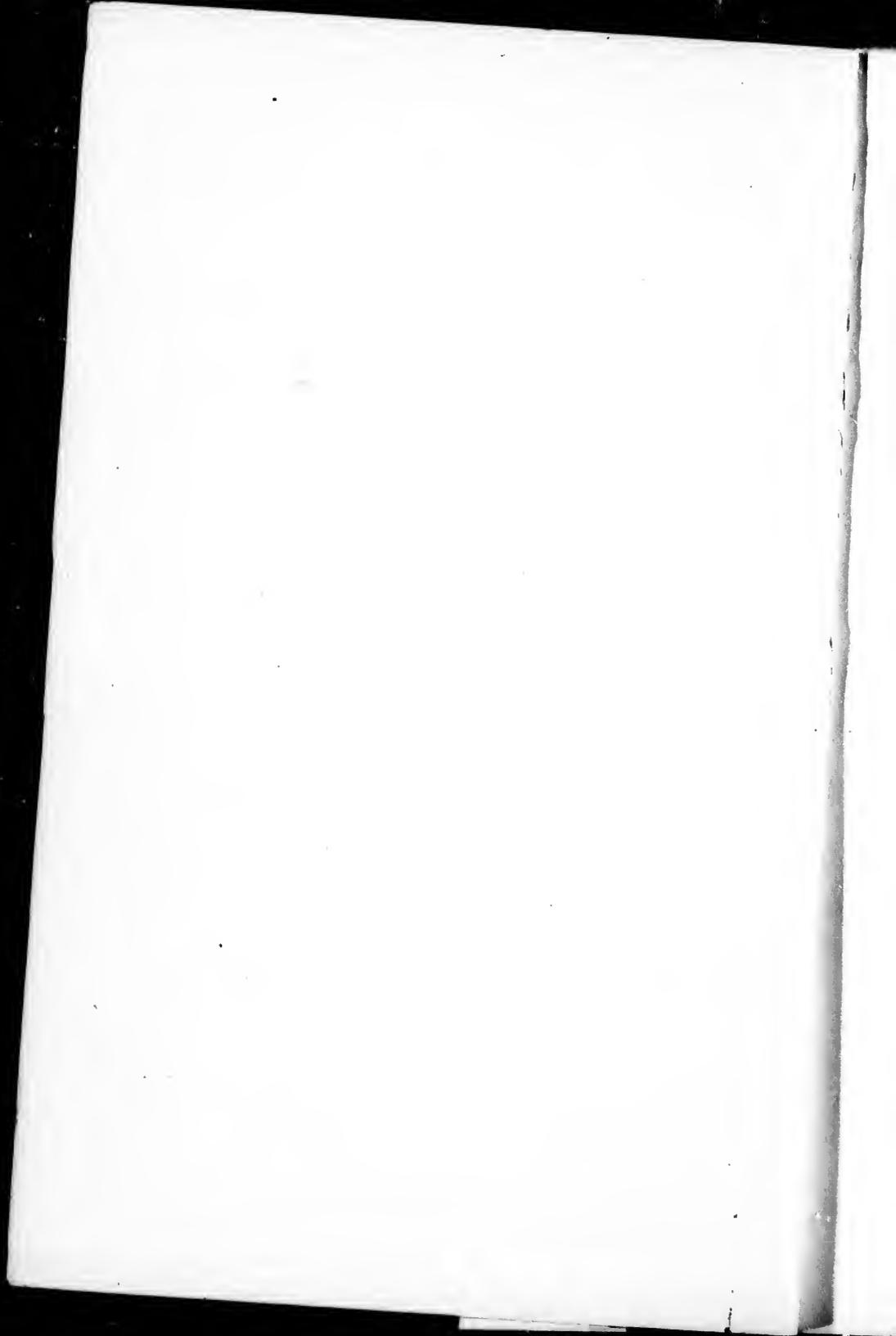
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A GREAT TREASON



A GREAT TREASON

A Story of the War of Independence



BY

MARY A. M. HOPPUS

. . . And some to shame
and everlasting con-
tempt.

VOL. I.

London

MACMILLAN AND CO.

1883

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A GREAT TREASON.

CHAPTER I.

THE FAIR AMERICAN.

Now, afore heaven, 'tis shame such wrongs are borne.

KING RICHARD II.

“Ef the Lord will, Ma'am, in five minutes more we shall be in Massachusetts Bay.”

It was about noon of the 15th of December in the year of grace 1773, and the snow, *Fair American*, Captain Eliphalet Ward, with a cargo of hemp and three passengers, was just off Cape Cod. The low sandhills were half veiled in a light-gray mist, which drifted down with the wind. The Captain declared he could make out Cape Ann; but though the passengers did their best, all they could honestly say they saw was a darker patch on a bank of gray. As the afternoon wore on, a white streak could be seen here and there; the Captain said these were lighthouses, and grinned when Miss Digby compared them to so many statues of Lot's wife.

All the passengers were on deck, and had been there (except when they went below to dinner) since early morning. They were thirty-five days out, and had not seen land for a month, and even a sandbank was worth looking at. So they stood in a little group by the taffrail, straining their eyes, and anxiously watching the wind—a shrewd north-wester, which, as Miss Digby said, seemed to blow thither straight from the North Pole. She said this to a very young man, who was standing next her—as indeed he usually did.

He had a handsome dark face and a shapely figure; and as he turned to reply, there was a mixture of softness and haughtiness observable in his manner, very far removed from provincial rudeness, and even perhaps belonging to an earlier time than the eighteenth century.

"I am sorry that we must come into port against the wind," he said; "but this inhospitable breeze blows from Boston. You shall be welcomed less roughly if you will visit my native province of Virginia."

"Don't you say nothin' ag'in Boston, Mr. Brauxholm," said the Captain, who was passing. "Boston's the heart and the mouth of the Colonies. She's all real grit, she is,—and you'll see that the wind that blows from Boston will set every weathercock from New Hampshire right away down 'o Georgia."

"I hope not, Captain," said a tall young man, with very light blue eyes and a fair face, which the cold had only made more ruddy. "I hope the example of disobedience and rebellion to His Gracious Majesty——"

"Disobedience and rebellion, sir?" cried the Captain, his long lean Yankee face all awork. "We want our rights and liberties, sir! Liberties assured to us by a dozen charters! Look you, Lieutenant, some of our fathers fled away hither across the seas from the tyranny of kings and bishops—all of 'em bore the burden and heat of the day. They found this country a wilderness, given over to the cruel and treacherous heathen; they have turned a great part of it into flourishing colonies, even as the garden of the Lord. We *made* this country, sir! And now, shall we tamely sit by and see our commerce cramped and fettered, and our prosperity destroyed, to swell the British revenues? I tell you, Lieutenant Digby, our ruin is meant! They have us every way. First——" here the Captain grew more excited still, and slapped his thigh at each emphatic word, "first, there was the Stamp Act. Then we must pay duty in specie—to drain us of our ready money, and leave us helpless——"

"The money was all to be spent in the defence of the Colony," interrupted the Lieutenant.

"A pretty defence!" cried Eliphalet Ward. "You hindered us defending ourselves, and you sent us a stubborn fool, who stuck fast in the mud till Benjamin Franklin got him out, and was cut to pieces with his army, through his own ignorant folly. Our officers was thrust aside by impudent jackanapes that never saw an Injun in all their born days, and had no more notion how to tackle one nor they had how to treat free Colonists. And the very money that was to pay these mighty defenders was to be shipped off to Britain and back again! Shall I tell ye why, Mr Digby? Because, sir, money's like

honey—ef you let it run thro' a sieve, a lot of it's sure to stick. That's why it was, Mr. Digby. Ef it hadn't of been for that, the troops could ha' been paid right off out o' the duties."

"Well," said young Digby, with a slight swagger—excusable in a very young man, whose courage and obstinacy outweighed his reason—"I don't know all the ins and outs of the case, of course; but I know that 'tis always easy for a few plausible sedition-mongers to make out a story to suit their own ends, and persuade those who wish to believe it that they're monstrous ill-used——"

"Persuade 'em! Make out a story!" cried the Captain. "By heaven, Mr. Digby, this is too much! You say you don't know the ins and outs—no, I rayther reckon as you don't! Do you know, sir, that there's been nine-and-twenty laws made against our New England industries? Air you aware, sir, that we have been forbid to use the waterfalls that God gave us to be used for the service of man? Or to erect machinery? or set up looms? or work wood or iron? Look 'ee here, Leftenant Digby, I'm a-speakin' o' what I *know*—you're a-speakin', by you're own showing, o' what you *think*. My father lived down in Maine, sir," continued the Captain, less angrily, but no whit less earnestly; "and when I was a little chap, no higher nor Miss there's apurn-strings, he's took me by the hand and led me into the forests, and pinte'd out one tree after another with the King's broad arrer on it, rotting away, Mr. Digby, rotting away. There was a hunderd pound fine on whoever touched one o' them 'ere trees with the broad arrer on 'em, sir, an' yet, there warn't one in a hunderd—one in a hunderd!—there warn't one in ten hunderd, as was ever cut down for the King's use! You mark my words, Mr. Digby—the day'll come, sir, an' some o' this generation'll live to see it, when the woodman's axe shall sound on those trees in the forests o' Maine, none darin' to gainsay him. Ah! there's no forests in the world like the forests o' Maine," he said in a much gentler tone, as though the remembrance had touched him deeply. "When I'm at sea, I often fancy I can smell the scent o' the pines, same as I smelt 'em when I was a little chap, and went toddlin' after father."

"I don't suppose though, Captain," said Lieutenant Digby—who had really listened with considerable patience to this rhodomontade of a merchant-skipper, "I don't suppose you seriously mean to say as you could get on without us?"

“Did you never hear talk o’ Cape Breton, Mr. Digby?” asked the skipper, putting his arms akimbo, and viewing the stalwart young Englishman with great disdain. “Or o’ the first siege o’ Louisburg? Did you never hear it said, New England had given peace to Europe? And didn’t our Provincial officers go up along o’ yourn after Gen’ral Wolfe, when he took Quebec? An’ who saved that poor fool Braddock’s retreat—such as *was* saved? An’ let me tell you, Mr. Digby, ef that there unfort’nit Gen’ral had ha’ listened to Colonel Washington, he wouldn’t never ha’ fell into the trap he did. Don’t you let folks deceive you, Mr. Digby—we come o’ the same stock as you, we love liberty as well as you, an’ ef necessary, we can fight as well as you.”

“What do you think about it, Mr. Branhholm?” asked Miss Digby of the young Virginian, turning her fine hazel eyes and arched brows full upon him. “Are you going to turn rebel, and wear homespun?”

“Mr. Branhholm hails from Virginia, Ma’am, and Virginia ain’t felt the shoe pinch as we have in New England,” said the Captain. “But they didn’t like the Stamp Act any better nor what we did.” So saying, he went off to give an order to the steersman.

“Well, Mr. Branhholm, what do you say for yourself?” repeated Miss Digby, those beautiful imperious eyes of hers still steadily fixed on the young man’s face. He flushed, but replied without hesitation,—

“The men of the Old Dominion, Madam, are as truly loyal as the most loyal Englishman can be. They were never rebels yet.”

“And yet I have heard,” said Miss Digby with a malicious smile, “that they compounded with Cromwell, and swallowed their loyalty in order to retain their rights and privileges. I fancy the Yankees are not the only colonists who can drive a bargain.”

“Madam,” said Branhholm, “you are severe. You do not know how hard it is to us, who have ranged in primeval forests, and lived as free as Adam in Paradise—and I think scarce worse tempted by the devil—to put ourselves into the swaddling-clothes of the Old World. For fields, we have whole tracks of country—for meadows, the unhedged Savannahs—for plantations, forests. Our boundaries are great rivers and mountain ranges. My Province of Virginia alone is larger than all England and Wales. We

are so used to have room enough and to spare, that these walls which the mother-country is trying to build around us seem more irksome than they would be to men whose boundaries are mere brooks and fences."

"You never spoke thus before, Mr. Branxholm. You used to be loyal," said the young lady.

"And I am loyal still, Madam. But I confess it, there's a something in the very wind which blows off these shores which smacks of liberty—almost in spite of myself I feel a certain impatience of control taking possession of me; and all those venerable rules and restraints, which seemed to me so admirable in Europe, seem now to be an intolerable bondage. I will show you a Virginian forest, and you'll forgive me."

"Indeed, I hardly know you. In Europe you was all for reverence and loyalty—"

"Madam, if His Majesty will but dismiss these ministers, and confirm to us the rights which his predecessors granted, he will have no subjects more loyal than we. And I still hope for this, in spite of my brother Jasper's fears."

"Ah, Mr. Branxholm," said Miss Digby, raising her sweet clear voice a little, to out-pipe the wind, which was whistling through the shrouds. "Captain Ward said truly that the wind of sedition blows from Boston. Ever since that letter of your brother's, you have been a different person. I protest, 'tis like enchantment! What a fire-eater this brother of yours must be—enough to set the Provinces in a blaze!"

"My brother Jasper is no fire-eater——" began Branxholm eagerly. Then he stopped himself, seemed to hesitate, and said at last, more gravely than Miss Digby thought possible to so lively a temperament,—“My brother Jasper is a man of so thoughtful and philosophic a turn, Miss Digby, so disposed to impartiality—so apt to see that a question hath two sides to it—in short, so extraordinary fearful of forming a hasty or unjust judgement, that I confess his change of mind hath staggered me. I do not yet despair, as he seems to do, of a happy issue; but if he be right, there's but one side I can take.”

"I hope that is the side of your King, Mr. Branxholm."

"God forbid I should ever have to choose!" cried Branxholm, a dark flush on his cheek. "But if I must—if I must choose between my country's just rights and liberties, and any other thing in this world soever, why, then, I must needs choose my country!"

Miss Digby looked at him; she was troubled and perplexed, and could think of nothing better to say than,—“But, sure, Mr. Branhholm, you are an Englishman, and England is your country?”

“If England is my grandmother, America is my mother,” he said—and Miss Digby noted that he was almost repeating certain words out of his brother Jasper’s letter, which he had shown her. “I was born here—my lot is cast here; but, besides that, I do believe from my heart that in this matter the Colonies are in the right, and the British ministry is in the wrong.”

“I contend in vain with Mr. Jasper Fleming,” said the young lady in a piqued tone. “But pray, if he be so great a philosopher, so used to weighing a matter, and so slow to pronounce a judgement, what hath of a sudden brought him to so sharp a conclusion?”

“Can you ask, Madam? Those letters of Hutchinson’s and Oliver’s——”

“It was a most unfortunate circumstance that such letters should have been written,”—began the Lieutenant; but Captain Ward, having given his orders, came up at this instant, and interrupted him once more.

“Say, a pity they was discovered, Mr. Digby—I guess that’s nearer what you mean, sir! And I guess the Lords and Commons over to England would like to see Benjamin Franklin’s gray head set up on Temple Bar for the share he had in that there unfort’nit discovery. But, thank the Lord, we know our enemies now!”

“At any rate, Captain Ward, you know that the King is not your enemy,” said Miss Digby, turning to the Captain with an irresistible persuasion in her smile. But before he could reply, a sudden light blazed up from the ship’s side, and was almost immediately answered by another, flashing over the fast-darkening sea, from just below a twinkling paler gleam, which the Captain had told his passengers was the light at the entrance to Boston harbour.

“That’s the signal for the pilot,” said Branhholm. “The entrance is very ticklish—so narrow, that between the two islands two ships can scarce pass abreast; but once inside, the greatest ship may ride safe—ay, and need not heed the fiercest gale; and yet, Miss Digby, such winds and waves beat on these shores, that, could you see the islands among which we must

presently grope our way, you would perceive that all their northern sides are so worn down, they seem like half-islands, and year by year the more exposed of them grow more barren. But on the mainland 'tis fertile enough, though not like Virginia."

"You will allow nothing to be like Virginia, I see, Mr. Branxholm," said the young lady, still with a slight touch of pique in her voice.

"You will forgive my partiality, Madam, when you see Virginia—but hark! what is that? I could swear I heard bells——"

They listened; but though they all agreed that the tolling of a bell seemed to come now and then on the wind, the sound was too inextricably mingled with other sounds of wind and waves—creaking cordage, flapping foresail—now hanging loose, as the ship was put about, to wait for the pilot—the dash of waves under her bows,—and now and then a sea-bird's scream.

"I could swear I heard it booming, and that 'twas the bell of the old Brick Meeting," said Branxholm again. "But however that may be, I do most certainly hear the sound of rowlocks—the pilot is coming off from Lighthouse-Island."

As he spoke, another flare-up lighted the gray mistiness which every moment drew closer and darker around them. The pilot-boat was near enough now for those aboard the snow to see the rowers, and to see also two men sitting in the stern. Then all faded out again, and in that instant night seemed to have settled down upon the sea.

All the passengers hurried to where the Captain stood, a little abaft the waist, giving orders for the ladder to be lowered, and for the ship's head to be kept in the wind's eye.

"Darn yer!" roared the Captain; "can't ye keep her steady? We shall swamp the boat, if ye don't look alive!"

"Ship ahoy!" cried a voice out of the darkness. "What ship?"

"*Fair American*, Eliphalet Ward, from Bristol," shouted the Captain through his speaking-trumpet. "Are you a pilot?"

"Ay, ay," was bellowed back, in tones so stentorian that, as Lieutenant Digby remarked to his sister, this might have been Father Neptune himself, come with a train of Tritons to overhaul the ship's log.

In another minute or so, Father Neptune, if it were he, became visible as a stalwart figure, magnified by the mist into

colossal proportions, looming out of the night, and seeming to be bound like Ulysses to his own mast.

"Haul up the fores'l!" shouted Captain Ward. "Keep her helm down!"

Thus brought-to against the wind, the good ship strained, and groaned, and pitched not a little. But those in the pilot-boat made nothing of scrambling up a ship's side on a dark night; and the pilot was presently on deck, followed by another man, and the rowers were putting back for the lighthouse.

"Ebenezzer Gunnell, ain't it?" said the Captain, shaking hands with the pilot—a short thick-set man, now that he was on deck, with a fur cap drawn over his ears. "What cheer, brother?"

"Good cheer, brother—the very best of cheer—liberty, brother!" returned the pilot, in a voice as stout as himself, albeit somewhat hoarse with shouting down the north wind.

"Is that so?" asked the Captain slowly.

"That's so, skipper. Massachusetts has made up her mind, and you bet, that whatever steerin' orders Massachusetts gives, the whole fleet'll foller. We've had nigh on to eight year o' talkin' an' argufyin', an' now we're a-goin' to hev a year or two o' actin' an' doin'. May be less'n eight year'll do for that—actin' don't take nigh so long as talkin'. Sam Adams——" here the speaker broke off suddenly, in obedience to a well-directed kick on the shin from Captain Ward, who observed drily,—

"Think yer can take us in to-night, Ebe? I've got passengers—Lef-tenant Digby, a British officer, and his sister, and young Mr. Branxholm of Virginia—and they're all in an all-fired hurry to see their friends."

The hint contained in this remark checked, as it was intended to do, any further political revelations on the part of Mr. Gunnell, who only said,—

"Wa-al, skipper, I'll try. But Mr. Branxholm needn't wait, *he* needn't, till we get to Boston, to see *his* friends, for one o' the best of 'em's come off with me."

Here the pilot modulated his voice to what might by courtesy be called a marine whisper, in which he said a hoarse word or two in the skipper's ear, and forthwith proceeded to take command of the ship; and for a long time to come he was only to be heard bellowing such brief orders as,—“Starboard one pint!” “Shift your helm!” “Lay her up closer!” “Brace the yards!” and so forth.

CHAPTER II.

A FIRE-EATER.

Russell. Let us have done with looking back, I pray,
And hold our faces turned the way we go.

LORD AND LADY RUSSELL.

No sooner had Captain Ward mentioned the name of young Mr. Branxholm, than the person who had hitherto been standing unnoticed behind the pilot (and who, wearing a bear-skin jacket and a sailor's dutch-cap, might well have passed for a pilot's mate) turned hastily, and exclaimed,

"Mr. Branxholm? Where is he?"

"Here!" cried Branxholm, springing forward. "Jasper! my dearest brother, can it be you?"

His arms were round the stranger's neck, and he was receiving a truly bear-like embrace from the wearer of the bear-skin, before he could well get out the words.

"This is luck indeed, or fate—if, indeed, it be not rather Providence," said the new-comer, drawing Branxholm apart from the others. "My dearest boy, I cannot see your face clear enough to know if you are changed, but the voice is still the voice of my brother Noel."

"And the heart is the heart of thy brother, too, dear Jasper," cried the other. "Oh, what happiness to be at home and to touch a kindred hand once again! But how come you here? This is witchcraft, surely!"

"Nay, for I did not know 'twas your ship. I had an errand to-night to the lighthouse, and finding some difficulty about returning, persuaded Gunnell to bring me off with him. We saw you just before sundown, and Gunnell swore you was a Boston ship—I should hardly have cared to find myself aboard a transport."

Jasper said this in a tone between jest and earnest, and then asked more gravely,—

"Who is the British officer? Lieutenant——?"

"Digby. They are people quite out of the common, I assure you, brother," said Noel eagerly. "I met them in England, and by the greatest good fortune was able to make the voyage in the same ship. Lieutenant Digby has lately exchanged into the 29th Foot——"

"Captain Preston's regiment!" interrupted Jasper.

"I daresay he did not choose it for that reason," said Noel, rather testily. "He exchanged because family affairs make it necessary he should visit the Colonies, where he has relations. He is, besides, distantly related to ourselves—that is, the English branch of the Randolphs is connected by marriage with the Dighbys. Let me present you, brother; you will, I'm sure, find them as charming as I do. The Lieutenant may have some British prejudices—'tis but natural he should—but he is a fine generous young man, and his sister——"

"Well, what of his sister?" asked Jasper drily, as Noel paused.

"His sister is a young woman whom all men must admire——"

"I seldom admire the women that men run after," said Jasper somewhat curtly.

"Jasper! I protest you are strangely altered, and grown strangely unjust, to judge a woman whose face you have never so much as seen!" cried his brother reproachfully.

"She may be endowed with all the graces and virtues combined, for aught I know, my dear boy," returned Jasper, "but she is certainly not worth my quarrelling with you about her the first hour I see you again after three years. Let her pass. I was never much of a dangler at young women's apron-strings, as you may remember. I have no sweetheart, nor am like to have any, but my mother. Perhaps she has made me hard to please; I have heard 'tis so when sons have uncommon mothers. And for the lady's face, it chanced that I was so fortunate as to see it the instant I set foot on deck—the lantern shone full upon her, which was the reason I did not see instantly a face my eyes desired much more."

"How good you are to me, dear Jasper," said Noel, caressing the furry arm linked in his own. The difference in their ages—though only four or five years—had combined with the difference of their characters to invest the relations between these brothers with peculiar tenderness. Jasper had been accustomed to protect and lead, and Noel, on his side, almost adored.

On the present occasion, however, but little time was given to mere protestations of affection. As soon as Jasper had replied in answer to his brother's questions, that his father and mother had not come to Boston, as they had intended—Colonel Branx-

holm being very uneasy in consequence of a serious Indian scare, and his wife refusing to leave him,—as soon, I say, as these questions had been answered, and Jasper had added that many of the Virginian gentlemen were trying to get Colonel Washington to organise the defence, as he had done before—he glanced round, to make sure they were not overheard, and said in his brother's ear, grasping his arm more firmly as he spoke; “Noel, the die will be cast to-morrow. Which side do you take?”

The Enchanter's Mirror, wherein the inquirer saw reflected the vision of the future, is but a fanciful statement of a very common experience. There is perhaps no one—how prosaic and unimaginative soever—who has not known this lifting of the veil, and found himself on a sudden, as it were, besieged by the future—hemmed in, pressed hard, by a thousand things—people, events, long spaces of years, idle fancies, inevitable results—all crowding in on him in wild confusion, but all real. At the instant that Jasper put his question, “Which side do you take?” it seemed to Noel that a vast and terrible panorama unrolled itself before his eyes, as clear as the view from the Blue Ridge of his own Virginia, which he knew so well. He had heard the words, “Rights of the Colonies,” “Charters,” “Resistance,” spoken in all the varying tones of remonstrance, contempt, and indignation, by friend and foe, on the American Continent and in England, for eight long years; but never before this moment had the words fallen on his ear like drops of molten fire. Now, in one never-to-be-forgotten instant, he realised that they might mean smoking towns and wasted fields, friends and neighbours arrayed against each other, life-long friendships broken and perhaps quenched in blood, and love that might-have-been, turned to irreconcilable enmity. All these terrible possibilities sprang suddenly into probabilities, nay, into certainties, as Jasper said—“to-morrow.”

To-morrow, Noel, you must decide. From henceforth you have done with mere opinion and theory. Here are the cross-roads. Which will you take? You believe that your country's cause is morally and legally just, and most of the best men you know think so too. Justice and law, and the manifest interests of the Colonies are on one side. On the other, there is nothing to be urged but to your country the risk of failure—and to yourself the loss of a woman whose love you dream of gaining, and to whom you must to-morrow seem a rebel, unless to your own conscience you are content to be a recreant this night!

All this, and much more, was in Jasper's question, and Noel knew it.

"No, no!" he cried—so loud that Miss Digby heard him as she was going down the companion-ladder into the cabin. "I must stand by my country, come what may!"

"Thank God!" said Jasper, relaxing the iron grip he had kept of his brother's arm, and seeming almost overcome for an instant. "You made me tremble, Noel. I feared——"

"What, brother?"

"Perhaps I should not say it—but this is a quarrel which will set house against house, brother against brother. Count the cost, Noel, for once embarked in it there can be no drawing back but with dishonour! I feared for you just now, because—'twas but an instant's glimpse—but I saw that Miss Digby has a pair of fine eyes—such eyes as they say can draw a man from his duty and make a traitor of him against his will."

"I never saw such eyes!" said Noel, his hot young Virginian blood all aflame at this praise of his mistress, "not even in Virginia! A man might be content to die, to win a tear, or even a smile from them; but be sure, brother Jasper, they shall never make a traitor of me. Althea Digby might hate a rebel, but she would scorn a traitor."

Neither of the brothers spoke for some minutes. The ship was safe past the narrows, and was threading her way among the innumerable islands. The wind had shifted, and they were making good way.

"Come below," said Jasper, suddenly turning from the gunwale, against which he had been leaning—lost, it seemed, in thought. "Come below. We shall be private, I suppose, in the cabin? I have much to tell you, and little time to tell it in."

Down in the cabin, by the light of a hanging oil-lamp, Jasper produced several letters and newspapers—the *Boston Evening Post*, the *Massachusetts Spy*, the *Boston Gazette*, and others. As Noel hastily ran his eye over them, he was astounded at the signs he everywhere found of the determination to resist. It was already known, even in England, that the ladies of several of the States had agreed to wear only articles of native manufacture,—in order to at once encourage trade on the Continent and disappoint the British revenue-officers. But the duty on tea was the centre of attack. From first to last of this unhappy contest, nothing is more sadly con-

spicuous than the persistent refusal of the British Government to so much as try to understand the situation. American Independence is a monument to all ages of that British pigheadedness, that unreasoning prejudice, on which we pride ourselves still, despite International Exhibitions and Cook's Tours.

Before the old French War, the Colonists looked to England as their mother and defender. But for England, they believed, they would be overrun by the French or devoured by the Indians. But we took good care to disabuse them of this belief. Braddock's disaster was but the first in a long course of lessons, wherein the Colonists learned that they had better, *and that they could*, protect themselves. We followed up many military blunders by the grand political one of slighting the Provincial officers. Those "Provincial buskins," whom poor Braddock sneered at for presuming to teach a British General how to fight, were as sensitive as the nicest British officer—incredible and incomprehensible as this appeared to the said British officers. Nay, that very Provincial buskin whose warnings Braddock rejected, said, on a certain memorable occasion, of which this narrative will speak more hereafter, that the profession of a soldier was "the chastest of all."

Having thus laid the fire, the British Government, by the hand of Charles Townshend (who seized the opportunity when his great chief was down with the gout), proceeded to set light to it. The Stamp Act, as every one knows, was an ignominious failure—it was at once outwitted and defied. Every one of those unused stamps was as a fiery spark falling among gunpowder—or rather, as a seed of thistle-down, carried by the winds of heaven, and springing up in hatred and resistance wherever it fell. The tax itself was repealed, but the obnoxious principle was maintained—the right to impose new taxes without any compensating privileges, and in contravention of the Charters. The free Colonists saw themselves suddenly placed on an inequality with the rest of their fellow-subjects—those very fellow-subjects who were always singing,

"Britons never shall be slaves!"

The Colonists were for the most part of the same indomitable British blood, and should *they* be slaves?

"Never!" cried all these papers and letters which Jasper was showing his brother. "We stand out for the principle;

what is the use of telling us that these teas are to be sold cheaper here than they are in England? The duty on them is the symbol of rights we do not acknowledge—the thin end of the wedge of a whole system of oppression—and we will never pay it!” This was the burden of all that Noel read—of the ladies’ meeting, at which they all promised to drink no tea—and of those great meetings in Faneuil Hall, at which it was discussed how to prevent the landing of these “detested teas,” now lying unshipped in Boston harbour.

Even the tradesmen openly espoused the popular side. Cyrus Baldwin, the grocer on Cornhill, in advertising some choice Bohea and Souchong (to be sold at eighteen shillings a pound, lawful money), was careful to add that “the above was imported before any of the East India Company’s teas arrived.” And the people of Newport went so far as to declare that any one who should give more than four-and-sixpence a pound, lawful money, for the best Bohea, “should be deemed an enemy to *this* country.”

Any disaffection to the cause brought down prompt and unpleasant notice. Some one had written to the *Evening Post*, to say that certain shopkeepers in Boston, “finding that tea is likely to be expunged from our dietetic alphabet, have raised their coffee two or three coppers per pound,” and to suggest that tar and feathers may be “a constitutional encouragement for such eminent patriotism.”

In the midst of this, Captain Ward came down to drink a parting glass with his passengers. The Lieutenant was with him, and Noel introduced his brother, who bowed somewhat stiffly. Just then Miss Digby came from the inner cabin. It did not escape Noel that she was paler than usual, and a wild hope sprang up in him that she perhaps regretted that the voyage was over. “Allow me, Miss Digby, to present my brother, Mr. Jasper Fleming, of Boston,” he said. “He is not quite in trim to-night for the company of ladies, but we are all travellers, and can make allowance for travelling-gear.”

While Noel was speaking, Jasper had taken off the great pilot’s-cap, which he had not hitherto removed, and was bowing to the lady. The light was very indifferent, being furnished by the smoky lamp which swung from the ceiling, but it sufficed to show Miss Digby a young man of perhaps five or six-and-twenty, tall and apparently rather slender, though the bear-skin left this point uncertain. His face was somewhat too

long for symmetry, and his features were rather strong than regular. Jasper was wont to say that his nose was crooked, and would sometimes complain that this circumstance spoiled his beauty. The nose in question was long but not ill-formed, and if it had a slight twist in its direction, this was but just enough to impart a half-critical, half-humorous expression to a countenance which might otherwise have been rather stern. But there was no sternness in Jasper's eyes. They might have been the eyes of a woman—they were gray, clear, and limpid, and expressed every mood of their owner's soul. They would have redeemed much homelier features than his. Apart from the eyes, the face was strong and thoughtful; but the eyes could make it seem anything—they could flame with indignation, and gleam with contempt, and soften into indescribable tenderness when Jasper looked on little children—who seemed to know that he loved them, for they would always go to him and twine their small fingers round his. His hair—a light brown, with no curl in it—was to-night neither powdered nor covered by the tie-wig then usually worn by gentlemen, and which was extremely becoming to Jasper's rather fair complexion. He was altogether seen to great disadvantage; but even beside the richer colouring and more regular features of his half-brother, Miss Digby was compelled to own to herself that he had an interesting countenance, and could not be dismissed as a provincial boor. Even in that rough dress he appeared unmistakably a gentleman, and he had the same beautiful hands which Althea had often admired in his brother, but more nervous and sensitive. His manners, too, had nothing unpolished about them, and a certain simplicity which distinguished them, made them appear rather the expression of innate good breeding than the artificial result of training.

Jasper had not spoken, but his silence struck Althea as the silence of a man who *will* not speak. She was piqued, and resolved that this fire-eating brother of Mr. Branzholm's *should* speak. She had already conceived a violent dislike to him; but her dislike was combined with a restless anxiety to convince him that she was not the woman he took her for—for Althea had overheard the warning which Jasper had addressed to his brother, and had been deeply incensed thereby.

"We are infinitely indebted to your brother, Mr. Fleming," she said, raising those fine hazel eyes to his face (and finding it

curiously difficult to keep them fixed there); "he has wonderfully enlivened the tedium of the voyage; and has besides pleaded the cause of the malcontents with such eloquence, that he has made me wish more earnestly than ever that all these unhappy misunderstandings may quickly be adjusted to everybody's satisfaction." Jasper bowed again.

"You cannot wish it more earnestly, Madam, than we all do," he said. Without having the Captain's Yankee twang, there was just enough peculiarity in the quality and intonation of his voice to give it novelty in Miss Digby's ears—and novelty is always interesting.

"I am glad to hear you say so, Mr. Fleming," she replied, smiling. "I was afraid I should find you quite a rebel."

"If we are ever rebels, 'twill be because we are made so," said Jasper quickly.

There was a hint of defiance in his tone—or so, at least, the Lieutenant fancied, and he bristled instantly, like a true-born Briton.

"In that case you would not be rebels long!" he cried, the blood mantling in his fair face; "if it came to that, we should make short work of you!"

Lieutenant Digby was heartily ashamed as soon as he had uttered this bravado—not that he doubted for an instant the irresistibility of the British arms, but he felt that his ardour was juvenile, and he had a painful consciousness of being very young, and a huge desire to appear manly and self-possessed. He, too, had from the moment of beholding him conceived a violent antagonism to Jasper Fleming, and he did not love him the better for having been the cause of his making a fool of himself, by taking the thing so much in earnest.

Jasper merely looked at him (Digby fancied his eyes twinkled, and became still more wrathful), and said quietly; "I hope, Mr. Digby, for both our sakes, that it never will come to that."

Jasper did not reciprocate Digby's dislike. He was rather taken with the young fellow—the Lieutenant was the same age as Noel, but looked much more boyish—Jasper thought he had a good ingenuous countenance, and, for Noel's sake, did not wish to quarrel with him.

"Well, of course," said Digby, with a superhuman attempt at lofty indifference, "'taint likely as it ever should."

"I fear our misunderstandings go too deep to be as easily

adjusted as Miss Digby hopes," observed Jasper. "But I trust in God they will never come to so terrible an issue as you, sir, hint at. That would be a misfortune second only to the one which now threatens us."

Jasper spoke with perfect self-possession and courtesy, but also with a calm conviction which made the young officer still more ashamed of having been betrayed into so boyish a bluster. He was much relieved when Captain Ward broke in, by saying in his most pronounced Yankee drawl,—

"Wa-al, friends, seems like as it's most time the vy'ge was over, since our tempers seems to kinder want re-fitt'n. Hows'ever, we've had a happy an' prosp'rous vy'ge, an' I'll give ye a toast afore we part. May neither we nor any one else ever be sorry as this here vy'ge was made!"

The Captain nodded all round, and solemnly drank off half a glass of toddy, while the others pledged him back in the measures which he had been hospitably mixing for them.

Miss Digby took up the glass which the Captain had pushed over to her, and just touching it with her lips, said,—

"I shall propose one more toast—Good luck to Captain Ward and the *Fair American*, and may he carry a better cargo next voyage!"

"Thank ye, Ma'am," returned the Captain. "That'll be as the Lord wills, and as times turns out. But it strikes me as it'll be a long while afore a Boston ship carries any more tea into Boston harbour," he added to Jasper, when his passengers had gone to get their packages together.

And Jasper replied, in a very meaning tone, "I think so too."

As the ship approached the wharf, her progress was very slow. The shipping which lay at the different wharves could be dimly traced in the darkness, by the lights which swung here and there in their rigging; and even in the darkness the masts could be seen rising like little forests—so thick lay the vessels. It was reckoned that on Long Wharf alone fifty ships could unlade at once. As the calendar gave a moon, the lamps were not lighted in the town, and the line of King Street, leading up from Long Wharf, could be only imperfectly traced by a few lamps belonging to private houses.

Noel pointed out to Miss Digby as much as could be seen.

"The State House is at the top of the street," he said; "the house you are going to is a handsome red-brick mansion

half-way up King Street, and Uncle Fleming's house is just opposite."

Now that the parting moment was at hand, Noel was aware of a painful depression. In a few moments more, the delightful familiarity and nearness of the voyage would be over. For five weeks he had not only seen Miss Digby every day, but no one else had seen her—no one, that is, except Captain Ward, and the crew, and the lady's own brother. Whereas, in Boston, it would be as much as he could decently venture, to call once a week or so, and to contrive to meet her now and then on the Pier—the liveliness of which as a public promenade he had several times casually mentioned. And she would be surrounded, to a dead certainty, by every young and middle-aged jackanapes of a King's officer in Boston. This prospect had appeared sufficiently dismal a few days ago,—but Noel would now have been thankful for it. For the news which Jasper had brought rendered it necessary that he should immediately set out for Virginia—since even love must be content to wait, if there were any fear of an Indian outbreak. Noel had been explaining this to Miss Digby, and had said as much as he dared of the disappointment it would be to him to leave Boston, just when he most wished to remain there.

"But I hope soon to return," he said. "If Colonel Washington will but take the thing in hand, we shall soon put them down. He is well used to Indian ways, both in peace and war, and has dealt with them in embassy and conflict from his youth up."

"You seem to think a great deal of this Colonel Washington," observed Miss Digby, who had not quite recovered her temper. "I have heard of him, even in England; I think 'twas he that they said bore a charmed life, having escaped unhurt from the very thiek of poor General Braddock's affair."

"It was, Madam; and if any one can defend our borders against the Indians, 'tis he."

"I see you are determined to lose no chance of chanting the praises of a Virginian, Mr. Branhholm," said Althea, relenting, "and that you do not think the Indians the harmless, ill-used creatures which some in England maintain they are."

"Madam, they are for the most part bloody-minded savages—treacherous, greedy, and revengeful—incapable of civilisation, and rejoicing in cruelty. I would kill my mother with my own hand sooner than leave her alive to suffer their devilish ingenuity!"

Althea shuddered ; but she thought—"Though he is but a boy, there is stuff in him too."

"Yet I think you told me that you have a drop of their blood in your own veins," she said, a little maliciously.

"The blood of Pocahontas need not shame the purest descent," he said, hotly ; and then, in an altered tone, he continued : "And yet, princess and heroine though she was, I have sometimes thought that 'twere better perhaps not to come of her race, by so much as one drop of blood. For I sometimes fancy I can feel that drop, like a drop of fire, boiling in the very core of my heart, and stirring a mad fierceness within me—'tis a kind of tingling in my veins, beyond the power of reason to control,—an impatience—I scarce know what it is, but I know that 'tis a something, which if it were ever fairly roused, might play the devil with all the rest of me."

"And has your brother likewise this fierce drop of heathen blood?" asked Miss Digby quietly.

"Jasper? To say the truth, Miss Digby, I think he has ; but in him it lies deeper down—at the very bottom of his heart, it seems to me—but yet I think 'tis there. But I have it in double measure, for my father and mother are cousins, and both come of Pocahontas' line."

"At any rate, we need not fear your taking to the woods and turning Sachem," said Althea ; "but I protest you have made me tingle with this talk of Indian blood, and I am almost glad that our English branch of the Randolphs can count no Indian princesses among their ancestry."

Late as it was when they cast anchor at the wharf, there were plenty of people about. As soon as the usual shouting, running hither and thither, flinging of ropes, hauling of chains, and all the confused turmoil which attends coming into port, had partially subsided, the Customs stepped aboard, and were taken down into the Captain's cabin. Before the Captain, however, could follow them down the companion, an elderly gentleman in a full-bottomed wig and a scarlet cloak hurried after him, and said fussily,

"A thousand pardons, Captain, but you should have as passengers Lieutenant Digby and Miss Digby—pray present me to them. I am sent by their relative, my cousin, Mrs. Maverick, to meet them. You know my name—Mr. Harrison Gray."

The Captain very slightly returned Mr. Gray's bow, and hastily looking round, espied the two persons he was seeking

standing amidst a heap of trunks and boxes, which some negro porters had fetched from below.

"Here they are," he said. "Miss Digby, Ma'am, this gentleman is Mr. Harrison Gray, come to escort you ashore. I have the honour, Sir and Ma'am, to wish you good-bye."

He shook hands heartily with them, and disappeared down the companion; while the old gentleman, removing his cocked hat, bowed with great formality, and explained that Mrs. Maverick had begged him to meet her young cousins at the ship, and bring them to her house.

Jasper and Noel, who were at the moment coming up to take leave, and ask if they could be of any service, heard this; and Jasper, as soon as they had set foot ashore, said bitterly,—

"You can see already which way the wind will blow from that quarter, Noel. Mrs. Maverick is a connection of Mr. Hutchinson's, and a Tory of Tories; and Harrison Gray is one of those that blow hot and cold on the cause, as long as 'tis only debated, but will go over the instant we do more than talk."

So saying, Jasper turned up King Street, towards the house of his uncle, Mr. Lawrence Fleming.

CHAPTER III.

THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE.

THE house to which Jasper took his brother was one of the fine old brick mansions which formerly lined King Street. The door was opened by a coloured footman, who displayed every tooth in his head when Noel addressed him as Telemachus, and told him he was a head taller than when he last saw him.

A solid oak staircase in the middle of the entrance-hall led to the rooms on the first floor, which opened on to a landing itself as large as a good-sized room. Telemachus showed the way across this landing, and flung open a door. The room into which he ushered the gentlemen would have been gloomy, but for the sense of homely comfort conveyed by the close-drawn curtains, the bright wood fire, and the table laid for supper. Here the family were assembled, consisting of an elderly lady and gentleman, and a young girl. Noel was received with open arms by them all, including his pretty cousin Mary,—for so Noel

always called the young lady, though she did not actually stand in that relation to him. "Come, come, give him a kiss, my wench," said her father; and Mary obeyed with a charming blush, which brought a second and warmer glow to the impressionable young Virginian's cheek.

Jasper's uncle and adoptive father was a little man of sixty or so, with a face plain enough by nature not to be much the worse for the smallpox, of which it bore the marks. His small gray eyes were remarkably quick and merry, and his expression was that of shrewd good-humour. He wore a plain suit of gray and a tie-wig, and was particular about his stockings, having a remarkably neat leg, and a well-turned foot and ankle. His wife was a somewhat comely woman, with sandy hair, inclining to red. She was dressed with extreme plainness, as befitted a member of one of the strictest churches in Boston; and wore a close linen cap, and, whenever she went out, a camlet riding-hood, such as pious folk liked to recall was worn in the good old times by even the Governor's lady. Good Mistress Fleming was of a somewhat despondent disposition, and was wont to talk of herself as one with whom the Lord had dealt mysteriously. If by this the good woman had meant the death of her only son, a promising boy of twelve, every father's and mother's heart might sympathise with her; but she had a way of giving an abstract theological turn to any expressions of human affection in which she might indulge, which to the purely human mind savoured somewhat of coldness.

Her daughter, however, made up for all her parents' deficiencies, whether of mind or person. She was a very beautiful young woman, of a style of beauty which appeals most forcibly to refined observers, but which could not fail to please any eye. She was tall, and in middle age would probably be what it was then the fashion to call a "monstrous fine figure of a woman." But at nineteen the suppleness of youth was chiefly apparent. There was a largeness of her movements, too, which seemed in some subtle way to suggest largeness and generosity in all the thoughts, words, and ways of Mary Fleming.

Noel, who since his travels possessed the advantage of having seen a good many admirable pictures, found an indescribable pleasure in watching his cousin as she moved about the room, putting the finishing touches to the supper-table; and the thought occurred to him more than once, that, with a child clasped to her bosom, she might well have sat for that very

ideal of tenderness and purity, which painters strove to embody in the Maiden of Nazareth. That blessed figure has become the type of womanhood; and it was Mary Fleming's womanliness which made her chief charm. There was a sweet bloom on her cheek, her brow was white and smooth, and shaded by hair of a warm light brown, which looked almost golden when the sun shone on it; her blue eyes were like two clear pools, as clear as Mary's own soul; but agreeable as all these things may be to the sight, Mary had a stronger and subtler charm still for the heart of every one with whom she came in contact. She was incapable of flirting or coquetry; she had no little feminine arts, no manoeuvres or pretty affectations. But in all she said and did there was apparent this warm large-hearted womanliness—and all women are no more womanly than all men are manly.

Noel always thought and spoke of Mary as his cousin, but there was in reality no blood-relationship between them. Noel's father and mother were cousins. They came of an old Virginian stock, and were, as he had told Miss Digby, related to the Randolphs, one of those old Virginian families which boasted that the blood of Pocahontas flowed in their veins. There was certainly a wild strain in them, which showed itself now and then in some passionate outburst. These two cousins had fallen in love with each other in spite, or in consequence of, a violent feud between their fathers, which rendered stolen meetings necessary. Stolen meetings by moonlight quicken most lovers' ardour; and these lovers made love by the light of the broad yellow moon of a Virginian summer night, flooding the crannies and crevices of the distant Blue Ridge, and the fir-trees which grow high up on its shoulders.

They had pledged unalterable fidelity a good many times under this moon, when the lady's father found out what was going on, and (after sending a message to his brother-in-law to chain up Young Hopeful, if he would not have him shot for trespassing) carried his daughter off to Philadelphia, where she was seen and admired by Mr. Jasper Fleming, a prosperous merchant of Boston. It unfortunately happened that the paternal interference took place at the very moment of a quarrel between the lovers. Myra Butler had taken it into her head to be jealous of a young beauty and heiress, who was reported to look very kindly on Mr. Branhholm. So when further reports reached Philadelphia of an actual engagement, Miss Myra became convinced that her suspicions had been only

too well grounded, and she despatched a letter to her lover, in which she begged him to forget any promise she might ever have made him, kindly assuring him of her own entire forgetfulness of any promises on his part. Miss Myra, being a high-spirited young lady, contrived to write a very cutting letter. Meanwhile (some said that Mr. Butler could have explained how) Mr. Branxholm had heard such an account of the attentions of Mr. Fleming as enabled him to explain Myra's letter in a manner in the highest degree unsatisfactory to his feelings as her lover. Not to be behindhand in spirit, he also wrote a letter, the gist of which was that he entirely coincided with the sentiments expressed in the lady's epistle. As though this were not insulting enough, he added incidentally that Miss Myra was greatly regretted throughout the county, and that Miss Euphemia never failed to inquire most particularly after her. Now Miss Euphemia was the beautiful and wealthy young heiress who had been at the bottom of the quarrel. When Myra came to that part of the letter, she tore it into a thousand pieces, and accepted Mr. Fleming that very evening.

Mr. Fleming was three-and-thirty, and Miss Butler was seventeen. He was a plain straightforward man, very much in love, and aware that he had a rival. But his rival was a boy of twenty, and Fleming was more amused at his audacity than jealous of the impression he had made upon Myra. The marriage was hastened, and Mr. Fleming brought his wife home to much such another substantial sober-minded house as the one in which Noel was at this moment watching Mary, and dreaming of Althea.

In those days stage-wagons were few, posts were slow, and it was a very long way from Boston to the heart of Virginia. Long after the days of which this story tells, prayers were offered in the meeting-house in Norwich for a man "gone, going, or about to go" on a journey to Boston—so much longer were the miles in ante-railway days. Mrs. Fleming therefore did not hear for many and many a month after her marriage that the evil reports had been false, and that rage and jealousy alone had prompted her lover's letter. When she did learn it, she had been three months a widow. Her husband died of an attack of suppressed smallpox, and she was left with a baby six months old. She returned to her father's house, to find that the old heart-burnings were raging as hotly as ever—so hotly indeed, that Mr. Branxholm senior, whose *Montague* was no

whit behind Mr. Butler's *Capulet*, had taken legal proceedings against her father. The real quarrel was as old as their lives, and had been inherited along with a disputed boundary; but it was perpetually assuming new phases, and as soon as Myra's marriage removed one grievance, another had been supplied by the untimely, and it was said suspicious, death of a valuable game-cock,—a bird much cultivated by fine old Virginian gentlemen before the Revolution.

In those good old days, if every man was not his own lawyer, any man could easily obtain a license to practise as legal agent for his neighbours. That venerable title, *Justice of the Peace*, was of a very wide significance, and, like charity, covered a multitude of incongruities. Possibly owing to this somewhat amateur administration of the laws, the verdict in *Butler v. Branxholm, in the matter of a game-cock*, went against the plaintiff. Mr. Butler's indignation at this miscarriage of justice was so excessive that, being a man of a full habit, and given to generous living, he had a fit of apoplexy in the courthouse, and died three days after.

By Mr. Butler's death his estate devolved upon his son, a good-natured young man, who had always thought it a great pity to keep up an old quarrel. His sister, too, had fallen into a deep melancholy, ever since she had learned the truth about Edward Branxholm. So he took an opportunity of saying to persons who would be sure to repeat his words, that, for his part, he had no quarrel with young Mr. Branxholm, and never had had any; and that he thought it a great piece of folly for sons to perpetuate their father's differences—a man's own quarrels, he added, were usually as much as he could attend to properly, without raking up things that happened before he was born. The long and the short of all which was that Mrs. Fleming married Mr. Branxholm, after a decent interval of mourning.

Mr. Branxholm was not unkind to little Jasper, but in his heart he felt towards him somewhat as Sarah felt towards Ishmael; and this feeling was not diminished by the death of the first child that his wife bore him. Jasper's presence became much more tolerable when Mr. Branxholm had a son of his own, although Jasper was to him, for many a long year, "that Yankee fellow's son," and a reminder of circumstances which he would gladly have forgotten.

To Mrs. Branxholm, the part of her life spent in Boston seemed like a dream. Her first husband was a shrewd man of

business, with so sufficient a confidence in himself that he had no misgivings about the Virginian love: he had supplanted. He did not even pay his wife the compliment of being jealous—it was a boy-and-girl affair, such as we all have in our youth, and think our hearts are broken; but a good husband will soon drive all such nonsense out of a gir.'s head. This was Mr. Fleming's reasoning; and so long as Myra believed she had been betrayed, pride almost benumbed the sense of misery. But she was a true Virginian, and Boston seemed a prison to her. She hated the climate, the way of life, the manners of the people. Accustomed to the careless freedom of Virginia, to its open-handed hospitality and luxurious idleness, she chafed at the grim piety and plodding industry of New England. The "seriousness" irked her; the hard-headed arguments on knotty points of theology or law bored her inexpressibly; the interminable sermons and prayers, which decency required she should listen to on Sundays, made her life a burden; but she had esteemed Mr. Fleming, and she always mentioned him with respect, and was a most loving mother to Jasper.

Mr. Branhholm, however, felt it to be a relief when, after the death of Lawrence Fleming's only son, Jasper began to be much in Boston. Mr. Fleming was a merchant and shipowner, and he had hoped that Jasper would take his father's place in the business. But it soon became evident that he would never be content to be only a merchant. His father's property had always remained invested in the business, and as he grew up he intermeddled to some extent in its administration; but he chose the law as his profession, and had already pleaded with success in many causes. In those primitive times the union of a professional with a commercial calling was not unusual—though, to say the truth, Jasper's commercial labours were pretty much confined to listening to his uncle's confidential communications, and making occasional suggestions, which Mr. Fleming usually adopted. When there was a ship to be built, however, Jasper's love for mechanical science made him take a more prominent part. On such occasions his uncle would sometimes lament that Jasper's attention had been diverted to the law; but Mrs. Fleming, whose piety never blinded her worldly wisdom, thought this a short-sighted view, for was it not pretty certain that Jasper would one day be a judge, and have the right to prefix the title *Honourable* to his name?

* * * * *

The little party gathered around Mr. Fleming's hospitable table were in high spirits that night—even Mrs. Fleming allowed herself to be carried away. Noel was asked so many questions about England, that he could hardly get any answers to his own questions about affairs at home. What was London like? Had he seen the King and Queen? Was the Pantheon very magnificent? Had he ever seen Lord Chatham or Mr. Burke? And the rebels' heads on Temple Bar? How did he like Bath, and was there not a monstrous deal of fashion there?

Noel was able to return a satisfactory reply to these and other similar questions—particularly the one about Bath, on which he had so much to say, that Mrs. Fleming feared he had become worldly-minded—a fear, however, which did not in the least check the tide of her questions.

“You have wrote us such admirable lively descriptions of all you've seen, Noel,” said Jasper, when the traveller at length paused in his tale, “that we feel almost as if we'd been with you. I wonder if I'm right in one thing I thought you conveyed? I mean that, though there's a much greater splendour, and the great world seems always close at hand, yet there's less room—if I may say so—a something more confined, more trammelled than here. I can't but fancy our thoughts are more our own—that in England a man is more content to think other men's thoughts.”

“There's something in what you say, brother,” replied Noel. “Their manners are more elegant, more finished; they seem to walk with more mincing steps, as you might say—but the effect is very elegant, and there's a deal of vigour in 'em underneath it all; though 'tis now become the mode to affect a languor and indifference in one's manner, and a man of fashion is half-ashamed to be caught in a sober mood. We are more homely, and, I fancy, more contented. And our air is lighter, our skies are clearer. I thought I never felt so refreshing a wind as that which blew so unkindly in our teeth to-day.”

“That, dear boy, was because you knew you was coming home,” said Jasper. “'Twas a detestable wind in itself, and had very near prevented my getting back to-night. How little did I imagine 'twas your ship I was looking at! Well, I trust at any rate the fine gentlemen at home have not made you ashamed of our colonial simplicity.”

"There's not all that difference as you might imagine, brother," said Noel. "That coat of yours is a very fair cut—very fair, indeed. 'Twould scarce be remarked in the Mall—'tis a trifle too plain for Bath, perhaps; but I remember that the sober lover in a play I saw there had on one very much like it. 'Twas, if I remember right, rather more of a plum. But really, brother, your coat's not amiss."

"I'm infinitely obliged to you and the tailor in Cheapside who made it," says Jasper, laughing. "Yes, 'twas made in England. I detest an ill-cut coat almost as much as I do loose-held opinions; so as my uncle's tailor could not be persuaded but the fault was in my figure, I sent to London, in the hope of convincing him 'twas in his scissors. I'm disappointed, though, that you think 'tis only fit for the virtuous lover, who, I suppose, is the fool of the play?"

"By no means, brother, 'twas a very moral play, and the villain received his deserts," said Noel. "I'm sure I said 'twas uncommon neat," he added, observing Jasper more critically. "How I wish you had been with me! 'Twas a great pity you didn't come. You would, I'm sure, have richly enjoyed it; especially hearing the wits and politicians talk. I was taken to St. James's Coffee-House and the Cocoa-Tree, and I can tell you I heard some good things. 'Tis said some of the wits prepare their impromptus, but if they do, they've certainly a very artful way of concealing it."

CHAPTER IV.

A STORM IN A TEA-CUP.

This quarrel will drink blood another day.

FIRST PART OF KING HENRY VI.

A DRIZZLING rain had fallen all day, and the brief December afternoon closed in early. The vast assembly gathered in the Old South saw each other's faces growing dimmer and dimmer as they sat waiting for Quaker Rotch, the owner of the *Dartmouth*, to return from demanding a pass for his ship.

The adjourned meeting has sat nearly all day, and Rotch has already been on one fruitless errand to the collector. This is the position; the *Dartmouth*, laden with the East India

Company's tea, has now been twenty days in harbour, and the moment midnight strikes the revenue officers will be legally entitled to seize her, and land her cargo at Castle William. If the tea is once landed, it will be impossible to prevent its being sold; and once sold, a precedent will be established for the taxation against which the Colonies have been protesting for eight years.

There have before now been riots and disturbances in Boston—notably, the destruction of Governor Hutchinson's house, eight years ago, in the first fury excited by the Stamp Act. Many invaluable manuscripts and collections relating to the early history of the Colonies thus perished. But this was the work of a mob, and all mobs are much alike, whether in Paris or Boston; they differ in degree, but not in kind. The seven thousand men who now sit waiting for Rotch to come back are of different metal—the Governor's Councillors said this to each other, as they watched them pouring past the doors of the Province House—from whose walls the portraits of Endicott, Bradstreet, and Winthrop, frown on Governor Hutchinson.

To this great meeting Jasper Fleming took his brother. Noel saw there many men whose names were bandied about like shuttlecocks by party battledores in England.

In the Old South pulpit stood a little knot of men—prominent among them, one tall figure with long gray hair and a lofty forehead. "Who is that?" asked Noel; and his brother replied,—“That is Sam Adams.” “What! the Great Incendiary as they call him? Why, he looks a mere dreamer!” said Noel, surprised.

From time to time some one addresses the meeting—which reminds Noel of a sea with a heavy ground-swell running. As such a sea, when a wind passes over it, rises for a moment into higher waves, so does the great assembly respond to the speakers. But its prevailing attitude is one of expectation. There are moments of stillness so deep that the rain is heard driving against the windows. One of these silences is broken by a speaker in the east gallery. He is a young man, and as the waning light falls on him through a window, there is an ill-boding hectic on his cheek, and his eyes have a feverish gleam. He reminds them that shouts and hosannahs will not end that day's trials, nor popular resolves and acclamations vanquish their foes. “Let us consider the issue!” And he is answered that they have counted the cost, and that now their hands are

to the plough there shall be no looking back; and the whole assembly vote that, come what will, the tea shall not be landed.

It is five o'clock. Here and there a few candles have been lighted, and by their misty flicker little groups of faces can be seen—some pale, all grimly waiting. The young man in the east gallery speaks again, still harping on the necessity of more than mere words. A voice from the floor warns "the young gentleman in the gallery" of the consequences of this intemperate language, and Noel recognises the full-bottomed wig of Mr. Harrison Gray. "If the old gentleman on the floor intends by his warning to the young gentleman in the gallery, to utter only a friendly voice in the spirit of paternal advice," retorts Mr. Josiah Quincy (for it is he), "I thank him. If his object be to terrify, I despise him. To that God who rides on the whirlwind and directs the storm I commend my country!"

It has been agreed to have patience one hour more. It is a very long hour. The meeting is growing restless; the buzz of voices rises and falls like the first low rumblings of a storm. Now and then, messengers from without force a way up the aisles through the close-packed crowd. Rotch is a long time gone; but he had to go to Milton, whither Mr. Hutchinson has betaken himself to be out of the way. A rumour has spread somehow that Rotch's mission has failed. If the Governor will but grant the pass, there are plenty of strong arms ready to work the tea-ships down the harbour, and start them off for London, with their cargoes safe and sound, long before midnight. But without a pass, they will be stopped by the guns of Castle William—and, as Rotch said before he started on his errand, he is loth to stand the shot of 32-pounders. There is a growing impression that Hutchinson will refuse—and what then? "Why, then," cries Rowe (who is part-owner of one of the ships), "who knows how tea will mingle with salt water?"

Suddenly, Jasper whispers to Noel, "I must speak! If I cannot get back to you, we shall meet at home to-night!" and is lost in the crowd, and sooner than seems possible, reappears in the east gallery.

"Fellow-citizens!" he cries, his voice reaching every corner of the great church—while an odd sensation comes over Noel, as though his brother were suddenly changed into some one he has never known—"we are most of us of British ancestry, and our forefathers were rocked in English cradles. But the child cannot always remain a child. He grows at last too large for his

cradle, and the hour comes when he can no longer even abide leading-strings. What should we say of a father who sought to confine his grown-up son's limbs in swaddling-clothes? Fellow-citizens, we are come to our majority—let us assert our manhood! We can no longer be under tutelage. A man, when he is come to man's estate, knows what is good for him better than the kindest parent can do—when that parent is three thousand miles away. Our reasonable demands appear unreasonable to politicians beyond the sea—our thoughts, it may be, are as much wider than theirs as this vast continent is greater than that little island! Some of our fathers played the man in England against the Stuart kings. Their spirits will rise to rebuke us, if we choose now to be slaves. Remember the beginnings of these Colonies of New England—planted in cold and famine and tempest, and much tribulation—reared in hardship and danger! Are we to be denied the heritage of Englishmen, because we are not shut within those narrow four seas of Britain—because we dared plant a new world in the wilderness? These Colonies were planted in God's name—He will not forsake them now, if we do our part as our fathers did theirs. The resources of America are inexhaustible. What shall hinder us from spreading from Ocean to Ocean, from the Gulf to the uttermost parts of the North? what, but the vexatious and tyrannical restrictions of the British ministry at home and its creatures here—restrictions first thought of because we were growing too prosperous! The time for talking is past—the time for action is come. This very night we must choose, or be slaves for ever!"

CHAPTER V.

THE MOHAWKS.

Do you prize your mack above your liberties?

THE BONDMAN.

A DEEP hum of applause rose up from the vast assembly as Jasper ended, but his words had moved them almost too tremendously—each man there saw his own purpose larger than he had ever seen it before, and the greatness of the issue at stake moved him to awe rather than to defiance.

But there was little time for the full effect of the speech to

be felt. A subdued tumult outside communicated itself to the meeting within, and in an instant every man in the assembly knew that Rotch had returned. The excitement was intense; it showed itself in a sudden silence. More candles had been lighted by this time, but the great church was dim and shadowy in spite of them, and only the group in the pulpit could be distinctly seen. As Noel caught sight thus of Samuel Adams's face, and saw the flashing of his blue eyes, he understood why Hutchinson feared him.

There was a rustling, as of the trees of a forest, as the whole assembly rose to its feet, while Rotch and the two gentlemen who had accompanied him as witnesses made their way up the long aisle. They looked harassed and excited; their clothes were disordered with the hasty journeys of the day, and still more by struggling through the crowd; and yet it seemed but a moment before they had reached the table in front of the pulpit, and, amidst breathless silence, were giving an account of their embassy.

"Governor Hutchinson refuses to grant a pass for the ship before the tea has cleared the customs."

A low sound, between a groan and a sigh, broke from the listeners; and then Samuel Adams, as president of the meeting, put a resolution that Rotch's conduct had been satisfactory,—and, amidst smothered sounds of tumult from the galleries (which mingled with other sounds outside), added solemnly,—“This meeting can do no more to save the country,” and dissolved the assembly, with an injunction to observe law and order. Just then, a wild Indian whoop was heard in the street without, answered by others from the galleries.

“Boston harbour a tea-pot to-night!” shouted some one in the gallery, and a storm of hoots answered him. And amid cries of “Hurrah for Griffin's Wharf!” the whole assembly poured out of the Old South, and, mingling with the multitude outside, hurried down the streets leading to the southern wharves.

Noel knew that something was intended, but the hints which Jasper had thrown out had been vague, and had amounted to little more than repeated assurances that the tea would never be landed. Noel looked anxiously for his brother, but he was not surprised at having missed him in so vast a concourse. The crowds were now strangely silent—so silent that Noel hesitated at asking any questions of a grave elderly man who had kept up with him ever since they left the Old South. But as they

turned into Pearl Street, he saw, some way in advance, what seemed to be a troop of Indians, just turning the corner on to the wharf. "Who are they?" he asked his companion. "The Mohawks," replied the other, quickening his pace.

The rain had ceased, the clouds had partially cleared away, and the moon was shining on wharves and warehouses, store-sheds and house-fronts, as they came out in sight of the water, on which here and there the moonlight glistened. But all eyes were instantly fixed on the tea-ships. The Mohawks were already boarding them, and as Noel set his foot on the wharf, he was stopped by a young man who was acting as sentinel. A watch had been stationed, and no one was allowed to pass.

Noel stood watching the fantastic figures leaping over coils of rope, or climbing the short ladders which hung from the vessels' sides. All Boston seemed to be looking on, so black were the shores and wharves with people; but the silence was so profound that the splash could be distinctly heard, as package after package was thrown overboard. As Noel stood watching, and almost wondering if he were awake, and the scene a reality, an arm was slipped into his, and Jasper said in his ear,—

"This was the only way, and now it is too late to go back."

Noel did not answer; he was thinking that at this very hour the night before, he had stood beside Althea Digby, and that this night's work opened a great gulf between her and himself. But he was young and sanguine, and he told himself that the storm might yet blow over, and that he might yet return from Virginia to better fortune.

Jasper, too, was silent, except when, as happened several times, some one came up and spoke to him in so low a voice that Noel found it easy not to hear what he was evidently not intended to listen to. But from a word or two spoken a little louder than the rest he could not help perceiving that Jasper was in the confidence of the leaders, if indeed he were not one of them. "Whatever we do, let the strict letter of the law be observed, so far as is compatible with the great object."—he heard Jasper say. Just as Jasper spoke, there seemed to be a sudden scuffle aboard the *Dartmouth*, which quickly resolved itself into three or four of the Mohawks dragging a man along the deck, and handing him over to some of the volunteer watchmen, by whom he was roughly handled. A person who came and spoke to Jasper shortly afterwards, said that the fellow had been caught secreting some of the tea.

"Hark!" said Jasper, gripping Noel's arm, as one heavy splash after another announced that the work of destruction was being carried on with zeal. "Every splash we hear tells of another chain wrenched off the limbs of freemen, and cast into the depths of the sea!"

"Jasper," whispered Noel, "do you think there will be fighting after this?" And Jasper, after a moment's pause, whispered: "It must come to that at last, unless *they* yield, for *we* never shall."

The moon shone from an unclouded sky before the work was finished, and the multitudes began to stream homeward. A vast bodyguard surrounded the Mohawks, and escorted them back through the town. They marched to the fife and drum, and people were looking from most of the windows. At one house, a gentleman in the dress of a naval officer called out from a first-floor window,—“Well, boys, you've had a fine pleasant evening for your Indian caper—but remember, there'll be the fiddler to pay yet!”—“Never mind that, Admiral!” shouted he who seemed to be the leader. “If you'll just come out here, we'll settle the bill in two minutes, Mr. Montague!”

But Admiral Montague shut the window in a hurry, as the people shouted, and the fifer struck up. The day of reckoning was postponed.

CHAPTER VI.

COMPLIMENTS AT PARTING.

THE next day Noel, with a somewhat heavy heart, went to call on his late fellow-travellers, and take leave before starting for Virginia. As Mrs. Maverick lived almost opposite, Noel had obtained a glimpse of Miss Digby already. Mary Fleming, watering the flowers on her *jardinière*, which stood in the sitting-room window, had also seen a handsome young lady, standing but half-concealed by the muslin curtains, and looking up and down the street.

It had been a bitter disappointment to Noel that his father and mother had not been able to come to Boston as had been arranged. Although Mrs. Branxholm did not love Boston for its own sake, she was always willing to accept her brother-in-law's invitations to spend a few weeks in his house in King

Street. She liked travelling; and when one went to Boston one could always visit Philadelphia on the way. Mrs. Branxholm was considered, even in Virginia, as a lady of great spirit, and quite a travelled person. Then, too, but for these most inopportune disturbances, Noel reflected that nothing would have been easier than to get his father and mother to invite the Digbys to visit them at Oglethorpe next summer.

With this idea in his head, Noel lifted the great brass knocker, where copious floral wreaths surrounded a grinning masque, and asked a smart black boy (who in his scarlet coat much resembled a monkey) if Miss Digby were within—having seen Miss Digby approach the window not five minutes before, this question was a pure matter of form. The black boy forthwith ushered Mr. Branxholm upstairs, where he was received by Mrs. Maverick, a very handsome old lady, with courtly manners, befitting the cousin of the Governor.

“I am delighted to see you, Mr. Branxholm,” she said. “I knew your mother when she was Mrs. Fleming, and I must compliment you on your resemblance to her. I always thought her out of place in Boston, between you and me, Mr. Branxholm,” continued the old lady with a delightful frankness, and fixing her bright eyes and beautiful snow-white curls on Noel’s blushing countenance. “Mr. Fleming was a very excellent man, and a great deal more personable than his brother, of course—but yet—you understand me, I’m sure, there’s a *je ne sais quaw*”—so she pronounced it—“about a real Virginian gentleman, that one sees at once. I assure you I have been quite grieved to see the part your brother, Mr. Jasper, has taken in these unfortunate squabbles——”

“Madam,” said Noel, getting very hot, but feeling that the words must out, “’tis true I am of Virginia, but on these matters we think the same in Virginia as they do here in Boston.”

“Oh, fie, fie!” said the old lady, patting his hand, which lay on the arm of his chair, with her own pretty plump fingers. “Fie, fie! We must have no treason talked here!”

Just then, Althea entered. She had found time to unpack a charming taffety morning-dress, and her hair was arranged more elaborately than had been possible on board ship. She was very gracious in her manner, but she could not resist the temptation to say, “Are you not sorry, Mr. Branxholm, that the *Fair American* did not make the voyage in time for

you to have engaged in this pretty little piece of piracy? But perhaps you *did* take part in it?"

"You are mistaken, Madam," said Noel, nettled, he could scarcely tell why.

"Perhaps at least you looked on?" she continued; and then, as he said nothing, she added, "and, like Saul of Tarsus, held the garments of those who were employed in the good work?"

"I had not the honour, or privilege, or anything else you may choose to call it, Madam, to take any part whatever," said Noel quickly. "Allow me, however, to assure you, that should a proper time ever arrive when I may seal my convictions with my actions, I will find a way to do it at which it shall be impossible for any one to sneer."

Althea saw that her words had cut deeper than she intended; but her brother coming in just then, and greeting Noel with unsuspecting friendliness, there was no opportunity for explanation,—if, indeed, any explanation would not have made matters worse,—and Noel went away angry, while Althea felt more interest in him than she had ever done before. A little injustice on the one side, and just indignation on the other, are the best means in the world to give a spice to friendship—especially when that friendship is between a man and a woman.

But whatever was wanting in the parting of Noel and Althea was made up for by the warmth of that between the two young men. Frederick Digby told Noel that they might yet meet in Virginia; for it appeared that the eccentric great-uncle—who had, by his Will, left a large property to the young relatives he had never seen—had died in that province. "You must come and stay in Shenandoah Valley," said Noel,—his eyes involuntarily straying towards Althea to see how she took this. "But I shall write to you, and you to me. We are sticklers for cousinship in Virginia, and you will find plenty of relations."

For all this, it was an uncomfortable parting—so much so that Noel recrossed the street and mounted the stairs of Mr. Fleming's house in a very dejected frame of mind. It was growing dusk, and Mary, who had just drawn the curtains, would have rung for candles, but Noel said,—“Sit down, Mary, and let us have half an hour's conversation, before I go home to be scalped by Indians, or roasted alive at a stake.”

"Pray do not say such things even in jest, dear Noel," exclaimed Mary, sitting bolt upright in the easy-chair, usually occupied by her father. "Think how terrible they will be to remember when you are gone!"

"It would make no difference to you, nor do I think there is a soul on earth who would care, save my father and mother—and Jasper. My father and mother will probably have perished before I am taken prisoner—of course I should fight desperately"—observed Noel parenthetically, and stealing a sly glance at Mary, to see whether this picture affected her sufficiently; "so that there would only be Jasper left to shed a tear over my ashes."

"Why are you so bitter-hearted, Noel? One would think you was sorry to come home!"

"I have dreamed of coming a hundred times—thought of it night and day," said Noel, staring into the fire, and seeing Althea's face in it, with an Indian just behind her, tomahawk in hand. "But, I know not how, I feel a depression I can't shake off——" here Althea and the Indian collapsed into a wild boar, rooting beneath a tree. "The prospect of a long and solitary journey in the dead of winter, and in a stage-coach as stifling as a ship's cabin, and that tosses nearly as much——"

"Poor boy, it is pretty hard, when you thought you would find your father and mother here, and spend the winter in Boston!" Mary laid a caressing hand on Noel's arm, and Noel slipped down on the rug, and laid his head on Mary's knee.

"You used to let me do this when I was a little boy, and your mother wasn't in the room," he said. "I wish I was a little boy again, and you was my sister, as we used to play."

Now, to tell the truth, in those not so very remote days, the play proceeded quite as often on another plot, namely, the betrothal and marriage, by canonical rites, of Noel and Mary, who, together with Jasper, had on one occasion been whipped and sent to bed, for taking part in a profane travesty of the marriage-service—Jasper, arrayed in his mother's black bombazine petticoat, with paper bands, representing the worthy pastor of the First Church.

Mary's memory, as it chanced, had just then gone back to this particular performance, and she felt an odd vexation at hearing Noel's lament for that other less exciting youthful drama. A silence fell upon her, and she was even conscious of

a disposition to cry. The folly of this, as there was nothing whatever to cry about (Noel's tragic forebodings being in the highest degree unlikely to be fulfilled), so forcibly commended itself to Mary's common sense, that she made an impatient movement with her knee.

"Sit still, Mary," said Noel, whom this movement incommoded. "You never used to try and push me away."

"You are talking foolishly, Noel, and you know it," said Mary, who could at the moment have boxed her young relative's ears or kissed him, with about equal satisfaction. "We are all greatly disappointed that you must go, and you know that well."

It is a striking example of the exceeding deceitfulness of the human heart, that a young man of so good a natural disposition as Noel Branxholm should have at this moment conceived the idea that it would be an excellent plan to have Mary at Oglethorpe when the Digbys were there.

"She's a fine girl, too," considered this youthful Macchiavelli, "and it might bring other people to their senses, to see that some people can——" here Noel went off into a reverie, comparing Althea's manner towards himself with Mary's, and trying to draw some conclusion therefrom. He was roused from this by Mary's questioning him about England, and he had not half finished his account of his adventures, when an elderly woman-servant, attended by Telemachus, came in to prepare the table for the evening meal.

At that meal, Mrs. Fleming gave the conversation a somewhat lugubrious turn, speaking much of the disturbed times, of wars and rumours of wars, and especially of the violence of the heathen, of which latter danger she spoke as though the Branxholms were about to face another King Philip's War. For all which had happened, or was about to happen, the good lady doubted not that Antinomian heresies were mainly to blame. In fact, her opinion of the "ill-egg of toleration" might have satisfied Dr. Cotton Mather himself. Her husband (who was shrewdly suspected of laxity) confined his own speech to a few disjointed remarks of a political tendency. "There'll be trouble, Noel, my lad," he said more than once. "After last night, something'll have to be done o' both sides. Well, we shall see, we shall see! Jasper here was very cast-down a while ago, with thinking how things might turn out; and now I feel kind o' downcast myself. It seems to me as though

what was done last night was a kind of fixing a lightning-rod, same as Benjamin Franklin did ; and now we've just got to bide and see what the lightning'll do."

These remarks, which were not delivered consecutively, as here reported, but at various times, and without much apparent connection with the general conversation, did not contribute to raise Noel's spirits before his departure. In fact they damped him so much—although Jasper reminded him that Dr. Franklin had survived his daring experiment—that he began to take some comfort from the thought that a brush with the Seneca or Delaware Indians would, after all, be exciting, and might afford immediate opportunities of distinction. Colonel Washington was but nineteen when he was adjutant-general. To be sure, such another emergency was not likely to arise. The conquest of Canada had pretty well silenced the French ; and, except for a sudden raid, the Indians could be easily disposed of by men that knew how to fight them.

Noel's dreams that night were of leading an expedition through the wilderness, in which past and present, Captain Joucaire, Braddock, and Indian Sachems, were mixed up in chaotic confusion with Althea Digby and her brother, Mary and Jasper.

CHAPTER VII.

TRAVELLING COMPANIONS.

Mowbray. There is a thing within my bosom tells me
That no conditions of our peace can stand.

SECOND PART OF KING HENRY IV.

As the outside places were all taken, Noel was obliged to make a fourth inside the stage, which was said, in highly figurative language, to "run" between Boston and Providence. That famous transatlantic word "progress" had not yet been formally promoted from noun to verb, but no other word so fitly describes the action of the respectable vehicle in question. Not even the partiality of its proprietor called it a "Flying Machine," as its sister of New York was fondly named. Run it did not ; to the impatient spirit of Noel Branhholm it scarcely seemed even to walk. It did, however, "progress." It was a high-shouldered, top-heavy concern, almost as sub-

stantial as a house, as was needed for the roads of a hundred years ago. The first emotion of the inexperienced stranger, on getting inside, was surprise, mingled with disappointment, at the smallness of the space which it took so much woodwork to enclose. In revenge for this, there was a prodigious amount of room on the roof—or, if not precisely on the roof, around and about the roof. In fact, the outsiders spread out before and behind in such fashion that, seen through a fog at a distance, the coach and its appendages might have been taken by some benighted Indian, last of the Narragansetts or Pocanokets, for the grandfather of all the bull-flies.

Mr. Fleming and Jasper accompanied Noel to the coach, where he was agreeably surprised to find also Lieutenant Digby, who exchanged a very stiff bow with Jasper. There was a deal of handing up of parcels, throwing up of carpet-bags, and hauling up of portmanteaus; as the outsides climbed up to their perches, the coach lurched and groaned like a ship weighing anchor, and the final start was a surgical operation, so many jerks and tugs were necessary to get the wheels to fairly begin to turn. Once off, however, the four stout horses seemed to pick up their load, and the unwieldy machine lumbered over Boston Neck, and away through the green winter landscape and along the busy street of Roxbury, past the old *George* tavern, and so out into the country again.

Long before this, Noel's attention had been drawn to two of his fellow-passengers; the third, wrapped in a travel-stained camlet cloak, and his hat slouched low over his eyes, was either asleep, or wished to indulge in his own thoughts undisturbed. This person sat next to Noel on the back-seat, and turned away from his companion.

The other two passengers were evidently divines, as was shown by their dress, and also by the cast of their countenances, much as they differed in personal appearance. The elder of the two, a man of sixty or thereabouts, had a placid, somewhat self-satisfied expression; Noel thought he recognised him as the pastor of a church in Boston who used to visit at Mrs. Fleming's house. He was grown stouter, and his hair, which he wore in its natural state, was now of a beautiful silver white, instead of being black as Noel remembered it; but the voice was unchanged—measured and slightly pompous; it had fixed itself indelibly on Noel's memory, and now called up visions of hot afternoons when he had been compelled to sit still on a

foot-stool and listen to the Doctor's well-balanced periods, while Mrs. Fleming gave occasional sighs of acquiescence. The Doctor's face was rather heavy, and his eyes were small; but, in spite of these defects, and a portentous double chin, he had a venerable and scholarly appearance.

His neighbour on the back-seat was at least a score of years younger, and in appearance far less comfortable than the Doctor. His clothes, too, though respectable, looked rather shabby beside the Doctor's fine broadcloth. His features were irregular and strongly marked, one eyebrow was slightly higher than the other, and he had a nervous trick of twitching it. He wore his hair (a sandy brown) long, which, as it was scanty and uncurled, gave him a slovenly appearance, while at the same time it heightened the quaint old-world look of the features. He was a restless man, evidently of a highly nervous temperament, and frequently changed his position—constantly hitching and unhitching an inordinate pair of legs, being, no doubt, much cramped. In so doing, he accidentally kicked the Doctor's most sensitive corn.

"Oh dear! oh dear!" exclaimed the Doctor, freely displaying his anguish. His companion apologising handsomely, a conversation ensued, at first very friendly, until some expression let fall by the younger divine hit another of the Doctor's corns, but this time a spiritual one. Orthodoxy took instant alarm.

"Christian liberty is not Christian license,"—he began, clearing his throat by way of preparing for action.

"Most true," said the other. "But the interference of the civil magistrate in matters of doctrine is an unwarrantable usurpation, whether it be done by a King of England or a Selectman of Boston; and I rejoice to think that we live in times when such persecution as even this province hath seen and committed is impossible."

"Sir!" exclaimed the Doctor, in whose face the blood of pious indignation had been mounting throughout this speech, "*I* on the contrary lament that the days are past, when our godly forefathers could drive away false doctrines, as they drove away Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson."

"Roger Williams was a man in advance of his age," retorted the other, warming in his turn. "He had a clear view of the glorious doctrine of toleration."

"A doctrine, sir, destructive of orthodox religion, and the

fruitful mother of every form of heresy," said the doctor sternly.

"Then, my dear sir, how do you maintain your ground against the Church of Rome?" demanded the younger man, with a mild air of triumph. "You have no *locus standi*—positively none—if you once deny the right of private judgment."

"No *locus standi*, sir!" cried the Doctor—who, by the way, had usurped by far the greater part of the *locus sedendi*. "No *locus standi*! The Church of Rome, sir, sets tradition above Scripture. We take the Scriptures for our sole guide. The Scripture, sir, is our *locus standi*—it is our rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!"

Having hurled this sentence (which formed part of the peroration of one of his finest discourses) bodily at his antagonist, he paused to observe the effect.

"That is the very point," said the younger man quickly. "Good men differ as to the interpretation of Scripture——"

"Sir," said the Doctor severely, ruffling his plumes; "I have observed that when men begin to talk of differing interpretations, they have always gotten an interpretation of their own ready, to clap on some plain word of Scripture. In other words, sir, 'tis ever your heretic who talks most of toleration."

As the Doctor said this, his looks added that he more than suspected that here was a case in point. Then, as his companion did not answer for a moment, he asked pointedly,

"Are you of Providence, sir?"

"I am, sir."

"Ah," observed the Doctor, slowly shaking his head, and crossing his hands on the top of his gold-headed cane, "I might have supposed so."

Being somewhat sharply requested to explain this remark, the Doctor made further reference to Roger Williams and his heresies, and at last, in the heat of controversy, went so far as to call his opponent an Antinomian; to which the other retorted that at any rate he was not a persecutor, and added,—“I confess to holding one heretical opinion—I do not love the Lord Brethren any better than the Lord Bishops.”

After this, war may be said to have been openly declared. The respective representatives of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, taking up arms each for his native Province, hurled

theological and historical stones at each other with a hearty good-will, worthy of those more zealous days so much regretted by the Boston divine. He reviled the first founders of Providence as heady, fantastic, and blasphemous heretics, given to contention, splitters of the Church of God, deniers of lawful authority, and lastly as Anabaptists and Antinomians—adding that he doubted not but the late lamentable betrayal of the land that bore him by Governor Hutchinson was to be regarded as in some sense the outcome of the errors of that unhappy gentlewoman, whose great-grandson he was. To this the other replied with much warmth, that Anne Hutchinson was a woman of whom the world was not worthy; that the tyranny of the Massachusetts theocracy was worse than that of the Star-chamber; that Church Covenants were human inventions; and finally, that there was no Divine Right save the divine right of following the light that is in us, without regard to any priest of any communion whatsoever.

If the words "Antinomian" and "Anabaptist" had visibly ruffled the philosophy of the Providence divine, he of Boston was so incensed at these assertions, and especially at the word "priest," that there is no saying to what extremity the belligerents might not have gone, if the coach had not been by this time crossing the Providence River. A fine winter sunset lighted up the tree-clad hills, and glorified the scene of the town into a warm dusky orange mist.

The third passenger, who had given signs of restlessness for the last hour or so, now suddenly threw off his cloak, pushed his hat to the top of his head, and, stretching himself, thrust his head out of the coach window,—which he had opened without asking permission. Presently he drew in his head, fastened the window, so as to let in a little air, and again stretched himself vigorously. Indeed, all his movements had such a vigour and readiness, that although he had not spoken a single word during a journey of several hours, Noel had for some time felt a greater interest and curiosity with regard to him than he would have believed possible on the day when he was leaving his heart behind him.

The person who had thus impressed Noel was dressed like a substantial merchant, but there was something about him which led Noel to speculate as to his calling, and to incline to think that he might be a sea-captain. He was a stout-built man, and appeared to be extremely muscular. His complexion

was very dark, and somewhat high-coloured, but his eyes were a light gray. His features were good, with an aquiline nose, boldly marked eyebrows, and a lofty but slightly-retreating forehead. As Noel studied his profile, the expression of the well-shaped mouth, with the lower lip projecting a little beyond the upper, was that of a man who is attentively listening, indeed, but who has already made up his mind as to what he himself shall say, and intends to say it, the instant he shall see a favourable opportunity. Noel fancied that the stranger's lip curled with contemptuous amusement, as he listened to the controversy raging opposite him.

When the coach had lumbered down the street of Providence, and drawn up before the door of the posting-tavern, Noel was not sorry to see his reverend fellow-passengers walk off in opposite directions—but not until the Doctor had said with great solemnity,—“Sir, it is on my conscience to bid you most seriously consider whether that light whereof you speak as a man's only guide to heaven be a safe guide, or whether it be not rather—as appears but too probable from the monstrous vagaries into which for the most part they fall who follow it—whether, I say, it be not rather of the nature of those wandering stars spoken of by the Apostle Jude, so that each man hath his own *ignis-fatuus* leading him to destruction. Sir, I wish you a good-day.”

With these words, the Doctor made a bow more in accordance with Christian courtesy than could have been expected from the utterer of so uncivil a speech, and turning on his heel went up the street, like a ship in full sail—his ample person and heavy footsteps making no little impression on a few bystanders, who had lounged up to see the coach come in; while his fellow-traveller, his cloak flapping loosely in the wind, hurried off down town, with long jerking strides.

“Thank Heaven, they're gone!” said the merchant, getting out of the coach. Then having waited till Noel had followed him, he said with a slight bow,—“Do you stay here the night, sir? Have you any objection to our joining tables?”

“None whatever, sir,” answered Noel, who as a very young man was not insensible to the flattery of notice from an elder one.

Not that the stranger was old, however. Being rather heavily built, Noel had taken him at first to be nearly forty, but when they were in the inn parlour, and the merchant had

thrown off his cloak, and was walking up and down the room, the elasticity and vigour of his figure became apparent—he could be but very little over thirty.

“Well, sir, I daresay you and I can find something better to talk about than theological quibbles,” he said; he was pacing vigorously up and down as though he were walking a deck, with a sharp measured stride. “You, I presume, was in Boston on Thursday night? How do you think the matter will end?”

“Who can tell?” answered Noel. “I can see but two possible ends.”

“And they?” The stranger had paused in his march, and put this question in the brusque tone of command.

“One is, the reduction of the Colonies to be mere plantations, as they were at first—places of banishment at the worst, and at the best, of refuge.”

“Ha!” exclaimed the other, drawing in his breath. “I see you understand. And the other end?”

“The only other end—as it seems to me—is, sooner or later—it may be a long time first——”

“Well? what is it?” impatiently interrupted the stranger, his dark face intently waiting Noel’s reply.

“An appeal to arms.”

The stranger brought his hand down on the table, with a force which set the glasses jingling.

“It will come! it must come!” he said, and would have said more, but the host came in at the moment, bringing the dinner, and a couple of jorums of flip, which would, he explained, have been served to the gentlemen before, if the poker had not happened to fall out of the fire, and been allowed to get cold.

The stranger drank off about three parts of the portion offered to him, and asked the host if he had got any Madeira in the house.

“Wa-al, doctor, we aint gotten no Madeiry to speak of, jes’ this minute,” he replied, looking with much curiosity at Noel. “But we’ve gotten some reel good Teneriffe.”

“Very well, bring us some,” said the stranger; and then turning to Noel, added, “Will you carve?”

“Certainly not,” said Noel, smiling.

“Why—what are you laughing at?” asked the other, promptly taking the head of the table, and beginning to sharpen the carving knife.

"I was smiling, sir, to think how much more fit you evidently are to lead, and I to follow," replied Noel. This seemed mightily to amuse the stranger.

"What do you think about it, Ezekiel?" he said, as the host was filling the glasses with the Teneriffe.

Ezekiel grinned.

"Wa-al, doctor, I guess you wa'n't cut out for much less'n *second* fiddle," he said. "Leastways, I b'lieve they think so over to New Haven."

CHAPTER VIII.

" I LACK OPPORTUNITY."

NOEL had ample time to improve his new acquaintance, for he was obliged to stay in Providence over Sunday. Aware of the greater latitudinarianism which was a tradition of Rhode Island, he had hoped to be able to push on ; but the landlord informed him that nothing would go out of the town till Monday. So Noel went dutifully to meeting in the morning.

Every one was talking about the tea-ships, and what the home Government would do. Noel, like most Virginians, had been brought up as an Episcopalian, but to-day he went into the first church he came to, which happened to be the most orthodox in the town. Just as he had sat down in the pew into which a lawyer-like person invited him, he saw the imposing figure of the doctor from Boston, majestically ascending the pulpit stairs.

It was easy to see that there was an uncommon interest in the service—every one was, in fact, eagerly waiting to hear what the preacher would say about public events ; and the doctor did not disappoint this curiosity. He displayed as staunch a zeal in politics as in religion ; and prayed that the enemies of the Colonies might speedily be confounded and brought to nought—at which words a deep hum went round the church.

The doctor took for his text the words, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve ;" and although he did not precisely preach a political discourse, he said so much about the fear of man which causeth a snare, and enlarged so eloquently on the sin of standing aloof in times of national trouble, that it would have been pretty evident which side he himself had espoused,

even if he had not, in his peroration, reminded his hearers that as to them much had been given, so from them would much be required; and, above all, would an account be demanded of them of what they had done with that great inheritance of freedom which their fathers had brought across the seas.

He paused, and looking around the crowded meeting-house, seemed to examine every face there. Then uplifting his right hand with a gesture of unaffected earnestness, he brought it down so heavily that the black tassels which adorned the gray cushion on which the Bible lay open before him, leapt again, as he said solemnly,—"Woe unto us of this generation, if, for a mess of pottage, we sell that birthright!"

As Noel came out, he was joined by his new acquaintance, who had been sitting close to the door.

"I thought I would look in," he observed. "Our friend's politics are better than his theology. I call that a sound uncompromising discourse, and I don't doubt that many hundred others like it will be preached this day in New England."

After dinner, instead of attending afternoon service, they went for a stroll to the high ground on the north of Providence, whence they had a fine view of land and water.

By this time Noel had made inquiries of the landlord, and had learned that his travelling companion was Dr. Benedict Arnold, an apothecary of New Haven. He took an opportunity of asking his companion if this were so. Arnold laughed.

"It is pretty plain you are not of these provinces," said he. "It is our custom to ask every stranger his birth, parentage, education, business, and private and public opinions, before he has had time to order his room at his inn. I heard Ezekiel plying you yesterday, and your answers, so I was saved the trouble of inquiring myself, and thus keeping up our character. However, honest Ezekiel hath been chary of his information, so, as I know all about you, 'tis but fair I should enlighten you a little further as to myself. 'Tis true I have a drug and book store at New Haven, and am, if not precisely an apothecary, at least as much of one as half the apothecaries in these parts. I am also a shipowner, a horse and cattle-dealer, Captain of the Governor's Bodyguard, and, as you may say, a sort of Jack-of-all-trades."

It further appeared that he had made several voyages to the West Indies, had been to Canada, and even to England. As they became more confidential, he told Noel that an ancestor

of his had been more than once elected Governor of the Province.

"Those were times worth living in," he said. "Enemies to fight, wildernesses to penetrate! 'Twas no sinecure to be a Governor in those days! But what opportunities they had, sir! I do not envy them their renown; but, by heaven! I do envy them their opportunities! They say every hour hath its man, but does every man have his hour, think you? Is there not many a man ready and longing for action, but lacking opportunity? They say men will follow if they be well led. I think I could lead, if I had anywhere to lead to. But I lack opportunity!"

A dark flush mantled in his cheeks as he said this. He was not a tall man, but as he drew himself up to his full height, he looked every inch a commander; and obeying an involuntary impulse, Noel exclaimed,—

"Well, sir, opportunity may yet come to some of us of this generation, and if so, and you'll lead, I'll follow!"

"You're a fine well-plucked young fellow, and I thought so the instant I saw you," returned Arnold, holding out his hand. "Who knows? Opportunity *may* come!"

In the New Haven coach next day Dr. Arnold and Mr. Branhholm were the only passengers. Arnold talked a great deal to his young companion, who was more and more impressed by the intellectual grasp which marked all his observations. "We are being united," he said, "by the very means which 'twas hoped would disunite us. 'Tis, I'm told, the fashion in the House of Commons to lay all the blame on the shoulders of New England, and to praise the fidelity of Virginia, New York, and the South. They are mistaken. Virginia, at least, is as staunch at heart as Massachusetts or Connecticut. The fat Quaker-traders of Philadelphia preach peace as yet; but, if I'm not much mistook, they'll show at least as much spirit in this quarrel as in their quarrels with Virginia and Maryland. We only need one outrage to unite us. Pennsylvania will forget her quarrel with Virginia, the Southern States their sorenesses among themselves; New York and New Hampshire will cease wrangling over the grants. And, once united, we *cannot* fail!"

He spoke much of the best points for attack and defence, and of how much might be done by sea. "On this coast we are greatly blessed in harbours," he remarked; "but New

London far excels both Providence and New Haven—our New Haven harbour is ruined by the mud-banks.”

The whole country, he told Noel, was preparing. Volunteers were in training, military stores were being accumulated. “And,” he added with a caustic smile, — “Dr. Peters is diligently writing home accounts of all our doings, under cover of harmless letters on the business of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.”

New Haven was not yet the “City of Elms,” but it was, even a hundred years ago, one of the most beautiful towns of the whole continent. It was a fair sight to see the white houses, with their green and red shutters breaking the monotony, broken yet more by the green of the many gardens, and the elms which were already planted round the central square. The elms were brown and bare, but the cluster of steeples—the steeple of Yale among them—subject to no change of season, rose clear against the winter sky, as the town lay spread out with the hills at its back, and the water and shipping at its feet.

Here Noel took leave of his friend, not without regret. “If the hour comes,” said Arnold at parting, “I shall reckon on you as a volunteer in my company.”

CHAPTER IX.

BIRDS OF ILL OMEN.

BEING extremely anxious to reach Oglethorpe as soon as possible, Noel pushed on from New Haven, and getting into the line of the stages between New York and Philadelphia, his progress was somewhat quicker. But once arrived at Philadelphia, he found that he must shift for himself for the rest of the journey. Very disquieting reports met him there. The whole of the country west of the Blue Ridge was up. A large body of Cherokees, Wyandots, Shawanese, and, indeed, all the Five Nations, had come over the Ohio River, and were wasting the country and murdering the inhabitants as they went.

Noel was lucky enough to hear of a party of five or six “receivers,” as the travelling agents of the Virginian planters were then called. These persons were the commercial travellers of those regions, and often added a little trading on their own

account to the business of their employers. As they always went armed, and knew the country well, Noel was exceedingly glad of the protection their numbers afforded; and as the son of Colonel Branxholm of Oglethorpe he was received into their company without demur.

The party travelled on horseback, accompanied by a couple of wagons, drawn by the gigantic horses of Pennsylvania. In the high mountain gorges between the Alleghanies and the Blue Ridge the winters are very severe, and the snow lies late on into the spring. Even in a somewhat mild winter, a journey through this region was a considerable undertaking, though nothing to the hardships which the fur-traders encountered beyond the Alleghanies, in what is now the State of Ohio.

It was not till Christmas Eve that the travellers reached Oglethorpe. Noel had the first sight of his home as the cavalcade defiled through the forest. The road wound along with many sharp turns, and at one of these, where the trees grew sparse, and the thick underwood had been burned—leaving blackened patches, thinly covered with snow—a tolerably wide prospect became visible. Down in the bottom, the Shenandoah, like a gleaming serpent, slid over its rocky bed. Across the river, the valley rose more gradually, and opened out wider; and on a knoll, about half-way between the river and the spot where the forest began again, stood a long, low white house, with a turret, crowned by a cupola. The valley there was so wide that the sun shone full on the ground all around the house, and the westward windows seemed on fire. A slight mist which rose from the river, somewhat detaching the knoll from the rest of the landscape, gave a singularly romantic appearance to the house. A very moderate exercise of the imagination would have sufficed to see in this white-walled dwelling an Enchanted Palace, behind whose shining windows the Beauty of the Sleeping Wood might lie awaiting the Fairy Prince. So tangled was the low brushwood across the river, so solemn a guard was kept by the evergreen oaks near by, and the sombre pines on the distant topmost ridge, that, familiar as the scene was to Noel, he was almost overpowered by the sight. His heart beat so fast that it seemed as if it would suffocate him. His travelling companions observed his emotion.

"It do look a lonesome place—won'erful lonesome," said one of them. "'Tis a pretty place, too. Maybe it's the dazzle o' the snow, lyin' about here an' there, an' sorter dazillin' yer eyes,

as makes it look so strange-like. Don't you be down-hearted, Mr. Branzholm," he continued, giving voice to Noel's own thought; "ther' ain't nothin' wrong, ther' ain't. Injuns leaves more marks behind 'em."

We can know nothing of the horror of such fears as those to which the receiver alluded—nor of the mad fury, the longing to lead a war of extermination, which shook Noel, as they urged their horses through the swift shallow stream, and up the bank. In times of Indian wars, homesteads such as this, as fair and peaceful as this at sundown, had been a heap of blackened ashes by a little after dawn.

Noel's nerves were so highly wrought that he started as if he had been shot, as a hoarse voice croaked,—“I see you!”

“That's only the one-eyed raven—Febus, don't they call him?” said the receiver who had spoken before. “If half the tales about him be true, you'll have fair warnin', any way.”

A huge black raven was circling in the air above them.

“Yes, that's Polyphemus,” said Noel, whistling to the bird. But Polyphemus contented himself with croaking out,—“I see you!” and, spreading his enormous wings yet wider, flew away towards the house, whence the deep baying of dogs was presently heard.

Noel was recognised and greeted by several negroes, both men and women, long before he reached the house. Some of them had carried the news (or perhaps the party had been seen descending the valley), for as they rode up, Noel saw his father and mother standing in the verandah.

Before he could reach the door, he was fairly besieged by negroes of all ages and both sexes, who crowded round him, kissed his hands and his horse, and exhibited the utmost delight. “Now no more fear ob Injuns,” said one old lady, in a red petticoat and a white night-gown, with a very bright yellow handkerchief twisted round her head. Several dogs rushed up from various directions, and others, probably chained, were heard barking furiously. The enchanted palace was wide awake, and its charmed silence had given place to a hubbub like that of a market-place on market-day.

“Welcome home, Mas'r Noel; you's come in de nec' o' time,” said old Uncle Memnon, whose full name was Agamemnon, but who could never get the “niggers” to give him the other half.

“Welcome home, Mas'r Noel!” said Nebuchadnezzar, the

steward, a particularly coal-black negro, who was more pompous, and more alive to the responsibilities and dignities of his office than the Governor himself—indeed, in his secret heart, Nebuchadnezzar believed that the ordering of affairs at Oglethorpe was a matter of difficulty and importance quite equal to the ordering of the Province of Virginia.

Amidst all this confusion, Noel saw his mother running forward to meet him, and heard her cry,—“My dear boy! oh, my dearest boy!”

She threw her arms round him almost before he had fairly dismounted, and all in a flutter, half weeping, half laughing, drew his head down till she could kiss his lips, while the assembled negroes uttered cries of delight, and the dogs leaped madly round him. Amidst these demonstrations of welcome, Noel was taken into the house between his parents, who alternately embraced him, and asked him a thousand questions—the first being,—“Had he seen any Indians on the road?”

As the mother and son stood together, her hands clasped over his arm, the resemblance between them was very strong. Mrs. Branxholm was tall, and her figure was still as slender as a girl's. Her complexion had been very fine, but was now somewhat sallow by daylight; but she was still a very handsome woman, and her eyes—which could be languid or brilliant according to her mood—were a second (or to speak more correctly, a first) edition of Noel's own.

Mrs. Branxholm was precisely what she seemed at first sight—impulsive, wilful, warm-tempered, and warm-hearted, capable perhaps of some follies, but also of great generosities; like most Virginians, indolent and careless so long as there was no particular call for energy, but possessed of a spirit which could always rise to the height of the occasion.

Her husband, who in his youth had been reputed the handsomest man in Western Virginia, was probably a more striking figure at fifty than he had been at twenty-five. He was not quite so tall as his son, but was perfectly well made, and of great strength and activity. His appearance was made more remarkable by his hair having turned a very fine soft iron-gray, while his eyebrows were still as dark as ever. This contrast—which may be seen in many of the portraits of the powdered gentlemen of the day—gave him an air of aristocratic refinement, borne out by the thin-bridged nose, and the mouth almost too delicate for a man. He wore his own hair tied

in a queue; and when he rode to Williamsburg to attend the session of the Assembly, in his colonel's blue coat and dark-red waistcoat and breeches, he was, in the opinion of his slaves, equal to Lord Dunmore in splendour and dignity.

The sharp fragrance of the burning hickory-logs perfumed the long low room in which the family took their meals, and whose windows commanded a fine view of the valley, the river, and the mountains beyond. Several of the dogs followed their masters into the room, and stretched themselves on the bearskin before the fire, but watching, with their heads laid on their paws.

It was long before the party rose from supper, and longer still before they retired to rest. Even the news from Boston was of secondary interest to the nearer and more awful peril of the Indians. The usual Christmas festivities had been deferred on account of it. Noel had to listen to a long list of tragedies. A Dutch family had been killed last summer, and in October, one of Captain Russell's sons and some whites and negroes; and about the same time, Boone's eldest son was shot, and the whole family nearly cut off at Cumberland Gap. The Cherokees had been vainly summoned to give up the guilty parties. The murdering season had fairly set in, and the great Delaware chiefs, Cornstalk and Captain Pipe, were bent on war.

In vain had the Governor of Virginia written letters exhorting the chiefs to "keep fast hold of the covenant chain," and reminding them that by these outrages they would incur the wrath of the Great King beyond the Big Water. Every day brought more and more alarming rumours, and it was even said that the messengers of peace had been fired on. Men sent out to kill meat for the garrison of Fort Chartres had been set upon and killed, and their scalps were hanging before the wigwams of the Indian towns by the Ohio. As yet the cloud of war seemed to cling to the regions near the confluence of the Ohio and the Great Kenhawa; but who could tell how suddenly it might drift eastward, and burst upon the very heart of Virginia?

Defences were being organised. Every planter laid in a store of ammunition, watch was kept, and a cordon of outposts had been established. Lord Dunmore had spoken of taking the field himself, should things grow much worse. And all the while the other cloud, which hung above the Old Dominion, was growing darker every day—although hitherto the idea of Independence, if it had already dawned in the minds of half a

dozen of the boldest politicians of the popular party, was very far from being the desire of the majority. Redress of grievances, restoration of rights, was the cry to which the people and most of their leaders rallied. A petition to the King—this, they thought, must obtain them justice. But there were already two parties in the House of Burgesses—one resolved to be free, and the other resolved to be loyal.

It was with great grief that Noel learned that his Uncle Rupert had taken his stand with this latter party. Mr. Butler rode over from Fairmead on the third morning after Noel's arrival. He was a somewhat heavy-built man, florid, and naturally rather jovial in expression, but he now had a perplexed and harassed look, which ill accorded with his bluff features.

"There's the devil to pay here, my boy, as I suppose you know," he said to his nephew, as he walked his white mare up the ascent to the house. "It's all the fault of that damned traitor Hutchinson and his friends. They have bid fair to ruin the Colonies, that they might get some big nuts in the scramble. But now he's unmasked, I don't see why there should be so much soreness. Here's even old Ben Franklin says he's much less indignant with ministers, now he knows whose hands pulled the strings in the first instance. What we want is a petition to the King. Once we can persuade His Majesty that we aint rebels, our wrongs will be redressed. Come, you've been in England; say you not so, too?"

"Nay, my dear uncle," replied Noel,—“I fear, on the contrary, that once we persuade the British ministry that we will never rebel, our cause is lost, and we shall but be made a cushion on which needy politicians may fall soft.”

Mr. Butler's ruddy face crimsoned with vexation and disappointment.

"My brother Branhholm told me your travels had made quite an Englishman of you," he said. "But I see how it is—Jasper Fleming has been teaching you out of Sam Adams's horn-book!"

"I form my own opinions, uncle, I assure you," returned Noel, with some dignity. "I need no one to teach me when the interests of my country are threatened, nor my duty when they are."

"Then there'll be open rebellion before long, mark my words, my young wiseacre!" said his uncle testily. "Some fine morn-

ing you'll find yourself in arms against your lawful Sovereign, sir! I've always liked you; I always thought you was a lad of spirit; and I own 'twould vex me more than enough to see your head a button for a gallows-rope, like a common thief."

"Should I ever have the honour to die for my country, sir, I think I can promise you that the manner of my death shall befit a gentleman," retorted Noel, holding the head referred to very high in the air.

It thus came about that by the time they reached the verandah, and Nebuchadnezzar was heard hurrying up "dese niggers" to take the horse, Mr. Butler was in as pretty a towering rage as an uncle could wish to be with a nephew.

"Your young game-cock here has learned to crow betimes, sister," was his greeting to Myra.

Noel, who had remained in the verandah to give his own wrath a moment to cool, was here addressed by Nebuchadnezzar. "When Mas'r Ed'erd tell you 'bout Injun las' night, Mas'r Noel," said that sable worthy, mysteriously; "he not tell de wuss—de wuss is dat de pidjins come las' year, same as come in King Philip's time. Berry bad sign dat," he continued, rolling his eyes and his tongue. "Plenty tronble, Mas'r Noel, plenty trouble—sho' as de sparks fly up'ards. You see!"

"I see you!" croaked a voice just over Noel's head.

"Ha! ha! dat on'y ole Fhebus, Mas'r Noel—he tell you, welcome home," said the major-domo, chuckling. "Ole Fhebus, he give us notis' if Injun comin.' Ole Fhebus, him eye see droo nine-inch wall—he see Injun udder side de Ohio."

Meanwhile, Polyphemus had responded to Noel's invitation, and flapped noisily down from the top of the verandah to the balustrade, where he sat, stretching out his neck for Noel to scratch his glossy poll, evincing his pleasure by a succession of grunt-like croakings.

Polyphemus was recognised by the negroes as the tutelar deity, or presiding Genius of Oglethorpe. He had lived there since the memory of man. According to the traditions of the plantation, Mr. Branhholm's father, who would have been eighty years old, had he been living at the time of this story, remembered him as a full-fledged raven, when he was a boy. Indeed, the youth of Polyphemus stretched back into the vague mistiness of fable. Not a negro on the plantation but firmly believed that he was hatched long before King Philip's

war—now a hoary tradition, a hundred years old. But, though Polyphemus was evidently an old bird, his sable plumes were still as glossy, and his solitary eye was as bright as ever—for, like his Sicilian namesake, he possessed but a single visual orb. The other had been extinguished some fifty years ago by the beak of a game-cock, whom Polyphemus (then a smart young raven of forty or thereabouts) had provoked to single combat.

The tradition went on to say that the game-cock had instantly paid for Polyphemus's eye with his own life. This part of the story was, however, less well authenticated; and Colonel Branxholm himself affirmed that the cock had not only survived the duel many years, but had in his old age defeated and slain that favourite bird of old Mr. Butler's, whose death he had so much taken to heart.

However this may have been, the exasperated fowl no doubt went down to his grave (whenever and however he gave up the ghost) with the consoling thought that, by thus demolishing his right eye, he had spoiled his enemy's beauty, and of course it had suffered to some extent. Two eyes are essential to symmetry, and have a dignity which the solitary orb cannot support. But Polyphemus's remaining eye was so amazingly expressive that those who knew him forgot to miss the other. Polyphemus, however, had evidently neither forgotten nor forgiven its untimely extinction; he vindictively pursued everything in the shape of a cock, and even occasionally harassed an unoffending chicken—who might have remonstrated with the lamb of classic fable,

“Equidem natus non eram.”

In spite of this mishap, very little escaped Polyphemus's notice. In particular, he was believed to be able to spy an Indian at distances indefinitely beyond the limits of the horizon. The Indians themselves had a superstitious awe of him, and believed that a Manitou dwelt in Polyphemus for the protection of Oglethorpe, and many were the stories current on the plantation of timely warnings he had given.

Curiosity is a trait of most of the more intelligent races—it was Polyphemus's ruling passion. Much as he loved talking, he would hold his tongue for hours together, while he lay *perdu* in some dark corner, waiting till he should be left alone, to begin an exhaustive investigation of the premises. Letters interested him deeply. He loved the rustle of the paper, and

having observed that human beings appeared to find something in them, he would examine them closely to discover the secret. He had torn up some valuable papers in a rage at being unable to see anything in them.

But perhaps his favourite occupation was eavesdropping. No matter how retired the spot to which the dwellers at Oglethorpe might repair for a little private conversation, Polyphemus would stealthily follow, and taking up a convenient position near by, be on the alert to cry,—“I see you!” at the most critical moment of the interview. Even Nebuchadnezzar, who had stolen out to conceal a surreptitious hoard of piastres in some remote part of the plantation, had suddenly leapt half his own height in the air, on hearing a harsh but exultant voice croak, “I see you!” and looking up had beheld a sable form perched on the tree above him, and a glittering eye boring his guilty breast through and through, with a point-blank directness only possible to a single-barrelled gaze.

Polyphemus was a remarkably handsome bird, and he seemed to know it. When not engaged in playing the domestic spy, he was usually preening his magnificent blue-black plumes, and spreading them in the sun, in whose rays they glistened with a thousand iridescent gleams. His wings had an immense sweep; and as he struck out like some strong swimmer, across the cloudless blue, above the highest cedar-tops, he might have been the fateful Bird of Odin, going to the last Battle of the Gods—so solemnly did those huge dusky pinions cleave their way through the infinite clearness of the sky.

CHAPTER X.

MOUNTAIN ROADS.

Only the eternal wind makes music there.

WHEN Noel, having recovered his equanimity in the course of this brief interview with the protecting demon of Oglethorpe, stepped in at the French window, he found his father and mother sitting at the table, while his uncle was drawing their attention to certain passages in a letter which he had spread out before them.

“What reasonable objection can you have to laying the

letter before the House?" he was saying, evidently struggling hard to speak dispassionately, and as evidently greatly perturbed. "Sister Myra, you was always a woman of penetration—you, at least, must see that the ruin of the Province will follow, if we continue in the present course. An open rupture is the only possible consequence. If you would not see your husband a rebel, you'll try to bring him round to our view."

"My husband is no more a rebel than you yourself, brother," said Mrs. Branxholm warmly. "And I must say, I think the claims of the country which reared us ought to be stronger than the claims of a King and a ministry three thousand miles off, and not one of whom ever set foot in this country. It may be because I'm but a woman, but I confess that I feel Virginia pull stronger at my heart-strings than the King of England can do, if he was the best king that ever wore a crown."

"Heaven help the Province, then, if the women turn rebels!" cried Mr. Butler in a heat.

"Look you, brother Butler," said his brother-in-law, laying his hand on the letter, "I can put it to you in a very few words. This letter is a good letter enough, but the gist of it is, *we will have our rights restored, if we can persuade the King to restore 'em.* Now the gist of our meaning is, *we will have our rights, though we must force the King to restore 'em.*"

"This is open rebellion. Remember Nicholas Bacon!" exclaimed Butler. "It is high treason!"

"Only if it fails, uncle," said Noel, striking into the conversation.

"Young man, would you take arms against your lawful Sovereign?" demanded Butler sternly.

"The Commons of England did so for less provocation," said Noel undauntedly. "I saw the field of Naseby when I was in England. Better have a Naseby here, than consent to be treated like a conquered and vassal people!"

"Nonsense, boy!" said Colonel Branxholm, who was unprepared to go this length. "You talk like a hot-headed youngster as you are. There'll be no fighting, if we show our teeth betimes. But this letter, brother Butler, has too much submission in it. Once we put our tails between our legs, and down comes the whip. Show you can bite, man, and then no one will care to bite you!" After a great deal of talk, Mr. Butler was obliged to content himself with his brother-in-

law's promise to put the letter in his pocket when he went to Williamsburg, but to use his own discretion as to what he did with it when there.

"I see you!" cried Polyphemus, thrusting in his head for an instant, just as this conclusion had been come to. Then, taking in the situation at one masterly glance, he added, "Don't be a fool!" and went off to pursue his investigations elsewhere. Like that of most oracles, the warning was too ambiguous to be of much avail. Still, every one looked rather disconcerted for a moment, and then Mr. Butler, recovering himself, burst into a hearty laugh. "'Pon my soul," he said, "one would think the old rascal understood what we was saying!"

"So he do, Mas'r Rupert," said Nebuchadnezzar, who now appeared, with a couple of sable myrmidons, bringing in refreshments. "Der ain't nothin' dat rab'n don't understand—'specially mischief—an' he know Injun in de wind jes' dis presen' time, jes's well's we do."

But as yet the mountains were between Oglethorpe and any hostile red man.

In spite of their disagreement on the great question—or, perhaps, in consequence of it—Mr. Butler made a point of his sister and her husband spending the New Year with him at Fairmead.

"This confounded alarm has spoilt our Christmas," he said; "but that's no reason why we should not have a little fun on New Year's Day. It may be the last time—God only knows what the end of all this will be, and, right or wrong, my part is taken."

So a couple of days later the Braxholms set off in state in a low-built, square-bodied gig, like an overgrown sulkey—or rather, like nothing but itself, being fearfully and wonderfully contrived, with a yellow body, a red morocco top, and a window in the side—placed there probably to enable the occupants to reconnoitre the enemy, for the gig was apparently constructed to stand a siege, and was certainly musket-proof, being studded all over with large square-headed brass nails, like those in a travelling trunk. Noel rode by the side of this substantial vehicle, and the rear was brought up by four lusty black servants (in liveries which had been made in London), who carried pistols on their holsters with the spare cloaks.

For part of the way, the road led through a wild and dreary forest region, to which some of the early pioneers had given the name of the *Shadow of Death*. It lay on the slopes of a mountain. Vast spaces of blackened underwood showed that the forest had been fired—perhaps by the same thunder-bolt which had blasted a stately spruce pine. The dead pine rose bleached and skeleton-like among the living trees—which were mostly evergreens—and gave the spot a ghastly horror, as of death in life. The place was gloomy even at mid-day; at night, with the spectre pine standing sentinel, it was a fit spot for a witches' sabbath. At high moon, the light which penetrated these withered glades was a sickly greenish twilight, like the light in an ocean cavern. There was a horrible stillness, broken only by the far-distant note of the cock-of-the-woods, or the creak of the carriage-wheels as they sank deep in the black soil. The day had clouded over, a little fine snow was falling, and a deadly chill struck through the air. Suddenly, a piercing blast, keen as a knife, swept by, and the ghostly forest shrieked and roared, the trees rocked and cracked, the horses plunged and reared, and snorted with terror, and became so unmanageable that two of the outriders had to dismount and lead them. This delay saved the lives of the whole party, for a second and fiercer blast was followed by a wilder uproar, and with a terrific crash, the skeleton pine came rattling to the ground, and lay right across the road, not twenty yards in front of the carriage.

The travellers had no time to realise their almost miraculous escape, for the horses struggled so violently that the carriage was very nearly overturned. Fortunately, the ground was soft, and the wheels had sunk in so deep that it only subsided against a bank, and Mrs. Branxholm took the opportunity of alighting. But the horses had to be taken out, and the carriage dragged over the fallen tree by the gentlemen and their servants, and the afternoon was well advanced before the cavalcade was once more in order of march. As they descended, the scene became less savage, until, shortly after passing some old tobacco-grounds, now run wild again, but where the stumps of many trees proved former cultivation, they saw the Shenandoah, now a broad stream, flowing through pleasant meadows, amidst which, sheltered by a clump of trees, stood a large white house. It was built round three sides of a quadrangle, the open side facing the river. A very large piece

of ground was enclosed on the side which looked towards the mountains—the part of it near the house laid out in terraces, but the rest left pretty much to Nature, except that the paths were kept in good order, and the trees pruned away wherever there was a good point of view.

All this of course could not be seen with bodily eyes from the spurs of the mountains, but Mrs. Branxholm saw it clearly enough with her heart's eyes, as she turned to her husband and said, half laughing, half crying (for the fright had rather upset her nerves): "Noel, I'm sure, has seen no place so beautiful as this, in all his travels."

Even in winter there was no bleakness in the aspect of this landscape, and the lower they descended, the higher the vast background of the mountains rose behind them, and with every additional half mile of distance, took on a mellover richness of colour, while the infinite variety of outline arranged itself into one stupendous whole. At different altitudes, all the trees of the forest grew there, in every shade of green and brown and yellow. Here and there, some bare rocky promontory, with its crown of pines, served as a landmark for the eye, which would otherwise have been bewildered and lost in the ocean of purple boughs and sombre evergreens. Patches of deep-red or brown showed where trees had been fired to make a mountain-pasture. A wild turkey, disturbed in his covert by the tramp of horse-hoofs, was flying towards the higher woods—which seemed more lonely since he sought them for a refuge. And over all, as the clouds passed, and the hours, they brought ever-changing combinations of lights and shadows, so that the whole panorama changed as one watched it, as a face changes—now smiling and gay, now dreamy, now cold and frowning, and sometimes terrible—but for ever new. But all the expressions of this mighty Face of Nature, save the last, filled the heart of the beholder with a sense of infinite consolation and repose.

After storm follows calm. The New Year came in peacefully enough; and before the Branxholms returned home, Noel had begun to look forward to bidding Miss Digby welcome to Oglethorpe, in spite of Indians and everything else.

CHAPTER XI.

SOME PAINFUL PASSAGES IN THE EXPERIENCE OF
LIEUTENANT DIGBY.

Valentino. Hark ye, coxcomb, I can be angry, very angry, d'ye mark me?—THE SOLDIER'S FORTUNE.

WHEN Noel told his brother that Lieutenant Digby had exchanged into the 29th Foot, he had no suspicion of how much tragedy was connected with that exchange. The Digbys were, as has been said, of a good old family—good enough to be collaterally related to the Digby of Gunpowder Plot—and, until a year ago, Frederick Digby had believed himself heir to a fine old hall and a comfortable estate in Staffordshire. He had always known that the estate was encumbered, but as his father had for several years lived very quietly, he believed that it was gradually recovering, when the death of his father revealed a secret which had been kept through a generation. A claimant appeared to dispute the validity of the marriage of Mr. Digby's father, and succeeded in proving his title to the estate. It transpired that Mr. Digby had for some years past been aware of this claim, but had not believed the story until shortly before his death, when he made a discovery which was fatal to his own title. Ill-natured persons whispered that poor Digby had put himself out of the way in despair; but his children always believed that the fatal dose was taken by inadvertence. Mr. Digby was a weak, indolent, easy man, who, having sown a few wild oats in his youth, had settled down into a somewhat pompous country squire. He had never troubled himself overmuch about his children, although he made a merit of allowing his wife's mother (an ancient dame, cut on a long lost pattern, and the only person of whom Mr. Digby stood in awe) to superintend Althea's education after her mother died. As for Fred, he bought him a commission in the Dragoons, and felt that he had done his duty nobly.

Mr. Digby was one of those men, who, without being themselves superior to their fellows in any respect save bodily vigour, hold that women are inferior animals—all very much alike except in looks, and best managed when kept, like dogs, in their proper place. When he had chucked Althea under the chin, and bidden her be a good girl, and she should have a

husband one of these days, he considered that he had shown himself all that a father should be. His wife, whom he had married before she was eighteen, did not share these views. She resented the good-humoured banter of his usual address to women (when not put out, Mr. Digby had a jovial way with him, which gave him much success with village-beauties), even more than the bullying tone he took when his authority was disputed. She even had the presumption to ask her husband what he would have said had she herself made free with Tom Gardener, as he did with pretty Molly the milkmaid. Mr. Digby's reply was profane, but illogical—he had a mind above logic, and could never have been convinced against his will.

It will thus be seen that Mr. Digby was scarcely a man to inspire his children with a passionate affection. After his wife's death (which happened about six years before his own), he at first gave himself up to the unrestrained enjoyments of a bachelor's life—enjoyments which he found so expensive, that his already burdened estate soon refused to support them. His health failing about the same time, he made this an excuse for retrenchment. But people said that he was more broken than could be accounted for by these causes. He rapidly degenerated into a peevish invalid, and became utterly dependent on his daughter, whom he had never much liked in his secret heart. She was, he thought, a stuck-up minx, with her mother's faddles. Fred he had found more to his taste, but too much disposed to dangle at the women's apron-strings.

Some circumstances attending Mr. Digby's death, combined with the discovery of his faulty title, gave colour to the rumour that his death had been voluntary—a belief which Althea secretly shared, although she never admitted it. The fortunate claimant of the estates, a person originally brought up in a much lower station in life than that to which his title raised him, behaved in the matter with a certain coarse good-nature, and had even proposed that Miss Althea should marry him, and thus to some extent "make things comfortable,"—thus he phrased it. But Althea did not accept this well-intended offer, to which her brother would hardly allow her to return a dignified refusal—he wished to reply with a horsewhip, and Althea was very glad to get him safe out of England and the way of temptation. She and her brother had each a very small fortune, left them by their grandmother; but their position in England was sadly changed. It seemed therefore a very happy escape, when

letters from America brought an invitation to the young people to make their home with a widowed cousin, who further informed them of the death of their father's uncle, a very aged man, who had gone out to Virginia some fifty years before, and who had made a Will in their favour. The same ship brought a more formal announcement of this, in the shape of a lawyer's letter. There were, however, certain informalities in the Will, and it was possible that Fred and his sister might after all only inherit as next of kin, along with several cousins.

Lieutenant Digby's loss of fortune had obliged him to sell his commission in the Dragoons, and he was very glad to accept an opportunity of exchanging into a regiment then quartered at Boston. It is a great descent from a horse regiment to a foot, and the sudden collapse of one's fortunes, just at one's entrance into life, is trying to the most philosophic mind. Both Fred and his sister felt bitterly that life had changed, and that England itself had grown strange, when their ancestral home was left to its new and uncongenial lord. But they were young. Fred was sanguine, and Althea had a high spirit, of the temper which rises higher in misfortune. When a new prospect—a new world—opened before them, their courage revived. Life would be easier where their story was less well known. Under other circumstances, a voyage to the Colonies in 1773 might not have appeared a great piece of good fortune, but now it was an escape from scenes and people too closely connected with the past; and it presently began to offer the promise of something more. Like all young soldiers, Fred longed for what he called "a brush," and a brush was every day more and more likely to occur. I grieve to own that he fairly gloated over the thought of shortly enjoying the chance of cutting down Mr. Hancock or Sam Adams; and saw himself, in his mind's eye, called up by the Governor to receive on the steps of the Province House a public compliment for his gallant behaviour.

As he had plenty of animal spirits and an excellent digestion, even the exchange from a crack cavalry regiment into the 29th Foot did not materially depress him. True, he would occasionally observe, that it was cursed hard to have no better a beast to ride than John Mein's sorrel, which he had seen advertised at Knox's *London Book Store* in King Street—"N.B. A saddle horse for hire." But he secretly felt it to be harder still, that in spite of his one-and-twenty years, his five feet eleven

and three-quarters, a sea voyage, and misfortunes, his chin was still so smooth, that when he went every morning to have his hair dressed at the barber's who had charge of the heads of the officers of the 29th, the knight of the brass basin never failed to say—as briskly as though it were rather a subject for congratulation.—“No shaving yet, Lieutenant, I think?” and cheerfully set to work with pomade and powder.

Lieutenant Digby usually studied the *Massachusetts Gazette* for the benefit of the interior of his skull, while the barber was cultivating the exterior. He would devote his first attention to the advertisements, both as affording the easiest reading, and also because he was always on the look-out for a better horse. However the lawyers might decide about Uncle Joe's will, he was sure to come in for enough to keep a tolerable hack, and the sorrel would, he felt, be intolerable much longer; his only recommendations were that he was always to be had (for no one else could endure his paces), and that he was to be had cheap. “But he's dear at any money,” thought Fred, shifting uneasily under the barber's hands. “I'm as stiff as a poker before I've rode him ten miles.”

The Lieutenant was not perfectly ingenuous with himself in these mental complaints of the sorrel. But in the simplest of us there is an odd duality—sometimes, indeed, a plurality. As Mrs. Malaprop admirably puts it, we are all three gentlemen in one. Fred Digby would have put up with the sorrel's paces for some time longer, if he had not seen a smile cross Miss Fleming's face the last time she saw him on that Rosinante. The idea of appearing as a figure of fun in Miss Fleming's eyes was distraction; the Lieutenant's mind refused to entertain it, and took refuge in the less shocking thought that his brother-officers could not possibly admire the sorrel, although good-nature had led them to speak leniently of his defects. But in the deepest recesses of his soul he knew that Miss Fleming had smiled. That Jasper Fleming, who was with her, had smiled also was beyond a doubt,—Digby cordially hated him for it,—but the sharpness of the sting lay in Miss Fleming's smile.

There was an amazing variety in the advertisements in the *Gazette*. Snake and jack watch-chains; canes and rattans; patent ass-skin for pocket-books; cake-blackening, and Daffy's elixir; lady's Josephs and riding-habits; dimothy, callimancoes, mantua silks, satins, taffeties, pompadores, and flowered gauzes;

blue, pink, and white alamodes and persians ; figured pelongs, English damasks, striped and brocaded lutestrings ; camblets striped and plain ; bombazeens, buckrams and duffles ; thread mitts and kid gloves ; women's callimancoe shoes (36s. old Tenour, or 4s. 11d. lawful money the pair) ; aniseed and snake-root waters ; mixed, claret, and snuff-coloured broad-cloths ; spruce, Philadelphia, and Baltimore beer ; Fyal wines ; Connecticut beef (to be procured, with excellent cider, at No. 9 South Side, Town Dock) ; "very neat instruments for drawing teeth ;" mathematical instruments (to be had at the sign of *Admiral Vernon*, opposite the *Golden Ball*) ; some theological works ; and a "hearty male negro child of a good breed" (to be given away, inquire of the *Printer*). Such were a few of the items over which the Lieutenant idly "cast his eye"—to quote the invariable phrase used by the barber in handing the *Gazette* to his beardless customer. He also read with languid interest that Isaac Greenwood (in Fore Street, next door to Dr. Clark's) had a number of "umbrilloes" (made, not imported) for sale ; and that Peter Curtis taught dancing "in a most polite manner," in Queen Street, having acquired the art in Paris. There was also a grief-renewing notice to the effect, that "knives, scissors, razors, and all sorts of steel things," were to be had of Sam Franklin at the *Crown and Razor*, South End ; and a "healthy negro woman, about forty years of age," was to be "sold or let,"—but no horse.

The Lieutenant had read straight on—not even omitting the "Run away from the subscriber," which was here seldom headed as in Virginian and Carolinian journals, with a rude but spirited cut of the truant negro, stick and bundle in hand. He was yawning over the description of the "lively negro fellow, named Scipio, 5 ft. 7 in. high, and 20 years of age," supposed to have gone off with a "mulatto wench about the same age, named Kate Daniel ;" when his eye suddenly fell on the following :—

"STOLEN FROM THE SUBSCRIBER'S STABLES,

"On Monday night last, a sorrel horse, little under 14 hands high, with a blaze on his face, a very thin fore-top and mane, two saddle-gaulds on each side of his ribs, occasioned by a saddle, switch tail, trots very rough, canters very rough, is dull with the whip ; an exceeding good chair-horse. Very thick and heavy in proportion to his height, has a high rump and a little hollow back. I don't reckon of any brand. I will give a *Generous Reward* to

any person that will take the said horse up, and bring him to the subscriber, or secure him so that the owner may get him again.

JOHN MEIN."

The Lieutenant had groaned more than once during the perusal of this candid description. "Find yourself a little sick, p'raps, now, Lef-tenant?" said the barber; "try a few drops of my stomach-cordial. Zedekiah! That boy's the plague of my life. Zedekiah! fetch the cordial, and a measuring-spoon!"

In vain did the Lieutenant protest that nothing ailed him. "I saw you go as red as your own uniform, and then turn as white as this hair-powder, Lef-tenant Digby," said the barber solemnly—who, as he bled and drew teeth, considered himself a medical authority. "'Tis a spasim, Mr. Digby, consequent on the east winds which always prevail in Boston in the spring of the year."

The barber exaggerated,—perhaps in the interests of his cordial,—but it was true that the ingenuous countenance of Lieutenant Digby had been suffused with a deep blush of shame and vexation as he realised that he himself had been publicly seen on the back of this beast. "I always knew he was a devilish ugly horse," he thought ruefully; "but somehow he looks even worse in pr'nt. I shan't be able to show my face at the Coffee-house. 'Trots very rough'—he trots like a camel—never was on such a beast before, and never want to be again; but for all that, he reads worse than he looks. They used to say he might have been worse when I complained of him, but if they once get hold of this description I shall never hear the last of it. No wonder Miss Fleming smiled!"

These painful reflections were interrupted by the appearance of Zedekiah, a red-headed boy with freckles, and eyes of so pale a blue as to be nearly invisible. Fred would fain have declined the proffered restorative, but the barber had twisted one hand in the wrapper which was tucked round his patient's neck, and thus had him at an advantage almost equal to that possessed by a canine practitioner when about to administer a bolus to an invalid bull-dog. A slender spoon was dexterously thrust into his mouth, and he found himself gulping down something the like whereof he had never tasted before. So highly aromatic and pungent was the concoction, that it brought the tears to his eyes, and produced a scorching sensation, which seemed to extend throughout the whole length of his spine,

"You'll find yourself powerful revived, Mr. Digby; it never fails, my cordial don't," said the complacent barber. "The colour's come back to your cheeks a'ready."

The Lieutenant would have been content to find himself a little less powerfully revived. He was glad to try to forget his excoriated cesophagus by plunging again into the depths of the *Gazette*. Even should the sorrel return once more to his master's crib, Fred inly vowed to mount him never again—no, not though he were the only saddle-horse in Boston for sale or hire. Stay—what is this? "To be sold by the Executors of Capt. Hopestill Foster, late of Boston, gent. deceased, an extraordinary good Negro Fellow, about 21 years of age, four pair of Bedscrews, one pair of Handscrews, a *Horse* and Chaise, a Horsecart, about 12,000 of good dry Boards, a large Scale Beam that will weigh a Tun on end, and about ten hundred of weights."

"It's true he's only a chaise-horse," thought the Lieutenant; "but he can't be worse than the sorrel, and, at any rate, they don't describe him. I'd sooner lose five guineas nor have my brother officers see that confounded description." He was for once thankful to turn to that portion of the *Gazette* which was devoted to political and town news—a part which he usually omitted, as monstrous dull reading.

But this time there was very little here, the chief item being the notice issued by the new fire-wards (among whom Fred saw with infinite disgust the names of John Hancock and Samuel Adams) begging the shopkeepers to be careful in extinguishing the pots of coals with which they warmed their shops. He read with more satisfaction an eloquent denunciation of the "selectmen, justices of the peace, and the rest of the rebellious herd of calves, asses, knaves, and fools, which compose The Faction."

As the weeks went on, and the news of the destruction of the tea must soon reach England, the commonest events acquired importance, and even the most thoughtless paid some attention to the signs of the times, and watched the political weather. What will they say in England? What will they do? What shall we all do next? These were become vital questions—no one could tell how vital. Even Fred, the least reflective of men, found himself looking at the people who thronged the streets, and wondering what might be their opinions of King George the Third and Lord North. Fleet Street itself was scarce more

thronged than King Street—merchants, ladies, soldiers, sailors, market-men and women, grave divines of Boston, and sometimes a shaven priest from Maryland, men crying lobsters, workmen carrying the tools of their trades, horses, oxen, private coaches and hackneys, chaises and sulkeys—as he watched all this perpetual motion, Fred would idly wonder to see how very tolerable an imitation they had got here of an English city.

It was, perhaps, his friendship for Noel Branhholm which a little depressed Fred's spirits whenever he heard the oft-repeated words, "When the despatches come from home." The mess was daily seasoned with conjectures as to the particular form in which the inevitable Nemesis would disembark—and the conjectures all agreed in this, that that shape would be terrible to the evil-doers, but a praise and joy to them that did well. The young officers in particular could scarcely restrain their impatience, and counted the days until the messenger of wrath should arrive. Fred joined in these joyful anticipations, but was occasionally conscious of a quahn when he happened to see Miss Fleming.

He met her on the Mall now and then, and each time he said to himself that it was a horrid shame that because of all these confounded affairs, Mrs. Maverick and his sister could not be intimate with the Flemings. Mary would have been a nice friend for Ally. Then there was young Branhholm; Ally and he might have made a capital match, if Branhholm had not been such an ass. It was downright disgusting to think of a fine young fellow throwing himself away—and a fine young woman with nobody better to beau her about than that lantern-jawed Yankee. "I should like a fling at that fellow," thinks Fred, giving the air a vicious cut with his rattan; "but he's only a civilian—a merchant or shopkeeper, or shipbuilder or something,—and I suppose I shall never have a chance."

The Lieutenant suppressed a sigh and a yawn, and turned into King Street. It was a Saturday evening at the beginning of March. A crowd of people were gathered round Mrs. Chapman's window, which displayed a painted transparency. It represented a pedestal, with several names written upon it; upon the pedestal was placed the bust of a young boy, and in the background there appeared a white figure with a bloody stain on its breast.

A young man in the dress of a Quaker, whom Fred had often seen in Knox's book-store, and knew to be named Nat

Greene, was talking in a low voice to a group in the middle of the street. "What does it all mean?" asked Fred of a sergeant who stood at the edge of the crowd, and who had a most portentous squint, and a complexion all the colours of the rainbow. "'Tis the nanniversary of the 5th o' March, sir," replied the sergeant, saluting. "That there's the bust o' young Snyder on the monument, and those names is the names o' them as was killed when the riot was, and that's the ghost o' Snyder at the back. And if I may make so bold, sir, I think 'tis a pity as there ain't a few more on 'em on monuments in the same way."

The sergeant took the precaution to utter this loyal sentiment in a low voice; but one or two of the bystanders turned sharply, and there was a moment during which Fred enjoyed a vision of himself and the sergeant with the variegated countenance standing shoulder to shoulder, back to the wall, and bidding the rebels come on and do their worst. But a person in a red cloak and white wig, who suddenly appeared, said a few words, inaudible to Fred, and the one or two quarrelsome-disposed bystanders went off quietly, muttering something about "lobsters" and "bloody-backs."

"I thought they meant mischief," observed Fred, preparing to depart.

"That's what they do *mean*, sir, but they dursn't do it," replied the sergeant, and, with a respectful salute, he too went on his way.

The bells were tolling—as they had done at noon. Fred felt hipped, and was glad to look in at the British Coffee-House, where he was to meet a man about a horse. The sorrel had never returned, and Captain Foster's chaise-horse had proved to be broken-winded, was sixteen years old, and had never had a saddle on.

As Fred turned a corner, he came plump on Miss Mary Fleming, leaning on the arm of her cousin Jasper, to whom she was talking very confidentially, and who was laughing at the moment at something she had said. Fred's hat was off, before he had time to remember that he had determined *not* to bow the next time he might meet the lady in company with her obnoxious relative—who had the insolence to remove his own hat in return.

"Damn the fellow!" thought Fred, stumbling down the step into the Coffee-house out of sheer indignation. "Does he think I meant to notice *him*?"

CHAPTER XII.

THE BOSTON PORT-BILL.

Guildford. Now may Heaven's curse
Lie on their heads that are the cause of this !

LADY JANE GREY.

MR. FLEMING'S prophecy that "something would have to be done" was not long unfulfilled. Almost before the boys had ceased searching Dorchester beach for the tea which the sea cast up there in wind-rows like seaweed, the Boston Port-Bill was passed, and in the second week of May the first news of it was brought by a ship which had sailed from the Downs on the 10th of April.

Two or three days afterwards, on the 15th, and while a town-meeting is sitting to consider what shall be done, the bill itself arrives, along with the new Governor—for Ministers have thought it politic to yield to the clamour about the letters so far as to supersede Governor Hutchinson. The new Governor, Thomas Gage, was with Braddock—poor foolish, pragmatist, but brave and kind-hearted Braddock—on that disastrous day upon the Monongahala, and helped to carry the dying General off the field, but has not learned by his example not to despise his enemy. He, too, is a kind-hearted man, mild and affable, but feeble of will. He lands to the music of the batteries, and is met by the members of both Houses of the Legislature,—the Councillors as resplendent as the rainy day will allow, in white wigs and scarlet cloaks,—and so goes up King Street in solemn procession, his commission borne before him, and Hancock's cadets escorting him to the Province House.

Among the seven companies drawn up in King Street to salute him, are the Boston Grenadiers, with their lieutenant, Knox the bookseller. The new Governor much admires their military appearance, and politely returns their salute—perhaps thinking the while of poor Braddock's last words,—“We shall know better how to deal with them next time.” But this time it is not Indians, but Hancock and Sam Adams and the Faction, with whom he must deal. And so, with the Boston Port-Bill in his pocket, he goes up King Street to the State House, while the heavens lower and the people are cold.

The Boston Port-Bill is, in fact, a bill to kill Boston. On

and after the first day of June next ensuing, the Custom-house is to be closed—as we close up a dead man's eyes. After twelve o'clock at noon that day, no ship may come in, no sail be unfurled, no ferryman convey so much as a passenger or a pound of sugar over to Charlestown, not a lighter may land hay from the islands, nor a boat bring sand from the hills on the mainland, nor a snow take in iron or timber, nor a float land sheep, nor a farmer bring over his produce. "Boston was ; Boston rebelled ; Boston is no more ;" so it shall be written in the annals of the kingdom beyond the Great Water.

But when Greek joins Greek then comes the tug of war. If Lord North, Granville, Sandwich, Townshend, and even the King himself, were obstinately determined never to give in, and to vindicate British prerogative, the Colonies were quite as obstinately determined never to give in either, and to maintain their rights. No Englishman need be ashamed to read the story of how New England wrestled a fall with Old England and overcame. The Colonists were English too—*cælum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt*. By Englishmen, Englishmen were worsted in the fight.

The newspapers of the Faction went into mourning. The Tory newspapers lifted up their voices and crowed long and loud. Papers were mysteriously distributed (as had been begun as long ago as February), warning the popular party to pause ere it was too late, and bidding them remember Wat Tyler.

And so on the 1st of June the doors of the Custom-house are shut to the tolling of the bells of Boston ; and Governor Hutchinson departs, taking with him the hatred of his native country, for a name which once had a fair prospect of an honourable place among the Governors of Massachusetts.

The closing of the Custom-house doors is, like the opening of those of Janus, a declaration of war. Still persistently taking the pettiest view of the question, as a mere traders' quarrel, the British Government reckons on playing one town against another ; Boston's loss is to be Salem's gain.

But the people of Salem, assembled in town-meeting, inform Governor Gage that not only has Nature made Boston a far more convenient port than Salem, but that they abhor the thought of profiting by their neighbour's misfortune. Further, they, with many other towns, appoint a Committee of relief, and generally so comport themselves that the Governor feels that

he has to do with a hydra, whereof, so soon as he cuts off one head, others spring up to defy him. It is true that the friends of Government, with Mr. Harrison Gray among them, present him with an address of regret at the doings of the Mohawks, and offer to help pay for the tea. But the bells of New York have been tolled, and the Bill is being hawked about the streets of that city, printed on mourning paper, and headed,

Barbarous, Cruel, Bloody, and Inhuman Murder.

Worse still, the House of Burgesses of the loyal Province of Virginia has appointed the 1st of June as a solemn fast-day; for which Lord Dunmore instantly sends them about their business.

The Massachusetts Assembly has been removed to Salem—the last Assembly ever to meet under the Charter. They too wish to appoint a fast-day, and do pass a resolution for a general meeting of Committees from the Provinces, and appoint five of the rankest rebels among them to represent themselves. Finally, they vote five hundred pounds of public money to the said Committee, and when the Governor refuses his assent, pass a resolution “recommending” (a euphemism for “enjoin”) the several towns and districts to raise the money themselves.

They are diligently engaged in passing as many resolutions of a like seditious nature as they possibly can before they are dissolved, when the Governor’s secretary knocks at the door. It so happens, however, that the door is locked; indeed, Sam Adams has by way of precaution put the key in his pocket. The audacious Assembly send word by the House-messenger that they have ordered the doors to be kept fast. Whereupon Mr. Secretary makes proclamation on the stairs that this Assembly is dissolved—probably the briefest proclamation ever made, having been drawn up in hot haste, to stop the debate as soon as possible.

Mr. Secretary has scarce had time to shake the dust of Salem off his feet, before the Governor hears that a General Congress is to be held in Philadelphia, which may be called a loyal city. That Philadelphia should ask for a Congress is a bad sign indeed. To this Congress, the Massachusetts deputies set forth in a coach-and-four, with two white servants, well mounted and armed, and four blacks in livery behind, two on foot and two on horseback. Sam Adams has been rigged out by his friends for the occasion, in a fashionably-made coat, an elegant cocked hat, and red cloak, with shoe- and knee-buckles, and

gold-headed cane, all complete ; for if "a guinea never glistened in his eyes," it was not because he had too many of them—his estate having never recovered his father's unlucky connection with the Land Bank.

All this time regiments have been coming into Boston and encamping on the common. Boston fairly bristles with warlike preparations ; and people in England write to warn their friends in America of "more to follow ;" of, for instance, at this present moment, seventy-eight thousand guns gone down to Sheerness ready for shipment. There is a strong guard set at Boston Neck. All this is injury—to which Governor Gage adds insult, by issuing on the 4th of August a Proclamation for the Encouragement of Piety and Virtue, containing a particular warning against hypocrisy.

Meanwhile, the "Sons of Liberty" and the other clubs are actively organising future resistance. The clubs meet in garrets, in rooms behind shops, and pretty often in Liberty Hall, under the spreading boughs of the Liberty Tree, which tree has borne a goodly crop of fruit since the Boot with the Devil peeping out of it was hung there in honour of Lord Bute, these ten years since.

The Sons of Liberty—of whom Paul Revere is one—meet at the *Green Dragon* tavern, where they talk about Oliver Cromwell, and remind each other of the Glorious Revolution—swearing at each meeting to reveal nothing which passes but to Adams, Hancock, Dr. Warren, and Dr. Church. Dr. Church, who, like Warren, is a physician, delivered one of the most eloquent orations on the anniversary of the Boston massacre. He is also a poet, and has written many stirring liberty-songs, and has lifted up his voice in the cause of liberty with a passionate fervour almost surpassing the enthusiasm of Warren himself.

For all this, Paul Revere has never quite made up his mind about the Doctor. He seems a "high son of liberty"—as high as any. But unpleasant circumstances are always happening—undoubtedly, some one from time to time informs the Governor of the club proceedings. A well-meaning friend, warning Paul Revere that the way of rebellion leadeth to the gallows, quotes to him certain words used at the last meeting. There is a traitor ; but who is he ? Revere looks round the table, and his eye always comes back to the face of Dr. Church. Possibly his suspicions are prompted by the knowledge that the Doctor's purse is rather low. It is said, too, that he sometimes parodies his own patriotic songs for the delectation of the Tories.

Be this as it may, there are more than enough sincere and honest rebels for the Governor's peace of mind. Gage is sitting upon a mine, which he is doing his best to spring. The people are arming everywhere. Every ship from England brings news of fresh measures of coercion to be adopted, and exasperation runs higher every day. No juries will serve, and the clerks who issued the warrants to summon the jurymen have abjectly apologised for doing so. The Court-houses are thronged by mobs determined to have no sitting. Mr. Hancock was deprived of his commission as Colonel; whereupon the Governor's Cadets disbanded themselves. It is the time of year for the annual muster of the militia—they have been with the utmost difficulty restrained from marching straight on Boston, and "raising the siege," as they call it. In the town, collisions between the soldiers and the people are of almost daily occurrence.

In September, a rumour spreads over half the Continent that Boston is being bombarded. As winter approaches, the selectmen will not allow the carpenters to work at the barracks. There are constant rumours of the seizure of arms and powder; one such seizure was made at Cambridge, and very nearly brought about a rupture.

All this while the General Assembly, sitting in Carpenter's Hall at Philadelphia, is laying the foundation of a nation. Some of the delegates already perceive the scope of what they do; others still think reconciliation possible; but they all work together, and they are gaining time.

CHAPTER XIII.

LIEUTENANT DIGBY ASKS FOR LEAVE.

BOSTON being, under these circumstances, most consumedly dull, Lieutenant Digby was very well pleased to receive a letter (by the Philadelphia post-rider) from Noel Braxholm, containing a pressing invitation to spend the summer at Oglethorpe. "My mother is writing to Miss Digby," added Noel, "to beg her to honour us by accompanying you; and we may also ask you to do us the favour of allowing my cousin Miss Mary Fleming to travel under your escort, if, as I much fear, my brother cannot get away. Mary nearly always spends her summers with us, and I think will give a good account of us, if

you ask her. Oglethorpe is not so far from your uncle's plantation, as we reckon distance in Virginia, but that you can combine business with what I trust you will not find undeserving the name of pleasure."

Within an hour of receiving this friendly missive, Lieutenant Digby might have been seen diligently employed in mending a pen—an art in which his skill was not conspicuous. However, after sacrificing half-a-dozen goose-quills, he at last succeeded in producing a nib which did not splutter much, and with this he proceeded to indite a respectful request to his Colonel for a six-weeks' furlough, "to go to Virginia on private business."

"I'll say six weeks" he decided, after biting an inch or so off the end of his quill by way of an aid to reflection. "I can ask for an extension afterwards. He couldn't expect private business to take less than six weeks."

Having sanded, folded, sealed, and directed his letter, he left it with his own hands at his Colonel's lodgings, and not till then went to call upon his sister and ascertain her intentions, wondering whether, in case she declined to go—for Fred had a high opinion of his sister's obstinacy—he would be expected to escort Miss Fleming from the outside of the coach, or whether he might with propriety ride inside—always supposing that detestable Yankee fellow did not go too, and spoil everything.

Althea (who had by this time received her own invitation, under cover to Mrs. Maverick) had not the least intention of declining, and appeared surprised when Fred said,—“I shall go; this is a very good opportunity to look up matters in Virginia, and then I can consult Uncle Joe's lawyer in Philadelphia on my way. But, of course, Ally, you aint obliged to go, because I do——”

“Why should I not go?” asked Althea, opening her fine eyes wider in surprise. “Mrs. Branxholm is an old friend of Cousin Maverick's, and I cannot see what excuse I could find for refusing to visit her. Do you see any impropriety in my going?”

“I? bless me! no. I'm sure I can't for the life of me see any,” returned Fred. “I'm sure I never meant——”

“You must have meant something,” persisted Althea, who was annoyed. “I can only suppose you meant to hint that the presence of Mr. Noel Branxholm makes it improper that I should visit his family. I confess——”

"'Pon my soul, Ally, I never meant anything of the kind," protested the luckless Fred, as red as a turkey-cock.

"I am glad you did not, brother," said Althea, with withering calm, "because if we are to be so extraordinary discreet, I wonder you think it proper to visit Oglethorpe while Miss Fleming is there."

"Then she *is* going?" asked Fred, with the slightest possible emphasis on the word "*is*."

"She may not—and probably will not—care to travel under your escort, when she learns that I am declining," said the cruel Althea, relentlessly determined to punish Fred, and now seeing her way to do so effectually.

"But are you not going, Ally? What on earth has made you change your mind? Of course there's no harm—I mean, of course, no one would ever go on a visit anywhere, if they was never to go where there was anybody—and Oglethorpe is like another home to Mary—Miss Fleming, I mean—and why she shouldn't go—or you either, entirely passes my comprehension." As Fred floundered helplessly in the toils of this sentence, Althea watched him with much inward enjoyment. "What an ass I was to say anything!" thought the unhappy Fred. "She'll think now I wanted to prevent *her* going, when all I wanted was to prevent her from wanting to prevent *me* going."

"I am not aware of having changed my mind," remarked Althea, who meant that Fred should pay the uttermost farthing. "'Twas you that raised objections. I have not had time yet to consider. As you say, however, *you* can go. As for Miss Fleming, every one expects 'twill be a match between her and Noel."

Having planted this arrow fairly in the bull's eye, Althea carelessly rose, and observing that she would tell Cousin Maverick Fred was there, left the room with an easy self-possession which completed her brother's discomfiture, leaving that gallant officer a prey to his own self-contempt. "What an ass I was! What a confounded ass!" he thought. "She'd never have thought of refusing, and we might all have fitted in like clockwork. I don't believe Noel cares a pin about Mary Fleming—he's over head and ears in love with Ally. She might do a deal worse. Cousin Maverick says they'll make the Yankees pay for all, and let the rest down easy. I'm sure I don't wish to stand in her way."

Fred had just registered a vow never again, so long as he

lived, to pit his wits against his sister's,—an encounter in which he invariably came off second best, perhaps by reason of her eighteen months' seniority,—when she returned with Mrs. Maverick. Mrs. Maverick took for granted that the invitation would be accepted, and thus opened a dignified retreat to Althea.

"I shall step across and call upon Mrs. Fleming, my dear," said the diplomatic Mrs. Maverick. "Mary is a very charming girl, and there is no objection to your knowing her—in Virginia. But it is perhaps better you should not visit her too often in Boston just at the present crisis of affairs, as her father and cousin are so excessive violent in their opinions, and we ought to mark our disapprobation as much as possible."

Having, as we know, a deeply-rooted antipathy to the person and principles of Mr. Jasper Fleming, the Lieutenant cheerfully acquiesced in this decision.

Noel's letter reached Boston early in June. In it he referred to the Indian troubles as still rumbling in the distance, but as too far away to affect Oglethorpe; but news travelled slowly and uncertainly in those days (though now and then the news of some great calamity would spread with mysterious rapidity), and Noel did not know, when he sent his invitation, that on the 24th of May there had been a shocking affair at a tavern on the banks of the Ohio. A number of Indians had been murdered while drunk—among them a woman—and a fresh impulse was given to outrage. But most of these horrors took place on the far-distant Ohio, and nothing worse than a panic had even yet reached Oglethorpe. But when the party from Boston (of which Jasper Fleming did not form one) arrived at Philadelphia, they found Noel awaiting them with a little troop of those Virginian backwoodsmen, whom their countrymen loved to call "hearts of hickory." In their hunting-shirts and their deer-skin leggings, with hatchet and powder-horn slung over their shoulders, ponch and knife at their sides, and musket in hand, they looked like the sylvan soldiers they were. After the first greetings had been exchanged, Noel explained that news had reached Oglethorpe a few days before, that several members of the family of Logan, the friendly chief of the Cayugas, had been murdered by Captain Cresop. Backwoodsmen were not always careful to make distinctions. The explorers had been robbed; the white men retaliated, and the unoffending family of Logan were the victims. Logan had

sworn to take a terrible revenge ; and although the defences were so well organised that it was extremely improbable any attack would be made so far from the unsettled border-lands, Noel had collected a score or so of his father's troop, and had brought them as an escort across the mountains. They were all mounted on rough serviceable animals, and when they saluted the ladies in military fashion, Althea was reminded of some of the chapters of old romance over which she had pored in her grandmother's library. Nor was Noel in appearance unworthy to be the captain of this gallant little company. "He looks like a young hero riding to the field of honour," she said to Mary, who blushed as red as her own hood at this compliment to her cousin.

"Well, ladies, what say you? Will you brave the perils of the wilderness under our escort, or will you return to Boston until more peaceful times?" asked Noel, when he had explained the situation. Althea looked at Mary. "What do you say, Miss Fleming?" she asked.

"I am not afraid," said Mary. "Noel would not give us our choice if there was any real danger." A speech which was certainly dictated by partiality, for Noel had always had a reputation for being rashness itself—as were all the Branxholms.

"As for me," said Althea, unable to resist giving this home-thrust, but giving it with a smile which disarmed it of its sting, "I may as well go on as go back. If there are Indians in front, there are your Boston friends behind, Mr. Branxholm, who have kept us in daily expectation of smelling powder ever since you left the town."

CHAPTER XIV.

NOBLE SAVAGES.

LIEUTENANT DIGBY begged for a day's delay in Philadelphia, in order to transact some of that business which had brought him so far from home. He was somewhat surprised to find a strong family likeness between Mr. Accepted Ringold, the Philadelphia attorney, and old Jabez Grabley, his father's lawyer. The same love for roundabout words and deeds, and the same professional horror of a straight line, distinguished

them both. Both seemed equally convinced that a straight line is the longest distance between two points, and that your truest course is the zigzag.

So far as lawyer Ringold could be persuaded to express an opinion, however, he appeared to think that the Will would not hold, and that Mr. and Miss Digby must rest their claim on their relationship to the deceased. "But you say his intentions was plain?" asked the Lieutenant, when his mind had opened to receive this idea. "The testator evidently intended you to have the Newbury estate," admitted Mr. Ringold. "But ain't that enough?" urged Fred. "What can you want more than to know what a man means?"

Mr. Ringold inserted his thumbs in his waiscoat armholes (he had laid aside his coffee-coloured coat for greater coolness), and smiled compassionately. "From a soldier's point of view, nothing, my dear sir," he said blandly—"but we require much more in law. However, it is a very pretty case—a very pretty case, indeed—and I fancy the other side would have a good deal of difficulty in proving their point. You see, my dear sir, there are two sides, if not more, to every question——"

"But you say my uncle's intentions are plain," persisted Fred.

Mr. Ringold leaned back farther in his chair, inclined his head to one side, and viewed Fred with a smile of compassionate amusement. "I have very little doubt that so it appears to the military mind, sir," he observed at length; "but if we slapped things right off like that in law, there's no telling what the consequences would be. Military men are members of a profession which is—I'm sure you'll pardon the observation—accustomed to take one-sided views of a subject. Niceness of discrimination, and a habit of carefully weighing the pros and cons, is, I rayther reckon, Lieutenant, incompatible with the profession of arms—or nearly so, nearly so."

It was with a sensation of great relief that Fred quitted the office of Mr. Ringold; and he even observed to Noel that he would rather meet an Indian or two than endure another hour of that eminent attorney's society.

As they rode out of the town,—the ladies in a covered wagon which Noel had provided,—Althea saw for the first time an Indian in all his glory. She had seen some half-breeds in Boston—half-civilised hangers-on at the skirts of civilisation, mongrels in habits as well as in blood; but the train which

met Noel's party, just where the wide streets of Philadelphia joined the wider open country, was arrayed in all the pomp of savage display. An Indian of a magnificent bodily presence and a most dignified countenance marched first. The great fan of feathers set out round his head showed him to be a chief. Many rows of wampum beads hung round his neck, and his furs and blanket all bespoke his rank. In his right hand he bore his musket and spear; a shield, whose boss was the head of the war-eagle, hung on his left arm; and his bow and arrows and axe were slung behind his back. His followers, in their gaudily-striped blankets, and fully armed,—they all carried muskets,—came behind in compact order. All their faces were made fierce by war-paint; but Noel explained to his friends that this was a deputation of the Turtle tribe of Delawares, with Captain White Eyes at their head, come to assure the children of their elder brother Miquon—as they called Penn—of their good-will. They had arrived the day before, and had encamped outside the town. Noel, who had seen Captain White Eyes in his boyhood, hailed him. “Good day, brother Captain White Eyes,” he said. “I know you, though you have forgotten me. I am Noel Brant-holm of Oglethorpe, beyond the mountains.”

“The child grows to the man,” said the Indian chief gravely, “but White Eyes does not forget.”

“They say you are come to bring us peace, brother,” said Noel.

“What peace, where there are wolves?” returned the Sachem. “It is peace with us, but the Sachems of the Five Nations are digging up the war-hatchet; and I have been insulted,” he continued, drawing himself up. “The Senecas have said that they have shortened our legs and put petticoats upon us. But am I not full-grown? and are not these the arms of a man?” He raised the musket and the spear as he spoke. “If the Five Nations dig up the hatchet, we will fight for you—we that sprang out of this ground.”

Where they stood, they could see the broad water of the Delaware, with the woods on the other side.

“Farewell, brother,” said Captain White Eyes, preparing to resume his march into the city; “and when you come to your father's wigwam beyond the mountains, tell him to beware of Captain Pipe; he is a Wolf, and his heart is a wolf's heart.”

“Surely this is the noble savage in person!” said Althea, when the Indians had gone on their way.

"The Delawares are mostly friendly," replied Noel; "but Captain Pipe, chief of the Wolf tribe, is a devil incarnate; and he would even join with his enemies of the Five Nations to feed his pride and ambition. But Cornstalk, the Shawnee chief, is the worst; and that tribe is the fiercest of all. They boast they have killed ten times as many Englishmen as any other tribe, and 'tis their chief that stirs up all the others."

"I confess I wonder you seem to make 'em of so much account," observed Lieutenant Digby, whose warlike eye had taken the measure of the red men. "Sure a dozen British soldiers could put a hundred of 'em to the rout in five minutes, with their bows and arrows, and their clumsy old matchlocks? It has ever been a mystery to me how poor General Braddock was so shamefully defeated by them."

"I can tell yer that, Mr. Digby," unceremoniously broke in the oldest man in the troop, a grizzled weather-beaten old fellow, with quick restless eyes. "I was there, an' I'll tell yer eg-zack-erly how it came about. It come about, Mr. Digby, because Gen'ral Braddock thought as how Injuns warn't no account. That there melanchol-ly affair, sir, come about en-tirely along o' the Gen'ral despisin' the enemy, instid o' tryin' to find out how to beat him."

Fred was not ready in conversation, and much as he would have liked to desire the backwoodsman to mind his own business (the only reply which occurred to him in time to be available), there was something about that veteran which he hardly cared to tackle. So he swallowed his wrath, and also his curiosity—for he would have much liked to know what *was* the way to beat Indians, but was too proud to ask a common fellow who had presumed to break in on the conversation of gentlemen. Althea, however (who reserved *her* pride for great occasions), put the question for him.

"Why, Ma'am," said the old backwoodsman, "it lays in a nut-shell. Yer must arl-ways be *ready* for 'em. Never be surprised. Have yer men under arms at least an hour afore daybreak—for they never attack a big force at night, though they'll cut off a small party. Move in close order; no stragglin'. And the Gen'ral's everything; he's a good deal in or'nary warfare, but agin Injuns, a Gen'ral's everything. Numbers is no use whatever to a fool, or a man that don't understand Injuns' way o' fightin'. And then, as the Scriptur' says, 'Watch,' for in such an hour as ye think not the enemy shall spring out o' the very

ground ; an' then where'll yer be, if yer've got to run back a furlong or two to fetch yer arms? Yer must sleep with one ear cocked, an' one eye open, an' yer musket loaded by yer side, if yer want to keep yer scalp on when Injuns is around."

These military instructions (which the veteran evidently intended for the ear of the British officer) derived a fearful interest from the wild and lonely character of the mountain-road up which the cavalcade was toiling as the sun went down. The forests on either side made it already dark enough for night to seem come, and yet light enough for the fancy to conjure up all sorts of gliding shapes behind the trees. Suddenly, they came on a swampy tract, rich in marsh-flowers, but, even in that summer season, singularly autumnal and gloomy. The hills sloped up very gradually, leaving a large space of undulating valley, over which hung a light-gray mist. About the middle of this wide valley, was a high grassy ledge, on which could be seen several rows of mounds. Noel told Miss Digby that these were Indian graves.

CHAPTER XV.

"FRUITFULEST VIRGINIA."

BUT that the wildness and loneliness of the region through which their road lay, disposed the minds of the travellers to believe almost anything that was told them, they might have been inclined to smile at Noel's precautions. The only incidents of the journey were the halts at the few and lonely taverns, where entertainment of the rudest kind was provided for man and beast ; the changes of landscape and climate as they toiled along the mountain defiles ; and a terrific thunderstorm which befell them during the second night—and which nearly swept away the log cabin (called an inn by the necessity of travellers) in which they were sleeping.

Once, at a cross-road, they came on a sorry sight—a gang of slaves being driven home from Maryland, where they had been bought. First came a small cart drawn by a single horse, in which were half-a-dozen naked black children, tumbled all together, and squirming like so many pigs. Three women marched behind the cart, with heads, necks, and breasts bare, and bare-footed. Then three men, chained together with an ox-chain. Last, rode a white man, with pistols in his belt.

"'Tis an ugly sight," said Noel, answering Fred's look of disgust. "You shall see none such at Oglethorpe, I promise you. We seldom sell our slaves, and never this way."

The long June twilight was fading fast when, on the next evening, the cavalcade began the steep descent to the Shenandoah; but the moon had just risen over the eastern ridge, and the valley was full of a dazzling perplexing shimmer, which the ladies thought very beautiful and romantic. But Fred, who had been unusually thoughtful on the journey, and towards its close had ridden beside the old backwoodsman (whose name was Meshach Pike), listening very attentively to all he said, observed to Noel; "'Tis pretty enough, but I should have no fancy for fighting by this glittering deceitful light, which shows you nothing plainly, and yet makes you think you see everything."

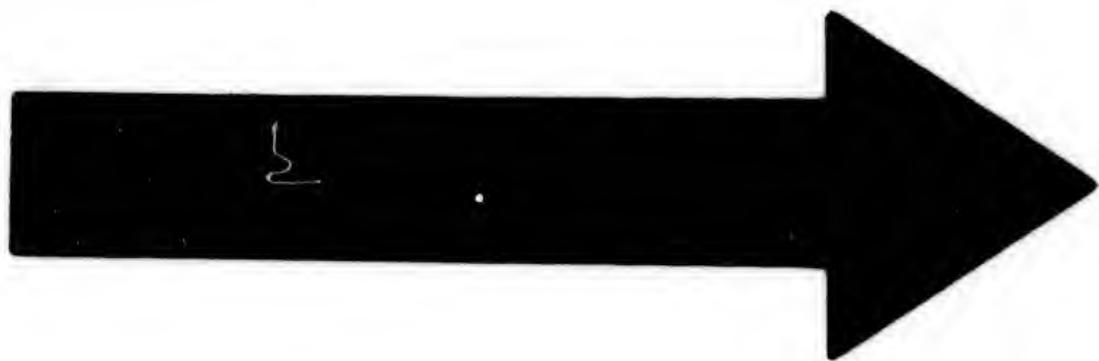
"An hour before dawn is the time they choose," said Noel, "when the watch is tired, and the sleepers are heaviest with sleep."

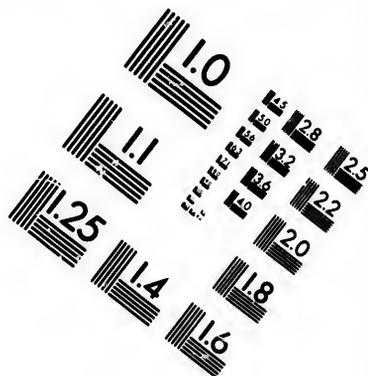
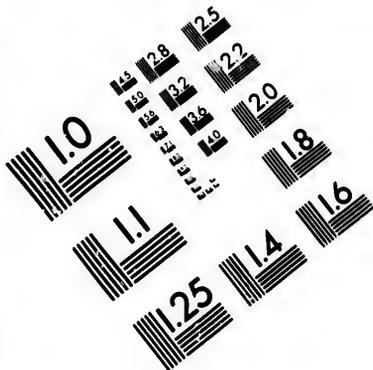
They had given notice of their approach by the winding of horns, and presently a little procession of torches began to move down the opposite valley. Althea was reminded of a scene in *Oroonoko*. The swarthy faces, with teeth and eyes gleaming in the torch-light, the river rippling and dashing in the bottom, the dark trees and the darker clefts of the mountains—all looked unreal, like the confusion of a dream. But the warmth of the reception brought her back to reality—or as near to reality as we ever are in a new and unfamiliar place. One could almost think that memory is the only reality—so unreal does everything seem until it has cast root in memory.

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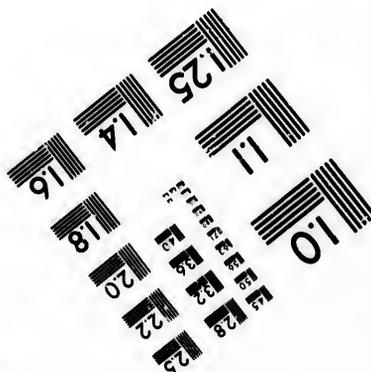
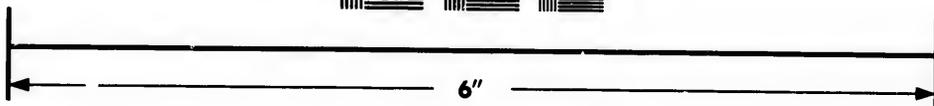
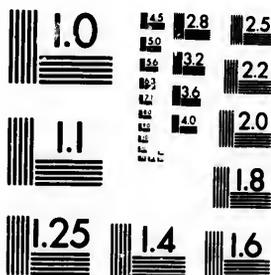
When the guests, lighted hospitably to their rooms by their hosts, had said the last of many good-nights, and the long corridors were still, Althea stole out and knocked at Mary's door. "Let me come in," she said. "I must see some one that I know, to make sure I am here." She came in and sat down at the open window by Mary. The valley was full of a shimmering light, which turned the river to silver. The awful heights of the mountains, made more awful by the inky blackness of the pines, seemed to rise higher as she watched them, until she could almost imagine that they were advancing through the sultry summer night, like some vast moving army. The air was heavy with the sweetness of the flowers.

"It is a dream, Mary," said Althea; "we shall awake in the morning, and find ourselves back in Boston."





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"I think 'tis Boston seems more like a dream to me," said Mary—not without a slight pang; for she fancied that she knew what it was that cast such a glamour over the Virginian landscape for Althea's eyes.

"Oh, Boston is real enough!" said Althea, with a sigh. "I was always in a bad humour in Boston—though I'm sure I can't tell why—but here I will be an angel!"

Noel, however, would scarcely have endorsed this declaration. Miss Digby was, it is true, in a very gracious and equable humour. Mary sadly told herself that every one *must* see how charming she was; but although her open brow and smiling mouth seemed to say, "Thus far shalt thou come," there was a something in her eyes, when they were most kind, which added, "but no farther." At least they added this to Noel. To Mary, Althea was affectionate, even demonstrative. "I wish you was my sister, Mary," she said to-night, as they sat at the window. "I never had a sister, and ever since my mother died, I have wished I had had one. I love you dearly, Mary! I doubt you think I'm proud, but 'tis all put on—I don't mind telling you—to hide the weakness I feel within. Tell me, Mary, do you never feel weak?"

"I do not think I have been much tried yet," said Mary—but there was a pathetic tone in her voice as she said it, and Althea fancied the moon, which just then slipped out of a little fleecy cloud, sparkled too brightly in her eyes. "Life has gone very gently with me," continued Mary. "I have only had such little clouds as that one over against the moon, which will presently vanish away among the stars. But I've imagined some things that might be too hard for me—things which might—— But these are mere foolish fancies," she said, suddenly throwing off the pensive mood into which Althea's question had beguiled her. "All our lives must have some dark hours, and I shall have mine; but we will not spoil to-night with thinking of them before they come."

"You are so happy here, Mary; you are not plagued with thinking you are only here in a dream. But I know why I feel this sadness," Althea sighed; "'tis because this country-house, unlike as it is, yet reminds me of my own old home."

"It must have been enough to break your heart to leave it," said Mary, pressing her friend's hand in sympathy. "I would mine, to think I should see this place no more. I always loved the mountains; 'tis more like a dream to me *not* to see them.

I hope I shall awake and find myself here." She laughed as she said it.

Althea looked at her two or three times, and then looked away to the misty valley. "There was an old book of poetry," she said, "in my dear grandmother's library, that I used to read. It was very long, and I never quite understood the story, but I remember some of the verses. There was one stanza I remember; it has run in my head all day:

It was an hill placed in an open plain,
That round about was bordered with a wood
Of matchless height, that seemed the earth to disdain;
In which all trees of honour stately stood,
And did all winter as in summer bud,
Spreading pavilions for the birds to bower
Which in their lower branches sung aloud;
And in their tops the soaring hawk did tower,
Sitting like king of fowls in majesty and power;
And at the foot thereof a gentle flood,
His silver waves did softly tumble down.

"I think this place is something like it," said Althea. "There was something, too, about 'fruitfulest Virginia,' and how for so many ages this land was blooming, and no man knew of it. Well, we are here now. This is our day, let us make the most of it, for, as I read in the same old book:

So passeth in the passing of a day,
Of mortal life the leaf, the bud, the flower.

"Good-night, Mary; I shall go and dream of 'fruitfulest Virginia.'"

After Althea had gone, Mary sat long at the window, thinking about a great many things, past, present, and to come, but always returning to the thought that every one would say Althea and Noel were made for each other.

CHAPTER XVI.

ARMIES IN THE CLOUDS.

MRS. BRANXHOLM, who dearly loved a little gaiety, had scarcely welcomed her guests, before she began to contrive festivities for them. There must be a ball, and the sooner the better, that Lieutenant Digby and his sister might be introduced to as many of their neighbours as possible.

With this end in view, a mighty commotion set in in the kitchen; Nebuchadnezzar's own peculiar satellites were to be seen, zealously polishing up every bit of silver or brass which the house contained; and for a couple of days an unsavoury odour, carried by the breeze into the upper windows, proclaimed that a batch of candles was being made in a remote outhouse.

At last the day arrived. The house was swept and garished, and the new-made candles placed all ready for lighting on every available ledge and shelf of the two large rooms in which the dancing was to take place. A couple of wandering fiddlers, who had happened to pass by a week ago, had been detained for the occasion, and the supper was to be served in one of the kitchens, which a skilful arrangement of screens and curtains had turned into a capital supper-room.

Many of the guests arrived on horseback—some with their ballroom attire strapped behind them in a valise. Even some of the ladies travelled thus, their hoops arranged behind them, and looking, as they trotted up to the house, like ships with lateen sails. But only the nearest guests came thus—those from greater distances drove for the most part in four-wheeled chaises. The stables were soon nearly as full of four-legged guests as the ballroom was of two-legged, and the whole plantation was alive.

When Althea came down, dressed in an elegant flowered negligee of the palest puce, over a bishop of very moderate dimensions, Mrs. Branxholm congratulated herself on having left off her own hoop. Mrs. Branxholm's own gown was a very fine gauze, with gray flowers and orange spots on it, made with a stomacher over an orange satin petticoat, and became her very well. Nor were the gentlemen behindhand in finery. Colonel Branxholm appeared in his uniform of blue and red, and Lieutenant Digby had, after much painful thought, himself decided that a man never looks better than in military dress. But he almost wished that he had put on a certain white silk coat and breeches (which, together with a pale-blue embroidered waistcoat, had produced a considerable effect at Bath only last autumn, and might very well pass muster in Virginia as the latest fashion), when he saw Noel leading out his sister for the first quadrille, while the fiddlers tuned their fiddles.

"He's a confounded handsome fellow," thought Fred, as he made a leg, and asked for the honour of Miss Fleming's hand in the quadrille. Miss Fleming graciously placed her hand in

the broad palm which the Lieutenant extended—and which held her with a grasp unnecessarily firm—and asked him as they took their places if a ball in England was anything like this ?

“The pump-room at Bath is larger,” says the Lieutenant,—thinking that white brocade and a carnation knot at the breast is sure the most becoming thing possible for a woman to wear. “But I have never seen handsomer women than are here to-night.”

The Lieutenant looked so hard at Mary as he said this that she could not help blushing a little ; and to cover her self-consciousness she observed that Miss Digby was certainly the belle of the evening.

“She is an uncommon fine girl—has always been considered so,” said Fred ; “and then she’s got such a spirit ! But there’s other ladies here to-night that I think full as handsome as Ally.”

“How well she and Noel look standing up together !” said Mary presently.

Noel had powdered his hair, and his fine complexion was amazingly set off by it. His white satin waistcoat and breeches, and peach-bloom coat, displayed his figure to great advantage, and the thought occurred to Fred that he would be a formidable rival, and that it was lucky he was so taken up with Ally as to have eyes for no other woman. With the nearest approach to malice of which he was capable, he observed to his partner, watching her face as he spoke, that Noel was more in his element here than his brother would be.

“Jasper is of a graver temper naturally,” rejoined Mary calmly ; “but I have danced with him many a time.”

“The devil you have !” thought the Lieutenant, turning his partner almost savagely, as he saw in imagination Jasper’s arm round the waist he was himself clasping. “I beg your pardon, Miss Fleming—I fancied I felt you slip,” he said, ashamed of his roughness.

Perhaps Althea was not quite as insensible as she professed to be to masculine attractions. At any rate, she talked and laughed with Noel, until he was in the seventh heaven. Then, when she saw that he was on the point of a serious declaration, she suddenly exclaimed that she was tired, and sat down beside Mary. It might have been a mere coincidence—but at that moment the fiddles had struck up *Yankee Doodle*, and Noel fancied that Miss Digby looked annoyed.

The droppings of the candles (which would have been all the firmer if they had not been so lately made) presently drove Mary and Althea from their seat, and Althea proposed that they should step out on the verandah and enjoy the coolness a little.

It was a sultry night. The heavens were obscured by a thin veil of clouds, through which only the very brightest of the stars were dimly visible.

"How oppressive it is!" said Mary; "I can scarce breathe. And what an odd red light there is in the north!"

Althea looked, and saw a curious dusky glow slowly spreading over the highest clouds. It could hardly be caused by a fire on the mountains, for their outlines lay as dark and vague as ever against the sky. While the girls were watching it, Lieutenant Digby came out. By that time, the glow had spread over the entire sky—brightening every moment, until the heavens seemed ablaze. It had been perceived by Mrs. Branhholm—who had cried that a comet was coming—and all the guests were crowding out in front of the house.

The light was now so brilliant, that shapes could be traced in the clouds—moving masses passing from east to west. With a common movement, Althea and Mary drew closer together, and put each an arm round the other's waist.

"What is it?" whispered Mary, awe-stricken. "What are those clouds like horses?"

At this instant Noel came hastily out on to the verandah. "I have been searching for you everywhere!" he began. "Have you seen it? What is it?"

"Hush!" said Althea, pointing to the east. "It is an army marching—I see the artillery!"

As they looked all present saw the semblance of an army marching through the clouds—cavalry, artillery, baggage-wagons—all plainly to be distinguished, while the blaze of that strange splendour spread wider and wider, the shapes grew clearer and clearer, and the shadowy banners waved above the cloudy host.

"There goes a body of dragoons," said Fred, under his breath. "By heaven, I could fancy I make out British uniforms! But what are these troops that come behind?"

For, following close on the heels of the first army, came another, with serried ranks, under a broad banner, on which Mary thought she saw a device like a pine-tree. The two armies seemed to join battle—the ghostly phalanxes swayed to

and fro, while the blood-red light grew more lurid, and the awe-struck spectators fancied they saw the gleam of steel. Then the ranks of the first host broke, and seemed to flee, while the second seemed to pursue. All across the expanse of heaven raged that shadowy conflict, until the last of the pursuing host was lost to sight beyond the western mountains, and there was a sound like a long-drawn sigh as the watchers drew their breath.

"You saw it?" said Noel, laying his hand on Althea's arm. Even in the fading of that mysterious glow he could see that she was as pale as death—but her eyes met his without flinching.

"I saw it," she said. "Thank God, it was but in the clouds!"

At supper, all the talk was of portents and prodigies. Many of the speakers inclined to the belief that the phenomenon they had just witnessed was a warning that a great Indian war was at hand. Noel, who was sitting next Miss Digby, looked at her steadily, and said in a low voice, "Those were no Indians that we saw fighting in the clouds."

He said it with a desperate feeling that it would be cowardly to hold his peace. Althea did not reply; but an involuntary feeling of respect awoke in her. She had told herself many times that he was a pretty, amiable boy; but she was beginning to see that he had some share of his elder brother's temper, and she did not like him the less for it. It was with a very gracious smile that she allowed him to lead her out in the contra-dance which was called for after supper.

CHAPTER XVII.

DAYS IN ARCADIA.

THERE followed three or four weeks of a life so perfect, that Althea said they were not in Virginia but in Arcadia. Once or twice the heavens clouded over, and some lightnings flashed across the valley, while the thunder pealed from peak to peak; but the skirts only of the storms swept over Oglethorpe, and left the landscape more laughing than before. A few rumours, too, came from time to time from beyond the river; but these died away like the storms. An old Indian chief, named Bald

Eagle, paid a visit to Oglethorpe, and sat for some days smoking his pipe in the sun, by the juniper tree, near the slaves' quarter, steadfastly watched by Polyphemus, and less persistently by old Uncle Memnon—who, having once belonged to Lord Baltimore, was a sort of Sir Oracle, to whom even Nebuchadnezzar paid some deference. Uncle Memnon took a vast fancy to Miss Digby—who was, he declared, the very moral picture of a young lady he had waited on when he was in my Lord Baltimore's service. To her he confided his sense of his own superiority to the other niggers. "Dey means well," he would say, leaning on his stick, and shaking his snow-white head at her—he was a little man, and bent by age, and he was obliged to look up at Miss Digby. "Bress you, my dear young lady, dey means well; but dey don' *know*—dey *can't* know. Nebuchadnezzar, now—he tink he mighty fine nigger; I 'scuse him, Miss Digby, 'cos it's *nat'ral*. It all comes o' not seein' de worl': ef I not see de worl', I jes' like Nebuchadnezzar. Sho' you, Miss Digby, I *jes* like him."

Miss Digby gravely replied that she had learned a great deal in Virginia.

"I don' go fer to say as dere aint a deal to larn in Virginny," observed Uncle Memnon; "but dere's some as will go on tinkin' bars an' wolves o' dereselves, when dey hadn't oughtn't to tink mo'n mice an' sparrers."

Uncle Memnon uttered these strictures with entire unconsciousness that he did not by any means think mice and sparrows of himself.

The country seemed so quiet, as the summer went on, that Colonel Braxholm resolved to go to Williamsburg. Those were momentous days for the Virginian House of Representatives—a few votes more or less on either side might determine the attitude of the Province. Oglethorpe was far removed from the unsettled border; and there were several companies of militia under the redoubtable Meshach Pike, Fred's instructor in woodland warfare, and other veterans as tough as he. So, with some misgivings, the Colonel set off early one fine July morning, with a very small escort, being unwilling to take too many men from Oglethorpe. Nebuchadnezzar was grievously disappointed at the poorness of the show. He would have had the whole three companies marshalled in the Old Cane Brake (where the Colonel exercised his men); and was disgusted to see his master ride off with no more attendance than a receiver. "Dey's white, but

dey ain't no 'count," he observed with much contempt to Uncle Memnon. "Can't tink what Mas' Ederd tinkin' of, ridin' off's ef he was ashamed o' bein' seen."

"De Colonel knows as dere's Injuns about," said Uncle Memnon. "An' de Colonel berry well—him mighty well, but you can't expect' him to ride 'bout de country like Lord Baltimore."

When Uncle Memnon got out Lord Baltimore, Nebuchadnezzar generally heard himself called. "Lord Baltimore, he mout be all berry well, I don't say he moutn't," he began; and then—as though a distant sound had at that instant struck on his ear—"Bress me, ef dat ar ain't Mas'r Noel a-callin'—orrhight, Uncle Memnon, I tell you de res' bimeby. Comin', Mas'r Noel, sar!"

With this he hurried off, fondly believing that Uncle Memnon would think he had had a crushing rejoinder ready, had time but allowed. But Uncle Memnon knew better. "Ha! ha!" would that venerable retainer of the late Governor of Maryland chuckle to himself, as he watched the retreating form of Nebuchadnezzar. "Dat nigger tink *I* tink he got suffin' ever so clever for ter say 'f he like—'s if I didn' know he make hisself call a-puppus, cos he got *muffin'* ter say! Dat ar nigger is so fond o' braggin'—can't cure him nohow."

The departure of Colonel Branxholm threw the little party still more together; and as Mr. Butler was also gone to Williamsburg—engaged in an unofficial attempt to persuade the House to a compromise—Oglethorpe was left more dependent on its own resources than usual. But Fred at least did not regret this. The unrestrained intercourse of country life had convinced him more firmly than ever that Mary Fleming was much too good for any Yankee, and especially too good for her cousin Jasper. The Lieutenant's mind was slow, but tenacious. Having once got it well into his head that Mary was uncommonly fond of Jasper, he was incapable of even imagining that Noel might be the favoured object—perhaps Mary as yet hardly knew this herself, but Althea had guessed it long ago. Fred hoped that Althea, who was confoundedly coy with Noel, would come round sooner or later. He did not think he was precisely in love with Mary himself—he was simply actuated by the praiseworthy intention of preventing her from throwing herself away on that long-nosed fellow in Boston. With this view he made himself agreeable, and he found virtue its own

reward—although he wished sometimes that Althea would not stick quite so close to Mary. She did it to avoid a *tête-à-tête* with Noel, but it was hard on Fred never to get a word with Mary alone.

One afternoon, the two girls were sitting at the open window of the dining-room. The day was very hot—too hot, they said, to go out. Noel had promised Fred to go shooting, but he still lingered. The table had been cleared, and the dessert was set on the mahogany, and Mrs. Branhholm was taking a siesta.

Althea (who was not in her usual spirits that day) declared she should soon be asleep too if she did not do something, and getting up, began to examine the queer prints of the Months which adorned the walls. There was January, with muff and tippet, tripping on her wintry way; March, with skirts flying in the wind; July, with a large fan, and ruffled elbows; and August, in a great flapping hat, with a wheat-sheaf in her arms. Underneath August stood an old oak table—round when it was fully open, but now only one flap was up. A curious old desk stood on it, and a leaden inkstand. "My grandmother had just such an inkstand as this," said Althea, taking it up, and examining it very attentively. "I was once sent to bed for upsetting it. In England, old-fashioned things seem natural, but here they make me melancholy. I wish we did not grow old! I wish inkstands that dead and gone people have used did not last so long after their fingers are dust!"

"Would you have all trace of the past vanish away?" asked Noel.

"I?" said Althea. "I hoard every ribbon that was my mother's—I have all sorts of trumpery that once belonged to her—'tis near as good as ever, and she has been dead seven years! I could hate these foolish relics of her for outlasting her, and yet I love them because they were hers."

Both her hearers were surprised. Althea rarely spoke with so much emotion.

"What do you say, Mary? You are more reasonable than I. Do you ever think of death?"

"Not often," answered Mary, after an instant's hesitation. "At least, not in that way. I think perhaps we should not think of it too much, except to love the people that belong to us all the more, because death must part us some day."

"I knew you would say that, Mary," said Althea. "You

are like a clear brook—all your thoughts set the same way; mine run a dozen ways at once, and give me no peace! Did you ever hate anybody, Mary? Did you ever see her angry, Mr. Branhholm?"

"Many times," said Noel, laughing. "And she has even boxed my ears—'twas once when I had torn up Jasper's copy-book in a rage."

"And I suppose, as a philosopher, Jasper could not box your ears himself?" said Miss Digby, rather spitefully.

"Nay," said Noel, "he was furious—he stood over me with the torn leaves in his hand, and cried, 'If I wasn't bigger than you, I'd annihilate you for this!' Then he went out of the room, and Mary came up to me, and said, 'I'm not bigger than you, so I shall punish you!' and dealt me the sharpest box on the ear I ever had in my life."

Every one laughed at this story, and Althea seemed to have recovered her spirits. She returned to her seat by the window, and, somehow or other, the talk turned to love. Noel (who had his private reasons for the opinion) declared he believed that all women were no more capable of loving than of speaking French.

"I hope the one accomplishment is less rare than the other," said Mary gravely.

"He is too young to know anything about it," said Althea, leaning back in her chair, and letting her eyes roam far away from Noel—away, across the valley, to where the road was lost among the leafy beeches and maples.

"We all have our own way of loving," she said presently. "There are as many ways of loving as of doing anything else. When you love, Mary, you will do it in a fashion as generous as your heart. There will be no caprice in your affection. You will be like the summer sunshine, always warm and kind. 'Twould shock you to be suspected or doubted, and you would almost as soon be false as be suspicious yourself. Yet, woe to him who should deceive you—you would be inexorable to falsehood!"

"You paint me too terrible," said Mary, flushing a little. "I am not so unforgiving as you think."

"You would be more merciful to mere weakness than I," returned Althea, allowing her eyes to rest for a moment on Noel, and then looking straight at Mary. "You would, I'm certain, forgive a hundred times easier than I should—weakness,

folly, error—all but falsehood. Your own strength makes you merciful.”

“You have said a great deal of me,” said Mary, laughing, but a little embarrassed. “Pray let us know what is *your* way?”

Althea’s own cheek flushed a little; but she leaned back still more lazily, as she replied, “I am, as I often tell you, a perverse wretch. There’s something in me that’s always getting the better of me. I sometimes wish I was like Fred. Fred’s head is not much to boast of. He believes himself to be prodigiously shrewd, because he hath no understanding of poetry, and always falls asleep in the sermon; but a child could outmanœuvre him. But his heart is all made of fine gold—no, ’tis made of much better—’tis made of human kindness. I am not blind; I know he is thick-headed, but his stupidity is of the sort which some cleverer folks might envy.” She looked full at Noel as she spoke.

At this moment, the voice of the young gentleman in question was heard calling Noel.

“If we are to get two hours’ shooting, we must start at once,” he said, putting his head in at the door. “But perhaps the ladies will come for a stroll instead—we might go along the river——”

Noel, however, did not second this proposal. He had an odd dislike of late to the ladies going much beyond the limits of the plantation. “Why, what danger can there be?” Fred had asked over and over again. “I’ve seen no one worse than poor old Bald Eagle, and his worst fault is, that he is a little too fond of bumbo and sangree.” And Noel always replied, “No danger in the world, or I would not have them here; but they are just as well near home.”

This brief dialogue took place for the twentieth time on the present occasion; and if Althea had been disposed to rebel, Mary’s unhesitating acquiescence made this impossible. But when the gentlemen were gone, she said, somewhat maliciously: “I protest, Mary, you are too docile! You will spoil Noel.”

“This was too serious a matter,” replied Mary. “There is, I think, very little danger in this part of the country; but if there happened to be any hostile Indians near us, the danger would be increased a hundredfold by the presence of women. The men would be hampered—and the Indians would know that, and be all the more ready to attack them.”

“You are a good girl, Mary, and you act exactly as I said

you would," said Althea. She had turned her chair round, so that she could watch the road.

"You described me at such length, 'tis only fair you should say a word or two about yourself," observed Mary. "You turned the subject very neatly, and sang your brother's praises very sisterly just now—I saw your motive!"

"So sisterly, that I thought your cousin was but half pleased."

"Noel is incapable of such littleness!" exclaimed Mary, coming into the window and standing there, looking towards the river. The two figures had just come in sight. Fred turned, and seeing the ladies in the window, waved his hat, and Noel followed his example.

"What is your way of loving, since you know so much about mine?" asked Mary, facing round upon Althea. Althea clasped her hands behind her head, and sat looking the picture of provocation.

"So far as I yet know," she said, with a defiant yet careless smile, "'tis very much the same as my way of hating. I'm convinced that if I ever love, I must begin with hating—none of your mild dislikes, but a good downright detestation. He must offend my pride, my prejudices—everything but my taste. What he must think of me I cannot tell—but I think he must admire and disapprove me. I shall, as I say, begin by hating. Then, by slow and reluctant degrees, I shall be forced to respect him a little—for which I shall take my revenge, by hating him worse than ever. Then I shall hate myself; and at last—at last—I shall—think I ought perhaps to have loved him!"

"He is scarce to be envied, I think," remarked Mary drily.

"Lord bless you, child! long before that time he will have married a beautiful gentle creature who will adore him, and I shall be old and faded." Althea looked triumphantly young and blooming as she said this.

"You look as if you could never be old, and I am sure you will always be beautiful," said Mary. "And I will not believe you are as heartless as you would have me think; 'tis plain, at least, you have meditated on the subject——"

"As for that, I never yet saw the man that was worth so much trouble," said Althea. She paused a moment, then added—" 'Twas a shadow that set me thinking thus—a shadow I saw one dark night at sea. Indeed I half believe 'twas a ghost, for 'twas nothing real."

CHAPTER XVIII.

"KING PHILIP IS COMING!"

THE Arcadian days came to a sudden end, as Arcadian days generally do. That hot blazing afternoon was the last of them.

The first alarm was given by Polyphemus. The three ladies were sitting later on in the afternoon, taking their coffee on the verandah. Suddenly, a dark shadow passed above them, and there was a rattle of claws and wings as the raven alighted on the eave, and croaked out a quick succession of disjointed sentences,—“Look out! Don't be a fool! Make haste!” winding up by a sentence he rarely used,—“King Philip's coming!”

“Good heavens!” exclaimed Mrs. Branhholm, upsetting half her coffee on her white dress in her agitation. “Did you hear that? He never says it unless he has seen Indians!”

“Poor old Bald Eagle, perhaps,” said Mary. “Polyphemus, come here, and have a rusk.”

Polyphemus was much perturbed. He liked rusks, but he had been caught by the glint of a silver tea-spoon, and if he liked rusks, he adored silver spoons. After a little hesitation, he scuffled down to the low balustrade and accepted the rusk.

Suddenly, a distant shot was heard. Polyphemus had begun to remark again that King Philip was coming, when he remembered that his only chance of securing the spoon was by effacing himself, and feigning not to see it—whereupon he applied with redoubled vigour to the rusk. He was rewarded. After stirring her coffee with the object of his desires, Mrs. Branhholm absently laid it on the table instead of in the saucer—remarking as she did so that they ought to return very soon now, for the shot was not far off. Polyphemus noted the action, though he appeared to be exclusively occupied with his rusk; but Virginian housekeepers were not strict about trifles, and the spoon was not missed until Polyphemus was surprised a month after, lost in ecstatic contemplation of his booty, as it lay, with half-a-dozen other abstracted articles, in the hollow of a tree.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Branhholm had left her coffee untasted, and had gone to the end of the verandah, to look out over the

valley, and try to pierce the thickest of the forests with her anxious gaze.

But the sun had long gone down behind Cedar Gap, and the deep orange glow had faded from the sky, and one after another the stars had come out, like calm eyes unclosing, and the cool of evening had succeeded to the thirsty heat of day, before Noel and Fred and the two servants they had taken with them returned. They said they were tired, and they looked pale and weary, and did not talk much at supper. They had shot nothing, though they had been all the way round by the Gap.

They did not tell the ladies that they had gone three or four miles lower down the river, to where a larger stream came to swell the waters of the Shenandoah. On this other stream they saw a canoe with an Indian in it; as it came nearer Noel noticed that the canoe seemed to be drifting with the current, which there ran very swiftly. As it drifted nearer, he recognised Bald Eagle, sitting bolt upright and motionless. The canoe swept rapidly past within thirty yards of where Noel was standing. Fred was just saying,—“How stiff he sits up!” when Noel seized his arm, and exclaimed in a horrified voice,—“Good God! he is dead! He has been scalped!”

The canoe had drifted far down the now united streams before either of the spectators recovered from the shock of this ghastly sight. Fortunately, the servants had fallen behind and so did not see it.

“Who can have done it? Poor old fellow; he was harmless enough!” said Fred. And Noel replied,—“Whoever did it, did it by way of reprisal, and two can play at that game. But it can hardly have been done near here, or we should have heard of it; and he has evidently been dead some days. Well, keep it close or we shall have a panic. I wish my father was not away.”

All precautions against panic were, however, rendered useless next day. It was Sunday, and they all went to church as usual. Oglethorpe was less solitary than it looked. A considerable population inhabited the villages on the borders of the river, and the town of Winchester was distant but a long day's ride.

On this Sunday morning, the ladies packed themselves into the venerable machine which had so narrowly escaped destruction in the Shadow of Death, the gentlemen mounted their

horses (Fred had the happiness to bestride a very spirited roan, who would, he trusted, efface the sorrel from Miss Fleming's memory), Nebuchadnezzar brought up the rear with a dusky cavalcade under his own immediate leadership, and Uncle Memnon was left in command at Oglethorpe. "Hurry up, you black niggers!" cried Nebuchadnezzar with unnecessary zeal, as there was plenty of time. "What de ladies say ef you late to chu'ch?" Being several shades blacker than any of his squadron, Nebuchadnezzar invariably addressed them as "black niggers."

The village was but five miles off, and the church stood at the end of the long straggling street. It was a neat stone building, almost hidden in a grove of oaks. Althea had come to love this little church, where she heard the familiar prayers of the English liturgy, said to an accompaniment of rustling boughs and chirping birds. The Oglethorpe pew was close to a window, which in summer was always open. Althea could see the river through an opening in the trees; and across the river more mountains, where sometimes she could watch the clouds caught like torn fleeces on the branches of the pines.

But to-day there was an unwonted commotion in the broad white village street. Groups of people were standing in the middle of the road. A knot of stolid Germans from the next village were gathered opposite the tavern; while, close by, Meshach Pike was leaning on his musket—occasionally turning round to spit. As soon as he saw the Oglethorpe chariot ploughing the village dust he straightened himself, spat twice in exactly the same spot, adjusted his musket to his shoulder, and stepped briskly to meet that vehicle.

"It's a-gettin' pretty nigh us, Mr. Branhholm," he said, as he came up. "As the people was a-comin' to church this mornin', they saw Jedidiah Vine lyin' dead across his own threshold, an' a Injun a little way off, dead too."

In the history of the Province there were too many such stories of sudden destruction—sometimes befalling whole villages—for any one to hear this news without a thrill of personal fear. Noel hastily glanced round at his own little company.

"Ten of us," he said, "and three women. The road back is pretty open, and it will be broad daylight. Meshach, is all your company here under arms?"

"Wal, Mr. Branhholm, I reckon as they will be by the time parson's done his sarmont," said Meshach slowly. "I s'pose

yer'll go to church now you *are* here? Seems kinder pity like—waste, as ye might say. An', then again, 't 'ud kinder give time to my men to come up. An', ef so be as we was to be attacked, the meet'n'-house is jest 's good a place to defend as e'er another. An', for the matter o' that, the Lord delivered Hadley on the Sabbath-day.”

Having laid this odd medley of considerations before Noel, Meshach fell back on the footpath, adjusted a fresh quid of tobacco in his cheek, and leaning his chin on his musket, resumed his former attitude—eyes and ears alert, like an old watch-dog.

On emergencies, Mrs. Braxholm always threw off her indolent carelessness, and vindicated the fame of her spirited ancestress. On the present occasion, as soon as she heard what had happened, she proposed that the women and children should take refuge on the plantation. As she was speaking, an express rode in from one of the frontier-forts to say that Cornstalk and Red Eagle had taken the war-path. The express, whose clothes were torn and dusty, had been fired at as he rode out of the fort, and had had a narrow escape. He did but stay to snatch a hasty meal and change his worn-out horse for a fresh beast, before he rode on to Winchester.

A brief and strange service was held in the little church. The congregation was far too numerous to be contained inside, and the churchyard was crowded. Sentinels had been posted at every point of approach, and there was a watcher up in the steeple. What the prayers lacked in length they made up in fervour. The parson—a small spare man, pale and feeble in appearance, but whose voice rose so clear through the still air of the summer morning that every word he said reached the listeners outside the church—gave a short exhortation, and was pronouncing the benediction, when a strange rustling sound was heard, and the seared worshippers, looking up, saw the air darkened by a vast flight of birds. “'Tis they darned pidjins,” muttered Meshach Pike to Noel, by whose side he stood. “King Philip's pidjins—they allus come when there's mischief afoot.”

The mysterious ill-omened flock passed over the village, going towards Winchester. Every eye followed them, until the last straggler was lost above the distant forest. For more than a hundred years, these mysterious flights of pigeons had been believed to herald war and calamity, and every face there grew graver and more anxious still as the rushing of their wings died away.

Oglethorpe, though not adapted for a military post, possessed some advantages of position which had more than once made it a place of refuge in Indian outbreaks. Without even waiting for the heat to decline, the wagons were got ready, the most valuable and portable of the household goods brought out and stowed in them, and the horses and oxen harnessed. Meshach shouted himself hoarse in bawling to the drivers to keep as close together as possible—he and his company acting as escort to the convoy. Not a living soul was left in the village. The old, the sick, women with babes at their breast, little children, sat among the household stuff, while the men trudged at the side of the wagons, or drove the cattle, which had been hastily collected from the nearest upland pastures. Althea never again read of the flight of the Israelites without thinking of that five miles' march through the sultry July afternoon, with the clatter of horse-hoofs, the uneasy rolling of the clumsy wagon-wheels, the constant flick of the tails of the fly-tormented cattle, the crying of some infant that refused to be pacified, and the patient-eyed dogs with their tongues hanging out of their mouths, as they panted along through the clouds of dust raised by so many feet and hoofs and wheels.

"You have a high courage, Miss Digby," said Noel to her, when late that night they all found time to take their coffee on the verandah. "You are not used, as we are, to alarms like these; 'tis the more to your credit that you can seem so little disturbed by them."

"Perhaps my hope that they would not attack us was stronger than my fear that they would," replied Althea. "Do not praise me too much, Mr. Branhholm. 'Tis my nature to like to be better than people think me, rather than have them think so unreasonable well of me that I must needs disappoint their expectations."

"You mean, then, that to please you I must do you an injustice?" cried Noel, provoked at having his compliment thus flung back in his face.

"'Twould undoubtedly displease me if you did."

"So that I cannot please you any way?"

Noel and Miss Digby were standing a little apart from the others, and he said this too low to be overheard—so low, indeed, that she too affected not to have heard, and stepping out into the light of the windows began to talk to Mrs. Branhholm about Boston, which was a frequent subject of conversation

between the two, Miss Digby having been so lately there. Althea had said that she did not like Boston; but she never allowed her dislike to appear on these occasions, and even endured with exemplary good-humour the many references to Jasper, which his mother never seemed to suspect might be uninteresting to her listener. "I've such confidence in Jasper," she would say. "Noel is all that a mother's partiality can desire; but, ah! my dear Miss Digby, it is very seldom that one sees an old head on young shoulders."

"And it is very odious when one does see it," thought Miss Digby; but of course she had far too much good-breeding to say so to Jasper's mother.

CHAPTER XIX.

"WOLF! WOLF!"

OGLETHORPE now resembled a town to which the inhabitants of the surrounding country have fled for refuge. Huts were hastily built; the rail-fences were strengthened; and the house itself became a kind of citadel. But the chief reliance was placed on the strict watch which was kept. Several fresh panics took place. A few days after the eventful Sunday, a hunting-party went out from Oglethorpe—for, considerable as were the resources of the plantation, they did not suffice for the needs of the new-comers. The hunters put up a flock of partridges, and four or five guns went off simultaneously. Instantly the alarm spread in the village near by that there was an attack by Indians. The men cut the harnesses of the plough-horses, leapt on their backs without waiting to saddle, and taking up their wives and children, made for Oglethorpe with all speed. Some forded the river, carrying their children on their backs, rather than lose an hour in going round the bend. The ladies, who had a habit in those days of looking out of the upper windows, saw the fugitives coming, and made sure of presently seeing the enemy in hot pursuit. But by the time the foremost reached the outskirts of the plantation, the hindmost had learned that the alarm was false.

Ever since the days of Æsop the cry of "Wolf! wolf!" has produced the same effect of terror at first and recklessness afterwards. Thus it came to pass that the hunting-parties went farther and farther afield, and that Noel, when rebuked by

Meshach Pike for over-rashness, replied that by this time the Shawnees must know the country was up, and must have fallen back. And so one day, Noel and Fred—who borrowed a hunting-suit of his friend for the occasion—with about a score of men, followed the tracks of a herd of deer so far that night overtook them on the side of a mountain overlooking a small lake, out of which ran a little stream. Most of the party thought they recognised it for a tributary of that river which fell into the Shenandoah, near to the spot where Noel had seen the dead body of Bald Eagle drifting in his canoe. This spot was many miles to the east; and if the hunters were correct in their reckoning, they were a good deal farther from Oglethorpe than was prudent, and in the wrong direction too. To mend the matter, there were some very fresh “Indian signs” on the trees a few hundred yards farther on.

A council was held, and it was determined to bivouac for the night, but not to light a fire. A ghastly discovery which was presently made did not tend to raise their spirits. Lieutenant Digby, in stripping the moss from a bank to make a bed, came on what he at first took to be some bits of bleached twigs, but which he saw the next instant were bones—bones of a human hand, with the arm attached. His horrified exclamation brought several others of the party to the spot, and a very few minutes’ search disinterred the whole skeleton. “His head’s on, so he warn’t killed in war, whoever he was,” said one of the men, contemplating these bleached relics of humanity, as they lay pitifully stretched out on their mossy couch—the hands fallen together, as if supplicating burial. In lifting the skeleton, the bones dropped asunder, and the skull rolled to the feet of the Lieutenant, who involuntarily recoiled.

The wild solitude, the gathering twilight, the knowledge that these woods were the lair of wolves, and had very lately been the resort of worse than wolves, and now the discovery of these bones—which must have lain in their forgotten and unhonoured grave for half a century—all this was enough to depress the boldest spirits. Lieutenant Digby found himself mechanically repeating the maxims of Meshach Pike;—“Never be surprised; keep close together; keep your arms handy.”

“But, good heavens!” thought the Lieutenant dolefully; “what’s the good of arms, when they can spring out of the very leaves of the trees? The look of the place is enough to daunt a man. A man must have room to fight in!”

Noel, to whom he communicated his uneasiness, agreed that it was rather ugly; but seemed to think the worst part of it was, that it would be unwise to kindle a fire, and that they had nothing for supper but some salt pork. It was also a serious question whether the wolves might not take advantage of them if they had no fire.

With these agreeable thoughts by way of a composing-draught, Fred lay down on his mossy bed, more than half expecting to be food for worms before the morning. He awoke out of an uneasy sleep, to see that it was clear starlight; and that Noel, wrapped in a cloak, and looking unnaturally tall, was slowly patrolling under the trees. He had dropped off again, when a slight sound roused him, and opening his eyes, he fancied he saw two prick ears and a shadowy flank appear from under the trees. At that instant, Noel turned in his walk, and the ears vanished. Fred felt for his musket—it was safe by his side. He was considering whether he ought to tell Noel he had seen a wolf, when sleep overcame him; indeed, in the morning, Noel was inclined to think the whole thing a dream.

The dawn rose red and misty with exhalations from the lake. One after another, the sleepy hunters sat up and rubbed their eyes. Suddenly, one of them seized his musket and fired, before any one could speak, but not before all eyes, instantly turned in the direction of his aim, saw a deer in a partial clearing of the mist which clung about the broken ground. The deer leapt high in the air, and fell. "You fool!" said Noel, under his breath. "Here have we lain shivering all night, with the wolves sniffing at our toes, for you to blaze away at the first deer you see!"

"Very sorry, Mr. Branhholm," said the culprit sheepishly—he was a mere youth, younger than Noel—"but we ain't got nuthin' for breakfast—an' 'sides, it's kind o' goin' home with yer tail between yer legs, ter hev ter say as you ain't shot a single hoof, nor claw—an' bin out more 'n twenty-four hours."

"Better go back with your tail between your legs, than go back with your scalp hanging on a pole to dry," retorted Noel angrily. "Well, now it's done, it's done," he continued; "so let's make the best of it, and then make tracks for Oglethorpe."

The most sheltered place was selected, and a small fire was made, over which some steaks cut from the deer were broiled, Noel all the time saying they ought to have left him where he

lay. "But we may as well fight on full stomachs," he said to Fred, when, having concealed the most conspicuous traces of their feast, they were at last on their way homeward.

When the lake was left behind, the forest closed in on them so completely that they could only ascertain the direction in which they were going by constantly observing on which side of the tree-trunks the moss grew thickest. The trees did not stand very close together, and the undergrowth was sparse, but they seldom could see more than thirty or forty yards ahead. They pushed on rapidly, and about noon came to a rocky place, where huge boulders overhung the bed of a dry stream. A clump of spruce, pines growing so close together that their boughs could not be distinguished, stood on the very top of this boulder. This was the Devil's Forge, and the party knew that by striking across the spurs of the mountain, they were now but three or four hours from Oglethorpe.

They had gone perhaps five miles (so far as it was possible to reckon distance, where the only landmarks were tree-boles and thorn-bushes), when the forest grew thinner, and they were able to see the crest of a mountain at no very great distance. Two of the party were a few yards in advance, but all were moving cautiously,—as they always did when approaching open ground,—when they heard a shot, and one of the two men in advance dropped, while the other ran back, crying,—“Injuns! Injuns!”

There was a large beech-tree close by—the last large tree before a great open space, sloping presently rather abruptly to the river. There, down on the river's bank, was the Indian camp, and between thirty and forty Indians were scattering behind such covert as the place afforded.

“Back to back round the tree!” shouted Noel. “Don't waste a shot!”

As he spoke, a ball struck the tree, and Noel replied by bringing down the Indian who had fired it. As for Fred, who had never been under fire before, he gave himself up for lost, and already saw his bloody scalp hanging at the belt of one of these savages—who looked horribly like devils—but he resolved to sell his life dearly. “Mark each one down—for God's sake, don't fire wild!” shouted Noel, himself firing a second shot and again bringing down his man.

The next ten minutes were ever after to Fred a confusion of flashing matchlocks, diabolical painted faces, and more dia-

holical war-whoops. But after the first surprise he began to recover his presence of mind, and—remembering how Meshach Pike had said a General was better than numbers—did his best to obey Noel's orders. There is no doubt that fighting is a pleasure which grows upon one. After Fred had had the satisfaction of seeing one sinewy paint-bedaubed redskin tumble head-long, convulsively clutching at the ground as he fell, his spirits somewhat revived. But loading was nervous work, and Fred would gladly have drawn his sword, and run in and laid about him, instead of fumbling with a cartridge when every instant was so precious. But, alas! his sword was at Oglethorpe, ten miles off, and he had nothing but the long hunting-knife which Noel had lent him.

Finding that several of their number had fallen dead, while the white men were comparatively uninjured, the Indians prepared for a rush *en masse*; but Noel was ready for them, and bidding only every alternate man fire, he received them with so well-directed a volley, that they retreated without waiting for the other half of it.

"Will you not charge them?" asked Fred, hastily reloading.

"No, no," said Noel; "better wait for their attack. They'll come on again."

All this time the man who had fallen at the first shot lay where he had rolled, a few yards down the slope. Wondering at the length of time which elapsed before the enemy returned to the charge, Noel saw that half-a-dozen of them had stolen round, and were beginning to drag off the wounded man.

"We must rescue him—he may not be dead!" he exclaimed. "Six of you go!" And instantly Fred, with four or five others, had sprung down the slope. There was a hand-to-hand fight round the body, which might have ended more disastrously than it did, had not the Indians been so eager for the wounded man's scalp that they struggled with each other in the effort to get at him, and two were killed before they could turn to defend themselves.

The remaining Indians, meanwhile, had renewed the attack under the tree, and the air was rent with their yells. Suddenly Fred found himself flung with such violence to the ground that his senses almost forsook him, although he retained a perception of his danger, as well as of a splitting pain in his head and an intolerable weight on his chest—the latter due to a dead Indian who lay above him. Presently, to his unutterable horror, he felt

a hand grasping his hair. He made a frantic effort to move, heard a fresh outburst of shouts and yells, and knew that Noel was standing over him. Then a curious indifference came over him, and then, for some time, he remembered nothing.

CHAPTER XX.

A SISTERLY EMBRACE.

WHEN Fred came out of his swoon, sick and dizzy, but otherwise none the worse, he found himself lying near the river, with Meshach Pike attentively watching him. Fred recognised many faces of Pike's company, and it slowly dawned on him that they had been reinforced. He remarked as much to Meshach, who he now perceived (not without a thrill of horror) had a couple of fresh scalps pinned to the skirts of his hunting-shirt. "Scalp for scalp—there's Scriptur' for that," said Meshach, with a grim twist of his dried-up lips, which was his nearest approach to a smile. "Leastways, 'twas an eye for an eye—but a scalp's as good every bit, an' comes to the same thing in the end. Reckon yer'll do now, Lef-tenant," he continued, after easing his mind by spitting. "'Twas that there ugly tree-root as swamped *you*. Reckon *they* Injuns won't trouble us much more. I tell yer, though, Lef-tenant, you had a pretty nigh squeak for that scalp o' yourn, an' I shan't never forgit comin' on yer, an' seein' Mr. Branxholm a-standin' over yer, layin' about with his gun-stock like mad, an' they yellin' devils prancin' around him."

It appeared that the long absence of the hunting-party was beginning to cause Mrs. Branxholm great anxiety, when the Colonel rode in, having hurried back from Williamsburg on hearing that war had actually broken out. Soon after his arrival, word was brought in by a man who had been out looking for some strayed cattle, that a party of Indians had been seen not far from the Devil's Forge. The Colonel had at once despatched Meshach and half a company of militiamen in that direction, fearing, as actually happened, that the returning hunters might fall in with the enemy. But for this timely succour, the hunting-party might have paid very dearly for their rashness in going so far in such small numbers. As it was, two men were killed, another died of his wounds before they

reached Oglethorpe, and several more were badly hurt, the worst being the man whom Fred had rescued, and who was that same indiscreet youth who shot the deer.

Of course the women received them as heroes; but when the Colonel heard how it had all happened, he swore that Noel was not fit to be a captain, and that mere dare-devil rashness would never make him one. Thus he spoke in public, angry at the unnecessary danger that Noel had run, and at the anguish it had cost his wife; but in private, when he had heard from Fred (who did not let Noel's generalship lose in the telling) how his son had borne himself, he so far relented as to vow that the lad was a gallant young rascal after all.

Noel had certainly no cause to complain of his reception. His mother hung weeping on his neck, Mary embraced him, and the haughty Althea entirely forgot her scornful dignity, and laughed and cried all at once. She ran up to her brother, and flung her arms round him. "Thank Noel, sister, that you see me alive," said Fred, as he returned her embrace. "But for him I was lost."

Althea lifted her tear-stained face from Fred's shoulder and looked at Noel. Then she deliberately went up to him, put her arms round his neck, and kissed him, saying,—“I have two brothers from to-day. Dear brother Noel——” And then she broke down and sobbed on Fred's neck.

It has often been remarked that the fulfilment of our wishes does not necessarily complete our happiness. That Althea should voluntarily bestow a kiss upon him was a piece of good fortune to which Noel had never aspired even in a lover's dreams—the utmost stretch of his imagination having never gone farther than to show him Althea, at some dim distant period, permitting a respectful salute. Yet now that she of her own accord had actually kissed him, he was so far from feeling elated that her kiss lay like lead on his heart. Great emotion sometimes clears the mental vision; Noel knew that it was in very truth a sisterly kiss, and that none but sisterly thoughts were in Althea's heart as she gave it him. She was kind—ever after that day she was kind; but her kindness more effectually discouraged him than all her former banter. It was a more impassable barrier, because it provoked no retaliation. He was almost glad that his time and thoughts were so fully occupied, and that the moments he could spend in her society were so few. He told himself that his youth was against

him ; and he looked forward with hope to the prospect of a real campaign in which he trusted to rub off this youthful bloom. If only no one came in in the meantime ! With some experience of war, and perhaps a scar or two, she could no longer despise him. And so, to the despair of his mother, he insisted on marching with Meshach Pike to join Colonel Andrew Lewis, who was ordered to the Great Kenhawa, there to form a junction with the other contingent, under Lord Dunmore himself. Fred (who had with some difficulty got his leave extended thus far) would fain have gone too, but was persuaded to remain with the small force left as a garrison at Oglethorpe.

The evening of the day on which Noel went—the crimson of the maples showed like fire, and the elms were yellow by that time—Mary and Althea wandered about the garden, long after the frosty autumn dews had fallen. They could hear the negroes singing in their quarters beyond the cane-plantation. Now that a great force was actually in the field, there was far less fear of desultory attack ; and a sense of comparative security had returned. Every now and then a mocking-bird sang from a hemlock-tree near them, but none of these sounds could much disturb the deep sense of stillness which wrapped the whole of the wide valley in rest.

As they slowly paced up and down, Mary said softly,—“ I will lift up mine eyes to the hills.”

Althea looked up the dim slopes of those vast enclosing walls. “ How small we seem ! ” she said. “ I could fancy they were about to fall upon us ; and yet they are like protecting arms too—like the Everlasting Arms.” Then, as through the deep silence they heard Fred’s footsteps coming towards them from the house, she suddenly slipped her arm round Mary’s waist, and whispered in her ear,—“ I have wished to tell you this long while, Mary, ’twas a true sister’s kiss I gave Noel that day, and I shall never give him any other.”

* * * * *

The battle of Point Pleasant (at which Noel distinguished himself), in breaking up the Indian confederacy, left men’s minds free to return to the great political struggle, which every one felt was on the eve of assuming a new aspect. Even the victory itself produced many bitter recriminations. Andrew Lewis was severely blamed for remaining in camp during the action, and it was said the day would have been lost but for Isaac Selby. Lord Dunmore’s strange order to

Lewis to march back at once and join him near the Shawnee towns on the Ohio—an order which luckily arrived the day after the battle—was considered highly suspicious. It was even hinted that the Governor had divided his force, and marched his own men seventy-five miles from those under Colonel Lewis, hoping by the destruction of the latter to weaken the militia of Virginia. Why else, it was asked, had he compelled Lewis (who wanted to fight again) to take the perilous march to Chillicothe?

Instead of the common danger allaying discord, no sooner was peace made with Logan and Cornstalk, than the smouldering fires burst out again fiercer than ever. It was a sign of the temper of the times, that a report that Boston was being bombarded by the British men-of-war was universally believed, and spread consternation through all the provinces.

Very soon after this, and while the negotiations with the Indians were still pending, Lieutenant Digby was ordered to return to his duty without delay. He set out with his sister on a frosty morning in October, availing himself of the opportunity of accompanying a tobacco-caravan which Colonel Braxholm was starting for Philadelphia. Mrs. Braxholm had declared that she could not part with Mary, and had adroitly used the recent alarm about Boston to represent to Mr. and Mrs. Fleming that, now the Indians were broken up, Oglethorpe was a great deal safer than Boston. The Lieutenant was obliged to console himself with the reflection that, at any rate, Mary would be out of that Yankee fellow's way.

CHAPTER XXI.

AN ORATION IN THE OLD SOUTH.

In Freedom we're born, and like sons of the brave,
We'll never surrender,
But swear to defend her,
And scorn to survive, if unable to save.

BOSTON ALMANAC, 1770.

It is the morning of the 6th of March, 1775, and the Old South is crowded to hear Dr. Joseph Warren's oration for the anniversary of Captain Preston's unlucky affair, now five years ago. The Governor and his officials have never heard the

last of this; so sure as the 5th of March comes round, the Whigs rake the whole thing up again—transparencies of the victims are exhibited in Mrs. Chapman's shop in King Street, and inflammatory orations are fired off in the Old South. This year the 5th falls on a Sunday, so they keep the day on Monday. Dr. Warren, who is a young physician, is one of the rebel leaders. He is a singularly amiable man, excessively beloved by all who know him, and has a chivalrous self-devotion befitting the leader of a forlorn hope, in proof of which he has offered to deliver the massacre oration this year—for the second time—although hints have been dropped that to do so may be as much as the orator's life is worth.

A great many of the British officers go to hear this oration—at which it is whispered something may happen. In fact, a young ensign, a friend of Lieutenant Digby, has agreed with some other choice young spirits (of whom Digby himself is one) to throw an egg at Dr. Warren at a suitable point in his discourse, by way of signal. For what may happen afterwards, they can settle with the rebels. There *may* be a riot, and in that riot Hancock, Adams, and Warren *may* be seized—a consummation devoutly to be wished! Behold, then, Ensign Perkins gingerly picking his way through the crowd, with the egg very much on his mind—so much so, indeed, that he does not take sufficient heed to his goings, and being jostled, trips and falls, putting out his knee, and breaking the egg. A broken egg, as we know, is past the help even of the King's horses, but Ensign Perkins is carried off to the hospital to be mended.

Digby does not know of this mishap, having been at the same moment swept into the church by a sudden rush of the crowd. He finds quite a throng of British uniforms in the aisle. In the pulpit (draped in black) are Adams, Hancock, and the Selectmen. It is the motto of that psalm-singing, bacon-curing rogue, Sam Adams (as Fred is in the habit of hearing him called), to "always put your enemy in the wrong." So, guessing that mischief is meant, what does he do but request the occupants of the front pews to vacate them, and politely invite the officers into them—by which means they will be in full view of the whole congregation. One of the first to respond to Adams's request is Jasper Fleming, who can scarce repress a smile at the contending emotions he sees painted on Digby's countenance, as he tries to take his seat with unconcern.

There are so many British officers present that some of them sit on the steps of the pulpit—one or two are even in it. It is a bright sunny day, and the Old South is full of a warm yellow glow.

It is getting late—people look at each other. What if Warren has been assassinated? Suddenly, there is a noise outside, and he appears at a window. It was impossible to penetrate the crowd at the door, so he sent for a ladder, and now comes in at the window behind the pulpit. There is a sudden silence in the great assembly as he begins.

At first he speaks of the early history of the country; the descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers hear him with pale determined faces—growing paler and more set as he goes on to speak of the violations of the Charter, of the deliberately-planned crippling of the Colonies by unjust restrictions, and of the insults of a military occupation.

That impassioned oration was still ringing in the ears of all who heard it, when Joseph Warren found a soldier's grave. As he proceeded—every word a trumpet-call to action—a Captain sitting on the pulpit-stairs held up his open hand with half-a-dozen pistol bullets lying on the palm. But Warren only dropped his handkerchief over them, and went on. Once there was an interruption. The 47th returning from parade passed under the Old South, and Colonel Nesbitt ordered the drums to beat.

Possibly owing to the fiasco of Ensign Perkins and his egg, the intended demonstration fell flat. There was a moment, though, when Digby looked round for Jasper,—not knowing why he did so,—and saw him, one hand laid on a pew-door, and bending slightly forward, watching him as though he read all his thoughts. That moment was when it was moved that an orator be appointed for next year (long before which time another kind of oratory will be the mode). At this a British officer cried, "Fie! fie!" They thought he said "Fire! fire!" and there might have been a riot then and there, but for the town-clerk, who ordered silence with his mallet. "There is no fire here," cried Adams, as soon as he could be heard, "but that of liberty which burns in your bosoms." And so the meeting crowded out, but as Fred was struggling towards the Milk Street door, he felt a hand on his shoulder, and turning, saw Jasper Fleming close behind him.

"You must get something harder than eggs next time, Mr.

Digby," whispered Jasper,—at which Fred was so taken aback that he uttered an inarticulate gasp, and, getting his sword between his legs, all but fell prone on the threshold of the Old South. Indeed, he would have done so, had not Jasper caught him under the arm, and restored him to his balance—a polite attention which still further infuriated the Lieutenant, who mentally vowed that if ever a chance arose of using anything harder, it should not be his fault if Fleming did not come in for some of it. Speechless with rage, he hurried out into the street, where a brother lieutenant presently informed him of what had befallen the unfortunate Perkins.

Fred gave his sister an account of all this (only omitting that inopportune stumble of his own) next time he was off duty. She was rather silent, and did not seem to respond to the sentiment, when Fred observed cheerfully that "of course we should shoot 'em all down at the first brush."

"This nonsense won't last long—they'll all take to their heels, as soon as ever we show our teeth," he continued. "As for Fleming, if I could once get hold of him, I'd soon tackle *him*—he's only a pettifogging lawyer. How the doose did he know about the egg? He pokes his long nose into everything! But I'll be even with him yet! If his brother warn't such a friend of ours, I should be devilishly inclined to demand satisfaction!"

CHAPTER XXII.

A LANTERN IN THE OLD NORTH.

Come, join hand in hand, brave Americans all,
And rouse your bold hearts at fair Liberty's call.

THE LIBERTY SONG.

It had been whispered for a long time that the Governor intended to seize the military stores at Concord and other places by a *coup de main*. Fred Digby's visions of glory grew more and more vivid every day, as every day it was agreed at mess that "something would be done soon." On the 18th of April, two members of the Committee of Safety, returning from a seditious meeting at Wetherby's Tavern, saw some British officers on horseback, outside Charlestown Neck. Suspecting that this meant mischief, they drove back to the tavern and

warned their friends,—especially sending a warning to Hancock and Samuel Adams, whom Governor Gage was known to consider quite as well worth seizing as the powder and shot itself.

On that same Tuesday evening, Lieutenant Digby happened to be crossing the Common with Lord Percy—whom he had known in England, and who was always very civil to him. Percy was returning to quarters from a conference with the Governor, and had just said to Fred that he might tell him in strict secrecy that a blow would be struck before very long, when they observed a group of men standing under some trees. It was a clear evening, with the moon in her last quarter, just rising.

“Let us hear what the fellows have got to say,” says Percy, and joins the group.

“The troops have marched, Mr. Fleming—I had it from one that saw ’em go,” said a man in a frieze jacket at that moment.

“Waal, guess they’ll miss their aim,” said another voice.

“What aim?” asks little Percy, suddenly pushing nearer.

“Why, the cannon at Concord.”

Lord Percy grips Fred’s arm hard at this, and pulls him out of the crowd, back towards the town. “We must see the Governor instantly,” he whispers, when they are quite out of earshot.

There is a standing order that no one shall leave Boston after ten o’clock at night, and it is close on ten. The Governor sends instant orders to stop any one trying to leave; but he is a minute too late—Dr. Warren has sent *his* orders, and in obedience to them, Paul Revere has been rowed across to Charlestown, borrowed a horse of Deacon Larkin, and is off at full gallop towards Concord, while a lantern hung out from the steeple of the Old North lets the people know that the long-expected hour is come. By the time Gage’s orders have reached the sentinels at the ferry, Paul Revere is galloping out of Charlestown, and a second lantern in the Old North tells that the attack is to be made by the way of Charlestown Neck. Hancock and Adams are sleeping at the Rev. Jonas Clark’s in Lexington, and have retired early—as the family have asked not to be disturbed. But at midnight, the messenger (who was very nearly taken on the way, more than once) comes clattering up at full speed, and there is no more rest that night.

That lantern in the Old North is the red flag of war. Before sunset to-morrow, the whole country will be up, and twenty thousand men will be preparing to march on Boston. Thanks to Warren, the messengers were ready, and they find the minute-men as ready as their name.

By the time the soldiers are landed at Phipps's Farm, bells are tolling, and guns being fired, to call out the minute-men. There is little sleep in Boston that night.

Jasper Fleming had tried to get out of Boston, but was stopped. For once Fred Digby was more prompt than he, and was already in command of a picket at one of the ferries. It was a huge satisfaction to Fred to say,—"Very sorry, Mr. Fleming, but your friends must do without you this time."

One of the soldiers laughed at this. There had long been open enmity between sword and gown in Boston.

"I doubt not, sir, that they can do excellently well without me," says Jasper, and goes off, feeling an unphilosophical desire to break the Lieutenant's head.

"That pays him for the egg, eh, Perkins?" says Digby in narrating this passage to his friend.

Next morning, messages come that the rebels are making a stand; Colonel Smith and Major Pitcairn want reinforcement. Luckily, Governor Gage has already sent Lord Percy with sixteen companies of foot, a detachment of marines, and two cannon. Percy marched out a little before noon (to the tune of *Yankee Doodle*), and reached Lexington just as Smith and Pitcairn had fought their way back thither from Concord, along the hilly road winding through forests and thickets. They are saying in Boston that Pitcairn's men lay down on the ground with their tongues hanging out, as soon as they reached the square which Percy formed to receive them,—so parched and weary were they with all those hours of marching and fighting.

It is fifteen miles from Lexington to Boston—a long way to retreat, harassed by an enemy which seems to spring out of the very ditches and fences. The rebels hang on their rear—they pick off the officers, they take advantage of every tree, every wall, every ditch. Like a swarm of wasps, they buzz on each side of the march. There are never more than four hundred of them together at any time in one place; but there are more of them every hour, as the alarm spreads through the country.

It is sunset before they reach Charlestown Neck—footsores and exhausted, and with the loss of two hundred and seventy

men in killed, wounded, and prisoners—and are under the friendly shelter of the *Somerset's* guns.

Boston and Charlestown are built on two peninsulas, which approach each other on the south side of Charlestown and the north side of Boston. Between the two towns, the Charles River is less than a third of a mile broad, or about as wide as the Thames at Southwark Bridge. Each of these peninsulas is connected with the mainland by a very narrow neck. There has been great confusion in Charlestown all day—many went out when Dr. Warren rode through in the morning with the news of Lexington; and there are few left but women and children, when the Governor sends word that no one else is to go. They crowd the higher ground, and see the troops marching along the Boston road, fighting as they march. Every puff of white smoke, every flash, every dull report of a musket, may mean that some husband, or brother, or father has fallen dead on the dusty road, or behind some bush or wall. The watchers strain their eyes—they watch as people watch from some harbour-head to see the fisher-boats struggling for life in the raging sea. Althea Digby had persuaded Mrs. Maverick to go to the ferry, where they might get earlier news; but the news they heard there brought little cheer. The rebels were showing fight. . . . The whole country was up and the militia out. . . . Pitcairn was killed. . . . No, it was Lord Percy. . . . It was neither—only Pitcairn's horse was shot, and he made prisoner. . . . Nothing of the sort—but Dr. Warren was killed, or severely wounded. . . . If so, it's all up with the rebels. . . . It was a terrible blunder not to send more men. . . . Adams and Hancock were taken—the speaker's informant saw them with their arms bound. . . . There were troops enough to sweep the Provincial hedgers and ditchers into the Charles. . . . That was a cannon shot! Some of them went to — then! . . . There are two thousand King's men gone, counting Lord Percy's—we shall smash the rebels all to pieces. What can country bumpkins do against regulars!

Althea listened to such talk as this, till her knees refused to support her, and she sank down on a coil of rope, beside a shed.

“You must not attend to the chatter of these people, my dear—they know nothing about what is happening any more than we do,” said Mrs. Maverick,—who felt it her duty, as Governor Hutchinson's cousin, to put on a bold face. “The

only sensible thing I have heard to-day was that gentleman's remark about country bumpkins."

At last they were coming! The red lines could be seen defiling on to Charlestown pier, where the boats were waiting to carry them over. There were some wounded, and all bore the marks of the day. Althea burst into tears of relief when she saw Fred, covered with dust, his face swollen and blood-stained, his uniform besmirched and torn, sitting in one of the boats, and waving his hat to her.

"Now, let us go home," she said, composing herself after the first moment,—“and pray that we may never know such another day as this.”

As she said this, and rose to her feet—faint and giddy with watching, and exposure to the sun—she saw Jasper Fleming standing near her, intently observing the troops who had already begun to disembark. He turned at the instant, and saw her. A deep red flush of anger swept to the very roots of Althea's hair, and she said, by an involuntary impulse of indignation,—

“So this is the end, Mr. Fleming, of all the fine seditious speeches you have been making so long! How do you like the result?”

He looked at her with such a look of sorrow and fixed determination, that she felt a shock,—as though she had struck her will against a stronger will than her own. But he only said,—

“The result is not yet, Madam;” and making her a low bow, turned again to watch the disembarkation.

“Poor young man! he will be sorry for it yet,” said Mrs. Maverick that night. “I only hope he will not lead astray that handsome brother of his. I have fancied, Althea, that you could turn Mr. Noel Branxholm into a loyal subject if you chose to take the trouble.”

The old lady made great play with her eyes and her curls as she said this, and it was easy to understand the drift of her remark.

“I should despise him if I could!” exclaimed Althea, in a sudden flash of scorn. “However much he may be in the wrong, I like him better so, than if he would sell his soul to please a woman!”

“Highty-tighty!” said the old lady, not quite sure how to take this outbreak. “I hope you do not use such expressions

in public, my dear. People who do not know you as well as I do, would think you sympathised with the rebels."

"I love my King and my country as well as anybody, but I hope I may do that, and despise a man who is false to his principles," said the young lady in rather a high key. "If Mr. Branhholm was as black a rebel as Sam Adams himself—or—or—as his own brother, he would never cease to be a gentleman."

"That's his Virginian blood," said Mrs. Maverick. "My mother was a Virginian—you can always see the strain. I am really sorry, though, for that poor young man. I fear he will end on the gallows. They say he is very clever—I know his uncle expected him to do great things as a lawyer. But of course, he has ruined all his prospects. 'Tis a great pity! I suppose he would be called a plain man, but there's a *je ne sais quaw* about him—of course he gets it from his mother—a lovely creature, and Noel is her living image."

CHAPTER XXIII.

"A RUSTIC ROUT WITH CALICO FROCKS AND FOWLING-PIECES."

Rudely forced to drink tea, Massachusetts in anger
Spills the tea on John Bull—John Bull falls on to hang her;
Massachusetts, enraged, calls her neighbours to aid,
And give Master John a severe bastinado.
Now, good men of the land! pray, who is in fault—
The one who begun, or resents the assault?

THE QUARREL WITH AMERICA FAIRLY STATED.

BLIND as the authorities are, they are not so blind as not to see the meaning of Lexington. It means that the rebels *will* fight, and that a grenadier's cap will *not* suffice to disperse them, as has been said and believed. They will fight—their courage grew hotter instead of colder as the day went on—and a few more such days will turn the bumpkins into soldiers.

With Lexington, the war is begun. Six or seven hundred militia instantly turn out to Boston Neck,—where for nine days Colonel Robinson is almost the only officer, all the other officers, and most of the men, having gone home to set their private affairs in order, in prospect of what is coming. So for nine nights and days Robinson never changes his clothes, or lies down to sleep, and has even to do his own patrolling.

But the news of Lexington is speeding like the fiery cross. "For God's sake," they write on the message, "send it on by night and by day." By Sunday, it is known in New York. New York is a somewhat half-hearted city, and Tories are as rife there as rebels are in Boston; but the people shut the Custom-house, unlade two sloops full of supplies for the regiments in Boston, secure the military stores, and arm themselves—in spite of Lord North's conciliatory Resolve, and Lord Dartmouth's despatch, which arrive next day. Two days afterwards, the news is at Philadelphia. In twenty days, it is known from Quebec to Savannah; and Captain Derby of Salem has already put to sea, to carry the news to England.

On Thursday morning, at Pomfret, old Israel Putnam, ploughing in the field with his men, hears a drum, and sees a horseman. He is a messenger proclaiming the news of Lexington. Like an old war-horse, Putnam smells the battle from afar. He unyokes the plough-horses, and posts off on one of them to rally the militia, without even waiting to change his leathern frock and apron and check shirt; and in this same gear he rides into Cambridge next morning at sunrise, having ridden a hundred miles in eighteen hours.

The ferries over the Merrimac are crowded by the New Hampshire men, under John Starke of Indian renown. He and Putnam look like two of Cromwell's Ironsides come to life again, to draw the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. As for Ethan Allen of Bennington, Colonel of the turbulent Green Mountain Boys of Vermont, he might be Gideon himself—he is a wild figure, who might have stepped bodily out of the Book of Judges; and, to make the comparison complete, he is at this very moment a proclaimed outlaw for his doings in the matter of the New Hampshire Grants.

On the 26th, Captain Benedict Arnold of New Haven (after a brisk passage-at-arms with the Rev. Dr. Peters at Hebron) passes through Hartford at the head of his company, and there falls in with Colonel Parsons, to whom he imparts his views about an attack on Canada.

Inside Boston, the Tories look at the Whigs, and the Whigs look at the Tories; but every one is afraid to be the first to move anything but his tongue. Tongues wag pretty freely. At a town meeting, a zealous partisan calls the popular leaders "venomous serpents," and "eggs of sedition;" "mustard-seed" which, grown into a fine tall tree, harbours all manner of unclean

birds. These, and many other pretty and forcible figures of speech, does Fred Digby applaud with all his heart, soul, and strength—leading the van of the applause indeed, and for once drowning the murmurs of the Whigs.

The Governor, expecting the town to rise, sends for the Selectmen, and bargains with them to use no violence on his part, if the people will use none on theirs. On the Sunday, this covenant is ratified in a town meeting. The inhabitants further engage to deposit their arms in Fanueil Hall, under the care of the Selectmen, and marked with the owners' names, so that they may be returned when these calamities shall be overpast.

Whoever wants to go away, may go, and take his worldly goods, and the Governor will lend his boats to ferry him over to Charlestown. He also condescends to write a letter to Dr. Warren, asking that those persons who wish to come into Boston may do so unmolested.

For many days after Lexington, the road to Roxbury is thronged with wagons, crammed with fugitives, who have to be fed as best may be by Congress—as many as five thousand persons being soon distributed among the villages.

Meanwhile, on the Friday, Dr. Church comes in on an errand of mercy, to fetch medicine and surgical appliances for the wounded on both sides. He has insisted on coming in—much to Warren's surprise, who thinks it almost as much as his neck is worth. But Dr. Church is evidently the better judge of Governor Gage's temper. On Sunday evening, he returns to his rebel friends safe and sound, having been, however, stopped on Boston Neck, and carried off to the Governor to be examined. This, at least, is his own account. Warren, who somehow or other has never liked Dr. Church, is surely satisfied now. Even Paul Revere, who has at times not felt sure of the Doctor, has dismissed his suspicions with shame, ever since last Wednesday morning, when Church showed him a bloody patch on his silk stocking, and told him it was the blood of a man killed close to him, as he was encouraging the militia. Surely, thinks Revere, the Doctor must be sound, if he can thus risk his life for the cause.

The Flemings, who were among the first to leave the town, soon have reason to congratulate themselves on having departed while passes were to be had for the asking. The exodus from Boston continuing, two hundred loyalists who

enrolled themselves as volunteers on the 19th of April, are angry that the rebels are thus allowed to escape, and say that their presence is the only guarantee against an assault on the town. As Gage does not reply to this representation, they threaten to lay down their arms and go themselves; whereupon the Governor throws obstacles in their way—prohibiting the carrying off of merchandise, then of provisions, then of medical stores. Then, even trunks and beds are to be examined by the guard; and at last, passes are refused altogether. The Governor especially tries to detain the women, in the hope that their presence may prevent his being attacked.

Charlestown is nearly deserted; only a few of its inhabitants go into it now and then to look after their effects, or to do an hour's digging in their gardens, or to mow their grass—a pathetic touch of peace amidst the fiery rumours which say that the town is to be burned, and that, on a given signal, fire-stages are to be sent down the river. Fred Digby is always on the look-out for this signal.

The Provincial Congress, sitting at Watertown, on the first Sunday after the battle, vote the raising of an army of thirty thousand men; and, in an address to the people of Great Britain, they say they will be free or die.

Very soon, there are twenty thousand men encamped between Roxbury and Cambridge—a line thirty miles long—with General Artemus Ward as a sort of Commander-in-Chief. Ward has seen war in Canada, under Abercrombie. His army is made up chiefly of substantial farmers and merchants—men who have a great deal to lose besides their lives. Then there is General Thomas, who fought in the war of '56. On occasion of one of the many false alarms of a sally, Thomas repeats the device of a famous European Commander—having but seven hundred men, the General marches them round and round Prospect Hill, which manœuvre being visible from Boston, produces a whole-some effect on the enemy. Both parties are always trying to secure the stock on the islands—provisions in Boston are likely to run short, although the King's ships command the harbour—and there are constant skirmishes both by land and water.

All this while Jasper Fleming is with his uncle and aunt at Salem, from which place Mr. Lawrence Fleming finds he can carry on his business more conveniently than in Boston, under present circumstances.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A GENTLEMAN FROM VIRGINIA.

The pillar of a people's hope.

IN the meantime, Captain Benedict Arnold—having received a colonel's commission from the Massachusetts Committee of Safety, authorising him to raise four hundred men and go and take Ticonderoga—sets out on the 3d of May, intending to pick up volunteers as he goes. But at Castleton he comes up with Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys, bound on the same errand, and holding a Council-of-war. Allen has a commission from the Connecticut Committee—who have condoned the affair of the New Hampshire Grants. After some squabbling, Arnold, having no men with him, puts his own commission back into his pocket and volunteers; and that day week, very early on a fine summer's morning, Colonel Allen, with Arnold at his side and the Green Mountain Boys behind him, walks into Ticonderoga, past the gaping sentinels, and summons the garrison to surrender. "In whose name?" asks Captain Delaplace, running out undressed, with his breeches in his hand, to see what is the matter. "In the name of the Great JEHOVAH and the Continental Congress!" says this new Gideon, waving his sword about the Commandant's ears, who, seeing no help for it, yields up the fortress, and retires to finish his toilet. The same day, Allen's lieutenant, Seth Warner, surprises Crown Point; and the next, fifty men come in to join Colonel Arnold, bringing with them a schooner they have taken, and with these he takes St. John's. But the rival Colonels continue to squabble—it is Massachusetts against Connecticut, and is a specimen of that State jealousy on which Hutchinson and Oliver taught the ministry to count.

But if the Provinces are jealous of each other, there is a wonderful unanimity in their behaviour, as Lord Dunmore finds to his cost. On the night of the 20th of April, he removed the powder from the public magazine at Williamsburg to an armed sloop which lay in the James River. The secret leaked out next morning, and the Mayor and Corporation demanded the restitution of the powder as the property of the town, and also as necessary to the public safety—for there have for some

time past been apprehensions of a rising of the slaves. The Governor flew into a passion, and swore a terrible oath that if any insult were offered to himself or those who carried out his orders, he would declare freedom to the slaves, and lay Williamsburg in ashes. He holds out till he hears that Patrick Henry is marching on Williamsburg, to recover the powder by force of arms, and seize the treasury, and, then thinking better of it, sends to pay for the powder, and says that in what he did he had the best intentions. But the people distrust him; and Williamsburg growing uncomfortably hot, he goes aboard the King's ship *Fowey*, off Yorktown, and invites the House of Assembly to come to him there—which they decline to do.

At this critical juncture of affairs, Mr. Butler desires his family to go to New York, where the chief strength of the loyalists lies. He himself remains in Williamsburg—still striving to patch things up. Colonel Braxholm and he exchange very brief greetings, when they meet now and then in the streets of Williamsburg. Congress (reassembling in Carpenter's Hall on the 10th of May) still, for the most part, hopes for final reconciliation with the mother country; but all now know that they must fight first. And if they are to fight, they must have a General—at present the Provincials are commanded by anybody and everybody. When a skirmish is imminent, the first Colonel of militia who happens to be passing that way takes the command.

There are fighting men in plenty; but where is there a General? Every one knows that Mr. Hancock would like to be appointed; and his wealth and position, and great sacrifices in the cause, give him some claim. But his health is delicate, and he has never seen any active service. Moreover, there is a strong Southern party in Congress which cannot stomach a New England army commanded by a New England General. The Virginians have a General in their eye—a Southern General over a Northern army would make all fair. So when, one June morning, Mr. John Adams gets up and proposes "a gentleman from Virginia, now among us, and very well known to us all," every face is turned to where Colonel Washington of Mount Vernon is sitting, close by the door into the library—where he slips away, as soon as he perceives that he is the object of attention. Mr. Hancock's handsome countenance was observed to fall at the words "a gentleman from Virginia;" but when, a day or two afterwards, Mr. Johnson of Maryland formally

nominates Colonel Washington, he is unanimously elected Commander-in-Chief of the Continental forces.

General Washington is soon ready to start. He marches out of Philadelphia with a considerable following of volunteers—young Virginians, always ready to go where there is a chance of some fighting—and, to the scandal of the sober elders, a goodly number of young Quakers. One blast of the trumpet of war has blown peace-principles clean out of their heads. One of these, young Mifflin, is the General's aide-de-camp.

As soon as the news of Lexington reached Oglethorpe, Noel Branxholm—returned safe and victorious from his first campaign—announced his intention of volunteering. Either he or his father must go—this he said, when his mother turned pale; and having said it, he embraced her and Mary, told them he should come back a Major-General at the least, and went out to send a messenger for Meshach Pike, with whom he took counsel. He was offered the command of one of the companies of militia, and set off at its head, leaving Pike to follow.

“Bress you, Mis’ Myra,” said Uncle Mennon, the first time he saw the ladies after Noel’s departure. “What could you ’spect? Tucks will be tucks, for all ole hen he hatch ’em.”

Noel makes such haste, that he reaches Philadelphia just in time to form part of the General’s escort. With Washington ride two of the new Major-Generals—Schuyler and Lee. Schuyler is a Dutchman of New York, an upright and honourable gentleman, staunch and kind-hearted, but a stiff martinet. Lee is an English soldier of fortune, who ought to have been a captain of Free Lances. He is a restless disappointed man—cynical, irascible, odd, and affecting to be odder than he is. Schuyler and he are old comrades, and fought together under Abererombie in Canada, where Lee, then a high-handed young captain, requisitioned the Canadians as though he had conquered them—or had been a Prussian. He was wounded in Abererombie’s unfortunate affair at Ticonderoga, and kindly nursed by Schuyler’s aunt, whose cattle had been taken and herself insulted. The good lady heaped coals of fire on his head to such an extent that he swore Mrs. Schuyler would have a place in heaven, though no other woman should be there.

Since then he has taken castles in Spain—fought the Turks—been aide-de-camp to Stanislaus Augustus—killed his man in a duel—got himself into trouble by writing political pamphlets—and had the honour of being thought dangerous

by the British ministry. He is a friend of Mr. Burke's; but man delights him not much, and woman less. Of human beings, he prefers the Mohawks. He made their acquaintance in Canada, and considers them models of good-breeding—and they have returned the compliment by bestowing on him the appropriate name of Boiling Water, and admitting him to smoke beside their council-fires. He also admires the Cossacks. But dogs and horses engage his best affections. His dogs sit at table beside him. As he says, one must have some object to embrace. One of these objects, Mr. Spada by name, is accommodated with a chair at table, and gives a paw to the ladies, when there are any present. Mr. Spada's manners are indeed superior to his master's, who is slovenly, coarse, and rude.

So the three Generals ride out of Philadelphia, anxiously discussing plans for the coming campaign; when, before they are twenty miles on their way, they meet an express from the army, with the news that there was a great battle at Boston last Saturday, and that Dr. Warren is killed.

Amidst the eager questions which beset the messenger, General Washington asks but one, "How did the militia behave?" And hearing the answer, he says,—“Then the liberties of the country are safe!”

CHAPTER XXV.

BUNKER'S HILL.

LIEUTENANT DIGBY'S martial ardour was at last to find full vent. There is little glory to be won in shooting savages; and the excitement to be derived from marching along a dusty road, and being popped at from behind walls and hedges, is unsatisfying. But the Lieutenant was at last to be gratified with a regular engagement.

There were five thousand troops in Boston by this time, for the three Generals, Howe, Clinton, and Burgoyne, arrived on the 25th of May—when General Burgoyne expressed himself much disgusted that ten thousand peasants should keep five thousand King's troops shut up, but observed that he would soon find elbow-room.

The joyful occasion, for which Lieutenant Digby had so long been praying, did not, however, happen until the 17th of

June, early on the morning of which day he and everybody else in Boston were awakened by a heavy cannonade, which proved to come from the men-of-war lying in harbour. As day broke, the watch on board the *Lively* was astonished to see that entrenchments six feet high had been thrown up in the course of the brief summer night, on Breed's Hill.

Meanwhile, up on the hill, Jasper Fleming had been working all night by the low-lying gleams of the dark lanterns, while the stars shone overhead, and the sentinels cried, "All's well!" from the ships below. Towards dawn, Colonel Prescott, who commanded on the hill that night, sent him down with a patrol to the shore. As Jasper paced up and down here by the old ferry, he seemed to himself like a ghost revisiting the glimpses of the moon. Yonder, across that narrow water, lay Boston—home—the past—seen phantom-like in the star-lighted dimness of the summer night, and yet more unreal in the light of the lantern of memory. "All's well!" cried the sentinels, thinking that that night was as other nights, and that the dawn should come as other dawns; and then the morning broke, and they all knew that the time was come.

The work went on to the roar of the British batteries. As the morning wore, the smoke from the ships' guns hung above the gently-swelling hills, as clouds hang above mountain summits. Sometimes it would clear for a moment, and the untried Provincial soldiers on the heights would for one brief instant see all the familiar hills, clad in the fresh green of early midsummer. Down below lay the white houses and gardens of Charlestown—houses to which some of them had brought home their wives—gardens where their toddling children had plucked the flowers.

So they work on, wondering why they are not attacked—wondering still more why they are not reinforced. As the smoke now and then clears over Boston, they see the roofs and steeples crowded with people, anxiously looking towards the Charlestown peninsula. Old Putnam has gone for reinforcements; they say Ward is not sanguine; Jasper Fleming begins to wonder whether they are to be left to their fate. They have toiled all night, and all through the hot summer morning they have had no refreshments.

Prescott commands in the redoubt on Breed's Hill—elsewhere there is that same happy-go-lucky generalship of any one who happens to come first, which the Congress at Philadelphia

has just put an end to. Most of the men are new to active service, but there is no want of veteran Colonels and Majors, who turn up from time to time, or appear in all parts of the field at once—to the bewilderment of him who seeks to comprehend the battle. Prescott has seen much service in the French and Indian wars. Then there is Colonel Gridley, who was the engineer last night—he fired the shot into the Citadel which brought about the capitulation, at the First Siege of Louisburg; and old Israel Putnam, who fights in his shirt-sleeves, a hanger belted across his burly shoulders—only fit, sneers a British officer, “to lead a band of sicklemen.” But Abercrombie remembers Major Putnam at Ticonderoga in '58—it was at his side that that beloved young Lord Howe fell, Sir William's brother, for whose sake the Provincials can scarcely hate Sir William. Old Putnam, with his burly frame and scarred and weather-beaten countenance, is a tower of strength to the men on Breed's Hill. They know that he dares lead where any dare follow. Not a man there but has heard how once at Pomfret he crawled into a she-wolf's den, when all other means of getting at her had failed. He has been tied to a tree by Indians, while tomahawks were flung at him for sport, French officers aiding and abetting; and then, after a painful march, stripped and bound to a stake to be roasted alive, and only rescued at the last moment, and after the fire was lighted, by a Frenchman more generous than the rest.

Then there is Colonel Pomeroy, another veteran of those French Wars which were the school of arms for the Colonies. He borrowed a horse this morning; but, finding the fire rather warm on Charlestown Neck, would not risk another man's beast, so sent him back, and walked the rest of the way.

Jasper Fleming, who knows something of artillery, is appointed to one of the field-pieces in the redoubt. He thinks, as he carefully gets his range, that he is stealing a march on Noel, who will envy him when he comes to hear of this day. “The pacific member of the family is first in the field, after all,” thinks Jasper, with a grim smile, his eyes wandering in the direction of the steeples of Boston. “'Tis the sole advantage I am ever like to take of the dear boy, so I had as well make the best of it.”

But if as yet there is no fighting, the British artillery kept up a constant roar, and private Asa Pollard falls dead. “Whas shall we do with him, sir?” asks a subaltern, to whom dead

men are still a thrilling novelty. "Bury him," says the Colonel. "What! without prayers, sir?" says the subaltern. And Chaplain M'Clintock begins to say prayers—till Prescott, perceiving that the sooner poor Asa is out of sight the better, orders the audience to disperse, and getting up on the parapet, calmly walks about there, giving orders, and even jesting, until he has so revived the drooping spirits of his men that they receive the cannon-balls with shouts. His commanding and martial figure is clad in the only suit of uniform on the field—a single-breasted blue coat, lapped up at the skirts, a tie-wig, and a three-cornered cocked hat. For some reason or other, he presently lays aside hat and wig, and is seen in his own brown hair, with the bald top of his head exposed to the broiling sun.

"Who is the person who appears to command?" asks Gage of Councillor Willard, perceiving this tall figure from Copp's Hill through his glass. "Will he fight?"

"He is my brother-in-law, sir, and an old soldier, and he will fight while he has a drop of blood left in his body," answers the Councillor.

By Putnam's order, the Provincials begin to fortify Bunker's Hill—which they ought to have done long before. The heat is intense, and no reinforcements come. Ward, at Cambridge, is afraid of weakening his camp too much. It is high noon. The British fire redoubles, and masses of scarlet uniform begin to blossom out on the Long Wharf and the North Battery. There will shortly be that fiddler to pay whereof Admiral Montague spoke eighteen months ago.

The red uniforms swarm into one barge after another, until Jasper Fleming counts twenty-eight of them, rowing in parallel lines for Moulton Point. The field-pieces come first, and as the sun strikes on their brazen mouths, they look fit to deliver the streams of red-hot oratory which they will shortly pour forth. The blue flag is hoisted, and they are all off—flashing oars, flashing armour and cannon, gleaming bayonets and muskets—blinding scarlet, and more blinding points of light—all flooded by the glorious sunshine, which shines on so many smiling hills and pleasant-smelling meadows, as though only the flower of the grass were to be cut down to-day.

And now at last reinforcements are coming to the Provincials. First, Jasper sees a single horseman dashing along the road from Cambridge—far-off, he recognises Dr. Warren. Dr.

Warren brings word that two thousand men will be here in twenty minutes ; and presently Colonel John Starke may be seen marching his New Hampshire men over the Neck—refusing to hurry them, in spite of the galling fire, for, as he says, one fresh man in action is worth ten that are fatigued.

At the foot of Bunker's Hill there is a fence, half of stone, and topped with two wooden rails. Captain Knowlton and his men have made another parallel line behind it, and filled the space with the new-mown hay which lay there, and here Starke takes his stand too.

Meanwhile, the twenty-eight barges have discharged their living cargoes. The barges presently put back ; and the British soldiers sit down in the long grass, and can be seen eating and drinking at their ease, with grog by the bucketful. Sir William Howe is waiting for more men, but also for cannon-balls which will *fit*. War is full of mistakes ; he wins who makes the fewest. Old General Cleveland, who is always dangling at the apron-strings of Schoolmaster Lovell's pretty daughter, gave her young brother an appointment in the Ordnance, and that young gentleman has sent twelve-pounder balls to load six-pounder guns with. So the hungry and thirsty rebels enjoy this spectacle of their enemies at dinner, while Sir William Howe swears at old dotards and young fools, and has time to observe that the redoubt is stronger than he thought it at first.

"Thank God! we ain't got Indians to fight this time! A parcel of slippery savages that 'tis a thankless task to engage!" exclaims Lieutenant Digby to Ensign Perkins, as they leap ashore with the second detachment—and quite unconscious of any incongruity in thanking his Maker for the opportunity of killing his fellow-subjects. Ever since that little affair at the Devil's Forge, the Lieutenant has been regarded as an authority on Indians ; Ensign Perkins in particular looks up to him with implicit belief as to a veteran campaigner.

"You've been under fire before, Digby," he says, as they hurry into position, while the barges put back for more troops. "They say the first time ain't like any other. I s'pose, though, they'll run after the first round."

It may as well be confessed that the poor little Ensign, who is only a boy, hopes most devoutly that they will,—the bravest men have owned to feeling awkward for the first five minutes or so that they ever had bullets about their ears,—and the Ensign would be glad if his first dose of powder and shot were

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a mild one. He thinks it might be as well to say his prayers, but the only petition which occurs to him is—"From battle and murder, and from sudden death, good Lord, deliver us." The images suggested by this clause of the Litany are not cheerful; but if the Ensign is afraid of being killed, he is still more afraid of running away, and as soon as the fighting really begins, he feels better, and acquits himself with credit.

As the British lines advance up the hill, Old Put, as his men affectionately call him, cries,—“Fire low! aim at the waist-bands! Wait till you can see the whites of their eyes!” And he is so well obeyed that the enemy falls back, and the Generals send for fresh reinforcements, before they charge the battery a second time. Howe leads the right wing against the rail-fence, but that reserved fire makes murderous havoc. There is a lull—the sharp rattle of musketry ceases for a while, and only the deep bass from the ships keeps the concert going.

Jasper, still at his gun, asks himself if they are to win an easier victory than he had ever imagined possible? More Provincial reinforcements are coming—they can be seen beyond the Neck—Gerrish's men. Why do they not cross? There is Old Put frantically urging them on, but they do not stir! Alas! Gerrish, once a tolerable officer, has grown too fat to spur his men to the fray. And Major Gridley shows the white feather. He talks of covering the retreat. In vain does Colonel Frye try to goad him, with the reminder that that day thirty years his father fired that shot at Louisburg. Alas, for parental partiality! brave old Colonel Gridley should have given the artillery to young Benjamin Thompson. None of them will come on, though Old Put swears freely at them (for which he afterwards makes a very moderately penitent apology in Pomfret meeting-house).

Despite these terrible *contretemps*, the second attack is received with a still hotter fire than the first. Two of Howe's aides are shot down at his side, and he is three times left alone. He is much galled, too, by the firing from the windows of the deserted houses in Charlestown. The carnage is terrible. Burgoyne, looking on from Brattle church-steeple, thinks he has never seen so hot an engagement. But Howe will not condescend to a flank movement, and still declares that he will take the bull by the horns.

At this point in the conflict, Gage sends a party of marines from the *Somerset* to set fire to Charlestown. The wooden

houses blaze quickly. The steeple of the meeting-house is soon wrapped in a garment of flames that laps in the wind, which, carrying off the dense black smoke, from time to time shows the hills and fields—like a glimpse of Paradise seen out of the mouth of hell—and the steeples and roofs of Boston alive with spectators. Never was battle fought under so many eyes. When Howe orders a third attack, his officers say it is downright butchery—but Lieutenant Digby, who is the only unwounded officer of his regiment, got near enough to the redoubt last time to hear some indiscreet young rebels cry out that their powder was all gone. This welcome intelligence reaches Sir William's ear at the moment that General Clinton comes up as a volunteer, with two regiments which he found in confusion on the shore.

Prescott, in the redoubt, sees that all is lost, and begs Warren to save himself, but he will not. Starke and Knowlton are making a gallant fight of it at the rail-fence—but there is no kind of order by this time. "Let me go and bring up the reinforcements!" cries Jasper Fleming, hastily tearing off his cravat to make a sling—a musket-ball has just broken his collar-bone, and his right arm hangs helpless at his side. But it is too late. The want of order and discipline tells fatally now. After all, these raw levies must learn war on the very battlefield itself. This time the enemy are taking the redoubt in flank; they, too, reserve their fire, and advance on three sides at once. The Provincials are come to their last round. "Don't waste a kernel of it!" cries Prescott, as he places the few that have bayonets at the most likely points of attack. The Provincials fire their last volley; the enemy waver, but do not return it, and come on. And then there is a hand-to-hand fight. Fred Digby, clambering over, is flung down—as he falls, he sees Jasper, his sword in his left hand, wildly endeavouring to fight his way to Warren, around whom the balls are falling like hail. "Confound him! I didn't think he'd fight like that!" thinks Fred, as he scrambles up, with his mouth and eyes full of dust, and leaps into the redoubt—but is so swept along with the furious current, that he sees little but the clouds of dust and smoke which envelop friend and foe. Only two figures impress themselves upon his vision—Pomeroy, parrying the bayonets of the victorious grenadiers with his shattered gunstock, and Prescott, who seems to bear a charmed life—both slowly fighting their way back; but friend and foe are almost

indistinguishable now in the *mêlée* and the smoke and dust. Just then he hears a cry near him, and sees two men of his own regiment running to support Abercrombie, who has just fallen.

"If you take Major Putnam alive, don't hang him, for he's a brave man," says the dying General, remembering his old comrade of Ticonderoga, as Fred and the others carry him off—passing poor Major Pitcairn, mortally wounded, just as he entered the entrenchment.

Major Small, too, whose life stout old Israel Putnam has saved this day, calls out, as he lies wounded on the ground, to spare Warren—but it is too late. Before he can reach him, Jasper sees his beloved friend stagger and fall, and at the same instant feels a sharp pang in his side, and all grows dark and silent.

It is five o'clock, and Lieutenant Digby's first battle is fought and won.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE SERGEANT SUSPECTS A PLOT.

"'Tis their duty, all the learned think,
T'esponse that cause by which they eat and drink."

It was some days since General Washington had drawn his sword under that historic elm at Cambridge, but Noel Branxholm had been unable to obtain any certain news of his brother. He had been seen to fall; but as his body had not been found, Noel refused to give up hope.

He was on picket-duty one night, when one of the British sentinels made a signal to him. Intercourse occasionally took place between the outposts, but greater vigilance had lately made this very difficult. Moreover, some Stockbridge Indians had come into the Provincial army, and had shot a careless British sentinel or two. On this occasion, the sentinel evidently did not dare to trust himself far out of his own lines. He cautiously threw a stone, round which Noel found a letter tied. He read it by the first pale sickly light of dawn. It was, as he had instantly hoped, from Jasper, but was written with such indifferent ink, the hand so feeble and indistinct that he had some trouble in making it out.

"DEAR BROTHER," he read,—“I am lying in Boston Jail, and must soon die there, unless you can get me exchang'd. I've got the

Fever and my wounds won't heal. For God's sake try and get me exchang'd as soon as there's any chance of such a thing. Your loving bro.,
J. FLEMING."

This letter (which was dated several days back), although a relief to Noel's worst fears, yet caused him the utmost anxiety. General Gage had refused to allow the rights of belligerents to the Provincials, and his prisoners were treated rather as sick felons than as wounded soldiers. Noel knew that General Washington was about to address a letter of remonstrance on this matter to his old brother-in-arms. He hurried off to headquarters as soon as he was relieved, and before noon had made interest to be appointed to carry the letter under a flag of truce. Once in Boston, he trusted to find some way of communicating with Lieutenant Digby, who surely could and would do something to alleviate his brother's condition. He was going away towards his own quarters for a little rest, when he felt a hand on his shoulder, and a clear ringing voice (which instantly recalled to his memory the long wide street of Providence) said; "Are you ready to redeem your word, Mr. Branhholm? Will you come with me to Quebec?"

Noel turned, and saw a powerful figure, rather under the middle height, and in military attire. As he looked in the dark sunburnt countenance, he said, taking the hand held out to him,—“I know your face, sir, and your voice perfectly——”

“But you have forgot my name? Well, never mind that, if you have not forgot the promise you gave me at Providence.”

“Captain Benedict Arnold!” exclaimed Noel. “I beg a thousand pardons, sir! I am much troubled with a private anxiety, or I had known you instantly. I’ve heard, sir, of your and Colonel Allen’s exploits, and was only sorry I was not there.”

“You can be in a bigger thing than the taking of twopenny forts, if you will,” said Arnold eagerly. “I have been much ill used—but of that no matter now. I have, as perhaps you know, a Colonel’s commission from Massachusetts, which therefore stinks in the noses of the Connecticut Colonels.” He slapped his coat-skirt as he spoke. “However, General Washington will respect my commission. Ethan Allen is a wild mountaineer, fit enough to lead his own wild people, but he understands nothing of the art of war, and will, I expect, run his head into a rat-trap before he is done. I have been shot at, sir—shot at by those lawless

bandits, the Green Mountain Boys! Allen and his men know not what discipline is; they are a mere rabble rout, all masters and no men! But if you are still in the mind you was in at Providence, come with me, and hear my plan."

"Colonel Arnold, there is no one under whom I would more gladly serve,"—said Noel, all his former impressions reviving as to this man's capacity for leadership. "Command me. I trust I may say I will not run away till you do—though I have a shrewd fancy that running away is the only thing you will ever be too late in doing."

"Nay, nay,"—said Arnold laughing, "I trust I can run away on occasion. I did so, indeed, t'other day from Dr. Peters. He threatened to blow my brains out, if I forced his stronghold, and as I perceived he was in earnest, I thought it a pity to spill my brains on so small an occasion, and so you see me here to-day. But come and hear my plans for a campaign against Quebec."

Early next morning, Noel Branhholm rode to Charlestown with a flag of truce in his hand, and the General's letter in his pocket. He had also written a very few words to Frederick Digby, which he trusted to get to him somehow or other; he was still contriving how this was to be done, when the boat came off to fetch him.

As Noel once more stood in Boston, a bewildering doubt as to the reality of the scene around him would intrude, and elbow out his half-formed stratagems. Had he really once known this town familiarly, and come and gone in its streets at his pleasure? Had only eighteen months passed since the *Fair American* took a pilot aboard one gloomy December afternoon? And did Althea Digby still dwell here? He tried to make her image take its place among the living people he saw—idlers, come to watch the flag, and pick up any crumbs of news—but he could not. He thought that, even if she herself came in at the guard-house door, she would still seem as a figure in a dream, and not half so real as his memory of her.

But if he felt that Althea had been so far removed out of his life as to seem beyond the reach even of his thoughts, Jasper was a terribly living presence—wounded and sick, perhaps dying. At this very moment, he might be turning uneasily on a pallet-bed in a miserable cell, with none to give him so much as a drink of water. Noel's travels had taught him to think well of the English character on the whole; he did not

believe the stories of inhuman treatment of prisoners which were current on both sides, and believed by each side of the other. But he knew the extreme rancour and hatred felt by the loyalists for the "rebels," and he was not at all sure that they would take extraordinary care lest a sick rebel should die. The thought that Jasper should lack kind hands to tend him was torture to him. He remembered how, in some childish malady, he had once awakened—hot, thirsty, and frightened, to find the night-lamp gone out, and the room all dark—how he had cried out, and how Jasper had come in from the next room, lighted a candle, brought him something to drink, and stayed with him until he fell asleep again. And now Jasper lay in the common jail—nursed probably, if nursed at all, by one of those British soldiers who had for years made it their pastime to insult the townspeople, and who were now enraged at the unexpected resistance they had met with.

With his heart swollen with such thoughts, Noel was suddenly recalled to what was actually going on around him, by perceiving that the Sergeant on guard was looking in at the door, and that now was his opportunity to speak. "Look here, my man," said he, holding out the letter—which he had taken the precaution not to seal—"if you'll give this letter to Lieutenant Frederick Digby of the 29th Foot, I'll make it worth your while. There's no treason in it—'tis on a private matter—you are welcome to read it, if you choose."

He thrust the letter into the Sergeant's hand as he spoke. The Sergeant's countenance (to which exposure to tropical suns and a gunpowder explosion had imparted a surprising variety of tint) assumed a puzzled expression. He took the letter, however—it was weighted with a couple of Spanish dollars—and opening it, turned it up and down, and round and round, in his hairy fingers, as though it had been a sample of cloth or leather. The Sergeant's eyes—which in form and colour resembled boiled gooseberries—had apparently at one time or other quarrelled so violently that they had mutually turned their backs on each other for ever. It was therefore physically impossible for him to examine the letter with both eyes at once—which may have been one reason why he was so long in arriving at a decision upon it.

"I can read print—mostly," he observed, after a careful inspection of every square inch, blank as well as written on, of the paper he held. "But you can't never tell where a word begins an' ends, in runnin' hand."

He held the paper out at arm's length as he spoke, and thoughtfully scratched his head, while he gazed intently on the mysterious characters with his right eye—the left vacantly roaming at large the while.

"It is only to entreat Lieutenant Digby of the 29th Foot to visit my brother, who is lying sick—I fear dying," said Noel—to whom it was agony to utter the word, even in order to work on this man's feelings. "He is a prisoner, and very sick," he continued. "I am a friend of Lieutenant Digby's. I knew him in England, and I once had the good fortune to save his life. He would, I'm sure, do something for my brother, if he did but know of his condition. You may show the letter to your Colonel—to any one you choose—if you will only get it to the hands of Lieutenant Digby." Noel said this in a hurried voice, trembling with eagerness and anxiety. The precious moments were passing; some one might come in. He pressed a guinea into the hand which still held the dollars—he had been afraid of arousing suspicion by giving too large a bribe at first.

"He's Captain now,"—said the Sergeant slowly, and with apparent unconsciousness conveying his left hand to his pocket, and turning on his left eye. "He's a smart young officer; he ought to be in a hoss-rigiment—he ain't cut out for a fut-soldier—yer see, he ain't used to it, arter bein' in the Dragoons—and as I allus say, 'ow the devil can a hossy man fight a-fut?"

"Well, will you get it to him? Will you give it to him?" said Noel; "or will you bring me to speech of some one that will?"

"Well, I *might* do that,"—said the Sergeant slowly, scratching his head to assist deliberation. "I *might* do that. *Givin'* a letter from a rebel to a King's officer's one thing—you never know where it might end; but *gettin'* it to him—look-ee here, Mr. Messenger, I don't know who you may be——"

"I am Noel Branxholm of Virginia," said Noel. "Everybody knows my father's name."

"I don't go for to say as they don't," said the Sergeant, still gazing abstractedly on the letter, and still scratching his head. "I don't say as they don't; but now, what might your father *be*?"

"He is a gentleman," said Noel haughtily.

"Ah! they say they are in Virginia," said the Sergeant musingly; then, suddenly fixing his parboiled right eye on Noel, he asked,—“But now, what might he be as to pollytix?"

"He is what you call a rebel, and we call a patriot," said Noel, who felt his hopes growing fainter every moment.

The Sergeant's optical peculiarity was here of signal advantage to him, enabling him to detail off one eye to observe any change which might take place in the paper—as for example, the becoming visible of any words written with secret ink—while with the other he watched the effect of his questions on Noel. During this process, he screwed his mouth awry, until his countenance became positively appalling. At last, he put his head on one side, and allowed the main body of his gaze to fall back on the letter, while he murmured, "Er——m."

"I swear on my honour as a gentleman that the letter is only to beg Lieutenant—Captain Digby, to go and see my brother, and carry him some succour,"—said Noel, with an earnestness which would have convinced any but a British sergeant.

"That's all mighty well," said the Sergeant doubtfully. "That is, the *beginnin'* don't seem to have no great harm in it; but it's the *end* as I look at. Now there *mayn't* be any secret writing in this here letter," here he brought his left forefinger down on the paper in question—"but then again, there *may*. Now, if there *was*, Lod A'mighty only could tell what 'ud be the end of it. That's how I 'look at it, Mr. Powel Ransom, or whatever your name may."

"It is impossible that any ill-consequences can ever result to you from a mere act of humanity," urged Noel.

"That's all well enough; but now look you," said the Sergeant, throwing his legs a little apart, so as to take up a firmer argumentative stand; "this is where it is. 'Ere's His Majesty, King George the Third" (the Sergeant made a military salute) "on the one side, as represented by his officers here in Boston, and by me in this here guard-'us; and 'ere's a number of evil-disposed persons, as have took up arms against His Majesty's lawful authority—contrairy, as you may say, to the laws of nature—on the t'other side. A certain number o' these evil-disposed persons is now layin' in jail in this town—havin' been, as I said afore, took pris'ners in the exercise o' their unlawful rebellion against their undoubted natural sufferin'. Now, the case standin' in this situation, 'ere comes a person as *owns* as he's one of them evil-disposed persons, and as comes from 'em with what he calls a flag—not as rebels *can* have flags, not bein' belly-gerents in law—and arsts me—civil enough, I don't deny—to carry a letter to another o' these evil-disposed persons, as has been took in

open rebellion, and now lays in the town-jail—as he *ought* to lay. Now, such bein' the case as it now stands, if *you* don't see as this 'ere letter might be a conspiracy to take the town by strattygem, *I* do."

The Sergeant alternately scratched his head and re-examined the letter, often glancing uneasily at Noel, whose distress evidently affected him.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," he said presently. "If you like to leave the letter here on the table, when the officer o' the guard comes round, I'll contrive for him to *find* it."

With this Noel was obliged to be content; but when, after some hours of waiting, an answer was at last brought him by the Governor's Secretary, Noel took courage on seeing that he was a very young man, and showing him the letter (much the worse in appearance for the thumbing it had received), implored him to take it to Captain Digby.

"I will take it, but I fear it will be of no use," said the young fellow. But he looked in the same evening at the *British Coffee House*, and, finding Digby there, gave him the letter.

"An uncommon good-looking young fellow gave it me," he said. "He came in this morning under a flag, with a letter about the prisoners. I really couldn't refuse him when he begged me with tears in his eyes to save his brother."

The letter which had seemed so dangerous to the wary Sergeant, contained only these words:—

"DEAR LIEUT. DIGBY—My brother Jasper was wounded and made prisoner on the 17th of June, and now lies in Boston jail. He has caught the Jail fever, his wounds won't heal, and if he's not removed he will die there. For God's sake, and if ever you thought I did you a service, don't let him perish. He might recover if he could be took away, but he must die if he's left to rot in prison much longer. You said at Oglethorpe you owed me your life, but I should never have remember'd it if you was not now able to save my brother's. Your sincere but most unhappy friend,
NOEL BRANXHOLM."

"Confound it!" thought Fred; "it's that insufferable fellow Fleming. I detested him from the first moment I saw him. I'm sure I wish for my part he lay there till he did rot—he richly deserves it! However, as Branxholm saved my life, of course I must do something. I'd better go and see him, I suppose. 'Tis a cursed plague to have to put oneself out of the way for a fellow one detests! And 'twill be no use—they'll never show any indulgence to such a red-hot rebel as Fleming; the fellow's as great a firebrand as that bacon-curing rogue, Sam Adams."

It happened that the new-made Captain's temper was greatly irritated at the moment by the recent discovery in the hands of two of his men of the following handbill, which they professed to have picked up that moment, blown on the wind:—

PROSPECT HILL.

- I. Seven dollars a month.
- II. Fresh Provisions, & in Plenty.
- III. Health.
- IV. Freedom, Ease, Affluence, & a Good Farm.

BUNKER'S HILL.

- I. Three Pence a day.
- II. Rotten Salt Pork.
- III. The Scurvy.
- IV. Slavery, Beggary, and Want.

This precious production had, Fred was convinced, come through the sentries. He tore it up—but afterwards put the crumpled fragments in his pocket, to show his Colonel. The allusion to the salt pork was enough to try the sweetest temper, and Fred's was already much tried by the intolerable heat of the beleaguered town.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CAPTAIN DIGBY PERFORMS AN UNPLEASANT DUTY.

I do begin, I know not why, to hate him
Less than I did.

THE DUKE OF MILAN.

IN, therefore, as ill a humour as was possible to an exceedingly sanguine temperament, Captain Digby went to the jail next day, and had very little difficulty in getting admitted to see Mr. Fleming. He found that red-hot rebel and firebrand lying on a miserable bed in a comfortless cell. A sunbeam which had got in at the barred window was the only cheerful thing in the room—and even that looked like a sunbeam in irons, crossed as it was by the shadows of the bars.

The Captain's eyes were a little dazzled from coming through the blazing July sun, but at the very first sight of Jasper, his sentiments underwent a surprising change. Not being much accustomed to sickness and the ravages it can make, his first thought was that Jasper was actually dying, so wan and ghastly was the face he saw, lying with closed eyes on a soiled and wretched pillow. But at the noise of his entrance the eyes unclosed—large and unnaturally bright—they haunted Fred for days afterwards—and a red spot came

out on one of Jasper's hollow cheeks. Fred advanced to the bedside, as the warder shut the door.

"This is kind," said the sick man feebly. "Sit down."

Fred mechanically sat down on a wooden stool beside the bed. He could not speak for a choking in his throat.

"This is very kind," repeated Jasper, laying his wasted and burning hand on Fred's.

"Good God! I never thought you'd be like this," exclaimed Fred, positively blubbing. "But we'll have you out! I'll move heaven and earth to have you out! I'll go to Percy—he'll help me!"

Emotion is infectious, and Jasper was very weak. "You unman me by so much sympathy," he said, his own eyes filling. "I'm not used to it."

"Don't smile like that as if you was just going to die—don't, for heaven's sake, my dear fellow," cried Digby, pressing his hand. "I can't bear to see you! I never saw anybody look so bad in my life, except our old coachman after the bull had gored him—and he was seventy," he added hastily, lest the parallel might unduly depress the invalid.

"Wounds are nasty things," said Jasper apologetically. "And pernaps, as I'm not a soldier by profession, I take them harder."

"It ain't your wounds, so much as this cursed hole that's killing you," said the Captain, adding in a parenthesis,—“By the bye, what are your wounds?”

"A shot in the side and a broken collar-bone," said Jasper. "I believe one or two of my ribs were broken too, but the fever's the worst."

"We'll have you out, by gad! we'll have you out!" cried Digby—as hotly as though the patient did not richly deserve all he had got. Somehow or other, this fact had lost much of its importance ever since he had seen Jasper.

"Is Dr. Joseph Warren killed, or did I only dream I saw him fall?" asked Jasper presently—but not as though he had much hope that it was a dream.

"He is killed," replied the young Captain bluntly—and added with a rough attempt at sympathy,—“It's astonishing how fond everybody was of him; and Sir William, when he heard it, wouldn't believe at first you'd have let him risk himself. He said it made up for our loss, for Dr. Warren was as good as five hundred men to the reb—I mean, the Pro-

vincials. That was an awful Sunday," continued Fred, as Jasper did not speak. "Every coach and cart in Boston was levied to carry the dead and wounded. They say there was more killed than at Minden, or the taking of Quebec. I saw three captains dead, and one dying, all in a hackney-coach together."

So zealously did Fred go to work, that by the evening of the next day Jasper was removed to Mrs. Maverick's own house—Fred having made so moving a representation of his sufferings that that good lady declared she could not rest in her bed, unless she did all she could for the poor misguided young man. After all, she observed, he was the son of an old friend, and that old friend, a Virginian of most unimpeachable pedigree.

Althea's conduct on the occasion was not all that it might have been. She said she did not see the necessity for their nursing Mr. Fleming themselves—just as though he had been wounded in the performance of his duty. He was a rebel, continued the young lady doggedly, with a hard red flush on her cheeks and a dull light in her eyes; of course if he was really as ill as Fred thought, common humanity demanded that some indulgence should be shown him; but to bring him here and nurse him as if he was one's own brother, seemed for all the world as though one approved of his conduct—and for her part, she thought Mr. Fleming might be very well taken care of elsewhere.

"In his uncle's empty house, for instance—which has seemed to interest you very much since there's been nobody in it," said Mrs. Maverick, rather indignantly. Althea happened to be standing in the window as she spoke. "I protest, child, I'm shocked at your unfeeling spirit! I could not have supposed that a Christian young gentlewoman could have shown so much inhumanity."

"When you see him, sister, you'll feel sorry for him—'pon my soul, you will!" cried Fred, anxious to avert a storm.

"I am sorry already—for him and all other wrong-doers," said Althea loftily. "I only don't see why I am to shake up his bolus for him."

"'Pon my soul, sister, I don't know what's got you!" said Fred—for once forgetting his awe of his sister, in indignation at what seemed to him this unwomanly harshness. "I felt just as you do before I saw him. But you'll excuse my saying I don't

think this harshness becomes you—or any woman. A little softness, even to an offender, never shows amiss in a woman, and I don't care if I tell you so to your face!"

If the Captain had stood on his head before her, Althea could hardly have been more astounded than at this open revolt. But if he thought to browbeat her, he was mistaken. "I do not doubt you think a woman should be kind to a man's faults," she said—with a look which made Fred feel three sizes smaller. "There is plenty of scope for that sort of charity nearer home, without fetching in all the sick and wounded rebels to exercise it upon. And as for inhumanity—since Mr. Fleming is to be brought hither, I shall, of course, help Cousin Maverick to do what is necessary. I trust I should not be inhumane to a much worse man than I hope he is."

"How you do detest him, to be sure, sister! I remember I didn't like him myself at first," said Fred, hoping to appease her. "I'm sure I don't know why, though—he seems harmless enough now. Well, I shall fetch him here about sundown—and I hope, for God's sake, Althea, you'll receive him with civility."

At this Althea burst into tears, said he was very cruel, and left the room.

"What the devil is the matter with the girl?" cried Fred, whose courage rose still higher as the enemy disappeared.

"Hush, hush! my dear boy," said the old lady, "I spoke as sharp as I did, because I thought your sister had a little forgot herself—but an old woman like me can see how the wind blows, better than a young man can be expected to do. Trust me, my dear cousin, to read a young woman's heart! Your sister was mightily smitten with Mr. Noel Branhholm's good looks, and though she would sooner die than own it, I think, but for these unhappy troubles, 'twould have been a match between 'em."

"Well, they say women are like the ways of Providence—past finding out," said Fred. "So I'm to understand, Cousin Maverick, that because Althea has a sneaking kindness for Branhholm, she shows it by wanting to turn his brother out of doors?"

"That brother, my dear cousin," said the old lady, emphatically shaking her plump forefinger at him, "hath been the means of seducing Noel from his allegiance. Doth that enlighten you?"

"Perfectly, perfectly! I protest, Cousin Maverick, you are

a witch!" exclaimed Fred, greatly struck by this explanation of the mystery. "I must say, though, I think she carries her resentment to too high a pitch. But she'll relent, when she sees how low poor Fleming has been brought."

That same evening the patient arrived at Mrs. Maverick's hospitable door in a hackney-coach, supported by Fred, who, if a rough, was not an inefficient nurse. The surgeon, a good-natured man, had come too, and between them they got Jasper upstairs, and into the bedroom which Mrs. Maverick and Althea had prepared for him—and where he presently fainted away. It was Althea who first called attention to this, and ran to fetch a burnt feather; and for a day or two, she was, to quote her own expression, as attentive as though she had approved of her patient's conduct. Under the application of the feather, Jasper came round very quickly, and protested that he felt perfectly well, but for some feelings of natural shame at having been overcome for a moment.

"The fact is, Miss Digby," he said, with a most provoking coolness, and as though he gloried in reminding her of whence he had come,—“jail-birds are unused to so many stairs as I have just mounted.”

Althea looked at him in speechless wrath. Did he intend to defy her? she asked herself. If so, he was soon punished, for his attempt to outbrave pain and weakness proved a signal failure. He was for many days too ill to do anything but submit to be nursed like a child. He was ever past making any exasperating observations—which was perhaps the reason why Althea was for a short time so kind and gentle in her manner towards him, that Fred told her she was a good girl after all.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TREATS OF THE SLAMMING OF A DOOR.

When I was sick you gave me bitter pills.

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

AFTER the first few days, however, and as soon as Jasper began to revive a little under his more favourable conditions, Althea's behaviour was not so satisfactory. It is true she took her full share of waiting upon him—indeed, she was always on

the watch to do him some little service—to bring him some delicacy prepared by Mrs. Maverick's own hands, to fold the *Massachusetts Gazette* and the *Boston Post Boy*—or to draw down the jalousies, if the sun shone in his eyes. She had ample opportunities of rendering him small kindnesses of this description, as he was for a long time extremely feeble, and it was weeks before he was allowed to use his right arm. But Althea contrived to do all these charitable offices in a manner which left a sting behind. "In performing these acts of Christian duty, I never forget that your sufferings are but the just punishment of your enormous offences." This was what Althea's manner said—though her only overt reproaches were conveyed by means of one of the ministerial organs already mentioned, which she never failed to lay beside Jasper's chair, folded with the most virulent article outside, so that it must needs catch his eye.

As Jasper slowly amended, Althea's temper became still more uncertain; and although she never allowed the conversation to turn on exciting subjects, she could not always refrain from a side hit—so skilfully given as to admit of no reply. She would calmly allude to what might be expected when the reinforcements arrived from England—and be in the middle of a remark about the visits she hoped then to pay in the South, before Jasper could make up his mind whether to notice her words or not. He thought he saw, under all her constrained kindness, a deep-rooted personal aversion to himself, and a fear lest her brother's good-natured geniality should ever make him forget that she saw in him only a traitor and rebel, who had been taken in out of compassion as he lay dying at her door.

One day, not long after he was able to crawl into the drawing-room and sit in Mrs. Maverick's own particular chair, Althea's "throw-a-poor-dog-a-bone" manner—which yet was always kept just within the limit of good-breeding—goaded him out of his resolve to appear unconscious of her unkindness. The surgeon had pronounced him convalescent—his wounds were healing, and his broken bones were beginning to unite. All these circumstances are, as every one knows, enough to try the temper of an angel, and Jasper was very irritable. When, therefore, Althea brought him a cup of particularly exquisite lemonade, made after a secret recipe known only to Mrs. Maverick, together with the latest issue of the *Post Boy*, on which appeared the words, "THE PSALM-SINGER UN-

MASKED," Jasper pushed the tray into the middle of the table—so abruptly that some of the lemonade was spilled into the saucer. "If I am sick enough to lie here and drink lemonade, Miss Digby," he said—his thin worn face flushing and his hand trembling so violently that, in the attempt to pour back the spilled lemonade, he drenched the *Post Boy*—"I am too sick to swallow the rhodomontade of hired scribblers. I shall esteem it a kindness if you will spare me until, if ever again, I am able to defend the cause I am ready to die for, but am now past even speaking for!"

Jasper became so ghastly pale as he said this, that Althea was frightened. But she was angry too—angry with him for having brought himself to this pass—and for other reasons—some of them too complicated to be put even into thought.

"You doubtless think me a miserable effeminate wretch, Miss Digby," he went on, a little colour presently returning to his face. "But the question is too burning, too personal, to be any less than a question of life and death to me. It is embittered by a thousand personal griefs—friends estranged, friends slain; judge if a sick man dare think much of such things! I know," he continued more calmly, and not without a ring of proud protest in his voice, which was steady enough now,—“I know that I owe all to your compassion, and nothing to your regard. You need not fear that I can ever forget it, or imagine you would not have shown as much to any other dying wretch. I have seen pity striving in you with the fear of being misunderstood, and my own pride has made yours more easy to bear.”

"I am sorry to have offended you," said Althea—her tone was sufficiently cold and haughty, but her face had crimsoned, though the knowledge that she had succeeded in offending him brought with it a considerable amount of satisfaction. "I supposed you would be anxious to learn how your friends fared"—she could not resist laying a scornful emphasis on the word *friends*—"and I thought this the least offensive method of apprising you of it."

"You wilfully misunderstand me!" cried Jasper, "and as wilfully, I think, refuse to see how great are the wrongs which you call it rebellion to resent."

"I see, Mr. Fleming," said Althea in a very hard tone, "that you and your friends are bringing about a war between two peoples who speak the same language. Any day—this very

moment, perhaps, while I say the words"—here all the hardness went out of her voice, and she spoke with deep suppressed feeling—"my own brother's blood may be shed—by a man who is of the same nation as himself, yet has been taught to hate him as a deadlier foe than a Frenchman!"

"'Tis you that hate us, Miss Digby; we have been patient, but the patient ass revolts at last. But what is the use of talking?" he said wearily. "Every word you say is a fresh sign that the quarrel is gone too far for words to be of any avail—the hatred which has been growing up between us so long can never now be uprooted but in fair fight. Perhaps we may so learn to respect one another—at present we can but hate and despise one another."

"You who talk so much of your country, Mr. Fleming," said Althea, looking down on him from under her long dark eyelashes, and finding a strange pleasure in being inexorable, "I wonder you should wish me not to love mine!"

"And hate your country's enemy," he said sadly. "'Tis the almost necessary consequence at such a pass as this. A brother offended is harder to be won than a fenced city. If I was a Frenchman, there's a native generosity in an English bosom, which would have made you forget your nation's quarrel with mine. And yet my obligation to you is so infinite, that 'tis scarce generous in you to show so plainly the aversion you feel."

"Indeed, Mr. Fleming, I was not aware that I had been wanting in good manners," returned Althea coldly. But she was on the point of relenting when he spoiled all by saying peevishly,—“Pray oblige me by taking these scurrilous papers away!”

"I am extremely sorry you don't like the *Post Boy*," she said with the most provoking calmness. "And very sorry too that I can't get you a copy of the *Spy* instead."

So saying she took up the *Post Boy*, and walked out of the room with considerable dignity—and Jasper would have had the worst of this encounter but for a gust of wind which happened at the instant of her going out to so snatch the door from her hand (somewhat encumbered by the *Post Boy*), that she appeared to have slammed it behind her. This cruelly jarred poor Jasper's broken bones, but was indirectly the cause of Althea's mending her manners; and upon the whole he had cause to be glad that it had happened.

Mrs. Maverick was coming downstairs just as the door banged, and Althea's bearing as she swept by her cousin plainly revealed that something was amiss. "The girl has been baiting that poor young man again, I'll be bound!" she thought, as she went in to the patient. "I declare she is as proud as Lucifer!"

Mrs. Maverick made a mental memorandum to give her spirited young relative a piece of her mind; and this she took an opportunity of doing on the following day, when Jasper, who was not so well, kept his room until after dinner. It happened that Mr. Harrison Gray had given them a call, and in asking after "the prisoner," had observed that he was a lucky rascal, to get a beautiful young woman to make his gruel for him, when, if he had his deserts, he ought to be hung in chains on Charlestown Neck alongside of Mark, the highwayman—to which Althea had returned that he had been pretty severely punished, and that as his brother had rendered hers a great service, she hoped there was no harm in showing him a little common humanity. "Of course," she added in a voice which she believed she had succeeded in making as hard as her heart, "we cannot look on him as an ordinary prisoner of war; but we could scarce have avoided doing what we have done, under the circumstances—'tis not done for his own sake."

Even Mrs. Maverick thought this was carrying loyalty too far—especially when combined with the banging of the patient's door—for Althea had been much too proud to say that this was an accident. So as soon as Mr. Gray had taken his leave (with a message for Mr. Fleming that he hoped to see him shortly restored to health and a sense of his duty), she began upon her cousin.

"My dear Althea," said the old lady, putting on her spectacles, and looking at Althea over them, "I think you cannot be aware of the great harshness you show, whenever Mr. Fleming is mentioned. In his present suffering condition, I'm really surprised at you. Your brother Fred is much displeased with your manner to Mr. Fleming, and has several times begged me to speak to you about it. He is in a very poor way, and if he should not get over it, you would not forgive yourself. 'Tis positively inhuman." Mrs. Maverick netted away vigorously as she said this. A glance at Althea showed her that that young lady was looking out of window, and apparently had not heard her.

"He is of course a very foolish and wrong-headed young man," she observed after a minute or two of silence. "But he is the brother of a person to whom you are under an undoubted obligation, and who is so devoted to him that he will think more of a kindness shown his brother than if it was done to himself. 'Tis true that Mr. Branxholm is unfortunately mixed up with the rebels—but as I've repeatedly told you, the weight of punishment will fall on the New England States—as you see it has done already. Virginia is a loyal Province at heart, and will be let off easy. All the best blood of the Colonies is in Virginia," continued the old lady, unconsciously bridleing. "My dear mother always felt that—although my father's connections was among the oldest families of Massachusetts. I've very little doubt that, on his submission, Mr. Noel would come off with a fine."

Mrs. Maverick paused again—to allow time for these words to produce their effect. Althea still stood by the window. Mrs. Maverick thought she perceived a slight droop of the head, and was encouraged to renew the attack more directly.

"I do really wish, my dear, you would be a little more womanly in your behaviour to poor Mr. Fleming," she said—wishing that Althea would speak, or at least look round. "I think he feels it. I have observed his eyes following you about the room in a very affecting manner—I've been quite sorry for the poor young man. I'm sure I disapproved of him as much you can do, when he was fomenting rebellion; but 'tis the boast of a true-born Briton to be generous to the vanquished. I feel no difficulty in being civil to him, and I don't suppose you pretend to be more loyal than me." As Mrs. Maverick said this, she looked every inch Governor Hutchinson's cousin. "I'm sure," she continued, "when I see him looking so ill, and yet so obstinate and wrong-headed, I feel as vexed with him as if he was my own son."

Still Althea made no sign. There was a long pause, during which nothing was heard but the snapping of the netting-pin, as Mr. Maverick deftly wove her meshes. At last, Althea went to the door, and there—with her hand on the lock, and her back turned to her cousin—she said in a very low voice; "I am sorry you and Fred think I have been inhumane—I did not intend it."

"Bless my heart!" thought the old lady, laying down her netting, and staring at the door—which Althea had closed behind her as gently as though she had feared to awaken her

venerable relative. "Bless my heart! I believe the girl was crying! That hint about Noel told well—I thought as it would!"

Mrs. Maverick resumed her netting with a complacent smile playing about her handsome mouth, and the glow of an approving conscience in her bosom. Neither the smile nor the glow had died away, when the door again opened, and Jasper came in—looking so pale and ill that Mrs. Maverick wondered indignantly how Althea could be so unfeeling; and rising instantly, she insisted on installing him in her own armchair. "Nay, I consider it yours while you are an invalid, Mr. Fleming," she said briskly, fairly forcing Jasper into it, who was still too weak to resist so much physical energy. "There—now you will be comfortable," said the good lady, taking another seat; "and I shall just be as well here. If you are looking for that naughty girl," she continued, observing that Jasper's eyes sought the chair near the window where Althea usually sat, "I don't think you'll see her for a while. She has gone to her room—I hope, penitent. I have been scolding her roundly for her incivility to you. In your present state I think it positively cruel, and so I've told her, and I think she felt it. Her brother is quite provoked at her. She is a warm-hearted girl at bottom, though I can hardly expect you to believe it. But if you could see her with your brother, you would not know her for the same creature. However, I've told her that high principles are consistent with feminine gentleness, and I hope she'll remember it."

During this speech, Jasper changed colour so often that Mrs. Maverick began to fear that perhaps her words to Althea were truer than she herself had believed, and that Jasper might indeed not get over it. "The slightest emotion throws him into a perfect fever," she thought; "and then that hard-hearted girl goes an' bangs the door! I could box her ears!"

Mr. Maverick would have been astounded to hear that she had herself just hurt Jasper much more than Althea had done when she slammed that door—so little can we sometimes judge how our words or deeds will affect another. And when Jasper did speak, his manner was so calm, and his words were so reasonable, that Mrs. Maverick's conscience continued to approve her. "If you allude to yesterday," he said, with—as Mrs. Maverick noticed—a very weary smile, "I happened to be looking at the door at the moment, and I saw that it escaped from Miss Digby's hand; I am convinced 'twas a pure accident."

"I hope it was," said Mrs. Maverick. "At any rate, Mr. Fleming, 'tis very good-natured of you to say so, and I trust Althea is ashamed of herself."

Althea probably was, for she sent word at tea-time that she had a headache, and would not come down.

The next day, she and Mr. Fleming chanced to be alone for some time after dinner. It was a very hot day, and there was no breeze astir to slam the doors. Fragrant airs floated in from the country, and mingling with the dusty air of the town, revived the pent-up townspeople.

"Oh, how I wish we could get out into a country lane!" exclaimed Althea, as she breathed such a whiff of summer-sweetness. Then, having broken the silence which had been hanging over them both, she went on hastily,—“Mr. Fleming, I should like to tell you that I did not intend to bang that door yesterday.”

"I knew you did not," replied Jasper quietly. "It was an accident—I saw it."

"I have been—I don't know what I have been—but I ask your pardon," continued Althea in an unsteady voice, and with downcast eyes.

"I am prepared to pardon you for anything," said Jasper, with a mournful smile, which Althea did not see—her eyes being fixed on the buckle on his shoe. "But I should like to know what you ask it for."

"For—for being—for behaving——"

"For remembering I am a rebel, Miss Digby? Nay, I never wished you to forget it."

So nicely are feelings balanced in the human breast, that these words irritated Althea singularly. "Nor could I forget it," she said, looking up, with a relapse into haughtiness; "but I ought to have remembered that an enemy ceases to be an enemy, when he is vanquished."

It was a good thing that Althea had resumed her study of Jasper's shoe-buckle, for he looked decidedly amused at this speech.

"'Tis true—I was vanquished," he said. "Then is it peace between us?" he asked, with so much sweetness in look and voice, that Althea's pride once more smoothed its ruffled plumes. She held out her hand, and Jasper took it in his for the space of a moment; but he did not kiss it, as she thought he was going to do. She would have been almost as angry

with him for doing so, as she was piqued that he did not. "I owe my life to your brother," he said, "and I shall never forget that."

He sat so still after Althea had left him, that Mrs. Maverick, who peeped in at the open door, thought he was asleep; but he was only thinking.

"It was better not," he said to himself, as the sleepy afternoon seemed to grow hotter and more breathless. "The path is difficult enough already."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE WAY TO GLORY.

THE Way to Glory leads over rapid rivers and headlong torrents, over lakes, bogs, and swamps, by craggy ravines, and up stony mountains, where the road is always growing rougher and steeper, and the air more piercing keen. When the wilderness of the forest is left behind, there begins another wilder waste of morass, and rock, and brushwood—scantier and scantier, as the way—it has long ceased to be a road, or even a path—toils up and up—until the rain turns to snow, and the wind to ice. This is the way to glory—and all the while we are not quite sure of our way. What if we find we have missed it—crossed at the wrong carrying-place, or gone astray in the mountains of Maine—when we trust at last to see the waters of the great Chaudière Pond? The seekers after glory have eaten salt pork till their souls loathe it; and now there is but half a square inch of that for each man's dinner, to be swallowed raw, with half a biscuit for supper.

"We must be near the top now," they say to one another. They press on for dear life through the frightful loneliness. For more than ten days, they have seen no trace of human habitation or presence, except a single deserted wigwam which they passed three days ago. Noel Branhholm finds his spirits almost as much oppressed by the frightful savageness of the landscape as by the scanty food, the biting cold, and the toils of the way.

This little party of eleven in all has been sent on by Colonel Arnold, to explore and mark the best route—Arnold's only knowledge of which is derived from the journal of an English officer of engineers—who came this way fifteen years ago—some

information from Indians, and a very rude map. The expedition marches in three divisions, with a day between each, to prevent confusion. First, comes Morgan of Virginia, with his three companies of riflemen, and among these are Meshach Pike and Noel Branhholm. Then Greene of Rhode Island, with three companies of infantry; then Meigs of Massachusetts, with four; and, lastly, Enos of Connecticut, with three.

Noel is by this time not a little proud of his own discernment, in enlisting under Colonel Benedict Arnold. If never-ceasing vigilance, far-reaching forethought, and absolutely dauntless valour, can ensure success, this expedition is certainly on the way to glory. At each halting-place, Arnold sees each several division re-embark, and when the last has started, passes them all in a fast birch canoe, paddled by Indians, and waits for them at the next halt. But the way is longer and more difficult than he had bargained for, and the weather is breaking; so he sends on a little band of volunteers to find the best way.

Even this little band is now reduced to four, and a guide or two. At the first pond, where the Great Carrying-place begins, the weakest were left behind, with half the provisions, while the other half pushed on to the Dead River. By day they scramble through the wilderness, and by night they sleep on branches of fir and hemlock. So rare is foot of man, red or white, in this untrodden wild, that one of their muskets, lost or forgotten, will lie here undiscovered for seventy-five years.

Two days of hard travelling on half an inch of raw pork brings the van of the exploring party to a great pine, forty feet high, without a branch.

"From here we should see the Chaudière's head-waters," says Archibald Steele, the young leader of the party. "Who will climb up and look?"

They all stand round in breathless suspense, while Robert Cunningham swarms up. They scarcely dare call to him to know what he can see. The next five minutes will decide whether they have lost their way. But no—from the tree-top he sees the river winding away to the north, till it spreads into the great lake fifteen miles off.

And now, having found the way to glory, back with all speed! The storm breaks on them—they are drenched with sleet—the trees crack and tumble like that spruce-pine which

fell in the Shadow of Death. Noel, looking back on this, wonders how he could have thought it so terrible.

When they have picked up the weaker half of their party, and are fairly on the road back to the main body, it is a race between them and hunger. On the second day, they shoot a diver. They boil him at night; every one throws his own bit of pork (marked with a skewer that he may know it again) into the pot, and that night they sup on the broth. Next morning, after a short uneasy sleep on the spongy ground, each man takes his own inch of pork and swallows it. Then the diver is divided, hunter's fashion. "Whose shall this be?" cries the carver, holding up the head; and Noel, his back turned to the pot, says, "Mine." So all is done fairly.

Another weary day and night go by, while the starving explorers leave many a mile behind; and then, next day, they run one of their canoes against a sunken tree, and tear the frail skiff from stem to stern. The rent was done in one disastrous moment, but many precious hours are spent on the mending. They find some birches, and strip off the bark; they dig up cedar-roots for thread, and collect pitch from the pines. At last the rent is made whole, and, weary and hungry, they set off once more.

As the sun went down on this day, Noel, whose canoe was a little behind, and who was light-headed with hunger and fatigue, was tormented by strange fancies. He thought he saw figures flitting before and behind him, on the rocky banks of the river. He fancied he heard Polyphemus croak,—“King Philip's coming;” but it was only the inarticulate cry of some bird that had never known man. Once, when the rays of the sinking sun fell red and low, darting arrows of light among the tree-trunks, he could have sworn he saw Mary Fleming, walking a little in advance of him under the forest trees. From time to time, she turned her head—as if to look at him—and stretching out her arm, pointed in the direction in which he was going. It seemed to him that the apparition smiled.

“Am I asleep? or am I going mad?” thought Noel, rubbing his eyes—which indeed were heavy with want of rest. “It won't do to wreck another canoe,” he thought, rousing himself. The wraith of Mary had vanished; but presently he saw it again—waving, pointing, and smiling as before.

“Is she come to warn me of my death?” he thought, with a contraction of his heart. “Am I to die here in the wilderness, where no one will ever know my grave?”

At that moment, he heard a sharp crack of a rifle on in front, followed instantly by a shout. The vision had vanished; but it could scarcely have been a messenger of ill, for when Noel, rowing hard, had come up with the others, he found them leaping ashore round a moose-deer, which lay dead on the bank.

It was nearly a week before they regained the main body. The various divisions of it, push on as fast as they would, found it terrible work. At Norridgewack Falls they left all trace of man behind—their last sight of man's handiwork being the ruined altar and chapel where good Father Ralle had once laboured for six-and-twenty years, and around whose bloody grave the wilderness had now grown rank for fifty. The cross which marked it was the last Christian emblem they saw for many and many a weary day. Then came swamp, bog, precipice, mountain, stream, and rapid. Sometimes they row, sometimes they push their canoes along with poles; often they jump ashore and pull with ropes. At night, their lodging is on the cold ground—and often in the morning they find that Dame Nature has flung a second blanket on that hard bed, all woven of the whitest new-fallen snow.

And so, over one carrying-place after another, they come at last to a boggy swamp, grown over with ghastly white moss and wizened bushes, where they sink knee-deep in the mud as they carry the canoes across, until they launch them on the swift-running waters of the Dead River. Summer travellers admire the grandeur of desolation and solitude; but these winter-beset soldiers, toiling their painful way up the steeps which lead to glory, call the ragged woods and rugged mountains "hideous."

Memory, like a magic-lantern, sheds its light here and there on the darkness of the past. When Noel Branhholm was an old man he loved to tell his grandchildren of certain incidents, which still stood out as clear as ever through the mist of years. He was never tired of telling, nor they of listening, how, one evening, they came to a river in flood, and for a moment could see no dry ground—until they made out, through the gathering gloom, a knoll rising out of the submerged forest—how they gained this, and then had to wade to a tree, and cut it down for fuel; and how, having at last coaxed the damp wood into a blaze, they gathered around the fire. Perhaps this night stood out so clear in Noel's memory, because Colonel Arnold himself was with their company, and (though Noel seldom

mentioned this when he told the story) had shared his cake of baked flour, which was all the supper that was forthcoming—no salmon-trout having been caught since the great storm a few days back. Colonel Arnold had talked with Noel as familiarly as ever, and they had wondered together how young Aaron Burr was faring, who had just been sent off disguised as a Catholic priest with a verbal message to General Montgomery.

"*This* is a famous opportunity—if only any of us live through it," Arnold said to Noel that night—and, as the fire-light flickered on his dark face, Noel saw an exulting smile play over it—"but the way is worse and longer than I thought, or than my map makes it out."

Provisions after this ran very short indeed, and the road grew worse and worse, till at a "ripply place" seven batteaux were lost, and the men barely escaped with their lives. Noel's company coming thither, found a notice to this effect nailed to a tree, and looked at each other in dumb dismay.

They have eaten the barber's powder-bag by this time. They stumble on, not quite sure of the way, till they come upon a batteau which Arnold, who has dashed forward as usual, has left for them. And so to a sandy beach where some of the men, seeing roots growing in the sand, dart out of rank, and tear them up like wild beasts.

"Why did they not all die, grandfather?" ask the children, when they hear these gruesome stories.

"Well, my dears, I used often to wonder why we did not," answers the old gentleman. "I really think we were kept alive by laughing at Mrs. Greer, Sergeant Greer's wife, who was such a figure of fun as never was seen, wading with her skirts tucked up. That woman had a genius for finding the shallowest places. The good lady was of a formidable size, but she trudged valiantly after her Sergeant—as virtuous as she was ample. There was not one of us durst let her see us grin—but grin we did. Then there was poor Shafer, the drummer-boy, who was the butt of us all. Once, I fished him out of the water, when he had tumbled, drum and all, off a log by which we were crossing—and didn't hurt the drum neither."

But the story which most thrilled the marrow of the children's bones, was the one which told how their grandfather, as he sat one evening by the fire, thinking of Old Virginia, and wishing he could just once hear Polyphemus say,—“I see you!” smelt a peculiar and not altogether unsavoury smell coming, as

it seemed, from a pot boiling over another fire a little way off. Sergeant Greer presently brought him a tin cup, with some greenish broth in it. The sergeant said it was bear—his honest countenance so plainly giving his words the lie that Noel insisted on knowing more, and Greer thereupon confessed that it was *dog*—Captain Dearborn's beautiful great dog, that every one was so fond of.

"But you wouldn't have it, would you, grandfather?" the children always asked at this point of the story; and their grandfather answered, as was expected of him, "No, my dears; my gorge rose at it somehow, and I gave the cup back to Greer, as quick as I could. It looked like hell-broth."

After this, some of them tried to sup off their moccasins and breeches; but alas! no amount of stewing availed here. Even the Sergeant could make nothing—though he gave them a fair trial—of a pair of old moose-hide small-clothes. Yet no one grumbled, for every one knew that Arnold was doing his best. He had pushed on now, with a small party of the strongest, for Sartigan, the nearest French settlement. He reached it late one night, and started with supplies next morning at sunrise. They came but just in time—and when the starving companies saw the cattle coming up the river, they wept for joy.

Not till now did Noel's young vigour give in—and still he struggled on by the friendly help of his companions, until, as they approached the St. Lawrence, he felt his strength fail him altogether, and sat down on a log, wondering if—as had happened to so many others who had died a few minutes after they gave in and sat down—this were to be the end of his march. As he sat there, conscious, but almost indifferent as to what should become of him, Colonel Arnold, riding in the rear, saw him, and dismounting, ran up to a settler's house close by.

"The man will take care of you—he is an honest fellow," said the Colonel, running out again in less than five minutes, followed more slowly by a farmer-looking man in a blanket-coat and a high cap, and coming to where Noel was sitting. "Get well as soon as you can, and come on."

Then he put a couple of silver dollars into Noel's pocket—Noel was almost past moving a finger, though he managed to sit up—and saying,—“In case of necessity,” squeezed his hand kindly, and in another moment was galloping after his men.

The terror of Arnold's approach had already spread as far as Quebec itself, where, by the mistake of *tôle* for *toile*, it was

reported that the men of Boston had come down over the mountains, clad in iron shirts.

And now, as soon as General Montgomery and his force can join him from Montreal, Benedict Arnold means to try and climb by the same way that, sixteen years ago, James Wolfe went up to death and glory.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE BLOCKADE OF BOSTON.

And what have you got now with all your designing,
But a town without victuals to sit down and dine in?

THE IRISHMAN'S EPISTLE.

JASPER'S recovery was slow—slower than his medical attendants could well account for. They, however, finally discovered the cause to be the patient's anxiety about his friends and the state of affairs in general. That he was depressed and gloomy was an undoubted fact. Even Captain Digby's conversation could not always cheer him.

The Captain kept his friend (as he had really by this time come to consider Jasper) informed of the progress of events; and Jasper, as he grew stronger, and able to walk out, had the opportunity of seeing for himself the entrenchments of Mr. Washington's army beyond Charlestown Neck, and sometimes had heard a distant shout, as some piece of artillery (notably the "Old Sow," brought from Ticonderoga) was placed in position. He also knew by a letter, which found its way to him in a somewhat mysterious manner, that his brother had started on his perilous expedition. Since then, the only events which had broken the monotony of the siege, were one or two other letters of remonstrance, sent by General Washington on the subject of the treatment of prisoners.

Gage had been deaf to the appeal of his old comrade; but Gage is no longer Governor of Massachusetts. His victory at Bunker's Hill had not been considered satisfactory. He lost too many men over it. Sir William Howe reigns in his stead—the last British Governor who shall ever mount the steps of the Province House of Boston.

One other excitement there has been of a mild sort—Dr. Church is, it is said, clapped up by his friends the rebels, on a

charge of treasonable correspondence. Besides this, there is really nothing, except the raids of Captain Wall of the *Rose*, and a cock-and-bull story about the ghost of Dr. Sewall. It seems that a good old woman, passing by the South Meeting (which has been desecrated by Burgoyne's dragoons, and Deacon Hubbard's fine carved pew carried off and made a pigstye of), uplifted her shrill old voice in lamentation, declaring that the sight was enough to make Dr. Sewall's ghost rise and protest—and so it did, one night shortly after, so frightening the Scotch sentinel, that his shrieks awoke the guard at the Province House over the way.

All through the summer the town was sickly. As winter approaches, one or two snows arrive from England, with pork and claret and other stores; but the troops feel that they are being left to get themselves out of a bad scrape as best they can. General Washington is too strong to be forced; the chief hope lies in the freezing over of the harbour, which may now be looked for shortly. Anticipating fighting his way out over the ice, Howe does his best to keep up the discipline of his troops, who have grown slovenly. They even come on duty in dirty shirts, leggings hanging about their knees, their hair badly powdered, and smoke when under arms.

After the New Year comes in (heralded with great rejoicings in the enemy's camp, which are as vinegar upon nitre to the beleaguered regiments), indignation at receiving no succour rises very high. Houses are being pulled now for firewood; the Old North went long ago—no more traitorous lanterns will be hung out from its steeple. The garrison's only diversions are a few skirmishes, and the theatricals in Fanueil Hall, and the Concert Hall—where the ragged Provincials are made exquisite fun of by their almost as ragged foes. There is to be a capital farce called the "Blockade of Boston" enacted shortly.

Meanwhile, if the blockaded forces did but know it, the Provincial army has no powder, and half the regiments disbanded on New Year's Day—their term being expired. But the new Union flag flies bravely in the wind, with its thirteen stripes and the crosses of St. Andrew and St. George, and Jasper's ears are gladdened by hearing the distant shouts which salute its unfurling.

Through the dreary monotony of these months, Althea had almost laid aside her rancour, and had even brought herself to talk calmly with Jasper of the great question, which had become the central fact in all their lives. If she ever felt disposed

to relapse into her old manner, she seldom did so, after a rumour reached Boston that the expedition to Quebec had failed, and that those who had not fallen in the assault were now prisoners of war.

One day, when the continued mild weather had almost destroyed the garrison's hopes of escaping except by ship, Miss Digby returned from a visit in the town, with the news that Sir William Howe had resolved to evacuate Boston, unless he was relieved by a certain day.

"What shall you do?" asked Jasper—to whom this was no news. There were still a good many rebels left in Boston, and Jasper could, had he chosen, have added the information that General Washington was contemplating giving a gentle flip to Sir William, if he were much longer in making up his mind to a move.

"I shall do as Cousin Maverick does," replied Althea. "Many of the loyal townsmen, I am told, intend to take refuge on board the King's ships. Of course I shall not return to England while Fred is in the Colonies. I've no natural protector left there—nor any relation with whom I should care to live."

"Would anything induce you to return to Oglethorpe?" asked Jasper, after a pause, during which he had doubted whether he should ask it.

"Nothing," answered Althea shortly. Then, as if in apology, she added not ungently,—“Much as we may lament it, we shall be enemies, as soon as the King's troops leave Boston.”

There was silence between them for many minutes—a painful silence, which neither knew how to break—and then Althea said impetuously,—“Mr. Fleming, have you considered all the consequences which may ensue, supposing even that you succeed? Are you so sure of your ground?”

“I think,” he said, “that I, and all but the most thoughtless—and there are always all sorts of men mixed up in great affairs—have considered the consequences, so far as is lawful.”

“So far as is lawful?” asked Althea, looking at him in grave surprise; “you surely can scarce mean that we should act without reflecting on the consequences of our actions?”

“This is a perplexing world, Miss Digby,” said Jasper—Althea thought he said it very sadly. “I believe 'twas intended to be so, in God's wisdom, as a means to our probation. Where were that, if a man could see all the road he is going, mapped forth plainly at starting?”

"Yet surely," she said, "when we foresee ill consequences, we should pause?"

"Principles, not consequences, must guide us," returned Jasper. "If we regarded remote consequences, 'twould palsy all action—and we may well be mistaken in our foreseeing, but hardly in our seeing. What possible act of any man's life is there, that might not peradventure turn to harm? No!" he cried, his eyes suddenly kindling; "let us do our part in this our day, and leave the rest to God! 'Tis the manifest duty of the people of these Provinces to preserve the liberties handed down to us by our forefathers. Perhaps it had been better for us that those liberties had never been threatened—with that we've no concern—'tis a barren speculation. They are threatened, and 'tis our duty to defend them, as I for one will do, with every drop of blood in my body!"

Althea did not speak for many minutes, and when she did, her voice trembled. "And what of those who see it their duty to oppose you?" she asked.

"To their own Master they stand or fall," he replied. "It seems to me, that when we give an account of our deeds, 'twill matter more how and in what spirit we did them, than what we did. But however this may be, my own duty is all that concerns me, and that I must do—and by God's help I will!"

Althea rose slowly from her chair, and went out of the room, only saying sadly; "I cannot contend with you, but my duty must be for ever opposed to yours."

It was on the evening of this day, that the Farce of the "Blockade of Boston" was given in the Concert Hall. Althea (who perhaps thought she had been a little too easy on Mr. Fleming in the afternoon) made up for it in the evening, by asking him, as a particular favour, to be good enough to escort her cousin and herself to this precious performance. But she was deservedly punished. Everybody was there, including Governor Howe; but the play had not gone far before Althea was forced to confess to herself, that she wished she had not brought Mr. Fleming to see British officers laughing at an enemy they could scarcely be said to have yet beaten. She was mortified when Mrs. Maverick laughed at the antics of a fellow got up to travesty Sam Adams, with wild gray hair, a wig all awry, and holes in his stockings. Jasper saw her annoyance with inward satisfaction, but he looked on in grim silence until there was a pause in the piece.

"I do not think, Miss Digby, that you despise this fooling much less than I do," he observed. For a moment, her eyes met his. "I am ashamed of it," she said, with an irrepressible movement of indignation—"ashamed that my countrymen can think to hide their disgrace under so sorry a jest. It will be time enough to make merry at our enemy's expense, when he no longer holds us besieged."

She paused, and glanced at Mrs. Maverick. Seeing that estimable lady deep in a greasy little programme—hastily written on a sheet of paper torn out of an account-book—which she had procured from the door-keeper, Althea turned again to Jasper. "Mr. Fleming," she said hurriedly, "there's something I've wished to say to you, and to-night may be the last opportunity I shall ever have of saying it. I hardly know why I say it—yet I must, before our paths divide for ever. I once, by a pure accident, overheard you say to your brother, that I was one of the women who make men traitors. I was very angry with you at the time; but since then I've wished to tell you that you did me an injustice. I should be glad indeed that any one should return to his allegiance—but it must be because he was convinced of his error. Loyal as I am to my country and my King, less than this could only move my contempt."

She had laid her hand lightly on his arm as she began—her touch rested there but an instant, but it seemed to reopen his wounds, and to burn like fire in his veins. Yet he spoke as calmly as though his heart were not throbbing as if it would leap out of his bosom. "I knew you had heard what I said—I saw it in your eyes," he answered. "I repented of the words as soon as I had uttered them—I had no right to form so hasty a judgement, and I have long since known that my words were as unjust as they were unwarrantable. I can only comfort myself by the reflection that no opinion of mine can have caused you much uneasiness."

Althea had risen to her feet—as Jasper supposed, to look for her brother. As she looked down on him, he saw a strange expression in her beautiful eyes, which flashed through the tears that suffused them. "You would hardly believe," she said, with a kind of proud humility, and forcing her lips to a smile, "how much uneasiness those words caused me." And then the curtain rose, and every one sat down, as a tall gaunt figure, arrayed like a hedge-general in ragged regimentals, and armed with a portentous rusty sword, came on the stage. Before,

however, this presentment of General Washington could open his mouth, a Sergeant rushed on behind him, exclaiming, "The Yankees are attacking our works on Bunker's Hill!"

His words were received with applause, as part of the play, and Captain Digby remarked to his friend the Ensign that the fellow did that capitally well! But almost before the words were said, every one in the hall was electrified at hearing Sir William Howe—who had instantly sprung to his feet—call out, "Officers, to your alarm-posts!"

Many of the ladies shrieked, and some of them fainted. The officers and soldiers present immediately left the hall, and as they went out a heavy booming sound, coming at regular intervals, filled the night air with its ominous tolling.

As the non-combatant portion of the audience poured confusedly out into the streets, Captain Digby snatched a moment to kiss his sister.

"Don't be uneasy, Ally," he said. "Remember you're a soldier's sister"—this, being precisely the fact which was making Althea uneasy, was not particularly consoling. "For my part," he continued, "a smart engagement would be a prodigious relief to my spirits—never was so hipped in all my life! I wish they was Frenchmen—'tis a cursed disagreeable thing to kill fellows that speak one's own language—but that's their affair—of course a soldier must do his duty, whether the enemy are Frenchmen or not. But it does come more natural to cut down a parley-voos." Here the Captain perceived Jasper, and became as red as his own coat. "At any rate, I shan't cut *you* down to-night, my dear fellow, and I hope I never shall," he said, extending his hand. "I can't of course ask you to wish me God speed—'tis to be expected you wish me at the devil, though I'm hanged if I can look on you as an enemy."

"I hope at least that you will return safe and sound to-morrow morning," said Jasper, shaking him warmly by both hands.

"Thank you, my dear fellow, thank you," cries the Captain. "Good-night, Ally; I shall be back in the morning—don't fret about me!"

Although the alarm was a true one, nothing very important happened that night; but a few mornings afterwards, Boston awoke to see Dorchester Heights occupied by General Thomas. As this placed the town at the enemy's mercy, Sir William Howe made instant preparations to attack with the ships. Meantime

Putnam began to move down on the Charlestown side. A battle, to which Bunker's Hill should be a mere skirmish, seemed inevitable—when Heaven interposed. A furious wind sprang up, which increased to a storm so terrific that no boat could live in the surf. The human combatants were compelled to wait until the conflict of the elements had abated. In this predicament—abandoned by the home authorities, hemmed in by the enemy, the fleet and army complaining of each other—Sir William Howe called a council, at which it was resolved to evacuate.

There was an indirect attempt at driving a bargain with the enemy—who was to let Sir William depart in peace, on condition he did no mischief in the town. Mr. Crean Brush, however, was very busy for a day or two plundering stores—although Sir William sent round the provost and the hangman to string up the first man caught red-handed. But on the Saturday night, General Washington (who was afraid reinforcements might arrive, and spoil all) jogged Sir William's elbow, by throwing up a breast-work on Nook's Hill, which commands Boston Neck. This was coming to close quarters indeed; and a deserter bringing in a report that an immediate assault was intended, the troops began to embark at four o'clock on Sunday morning.

Great was the confusion in the dark streets and on the wharves. Seventy-eight ships and transports all getting ready for sea, and twelve thousand soldiers, sailors, and refugees all hurrying to embark—the last with their families and worldly effects, and obliged to man their own vessels, as men enough could not be spared from the transports. Members of Council, Commissioners, Custom-house officers, clergymen, merchants, farmers, tradesmen, mechanics, women and children, sick and wounded, were crowded into every available kind of transport. The men were glad to get out of the fever-stricken half-starved town, but the officers were in very poor spirits.

“'Tis a damned shame!” says Captain Digby. “We are left to get out of the hole as we can—no despatches since October!”

For they do not know that Ministers, being goaded with their neglect, did at last send a great supply—but so late in the season that half the ships were wrecked, and the British Channel was strewn with dead sheep and hogs.

But the refugees and the loyal inhabitants of Boston were the chief sufferers—leaving, as they did, country, home, friends, and often worldly goods behind them. One must needs feel a great pity for these unfortunate persons, whose consciences in

some cases, and whose fears in others, bade them side with their King, at the cost of every one of their old associations, and who (even those of them who were undoubtedly conscientious in their choice) have received but very little admiration, even from the side for which they made so great a sacrifice.

Captain Digby took leave of Jasper Fleming with many expressions of good-will, and begged him to give his most affectionate remembrances to Colonel and Mrs. Braunholm, Noel, and Miss Mary.

"'Tis a cursed thing we should be forced to be enemies, Fleming," he said, with a sincere forgetfulness of having once thought Jasper a detestable coxcomb. "I'm sure we was cut out to be friends, and it's given me the greatest pleasure to make your acquaintance."

"Don't say that, Digby," said Jasper, pressing his hand. "I shall always consider I owe you my life. But for you, I shouldn't be here."

"Don't speak of it, Fleming," cries Fred, "Noel did much more for me than ever I've done for you—which was mere common humanity, and a pleasure besides—and I beg you'll never think of it again. Well, God bless you—and don't forget to give my best respects to Miss Mary."

The parting between Jasper and Althea was rather bitter.

"To-day restores you to liberty and your friends," said the young lady, as she bade him farewell. "And I suppose the kindest wish I can form for you is that we may never meet again."

"Why should we not meet again in happier days, when our quarrel is reconciled?" said Jasper, holding her hand, and speaking in a quick agitated voice. "Sooner or later it must be so; this state of things cannot last for ever. Will you not at least give me a message for my mother and Noel?"

"Give my love to your mother and Mary," she replied; "and you may tell Noel that I wish I had repaid him better."

Jasper turned very pale, though he could have expected no other answer. He thanked her for all the kindness she had shown him in his illness. To Mrs. Maverick he expressed himself more strongly still; but in the nature of the case it was a very painful farewell, and there was soreness on both sides.

And so, leaving crows' feet and dummy sentinels on Bunker's Hill, to gain time, Sir William embarked, and dropped down towards Nantasket Roads; and the sceptre of New England had departed from Great Britain for ever.

It was as Althea had said; long before the ship which carried her had passed Castle William, the streets of Boston resounded to the beat of drum, as Ward marched in with the thirteen stripes flying in the gusty air; and Jasper Fleming was being eagerly greeted by friendly voices, who welcomed him almost as though he had been returned from the dead.

The very first news which he asked and heard was of the expedition to Quebec—concerning which disastrous rumours had already reached him. He now heard how Arnold, by almost superhuman daring and endurance, had struggled on to Quebec, in spite of Colonel Enos's desertion; how he had waited three weeks at Point Levy for Montgomery—who, having taken peaceable possession of Montreal, had, after a march only less toilsome than Arnold's, joined him with all the artillery he could muster. How they had besieged the town, amid the snows of a Canadian winter; how Arnold climbed up the way that Montgomery went with Wolfe sixteen years before, but found the garrison too strong. And then how, early in the dark of a December dawn, on the last morning of the year, and under cover of a furious snowstorm, the assault was made; how Montgomery fell under Cape Diamond—how Dearborn's company, having to cross the Charles at high-tide, were too late—how another company lost their way in the deep snow—yet how Arnold and Morgan and Thayter fought their way through the first barrier, and were pushing on, when a ball shattered Arnold's leg, and with his fall all was lost.

A letter had been received from Noel by Mr. Lawrence Fleming, addressed to Jasper, which now reached him, telling this and more.

"I had the happiness," wrote Noel, "to be able to assist the General back to quarters, every step marked in his blood. Now, wounded and helpless as he is, he is as good as a host. From his bed, he is blockading Quebec, and he swears he'll lead them a dance as soon as he can crawl. 'Tis as you say, dear brother; action is the way to forget one's private griefs. I think I hear you say, 'What, hath the boy any?' Yet who is there in these times but hath some friend to deplore—fallen in his country's cause, or, worse perhaps to bear, estranged by it? Meanwhile, action, action! And there will be plenty of that where General Arnold commands, I promise you! And let me tell you, you had never maintained the blockade of Boston so long, without the artillery the General took at the forts last May."

CHAPTER XXXI.

FLATBUSH.

It has, I believe, been already mentioned that Mrs. Maverick possessed a small estate on Long Island. It was a farm in King's County, about two miles from Flatbush, on the New Utrecht Road, and had been let for many years to a respectable Dutch farmer named Jacobus Quackenboss.

During the many days that Sir William Howe lay in Nantasket Roads, there was ample leisure for considering what had best be done. Captain Digby was urgent for Mrs. Maverick and his sister to go to Long Island. The fleet was only to remain at Halifax long enough to refit, and to be joined by the Admiral. Why, asked Fred, expose themselves to the hardships of the voyage there and back, when, by going at once to Long Island, they could await in comfort the coming of the fleet? Long Island was loyal—it had refused to send a deputy to the Continental Congress. Mrs. Maverick had many friends there. Mr. Justice Jones, whose seat was at Fort Neck, was her connection by marriage, and would be able to protect her—should protection be necessary.

"I believe, my dear Fred, you're right," said Mrs. Maverick. "I think we can't do better nor take your advice. What a comfort 'twill be, to be sure, to find oneself in a loyal neighbourhood!"

Althea was naturally reluctant to leave her brother, but she had really no choice in the matter. Mrs. Maverick inclined to go to Long Island, and the advantages of so doing were too obvious to be denied. So when Fred one afternoon came aboard the ship which carried Sir William and most of the ladies, bringing with him a rough-looking person whom he presented as the Captain of the *Three Friends* of Bristol, chartered by Sir William to carry despatches to Governor Tryon, she took a tearful farewell of her brother, and next morning was tossing in sight of the barren sands of Nantucket.

The *Three Friends* was doubtless a safe craft—being uncommonly broad in the beam for her tonnage—but she rolled so amazingly, that by the time she passed the Narrows, her unfortunate passengers were too anxious to feel themselves once more on *terra firma*, to pay much attention to the assurances of the

captain of the *Asia* man-of-war (whom they spoke), that they would find Long Island swarming with rebels.

These comfortable assurances received confirmation the very instant the ladies set foot ashore. Mrs. Maverick, somewhat unsteady on her feet from long tossing at sea in a small and crowded vessel, stepped upon her cloak, and had nearly fallen.

"Take my arm, Ma'am," said a seafaring man, stepping forward, and helping the old lady up the slippery steps—and Althea, looking up at the sound of a familiar voice, saw the angular form and lank countenance of Captain Ward. He knew her at once, and made her a polite bow.

"I hope I see you well, Ma'am," he said. "P'rhaps ef I was to hope anything mor'n that, I might ketch myself a-sayin' something orkard—least said is soonest mended. You know my sentiments, I reckon, and I reckon as I know yourn—so we'll both agree to hold our tongues. But I don't feel it any-ways agin my conscience to say as I hope the Lef-tenant's pretty well?"

"He is quite well, thank you, Captain Ward," replied Althea—who, somewhat to the Captain's surprise, and very much to his pleasure, had shaken hands with him, and evidently intended to be gracious.

"Is he now?" said the Captain, eyeing her with much interest. "He's a good-hearted young man. I shouldn't mind sailin' with him agin to-morrer. By the bye, I saw a friend o' yourn yesterday mornin', over to New York——" here the Captain indicated that city, by jerking his right thumb north-westwards. "Leastways, he was p'inted out to me. 'See that fine-lookin' man speakin' to Gin'ral Stirling?' says my friend to me; 'that's Gin'ral Branxholm o' Virginia.'"

It did not escape the Captain's penetration that Miss Digby looked pained and constrained, and seemed at a loss for a reply.

"Young Mr. Branxholm's a fine-sperrited young feller," he observed, with the benevolent intention of smoothing matters over. "No one can't help likin' him; but his brother's the man for my money. You should jist hear him speak at a town-meetin'—ahem!" Here the Captain suddenly perceived that he was on the point of saying something awkward, and hastily demanded how the ladies meant to do, and where they were going? and whether all that was their baggage?

"We are going to my farm at Flatbush," said Mrs. Maverick—in a tone which conveyed a whole volume of disapproval of

rebellion in general. "And we should be greatly indebted to you, sir, if you could procure us some conveyance."

"With the greatest of pleasure, Ma'am," returned the Captain, who was by this time leading the way into the parlour of the ferry inn. The inn kitchen was crowded with wagoners, who looked curiously at the ladies, as they passed into the parlour. Mrs. Maverick sank wearily into an elbow-chair.

"I only hope, child, we may not have cause to wish ourselves at Halifax!" she said in an impressive whisper, with a shake of her head towards the kitchen.

The Captain had promised to return as soon as possible, but had warned them that he might be absent some little time, so they ordered refreshments. The hostess, who waited upon them herself, told them that most of the Whigs they might see, "for I wouldn't advise anybody to call 'em rebels—not for 'em to hear you, that is," she remarked in a lower voice—were from Suffolk County.

"They've been at us these six months to send depputies to Congress," said the good woman—whose personal appearance much resembled that of Don Quixote's faithful squire, could that worthy have been arrayed in half-a-dozen petticoats. "But, Lord save you, we only want to be let alone. We don't wish the King no harm, and we don't want to burn our own fingers. But the Whigs are very mad; we had Colonel Heard here in the winter, tryin' to make us take the oath. And them as voted against a depputy had to give up their guns. They took my husband's; leastways,"—here she whispered mysteriously—"I hid his best fowling-piece in the loft, and they never found it. But they took the two old ones, and they threatened him what they'd do, if he smuggled any powder from the *Asia*. That's all their fear. They think the Tories are a-going to make a rising; but, lor', why should they? My husband says, let the King's soldiers do the fighting—they're paid for it—and let honest folks mind their own business."

"But we all ought to help, as loyal subjects, in these dreadful times," began Mrs. Maverick, scandalised at this want of public spirit.

"There's many ways of helpin', if you come to that, without rummin' your head agin a wall," remarked the hostess mysteriously. "I don't see as we're called to ruin ourselves—and the King perhaps never so much as hear of it."

A call to the kitchen coming at this moment, she left the

ladies to their repast. Although the parlour door was shut, the passage was so narrow that almost every word could be heard. There was a brisk discussion going on, and although it was not much past noon, the flowing bowl had evidently not flowed in vain.

“Look you, Jacob, you’d better take the cath, and put the accusers to silence,” said a sarcastic voice.

“Swaller it like a four-pound shot, Jacob,” chimed in some one else.

“Better turn patriot, Jacob, before it’s too late,” said a third voice, which potatoes had rendered mellow. “’Tud be a pity to have to tar and feather a man o’ your figger; you ain’t the build, nuther, for ridin’ on a rail. Why be obstinate? Here’s His Excellency’s health, and Confusion to tyrants!”

There was an angry murmur of several voices, during which it may be presumed the speaker tossed off his glass, for, as if inspired by the toast, he presently struck into a song:

“Our country calls for swords and balls
Our drums aloud do rattle,
Our fifer’s charms arouse to arms,
And Liberty calls to battle.
Tol de rol, de rol, de rol!

“You don’t seem to like the song, Jacob,” he continued—and there was a sound as though he slapped some one on the back not over gently. “There’s another verse, as ’ull suit your complaint better:

“We have some noble Congressmen,
Elected for our nurses,
And every jolly farmer will
Assist ’em with their purses.
Tol de rol——

“That is, if he don’t we shall be under the sad necessity of compellin’ him,” observed the singer, cutting short the burden of his song to interpolate this remark.

“And they may stay at home we say,
And enjoy their state of pleasre,
While we do go and fight their foe,
And save their lives and treasure.
Tol de rol, de rol, de rol!

“Ain’t that only reasonable, Jacob? Oh, Jacobus Quackenboss, Jacobus Quackenboss, I have great searchings of heart concerning thee, Jacobus Quackenboss! I fear thou art a

time-server, Jacobus—a double-dealer, like thy namesake the patriarch—a truckler to the Powers that be—a——”

“You let Mr. Quackenboss alone in my house,” cried a coarser and louder voice. “He’s mindin’ his business—you mind yourn! This sort o’ song don’t go down here. I’m master in this house, an’ I’ll let you know it!”

“Don’t quarrel, gentlemen,” said another voice, in a tone of mock entreaty. “What will the ladies in the parlour think of us?” Here there was a laugh. “I know a verse or two of a song,” he continued, “that may be will please the company better—’twas made by a friend o’ my own.”

And to the tune of *Yankee Doodle* he struck up in a rollicking voice :

“Colonel Heard has come to town,
A-thinking for to plunder,
Before he’d done he had to run—
He heard the cannon thunder.

“And when he came to Hempstead town,
He heard the cannon rattle—
Poor Colonel Heard he ran away,
And dared not face the battle.”

There was a roar of laughter. Pots and glasses rattled and clattered, and a general hubbub followed, in which every one seemed to be talking at once.

Althea had listened with a heightened colour, and an expression of haughty anger. Mrs. Maverick looked anxious and displeased.

“If I have unwittingly brought you into a situation unfit for a young gentlewoman, my dear, I shall never forgive myself,” she said in great distress. “I am sure I acted for the best, as I thought——”

“My dear cousin,” said Althea, “I fear there is scarce a place to which we could have gone where we should not have been exposed to hear rebel sentiments.”

“I believe Quackenboss is there—I am sure I heard that poor misguided wretch say ‘Jacobus Quackenboss,’” pursued the old lady, knitting her brows. “If Quackenboss has turned rebel——”

But at this moment Captain Ward came in, followed by a stolid and rather sheepish-looking individual, who seemed to come against his will.

“Oh, Mr. Quackenboss!” exclaimed Mrs. Maverick on

seeing this latter person; "I daresay you're surprised to see me, but I had no means of sending you word as I was coming. I hope, however, you've no objections to this young lady and me spending the summer at the farm, as we used to do in my poor husband's time."

"Well; no; I s'pose you can come. But things ain't ready," said Quackenboss slowly.

"The waggin's here handy," put in Captain Ward, cutting short any further demur on Jacob's part; "and the landlady'll lend you a couple of cheers, and you'll get in nicely afore dark—the road not being very bad."

The Captain assisted in hoisting the ladies up into the wagon—a work of some difficulty in Mrs. Maverick's case, as she declared she could not and would not go up a ladder, which the ostler had brought from the loft for her convenience. However, she was safely landed at last, and she and Althea were comfortably settled in two broad-bottomed, splay-legged elbow-chairs, on either of which the most ponderous of the old Dutch Governors of New York might have sat down without a misgiving. The Captain shot up over the tail of the wagon, as though it had been a ship's side, to shake Miss Digby by the hand, made his bow to Mrs. Maverick, wished them a safe voyage and a joyful coming into port, and disappeared—while Jacobus took command of the horses from a turned-up cask in the front of the wagon.

Mrs. Maverick, who had expressed her thanks to the Captain, was graciously pleased to wave her hand to him, when, some ten minutes after (Jacobus having by that time got as much as fifty yards from the ferry), they saw him still standing at the inn door.

"I'm sure I don't know what we should have done without him," she observed. "Did he say what he was doing here, my dear Althea?"

Althea replied that, from a word or two he had dropped, she fancied he was watching the coast. As this could only mean that he was watching it in the rebel interest, Mrs. Maverick sighed.

"The Bible says rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft," she said presently. "And I'm sure 'tis as mysterious in the way it spreads, and the people it gets hold of."

Althea said nothing. The ride was a very silent one. Jacobus answered Mrs. Maverick's civil inquiries by mono-

syllables, or by the very briefest of sentences—the fewness of the words being, however, somewhat eked out by the slowness with which they were uttered. Jacobus was every inch a Dutchman. Square and solid, slow and sure, he diffused around him a sense of industrious leisure, which he appeared to have communicated to the great white horses which drew the two-spanner. In person he was capacious—as were his nether garments. His hair was still of a bright chestnut colour, so bright and thick that it might have been a wig,—but Jacobus would have scorned any such attempt to improve upon nature. His eyes were very small; and though it could not be said that they never looked one in the face, they seldom willingly dwelt long on a human countenance. When Jacobus was engaged in conversation with any one (it would be more correct to say, when any one was engaged in conversation with Jacobus), he usually became deeply interested in some object in a far corner of the room or in the extreme distance of the landscape, occasionally shooting a glance to see if the enemy was still there. But this afternoon his presence was soothing. After nine months spent in a besieged town, with scarcely a day unbroken by the roar of cannon, the quiet of a country road, the sleepy turn of the wheels, the budding green of the young trees, all brought a delightful restfulness to the travellers.

“Surely, dear cousin, we have exchanged war for peace,” said Althea, laying her hand on Mrs. Maverick’s, with an irrepressible yearning for sympathy. And Mrs. Maverick replied, “God grant, dear child, that we have!”

And so they rumbled along towards Flatbush, in the lingering March sunset—which always looks like a smile shining before the tears are dry.

* * * * *

The old Dutch farmhouse before which Jacobus Quackenboss brought his waggon to a halt, just as one or two pale-eyed stars showed in the fading saffron of the sky, looked the fitting goal of their journey. “Here is peace,” said the closed windows, the neatly-kept flower-border under the house, the solemn old white-oak which stood in such neighbourly nearness to the sloping eave—even the old dog who came out stretching and yawning, with a bark or two out of pure formality—everything spoke of settled ways, of ease and quietness.

“Fetch out the steps. I’ve got Mrs. Maverick,” said Jacobus to a gray-haired man and a raw-boned youth, who

came from the back of the house at the sound of the wagon-wheels. "Yonichy! Yonichy! Come out, Yonichy!"

A short stout woman in a close-fitting cap appeared at the door, shading a candle with her hand.

"Come out, Yonichy; I've got Mrs. Maverick," repeated Jacob.

"Good lack!" exclaimed the woman, coming out. "How do you do, Ma'am? Dear, dear, if I had but a-known——"

"It was impossible, my good Mrs. Quackenboss," said Mrs. Maverick, breathless with the exertion of descending from her rustic chariot. "You know you are always as clean as a new pin, and that's enough for me." To which Mrs. Quackenboss only repeated, "Dear, dear, if I'd a-known——"

Here her eye fell on Miss Digby, and she stared at that young lady in a fresh access of surprise and discomfiture.

"That's a friend of Mrs. Maverick's; she's come too," observed Jacobus, seeing his spouse's perplexity.

"This is my niece—that is, she is really a young cousin of mine," interposed Mrs. Maverick—while Althea won her future hostess's heart at once, by protesting she did not come to give any trouble, and hoped Mrs. Quackenboss would not put herself to any on her account, to which Mrs. Maverick added that for that night at least they must and would sit in the kitchen—and marched in with no more ado.

If the outside of the house was as plain as a barn, the inside was adorned with a cleanliness that many a palace cannot show. The fire in the huge open chimney glowed with fragrant pine-logs, and kindled itself anew in every dish-cover, saucepan, candlestick, and frying-pan. It gleamed on the rows of big-paunched jugs which hung from the brass hooks of the dresser; and it tipped each individual hook with a living diamond. The sanded floor, the polished chairs, the table set out for supper, all seemed hospitably to say,—“Pray, step in!” while a cheerful old Dutch clock ticked away close to the ceiling, like a gigantic cricket.

Mrs. Quackenboss, with fresh laments at not having known, made her unexpected guests sit by the fire, while she retired into a second kitchen, behind the “house-place,” where the actual work was done, to make some hasty additions to the meal.

A very square-faced little girl of perhaps eight years old, presently made her appearance, and—ignoring all the advances of Mrs. Maverick and Althea—went up to her father (who stood

with his back three-quarters turned to his guests), and possessing herself of the tail of his coat, appeared to be awaiting her execution with imperturbable resignation. As for Jacobus, in not going to see his horses put up, he was paying Mrs. Maverick the highest compliment he could have paid to any one, were it King George himself.

"Make your manners to the ladies, 'Tilda," he said in a low voice, "an' let my coat-tail be." Matilda on this turned her own back outright, and appeared to be sucking her thumb—as affording some slight moral support in so unprecedented a trial as the presence of two strange ladies.

"Matilda is very much grown, Mr. Quackenboss," said Mrs. Maverick, wishing to put an end to this embarrassing situation. "Why, bless me! what have you done with your clock-weight?"

For as the good lady's eyes rested on Matilda's straw-coloured head, they caught sight just beyond it of a large stone attached to the chain, in lieu of a weight.

Quackenboss faced round, looked a moment at Mrs. Maverick, and then earnestly contemplated a side of bacon which hung from a beam, as he replied stolidly,—

"It was took for lead."

"For lead?" asked Mrs. Maverick, not realising his meaning for the moment. "Lead for bullets," explained Jacobus, his eye resting still on the bacon. "Bullets for shootin'."

"Shooting snipes and wild fowl, I suppose?" observed Mrs. Maverick, refusing to admit a horrid suspicion.

"Snipes—or Tories, as the case might be," said Jacobus, with true Dutch phlegm, yet evidently uttering the words on compulsion.

"Good heavens! Mr. Quackenboss!" exclaimed Mrs. Maverick, turning as red as the copper saucepan which was at this instant engaging her tenant's attention. "Do you mean to tell me you allowed the rebels to carry off your clock-weights, to make bullets of to shoot His Majesty's loyal subjects with?"

"Well," said Jacobus slowly, shifting his gaze to the frying-pan; "I'm afeared that's about what 'twas they took 'em for, for 'twas Colonel Heard as took 'em, and finely I've been plagued about it ever since—though I ain't the only one, not by a long chalk, as had their weights took—and their guns too, for that matter."

“And did you not resist?”

“There was too many on 'em,” said Jacobus. “When there's a Colonel a-talkin' fire an' brimstone, an' a file o' minute-men a-lookin' tar an' feathers, an' your wife a-cryin'——”

The unusual effort of uttering so many words at once here proved too much. Jacobus suddenly relapsed into silence, until his better-half came in, in a procession of two—the other member being old Nan, the cook, who grinned on seeing Mrs. Maverick, and looked at Miss Digby with undisguised admiration.

“Sit by, sit by,” exclaimed Jacobus, as hastily as he was ever known to say anything, the instant old Nan had deposited her smoking plate of buckwheat cakes on the table. He stood while his guests seated themselves, lifted Matilda to a high stool, and then sitting down himself, clasped his hands, threw his head on one side, and shut his eyes, and so sat silent by the space of a full minute, as was the Dutch manner of saying grace. And whimsical as was the figure he cut, both Mrs. Maverick and Althea, while they also gravely bowed their heads, felt their hearts moved to sincere thankfulness to the Goodness which had guided them to this haven of repose.

But repose is of brief duration here below, and Mrs. Maverick was kept awake half the night by the distressing consideration that, as she might say—being the Lady of the Manor—her own clock-weights had been converted into rebel bullets, and that possibly some of His Majesty's faithful subjects had by this time received grievous bodily harm from these identical missiles!

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE OLD BELL OF INDEPENDENCE.

The men are ripe of Saxon kind
To build an equal State.

THERE were many anxious and excited groups of people waiting round the State House in Philadelphia, on a certain July morning. As many as could, stood in the shade of the black walnuts, which were already shady trees when William Penn began to build his city by the broad waters of the Delaware.

The people were watching the windows of the State House. It was broad day—a summer's day, and there was no candle

in any window like that which, but two years before, burned in a window at Versailles, and whose sudden extinction was to be the sign that the King was dead; but these people here were none the less waiting for the last hour of a King's reign to strike.

Jasper Fleming, with his cousin Mary on his arm, had been waiting here more than an hour. Every now and then the crowd opened to let some one pass into the State House, and as often as this happened, a low murmur would go round, as each man told his neighbour who it was.

Across the street, in the yard of Clarke's Inn, stood half-a-dozen chaises with the horses taken out, and the innkeeper himself was—as could be seen from his gestures—rating the ostler for not sweeping up some of the oyster-shells which plentifully strewed his yard, and made it look like that of a marine tavern. The old inn, with its rough weather-boarding, gave that part of the street a still more out-of-town aspect than it would otherwise have had; but no one looked at the inn—all eyes were turned towards the door of the State House.

Every one knew that Pennsylvania and Maryland had been against the Declaration of Independence, and many were the reports afloat as to the numbers for and against. Some said that Cesar Rodney, the third delegate for Delaware, had been sent for in haste, and that he had given his vote in favour of the Declaration—whereupon the Pennsylvanian representatives had wavered. Others said that Pennsylvania and Delaware still held out. But these were mere flying rumours, set on foot one hour to be contradicted the next. What was certain was, that the Great Decision hung trembling in the balance—the Great Decision which would turn revolt into revolution, and transform mere plantations and colonies into a Nation. That this *was* a Great Decision, every one there present was well aware—if no one there knew how great, what wonder? The issues of that day, with all that they have involved and will yet involve in the world's story, are unmeasured still.

In the yard at the back of the State House there was a small round platform, which Rittenhouse had made for the purpose of observing the transit of Venus, seven years ago. "That was a famous day at Norriton," said a mild-eyed elderly man with a pair of heavy-rimmed silver spectacles, and dressed in a decent suit of duffle-gray. "We had all been watching the clouds for a week before, for fear the sky shouldn't be clear. Mr. Ritten-

house hadn't slept for nights and nights—leastways he looked as if he hadn't; and when the time came, and the planet showed fair out on the sun's face, he just dropped down all of a heap in a dead faint—I saw him drop." Here the speaker looked round, and nodded his head impressively, as much as to say,— "Mark how much he took the matter to heart, and learn hence what it is to be an astronomer!" "But he came to in a minute or so, and went on with his observations," he continued, when he had given his hearers time to digest this impressive fact. "They say there's not a better astronomer to be found anywhere—not all over Europe, nor England neither; and his orrery's the best as ever was made, and 'tis a great shame to us we haven't gotten it here in Philadelphia."

"My memory goes back further nor yourn, Mr. School-master—a vasty deal further back," quavered a very aged man, small and shrivelled, who was sitting in the shade, on a chair which a woman had brought out for him. "I remember when this fair-built town was a little lot o' cabins in the wilderness—lodges in a garden o' coweumbers, as you might say. I've seen Injuns' wigwams, where now there's stores an' meetin'-houses, an' red men paddlin' their canoes, where now there's wharves with merchantmen a-layin' alongside. I mind pickin' blackberries an' catchin' wild conies where now there's streets. I can remember William Penn—I could show you the very place where his cabin stood; it warn't much like the Slate-Roof House, I reckon," said the old man, with a feeble cackling laugh. "Rome warn't built in a day, they say—no more warn't Philadelphia; but I mind the buildin' o' most part on't."

"Ay, that you do, Master Drinker," said the woman who had brought out the chair. "I've hearn my father say as you an' the city was pretty nigh the same age."

"Pretty nigh, pretty nigh," said the old man in his high thin voice. "I can look back more'n eighty years. Eighty years is a long time in a man's life; but in the life of a city it counts for but a few days. I'm an old man, but this is a young city—young an' fair, young an' fair; and I bless the Lord for lettin' me see this day before I depart in peace."

"How much has happened in those eighty years, Jasper!" said Mary, as they moved a little nearer the platform. "It is impossible to imagine that as much can happen in the next eighty."

"Do you think history's tale is done?" said Jasper, smiling.

"A whole new page is going to be unrolled to-day, and all we who stand here shall have to write some of its lines." As he spoke, the great bell began to ring above their heads.

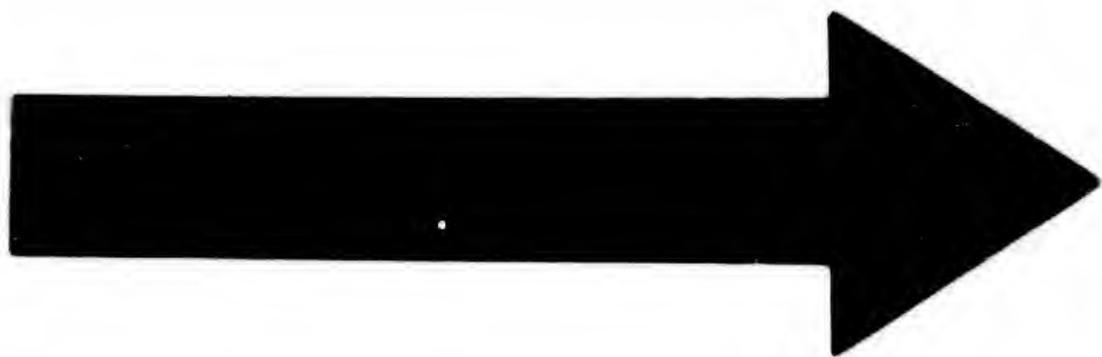
"Now, thank God!" he exclaimed, gripping Mary's hand tighter—"they have agreed to the Declaration!"

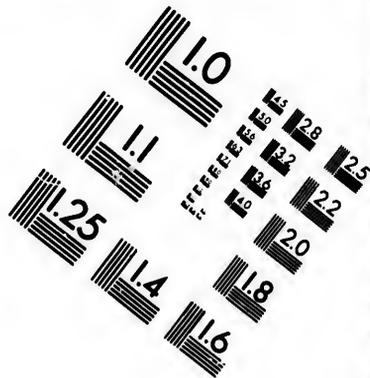
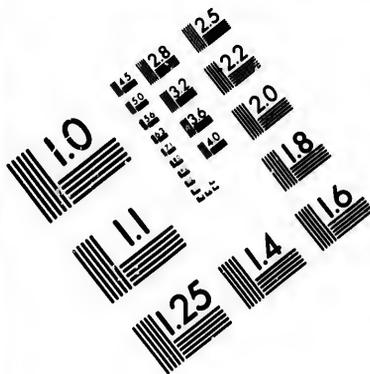
The quick joyful strokes smote on the air; the summer day seemed to have suddenly found a tongue. Old Ned Drinker stood up and waved his hat, and most of the people cheered—though some of the groups drew back a little, as if alike reluctant to go or to stay. A substantial-looking citizen, whose garb showed him to be a Quaker—and whose fresh-coloured impassive face was a singular contrast to many of the eager countenance around him—said to Jasper, "I perceive, friend, that thee rejoices; but has thee sat down and counted the cost, whether thee is able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against thee with twenty thousand? Moreover, has thee considered that these Colonies can no more flourish cut off from Great Britain, than a limb can live after it is cut off from the body, or a branch after it is torn from the tree?"

"But we can take a slip and plant it, and it can grow to a greater tree than its parent," replied Jasper. There was a murmur of assent from those who heard his answer, and a group of listeners collected round the disputants as the Quaker asked, loud enough for everybody to hear,— "What are we, left to ourselves? This very bell, set a-ringing to announce your rash defiance, was fetched hither from England——"

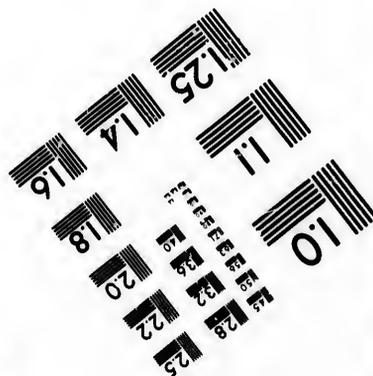
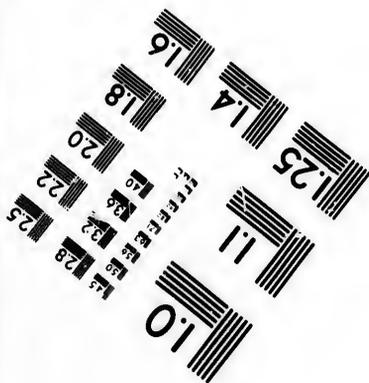
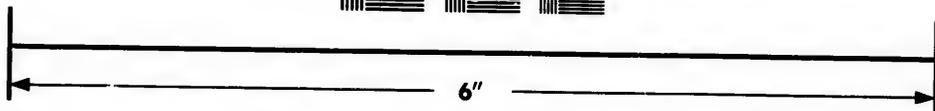
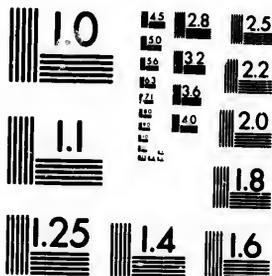
"But it was recast here—and they say we taught it a sweeter tune than it had at first," retorted Jasper. His reply evoked a slight cheer. The Quaker, however, seemed in no wise silenced; but at that instant a thrill ran through the crowd—by that time very much increased—and every one said,—"They are coming out!"

There was a deep silence (except for the pealing of the great bell), as the members of Congress crowded out. Most of them stood on the steps and in the hall. A few went up with Colonel Nixon into the observatory. Many a well-known face was there, and among the foremost stood Samuel Adams, his gray head bared to the sun. He saw Jasper, and waved his hand to him with a gesture of triumph. There too was Dr. Witherspoon of Princeton, in whose veins ran the blood of John Knox—a whisper was already going round the crowd that his words had finally determined the hesitating delegates.





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The generations which have inherited that day's deed have often shown much arrogance in their rejoicings over it; but those who actually bore a part in it were mostly too much in earnest for any vulgar bragging, and had too well counted the cost. Nixon's voice rang loud and clear—sound travelled far in Philadelphia, perhaps by some peculiarity of atmosphere—and a quarter of the listening city might have heard. All the civilised world has heard it since.

The first reading of that famous Declaration has been celebrated since then, in all parts of the habitable and uninhabitable globe. The sons and daughters of those rebellious colonists have kept that day with sober thankfulness, with rowdy merriment, with exultant pride, with solemn memories, from the forests of Maine to the swamps and jungles of Louisiana, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans. As that day comes round, it is remembered on the other side of the world—in nooks of the Alban Hills, in passes of the Appenines, among the Umbrian Mountains, and by the banks of Arno, in many a German town, in the heartless streets of Paris, and on ships tossing in mid-ocean, far from any land. Even amidst the eternal desolations of the north, in the brief Arctic summer, that day has been celebrated. On that day, every American, wherever he may be, thinks of home, and if he be in a far country, feels the pangs of homesickness. If it happen to him to keep that day in the mother-country, whose rule his ancestors cast off, he can perhaps afford after the lapse of a hundred years, to remember it with some abatement of the old bitterness, even though with no less of the old pride. There are wounds that ache for centuries—time itself but skins them over—and this is one. But after a hundred years, the inheritor of that day can perhaps afford to remember that his blood, his language, his religion, his stubborn independence itself, are all English—as he says devoutly, QUI TRANSTULIT SUSTINET.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE DUTY OF A CHRISTIAN MAN.

THE reading was over; the people huzzaed, and the Old Bell called all the other bells of the city to rejoice with him that another nation was born.

As Jasper and Mary turned to go—when a sort of solemn hush had fallen on the crowd—the Quaker who had spoken before said reprovingly to Jasper,—

“Young man, thee looks as though thee had just gotten thy heart’s desire; but for all that, remember that they that take the sword shall perish by the sword!”

“Say that to cowards, Master Roberts!” cried the schoolmaster, pushing forward, his pale face glowing and quivering with excitement. “We ain’t afraid to die, if that’s all you’ve gotten to frighten us with! And let me tell you, you’ll find you’ve run your head against a wall—or something worse perhaps—if you go about Philadelphia preaching submission to tyranny!”

“I think I am like to be in more danger of running my head against a wall, in resisting the power of Great Britain,” rejoined the Quaker. “King George hath a long arm, friend schoolmaster, and we are like to feel it. It is impossible this attempt at Independence can succeed—’tis sheer madness.”

“’Tis impossible we can fail—if we can only hold out long enough,” cried Jasper; “and we can hold out long enough if we will but dare do it! All we need is courage and patience. The King of England is stronger than we, I grant you; but in this quarrel he will be as a man who is fighting at arm’s length—he can but touch us with the tips of his fingers.”

“We are not to resist evil, but to give place unto wrath,” said Roberts, shifting his ground.

“Yet the Lord Himself bade His disciples take a sword,” said Jasper. “We did not seek this quarrel—’twas forced upon us; and for how many years have we not had patience? As for perishing, we must all die once—and blest are they who die, like Joseph Warren, for their country!”

A deep hum went round the crowd at the mention of Warren’s name. Roberts flushed with some carnal wrath as he replied,—

“Thee speaks as a soldier and a man of blood, young man, and I fear art of those of whom it is written, ‘Cursed is the people that delight in war.’” As the Quaker said this he looked at Jasper’s uniform with evident disfavour.

“Nay—I am not a soldier save by sad necessity. I am a lawyer by profession, and, God knows, peaceably enough inclined by nature,” returned Jasper.

“If thee is a lawyer, friend, thee belongs to a trade which

has no place in the Kingdom of Heaven," returned Roberts. Several people standing by laughed.

"You would withdraw the Christian man from the commonwealth," said Jasper rather warmly. "We have tried all other means; there is nothing left now but the sword or slavery. The Christian man is a citizen, and must do his duty as a citizen. Our Independence hath been this day proclaimed. We are this day a nation. For that Independence we must, if needs be, even lay down our lives. Whoever here is not afraid to be a man, say with me, God preserve the united Colonies of North America!"

Jasper had addressed his brief speech to a little knot of people, whom his passage of arms with the Quaker had attracted to the spot. As he took off his hat at the last words, all the men, with the single exception of Roberts, followed his example, and the women cried "Amen!"

"I was very glad you said what you did, dear cousin," said Mary, as they went home. "I wish Noel could have heard you."

"I was obliged to speak, lest Roberts should daunt the people," he replied. "Philadelphia is not whole-hearted like Boston; there are many here who would compound if they could. But I think that after this there can be no drawing back."

Mrs. Branhholm and Mary had now been some time in Philadelphia. As the spring advanced, and it became evident that the blockade of Boston would soon be raised, and the theatre of war removed southwards, Colonel Branhholm (who was now a Brigadier-General, having been appointed in the early part of the winter) had resolved not to run the risk of leaving his family at Oglethorpe, exposed to any Indian rising which the disturbed state of the country might bring about. Nor were Indians the only danger. Party rancour had not yet reached the frightful virulence which it was soon to display, but already neighbours were arrayed against each other, and many a lifelong friendship had turned to bitter hatred. Mr. Butler of Fairmead had definitively taken his stand on the side of the British Government; and it was reported at Oglethorpe that his son had accepted a commission in a Corps of irregular cavalry being raised by the Tories of Virginia. The isolated position of Oglethorpe made its efficient defence very difficult, even in ordinary times of disturbance;

and General Branhholm had now additional and particular reason for anxiety, in the course taken by another branch of the Butler family. They were very distant relations of the Butlers of Fairmead, and the two branches had never been on cordial terms. This branch of the family had fiercely espoused the British side, and had already shown by actions as well as by words that they intended to disregard all considerations of kinship. Mr. Butler of Fairmead had highly disapproved of the intemperate spirit in which his cousins had taken their side, and had expressed himself in terms which had brought on him the taunt of being no better than a rebel at heart himself. Mr. Butler was by this time on very cool terms with his relations at Oglethorpe, but he had nevertheless sent a message to his sister to advise her to remove to safer quarters—and above all, not to reckon on the Butlers' forbearance should the war become general. With all these reasons for fear, it was an immense relief to General Branhholm to know that his wife was safely lodged in the Slate-Roof House, whither she had brought everything of value which could possibly be removed, and where she arrived in time to see General Washington when he visited the city in May. Oglethorpe was abandoned to the care of the General's white overseer, assisted by Nebuchadnezzar—on whose shoulders (in his own opinion) rested the chief weight of government. And certainly, if multiplicity of orders constitute government, Nebuchadnezzar ruled Oglethorpe. His very aspect was changed—a portentous solemnity invested his features, and he was on one occasion heard to remark that the "sponsability was a'most too much for one back to bear up under," and that he felt "like as if he was car'yin' a mountain." He would doubtless have likened himself to Atlas, had he ever heard of that over-burdened immortal. Uncle Memnon with his futile reminiscences of my Lord Baltimore was nowhere—Nebuchadnezzar crushed him with a shake of his care-laden brow. Was Lord Baltimore himself ever in such a responsible situation as I am? he seemed to ask with sorrowful triumph, and Uncle Memnon was fain to confine his reminiscences to an audience of an age too tender to discriminate clearly between great and small.

Mary remained with her aunt, even after Boston was evacuated. The journey was long, and the country much disturbed, and it seemed better to leave her where she was in safety—especially as for many months after the evacuation

there were frequent rumours of an intended attack on Boston by sea.

Mrs. Fleming supported her daughter's absence with characteristic resignation—further assisted by the conviction that Providence was thus preparing the realisation of her favourite plan. Ever since the untimely death of her own son, the good lady had cherished the hope that Jasper would take that son's place. He had somewhat disappointed this hope, inasmuch as he had applied himself to the law, instead of becoming a ship-builder and owner like his father and uncle. But at that time it was not impossible to combine several callings. Jasper had on many occasions shown considerable mechanical ability, and had suggested one or two material improvements in the stowage of cargoes, and even in some of the details of shipbuilding; and Mrs. Fleming kept the hope in a corner of her heart that he would yet take to business—for she had moments when the certainty of his being one of the chief merchants of Boston seemed to her more desirable than the possibility of his attaining to the honours of a judgeship. In either case, however, Jasper was evidently the husband appointed for Mary in the decrees of Heaven. Mrs. Fleming was one of those timid but tenacious women who are jealous of strangers. She had herself married her cousin, and she made a clannish distinction between her own family and the rest of the world. It seemed to her that there was safety in Mary's marrying Jasper. It is true his views on all subjects were on a scale so much larger than her own, that she had never even succeeded in grasping them; but his moral character was irreproachable, his fortune was ample—and, above all, he was of her own flesh and blood.

This being the case, Mrs. Fleming easily persuaded her husband that the journey was dangerous, and that Philadelphia was far safer than Boston, and Mary had better remain there.

Jasper (whose company was ordered to New York the day after the evacuation) concurred in his aunt's view, being tolerably certain that both his mother and Mary would thank him for doing so. Jasper had long ago seen through poor Mrs. Fleming's transparent devices for bringing him and Mary together, and he had his private reasons for thinking that no harm would result from them to either party. He departed therefore, charged with a bulky packet of letters, and with multitudinous messages, which he was to deliver as soon as his duties would permit him to ask for a few days' leave of absence.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A PAINTED ROSE.

“Absence is vain, for everything
Which I have known belong to you,
Your form does to my fancy bring,
And makes my old wounds bleed anew.”

JASPER FLEMING'S services at Bunker's Hill were not forgotten, and very soon after his arrival at New York he received a Colonel's commission in the artillery.

He immediately found a safe hand by which to send the letters ; but the messages had to wait until early in July he was able to go himself to Philadelphia. He accomplished this journey on horseback, accompanied by his negro servant, Telemachus—the same lad who opened Mr. Fleming's door to Noel Branhholm on the night of his return from England. Telemachus was a native of Oglethorpe, and had been presented to Jasper some years before by Colonel Branhholm. Somewhat to the surprise of his friends, Jasper had freed him ; but Telemachus was so devoted to his master that this made no visible difference in their relations, and those who prophesied that Jasper would “spoil a good nigger,” saw their predictions disappointed.

Jasper found his mother established in the Slate-Roof House at the corner of Second Street, then one of the best boarding-houses in the town, and where several members of Congress (including Mr. John Adams himself) were lodged. She had brought a couple of servants with her, and lived as much as possible in the Virginian way—somewhat to the scandal of the strictest Philadelphians, who had never seen a person so entirely content to do nothing at all. Like many idle persons, however, Mrs. Branhholm could exert herself on occasion ; and she did so notably at her first arrival, insisting on having a particular room as her sitting-room, and giving further offence by changing the position of the furniture. “Every one else had thought the furniture was set where it should be,” murmured the insulted landlady of the Slate-Roof House. “Mrs. Adams had said it was set up real elegant. But Madam Branhholm seemed to think what did for other people wouldn't do for her.” However, no one could long resist Madam Branhholm—she had her way, and the walnut press was removed to behind the door,

and the sofa put in its place. Madam Branhholm was reclining on this very sofa, when Jasper and Mary returned.

"Tell me all about it!" she exclaimed, springing up as they entered. "I heard the bells ring, and was sorry I did not go with you; but I did not believe they would agree for days yet."

"They have agreed, dear mother," said Jasper, sitting down beside her, and kissing her fondly. "I wish you had been there—it was all quiet enough."

"You don't think I was afraid, I hope, Jasper!" cried Mrs. Branhholm, with briskness enough to have taken her to the State House. "I was lazy, and I thought there would be nothing to see, and it was a hot day—but I was not afraid!"

"I never saw you afraid yet, mother," said Jasper, putting his arm round her waist in lover-like fashion, as he added maliciously, "It may be that you are only too lazy to run away."

Jasper had not gone far in his account of the morning, before Mary interrupted him, protesting that he was leaving out his own part. "You ought to have been there, Aunt, to have heard him reply to Mr. Roberts, who was all for pouring cold water on the Declaration," she said. "And he made a speech that you would have been proud to hear."

As Mary said this, her eyes sought Jasper's with sisterly admiration, and her cheeks glowed brightly—he thought she had grown handsomer than ever.

While Mary was descanting on Jasper's oratory, he had time to glance round the room. It had from the first oddly recalled to him Mrs. Maverick's sitting-room in Boston, but he did not know what it was that had touched the hidden springs of memory, until his mother said,—“You are looking at those pretty painted fans. Are they not sweetly done? Althea Digby copied them from a pair Mrs. Maverick had, and I happened to say I had always admired them, and nothing would do but the dear girl must make me accept of them. Fetch them here, Mary, my love; I want Jasper to see them closer.”

Mary brought the fans. They were painted very delicately with fuchsias and roses, in the stiffly graceful fashion of a hundred years ago.

“Are they not sweetly painted?” repeated his mother. “Take them in your own hand, Jasper; they bear looking into.”

As Jasper took the screens from Mary, and examined them, he knew that her clear eyes were reading him, and was con-

scious of looking rather foolish, even amidst the pang which he always now felt at hearing Althea's name.

"They are very beautifully done," he said gravely. "When did she give them to you, mother?" He had a ridiculous difficulty in fixing his attention on the painted flowers—Althea's face would come floating between him and her handiwork.

"At Oglethorpe," replied Mrs. Branhholm. "She is a delightful creature! I call her quite one's idea of a heroine. Her brother is a fine young fellow in his way, but not a patch on his sister. Do but look at the fuchsias again, Jasper; they always remind me of the way she droops her own head, when she is in one of her softer moods. Don't you think so?"

"I rarely had the advantage of seeing Miss Digby in one of her softer moods," said Jasper drily—but he changed colour a little as he spoke.

"You ungrateful wretch!" cried his mother; "I protest, I shall have to box your ears! Did she not nurse you when you was wounded? Oh, my poor dear boy, what would I not have given to be there myself!" she said, tenderly stroking his cheek. "Your cheek burns—you are feverish," she exclaimed hastily. "You must have one of my fever draughts at once! Riding for days in the sun, as you have——"

She would have sprung up to fetch it, but Jasper gently but firmly detained her.

"My dear mother," he said, "I am perfectly well, and if the decoction you propose to give me is the one I imagine it to be, its nastiness so infinitely surpasses all its other qualities, that now I am come to years of discretion, and am a Colonel of artillery, I am resolved to swallow no more of it."

Mary laughed, but Mrs. Branhholm with perfect good faith replied that medicine which had any strength in it was inevitably nasty.

"If that be so, dearest mother, your potion must have been originally mixed for a sick elephant; at any rate I'll have none of it," replied Jasper; at which even his mother was obliged to laugh, and say he was always an obstinate boy, and she must give him up. Then she returned to the subject of Althea, and would have Jasper tell her over again the story of his captivity.

"Poor Noel! I am sure he will envy you for having been nursed by Althea," she said, playing with one of the fans which she had taken out of Jasper's hand—he had forgotten to lay it down. "Between you and me, Jasper, Noel is mightily

smitten with her—and, upon my word, I don't wonder at it. I never could be quite sure whether she returned it or no; I watched her sharp enough too, but she fairly puzzled me. She has an uncommon interest in him, 'tis evident; but whether 'tis of that particular kind is another matter—and, to be sure, Noel saved Lieutenant Digby's life. Finely his father scolded him for his rashness; but 'twas a most gallant affair, and Meshach Pike, when he came to hear about it, said Noel behaved like an old general."

"Digby has often described it to me," said Jasper. "Digby thinks the world of Noel, and is always lamenting that they cannot fight side by side. When we heard the first rumours that General Arnold had failed, he came to me with the tears in his eyes, to ask me if I had any secret news—he knew I got some sometimes—and when I told him I'd been assured Noel was not among the slain, his joy would have won my heart for ever, if I had not loved him already. He is as free from guile or self-seeking as Noel himself. Would to God the dear boy were safe back again! I lie awake of nights imagining all sorts of things, and so, I doubt not, mother, do you!"

"I could not endure it, was I at Oglethorpe," cried Mrs. Braxholm. "Here, with so many other wives and mothers in a like situation, and with Mary to cheer me when I'm dull, 'tis more tolerable. But I must have your opinion of Noel and Althea. What do you think, Jasper? you had opportunity of observing her."

"I think she detests me as the instrument whereby (as she pleases herself to think) Noel was persuaded to rebellion," said Jasper, steadily meeting Mary's eye. "She is too generous not to be kind to a vanquished enemy—she called me so one day—but in her heart she accuses me of having decoyed him from his loyalty, and she likes him well enough to owe me a grudge for it."

If Jasper had wished to punish Mary for having noted his embarrassment he had his revenge; her own eyes fell before his, and her cheeks grew a little pale.

"I told you so, Mary! You would always have it that she only felt for him as a sister might for a brother; but you hear what Jasper says!"

"All I know is, she as good as told me at Oglethorpe that she had no other but sisterly regard for him," said Mary, reddening again

Now Jasper knew the history of that day perfectly—having had it from his mother in a letter, for which he paid treble postage. He remembered with singular distinctness that Althea on that memorable occasion had bestowed an embrace, sisterly or otherwise, on Noel; and he privately inclined to the belief that her speech about sisterly affection meant no more than that she could never receive the addresses of a rebel. He was aroused from these reflections by his mother playfully shaking him, and declaring that she had asked him a question three times over.

“I beg your pardon, mother; you set me thinking, and I went off in a brown study, as you used to call it when we were boys,” he said, trying to give a jesting turn to the conversation. “What is the question?”

“I have been asking you three times what you think of her yourself?”

“Of Miss Digby?”

“Of course; you know very well we have been talking of no one else.”

“That is a difficult question to answer in a moment,” he replied, feeling the old embarrassment come over him. He nervously took up the other fan and seemed to be counting the thorns on the rose as he said, hesitating between each word,—“I think her beautiful—and accomplished——”

“And high-minded,” cried his mother. “Surely you think her high-minded?”

“And high-minded,” said Jasper, in the same slow quiet tone. “And so proud, that she would, I fear, sacrifice another’s happiness—and perhaps her own—to that pride.”

“You are right there, Jasper,” said Mary. “Or, at least, ’twould be a hard struggle. Yet I love her dearly; and if she would but let her heart speak, what a heart it would be!”

“She’ll come round—she must,” exclaimed Mrs. Branxholm cheerfully. “We shall have peace at last—Captain Digby will come into his uncle’s fortune, and all will be well in the end. But when will you get a sweetheart for yourself, dear boy? For my part, I’m not one of those mothers that hate their sons should marry. I’ve fancied sometimes—if you was to keep anything from me, Jasper—any grief, I mean—’twould cut me to the heart! I’ve fancied——”

“Dearest mother, you are all the sweetheart I ever had, be assured of that,” said Jasper—smiling at her, as the Spartan

boy smiled while the fox tore him. He found it difficult to meet Mary's eye without wincing, but he dissembled admirably with his mother. "There can be little thought of love or marriage for many a day to come, for me," he said, with forced cheerfulness. "When, as you say, all has come right in the end, it will be time enough. Meanwhile my mother is all womankind to me."

At which Mrs. Branxholm melted into tears, and declared that no mother ever had such loving sons, and protested she was a useless wretch and did not deserve their devotion.

Mary went away and left them together. She stood a long time at her own window, idly listening to the footsteps that passed below.

"I do not believe she loves him; there was sincerity in her voice that night if ever I heard it," she said to herself. "But, after all, what is it to me whether she does or no? Unless, indeed, that I should be grieved if she should ever make Noel unhappy; though, if I'm not much mistaken, she has made some one else unhappy already."

Mary's suspicion as to this was confirmed next day, when—happening to pass the door of the sitting-room on her way downstairs—she saw, through the crack of the hinge, Jasper standing by the mantel-shelf, attentively looking at Althea's fans. At that instant he took one of them into his hands, with as much care as if it had been a living thing, contemplated it a while—it was the one with the rose—and then, unless Mary's ears deceived her, sighed deeply as he restored it to its place.

CHAPTER XXXV.

HOUSEHOLDS DIVIDED.

A DAY or two after this, Jasper rode away, with Telemachus behind him—turning many times to wave his hat once more to the ladies, who stood in the porch watching him out of sight. He was going back to New York—to find the British Fleet at Staten Island, and Admiral Howe making one more last attempt to bring about a reconciliation.

The brief period of rejoicing, which followed the Declaration of Independence, lasted but just long enough for King George's statues to be made into bullets; before these bullets could be

shot into the bodies of His Majesty's soldiers, Fortune began to turn her wheel.

Sir Peter Parker's fleet had come up from the South, with Lord Dunmore and his refugees of all colours—and with Mr. Butler of Fairmead, whose son it was now said was raising a company to serve under De Lancey, and whose two daughters had been for some time in New York.

People were talking, too, about Dr. Church, who in this same month of July had begged and received permission to go to the Bermudas, on the plea that his health was suffering from his imprisonment. No one doubted his guilt, but that plausible tongue and ready pen, which had wagged on both sides so long, stood him in good stead in his treason; he managed to cast a mist of words about his deeds in such fashion that it was hard to mark precisely the measure of his guilt. He set sail, but the ship that carried him was never heard of again,—and so he vanishes with his dishonour out of history.

Mr. Butler had professed himself highly incensed at finding his daughters detained, as he chose to call it, and had written an angry letter to General Braxholm, whose brigade had for a short time occupied the city. The General replied that the young ladies certainly were detained, and added that he had taken it upon himself to detain them, rather than allow them to be exposed to the risks of leaving the city before he had heard from their father. Many of the inhabitants, Whigs as well as Tories, had removed into the country, as soon as New York became the centre of attack; and already marauders were profiting by the general disturbance.

This explanation by no means appeased Mr. Butler, and he sent back so curt a letter that General Braxholm requested Jasper Fleming to take the girls across the ferry to Staten Island, where their father would meet them.

"I don't want to quarrel with him more than I can help, for your mother's sake," he said, as he gave Jasper the pass. "If I see him, we shall both of us say what we shall be sorry for afterwards."

The girls had been the guests of Mr. Thomas Smith, who had now given up his house to Major-General Gates, and who had offered to take the young ladies with him to Haverstraw on the Hudson, where his brother the Counsellor also had a house. But Mr. Butler had, in an angry letter to his brother-in-law, peremptorily declined to allow his daughters to be sheltered

longer by a rebel—an uncivil expression which Jasper persuaded General Branhholm to soften down in the conveying of it to Mr. Smith.

The girls themselves—two dark eyed, romantic damsels of fifteen and sixteen or so—openly regretted their father's decision, and the younger declared it was a shame—it would have been delightful to go to Haverstraw.

As Jasper got into the coach after his cousins, he unbuckled his sword and laid it across his knees, to their no small admiration; and Myra (who was named after Jasper's mother) exclaimed, "What a pity, Cousin Jasper, you aint on the King's side!"

As they went down to the ferry, after alighting from the coach, a score or two of the Connecticut Light Horse passed them. Some Marylanders who were lounging outside a guard-house, strolled into the middle of the road, and began to banter them. The girls laughed, and Jasper himself could not quite retain his gravity. The Connecticut men were a motley rout, attired in every variety of antiquated raiment. Some were rigged out in uniforms which by their venerable appearance might have first seen war at the siege of Louisburg. Some still wore their yeoman's dress of rustic homespun, with jack-boots and an enormous leathern belt added thereto—in which garb they bore a whimsical resemblance to a company of Ironsides on their way to smite the malignants.

In ludicrous contrast to these Puritanic worthies, were a few warriors in full-bottomed wigs, whose solemn dignity but ill-accorded with the rest of their wearers' equipment. Here and there—and perhaps these presented the oddest appearance of all—might be seen a pair of stalwart shoulders encased in dingy regulation scarlet, surmounted by a weather-beaten countenance, shaded by a three-cornered laced hat, wofully battered and tarnished. The horses were worthy of their riders, but certainly did not merit the name of "light horse." Many of them were sorry jades, and more than one of the best of them had probably in peaceful times drawn the plough of the modern Cincinnatus who now rode him to battle.

Jasper's cousins giggled audibly at the sight of this martial cavalcade—for martial it was, despite the many ludicrous incongruities of its appointments. The smart Marylanders, in their scarlet and buff uniforms, all trim and new, could not resist this opportunity of displaying their wit. A gay young lieutenant had just requested the loan of a redoubtable fowling-piece, carried

by a grim old yeoman, who was mounted on an extraordinary raw-boned animal. "Prithee, lend us your blunderbuss, good Master Accepted," said this young scapegrace, with a sly wink to his friends. "'Tis the very moral of one my grandfather used to shoot ducks with, away to Pennsylvania, when I was a boy. The sight of that venerable weapon, sir, excites in my bosom the holiest associations——"

"My name is not Accepted," returned the Connecticut man, "and as for holiness, young sir, I reckon you have about as little of it as my musket."

There was a laugh at this; but the Marylander returned to the charge. "If your name aint Accepted, I'll wager 'tis Makepeace," he said impudently.

"Nay, Hopestill—he hopeth for a better nag than the jade he rideth," suggested another, imitating the Connecticut drawl; while the smart young lieutenant who had spoken before, begged to know if he happened to come from Windham—protesting that he had always had a great desire to learn from a native of that town a particular account of the talking frogs, which had once put the place in such a taking.

A laborious research into Dr. Peters's admirable work on Connecticut has failed to reveal wherein lay the sting of this apparently innocent question. It acted, however, as a casual reference to the moon is said to do to an inhabitant of Gotham. By way of reply, the Connecticut man smote the Marylander with the stock of the ancient matchlock he had just derided, and others joining in, a serious fray was threatened.

This, however, Jasper did not see. By this time, he and the girls had got down to the ferry stairs, where their trunks were already being put aboard the boat. Colonel Fleming showed his pass to an officer of the guards, and the ferryman put off.

"You may laugh at their coats," said Jasper, as his cousins made merry at the expense of the Connecticut men, and asked each other what their father would say to such a regiment? "but when such men as they turn soldiers, it means that our cause must win at last—and you can tell your father I said so."

Mr. Butler, who looked older and sterner, was waiting with a coach at the landing.

"So my brother-in-law has thought it best to send me my children," he said. "Now I've got 'em safe, I'll let him know what I think of him. I saw through his manœuvre; he would have kept 'em as hostages."

He persisted in this charge, in spite of all that Jasper could say, and bitterly reproached his nephew for having seduced Noel.

"You flatter me, Uncle—I am happy to know that my brother needed no one to show him on which side the right lay," said Jasper with some warmth.

"Don't Uncle me, sir!" cried Mr. Butler in a rage. "You provoke me to forget you're my nephew!"

"You shall not provoke me to forget that you are my mother's brother, sir," answered Jasper quietly. At the moment there was a look on his face which reminded Mr. Butler of his father—between whom and himself there had been very little love lost.

"It is useless to prolong our interview, sir," continued Jasper. "I am sorry you did not let my cousins go with Mr. Smith to Haverstraw, where they would have been safer than they can be here. As for the other question, you have made your choice and I have made mine, and I do not think either of us is very likely to change our minds."

The girls kissed Jasper, regardless of their father's frown; but uncle and nephew parted without even a clasp of the hand.

This specimen of the rancour excited by the troubles of the times made Jasper forget all about the encounter of wits between Connecticut and Maryland. He had recrossed the ferry, and had got nearly as far as the guard-house, when he perceived a crowd of soldiers and civilians—in the midst of whom he instantly recognised the tall figure of General Washington himself. His Excellency was giving vent to one of those rare outbursts of passions, which his usual self-command made all the more terrible.

"Good God! gentlemen," he was exclaiming—while his blue eyes fairly blazed with anger—"if your notion of the way to defend your country is to break each other's heads, you will save the enemy a deal of trouble, and I had better throw up my command! This is not the first time I have been revolted, by the disgusting spectacle of men who profess to be united in one great and sacred cause, allowing their petty jealousies of each other to interfere with their duty to their country! Let me see it no more!"

Most of those assembled looked sheepish; several of them showed by their disordered dress that there had been an encounter of more than wits; and the smart young lieutenant

furtively wiped away some blood which was trickling down the side of his face. The action did not escape His Excellency.

"The next time you shed your blood, sir," he said sternly, "let it be in a cause for which you need not blush." Then his eye fell on Jasper. "A word with you, Colonel Fleming," he said; and as they went away together, he began to complain passionately of the ill-feeling between State and State which made his task yet more difficult.

"To bring such different tempers into harmony is a harder task than Noah had to keep the peace in the ark," he ended; "and our enemies know it, and lay their account on it!"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

MRS. MAVERICK FINDS HERSELF IN A LOYAL NEIGHBOURHOOD.

You've raised the storm
Will sever us for ever.

ISABELLA, OR THE FATAL MARRIAGE.

AT first, though even at Flatbush there was much to grieve a loyal soul, Mrs. Maverick congratulated herself on the step she had taken. They were not free, even at Flatbush, from alarms and marchings—every now and then Althea would start out of her sleep to hear the tramp of a body of minute-men, marching past from Brooklyn or New Utrecht. Once, the house was searched for weapons, by a person whose only pretensions to a uniform were a cockade and a swagger. Mrs. Maverick fixed her eyes upon him, and regarded him with steady contempt all the while he was in her presence, and only refrained from calling him a rebel to his face, because she felt herself answerable for Althea. As for herself, she would have liked nothing better than to be clapped into a rebel dungeon, and thus testify to her principles.

But in spite of this person's requisition, it was evident that His Majesty had a good many sympathisers in King's and Queen's Counties. Not only was there an Episcopal Church at Jamaica, but Mr. Burnet, the Presbyterian minister, was a staunch loyalist, and it was a great comfort to Mrs. Maverick to have his opinion on how things were going.

Although it was certain that the Fleet was on its way from Halifax, and there were rumours that Sir Peter Parker and General Clinton were coming up from the Carolinas, there was a rebellious spirit abroad. Mr. Matthews, the Mayor of New York, was audaciously seized at Flatbush, only a day or two before the long-expected Fleet came crowding past the Narrows. Staten Island was immediately occupied; and not many days afterwards Admiral Howe came from England, and Sir Henry Clinton arrived from the South.

The joy occasioned by these arrivals was only slightly damped to the ladies at Flatbush, by the possibility of their finding themselves lodged on a field of battle. But Flatbush could scarcely be said to lie on the way to New York from Staten Island; and Captain Digby would be sure to see that they received no harm.

Jacob Quackenboss, who always seemed to have business at Blazing Star Ferry, had brought them more than one letter from the Captain. Fred congratulated them on not having gone to Halifax—it was, he observed, “a cursed cold wintry place, with little to eat, and less to drink”—and expressed himself very hopefully as to the immediate results of the campaign. “By all accounts,” he wrote, “Mr. Washington’s army is a mere ragged rout, and is deserting every day. Cheer up, dear sister; one more brush, and I trust we shall for the future keep our swords for Frenchmen. This unnatural rebellion must be nipped in the bud—hang one or two of the leaders, especially S. A——s, and then issue a general pardon. Everybody says His Majesty will consent to redress most of their grievances as soon as they lay down their arms.”

This indiscreet letter was within an ace of falling into the hands of the same rebel Captain, or whatever he might be, who had already searched the house. He was riding by, just as Jacob drove up at the door, and called out to him with an oath not to let him catch him carrying any treasonable correspondence, or it would be the worse for him. Jacob, who was handing out some parcels to his wife, merely looked round, and Captain Marrener rode on.

Mr. Justice Jones paid the ladies several visits, as soon as he returned from circuit, and would have had them take up their quarters in his house at Fort Neck, but that, as he said, he was convinced he was a particular mark for the rebels’ eumity; and at this moment Mrs. Jones was not at home. They had not seen

the Justice for two or three weeks, when one day he came over from Fort Neck, with the news that his wife had at last got home, and intended calling on the ladies in a few days. The Judge—who was a dapper gentleman of five-and-forty or so, with remarkably piercing dark eyes, and brows as sharply arched as the string of a cross-bow—was fuller than ever of the misdoings of the rebels in general, and of his own grievances in particular. He had, as he took care to observe, held the Courts as usual up to the very last—for which, and for his well-known loyalty, he had just been summoned to appear before the Committee of the Provincial Congress, and show cause why he should be considered a friend to America. “But I’ll see ’em damned first, before I’ll obey a rebel summons, and give in to their oppression and tyranny,” cries the Judge; and then begs pardon for forgetting himself, but such con-founded impudence is enough to make Job himself use strong language.

The Judge then went on to tell them a long story of Lord Stirling’s incivility to Mrs. Jones, when she asked for a pass to return to Fort Neck. The Judge had a fine town-house at Mount Pitt, which he had built himself, but he had no pleasure in it, now that General Lee had built a great redoubt close by,—which, to crown all, was called, if you please, “Jones’s Hill Fort!”

“As if,” cries the Judge, “I was a rebel like themselves!”

The Judge’s indignation seemed to be about equally divided between the designing demagogues who had instigated the rebellion (the Smiths in particular coming in for his roundest denunciations), and the unprincipled crown-servants who, according to him, had formed a deliberate plan to ruin both Great Britain and America, in order to enrich themselves.

In about a week, he came over again—more peppery than ever. It seemed that on his return from visiting the ladies, he had found what old Nan was accustomed to call a “*posse cotatis*,” waiting to arrest him for not obeying the summons which had so highly offended him. He had been taken over to the city, detained three days, and then discharged by Mr. Gouverneur Morris—the only one of the Committee who attended—on his parole to appear when called on.

“You see me therefore, a prisoner on parole, Ma’am,” says the Judge. “A pretty way to treat one of the chief magistrates of New York, for doing his duty! But what can you expect of fellows that will treat a lady as Washington and Stirling

did my wife t'other day? But they'll dance to another tune, now the Fleet has come!"

The ladies had other mild distractions to enable them to pass the time less wearily. Mr. Burnet of Jamaica sometimes invited them to come and drink a dish of tea with him and his family—an invitation issued *sub rosa*, as tea still stank in rebel nostrils. On such occasions, he would fetch them and drive them back in his own chaise.

It was one day late in July, when the sunshine lay burning hot in the wide dusty street of Jamaica as they drove through, and the boughs of the weeping-ashes hung down like thirsty tongues. They had spent a very agreeable afternoon in looking over Mr. Burnet's collection of Lebrun's plates of the Passions, and drinking some excellent India tea.

"I protest, Mr. Burnet," says Mrs. Maverick, "I shall take it very unfriendly, if you don't contrive to smuggle me a package of this tea. Poor Mrs. Quackenboss's is a sorry wash, though she vows 'tis real Bohea—and I do believe she puts in twice as much for me as she ever did for her own drinking. I've told her a hundred times not to stand for the price—and I'm sure I make our being here well worth her while—but she says 'tis the best she can get, and, I believe, poor soul, thinks I'm fanciful for finding fault with it!"

Upon this Mr. Burnet insisted on presenting Mrs. Maverick there and then with a pound of his own mixture, saying with a twinkle of his eye, he doubted not he could get more where that came from.

As it was not a time for unarmed travellers to be gadding about late at night, Mr. Burnet soon after this had his mare put in. It was a fine warm evening, but a white mist was already rising from the swamps beyond Hempstead.

They had got no farther than Betts's tavern (Althea sitting bodkin, with very little room to spare), when it became apparent that there was a commotion in the town. A crowd of people were assembled in front of the tavern, listening to a man dressed in a white linen frock, with a fringe round the neck and arms, and a white feather in his hat. This person was reading a document which he held in one hand, while with the other he emphasised his periods. Althea thought she recognised him as one of the party in the kitchen of the inn at the ferry, the day of her landing. Marrener stood not far off him.

Mr. Burnet, on seeing this, was for turning his horse's head

to go round by another way ; but Captain Marrener ran up and seized the reins, exclaiming,—“Come on, Doctor, you’re just in the nick of time to hear the Glorious Declaration of Independence read ! Oh, we won’t hurt the ladies ! But we can’t let you sheer off.” So saying, he led the chaise up to the tavern door, disregarding all Mr. Burnet’s remonstrances.

“Late ?” he said. “It ain’t quite sundown yet—you must stop and see the fireworks. And if you’re afraid, I’ll take the ladies home—I know where they live.”

He grinned at Althea as he spoke, and she then perceived that he had a paper stuck in his hat. She saw the words “£10 REWARD,” and “His MAJESTY’S Commissioners,” and was pretty sure it was the new placard just issued, offering a reward for the person who had taken down the Manifesto from the church-doors.

A number of minute-men, all in their white frocks, were drawn up outside the tavern, with a drummer in front, who beat a tattoo as often as the orator paused in his reading.

The occupants of the chaise were compelled to listen to the Declaration, and to hear the shout of triumph with which it was received—the reader leading the huzzas, waving his hat high in the air. Then, to the beat of drum, and with more shouting, he took the flag which his lieutenant had been holding all this while, and ripped off the letters which formed the King’s name, leaving only the word *LIBERTY*.

After this, the speaker, declaring that his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth, called for a glass ; and on its being brought out to him, observed that he would propose a toast—those who had no glasses could drink it in the spirit.

“Do not laugh, gentlemen,” said the orator—who, however, unless his appearance belied him, was jovially inclined. “Hear my toast. A cobweb pair of breeches, a hedgehog saddle, a hard-trotting horse, and continual riding, to all the enemies of America !”

This toast was received with roars of laughter and applause, and many not over-friendly glances began to be directed towards the chaise.

Everybody on the ground had uncovered except Mr. Burnet, who sat quietly in the chaise, from time to time addressing a word of reassurance to the ladies. Althea had drawn her green silk calash closely over her head—her face was flushed, her eyes sparkled with indignation ; but it was Mrs. Maverick who,

provoked beyond her patience, called out in a voice which was distinctly heard by every one there,

“God save King George the Third!”

The person who had read the Declaration started, glanced round him, and then coming quickly up to the chaise, and removing his hat for a moment, said determinedly,—“Dr. Burnet, we have had too much of this sort of thing. You have just cried ‘God save King George the Third!’ for your own pleasure; you must say ‘God save America!’ for ours, before you leave this ground.”

Great was Mr. Burnet’s dilemma. True, he had not himself cried, “God save King George!” but it was, of course, impossible to throw the blame on a lady—and, as every one there knew perfectly well which of the party it was who had uttered the obnoxious sentiment, would have been a useless piece of cowardice to boot. He saw that the consequences might be ugly, but his Presbyterian gorge was aroused, and he cried manfully that he would say nothing on compulsion.

Mrs. Maverick, however, had instantly rushed to the rescue.

“’Twas I, sir, that said it, and I am ready to stand to it,” said the undaunted old lady, flashing on the Captain of the minute-men a pair of eyes that were still almost as bright as Althea’s own.

“Madam, I am sorry to hear it,” returned the Captain. “’Tis a pity to see courage and spirit wasted in a bad cause. But we all know Dr. Burnet’s sentiments, and are determined that he shall for once in his life wish well to his country, or pay the penalty.”

“We shall only just slip him on a suit of American thick-set with white trimmings,” cried a voice at the edge of the crowd. Most of the rest laughed, and pressed closer round the chaise. The mare began to be restive, and plunged a little, but several volunteers promptly went to her head, and quieted her more judiciously than could have been expected—while Althea exclaimed, “Surely, sir, you do not threaten a minister of the Gospel with violence!”

“He was a citizen before he was a minister,” replied the Captain of the minute-men, and Marrener added;

“And we shall tar and feather him as a citizen, and not as a minister.”

"You will have to reckon with me first, though, before you do it, Mr. Marrener," said a voice which made Althea start as if she had been shot,—while Mrs. Maverick cried, "Oh, Mr. Fleming, for God's sake, protect us from insult!"

"You may be sure I will do that, Madam," said Jasper, taking off his hat to the ladies—but his eyes never once rested on Althea. He took the reins from Marrener, and asked him sternly if that was the way he served his country?

"We only want him to say, 'God save America!'" said Marrener sulkily; "and I should like to know who you are to prevent it?"

"I am a Colonel in the Continental army," returned Jasper; he wore a dark blue coat, with yellow buttons and scarlet facings, and had a small sword by his side.

"Not seen much fighting yet, I reckon," sneered Marrener, who had a grudge against Mr. Burnet, and thought he saw his prey about to escape him.

"I was at Bunker's Hill."

This reply, quietly as it was made, produced a great effect—of which Jasper took immediate advantage to obtain a promise that no molestation should be offered to Mr. Burnet. But he was obliged to submit to a condition—Mr. Burnet and the ladies must stay and see King George burnt in effigy.

"I would save you the annoyance if I could," said Jasper in a low voice to Mrs. Maverick; "but they are very angry with Mr. Burnet, as the only loyalist Presbyterian on Long Island, and 'tis best to give in to them in a small matter."

"That's very fine, Mr. Fleming, I protest!" cried the old lady, indiscreetly loud. "You have just rescued us from an unpleasant predicament, and I don't mean to quarrel with you; but I'd have you to know that 'tis not so small a matter to a loyal subject to be forced to stand by and see a gross affront offered to His Majesty!"

"You can avoid it, Madam, by letting Mr. Burnet say, 'God save America!'" observed Jasper maliciously. And Mr. Burnet gravely replied that, knowing what was meant by it, 'twould be against his conscience to do so.

The bonfire was prepared under a gibbet, from which hung a rude effigy which had been wrapped in the Union. Its face was black, and resembled rather the countenance of one of Dunmore's recruits than the homely features of Farmer George,

but that a profane caricature of His Majesty's sacred person was intended, could not be doubted.

"What seem'd its head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on."

But the crown was of wood, and stuck with feathers instead of rubies. Along with it on the gibbet, gently flapping in the evening breeze against this travesty of a diadem, hung the tattered bunting just torn from the flag of Liberty. The crowd gathered round in silence, as light was set to the bonfire. Jasper stood on one side of the chaise, while Marrener at the mare's head seemed resolved that the involuntary spectators of the performance should have a good place whence to view it.

"Wa'al, Miss Digby, I reely shouldn't have expected to find you a-looking' on at a game o' this sort, that I shouldn't, reely now," says Captain Ward, coming up unperceived behind the chaise. "I happened to be passin' through Jamaica this evenin'—but this is an altogether unexpected pleasure."

"I am not here with my good-will," says Althea; while the Captain, seeing Colonel Fleming, whispers something in his ear—at which Althea fancies he looks graver than before.

When the gunpowder under His Majesty's arms had blown up, and the royal *effigies* lay a shapeless and blackened mass in the glowing heat of the fire, Mr. Marrener professed himself satisfied, made a rough apology to Colonel Fleming, and offered to conduct Mr. Burnet safe back to his own house—for Jasper had insisted on himself seeing the ladies home.

As the chaise was constructed to carry only two (though with a little squeezing it constantly carried three), Captain Ward took his leave, and said he would wait at Betts's tavern for Colonel Fleming. This he said in a significant tone which went to Althea's heart, as showing but too plainly how actively Jasper was engaged in rebellion.

Jasper scarcely spoke a word on the way. He drove so fast, that the minister's well-fed mare submitted out of sheer astonishment. Althea thought he was in haste to have the drive over, and would have died sooner than beg him to go slower—while Mrs. Maverick made no remonstrance, only praying to be once safely housed under her own gables.

So much in haste was Jasper, that he was only persuaded to come indoors, on the score that Mr. Burnet's mare was old,

and ought to rest half an hour before going back to Jamaica; and so much flurried was Mrs. Maverick, that she all but offered Colonel Fleming some of that excellent tea which had been weighing down her pocket for the last three hours. He refused all refreshment, and, it must be honestly owned, behaved altogether in a very uncomfortable manner. "Though, to be sure," said Mrs. Maverick afterwards, in excuse for him, "I don't know what he could have talked about, without bringing up some sore subject or other; and I think he felt it."

Mrs. Quackenboss had put candles in the parlour—a room whose pervading perfume was beeswax and turpentine, and which stood the whole year swept and garnished, in eternal expectation of guests who never came.

In this inhospitable apartment Jasper and Althea were left alone for a few minutes, while Mrs. Maverick went out to speak to Mrs. Quackenboss. As Jasper stood near the table, his head a little bent, his right hand resting on the table, and his left (holding his cocked hat, which bore the symbol of rebellion) resting on his hip, Althea sat watching him, torn by a conflict of feelings which she herself did not, or would not, understand. His very dress was a kind of high-water mark, to show how far things had gone. And there was a change in him which she could not define to herself, but which gave her a maddening desire to provoke him to some such display of weakness as she had occasionally goaded him into in Boston. She could have cried with rage—at him, but also at herself. At last, something—perhaps the fear of her cousin's return—got the better of her pride, and she said sharply,—“Have you sworn not to speak to me, Mr. Fleming? Are you aware that you have stood there for ten minutes, without condescending to notice my presence by so much as a single word?”

He started.

“Have I not spoke to you?” he said in great confusion. “I beg a thousand pardons—indeed 'twas not intentional—I was not conscious that I had not done so.”

“You had merely forgot me, in thinking of more important matters,” she said sarcastically. “What wonder, when you wear that uniform? And, after all, what can you have to say to me?”

“Good God!” he exclaimed, turning towards her with

sudden passion. "What have I done to you, that you should delight to torture me thus?"

Althea turned pale, but before she could reply, Mrs. Maverick came bustling in, with a cup of hot wine.

"There, Mr. Fleming," she said, "this will keep the fog out of your throat, this damp evening. I was a mother to you so long that I can't quite give over now; though, indeed, 'tis more than you deserve, as long as you wear that by your side." She pointed to his sword as she spoke—but she looked at him very kindly as she thus rebuked him.

"'Tis most true, Madam, that your kindness far exceeds my deserts," said Jasper, taking the cup. Then, as he raised it to his lips, he looked at Mrs. Maverick and said, smiling, "For this, and all the many kindnesses I have unworthily received at your hands, Madam, pray believe that you have my most heart-felt thanks."

But, though Jasper smiled, his face was very pale, and Althea thought his brow was contracted as if by bodily pain.

He kissed Mrs. Maverick's hand, and had begun to say, "May we——" when he checked himself, drank off the rest of the wine, and, setting down the cup, said hurriedly to Mrs. Maverick that he was exceedingly sorry he had not been able to spare them the annoyance to which they had been subjected, but party-feeling was so bitter that he had not even expected to get them off as easily as he had done—Marrener could have made it very unpleasant if he had chosen.

"Of course, Mr. Fleming, I saw very well 'twas your saying you was at Bunker's Hill got us off," said Mrs. Maverick. "They was all turned in a moment; and very grieved it made me, to see such a spirit in them."

"I was obliged to say it," returned Jasper, a little embarrassed. "Believe me, 'twas not intended as a boast, but merely to shut Marrener's mouth, and make them more inclined to listen to me."

Without giving Mrs. Maverick time to reply, Jasper begged to be excused for taking his leave. He kissed Althea's hand, desired her to remember him very kindly to Captain Digby, and in a few minutes was rattling along the dark road towards Jamaica, at such a pace that two or three people who wished to speak with Dominie Van Zinder, thought it must be he, and ran out to stop the chaise.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CONFUSED NOISES.

What stratagems, how fell, how butcherly,
Erroneous, mutinous, and unnatural,
This deadly quarrel daily doth beget !

THIRD PART OF KING HENRY VI.

THAT sacrilegious insult offered to the divinity which hedges Kings, was not left long unavenged. Jacobus Quackenboss (who in some mysterious manner was evidently in communication with the Tories, though not even to Mrs. Maverick would he admit the fact) brought several more letters for Althea from her brother. These, though necessarily very guarded, prepared her for what was to happen. Meanwhile, the rebels were preparing on their part for a desperate resistance; and many of the leading Tories—among them Mr. Justice Jones—had been seized and arraigned before a Board of rebel officers, and ordered to be sent away, and kept away, till the battle should have been fought.

It was known long before the 22d of August, that New York would be attacked from Long Island, and on that day a large British force landed near New Utrecht. No one at Flatbush slept much that night. At intervals, the reports of distant musketry awoke those who had fallen into an uneasy slumber; and early next morning, when Mrs. Maverick and Althea came downstairs, they found Mrs. Quackenboss busy tying bits of red bunting to the gates and palings, and even to the nearest trees.

“I'm sure I'm truly glad to see that colour, Mrs. Quackenboss,” said Mrs. Maverick, coming out into the narrow strip of garden, where late-flowering roses shed sweetness; “but it seems dreadful too—it reminds me of the Destroying Angel passing by.”

By noon, a whole legion of Destroying Angels swarmed into Flatbush, in the shape of a detachment of Earl Cornwallis's reserve. The farm lay temptingly on the road, and the house was presently filled with thirsty light-infantry, demanding refreshment. To them enter Mrs. Maverick—arrayed in her stiffest brocade, with a kerchief and apron of the finest India muslin, and leaning on her ivory-handled crutch-stick—and desires to know which is the officer in command ?

"This is a loyal house, sir, as you have doubtless perceived," she says with infinite dignity. "I have already given orders for you to be served with the best the house affords—'tis less than I could have wished, but my tenant assured me 'twould be impossible to make greater preparations, without the certainty of their being instantly seized upon by the rebels. I have only to add, sir, that we place ourselves under your protection; and—though I'm sure 'tis unnecessary—I may inform you that I am cousin to His late Excellency, Governor Hutchinson, and that the young lady with me is sister to Captain Digby, now serving in your army."

To this the officer replied that the ladies might be confident the utmost possible respect should be shown them, and was in the middle of a most polite apology for the inconvenience which he was unwillingly causing them, when Captain Digby himself came hurrying in, and appeared greatly relieved at finding all well. The lower part of the house being by this time crammed with soldiers, the Captain retired to embrace his sister and Mrs. Maverick on the upper landing, where a few hasty questions and answers were exchanged. Fred was looking bronzed and hearty. He had filled out, too, a little—in spite of the poor fare at Halifax—and was in excellent spirits. "In a week at latest, we shall be in New York," he said, as he bade them farewell.

For several days after this, the lonely farmhouse was never quiet. There was marching and counter-marching. Mounted officers galloped along, leaving clouds of dust behind them. Artillery lumbered past, and Jacob Quackenboss's fat horses found themselves harnessed to a gun-carriage, and made to pull harder than they had ever done before during the whole course of their sleek lives. There was firing in the woods—pretty hot sometimes; and a few wounded men were brought in, whom Mrs. Maverick and Althea tended as well as they could, till the surgeon came. And then one night, a rumour spread that the rebels were to be attacked next morning.

By this time, the whole British army had passed over to Newtown, and Flatbush was left like the sands when the tide is down. The slip of garden was trampled sadly, and all Mrs. Quackenboss's tulip-bulbs were ruined; but old Nan did not much afflict herself on these accounts. Her resentment, both loud and deep, was directed against the Hessians—who, on their way to encamp in the village, had halted long enough at

the farm to convey her whole remaining store of pickled beef, and had then and there guzzled all her buttermilk. The said buttermilk would have been regarded in less thrifty districts as partaking of the character of hog-wash ; but here it was being reserved to make *mush* for supper, as the chilly autumn evenings came on ; and great was the wrath with which old Nan beheld the masterful Hessians emptying her churn. She went so far as to call them "Injun-niggers"—an epithet which Nan, herself a cross between those two races, reserved for the darkest shade of criminal.

"A pack o' yaller varments !" she screamed, wringing her skinny hands in rage and grief. "Eb'ry drop o' dat mush gone! Ef on'y master'd a bin here ! He'd a sent the hull *posse cotatis* about their business !"

In saying this, however, old Nan idealised that pacific Dutchman—who had for the last year or so devoted too much thought to the preserving a whole skin to his body, to care to risk that inestimable blessing for a churnful of buttermilk.

A half-foolish fellow named Anthony, who lived at Hempstead, brought the first tidings of the battle. He came in a little after noon, very dusty and footsore, and told a long story of how he had guided the British, the night before, across a pass in the hills by Jamaica—left unguarded by old Putnam, whom Greene's illness had placed in command. Anthony had long been suspected by the Whigs of being a Tory agent, and had more than once only saved himself from unpleasant consequences by playing the fool. He was an idle good-for-nothing fellow, who never did anything but fight cocks and loiter about, but many believed he had more wit than he chose to own. This not very trustworthy authority said further that the rebels were routed, and had fled in confusion to their lines—hundreds, he added, had been drowned in trying to pass Gowanus Creek.

Anthony's account was soon confirmed—so far, at least, as related to the result of the day. The rebels were totally defeated, three thousand of them killed or taken, and the Marylanders in particular almost cut to pieces ; and three Generals made prisoners. Captain Digby sent a message to say that he was safe and well ; and, as Mrs. Maverick observed, nothing was wanting to complete one's satisfaction but to know that Mr. Washington himself was a prisoner, and that poor Mr. Fleming was unhurt—since, whatever his faults, she should be sorry to see her old friend's son perish miserably.

It may have been this remark of her cousin's, which caused Althea to dream that night, that Jasper Fleming was brought out to be hanged in front of the State House in Boston. Althea seemed in her dream to be standing at the window of Mrs. Maverick's drawing-room in King Street—and with the odd slowness of perception common in dreams, had been idly watching the gallows for some time before she knew what it was. Suddenly, a file of soldiers came up the street with Jasper, his arms bound, and bare-headed. She thought he saw her, and stopped,—and with the anguish of the recognition she awoke.

But the days which followed brought no news of Jasper. Mr. Washington, seeing that things were desperate, very cleverly slipped across with his army to New York, thus escaping immediate destruction. A few days afterwards, the British commander made another attempt at a compromise. Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams waited on His Majesty's Commissioners on Staten Island; but finding that Lord Howe—who received his old friend the Doctor with much kindness—was only empowered to pardon on a full submission, they declined his overtures, and the interview had no other result than the exchange of the captive Generals.

A few days after this, the rebels retired from New York, and the British army immediately entered it. No day passed without the sounds and alarms of war. Wild rumours of fresh disaster to the rebels spread—almost, as it seemed, on the wings of the wind. Some of these, however, were brought to Flatbush by a more visible Mercury, in the shape of Anthony. Rumour "painted full of tongues" was not more agog with news than he. The rebels were seized with panic,—the women and children had run shrieking about the streets of New York, when they saw the British men-of-war pass up the East River. And two whole brigades had run away at Bloomingdale on the 15th, without firing a shot, leaving General Washington alone—who, it was said, was so transported with rage and despair at their dastardly behaviour, that if two of his officers had not seized his bridle and forced him to retire, he would have rushed on the enemy, and must inevitably have been taken or slain.

After narrating these and other stories, and freely partaking of such good things as old Nan had contrived to conceal from the Hessians, Anthony would take his departure, to retail his news at the next farmhouse—there to receive a like reward.

Jacob Quackenboss spent these days in intermittent at-

tempts to learn what had become of his horses, for which he had received a memorandum, signed by the officer with whom Mrs. Maverick had had those passages of civility. His wife and old Nan remonstrated against being left with only the old man and the boy to defend them; but Jacob, with much reason, replied that three would be of no more use than two against a regiment, and that if he once lost trace of the horses he might never see them again. Old Nan next entreated him, when he saw the King's General, to tell him about the pickled beef and the buttermilk, and to "give him some hard plums"—to which advice Jacob listened with an impassive countenance, being deeply penetrated with the conviction that a still tongue not only makes a wise head, but is likely to preserve that head from being broken. He soon after set off on the search for his horses—observing, as he stepped across his threshold, that while the Hessian was there, no one would trouble them.

The Hessian was one of the men who had been brought in wounded before the battle. He was so badly hurt, that when Mrs. Maverick asked if it would do him harm to move him, the surgeon had replied that it would most likely be his death—not that there was much hope of him in any case. "Then you shall not move him!" cried the old lady; and they had kept him ever since, the three women taking it in turns to sit up with him. It was a singular and pathetic situation. The poor young fellow—he seemed to be only three or four-and-twenty—could speak no English, and communication was carried on by signs and by a few Low-Dutch words which Yonichy knew. Althea had proposed sending for one of the Dutch pastors; and Dominie Van Zinder happening to drive by soon after, she ran out, and begged him to step up and see the wounded man.

The pastor was a lean and shrivelled little man, with long silver locks under a sugar-loaf hat, like a portrait of Richard Baxter. He climbed down from his chaise, tied his horse's reins to the gate-post, and followed Althea upstairs. The sick man's eyes turned anxiously towards him, and a flush came over his face.

"Leave us," said the Dominie, taking the chair from which Yonichy had risen. He was a quaint figure, as he sat there, still wearing his high-pointed hat—his lean face, full of vigour and intentness, contrasting strangely with the large frame and

heavy countenance of the man whose life was so fast ebbing away.

"We understood each other a little," said the Dominie when he came out—the women had heard him praying—"and I have here the address of his father. I will come again to-morrow."

But that evening, a change came on, and it was evident the poor fellow could not last many hours. It was Althea's turn to sit up, and she insisted on taking it, and on sending her aunt and Mrs. Quackenboss to bed. There was nothing to be done, but he could not be left to die alone. He lay quite still—indeed he had sunk into the stupor preceding death—only now and then murmuring a name which sounded like "Leonora." A little after midnight he opened his eyes, and fixing them on Althea, said some words which she knew to be thanks. "All very gut," said the poor fellow, and then he pointed upwards—as if he would say that God must thank them, since he could not. And then he closed his eyes, and spoke no more.

But when Althea wiped the tears out of her own eyes, she noticed a strange red glow in the room, and going to the window, saw that the sky was full of a lurid light—which instantly reminded her of the awful spectacle she had beheld at Oglethorpe, two years before. It brightened and brightened—rising and falling, and then rising higher—until the whole sky was illuminated. It was in the direction of New York, and she remembered that Anthony had said the rebels meant to burn the city.

The red glare continued all night, and when the dawn rose a heavy pall of smoke hung where it had been. By that time the poor young Hessian lay still—he had drawn his last breath so quietly that Althea did not know it for some minutes.

The next day was Sunday, and after the afternoon service, Pastor Van Zinder (as Pastor Rubel was that day at Jamaica) buried poor Heinrich Welder—for that was the young Hessian soldier's name—in the graveyard at Flatbush. Mrs. Maverick and Althea attended the funeral. This Mrs. Maverick considered to be a mark of respect due to a young man who had fallen in the royal cause, whether he were a gentlemen or no; but she had woven a little romance, founded on the poor fellow's decent behaviour, that he had run away to enlist, and was above the rank of a common soldier.

The Dominie drove the ladies back as far as where the road to Flatbush runs into that which leads to Flatlands—and then, as all was quiet, and he had a sick parishioner to visit, he set them down, and drove on his way. They found Anthony sitting in the kitchen at a great plate of broken victuals, while Yonichy stood listening to him, with Matilda holding on by her apron, and old Nan, with her arms akimbo, calling some persons unknown, “yaller varments.”

Anthony, it seemed, had just come from New York, and had brought terrible news. Half the city had been burned down on Friday night; he had himself seen the flames come leaping and roaring up both sides of Broadway like fiery horses, and climbing the steeples of Trinity Church. Dr. Inglis had but just saved St. Paul’s, and his own Church of Trinity was burned to the ground. Anthony made his hearers’ flesh creep, by his description of how he had seen suspected persons seized by the soldiers, and flung into the flames, and a man hanged on a tavern sign-post in Roosivelt Street.

“An’ sarve ’em right, tarnation varments!” cried old Nan.

But Anthony had kept his most thrilling narrative until the ladies should return. Yesterday morning, very early, a spy had been caught at Mother Chich’s, at The Cedars, near Huntington, and this morning he was hanged just by the Barracks in the old graveyard. Anthony had seen him brought out from the Provost, dressed in a white jacket and cap, trimmed with black, with his coffin carried beside him, and the Provost-Marshal Cunningham walking behind, and the black hangman carrying the rope. A handsome fellow—tall and fair, and blue-eyed, Anthony said, and quite young. It was said that he was Captain Nathan Hale, who last May took the sloop under the very nose of the *Asia*. Anthony had thrust his way through the crowd, and seen and heard all—or so he declared. The rebel died game, and said he was only sorry he had only one life to lose for his country. As Anthony was returning, he had heard that Captain Hale had been taken in consequence of information given by his own cousin—who saw him waiting at Mother Chich’s for a boat, and suspected he was on a spy’s errand. His boots were full of plans of the British works, all written in Latin—they said he had taught school at New London, before the rebellion broke out. Now that the rebels were put to flight, Anthony called it the rebellion.

This story filled Althea with horror—she involuntarily con-

nected it with her dream. Anthony was positive as to the extreme youth of the spy; twenty-one at the most was as much as he could be—but when Anthony said he had blue eyes, Althea's blood had run cold.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE RETURN FROM GLORY.

THE rebels had appealed to Heaven; but so far Heaven seemed to favour the cause of King George, and those strong battalions in which alone General Lee declared he put his trust. If no such signal disaster as the defeat on Long Island befell the rebel arms in the North, they had slowly lost all the ground they had gained; and by the time the fire in New York was well extinguished, Sir Guy Carleton had entirely changed the face of affairs in Canada.

With an army dispirited by repulse and very ill found, and himself slowly recovering from a severe and painful wound, Benedict Arnold had maintained his position all through the spring, and kept up the blockade of Quebec. Through the clear wintry air, he could see the sentinel pacing the snow-covered ramparts, and the British standard drooping idly in the frosty stillness against the flagstaff, while the tin steeples of the town twinkled against the deep blue Canadian sky. But all attempts to take the town failed, so constant was the vigilance of the besieged—some of the British officers sleeping in their clothes for eighty nights together—and Cape Diamond echoed to no later victor's tread. Governor Carleton had added conciliation to valour and vigilance, and had thereby done what no valour or vigilance could have availed to accomplish—he had turned the heart of Canada to the British cause. The American army, which had expected to be welcomed as a deliverer, saw itself regarded as an invader, and its position was rapidly becoming untenable.

Noel Branzholm had by this time had ample opportunities of reflecting on the caprices of Fortune. He had seen the best laid plans fail, the most dauntless valour and the most untiring efforts seemingly thrown away. For all this even his impatient spirit might have found consolation, in remembering how many times in the world's history desperate causes have suddenly

recovered themselves. But his young inexperience had been put to a harder trial still.

It would seem but natural that such brilliant exploits and indefatigable zeal as Arnold's should have been recognised by Congress. But from the beginning he had been singularly unfortunate. The anticipation by Ethan Allen of his scheme for the surprise of Ticonderoga was prophetic of the fate which awaited him; he was, it seemed, destined always to see others reap his hard-won laurels. For all thanks, a Commission had been sent, to put him virtually on his trial; and when he had taken or assisted in taking every post on the Lakes, he had been superseded and recalled.

In the second expedition to Canada, he was at first more fortunate—although the great attempt failed. But almost as soon as he was able to mount his horse, his evil star once more pursued him. Colonel Hazen's refusal to take charge of the goods seized at Montreal (under instructions from a Commission) had involved him in endless vexations; and he had also had a difference, ending in a serious quarrel, with Lieutenant-Colonel Brown, about the plundering of the officers' baggage taken at Sorel. Brown had been at the capture of Ticonderoga, and was a partisan of Colonel Allen's, and made no attempt to hide that he was General Arnold's enemy.

In one of the last days at Montreal, and when the abandonment of Canada was already decided on, Arnold sent for his young Captain, to give him some last orders. Noel found him in a bitter mood. He had evidently been writing a letter—and judging from the blots which disfigured his usually clear and firm handwriting, had dashed it off in hot haste. He observed Noel's glance, and said ironically,—“I have received another of Colonel Brown's favours—so much hatred is enough to turn a man's head. He has never forgiven me for having been at the taking of Ticonderoga. He writes to assure me that he has friends in Congress, who will see that my deeds are brought to the light of day. I've told him that in that case I shall be much beholden to him.”

“Is it about the goods Colonel Hazen left at Chamblay, sir?” asked Noel. “Surely when the facts are brought before Congress——”

“By that time, so much mud will have been thrown at me that some of it will stick,” returned the General. “Colonel Brown takes the pains to inform me that I have enemies—a

conclusion I had arrived at some time since. Hazen leaves the goods on the banks of the river to be stole by the first-comers, and the Commission demands *my* arrest!"

"But they reckoned without their host, sir—General Gates was too much of a soldier to listen to them," interposed Noel.

Arnold laughed. "He has been very civil to me," he said, "so we will let his qualities pass—he is another Lee, without Lee's brutal animal courage. Time will show which is most mischievous—the bully braggart or the specious braggart. Meanwhile, they may traduce me, but I will be the last man to leave Canada, as I was the first to enter it."

The General kept his word. He made a masterly retreat to St. John's—never more than a day's march ahead of the British forces—and embarked all his men without confusion. Captain Branhholm's company was among the last to embark—he had begged this favour, and the General, after looking steadily at him for a moment, as his manner was when he was pleased, had granted it with a smile which flashed across his dark face like a ray of sunshine over a gloomy landscape. Noel would have led a forlorn-hope to win one of those stern smiles.

It happened thus, that when the last boat was ready to push off and follow the others—already pulling steadily across the fast darkening waters of Lake Champlain—the General, who was mounted, saw Captain Branhholm standing close to the water's edge.

"There's just time to reconnoitre their advance-guard," he said, and turned his horse's head inland; Noel leaped on the wretched nag he had been riding, and followed him.

The June evening was closing in, but gleams of fire could be seen flashing among the distant trees, and once they heard a bugle sounded.

"There they come," said the General, reining in his horse. "No one can say we fled like the wicked, when no man pursued! Might I but once lead a charge against them, with Morgan and his men behind me, I would be well content to leave my body on the field!" He sat for a moment perfectly still on his horse, amidst the silence of evening, which during those moments even the advancing wave of war did not break. Then a bugle was winded in the woods, and Arnold, shaking off the reverie he had fallen into and exclaiming,—“To everything there is a time and a season, says King Solomon. This is the hour for running

away ;" set spurs to his horse, and galloped back to the shore—but not till Noel had seen three or four horsemen leave the covert of the woods, and start in pursuit.

Arrived at the beach, where the boat waited, Arnold dismounted, and began hastily to take off his horse's saddle and bridle. "No Britisher shall ride him," he said. "'Tis a pity—but 'twere a greater pity to let so good a horse be pressed into a bad cause."

As he spoke, he threw the saddle and bridle into Noel's arms, and ordered a soldier who stood waiting to shoot the horse.

"Behind the shoulder," he said. "Do not put the poor beast to torture."

"'Twas a merciful death, at least," he muttered, as the horse rolled over with one convulsive quiver. "And now we have not a moment to lose!"

Noel flung the saddle into the boat, and leapt in himself, in obedience to a gesture of the General's.

"I must be the last!" cried Arnold, motioning the soldier to precede him. Then pushing the boat off with his own hands, he too leapt in. "Pull hard, men," he said, bending his eyes intently toward the land.

As they pulled from shore, Noel fancied he heard the beat of drum from time to time, but the wind was on their quarter, and the rowers were pulling hard, and soon all sounds from the land died away.

No one spoke ; the click of the oars in the rowlocks kept measured time, and here and there a star, unclosing like a waking eye, gleamed pale above the northern mountain-tops. But the General never moved. He sat, hour after hour, his left arm resting on the gunwale, supporting his chin with his hand, and his sword across his knees—looking forward into the darkness.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

GREEK JOINS GREEK.

THE retreat from Canada had not been decided on a day too soon. Sir Guy Carleton was by this time ready to attack the Provincials by water, as well as by land. He had provided himself with a little flotilla of vessels which could be taken to

pieces, and thus easily carried overland when necessary. With these, he hoped to command the Canadian waters, and work his way down to Ticonderoga and Albany, there to form a junction with the King's troops in New York, and thus isolate New England.

To oppose him, General Arnold had early in the summer obtained permission to form a naval armament. He had thrown himself into the work with his usual zeal; but he was obliged to make his own ships for the most part, and though he worked incessantly, and urged on his men to the utmost, he could not equal Carleton's fleet, and his own flotilla seemed destined to serve only to convey his men across the waters of Lake Champlain and Lake George, on their retreat from Canada. With his motley crew of landmen he dared not oppose Carleton's tried seamen in open water, so when he knew the enemy was approaching, he anchored under Valcour Island—disposing his line of battle so that, if discovered, he could only be attacked in front.

Early on the morning of the 11th of October, the British squadron, with their battle-flags flying, rounded Cumberland Head, coming up with a fair wind. As they made the southern point of the island, the large ships fell behind, and Arnold instantly attacked the smaller vessels. But the odds were too great, and he was gradually pushed back. The unskilled crew ran the *Royal Savage* aground, and Arnold was obliged to go on board the *Congress*.

By noon the action was general. Carleton had twice the number of fighting ships, and was more than twice as heavy in metal as his enemy—but that enemy was made of the same stubborn stuff as himself, and did not stay to count his guns. Besides the fire from the ships, an incessant blaze of rifles was kept up by the Indians posted in the covert of the forests on the island and the mainland; but their fire did little harm, thanks to the fascines which Arnold had attached to his ships' sides. He pointed the guns himself; he seemed to be everywhere at once—directing, encouraging, repulsing attempts to board—while the conflict grew hotter and hotter as the day wore on, and the cannonade was heard as far away as Crown Point. The *Congress* had been hulled twelve times, and had received seven shots between wind and water; she reeled and staggered with the recoil of her own guns, and seemed as though she would settle down. Her mainmast was twice

struck, and her rigging cut to pieces ; but still Arnold refused to abandon her.

At last, night came on, and the British commander withdrew a little—but only, as Arnold presently ascertained, to post his fleet across the only channel whereby the Provincials could escape.

“He thinks he has got us,” said Arnold, looking round on the handful of officers he had called to a council. No one spoke. The *Philadelphia* had just sunk, and the *Washington* was every moment expected to follow her example. But when Arnold said abruptly,—“Gentlemen, the *Philadelphia* is sunk, the *Royal Savage* was abandoned this morning, and the *Congress* is as you see her. We have lost a considerable number in killed and wounded. We have spent three-quarters of our ammunition, and the enemy is greatly our superior in both ships and men. What do you say?” It was Noel who—seeing the General’s eye resting on him—ventured to reply, “I suppose, sir, we must break through.”

“Yes,” said the General slowly, looking at the two Colonels who stood beside him. “I suppose that is all we can do.”

It was a hazy night, but a fair wind had sprung up from the north after sundown. Every vessel put out her lights, leaving only a single signal-lantern in her stern, to guide the ship that followed her. As soon as the darkness of night had fairly come on, one vessel after another glided away silently before the wind.

General Arnold standing in the stern of the *Congress*, the last of the procession, with his hand laid heavily on Noel’s shoulder, watched the lights of the British squadron. In the intense stillness Noel could hear each breath the General drew ; and as often as a rope creaked, or a sail flapped, or the slightest movement was heard below, he felt his shoulder clutched more firmly.

Noel had time to think of many things, as they glided along over the waters rippled by the night wind. Long after they had slid past the shadowy outline of the last of the enemy’s vessels, and their lessening lights gleamed low on the lake like will-o’-the-wisps, he kept his watch by his General’s side, and wondered where Althea was that night, and thought—“At least, she cannot despise me now—and if she hears I have found a soldier’s death, she will perhaps permit herself to shed one tear for the rebel who loved her so well.”

At Schuyler's Island, twelve miles up the lake, the fugitive flotilla lay-to, to mend the sails of the *Washington*, and repair the most pressing damages. With their utmost diligence, they could not get away till the afternoon—and then the wind dropped, and presently veered round to the south. All that night, they beat up with sails and oars against the wind, but they had by morning got no farther than Split Rock; and as the sun broke through the fog, the Provincials saw the whole British fleet with every sail set, crowding down on them.

But even in this terrible predicament General Arnold did not despair. He ordered those vessels which had suffered least to press on under all sail towards Crown Point; while he, with the *Congress*, the *Washington*, and a few gondolas, held the enemy in check, and gained precious time. The *Washington* struck soon after the British opened their fire, but Arnold fought on in the crippled *Congress*—now almost a wreck. He was attacked by three schooners on his bow, one on his broadside, and two under his stern, all within musket-shot, but he showed his teeth to such effect that for five hours he held them all at bay, continually forcing his way nearer and nearer to the shore. The smoke of battle hung dense and black over the blue waters of the lake, and the artillery rolled echoing along the mountain sides which shut it in; but amidst the smoke the thirteen stripes still flew bravely from the *Congress*—whose riddled hull and torn rigging bore her witness that she had not shunned the thick of the fray. There is nothing like it in history, but Richard Grenvil's last fight. In the midst of that furious conflict, when for a moment the battle paused, Noel found himself close beside his beloved leader—from whose head he had more than once been so happy as to divert an enemy's sabre.

"This is warm work," says Arnold, with his grim smile, his dark face purple, and the veins on his forehead standing out like cords. "If we come alive out of this, they will scarce say again we are afraid to show fight! To be sure, though, we could hardly run away if we would."

"If we come alive out of this, sir," says Noel, all his own hot young blood in his face, "so help me Heaven, I will never fight under any General but you!"

The General's right hand held his sword—he laid his left on Noel's shoulder, and said, still smiling,—“Thou art a good lad, and deserving of a General more fortunate than I seem to be.”

"Fortune favours the brave!" cried Noel—and then the battle joined again.

This time, Arnold broke through, fighting to the last. There was a little creek on the east side of the channel, and into this he ran the *Congress* and the four gondolas which had remained with him. He made the marines wade ashore—then, protected by the fire from their muskets, he set fire to his ship, standing by her till the flames had taken hold. And so he left her, with her flag still flying defiantly amidst the flames, and, leaping from her bow to the beach, was the last to land.

That same evening, escaping an Indian ambush set for them, the retreating Provincials reached Crown Point, and pushing on, were at Ticonderoga next morning, where General Gates received them joyfully.

CHAPTER XL.

A HAPLESS LOVER.

'Tis glory only with her potent ray
Can chase the clouds that darken all his way.

ANNA SEWARD'S MONODY.

NOT long after New York was occupied, Mrs. Maverick and Miss Digby removed into the city, to a respectable lodging which Fred had found for them in the Bowery Lane; and although Mrs. Maverick professed to be for ever expecting that the rebels would set fire to New York again, they were very much more comfortable than they had been since they left Boston, and were certainly safer than they would have been on Long Island. The British occupation was far from rendering Long Island a desirable place of abode. What with rebel raids and Tory escapades, it was very insecure; and Mr. Burnet wrote to Mrs. Maverick, that he had but just been in time to stop a party of ingenious loyalist youths from sawing off his steeple, and was in daily expectation of being kidnapped by the rebels. "Thus am I," wrote the worthy divine, "between two fires—or, like the ancient Britons, tossed between the sea and the barbarians."

New York itself, however, was not a cheerful place at this time. The Broadway was still encumbered with ruined and deserted houses. Trinity Church was a blackened heap. The

soldiers were disorderly; they had even broken open the City Hall, and plundered the College Library. Then, too, the knowledge that there were so many wretched prisoners in the Sugar House and the Provost's, was not enlivening, especially as some of those from Philadelphia were known to Mrs. Maverick—who often carried them relief.

As winter came on, Sir William Howe gave occasional entertainments (at which Mrs. Loring appeared as conspicuously as in Boston); but many of the inhabitants of the city had fled before the British took possession, or had obtained passes soon afterwards; and those who were left had no great reason to feel merry. Such of them as had estates on Long Island, or the mainland, complained bitterly that the British foraging parties showed no respect of persons, but seized on any cattle or horses they came across—never so much as asking them if they were rebel beasts. Moreover, insult was added to injury—the remonstrating owners were bidden go carry their complaints to a remote and torrid region of the universe, which it is a gross incivility to mention in respectable ears.

There should have been—and doubtless was—much consolation in the fact that the rebel cause was growing more hopeless every day—until it seemed that Sir William Howe had only to bring down his hand and crush it at a blow, as one crushes a hornet (sometimes, it is true, getting stung for one's pains). After Fort Washington was taken, even Mrs. Maverick pitied the rebels—that is, she pitied the unhappy prisoners whom she saw being marched through the streets of New York, on their way to the jails. As for Sam Adams, John Hancock, Mr. Washington, and the other leaders, who had brought them to this, Mrs. Maverick declared herself capable of sitting unmoved to see them either hanged or beheaded, as His Majesty might command.

Captain Digby had made acquaintance with a Captain Graydon of Philadelphia, who was one of the prisoners taken at Fort Washington. The acquaintance began by Lieutenant Beckett (a good-natured fellow, who had been very kind to the luckless prisoners) saying to Fred one day—when he had ridden out to the prisoners' temporary quarters—that he was sorry for these poor devils, and pointing out Graydon as a particular object of compassion—he being terribly anxious about his brother, who had, he feared, fallen at Fort Washington. A few days after the prisoners were marched into New York,

Fred came upon Graydon, not far from the battery (by Judge Jones's house), and was talking to him, when they heard—what was heard pretty often about that time—the buglers amusing themselves by giving the view-halloo. This was intended for the rebels across the water, and was considered an exquisite jest. It brought tears of mortification to poor Graydon's eyes. Digby pretended not to see them, and began to ask all sorts of questions, with the charitable design of diverting his attention—and in the course of his questions discovered that his rebel acquaintance could give him some very interesting information. From Graydon he learned that Miss Fleming was in Philadelphia. Graydon added that he had seen the young lady with her cousin, Colonel Fleming, about the time of the Declaration of Independence—a detail at which Fred's countenance fell considerably—and further remarked that he had heard that General Washington had a particular regard for the Colonel, who had shown great gallantry at Bunker's Hill, and had a cool steady head, to be depended upon at an emergency.

"These particulars can hardly be expected to concern you," observed Mr. Graydon; "but you seemed to take some interest in the family—and I rather fancied it might be a match between Colonel Fleming and Miss Mary."

"Did you—that is, had you any particular reason for thinking so?" asks Fred, with an attempt at carelessness.

"Only that she is a very charming girl, and he is a young man any girl might be proud of," returns Graydon—who, being safely engaged to the object of his own affections, can afford to be generous. "And 'twas evident they was on very familiar terms."

"The devil it was!—I mean, could you really see that?"

"I don't mean that they was foolish—only cousinly—they are cousins, you know," returns Graydon, a little surprised at Captain Digby's showing so much feeling on the subject.

From the upper windows of the house in Bowery Lane there was a view over the hills of Long Island, and Althea sometimes stole up to a certain window at the end of the upper corridor, and looking out towards Flatlands, wondered whether Jasper Fleming was among the prisoners who were there on parole. Looking out of window is proverbially an unprofitable employment; and Althea used to come down in not the best of humours.

She went dutifully with her aunt to visit the prisoners—but always with a sickening dread of seeing a face she knew. By this time she shared the opinion of Mr. Justice Jones as to the conduct of the war; and although the exploits of rebel marauders, privateers, whaleboats, and skimmers, sufficiently kept alive her prejudices against the rebels, she was often heartily disgusted at even so much of the Provost-Marshal's brutality as he permitted himself to show before ladies. This was sometimes, however,—when he had begun at the punch-bowl earlier in the day than usual,—not much disguised. Althea did not know the secrets of those prison-houses till years afterwards—nor the hideous stories of prisoners poisoned, that the Provost-Marshal might go on drawing their rations as if they were still alive—but she saw enough to make her loathe Cunningham; but party feeling was by this time risen to a madness which only civil war can excite, and which confused the judgements of persons who knew more of both sides than Althea Digby could possibly have known.

Althea's natural delicacy was offended by much that she saw that winter. Mrs. Loring flaunting it at the State-balls, was not a decorous spectacle; and old General Robertson appeared to her an odious old man. He had been presented to her at one of the balls, and was vastly smitten. He was always calling, and would squeeze her hand, and ogle her—as only such old men can—until she declared that next time he came, she would go up to her own room and stay there till he was gone.

General Robertson had a “lady,” as everybody knew—a certain Mrs. Carroll, at whose house some of the rebel prisoners, among them Mr. Graydon, were lodged. For the old General (a Scotsman by birth, and who had risen from the ranks) combined business with his pleasures. He was making a very pretty fortune out of his “Robertsons,” as the rebels called the guineas, moidores, and six-and-thirtieths, which had passed through his hands—and which might be known by the holes he punched out of them. As he also clipped the half-joes, these coins too were called by his honoured name. This venerable old gentleman, now nearly eighty, had been made Governor of the city, in place of Governor Tryon, to the unspeakable disgust of Mr. Justice Jones.

It was not until December—by which time some, at least,

of the rebels were beginning to think it might be as well to have a friend at Court in time of need—that the Justice was released on parole, and returned to New York. He soon found out the ladies—and it may be imagined whether he spoke charitably of the rebels now! But he soon saw things in New York, which put him in a still more towering rage with those who made the King's name and authority a cover for speculation and rapine.

He came in one day, soon after his return, with a pretty thick book under his arm.

"How do you do, Judge?" says Mrs. Maverick, holding out her hand, as she sat behind her tea-pot. It was easy to see that Mr. Jones was even more peppery than usual.

"Do, Ma'am!" he cries, bristling with wrath. "Very ill, Ma'am! Infernally ill, saving your presence! I'm ashamed to say it, but 'tis the truth, and damn it! it shall be said! The King's troops did more mischief the first week they were here than the rebels—confound 'em—did in seven months! They only took a telescope for Mr. Washington's own use; and the King's troops have stole forty thousand volumes out of the College Library! I saw a villain yesterday hawking about some volumes of the *Annual Register*, neatly bound and lettered on the backs, and selling 'em for a dram!"

"'Tis a shameful thing, to be sure!" says Mrs. Maverick, much concerned.

"Ma'am, 'tis infamous! And this very afternoon, coming along to wait upon you, I saw an infernal scoundrel offering *Coke upon Littleton* for one-and-sixpence! One-and-sixpence, Ma'am, for a fine copy of *Coke upon Littleton*, stole out of the town library by these pretty fellows sent hither to restore order! Ma'am, when I think how we loyalists are treated, I am like to burst with rage! My cows and horses on Long Island have been taken. My loyal neighbours have had their fat cattle and wagons seized, just as if they was rebels. My friend Dr. Tredwell's horse—a descendant, Ma'am, of the famous Wildair, of the true English breed, and worth a hundred and fifty guineas—was pounced upon t'other morning by the Colonel of the 17th Dragoons. 'Get off that horse, in the King's name!' says this precious specimen. 'I am a loyalist,' says the Doctor. 'No matter; get off, in the King's name,' says my fine gentleman. 'I want that horse, and, by George, I'll have him!' and when the Doctor remonstrates, the

jackanapes tells him to take the saddle home on his back, and be damned to him, and thank his stars that he don't take the saddle too! And calls him a rebel, and threatens him with the Provost if he says any more!"

To this Mrs. Maverick replies by relating the woes of Jacobus Quackenboss—who, having after infinite pains found his horses, presented his memorandum. "But they only hove it at his head—'tis the very word the poor man used—and I never saw any one more cut-up in my life," says the old lady. "I call it a shameful thing—and very impolitic too."

"Ma'am, they're all traitors together," cries the Judge, clutching *Coke upon Littleton* and shaking it at Mrs. Maverick. "They're all in a league together, every one of 'em! I believe on my soul, that there's a set plan to betray His Majesty—a plan to enrich themselves and let these Provinces be lost! Howe is a traitor!"

"Come, come, Judge; this is going too far," exclaims Mrs. Maverick, a little scared at such words.

"I don't say his brother is. Black Dick, as the sailors call him, is, I think, an honest man. But Sir William—dallying with loose women, neglecting the best opportunities, and robbing His Majesty's loyal adherents—I say he's a traitor, and we are being bought and sold by him!"

The winter would have been dull indeed but for the presence in the city of a very accomplished young officer, a Captain in the Fusileers, named André, who became exceedingly intimate with Mrs. Maverick and the Digbys, and was always dropping in and enlivening them with his witty conversation.

Captain André—or Jack, as his friends called him—was a young man of Swiss extraction, who had begun life in commerce. He had fallen in love with a young relative of Miss Anna Seward, the poetess, who was also a connection of his own; but the course of true love ran cross. Jack André was an amiable and agreeable young man enough, but he had neither fortune, connections, nor expectations, so the lady's friends opposed the marriage. She wept and protested, but she yielded at last, and allowed her family to marry her to Mr. Richard Edgeworth—a young widower of six-and-twenty, of almost as lively and ingenious a turn of mind as his rival.

Having been so unlucky in love, Jack André determined to see if he could not be more lucky in war. Ambition woke up in

him, and whispered that glory was still left, even if love's labour was lost. He threw up his clerkship, and entered the army—where his charming manners and versatile genius quickly made him friends. There was nothing he could not turn his hand to, from a lampoon to a lady's fancy dress, and he was an authority on all matters of taste. With all this he was also a smart and intelligent officer, and men liked him as much as women admired him.

Everybody knew that Jack André's heart was broken ; he still carried his lost Honora's portrait about with him, but he by no means therefore shunned the society of the ladies—who for their part did their best to comfort him. But, indeed, no one could resist the young fellow. There was a boyish impulsiveness about him which disarmed every one, always excepting his Honora's parents and guardians ; but, as we all know, parents and guardians sometimes have millstones instead of hearts. Even in America, he had not been without his adventures. He was taken prisoner in Canada, and carried south to Lancaster—where, as usual, he won the affections of every one who had to do with him. He sketched the house in which he was quartered ; he made the most graceful and spirited pen-and-ink portraits of the family ; and when he was exchanged, there was a general lamentation.

In person Captain André was slight, and scarcely reached the middle height. His features, without being regularly handsome, were decidedly pleasing ; and a pair of ingenious blue eyes, full of vivacity and sensibility, betrayed his feelings before he uttered them. He looked even younger than he was, and the charm of his conversation was all the more irresistible from the singular union of so boyish a face with so accomplished a mind and so polished a manner. There was nothing of the forlorn lover of tragedy about him—it required, indeed, some stretch of imagination to believe that so light-hearted a being could be the victim of blighted affection. But to doubt this, would have been to wrong Jack André. His passion for his Honora had been a true one, and if he hovered round other shrines now that she was lost to him, who could blame him ? Was he to be accounted incapable of deep suffering, because his complexion was not a fine olive-green, and his general aspect that of a Calabrian brigand ? Jack André's character had nothing tragic in it by nature, but he had had a great passion nevertheless. The women who allowed him to flirt with them, knew

well enough that he would never love again as he had loved—from which it will appear how eminently disinterested was the interest which they took in him. Being thus naturally sanguine and impulsive, it was but a law of nature that he should believe himself to be a deeply-tragic person—and being as transparent as the day, that he should be convinced he had a prodigious aptitude for intrigue and diplomacy.

He had his young brother with him—a mere boy—he himself was not much more than five-and-twenty; but he told Miss Digby that he had several sisters who came between them in age.

This ingenious young gentleman had conceived a huge admiration for Althea Digby. He had confided his sorrows to her ear, and she had listened very patiently. He had shown her his Honora's portrait—a pretty miniature taken by himself; and he told her how, when he was made prisoner at St. John's by General Montgomery (a little before Arnold's attempt on Quebec), he had concealed this portrait in his mouth, lest it should fall into the hands of his captors. He sighed deeply as he told all this, and it was evident that he had suffered much—although he went on to speak of the Phoenix, and to beg Miss Digby's opinion as to that classic fowl's peculiarities, and especially as to its alleged power of rising renewed out of its own ashes. Here, however, Althea gently withdrew her hand (which the Captain had respectfully kissed out of gratitude for some words of womanly sympathy which she had just uttered), and remarked that, although no one could justly blame a man for transferring his affections from a woman who did not return them, yet that, in a case like this, it was difficult to see how either of the parties could hope for happiness.

“For I will not suppose either of you so fickle as to be able soon to forget each other,” she added, leaning back in her chair, and looking full in Jack André's face, as she took up the netting which she had laid down for a moment.

“Heaven knows I have remembered her too long for my own peace of mind!” cried Captain André, ruefully contemplating his ruffles, to avoid meeting Miss Digby's steady glance. But she was inexorable.

“Nay, I hope you are not going to abuse your own constancy,” she said, smiling but determined.

“In the past, no; but for the future—'twere folly, if not indeed sin, to continue to cherish feelings towards her which it were now a sin in her to return.”

"I protest, Captain André, I did not know you was so moral," said Althea, rather sarcastically.

He flushed to the roots of his hair. "Do you take me for a profligate?" he cried, the tears almost in his eyes. "My love was ever honourable—and sooner than disturb her peace of mind, I would consent to be banished to the ends of the earth!"

"Nay, you are there already," observed Althea, with a malicious curl of her lips.

"I know you detest this country," he said; "but so do not I. There are honest people here—even among our adversaries. When I was a prisoner at Lancaster, I learned to much respect some of 'em. I would be banished to a worse place than this, sooner than show my constancy as you seem disposed to have me do."

"You mistake me," said Althea kindly and gravely. "I never meant to say that you should pursue the lady, now that she has become the wife of another. It only seemed to me that you was too eager to give a plausible name to mere natural weariness of a hopeless passion."

"And what then?" asked André, with a good deal of warmth. He had been standing by the window, but he now came and sat down near Althea. "What then? What if a heart—wearied with long hoping and fearing, and thrown back at last on itself—seeks to ease its burden, and looks round for some kind heart on which to lean? God forbid I should blame her—I know what it cost her; but if 'tis so great a sin to be inconstant, who was inconstant first? There are some men who deny their past loves, and protest for the hundredth time that they never loved before. I am more honest; I never yet loved but once, and I confess it. Yet surely, in time, the deepest wound may heal, and a man may love again?"

"Or desire to be loved," said Althea, with a swift piercing glance at him.

"Well, even that is a way of loving," he said. "You are cruel! You have never known what 'tis to love, or you would know what 'tis to desire to be loved."

He looked so ingenuous as he said this, and his blue eyes were so sweet and beseeching, that Althea relented.

"You know you have my sincere sympathy," she said kindly. "'Tis as you say—only time can heal such wounds. As yet, you still see the shadow of your Honora come between you and every woman you talk with. It may seem cruel to

say, forget her—yet I must needs own it would be better you did not remember her so often.”

Althea smiled as she said this, and André smiled too ; but his smile only lasted an instant. A doubtful expression took its place on his countenance. Once or twice he made as though he would speak. At last he rose abruptly and went to the window, and stood there looking out—and he had not turned when Fred came in, and no more could be said.

CHAPTER XL.

A BOLD STROKE.

On Christmas Day in 'Seventy-six,
Our ragged troops with bayonets fix'd
For Trenton march'd away.

THE BATTLE OF TRENTON.

THE Battle of Long Island was but the first of a long train of reverses, of which the loss of Fort Washington was probably, considered in its moral effect, the heaviest blow of all. After this, the Continental army doubted itself, and all the old contempt for Continental courage revived among the King's troops—for it was many a long year before it was known that Fort Washington had been betrayed.

Then came retreat after retreat, with an ever-diminishing army—from Harlem to White Plains, from White Plains to Northcastle, then across the Hackensack to Newark, then to New Brunswick, then to Trenton—and always closely pursued by Cornwallis. There were many who would have had the Commander-in-Chief fight instead of retreat ; but he knew better than to risk his raw levies, where defeat must be ruin.

Many of these zealous persons accused Washington (but under their breath) of want of enterprise, and thought that General Lee would soon alter the face of affairs, if he were in command. In this opinion, General Lee heartily agreed—and, after the loss of Fort Washington, found it impossible to conceal that he did so. He had been sent with his division into New Jersey in order to cover Philadelphia, and when Washington desired him to come to his assistance, he made one excuse after another, and did not move for three weeks, in spite of repeated and urgent messages—keeping up a

brisk correspondence meanwhile with Joseph Reed, Washington's secretary and intimate friend, in which they mutually deplored the vacillation and febleness of their chief.

Joseph Reed had come very near to despair of the republic. When, after the fall of Fort Washington, he was sent to New Jersey for help, he found the legislature of that State fleeing from place to place, and the militia positively refusing to serve after their term should be expired. When, therefore, on his return he heard that Sir William Howe had issued a proclamation, giving the rebels sixty days in which to come in and receive a full pardon for their offences, he began to fear the game was played out.

General Lee had long been meditating some bold stroke which should let the Provincials see what real generalship was, and snuff out General Washington's flickering candle once for all. He had had thoughts of surprising Rodgers the Renegade—who lay with his rangers in an exposed situation in New Jersey—but on mature consideration, he decided that he could distinguish himself more brilliantly on the other side of the Delaware. It would never do to hide his light longer under a bushel. Though most people turned to himself as the hope of the country, General Gates had insinuated the belief into a good many minds that *he* too was an abler commander than Washington. Lee seldom took the trouble to insinuate, having found by experience that there is nothing like bold self-assertion; and he intended to support assertion by deeds.

At last he moved on to Morristown. His march was very slow, and it was the 12th of December before he got as far as Chatham. There he left his army with Sullivan in command, and took up his quarters at a tavern at Baskenridge, to meditate more at leisure on his bold stroke—and where that evening a gentleman was making a disturbance about a missing horse.

Meanwhile, General Gates, also marching to Washington's aid, was detained by a heavy snow-storm in a valley near the Wallpeck, and sent on young Mr. Wilkinson, his brigade-major, with a letter to the Commander-in-Chief, to ask which road he should take. Hearing that General Lee was near Morristown, it occurs to Wilkinson that he will do as well; so, at four in the morning, he is brought up to the bedside of the General, who opens the letter after a decent demur, and desires Wilkinson to go down and lie before the fire.

The General is not very early of a morning ; he does not come down till eight, and then comes half-dressed and slovenly, his open collar showing a shirt which looks as if it had been worn a month—he affects slovenliness, as a mark of greatness. Every one knows that he has received a most urgent letter from His Excellency to push on, but he is in no hurry—on the contrary, he questions Mr. Wilkinson, and makes sarcastic remarks on the operations, hinting pretty plainly that, as second in command, he means to follow his own judgment—and seems as though he will do anything, except go to breakfast.

As if to make a fresh delay, some of the Connecticut light-horse come up, outlandish enough in their full-bottomed wigs—in which they look like George the First on horseback. One wants his horse shod, another wants his pay, another wants forage——

“You have not mentioned the last want!” roars the General, making the crockery dance as he slaps his unwashed hand on the table. “You want to go home ! and damn you, you shall !”

Whereupon, exeunt the Connecticut light-horsemen, sorely aggrieved and scandalised.

They have scarcely retired, when Sullivan, tired of waiting, sends for orders, and receives some, after a fashion. He is to go on, and the General will follow. But even after breakfast, Lee lingers—to write to Gates on the well-worn subject of General Washington's deficiencies as a commander. He has just dashed off some crushing sentences, and signed his name to them, when young Wilkinson (who is looking out of the window) sees a party of British dragoons riding up the avenue.

Resistance is useless—has not the General said (on occasion of the Fast-day ordered by Congress) that Heaven favours strong battalions ? Colonel Harcourt and his dragoons have taken care to be much the stronger. The gentleman who came last night about the horse, posted off to Brunswick to tell them what a prize was to be made. General Lee is hurried off in his dishabille—blanket-coat, slippers, and all ; there is no time to lose lest a rescue should be attempted. Even greatness has its weak moments ; at this distressing juncture—fallen thus ignominiously a victim to a bold stroke of the enemy—the ex-aide-de-camp of King Stanislaus turns pale, and even condescends to ask his life, as he is forced to mount Mr. Wilkinson's horse, standing quite providentially before the door. Mr. Wilkinson,

meantime, having slipped away in the confusion, makes good his own escape, and—finding somebody else's horse—is off with the news and that unlucky letter to Sullivan.

This misfortune falls like a thunderbolt on Secretary Reed, who had pinned his last hope on Lee. He so far loses his head, as to express a wish to a friend that the devil had carried off Dickinson before he wrote the *Farmer's Letters*, and engaged the country in a contest above its strength. Dickinson himself is now, but unjustly, accused of having made his peace. The New York militia has deserted and gone home—and even some of the New England regiments have followed their example. The regiments which remain are utterly demoralised. The other day, a captain and fifty men fled from six wagoners in red coats, and the very name of a Hessian is enough to cause a panic. The army is, moreover, in want of everything—from wollens and linen, to salt and sugar. The only wonder is, why Howe has not crushed General Washington at one blow—as he might have done if he had attacked him on White Plains, instead of marching on Fort Washington. Philadelphia is threatened, and Congress have hastily adjourned to Baltimore. So dark is the prospect, that Washington himself has said to Reed that if things grow much worse they must retire to Augusta County in Virginia, and try a predatory war; and, if that fails, they must cross the Alleghanies. So the days go on, and Congress orders another day of fasting and humiliation, and people say despairingly to each other, that Heaven has withdrawn its favour from the cause of America.

When the ship is sinking, it is rather hard, for a mere point of honour, to be expected to go down with her. Much undeserved obloquy has been vented on rats for not staying to be drowned. Colonel Reed, in this dreadful situation, remarks to Cadwallader (who has been exchanged, and is with him at Bristol), that in these times a man with a family dependent on him must look to himself. Whereupon Cadwallader suspects his friend of intending to run, but keeps his own counsel—as much from fear of the terrible example, as from pity to human weakness. *Apropos* of weakness—immediately before Lee's capture, a letter came from him to Colonel Reed—then just returned from his fruitless errand to the Jerseys—and His Excellency, as was usual, opened it, supposing it to be on public business. But at the first sentence he read; "*I lament with*

you that fatal indecision of mind which in war is a much greater disqualification than stupidity, or even want of personal courage——" with more to the same effect, together with acknowledgments of Colonel Reed's flattering expressions towards himself. This letter His Excellency sends on to the Colonel to Burlington, with an apology for having opened it; on which Reed calls Heaven to witness that he has never said or written a word derogatory to his Commander, and only prays that General Lee may be speedily exchanged, in order that His Excellency may see how harmless was the letter to which this was an answer.

It is a dark hour for Washington. The sixty days are running out, and many a man is looking at his neighbour, and wondering what he is going to do—or what he would say, if he knew what he himself was thinking of doing.

* * * * *

But before the sixty days were out, Fortune turned her wheel once more—or rather, General Washington, tired of waiting, turned it for her. He, too, saw that a bold stroke must be struck, and his plan was bold enough to satisfy General Lee himself. He had determined to attempt the surprise of Trenton, held by Colonel Rahl and a small force of the terrible Hessians. But Trenton was on the other side of the Delaware, and the stroke must be struck before the river was frozen over.

So on the evening of Christmas Day he set out from camp with two thousand five hundred men, and came down to M'Konkey's ferry at twilight. There was snow in the wind, and on the ground. The Delaware was swollen, and the blocks of ice rushed swirling down with the current. It seemed to Jasper Fleming, as he waited on the brink, that this was the river of death, running black and fierce. But they must cross it—there was no other way.

His Excellency, with his riding-whip in his hand, was in the ferry parlour. Jasper could see his tall figure passing every now and then between the window and the table, on which stood a single candle, while his horse champed his bit outside. Just at this moment, a horseman comes trotting up, and a voice—which Jasper recognises as Mr. Wilkinson's—asks hastily where His Excellency may be found?

"He is in the parlour," says Jasper, advancing. "I thought you was in Philadelphia?"

"So I was this morning," replies Wilkinson, dismounting. "I've a letter to His Excellency, from General Gates."

As he goes in, Jasper, standing just outside the window, hears His Excellency say,—“What a time is this to hand me letters!”

Then he hears Wilkinson's brisk young voice replying; and presently catches the word “Philadelphia,” and hears His Excellency repeat, in the same tone of solemn reproach and indignation,—“On his way to Congress!”

“Dear me—beg your pardon, Colonel Fleming, I'm sure—didn't see you, coming suddenly out of the light,” exclaims Wilkinson, who has run into Colonel Fleming's arms, and would have fallen on the slippery stones, if the Colonel had not promptly caught him. “How dark it has grown!”

“Dark enough to make the venture,” says Jasper. “If you ever say your prayers, Major Wilkinson, now's the time, for I think the future of this country hangs on to-night.”

“God grant you succeed!” cries Wilkinson. “But was ever an army so ill-found? I traced you here by your bloody footsteps in the snow.”

“Who will lead us over?” cries His Excellency, coming down to the water's edge. Colonel Glover and the Marblehead fishermen are there to do it. They might be a regiment of seals, for their indifference to water, but work as they may, they cannot get the artillery over before four in the morning.

As the troops crossed the river, the sleet and snow drove in their teeth, and the night was as dark as their hopes. The light of the lantern in the prow fell on Washington's face—set like iron.

“This is the Rubicon with a vengeance!” whispered a voice in Jasper's ear, and turning, he saw the fair boyish face of Alexander Hamilton.

“This work is too rough for you,” he said involuntarily, as he contrasted Hamilton's small slight form with the stalwart figures around him. “And your head is too valuable a one to be risked without necessity.”

“I mean to run worse risks than this before I die,” said Hamilton. “Look at His Excellency—he means to do or die, and I think he will *do*.”

“I bade young Wilkinson pray for our success,” whispered Jasper in Hamilton's ear. “But I think I had better have told

him to pray that his master Gates may not wriggle himself into Washington's place, while we are away on this errand."

They were to march in two divisions—one on the upper and one on the lower road. The second division, under Sullivan, was to halt at the cross-roads leading to Howland's ferry. It was a nine miles' march; the roads were slippery and the men half-clad, but they marched on manfully—up hill and down—amidst sleet and hail. Part of the way led through forests of hickory and black oak, whose boughs sheltered them a little from the violence of the wind; but more than once Jasper was obliged to get off and lead his horse, so deep were the ruts, and so much was the poor beast distressed by the hailstones. The cold gray dawn broke before they saw the roofs of Trenton, where Colonel Rahl and his Hessians lay. They can scarcely hope to effect a surprise by broad daylight.

"Sir, we are at the cross-roads, but General Sullivan desires me to inform your Excellency that his arms are wet," says an aide-de-camp, trotting up at this moment.

"Then tell your General to use the bayonet," replies His Excellency sternly. "The town *must* be taken." And so they went on along the snowy road in the gray December morning. They were close to the village, but the snow lay deep, the Hessians slept heavily, and no alarm was given until they were fairly in the street. Now Colonel Rahl loved music and deep potations—as a good German should—yet perhaps, as a commander stationed so near the enemy, rather too well than wisely. He had vexed the military soul of one of his lieutenants, by neglecting the weightier matters of drill and defence, in his anxiety that the hautboys should play up bravely. He delighted to make his men march round the church to martial strains; but he had laughed at a proposal to throw up some earth-works—and when the old veteran Von Dechow had respectfully urged that at least it could do no harm, he had made a boastful joke, which may be best described as mediæval.

The Herr Colonel had yesterday received a warning that he was to be attacked by Lord Stirling, and had been on the alert; but it so happened that last night, in the twilight, one of his pickets was fired on by a party which instantly fell back into the woods; so the Colonel concluded that this was the attack, and went home to bed—having some wassail-cups to sleep off. But at eight o'clock in the morning, a very different alarm was given.

That same disapproving lieutenant was in command of the

picket, just at the top of King Street. Hearing a slight commotion, he popped his head out of the door, and saw the enemy's advance-guard with the artillery behind filling the street. "*Der Feind! Der Feind! Heraus! Heraus!*" shouts the lieutenant; and in another instant they hear firing at the lower end of the town, and in a moment more the cold frosty air is full of the noise of war—bugles sounding an alarm—drums beating to arms—dragoons galloping hither and thither—shots from windows—shouts of officers trying to form their bewildered men; while Washington rides up the street beside Forest's artillery, which is just ready to open fire. "Sir," says Jasper, "your position is too exposed. No success could make up for any accident happening to you." But His Excellency's blood is up, and he will not listen. The enemy are getting two field-pieces in position across King Street—but Captain Washington and Lieutenant Munroe with the advance make a brave rush, and take the pieces before they can be fired. The Herr Colonel is by this time on horseback, drawing his men together—he has actually got them safe out of the town. But his evil genius suggests to him that one wild dash may recover all, and save both honour and baggage. So he gallops back into the town, now in full possession of the enemy. There is a wild charge—and then the Colonel falls from his horse, and the Hessians, seeing his fall, break in dismay and try to flee.

As Jasper returns from carrying a message to Sullivan, he sees the luckless Colonel, supported by a file of sergeants, presenting his sword to His Excellency, and knows that the bold stroke is accomplished.

* * * * *

The elephants of King Pyrrhus were not more monstrous in the eyes of the Romans than were the Hessians to the rebel Provinces. They ate babies; they drank the blood of their enemies. Mothers frightened their naughty children with their name. And now more than seven hundred of these wild beasts were marched prisoners into Newtown, and discovered to be but men after all. They wore towering brass-fronted caps, and bristled with brass all over. They blacked their shoes and their moustaches out of the same gallipot; their queues reached their waists; altogether they looked terrible fellows. But the spell was broken, the day that their blue coats and yellow breeches were seen coming down Newtown Street.

By the spring, Washington had recovered the Jerseys with-

out a pitched battle ; and though as spring came on, the clouds began to gather in the north, and faction lifted up her head in Congress, the tide had turned,—there was never any more talk of retiring behind the Alleghanies.

CHAPTER XLII.

PHILADELPHIA.

THERE are always some dull pauses in the midst of the most exciting times — pauses long enough for the acuteness of suspense to become blunted, and for the more prosaic part of the evils of war and tumult to be felt. In Philadelphia, even the presence of Congress could hardly keep the town alive, in the stagnation of business caused by the interruption of communication. Occasional rumours of dissensions in Congress (who sat with closed doors, and admitted no reporters), and more disquieting rumours from the seat of war, could not prevent the town from being extremely dull. Most of the young men were gone to the war—many, alas! slain, or prisoners in New York, or in the prison-ships off Jersey—for there was scarcely a family on the side of the Provincials which had not to lament some member killed or taken at the surrender of Fort Washington. Then came the gloomy day when the members of Congress departed for Baltimore, and seemed to leave the city to its fate.

Mrs. Branzholm and Mary had endured their full share of suspense throughout the winter. General Branzholm, with his brigade of mounted rifles, was chiefly engaged in repressing the raids of the loyalists of Long Island—who were beginning to establish a regular system of rapine. It had become a recognised method of plunder, to carry off a substantial citizen in a midnight raid, and hold him to ransom. The other side naturally tried reprisals, so there were occasional exchanges of captives. In such a state of things, cattle-lifting and housebreaking were mere matters of course. No one who had the misfortune to live on Long Island, or in any of the districts around New York, could go to bed, without a reasonable probability of being awakened by Fagan and his men, or some other marauder of the same kidney, having his house stripped, and being himself carried off to New York, until he should have paid a round ransom.

Philadelphia was as yet too far from the seat of war to be subject to such plagues as these. As yet, Washington and his army lay between her and the enemy; and the piratical whale-boats, which infested the Sound and the Hudson River, dared not try the waters of the Delaware. But the dark cloud of war shut in her horizon for all that, and the air was heavy with disquiet. Many of the leading citizens were known to disapprove of the resort to arms—there were whispers of plots—and every now and then the decorous Quaker city saw the unseemly spectacle of the tarring and feathering of some obnoxious loyalist.

To Mary Fleming, born and bred in Boston, Philadelphia had a strangely sleepy and old-world air. Fashion—time itself seemed almost to have stood still there. There were no steep streets and crooked alleys as in Boston; all here was laid out with the right angular precision of Quaker morality. The fair broad streets, with their avenues of trees, gave a sense of leisure unknown to the busy thoroughfares of Boston. Mary said that, after the narrow streets of Boston, Philadelphia seemed to her like a house without walls.

Mary had been awakened early that morning by the long-winding of a cow-horn. Before the Revolution, this was the reveille of the citizens of Philadelphia. The cow-herd blew his horn in Dock Street, and the people let out their cows,—who knew the sound,—and when they were all gathered, he led them to the common pasture. In the evening, he went for them, and brought them back—blowing his horn as the signal for the housekeepers to open their gates. Then he blew again, and every cow came home to her own door, as some of us have seen them do in villages of the Bavarian Highlands to this day.

Mrs. Branhholm's rooms possessed the lately-introduced luxury of wall-papers—an experiment to which the landlady had brought her mind only after great searchings of heart. That the paper would harbour dust, and the paste turn mouldy, were the private convictions of that estimable person. But the Slate-Roof House had a character to maintain, and she had been assured by Mrs. Frankiin (whom she had happened to meet in a drapery store, while her mind still trembled in the balance) that wall-papers would soon be all the rage—Dr. Franklin had said so, founding his opinion on the love of womankind for gay colours and change.

The new wall-paper exhibited a choice collection of classic

vases, from which depended festoons of elegant pale-puce flowers. Against this unwonted background, stood the heavy Spanish mahogany furniture, which had already served two generations, and was to serve at least three more. In those days (which in the Colonies answered to a period full fifty years earlier in England), respectable people were no more ashamed of inheriting their father's tables and chairs, than of bearing their names, or of following their opinions. In England, long before this, great progress had been made, and fine young gentlemen, who had gone on the grand tour, tried almost as hard to make themselves into French gallants as the frog did to swell herself into an ox; and to be old-fashioned was to have committed the one unpardonable crime. A man might be guilty of all the seven deadly sins, and yet be admitted to repentance in a coat of the latest mode—but the door of mercy was inexorably shut against an unfashionable sinner. In Philadelphia, however, before the revolution, it was not thus—perhaps because the shade of William Penn still haunted the streets of his city—or, perhaps, because Paris was so far away. Instead of wearing two or three watches at once, like modish gentlemen at home, the citizens of Philadelphia so often wore none at all, that it was quite a recognised custom to step into a watchmaker's and ask the time of day—until Mr. Duffield put up a public clock.

But fashion lies deep in the heart of man—even in Philadelphia, the boatmen went about with their hair tied up in eelskins, to make it grow into a toupee. Many gentlemen had laid aside their wigs since Braddock's men came back from Fort Duquesne in their own hair; and many more had done so since the King of England had cast away his own peruke. For all this, however, Philadelphia was half a century behind-hand (at the very least) in the arts of genteel dissipation. There was not even a public promenade; it had not yet occurred to the Pennsylvanians to go out except on business. But there was plenty of homely sociality; and in summer the ladies dressed up of an evening, and sat in their doorways, or went from porch to porch gossiping with their neighbours. They rode, too, in neat little jockey-caps, or drove in one-horse chairs, with leathern bands for springs.

Indoors and out, there was the same substantial simplicity. Mrs. Braxholm's sitting-room had no carpet, but the boards were as white as the silver-sand they were sprinkled with, and

which Deborah, the hired woman, swept into figures with her brush. The chimney-place was in a corner; it was one of Dr. Franklin's "Pennsylvanians," and bore the appropriate device of a friendly-faced sun, with the motto, *ALTER IDEM*. A little above the stove, and set across the corner of the room, hung a fine mirror, in a scalloped mahogany frame, further embellished by a festoon of flowers painted on the glass itself. It had a shelf in front of it—on which Althea's hand-screens enjoyed the post of honour. This arrangement was Mrs. Branhholm's own doing, suggested by a mantel-shelf which she had seen in Boston, and was one of the innovations which her landlady had resisted. She had, however, handsomely owned that the effect was elegant, and gave the room quite a new air.

If the town was dull, what society there was in the Slate-Roof House was of the best. Mr. Rittenhouse (lately appointed State-treasurer) would drop in pretty often. He was very partial to Mary, and spent a deal of pains in explaining to her how he calculated the exact size of the moulds for his clock-weights—for he had been charged with replacing with iron the leaden weights for which Congress had found another use.

One morning, however, Mr. Rittenhouse came near receiving a warmer welcome from Mary than he expected. He was coming along—rather earlier in the day than he usually went abroad—and being somewhat lost in meditation, did not observe until he was actually in front of the door-steps that half-a-dozen boys and girls were gathered round the porch of the Slate-Roof House, where Mary Fleming, her face crimson with anger, was holding up an egg to the general view.

"This is a wicked attempt to frighten silly people; there's no magic in it—'tis a trick!" Mary was saying indignantly, as she looked round on her audience, who seemed rather awed—but whether by her eloquence, or by the trick she was denouncing, was not apparent. "I have heard of these eggs, and I'll serve every one I see as I serve this one—and not pay for it, neither!" With this, Mary dashed the egg into the middle of the road—with so swift and unexpected a movement, that Mr. Rittenhouse very nearly received it into his own bosom, as he came up the steps to see what might be the matter.

"I scarce expected, Miss Mary, to be pelted by you with rotten eggs," he observes, bowing politely—while the boys laugh (out of pure respect, as Jasper said, when this story was told him).

"'Tis not rotten that I know of, sir," stammers Mary in great confusion. "But indeed I am so ashamed, I do not know what to say to you—only I was so put out; and so I think will you be when you know why I did it. 'Tis what they call a magic egg——"

Mr. Rittenhouse now perceived a great girl with a basket of eggs on her arm.

"Magic egg or no, Humpty-dumpty hath had a great fall," he observed, quietly stepping into the road, and turning over with his cane the shattered remains of Humpty-dumpty, as he lay in the dust. Some letters were faintly visible on the broken shell—"O America, Howe shall be thy conqueror!" says Mr. Rittenhouse slowly reading the inscription. "It looked so indeed three weeks ago, but now I think that Sir William Howe shall no more conquer America, than

All the King's horses and all the King's men
Shall put Humpty-dumpty together again.

Pray do not apologise, my dear Miss Mary—'twas a patriotic act, and I trust will be imitated. As for the magic, 'tis a very simple scientific secret, and could only impose on ignorance."

Mr. Rittenhouse said this rather severely, for the benefit of his hearers; and added—"Go home, and tell your mothers that I could in an hour write, '*O America, Washington shall be thy deliverer,*' on a score of such eggs."

Dulness and safety are frequently supposed to be convertible terms; but though Philadelphia was undoubtedly dull, its safety was threatened pretty often from without, while within, as every one knew, the great body of the Quakers inclined strongly to the royal cause, as to the Powers that Were. They did not always confine their opposition to the sort whereof it is said, "he that is not with me is against me"—but were known to give aid and comfort to the enemy in many ways, more or less direct—even if they did not, as was suspected, positively plot to restore the old order.

There was a brief flash of rejoicing when the Hessians were marched through, and poor Colonel Rahl's colours were hung up in Carpenter's Hall. But not even this could give much hope to the New Year, with Congress fled away, and every now and then an alarm of Howe's approach—the militia ordered out, shops to be shut, and people packing up their bedding and clothes in wagons, ready to start for the mountains.

The New Year was but a fortnight old, when the body of General Mercer (slain at Princetown) was brought in, to be buried at Christ Church with the honours of war. There were many such solemn spectacles after this, and one rainy day young Ensign Morris was laid to rest in the Friends' burying-ground, —but with no volley from weapons of carnal warfare breaking the sacred stillness.

Rumours that New York was taken—Tory prisoners brought in—backwoodsmen marching through to join the army—more funerals—so the winter wore away.

The very excitements in Philadelphia that winter were gloomy—the last being the hanging of Molesworth, for trying, at the instigation of Ex-speaker Galloway, to corrupt three pilots of the town, and get them to bring the *Eagle* up the Delaware.

Beside this, two or three flying visits from General Branhholm and Jasper, and as many letters from Noel—now in New Jersey with General Arnold—were the only events of any vital importance to either Mrs. Branhholm or Mary Fleming, until spring was far on its way to summer.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A MAN BORN TO COMMAND.

Magisque magisque viri nunc gloria claret.

NOEL BRANXHOLM accompanied General Arnold on his visit to the camp on the Delaware, in December—not very long before the surprise of Trenton, and had the happiness of there seeing his brother, for the first time since the breaking out of the war. In the few days which he and Jasper spent together, there was no lack of subjects for conversation. If Jasper could possibly have entertained any doubt before as to the extent to which Noel's affections were engaged, he could have none now.

They were one day discussing the loss of New York, and all the disastrous consequences which had followed therefrom, when Noel said—with a somewhat heightened colour and an uneasy manner, which Jasper did not fail to notice—

“I suppose Miss Digby is there?”

“I suppose so,” said Jasper—and hesitated so long before

he could find anything more to reply, that Noel mistook his brevity for displeasure.

"You hurt me once, brother—the only time you ever did," he said, holding his head high, and meeting Jasper's gaze. "Do you remember hinting that Miss Digby might move me from my principles? I hope you do not think it now?"

"No—I do not think it now," replied Jasper in a constrained tone. Noel had introduced Miss Digby's name so suddenly, that he was taken unprepared.

"Ah! but you speak doubtfully—you wish it was otherwise! You wish 'twas any other woman in the world I had set my thoughts on!" cried Noel excitedly. "'Tis so—confess it!"

"If it were so—even if it were, 'tis not because I—that is, you have no right to suppose—I mean, I never gave you cause to imagine—you mistake me——"

Jasper stammered and hesitated more and more. To accept Noel's accusation was to seem to think Althea unworthy—to repel it too openly, might be to betray himself. But Noel had not the remotest suspicion of the truth.

"Dear brother, I understand you better than you can explain yourself," he said. "I'll even own my love is a misfortune—God knows 'tis so, for I can never hope 'twill have a happy conclusion. But we cannot control our hearts—that's a task beyond the power of all our philosophy, as you will, I doubt not, find out one day for yourself."

"I have learned it already," said Jasper—and even the unsuspecting Noel noticed an unwonted bitterness in his voice—"and, like much other wisdom, 'tis of very little use to its owner. But why do we talk thus, when we must part so soon, and may never meet again in this world? As you know, His Excellency means shortly to strike a blow somewhere, though no one as yet knows where, and wherever he goes I follow."

"There's a something about His Excellency which compels respect," said Noel, "and then he is a Virginian—but if he throws your life away in one of his unlucky engagements, I shall not forgive him. I could wish you had served under General Arnold"—

"If I have rightly understood your description of his campaigns," said Jasper drily, "I should but be exchanging the frying-pan for the fire."

Noel laughed. "'Tis true he does not choose the safest

roads," he said; "but if you had ever seen him fight you would think of him as I do. You have seen him and heard him speak—is he not a man born to command?"

"Yes, in action," returned Jasper. "He is a man of astonishing daring and resolution, quick to resolve, and bold—and cautious too—to carry out. But I think he is too thirsty for glory, and, though 'tis the least ignoble sort of self-seeking, 'tis self-seeking still. No one can have seen Washington—as I have—sober and unrelaxed in success, patient and steadfast under defeat, without perceiving that the heart of a nation may safely trust in him. I'm ever reminded of those lines in Ennius—

'Unus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem;
Non ponebat enim rumores ante salutem'—

But I think the greatest men seem at first less great than they are; 'tis not till I compare Washington with others, and even with your own intrepid commander, that I see how great he is."

"That may be," observed Noel; "but if General Arnold had been here you had never lost New York."

Before they parted, Noel put his brother through a close examination as to all that had happened in Boston. Jasper answered these questions very fully, and frankly told his brother that although Miss Digby had shown him kindness which he could never either forget or repay, he feared she disliked him.

"'Tis all my fault if she does," cried Noel eagerly—"not that I believe it for an instant. But I talked so much of you, when we was at sea, that she's got an idea, I know, that I take all my opinions from you. 'Twas in vain I assured her I thought for myself. She as good as told me you had made a rebel of me, and she called you a fire-eater before she'd ever seen you."

"I can assure you I take that as a compliment," said Jasper, and his cheeks flushed. "I fancied she thought me rather a fellow who set the ball a-rolling, but himself escaped the full penalty of his sedition."

"She could not have thought that," said Noel. "But I see plainly how 'tis; you misunderstood her from the first—nay, I'm not reproaching you. She's unjust too—I admit it. She chooses to think me your tool; 'pon my word, I'd sooner she called me a fire-eater! But you say she always spoke kindly of me?"

"She never mentioned you without some kind expression or

other, and she has spoke a hundred times of your rescue of her brother."

"She makes too much of that," said Noel. "I don't mean to say but in another instant he had been lost, but any one would have done the same. But sure, dear brother, you wasn't with her all those months without seeing what a noble creature she is?"

"Can you not understand that the perceiving that may bring more pain than pleasure, under our circumstances?" returned Jasper. "I am fast becoming an accomplished dissembler!" he thought to himself, as Noel exclaimed,—

"I understand it but too well, brother! Is not that precisely what I feel ten times more sharply than you possibly can? Well, whatever be the issue, I believe she will do us justice one day—'tis scarce to be expected she should yet."

A day or two after this, His Excellency ordered General Arnold to Rhode Island, to assist in rallying the militia, and Noel bade his brother farewell with many embraces, in which everything was forgotten but their love for each other.

Before General Arnold left camp, he had the satisfaction of getting his friend Captain Lamb exchanged. Lamb had been left for dead under the walls of Quebec, and had been a prisoner ever since. He was now empowered to raise a regiment of artillery, and, wanting funds, Arnold lent him a thousand pounds.

The surprise of Trenton and the recovery of the Jerseys seemed to Noel's sanguine temperament sure signs of final and speedy victory to the cause of the United Colonies. He doubted not that the retaking of New York City would soon follow, and pleased himself with the idea of presenting himself very shortly before Miss Digby, in the character of a modest and chivalrous victor.

He had by this time fresh reason to complain of his General's wrongs. His relentless enemy, Colonel Brown, having been refused a court-martial, had sent no less than thirteen charges against Arnold to General Gates, who treated Brown very coolly, and forwarded the papers to Congress. This persistent persecution roused the anger of Schuyler (himself a victim to the New England grudge against a New Yorker); and he had written to Gates, that it would be well to court-martial officers who abused their superiors—adding that General Arnold's impartiality and candour would always expose him to complaint.

The effect of Brown's accusations was soon seen. In February, Congress elected five Major-Generals, but Arnold's name was not among them. Washington was much annoyed, and vainly remonstrated against this injustice; and Arnold, deeply hurt, requested leave of absence to go to Philadelphia (to which place Congress had now returned), to demand an investigation of his conduct. He first, however, went home to New Haven, where his sister was taking charge of his children—his wife having died during his first Canadian campaign.

He was still at New Haven when, one day in April, Governor Tryon of New York, who had planned a sudden descent on Rhode Island, landed two thousand troops at the foot of Compo Hill. He burned the stores at Fairfield, and then went on to Danbury. Wooster and Silliman, the Generals in command of the Provincials, had hastily called a few militia, and marched with them through the night, guided by the flames of Danbury. They were not more than six hundred in all. Just as they came into Reading, Noel—riding a little in advance of his company, anxiously listening for any sound, and wishing that General Arnold were but there to lead them—heard the sharp trot of a horse approaching, which slackened presently, and the very voice which he had been longing to hear, called out,—

“Who goes there?”

“Friends!” cried Noel, spurring his horse up the street. “You are just in time, sir, we shall beat them now you are come!”

“That will depend a good deal on how many they are,” returned the General, not, however, displeased.

As the day dawned, the street of Ridgefield presented a strange and unwonted spectacle. General Arnold, with Silliman and the main body of the militia, were waiting there behind a barricade hastily thrown across the street—carts, logs, earth, and stones, anything that came to hand, had been used to block the road. On one side was a ledge of rocks, on the other, houses and barns. Five hundred of the militia of Ridgefield had come in during the night. Nine hundred men in all were waiting in Ridgefield street for Tryon, whose rear would be harassed by Wooster and his two hundred—Tryon, having done all the mischief he had intended, was retiring.

It was neither dark nor light. The chilly dawn wrapped

all the familiar surroundings in a dim gray mist—like the dimness which hangs between life and death—and the close-drawn blinds of the houses looked like eyes shut in death, to open no more.

And so they waited, in a light more dreary than darkness itself, until the heavy tramp of the advancing British column sounded hollow through the fog, and they heard the distant firing of Wooster's men in the rear.

The encounter was desperate; but numbers began to tell, and the heavy firing soon made a breach in the barricade. Still it would have gone hard with Tryon, if a platoon of General Agnew's infantry had not gained the ledge of rocks. Arnold was evidently the object of attack. The balls whistled round him—Noel expected every instant to see him fall. His horse was struck and began to plunge; but that personal prowess which had so often before dazzled Noel's imagination, kept the foe at bay by sheer dint of hard blows. Then there was a sudden rush, and Noel, hard-pressed himself, and swept to the side of the road, suddenly missed the General, and desperately fighting his way towards him, heard a voice cry,—“Surrender! you are my prisoner!”

At this Noel struck about him so madly that he found himself the next instant by the General's side, whose horse had sunk down dead under him, and at whose breast a Tory partisan was pointing his bayonet. Noel had but just time to wonder why he still kept the saddle, when Arnold said coolly, “Not yet!” and, drawing out a holster-pistol, fired and killed the Tory.

By this time Noel perceived that the General's foot was entangled in his stirrup, and helped him to get clear. There was a thickly-wooded swamp a little farther on, and here Arnold rallied his men, and hung on the British rear all the way back to Compo, where Lamb came up with his artillery. There was another smart encounter here, before the enemy could re-embark under cover of the fire from the ships, and the General lost another horse—having nearly persuaded the enemy that he bore a charmed life.

After this, Congress relented so far as to appoint him a Major-General, and presented him with a horse in the stead of the two killed at Ridgefield. But even by this tardy act of justice his late juniors still outranked him. In vain did Washington once more urge his claims upon Congress, and represent that

General Arnold would scarcely consent to act under the new Major-Generals—whom as senior Brigadier he had commanded but a few weeks ago. Arnold was obliged to soothe the injured pride of a soldier, by taking what comfort he could from the report of the Board of War, which (confirmed by Mr. Carroll's evidence) pronounced Brown's charges to be cruel and groundless.

His Excellency had offered General Arnold the command on the Hudson. Arnold, however, had resolved to go to Philadelphia and demand the restoration of his seniority, and the settlement of his accounts. He had carried on the campaign in Canada to a great extent at his own charges, and had expended large sums to relieve the necessities of his starving soldiers. General Washington gave him a letter to the President of Congress; and Noel Brankholm, having obtained leave of absence, made the journey in his General's company.

As, owing to the disturbed state of the country, the stage-coaches had ceased to ply even as far as Princetown, they journeyed on horseback, with a couple of attendants. They had ridden some way in silence, when the General suddenly asked Noel what he was thinking of?

"I was thinking, sir, of the first time that ever I saw you, and of all that has happened since," answered Noel.

"'Twas an odd meeting," said Arnold, looking sharply at his young companion. "I'll wager you thought I was a swagging apothecary."

"I thought, sir, when you spoke of opportunity, that you was the man to seize one," replied Noel boldly—he knew that his General loved an outspoken answer. "And you may remember I promised to follow wherever you might lead. 'Tis not a promise a man makes every day, but I've never regretted making it—and I shall never, I'm sure, regret keeping it."

"You have kept it," said Arnold; "and whoever may turn against me, or play me false, I know you will not. Before ever you had spoke a word that day we met, I knew you was single-hearted."

"To be faithful, sir, is the least a man can do," said Noel; "we cannot control good fortune, but to be faithful lays in a man's own power."

CHAPTER XLIV.

GENERAL ARNOLD WITHDRAWS HIS RESIGNATION.

Let me embrace you,
Ere you depart! It may be one of us
Shall never do the like again.

THE TRAGEDY OF VALENTINIAN.

It was in a very disconsolate mood that Noel was waiting at General Arnold's lodging on a sultry afternoon in July. The General had desired him to be there by three o'clock, and it was now past four. Noel had read the *Pennsylvania Packet*, which he found on the floor, until he had nearly dropped asleep—to be awakened by a blue-bottle fly buzzing in his ear. He had in sheer desperation examined a hideous shell-work cornucopia—a *chef d'œuvre* which the General had considerably damaged by keeping his pens in it. Some one upstairs was playing the Old 100th on the harmonica. The casement was open, but very little air was stirring. Now and then, a step was to be heard going along the street, but this was so rare that Noel took the trouble to get up and look out. Once, it was a slow and pompous step—and Noel, peeping between the tall pots of lavender and golden-rod which effectually screened the window, saw Dr. Yeldall, in three-cornered hat, full-bottomed wig, and red cloth coat, on his way to visit a patient, shaking his head and muttering to himself, as he banged the pebbles with his gold-headed cane. Noel watched the doctor out of sight, and then impatiently returned to his chair and his meditations.

Things were going ill. There was evidently no thought now of striking the one great blow with which all the young soldiers dreamed of putting an end to the war. Above all, there was no idea of attempting to dislodge the enemy from New York—an enterprise with the anticipation of which Noel had beguiled the long way from Canada. That New York would be invested, a concerted attack made by sea and land, and the city forced to capitulate—these were visions on which Noel had allowed himself to dwell, until it seemed to him incomprehensible that General Washington should hesitate a moment before beginning his preparations. If only a sufficient force were brought to bear, success would be certain—for Noel was far too sanguine to perceive the dangers of becoming

entangled in the British lines, in a district where Tories abounded, and where the enemy would therefore be sure of receiving instant information of every movement.

It was a necessary part of the picture that Althea Digby should by this means fall into the hands of the victorious besiegers, to be by them treated with such chivalrous magnanimity that she must needs forgive her captors. How else could Noel ever hope to see her again? If, indeed, she had not left for England already! But Jasper had expressly said that she did not intend to return thither. She had told him that her relations there had not been so eager with offers of service, immediately after her father's death, as that she would care to throw herself on their kindness now. Though Jasper had answered his brother's questions fully, it was evident to Noel that the subject of Althea Digby was one which he shrank from discussing.

"You still think ill of her in your heart,—I can see it, Jasper,—but, by heaven, you do her wrong!" he had exclaimed the last time they spoke of her. And Jasper had replied,—“I never thought ill of her—never, that is, after I had heard her speak. Will you never forget that one unfortunate word, for which, as I've told you, she herself has forgiven me?”

"'Twas like her to do so!" said Noel. "I protest, brother, you've given me such a picture of her generosity, that you've made me love her more than ever!"

"Then do not again accuse me of thinking ill of her," returned Jasper.

But this afternoon, as the moments went by, and the General did not come back, Noel told himself that whatever Jasper might protest, he was certain he was uneasy about Althea's influence over him.

"He knows her very little—and me still less," he thought, with some chagrin, "to imagine it possible. 'Tis the only time I ever knew his judgement to be at fault. But he hath never yet loved a woman himself, and so hath a notion that a man in love is but a nose of wax, to be moulded as his mistress chooses."

Noel felt that something had come between Jasper and himself, and that that something was Althea Digby. So keenly did he feel this, that he had even asked himself if it was worth while to let the mere memory of a woman, whom but too probably he would never see again, estrange him ever so little from his brother. But he knew that so long as there remained

the least hope of winning her, he could never deliberately give her up. He believed that she felt kindly towards him—she had assured him of her sisterly regard, with a sincerity he could not mistake ; and all that Jasper had said confirmed this. But Noel did not deceive himself ; in his heart he knew that he had not yet gained her love. And if the King's troops were to be left much longer in comfortable possession of New York, who could tell but that some smart young British officer might not step in and carry off the prize ?

Noel had seen his brother several times since he had been in Philadelphia, but by tacit consent, they had avoided speaking of Althea. There was nothing new to say, and even Noel felt a disinclination to dwell on hopes which every month, as it went by, made less likely to be realised.

It is obvious that there was very little in all this calculated to cheer Noel's spirits ; and the longer he waited for the General, the more dismally was he persuaded that everything was going wrong. He had been pouring out this conviction to Mary Fleming, that very morning, and he wished the General would come, that he might get away in time to go and take a dish of tea at the Slate-Roof House. They ought not to have drunk tea ; but they did—and called it coffee. Mary had protested a little, but Mrs. Branhholm declared there was no harm—there could be no talk of tea-duty now, and the tea was there, and why not drink it ? Meanwhile, time was running on, and that young coxcomb, Graydon's cousin, would be there, hanging over Mary, and Noel would not be able to get a word with her ! The General must be detained by something serious. In disgust at the long-continued refusal of Congress either to pass his accounts, or to give him his proper rank, he had yesterday sent in his resignation ; but surely Congress would decline to accept it !

General Arnold had now been three months in Philadelphia, vainly demanding the settlement of his accounts. Once during that time it had seemed as though something was to be done. Sir William Howe had made a demonstration towards the city, and Arnold had been sent for to the Delaware above Trenton ; but the British Commander had refused battle—though those best able to judge, believed that he was meditating crossing the Delaware with a view to marching on Philadelphia.

Noel respected his brother's opinion too much to have ever wished to see Washington superseded by Lee, but he could not help secretly lamenting the capture of that General—as the

silencing of a voice which was always given for action. He tried to comfort himself by remembering that General Arnold had never expressed any admiration for Lee's military abilities, and had even said that his ignominious capture served the braggart right.

"If His Excellency had full powers, as he ought to have, General Arnold would not have been kept here, dancing attendance, till he resigned his commission in disgust," thought Noel ruefully. "Oh, for one bold dash, in which we might risk all to win all!"

Just then, he heard the hasty determined step—which always made his heart leap with the hope of something to be undertaken—and caught a glimpse of General Arnold turning in at the door. In a moment he entered the room. His face was flushed and angry, yet something about his whole manner made Noel say respectfully,—

"You look, sir, as though you had heard good news. May I hope that Congress has done you justice at last?"

"Congress be d——d!" said Arnold with a triumphant defiance in his tone. "No! they think to wear me out with their rascally lawyer-like delays! His Excellency's only fault is that he shows 'em too much respect—he should send 'em about their business, as Cromwell did the Rump! A curse on Kings and Congresses, say I! No! they have not done me justice, and they never will—but, for all that, I've withdrawn my resignation!"

"Then are we to attack New York, sir?" cried Noel joyfully.

"No," said Arnold, smiling at the young fellow's impetuosity; "we leave that for General Lee to do, when he is exchanged—he hath been long enough in New York," he added sarcastically, "to know the best points of attack. We are to do better than that. Burgoyne is advancing on the Hudson, and two expresses have come in from Schuyler. St. Clair has evacuated Ticonderoga without striking a blow, and is wandering in the woods with his army—no one knows where! You look astounded—but 'tis but the inevitable result of the pig-headed obstinacy which would not believe the Sugar-Leaf Hill was accessible, though Wayne and I climbed it last summer, to prove it was! Well, Ticonderoga is lost, and Schuyler writes that he is at the head of a handful of men—five hundred at most—and only five rounds of ammunition a

man—the country in consternation, Fort George threatened, and the Indians at work scalping by Fort Stanwix!”

The General walked about the room, clenching his hands with rage as he spoke.

“Fools! always counting on what may not be—instead of acting on what may be!” he exclaimed presently, while Noel stood by in dismayed silence. “The loss of the place and all the artillery and stores is bad enough, but the panic is a thousand times worse than all! Burgoyne is marching through the country like a conqueror, and if he once gets down the Hudson we are lost! When I think how all I won in Canada has been fooled away, I could curse!” And then with a sudden change of manner, he added quietly,—“I have withdrawn my resignation, and offered to serve, if I must, under St. Clair.”

He smiled sarcastically as he said it, and when Noel exclaimed; “’Twas a noble patriotic resolution, sir!” he rejoined that it was a sacrifice he might never be called on to make, as it was quite possible that St. Clair’s scalp was dangling by this time at Joseph Brant’s girdle. “But however that may be, I shall go,” he concluded.

“Then I was right, sir, and you’ve brought good news,” said Noel, who believed his General to be invincible. “When you came in, I was just wishing we might for once be permitted to risk all to win all—and here is the opportunity, and a glorious one indeed!”

“’Tis well there are wiser and cooler heads than yours, my young friend, to remember that one may also risk all to lose all,” said the General looking at him good-naturedly. “But I like to see spirit. And this time we must do more than last—Burgoyne must be beat at all hazards. I have told ’em I’ll serve without a command if they won’t give me one; but Washington will, I know, never let that indignity be put upon me.”

It so happened, that next morning Jasper came in from Morristown. He had only one day’s leave, and had ridden all night. He came just in time to see his brother once more. On both sides the interview was affecting—almost solemn. Noel was about to start on what must prove a perilous campaign, and it was equally certain that Sir William Howe did not mean to leave General Washington in undisturbed possession of the field much longer.

“We may be pretty sure ’tis all part of one plan,” said Noel in answer to a remark which Jasper had made. And

then he took his brother's hand and said, looking at him very sadly,—“Jasper, if I fall, and you escape, and you are ever able to get speech of her, tell her I never forgot her. Nay, dear brother, why should my saying it move you?” for Jasper's eyes had filled with tears. “’Tis no more like to be because we speak of it. And for God's sake, take care of yourself, for if anything was to happen to you, ’twould, I'm sure, break my heart. ’Tis my greatest trouble that we are so often parted. We've never had a thought that the other did not know,—oh, I guess more of yours than you tell me! And if we do not meet again, remember I said nothing on earth could ever come between us for long,—not even a woman's love.”

They embraced each other without speaking.

“I've nothing to say in case anything should happen to me,” said Jasper when he had a little recovered his calmness—his hands still rested on Noel's shoulders, and he looked in his eyes without flinching—“except that I would have you remember you was always dearer to me than myself.”

Many tears were shed the day that Noel left Philadelphia. Mrs. Branxholm seemed as though she could not let him go, and Mary, when she kissed him, was as pale as death, and her lips were almost as cold. But Noel had shaken off his momentary depression, and he rode away in very tolerable spirits.

CHAPTER XLV.

SIR JOHN BURGOYNE PUTS ON HIS ARMOUR.

If after all my loving warnings,
My wishes and my bowels' yearnings,
You shall remain as deaf as adder,
Or grow with hostile rage the madder,
I swear by George and by St. Paul,
I will exterminate you all.
Subscribed with my manual sign,
T'attest these presents,

JOHN BURGOYNE.

IT was with a Proclamation conceived very much in this strain, that Sir John Burgoyne set out upon the conquest of the rebellious Provinces of North America. So admirably appointed an army had perhaps never been sent out before. It only numbered somewhere about ten thousand men in all; but these men

were the very flower of the British army, and the Generals were men of tried courage and ability. One of them, General Fraser, was the son of that old Simon, Lord Lovat of Fraser, who, having hunted with the hounds and run with the hare for so long, at last laid his gray head on the block upon Tower Hill, after the 'Forty-five. His son hoped, by zealously serving the House of Hanover, to get the attainder reversed and the estates restored. The train of artillery was the finest ever given to so small a force. There were four thousand mercenaries—Hessians, Waldeckers, Anspachers, and Brunswickers, under Baron Riedesel—and it was credibly asserted that the Hessians had double teeth all round their jaws.

Sir John himself was a person whose birth, antecedents, and character, all combined to make him a romantic figure. Everybody knew that he was a son of Lord Bingley. He had followed up this advantage by running away with Lord Derby's daughter. The Earl—perhaps misliking the bar-sinister—had been for a long time inexorable. Burgoyne, however, distinguished himself in Portugal, where he had formed a friendship with Lee. He was also a wit, and a man of elegant tastes. So at last, when his heir was to be married, Lord Derby relented, and permitted his audacious son-in-law to write a play for the occasion. It was called *The Maid of the Oaks*, and Mr. Walpole made cruel fun of it. But the General wrote another, which he called *The Heiress*—and this Mr. Walpole was pleased to say was the gentleest comedy in the language.

Besides all these claims to admiration, Sir John was a brave soldier; and, if he was a weak man, and too fond of vainglorious proclamations, was a very kind-hearted one, with a foolish romantic generosity—not of the highest sort, but genuine in its way. And his abhorrence of cruelty was quite genuine—for which reasons we will hope that *Junius*, when he accused him of cheating at play, was merely indulging the innate malignancy of his genius.

This gallant little army was to march from Quebec, by the St. Lawrence and Lake Champlain, to the Hudson, and so to Albany. Colonel St. Leger was to co-operate with Sir John from the Valley of the Mohawk, and Sir Henry Clinton was to advance up the Hudson. There was plenty of elbow-room here. The march lay through the old battle-grounds on which French and English had so often contended for the mastery. The way led by lakes and mountains, fertile flats, and deep

valleys, through dark forests, along great rivers, through districts sometimes populous and cultivated, and sometimes inhabited only by wild animals and wilder red men. The little stone church of each village that they passed had often been turned into a citadel, wherein the men had defended their wives and children from the terrible Mohawks and Onondagas.

A large body of these warriors was attached to General Burgoyne's army, led by Sir John Johnson and Joseph Brant, the famous Sagamore of the Mohawks. The General harangued these noble savages at Crown Point. He carefully explained to them (as they stood or sat round with impassive faces, all feathered and painted, and wrapped solemnly in their blankets), that in this war they must not act up to their national traditions—here the contending parties were of the same blood, and the loyal might even be confounded with the rebellious. Having thus exhorted the leopard to change his spots, Sir John moved down the country, driving Schuyler before him step by step towards Fort Edward.

Schuyler meanwhile was not idle. He was too weak to fight till the arrival of the reinforcements which Washington was hurrying up; but he could do much to gain time—and he did it. Time was everything; if Burgoyne could once get down the Hudson to New York, the Colonies would be cut in two, and all would be lost. So while Sir John was haranguing the Six Nations on the amenities of civilised warfare, and denouncing the torture of prisoners, Schuyler was destroying bridges, felling trees, blocking roads, digging trenches, rendering creeks unnavigable, driving off cattle, destroying forage, and placing every possible obstacle in his enemy's way. More than this, he had a spy who had consented to run the awful risks of entering Burgoyne's service, and who brought him Burgoyne's despatches to Clinton, and Clinton's replies, which Schuyler was thus able to alter so as to ensure yet more delay. Lincoln was at Manchester, raising the militia of Vermont, and Arnold was already on the march. Delay was salvation.

No one can have much observed the course of human affairs (whether on the great or the little scale), without having perceived a certain ebb and flow of Fortune's tide. "Misfortunes," says the proverb, "never come alone." One piece of ill-luck will sometimes seem to have broken the spell of good-luck—thereafter, everything goes wrong.

Something like this happened to Sir John Burgoyne, as he

marched on, flushed with success-to-be. We may be sure that these strange turns of fortune are not mere chance, but have their causes deep-rooted in the moral law of the universe; but we cannot always trace the connection of cause and effect so clearly as here. The tragic death of a young girl was to put an end to the panic which Burgoyne was spreading, and to raise him mortal enemies out of the very ground; it was the first small cloud which grew and grew until it covered all his sky.

Burgoyne's old comrade Lee delighted to vent his misanthropy in praising the fine breeding of the Mohawk chiefs who honoured him with their friendship; but it was scarcely to be expected of the author of a genteel comedy that he should admire them. General Burgoyne did not love Mohawks and Oneidas, but he believed that a certain wild honour inspired the savage breast, and he trusted that a diligent study of the humane arts of European warfare would soften their manners. In this confidence, he remarked with satisfaction that the very same Indians who had destroyed poor Braddock (led by Langdale, who had commanded them on that terrible day) were now marching peacefully beneath his banners to annihilate the rebels. But even already his satisfaction was dashed by the perpetual anxiety in which they kept him, and he was further plagued by the Canadian interpreters, who could not always be trusted to interpret truly.

He had got almost as far as Fort Edward by the end of July—moving at about the rate of a mile a day, and doubtless cursing Schuyler's ingenuity—when, one morning, a party of Indians brought into camp a very stout elderly lady, stripped to her chemise, who proved to be Mrs. Campbell, a cousin of General Fraser's, and a staunch loyalist. No woman in camp had a gown big enough, so the General lent the poor lady his own camp-coat, and a pocket handkerchief for a cap. She told how she and her young friend Miss M'Crea—who was that very morning to have gone down the river to join her brother—had been seized in their own house at Fort Edward by Indians, and were being hurried off, when a negro boy gave the alarm, and a detachment of Provincials from the fort came out to the rescue. At the foot of an ascent, where the road divided, she had been parted from Jennie, and knew not what had become of her.

Mrs. Campbell had hardly got thus far in her story, when another party of Indians came in—with Jennie's bloody scalp.

The rest has been told many times, with various degrees of

horror. Perhaps the least shocking version is the true one, and the fierce "Wyandot Panther" only took her scalp—as he protested—after she had been killed by a shot from her would-be rescuers. Mrs. Campbell was inclined to believe it—for Burgoyne, to show himself in earnest, had promised a much larger reward for a living prisoner than for a scalp. But the truth is tragic enough. Jennie's brother was a Whig, and she was betrothed to Lieutenant David Jones—now serving in Burgoyne's army, and there present to behold her long dark hair dripping with her blood. The report spread, and was long believed, that he had sent the Indians to bring her into camp, knowing that her brother was about to take her away to Albany. This was not true; but there can be no doubt that the poor girl had lingered at Fort Edward, in spite of her brother's urgent messages entreating her to return, in the hope of seeing her Tory lover. All the inhabitants were fleeing; but Mrs. Campbell, as a loyalist and General Fraser's relative, had nothing to fear—and poor Jennie knew that along with General Fraser would come Lieutenant Jones.

Most people know the end of the heart-rending story—how the poor young lieutenant, after indignantly denying that he had any part in the affair, asked to resign his commission, and, being refused, deserted, taking with him that long tress of hair—which he had bought of the Indians—and never held up his head again.

Sir John's horror was unfeigned. He wanted to punish somebody, but was taken aside by St. Luc, the other leader of the Indians,—Sir John had called him "a Canadian gentleman of honour,"—and informed that the "wild honour" of Sachems forbids the giving up of a culprit, and that if he is to be too extreme to mark iniquity, his savage allies will abandon him, and perhaps ravage Canada as they go. The General was by this time heartily sick of wild honour, but he was obliged to content himself with issuing still more urgent restrictions.

But no proclamations, or restrictions, or severity, could undo the effect of that deed. The British General had let loose these fiends on a Christian country, and poor Jennie M'Crea had an avenger in every man and woman who heard her story. The burning indignation which it aroused united the whole country in the resolve to resist to the last.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE RELIEF OF FORT STANWIX.

WHEN, on one of the last days of July, General Arnold brought up his reinforcements, and joined Schuyler at Fort Edward, he found that General Gansevoort was preparing to move down to Moses Creek, a little below, and affairs in a very critical state indeed; and a few days after, in spite of all the hindrances which Schuyler had put in his way, Sir John Burgoyne was at Fort Edward—where his army, with loud rejoicings, first beheld the river Hudson.

Nor was this all. On the 3d of August, Colonel St. Leger, with Sir John Johnson and Joseph Brant, had invested Colonel Gansevoort in Fort Stanwix, in the Mohawk Valley; and General Harkeimer, marching to his relief with some militia, was caught in a forest-ambush prepared by Brant—whose sister Molly, old Sir William's left-handed wife, had sent him word. Harkeimer and his men had made a gallant stand, but not one would have escaped, but for a storm of rain so violent that even the Indians could not fight until it ceased; and before it ceased, Gansevoort, who had heard by a messenger that Harkeimer was coming, sent out Colonel Willett to make a diversion. But the slaughter was frightful—neighbours were there fighting against neighbours (for Tryon County was full of loyalists), and Harkeimer's own brother was commanding the Indians, who, as though maddened by this strife of brethren, surpassed themselves in ferocity.

Harkeimer was dead of his wounds, Johnson was threatening Gansevoort with an Indian massacre, and Colonel Willett had crossed the Mohawk on a log, in a violent storm, and reached the camp at Stillwater—but not till the 12th—to beg for aid.

Schuyler, who had already heard of the disaster of Oriskany, and was devising means to save the fort and the Valley of the Mohawk, instantly called a council-of-war. But the council hesitated—the army was too weak already—they dared not spare a detachment.

If the head that wears a crown lies uneasy, a General does not sleep on roses. General Schuyler had fared almost as ill as Arnold himself. As a New Yorker, he was obnoxious to the

New England party; and his strict Dutch discipline did not commend him to the insubordinate spirits of New Hampshire. He had been a Commissioner, on the part of New York, on the much-vexed question of the Grants, and was detested for this also by the New Hampshire grantees. All the Eastern influence in Congress, led by the Adamases, was being exerted to supersede him by Gates—who had been a Commissioner for New Hampshire, and who was, moreover, well versed in the practice of those arts of popularity which Philip Schuyler disdained. Vexatious and malicious charges had been brought against him. Dunder-headed Vermont militiamen had written to Washington, to say that “on their consciences” they believed General Schuyler was a traitor, and had introduced the small-pox into the army. He had even been accused of having sold Ticonderoga, and of having been paid in silver bullets fired into his camp! More serious attempts than these had been made to poison Washington’s ear, but all in vain. His health had for a time given way, and he had wished to resign his command; but Washington had persuaded him to stay and serve his country through good report and evil—and so he stayed.

The council-of-war was held in Dirck Swart’s house. The officers sat at a rude wooden table in the centre of the room, on which some ingenious person had amused his leisure by carving the effigy of a Hessian—brass cap, belt, sword, bayonet and all, and made more hideous by various splashes of red. The ink-pot happened to be set on this foreign mercenary’s stomach—so that as often as any of the assembled council dipped in his quill he seemed to be running him through—so at least it appeared to Noel’s lively fancy, as he stood just within the door, having come to the council as General Arnold’s aide, but modestly refraining from taking a seat, until Schuyler himself asked him somewhat brusquely, why he stood?

Schuyler was walking up and down the room with long impatient strides, smoking furiously; every now and then he would snatch the pipe from his mouth and utter a word or two, but most often he muttered to himself, casting angry glances at the end of the table farthest from the place where Arnold sat. Arnold himself was silent—he had scarcely spoken a word since his brief greeting of Schuyler on his entrance; but his eyes were restless, and his lips were set. Noel knew the signs well, and knew that his General was in a fume. He sat half-turned from the table, his arms clasped over the back of his chair,

watching Schuyler as he turned in his walk—with, however, many a swift glance towards the farther end of the room, where a group of officers were whispering together.

Presently Schuyler spoke.

“Are we to leave Gansevoort to his fate?” he asked angrily.

Noel saw Arnold’s eyes flash, but he did not speak—he only turned himself on his chair, so as to be able to watch Schuyler. As he caught Noel’s eye, he slightly shrugged his shoulders, with an almost imperceptible movement of his hand in the direction of the group of officers still laying their heads together at the other end of the table. One or two older men who sat on one side looked up from a map they were studying. Their grave anxious faces turned inquiringly towards Arnold.

“It is a heavy responsibility, General,” said one of them, “and demands the utmost prudence.” And Arnold replied shortly—“Boldness is the best prudence sometimes;” and fixed his eyes again on Schuyler.

“Will none of you speak, gentlemen?” asked Schuyler, facing round impatiently. “Are we to leave Gansevoort and his garrison to the tender mercies of Sir John Johnson and the Mohawks? You know my opinion; but if you have anything to urge——”

“He wants to weaken the army.”

Noel heard the words distinctly, but did not know who had uttered them. Schuyler heard them too, and a dark flush dyed his sallow face, as he crushed his pipe between his teeth. But he controlled his rising passion, and said with dignity, raising his head, and looking at the group—not one of whom cared to meet his eye,—“Gentlemen, I take the responsibility on myself. Where is the Brigadier who will command the relief?”

“I will!” answered Arnold, springing up so impetuously that he upset his chair. “To-morrow morning early I will beat up for volunteers!”

* * * * *

When General Arnold with his nine hundred volunteers set out to the relief of Fort Stanwix, he said to Schuyler—“You will hear of my being victorious, or no more.” But at Fort Dayton he held a council-of-war, at which a friendly Oneida Indian told them that the enemy numbered seventeen hundred besides Tories—on hearing which, the council thought the attempt too hazardous, until the army should be reinforced.

The General’s manner of taking this greatly puzzled Noel,

who expected to see him fall into a rage. He heard his officers' opinions almost in silence, merely saying absently, that the odds were great, and no precaution must be neglected. But his mind was evidently preoccupied; and as soon as the council rose, he desired Major Branxholm (who as aide-de-camp took that rank) to have Hon Yost Cuyler sent for—and began to hastily draw up a proclamation.

Hon Yost was a half-witted fellow—a Dutchman, of the Mohawk Valley—who had been seized at Mr. Justice Shoemaker's house the night before, with Lieutenant Walter Butler of St. Leger's detachment. Being caught in the act of trying to persuade the inhabitants of German Flats to abandon the Provincial cause, and join the King's forces before Fort Stanwix, the lieutenant had been tried that morning by a court-martial, and sentenced to death. But many of the officers had known him when he was a law-student in Albany, so (unluckily for Cherry Valley) he was relieved. Hon Yost's family were Tories, but his mother and brother had instantly hastened to Fort Dayton, to beg him off. The mother was a wild gipsy-looking creature, who most likely had Indian blood in her veins; and she besought General Arnold with such frantic eloquence that the whole court was moved,—all but, as it seemed, the General himself, who sat listening to her—his chin propped on three fingers, while the forefinger rested on his cheek—as if he hardly heard her. Noel was much puzzled by his insensibility. Surely he did not mean to hang this poor half-witted wretch, when he had spared Butler? "'Tis not like him to strike the low, and spare the high," he thought. "Nor have I ever seen him unmerciful before."

Meanwhile the General, breaking silence at last, was sternly telling the unhappy mother that it was such as her son who did such incalculable mischief, in carrying news and acting as go-betweens, and that he would make an example—here he frowned so darkly, that she gave up hope, and ceasing her prayers, broke into loud weeping.

"Provost, do your duty!" said the General, rising—but before he left the court he beckoned to the Provost, and whispered in his ear.

So now, when the General desired Hon Yost to be sent for, Major Branxholm made bold to say,—“I'll go this instant, sir, but I fear he may be hanged by now.”

“No; he is not hanged,” replied the General, with an odd

smile. "I do not hang idiots. Send the three to me, and leave us alone."

Not even to Noel did the General speak of what passed at this interview; all that he knew was that the mother and brother were taken back to the lock-up, while Hon Yost (after having had half-a-dozen shots fired through the skirts of his garments) was permitted to go, with a stern warning from the General at parting, to mind what he was about. And the same afternoon, the General said he should go on, council or no council, and repeated his favourite adage—that in war expedition is equal to strength.

* * * * *

It was about noon of the next day, and Major Branhholm was riding beside his commander. The General had been obliged to borrow a horse of Colonel Lewis, as, by some chance, his own had not arrived, though his sister had sent them on weeks ago. The horse was a thoroughbred, almost black—a gallant high-spirited beast, and was named "Warren," after that beloved leader who fell on Bunker's Hill. The General had been speaking much of Joseph Warren, whose intimate friend he had been, and had complained indignantly that Congress had not been more prompt in providing for his orphan children. He added that he believed the matter had now been attended to—but Noel knew that if it were so, it would be thanks to General Arnold.

As they were still talking of this, a horseman came galloping towards them—at sight of whom the General's dark countenance relaxed into a grim smile, as he said, very meaningfully,—“I should not in the least wonder, Branhholm, but what this is an express from Gansevoort, come to tell us the siege is raised. Hon Yost is half an idiot, 'tis true, but the other half of him is a very cunning fellow.”

“What, sir?” cries Noel. “Was that, then, why you seemed so implacable with him at first?”

“If I'm not much out in my reckoning,” returns the General, still with that grim smile, “we shall hear that the siege of Fort Stanwix was raised in the night, on a report of General Arnold's being at hand with two thousand men.”

And so it was.

* * * * *

When Arnold returned to camp (after being received with a salute of honour at Fort Stanwix), he found that Schuyler's

enemies had triumphed, and that Gates reigned in his stead—appointed, however, directly by Congress, as Washington had declined to have anything to do with the matter.

But there was more news than this. On the 15th of August, Sir John Burgoyne had sent Count Baum and his Hessians to destroy the stores at Bennington. John Starke was there—having resigned and gone home to his farm last spring, in wrath at being passed over in a list of promotions. Starke had called out the militia, and fallen upon Baum in the forest, in the rainy dawn of a day so tempestuous, that the earth-works which Baum hastily cast up were washed down as soon as they were made. Meanwhile, from every township the Provincial militia came pouring in, all eager to fight.

“We have been called out very often, and never been led against the enemy yet,”—say the people of Berkshire, with Parson Allen of Pittsfield at their head. “And if you don’t let us fight now, we won’t come again.”

“Please the Lord to once more send us sunshine,” says Starke, “and if I don’t give you fighting enough, I’ll never ask you to come again.”

The sun shone out of a cloudless sky next morning, and Starke kept his word. At daybreak on the 17th, General Burgoyne was awakened to be told that Baum was defeated and slain, and that Breyman, who had been sent to reinforce him, was trying to retreat, hotly pursued by the enemy.

This was a great blow. If the loss of Ticonderoga had struck the rebels with panic, the victory of Bennington put them in such heart that their Generals could hardly keep them back. The British army began to be harassed by skirmishers, who cut off the pickets, and attacked the parties engaged in repairing the bridges which Schuyler had broken down.

By this time, a great number of the Indians had slipped away; the British General’s illiberality in the matter of plunder and scalps had outraged their “wild honour,” and having vainly tried to make him hear reason, they remembered that it was harvest-time, and departed to their wigwams—not going empty away.

* * * * *

General Arnold was now to suffer more tangible evils from the refusal of Congress to give him his proper rank and position.

The cabals in Congress had never run higher than now. Lee’s star had set for the time, but Gates’s was in the ascen-

dant. How strong his influence was, no one knew precisely—whispers had got about that some of the greatest names in Congress were with him. But Washington's advice could not be entirely disregarded—Congress had ungraciously yielded so far as to request Arnold to "co-operate" with Schuyler, and so great was his anxiety to serve, that he accepted this nondescript and unmilitary commission. He had hardly, however, reached camp, when he heard that Congress had decided against his seniority. His first impulse had been to resign, but his old friend Schuyler had persuaded him to follow his own example, and swallow the affront for the sake of his country.

As long as Schuyler was in command, this was easy, but with the arrival of Gates Arnold's position became almost intolerable. Horatio Gates might fairly be described as being everything that Philip Schuyler was not. He was by birth an Englishman, and a godson of Horace Walpole's—some said that the second half of the word would have sufficed to express the relationship, but as Gates was only twelve years the younger, there must have been some error in this bit of scandal. Like so many other leading actors in the war, he had been with Braddock at the Great Meadows, but had sold out of the army, dissatisfied with his promotion. His enemies said that years of solicitation had taught him to wheedle and flatter, and be all things to all men. He had retired to Virginia, a disappointed man, and had there renewed his old soldier's friendship with Washington, and when the war broke out had espoused the Provincial cause. He had long been secretly manœuvring to supplant Washington, and he thought that he had now almost succeeded. In the former Canadian campaign, Gates and Arnold had been friendly; but Gates was beginning to count Washington's friends as his own enemies—and some said he was afraid lest Arnold's brilliant daring should eclipse his own generalship.

He was now nearly fifty, and looked much older—a stout florid-complexioned man, rather comely than otherwise, but fussy and excitable in manner—as great a contrast in person as in character to the high-minded soldier and gentleman whom he had superseded.

CHAPTER XLVII.

FREEMAN'S FARM.

Said Burgoyne to his men, as they pass'd in review,

Tullalo, tullalo, tullalo, boys !

These rebels their course very quickly will rue,

And fly as the leaves 'fore the autumn tempest flew

When him who is your leader they know, boys !

They with men have now to deal,

And we soon will make them feel—

Tullalo, tullalo, tullalo, boys !

That a loyal Briton's arm, and a loyal Briton's steel

Can put to flight a rebel as quick as other foe, boys !

Tullalo, tullalo, tullalo !

Tullalo, tullalo, tullalo-o-o-o, boys !

PROGRESS OF SIR JACK DRAG.

ON the west side of the Hudson, about three miles above its junction with the Mohawk, there is a ridge of hills called Bemis' Heights. The only tavern to be found between Albany and Fort Edward, in old days, stood on the bluff, and was kept by one Bemis—who also kept good wines and long clay pipes. Perhaps it was some way-worn eighteenth-century trader who, grateful for these mercies, gave his host's name to the landscape.

And a great landscape it is—a landscape of broad-swelling hills. On the north, the heights of Saratoga ; on the south, the hills of Albany, thirty miles away. Bennington, too, lies thirty miles away to the south-east, but the smoke of the battle was seen from Bemis' Heights.

Along this ridge, one September afternoon, General Arnold rode with Kosciusko ("the Polish engineer," they called him) to find a camping-ground. Up hill and down dale they rode, till they came to Sword's House, where Morgan and his rifles were, and where Noel saw old Meshach Pike, leaning on his musket, exactly as he had stood on that Sunday morning, three years ago, when there was the Indian alarm at Oglethorpe.

He saw Noel, and—by way of returning his greeting—unhitched his chin from his clasped hands, and sauntering up to the side of Noel's horse, spat with energy, and then stood still a full minute before he remarked,—

"Reckon Gen'ral Branhholm'd give his ears to be in our shoes. This yer's jest about the kind o' country as he'd like to fight in—wood enough, an' not *tu* much. Dan Morgan he's

quite countin' on payin' back that extry lash he's owed the Britishers these twenty year. I call it a reel lux'ry to have time to look around and choose yer place, 'stid o' jest hearin' an Injun screech, an' havin' to take the nighest tree you can get to.

"Bennington was a good beginning," said Noel, when Meshach had, with great slowness and deliberation, delivered himself of these observations. "We must do our best to make as good an ending."

"Ther's some of us means to try, Mr. Branhholm," replied Meshach, emphasising his words by spitting again, and shifting his quid. "Dan Morgan does, an' I think Gen'ral Arnold does. An' I've noticed," continued Meshach, as he completed the operation, "that Gen'ral Arnold arl-ways says, 'Come on, boys!' He don't never say, 'Go, boys!'"

"You may well say that!" cried Noel. "Where is the General like him? We can't be beat if he leads us!"

The reconnoitring party rode on a little farther to the next hill, whence they could see the British camp; the soldiers seemed to be parading, but without beat of drum. Burgoyne had crossed the Hudson the day before, and was now encamped at Saratoga.

It was not till the 19th of September, however, that Dan Morgan began to pay off that old score. By this time, Sir John Burgoyne and his army had found their march so much more difficult than they had expected, that it had even been mooted whether they should not go round by Fort George. But this would have the appearance of a retreat, and Sir John had said that army must not retreat. The enemy grew bolder every day, till he had to send out whole regiments to protect his working-parties. He had, moreover, by Schuyler's contrivance, received the most contradictory despatches from Sir Henry Clinton—who ought to be by this time preparing to march up to Albany. But something must be done; so he moved from his headquarters in Schuyler's mansion, near Fishkil (Schuyler had sent word to his wife to burn his wheat-fields before she fled), and, crossing the Hudson on a bridge of boats, prepared for battle.

The sun rose bright on the 19th of September, 1777. The air was clear, and long before the hoar-frost had melted from the forest-trees the beat of drum was heard in the British camp. About nine o'clock, word came to Gates that the enemy

seemed to be forming his line of battle. The scouts and pickets had seen the glitter of moving arms and flags, and the bright scarlet of the British uniforms. By ten, it was evident that Burgoyne's whole army was advancing in three divisions.

But, to Arnold's infinite disgust and vexation, General Gates showed an extraordinary indisposition to fight. For hours Arnold urged and entreated to be allowed to attack. Gates fidgeted up and down the room, fussed with his spectacles, shilly-shallied, talked of letting Burgoyne entangle himself in the woods, and appealed at every moment to his Adjutant-General—who was the same young Wilkinson who had carried his letters to Lee. He was a pert officious youth, so ready to instruct his General in his duty, that those who did not like him said that Mr. Wilkinson thought Gates and himself made up the General commanding.

"The General, sir, is against doing anything rash," says this young whipper-snapper, following Arnold out at the door, and calmly settling his coat-collar, while he looks full in the General's eye, with an expression which says as plain as words,—“If you think, sir, that the General and I are going to let you have the honour and glory of this day's work, you are mightily mistaken!”

“Is he indeed, sir? Then he must be very unlike you!” returns Arnold, glaring at him as though he would wither him where he stands. But at this moment Major Branxholm came galloping up, to say that the enemy was swarming over the heights beyond Freeman's Field.

At this, Arnold, with another look at Wilkinson—which that young gentleman rightly interpreted as a hint not to follow—went hastily into the house again.

The two young men awaited his return in perfect silence, while Arnold's horse, tied up by the door, neighed and pawed the ground, as though he had caught the infection of his master's impatience. There were several other officers standing about. The very air was astir with suspense, and the moments seemed interminable.

“Morgan and Dearborn may attack,” says Arnold, coming out. “Major Wilkinson, the General desires to speak with you.”

“Let us be off,” he says to Noel, as he leaps into his saddle, “before he can think better of it, and fetch us back!”

Morgan attacked with such good will, that he not only routed the Indians and the loyalists, but found his men scattered

in the woods, and himself for a moment left almost alone—and at that moment the enemy was reinforced. But Morgan sounded his “turkey-call” loud and shrill, and gathered his men again; and by this time Arnold, with the New York troops, was trying to turn the enemy’s flank, and cut off Fraser from the main army. So dense was the forest, and so uneven the ground, that neither party knew that each was attempting the same manœuvre, until they suddenly met on the level ground near Mill Creek.

Arnold led the van—as those who saw it said, “like a tiger.” With voice and action he encouraged his men; but he was outnumbered, and Fraser, seeing his design, brought up Breyman’s riflemen and some infantry. Just then Arnold, reinforced by Dearborn’s regiment and three others, attacked again, so furiously, that the British lines were beginning to give way—when Phillips, who had heard the din of the conflict, hurried over the hills and through the thick woods, with fresh troops, and part of the artillery, and appeared in the very nick of time.

There was a lull. It was three o’clock. The combatants were on two gently-sloping hills, separated by a thick wood and a narrow clearing. Noel, returning from headquarters, whither he had been sent to ask for more reinforcements, could hear the voices of the British officers giving orders on the opposite height. He even fancied that he distinguished Fred Digby’s voice, but this was surely fancy.

General Gates sent word that the British left was too near his lines—he dared not detach any troops. Arnold angrily asked if he was to make bricks without straw? And then the enemy began to open fire again. Burgoyne had ordered the woods to be cleared; and the Provincials soon saw column after column of British infantry advancing steadily across the clearing.

For four hours, the conflict raged in alternate advance and retreat, and the contending armies measured their strength in sheer hard wrestling. The Generals on both sides exposed themselves like common soldiers. One of Burgoyne’s aides was shot down as he was giving him a letter, and it was believed for hours by the Provincials that Burgoyne himself had fallen. All through the afternoon, and far on into the twilight, the two armies wrestled—cannon were taken and retaken, and taken again. And still victory hung in the balance—the British troops fought with stubborn valour, and even in the

gloom of evening there were some brisk renewals of the action. But Gates, though not himself engaged, would send no more reinforcements. In vain had Arnold despatched message after message. The evening was gray, when Noel rode back once more with the old answer—the Commander-in-Chief dared not expose his own lines.

“He will fling away all we have won, with his paltry prudence!” cries Arnold, on hearing this reply. “I’ll go myself!”

And so he gallops off on the good gray horse he rode that day—now covered with dust and foam—and is lost in the smoky mist.

Noel waited long, watching the field, where every now and then a running fire would blaze out for a moment, and then as suddenly cease. On the extreme left, he could at first make out Breyman’s rifles, by the brass match-cases on their breasts, gleaming feebly in the fast-fading light; but soon friend and foe were wrapt in one monotonous cloak of gray, which was fast turning to black when an order came to retire within the lines.

Before this, however, Noel, fancying he heard something stirring in the wood on his right, rode towards it. As he came into the shadow of the trees, he dismounted, and leading his horse, looked about him. Several bodies lay just there, and a groan testified that there was life in at least one of them. Noel was just turning away to get help to remove him, when he saw a figure leaning forward against a tree, grasping a musket. It was not yet so dark but that at these close quarters he saw that it was Meshach Pike. He called him by his name, but Meshach did not reply. Perplexed by this strange silence, Noel went nearer, and pulled him by the sleeve. At the touch, slight as it was, Meshach fell heavily against him, almost knocking him down by the suddenness of the shock—and Noel found that he was holding a dead man in his arms.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

LIEUTENANT PERKINS TAKES A GLOOMY VIEW OF THE SITUATION.

CAPTAIN DIGBY, in command of a picket on the field of battle, spent the night of the 19th in a state of intense disgust with

human affairs. The best-contested engagement of the whole war had been fought, and the Light Infantry (into which, by Lord Percy's influence, he had exchanged) had not taken part in it. True, the result was indecisive, and his turn might yet come. But what opportunities had not been presented to-day for a determined officer (and the Captain was modestly conscious of a very stiff determination when once fairly roused) to make a smart flank-attack, throw the enemy into confusion, and get mentioned in the General's next despatch, as "a gentleman whose services merited particular notice"! There had been a good many such movements made in the course of the day—but alas! the Light Infantry, though forming part of the right wing, had never been actually under fire. The night was cloudy, and a sulphurous mist hung over the field, where burying-parties might be traced by the lights they carried. More than once, Digby heard the howling of wolves in the forest, as they followed the scent of blood. The sound recalled to him his summer in Virginia—when it had seemed as though Fortune was going to make up to him for the ill turns she had done him. How admirably well things might have gone! And how execrably ill they had gone!

Upon the whole, Captain Digby reflected that he did not like this country for fighting. There was too much cover for the enemy (who of course knew every bush); while, in the event of anything like a repulse, it would be a monstrous awkward thing to be entangled in all this wood. "A fine open plain, with plenty of room to manoeuvre," he thought, "that's the kind of place for a regular army to come to an engagement in. These woods and thickets may be all very well for Indian warfare, but artillery and cavalry want more room to play in."

The thought of cavalry reminded the Captain of his hard fate in belonging to a foot regiment, and of the mysterious ill fortune which seemed to attend him.

"It is certainly a monstrous odd thing," he thought (listening all the while for any sign that the enemy was moving), "that my poor uncle should die just when there was going to be the very devil to pay—to be sure, if he'd died before though, the poor old dad might have made ducks and drakes of it all. Then there's Ally. How the doose is she to get married, till this confounded business is over? And by all one can see it will go on till Doomsday. We've beat in all the battles—but what's the good of that, when the rebels go on rebelling the same as ever? I

thought when we'd once beat, there'd be an end of it—a general pardon, or something of that sort—let bygones be bygones, and give a man a chance of attending to his private affairs.”

At this point in his reflections, the entirely irrelevant thought occurred to Captain Digby that by this time Mary Fleming might be married to Jasper——

“You was asleep, sir! I've had my eye on you these ten minutes!”

The Captain addressed these words to one of the sentinels, who was leaning against a tree in an attitude suggestive of drowsiness.

“Don't let me catch you at it again, sir!” says Digby, cutting short the man's protestations, and continuing his patrol and his reflections.

He imparted a portion of these reflections next day to his friend Lieutenant Perkins (whose regiment had been likewise out of the action, and who agreed with him that it was a preposterous thing the rebels did not lay down their arms). “I daresay we shouldn't hang any of 'em now,” observed Perkins. “I daresay as we shouldn't even hang Sam Adams, or Washington himself, on their submission.”

“I wish they'd be quick about it then,” rejoined Fred, with a lofty air which he specially reserved to impress his quondam subaltern. “'Tis a monstrous inconvenience to me to be hindered like this from winding up my poor uncle's estate.”

The Lieutenant, who was one of the ten children of a poor parson in Northamptonshire, and had never wound up anything but the church-clock (which never went right) was immensely impressed,—as Fred intended he should be,—and humbly replied that it must be a monstrous great inconvenience indeed.

“You see, Perkins,” continued Fred, “it's all according to what a man's been used to. When a man's begun life in the Dragoons, the Light Infantry is a come-down.”

To which Perkins dutifully replied that indeed in the nature of things it must be so.

“We're in a mess though, Digby—we're in a doose of a mess somehow or other—though I'm hanged if I know how we've got into it,” the Lieutenant observed presently, his innocent, almost childish blue eyes, fixed abstractedly on nothing. “Mark my words, we'd a deal better have gone round by way of Fort George. 'Twas a grand mistake to run the gauntlet as we're doing,

for a mere point of honour. That's my opinion at least," he added modestly. "I may be wrong, of course—and I hope I am."

"You're down in the mouth, Perkins, because you wasn't engaged yesterday," returned Fred reassuringly. "Sir Henry must be on his march before now, and as soon as ever he comes, we shall settle 'em in a jiffy."

It seemed at first as though Perkins had been too despondent. Three days after the engagement of the 19th, a messenger got into camp with a letter in cypher from Sir Henry Clinton, to say that he hoped to attack Fort Montgomery on the Hudson, by the 6th of October. This cheering news emboldened General Burgoyne to give out in orders that powerful armies were co-operating with his own.

The justice of Perkins's view of the situation was, however, shown in a very few days more. By that time, an uncomfortable impression had begun to prevail that the army was in difficulties—or, as Perkins more tersely put it, "in a mess." It was impossible to ignore the facts that forage was running short, and that the rebels had so closed in all round, that the price of getting any more must be, not a skirmish, but another engagement.

"We're in a mess, Digby," said Perkins in a dogged way he had had lately. "It looks to my mind doosed like our being caught in a trap."

"How *can* we be in a mess, when Sir Harry's actually took the field?" asked Fred angrily. Having just had the self-same idea in his own mind, he felt bound to rebuke Perkins for croaking. "'Twas but t'other day," he continued, "we was all jubilation about Ticonderoga. We've had no real reverse since—except at Bennington. That was a devil of an affair, I'll own——"

"We're in a mess," persisted Perkins, nodding his head wisely at his friend. "We hallo'ed before we was out o' the wood. You mark my words, Digby, we're in a mess—I may say, we're in a devil of a mess."

The Lieutenant, who sat nursing his chin (it was as smooth as a baby's), seemed to derive a gloomy consolation from repeating these words.

"If you mean," says Digby in an irritated tone, "that somehow or other in this cursed war the more we beat the enemy, the stronger he seems to get, there'd be some sense in

what you say. For my part, I believe the devil's in it! We've beat 'em into a cocked-hat a dozen times at least. Then why the devil don't they submit? It's making fools of us—positive fools! It's contrary to—to military tactics—and common sense too!”

“ ‘A woman, a span'el, and a crab-apple tree,
The more you beat 'em, the better they be—’ ”

said Perkins slowly and thoughtfully, and still stroking his chin. “Rebels seem to be the same.”

“But, of course, as soon as they hear of Sir Harry's advance, they'll cut and run, every man-jack of 'em,” continued Fred, kicking a boot across the tent so viciously that Perkins did not venture to contradict him this time.

That same afternoon, General Burgoyne's orderly came and requested Captain Digby's attendance at headquarters.

Digby found Phillips and Riedesel with the General. Just as he entered, Riedesel was saying something in his heavy German way—Fred caught the words “point of honour,” to which Sir John replied in an irritated tone,—

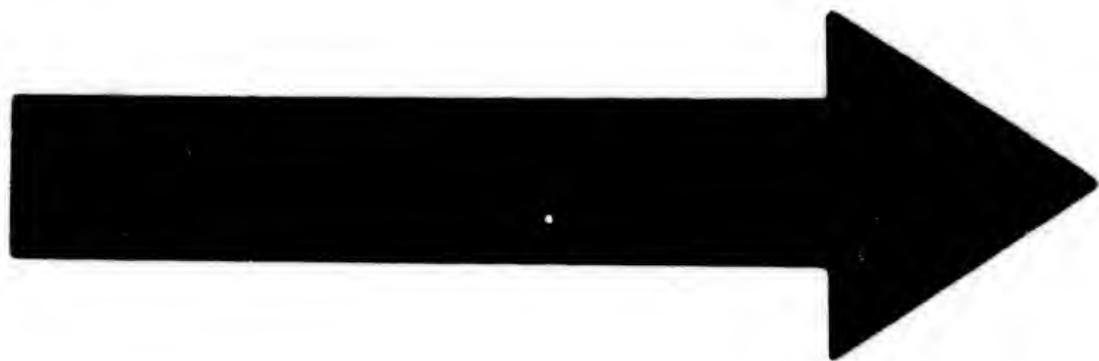
“Point of honour! Why, that's everything!”

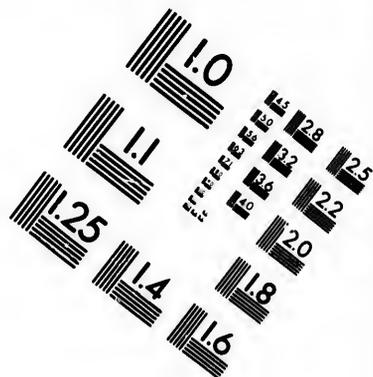
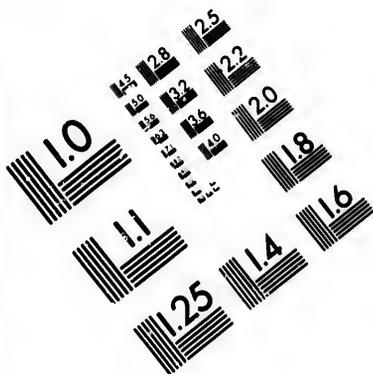
Then they saw Digby, and the conversation dropped; and Sir John, turning to Fred, told him he had sent for him, because he believed he had been some time in the Colonies, and might be supposed to know a little of the country, and also because, being personally known to Sir Henry Clinton, he could if necessary carry a verbal message. “We don't care to trust an American officer, after the way those scoundrels of Provincials turned on Baron Riedesel's dragoons at Bennington, the other day,” he observed; “and we've reason to believe that the fellow Moses Harris has betrayed us, and been in communication with the rebels all the while.”

Captain Digby remaining respectfully silent, Sir John asked him plainly, did he think he could carry a despatch to General Clinton?

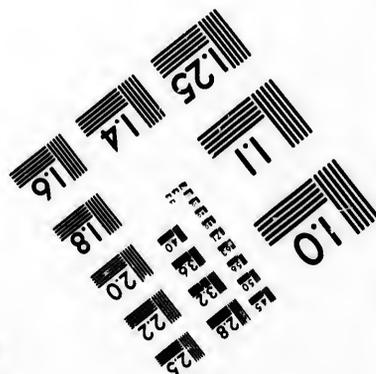
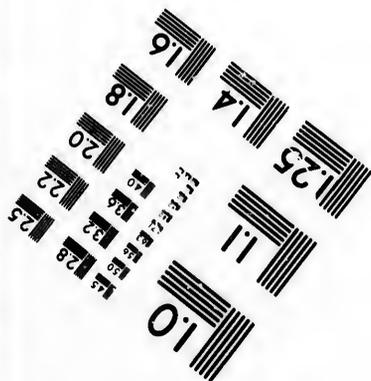
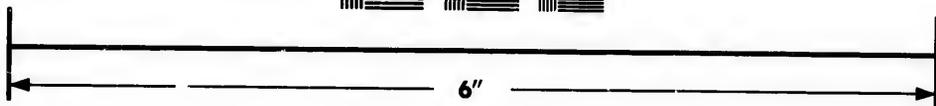
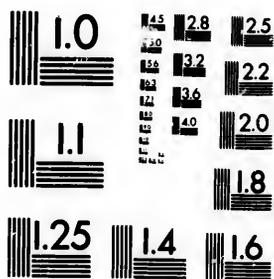
“Where is he, sir?” asks Fred.

“That,” answers the General,—with an assumption of ease that does not hide a real uneasiness,—“that will be for you to find out. We hope and believe that he has already started for Albany. If he should not, however, have done so, you would then push on as quick as possible to New York. Well, sir,





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do you dislike your errand?" This the General said very sharply.

"No, sir," stammered Fred. "I shall be honoured—that is, of course, sir, I'm ready to start this very hour."

"But you would sooner somebody else went?"

"'Tis not that, sir," said Fred, driven into a corner. "Only I thought—that is, I hoped that we was going to fight 'em again."

"You hear, Baron!" cries the General, his face brightening. "And I'll be bound, Captain Digby, that all the other Captains hope the same?"

"All I've heard speak on the subject do, sir," replies Fred. On which the General tells him they may get their wish yet; but bids him study the roads (for which purpose he presents him with a map), and consider how best to disguise himself—"for that honest English face of yours," he observes, "would betray you instantly"—and hold himself in readiness to start, if necessary, at a moment's notice.

The General laid some stress on the word "necessary," and glanced at Baron Riedesel, who shrugged his shoulders, and spread out his great broad palms, but did not speak.

CHAPTER XLIX.

A RECONNOITRING PARTY.

. . . It seem'd a narrow neck of land
Had broke between two mighty seas, and either
Flow'd into other; for so did the slaughter:
And whirl'd about, as when two violent tides
Meet and not yield.

CATILINE.

ALMOST immediately after the First Battle of Bemis' Heights, Gates and Arnold had come to an open quarrel. Gates had not only refused to allow Arnold to return to the field on the evening of the 19th, but in his Order of the day, noticing the action, he never mentioned the division at all, although it was the only one engaged. It was the same in his despatch to Congress—for he insolently refused to make his reports through the Commander-in-Chief.

Not content with this, he allowed his Adjutant-General to withdraw Morgan's corps from the division, without so much as informing Arnold. At this, Arnold threatened to resign—to

the consternation of the army. This, however, being precisely what Gates desired, he only became more insolent than ever, and one evening went so far as to tell Arnold that he did not know of his being a Major-General—he had resigned his commission before he joined that army. He added that General Lincoln would arrive in a day or two, and that he should then have no occasion for Arnold, and could give him a pass for Philadelphia.

Maddened by this insult, Arnold had gone back to his own quarters and written to Gates, demanding a pass for himself and his suite—for his aides had declared they would go with him. Major Livingstone, one of them, had been Schuyler's aide, and Mr. Wilkinson had hinted to Arnold that the General felt some natural jealousy of a partisan of Schuyler's; perhaps if Major Livingstone was to be replaced—

“No, sir!” replies Arnold, looking indignantly at the smirking Wilkinson. “Such a proposition is a worse insult than any that General Gates has put upon me yet! You can tell him, sir, if you choose, that I will not sacrifice a friend to please the face of clay! Tell him, too, that I will have a pass made out in proper form; I've already sent him back by Major Branhholm the letter to Mr. Hancock in which he has huddled me in a corner.”

Meanwhile all the general-officers in camp had signed an entreaty to General Arnold to remain, as another action was expected daily—the British General would not dare to wait until his provisions were exhausted. This argument was so strong, that Arnold stayed—even though, when Lincoln arrived, Gates gave him the right wing, and, taking the left himself, made good his words about having no occasion for Arnold.

“Oh, that Schuyler was here!” said Noel to Major Livingstone. “But Gates must be very sure his intrigues have succeeded, before he would dare depose the General that His Excellency was so set on appointing! 'Twas a shameful thing to send him here to reap the fruit of Schuyler's labours—and now he will reap the credit of General Arnold's valour! There's no justice in the world!”

“Gates is an old fool,” rejoins Livingstone; “but that pert young fool Wilkinson makes him a thousand times worse than he would be else. He is Gates's creature, and has persuaded him he is a Marlborough. However, if my being out of the way will appease him, and promote General Arnold's remaining, I'll go to-morrow.”

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Captain Digby had long before this (at infinite pains) procured himself some walnut-juice, with which he intended, when the time should arrive, to transform the natural ruddiness of his countenance into a good mahogany brown, such as is acquired by perseverance in agricultural pursuits. He had also obtained a long-waisted blue coat turned up with sun-bleached buff, which met upon his breast for the space of a single button, and thence retreating, displayed a red waistcoat, which had been cut when George the Second was King. A pair of superannuated sherry-vallies completed this costume, and cost the Captain no little trouble to get into them—he being accustomed to knee-breeches only. These garments, which had belonged to a soldier of one of the New Hampshire regiments engaged on the 19th, Captain Digby had bought of a camp-follower, who had become possessed of them in the manner usual to those human vultures. They were all a thought tight for him, but he had been so fortunate as to procure a pair of coarse leather shoes which fitted him as comfortably as if he had already worn them six months.

The walnut-juice was too precious to be wasted in rehearsals, but he had tried on the garments in presence of Lieutenant Perkins, who considered that the disguise was complete, or would be so, when the walnut-juice came to be added.

“’Pon my soul, Digby, nobody’d ever think as you was a gentleman—’pon my soul, nobody wouldn’t!” he exclaimed admiringly. “Yes, that’s right—slouch just a leetle more; don’t hold up your chin too high; and for God’s sake remember to turn your toes in! Though, to be sure,” he added, with his head very much on one side, the better to observe the effect, “you could always say as you’d served in a milishy regiment—perhaps, on the whole, ’twould be better to go in for the Canadian reb—I mean Whig. By the bye, perhaps we’d better practise calling ’em Whigs, lest you should ever let t’other word slip out by mistake.”

“Patriot’s the proper word,” observed Fred, endeavouring to move with rustic clumsiness.

“Don’t overdo it!” cries his master of deportment. “I should strongly advise you to go in for being a reb—a patriot milishyman—that’ll allow you to have a military air. I’m affraid you’ll never *qu-ite* get rid of your military air,” continued the Lieutenant slowly, with a critical frown. “So you’d better account for it naturally, by saying you’re in the Provincial army. By the bye, I s’ppose you’ll have your despatches so as you could swallow ’em if you was forced to?”

"I am to take none," says Fred, going warily through various leg-and-arm exercises, by way of making himself at home in his clothes. "Sir Harry knows me, so there's no need. I daresay I shall have to bring something back—that's if I go. 'Tis my belief that General Burgoyne wants to fight it out without help; 'twould mean a coronet for him, if we smashed up the Provincials here, got down to New York, stamping out the rebellion as we went, and then beat Washington on the Delaware. I must get the sergeant's wife to let out this sleeve an inch or so, or I shall split it, to a dead certainty."

So saying, Captain Digby motioned to his friend to assist him in divesting himself of his coat, bidding him for God's sake pull gently.

But greatly to his relief, General Burgoyne seemed to have forgotten him. Captain Campbell departed secretly on the 28th with despatches for Clinton—which did not, however, represent the situation as absolutely desperate; Burgoyne had sent home so glowing an account of his success at Ticonderoga that it was galling indeed to speak of even falling back. Meanwhile, if he had but known it, the rebels had had only forty rounds of ammunition left, on the evening of the 19th! If he had but known it, and had renewed the battle early next morning, before a supply came in! And in the long course of history how many such *Ifs* have there not been!

He did not know this, and he did not know something else—something which, in the Record of Blunder, stands out, one would hope, as unique as it is certainly almost incredible. Burgoyne did not know, that at the very moment when he was anxiously calculating on how near Sir Henry Clinton might be, and buoying himself up with the hope of at any instant hearing his guns on the enemy's flank, the despatch ordering Clinton to march northwards was lying, neatly docketed and tied up with red tape, in a pigeon-hole at Lord George Germaine's office at Whitehall! His lordship had been going down into Kent, and had called at the office on his way, to sign the despatch. It was not fair copied, so—having to meet some friends at dinner—he became impatient, and desired it should be sent down to him. By this means it happened that the despatch to General Burgoyne, being ready, was sent, while that to Sir William Howe, with the other half of the notable scheme for cutting the rebellion in two, lay forgotten in its pigeon-hole, until somebody happened to find it months afterwards!

The unlucky General had, of course, no suspicion that the

hero of Minden had thus sent him to his destruction; but he had begun of late to fear lest no news might turn out to be bad news. Lincoln had come into the rebel camp with two thousand fresh troops—a cornet, who had been allowed to visit the British lines on parole, thus explained a great shouting which had been heard on the night of the 21st. Burgoyne, moreover, knew that he would soon be as much straitened for provisions as he already was for forage.

In this dilemma, he called a council. Phillips was for fighting again; Riedesel still advised retreating by Fort George. In order to turn the matter well over in his mind, the harassed General sat up till dawn, playing cards with Lord Balcarres. But he took his resolution—he would go out with a strong force, and get some forage at all hazards; and if the enemy wanted a battle, he should have one. So at ten next morning, he went up with fifteen hundred men to the high ground on the west from the American lines. There, behind a screen of dense forests, he formed his array, and sent the Rangers, with the loyalists and Indians, to steal round through the woods, and fall on the enemy's rear; while Riedesel's Germans, the Grenadiers under Major Ackland, Balcarres's Light Infantry, and Williams's Artillery, advanced together towards the American left.

* * * * *

Gates was in the very act of ordering Colonel Brooks to attack the enemy's rear with three hundred men, when a serjeant came in to say that the whole British army was in motion; and an aide sent out to report brought back word that some British soldiers were cutting straw in a wheat-field half a mile from Neilson's house—which had been fortified—and that some officers were reconnoitring from the roof of a cabin.

Just then, the Rangers made their attack, and drove the Americans within their lines, where they rallied, and were joined by the Marylanders.

While this was going on, General Arnold, attended by his aides, was at headquarters, evidently much to Gates's annoyance. When Wilkinson came back and reported that the nature of the ground by the wheat-field justified attacking the enemy there, Gates bade him "order out Morgan to begin the game."

"That's nothing," said Arnold, unable to restrain himself any longer; "you must send a strong force."

"General Arnold," replies the Commander-in-Chief, ruffling

like a turkey-cock, and glancing at Wilkinson to see if he is doing right,—“I have nothing for you to do, and you have no business here!”

“I think, gentlemen,” says Arnold to his aides, “that in that case we had better go,” and departs forthwith to his own quarters, in a towering rage; and presently the battle begins without him.

Morgan had requested to be allowed to take the heights on the enemy's right, where Fraser was advancing with five hundred picked men. Poor and Learned were to attack Ackland and his Grenadiers. It was half-past two in the afternoon as they marched up the slope, in deathly silence, and the game began at once in earnest; but the British fire rained high over the heads of the Provincials, and at first did them little harm.

After a stubborn struggle at the brow of the slope, the Provincials charged among the cannon, and took and re-took one gun four times. The last time, Colonel Cilley leapt on it, and, waving his sword above it, dedicated it to the patriot cause. Major Ackland, severely wounded, was made prisoner, as his friend Captain Simpson was trying to carry him off the field on his back. Major Williams, who commanded the artillery, was also taken, and the artillerymen and grenadiers gave way. Morgan's fierce onset had driven back even Fraser for the moment; but the centre, rallying under Balcarres, held firm. General Burgoyne, himself in the thickest of the fight, did his utmost to strengthen his centre, where Colonel Specht and his Germans were being pressed hard. And so the battle raged all along the British centre, while Fraser on his gray horse was always in the front.

At that moment, there was a great shout all along the American line of “Arnold! Arnold!” It rang above the din and roar of the battle—and so did Arnold's voice, crying.—“Come on! come on! Victory or death!”

CHAPTER L.

GENERAL ARNOLD DOES SOMETHING RASH.

EVER since Gates dismissed him in the morning, Arnold has been fuming in his tent, sending one or other of his aides to bring him word how the day is going; until at last, when the roar of battle reaches him, he can endure it no longer, and orders Warren to be saddled.

"I'll fight in the ranks!" he says. "But the soldiers, God bless them! will follow in my lead!"

As the great black horse and his rider gallop towards the front, General Gates sees them go, and instantly despatches Major Armstrong to order Arnold back,—“lest he should do something rash,” says the General, all of a pucker.

So Armstrong mounts, and gallops off in pursuit, but soon loses sight of horse and rider, as they plunge into the battle.

But though Major Armstrong could not overtake Warren, Noel Branhholm kept close behind his General, until they reached the front, and heard the mighty shout which greeted Arnold, and saw the wavering line of battle gather itself together, ready to follow him to death or victory.

Arnold put himself at the head of Learned's brigade, and led it against the British centre. He fought like a madman, and at his second charge the terrible Hessians broke and fled. But even then Fraser rallied them, and set his line once more in array.

But then Morgan called his best marksmen round him, and asked them if they saw that gallant officer on the iron-gray gelding. “That is General Fraser,” says Braddock's old wagoner. “I admire and honour him—but it is necessary he should die.”

Presently afterwards, there comes a perfect hail of shot about the iron-gray horse, and an aide begs Fraser to withdraw a little, as he is evidently a mark. But he refuses—and five minutes afterwards falls, shot through the body.

With Fraser's fall, a panic seized the whole British line. Burgoyne sent Sir Francis Clerke to order a retreat, but he fell mortally wounded before he could deliver the order, and the moment for a successful retreat was lost, as Arnold formed his men and led them again to the charge.

Amidst the flame and smoke, and hail of whistling bullets, Arnold on the great black horse thundered along the line. His voice rang like a trumpet above the battle, still bidding the Provincials conquer or die. The memory of his wrongs, and the thirst for the glory which Gates had tried to snatch from him, goaded him to almost superhuman exertions. He returned to the charge again and again, and with part of Patterson's and Glover's brigades, led the assault on the works still held by Balcarres and the light infantry. At the point of the bayonet, he drove them from a strong *abatis*, and made a desperate attempt to storm the camp. But the light infantry made a stand as desperate. It was after sundown; Major Armstrong, who had

now been for two hours vainly trying to get near him, saw Arnold suddenly dash forward to the enemy's right flank, exposed to so terrible a cross-fire that he gave up the chase. As Arnold went, he met Learned's brigade, and gathering up them, and every other brigade he found, he hurled himself once more against the enemy—this time, at an opening in the *abatis*, between Balcarres's light infantry and Breyman's German reserve. The Canadians and loyalists were here. Arnold came up like a whirlwind, and before the incredible fury of his onslaught the defenders at last gave way, and the *abatis* was carried at the point of the bayonet, as Breyman fell mortally wounded.

In that scene of blood and slaughter, Captain Digby, just within the *abatis*, and resolutely disputing every inch of ground, saw an officer's horse shot under him, and in the uncertain light, and the confusion of the assault, thought it was Arnold himself. The officer waved his sword, and rushed on. The ground was encumbered with wounded and dying men, and knee-deep in blood and mire, and the assailants were pouring in at the opening in the *abatis*—but the works themselves might still be defended, and Digby, desperately rallying a handful of the infantry, threw himself between the enemy and the sally-port, making straight for the dismounted officer. He was in the very act of cutting him down, before he saw that it was Noel Branxholm, whose sword had shivered in his hand. Digby instinctively turned the flat of his own sword, or that moment would have been Noel's last; but even so the blow descended on his head with a force which felled him to the ground.

"You hound!" cried Digby, striking up a loyalist's bayonet, "would you strike a wounded man?"

His words were lost in the din. Arnold was at that instant ordering a general assault; and Digby fell slowly back, hoping that the infantry might yet rally once more—but the Provincials came on with an impetuous rush, which carried everything before them, and the entrenchment was turned. Digby saw that reckless rider on the gallant black horse dashing madly on into the sally-port, and then he himself was caught in the irresistible wave, and though but at the edge of it, was flung down, and, his head coming in contact with part of a gun-carriage, he lay half insensible to bodily pain, while perfectly aware of the sounds of conflict going on all around him.

As Arnold and his brigade rushed within the sally-port, the Germans gave way, discharging a last volley as they retreated. The gallant Warren fell dead under his rider, and at the same

instant, a German, lying wounded on the ground, fired point-blank at the General. The shot struck him above the left knee. "Rush on, my brave boys! rush on!" he cried, seeing that his fall was checking the pursuit. A Provincial soldier was running up to bayonet the German, but Arnold called out to him not to hurt him, for he had only done his duty.

As they are lifting the General from his dead horse, Major Armstrong comes up with Gates's order. He is too late to prevent Arnold from doing something rash; but he comes in the very nick of time to help carry him off the field. Having handed him over to the surgeons, Armstrong returns to inform General Gates that the day is won, and finds him deep in an argument with poor Sir Francis Clerke—who has been brought in to die on the General's bed—about the justice of the quarrel between Great Britain and America, and very indignant at his obstinacy. "Did you ever hear such an impudent fellow?" says Gates (adding a more uncivil epithet still), as he steps briskly out, to hear in private what Armstrong has to say.

Generation after generation reads of the deeds of Greek and Trojan,

"Far on the distant plains of windy Troy;"

and, looking into the enchanted distances of Antiquity, imagines,—according to the spirit of its age—either that there have been no heroes since Ajax and Diomedé, or else that the heroes never lived at all save in a poet's dream. Yet the charge of Benedict Arnold at Saratoga is as Homeric as anything in Homer; and the story of the two battles, and of the whole Canadian campaign, is as worthy to be told as the story of any of the wars of Greece or Rome.

Vixerunt post Agamemnona fortes.

END OF VOL. I.

[CHAP.

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