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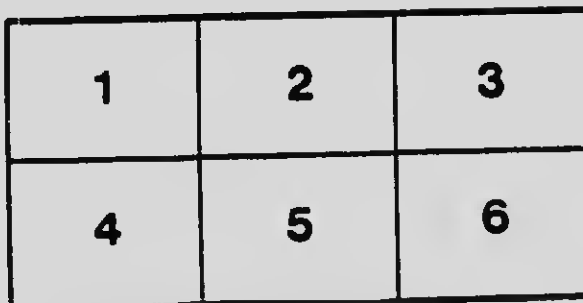
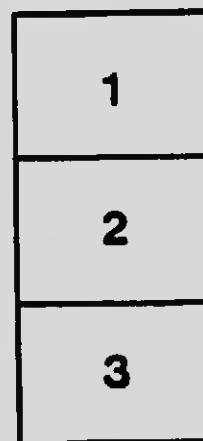
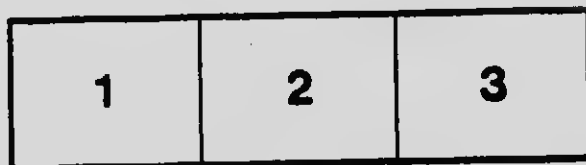
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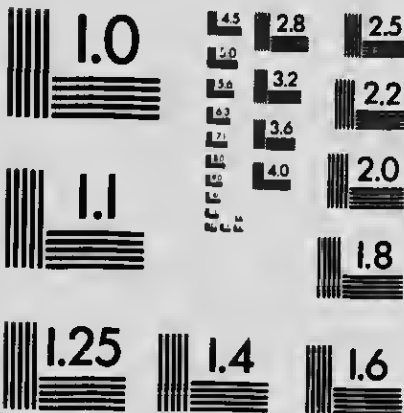
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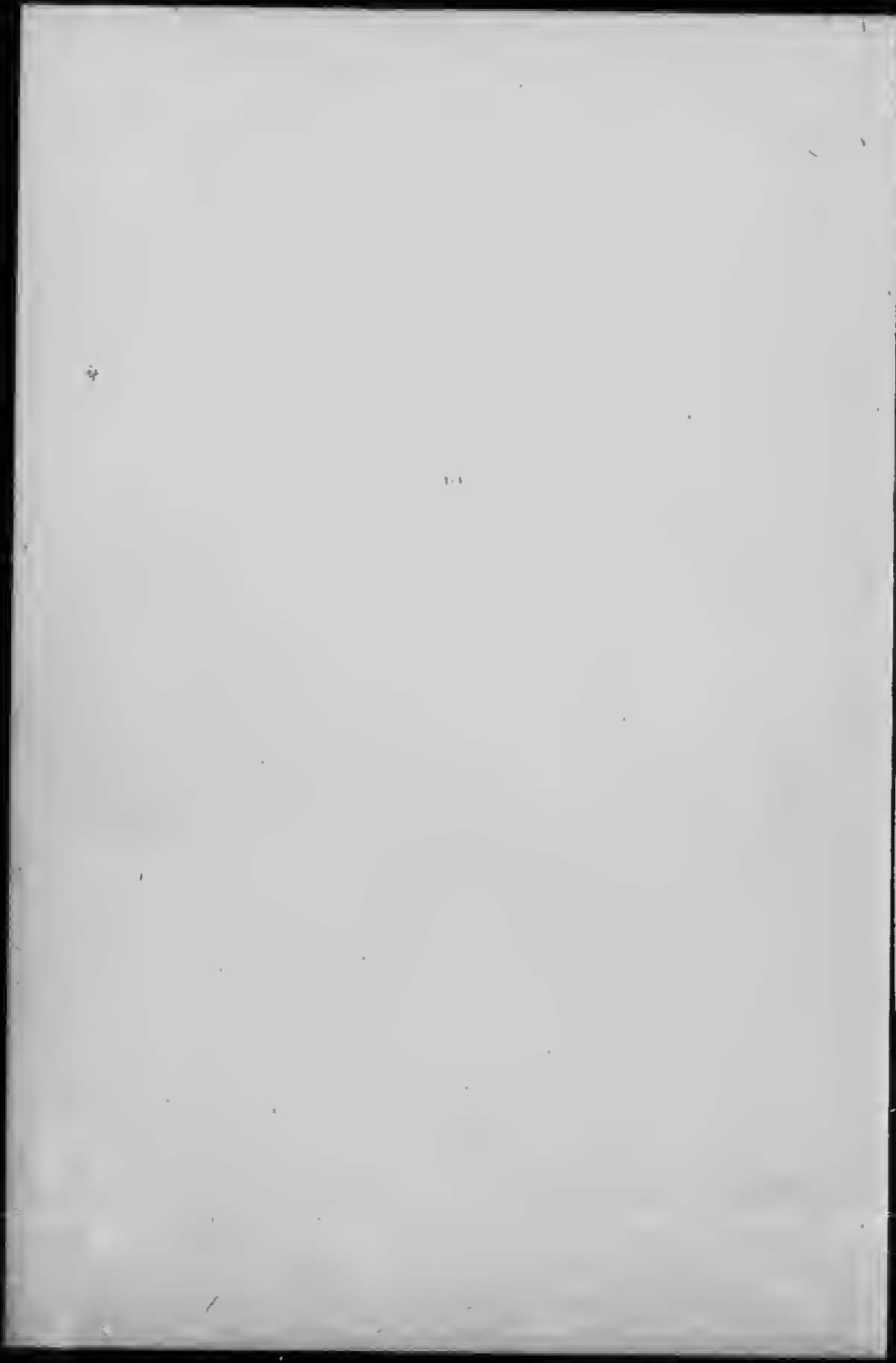
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"FETTERS WERE THEN PUT UPON HER HANDS, AND SHE WENT FORTH FROM THE HOUSE BETWEEN TWO CONSTABLES, PRECEDED BY THE TOWN MARSHAL AND ACCOMPANIED BY A MOTLEY CROWD."

Gerald de Lacey's
Daughter

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF
COLONIAL DAYS

BY
ANNA C. SADIER



NEW YORK
J. BENEDEY & SONS

1915

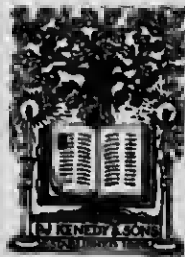


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Gerald de Lacey's Daughter

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF
COLONIAL DAYS

BY
ANNA T. SADLIER



NEW YORK
P. J. KENEDY & SONS

1916

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

Every effort has been made to secure the absolute accuracy of the historical facts on which this story is based. In the case of Captain Kidd's appointment, however, it was found necessary to alter the date a little so that the full story of this notorious pirate might be brought naturally within the scope of the story.

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CONTENTS

BOOK I

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	DAUGHTERS OF COLONIAL DAYS	1
II.	A COLONIAL MATRON	8
III.	THE NEW GOVERNOR	16
IV.	JACOBITE AND CATHOLIC	25
V.	NEW FACES	33
VI.	THOMAS GREATBATCH, SMUGGLER AND PIRATE	41
VII.	AN ESCAPED BIRD	54
VIII.	SHOALS AND QUICKSAND	64
IX.	THE DAWNING OF LOVE	71
X.	THE WHITE FLOWER AND THE EAGLE	83
XI.	FRIENDS OR ENEMIES?	92
XII.	DANGEROUS DAYS	102
XIII.	FEARS REAL AND IMAGINARY	115
XIV.	THE SHADOW OF CAPTAIN KIDD	125

BOOK II

I.	PERSECUTION REVIVED	134
II.	AN ENEMY DECLARES HIMSELF	149
III.	GLADNESS AND TEARS	157
IV.	THE PAST IS INVOKED	165
V.	THE WARNING	170
VI.	A STAUNCH FRIEND	179
VII.	THE SEPARATION	185
VIII.	CLOSER IN GRIEF	198
IX.	AN UNWELCOME MEETING	206

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
X.	HUSBAND AND WIFE	212
XI.	PROSSER WILLIAMS' RESOLVE	223
XII.	THE KERMESSE	235
XIII.	A BLOW THREATENS	249
XIV.	AN ALLIANCE OF HATE	258
XV.	THE BLOW FALLS	265
XVI.	A NOCTURNAL FLIGHT	275
XVII.	SAFE WITH THE WILDEN	282
XVIII.	PLOTTING ANEW	287
XIX.	FAREWELL TO MANHATTAN	295

BOOK III

I.	EVELYN'S NEW HOME	301
II.	A WELCOME VISITOR	307
III.	FATHER HARVEY	313
IV.	A NEW CONFEDERATE	330
V.	A CLUE DISCOVERED	337
VI.	A NEW DANGER	351
VII.	TRIED FOR WITCHCRAFT	354
VIII.	THE RESCUE	367
IX.	A REUNION	374
X.	A COUNTERPLOT	385
XI.	AN EAVESDROPPER CAUGHT	394
XII.	THE TRAGEDY OFF SANDY HOOK	402
XIII.	AN ALLY WON	413
XIV.	CONDITIONAL PARDON	420
XV.	AN OFFER OF MARRIAGE	428
XVI.	THE CLOSE OF A RÈGIME	435
XVII.	THE RETURNED EXILE	443
XVIII.	PINKSTER MORN	450
XIX.	A PLEDGE REDEEMED	457
XX.	HAPPINESS	467

**GERALD DE LACEY'S
DAUGHTER**

GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

BOOK I

CHAPTER I

DAUGHTERS OF COLONIAL DAYS

A COACH was rattling down the Boston Post Road, the mud after the recent heavy rains flying as the wheels splashed through it, while the stones threatened to destroy the equilibrium of even that sedate equipage. It was the carriage of the Van Cortlandts, heavy and ponderous, hanging suspended upon straps and bearing upon the panel of the door the family escutcheon and motto. The coachman, who had been long in the service of the family, was a very splendid figure in his livery of pale fawn color, laced with silver and with silver upon his cocked hat. From the back of the coach, where he hung on by the tassels, the negro foot-boy peered at this majestic personage. The foot-boy wore a livery precisely identical with the coachman's, save that on his head a jaunty, leathern cap replaced the cocked hat.

2 GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

The coachman had beguiled the tedium of a wait upon the shore by some half-articulate grumblings, uttered out of the soreness of his heart because he had to drive over such roads, even as far as Haarlem, to meet his young lady and a friend who had come over the river in a scow. He had sat and watched their approach in no very good humor, while the scow was being poled over the dancing, sunlit waters of the river by two sturdy negroes. The foot-boy, Jumbo, made but little response to these complaints. He had thoroughly enjoyed the drive, as he enjoyed most things, being light of heart and merry by nature. He had merely rolled his dark eyes till nothing but the whites were visible, assenting to his superior's remarks just as far as it was expedient to do so. He, too, watched with interest the progress shoreward of the scow, and hastened eagerly forward to assist the young ladies in landing, assuming control of their bags and various impedimenta. With low bows and a delighted flourish, he opened the door of the coach for Mistress Polly Van Cortlandt, who ensconced herself with a sigh of relief in the comfortable cushions, while her companion, Mistress Evelyn de Lacey, whose every movement suggested a different temperament, followed more slowly and allowed the negro boy to close the door. The air, slightly salt, fresh and invigorating, had given increased color to both girls. Polly, by nature rich-colored, looked perceptibly redder, and her bright eyes were even more sparkling than usual. The pale, olive-tinted skin of her companion had a glow in it, a dash of scarlet in either cheek, which increased the attractiveness of a very beautiful face.

"Oh, but I am weary from standing on that

DAUGHTERS OF COLONIAL DAYS 3

scow!" cried Polly, with a sigh of pure contentment.

Her friend looked at her with some amusement and a smile that enhanced the perfection of her mouth.

"You could have sat down, my Polly," she said briefly.

"In truth I could," returned Polly, "upon one of those stools that made me feel as though I were in a side-saddle upon a rough road, and at any moment might be shot overboard into the middle of the stream."

The other laughed a low laugh that seemed to have its source in some secret amusement of her own.

"Yes, I think standing were preferable, though I contrived to keep my seat. But the air was delicious, so fresh and with a touch of salt therein. It is a sweet morning."

The two fell into silence after that, as the coach, still jolting from the unevenness of the road, continued down that highway which in the year of Our Lord, 1698, led out from the Colony of New York—a title favored by some as a compromise between its Indian name of Manhattan and its Dutch name of New Amsterdam—to the neighboring colonies of New England, even to Boston Town. As the carriage drove slowly past what had once been the *bouwerie* (or farm) of Mynheer Pieter Stuyvesant, a former Governor of the colony under the Dutch and a mighty personage, the girl with the olive-tinted skin leaned slightly out of the coach window and regarded the building with those eyes of hers which so many called wonderful. And wonderful was the adjective that best described them. They were lit up by so many lights and were haunted by so many expressions, which now appeared to

4 GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

hover on their surface and again to linger in their depths. It had been remarked that hers was a tragic face, like that of some woman by whom the whole course of history is haunted. She looked at the stiff, square building, with its two windows on either side of the door and three abreast above; with its trim, box-bordered flower-beds, wherein had blossomed many a seedling brought from Holland. Intersecting these beds were gravelled paths, and all about stood trees—how ancient no man knew. They had in any case survived the strongest of the Governors, and could rustle over the roof that had sheltered him, and still make patterns upon the paths his feet had trod, long after he had slept with his fathers.

"The poor, old Governor!" cried the soft voice of Evelyn. "What a figure he must have cut in his day!"

"And he had a wife that matched him," cried Polly. "I doubt not you have heard the story. It was once when the *Wilden*¹ were swooping down to attack the *bouweries*. It chanced that the Governor was absent. Madam Stuyvesant, so men say, called in some Frenchmen who were working for her that day, that they might help in defending the dwelling. She had put it in readiness for a siege, but the savages, satisfied with what plunder they had obtained elsewhere, went their way without making an attack."

"I like well her spirit," commented Evelyn. "I like whatever savors of vital force." Then, as the coach rolled on its way, the girl added: "I wonder, Polly, what you and I would have done in like case."

¹ i. e., the Indians.

DAUGHTERS OF COLONIAL DAYS 5

"She needed courage," Polly made answer, with a shiver. "If one does but think of being tomahawked or scalped!"

"Are you not curious," inquired Polly, with an abrupt change of subject, "to see how *they* will all look like?"

"As full of curiosity as—but there, I cannot think of a comparison. I cannot rest, in truth, until I have seen them all and heard whatsoever there is to hear about them."

"They should arrive by two o' the clock to-day," mused Polly, "very soon after the dinner hour."

"My Lord Bellomont," said Evelyn, continuing her train of thought, "should be shapely and tall, with hair or peruke curling down on his shoulders."

"And his attire should be gorgeous," added Polly. "It is said he is bringing with him a goodish number of young officers and supernumeraries."

"I wonder what else he is bringing," Evelyn said to herself, in a voice only half intended for her companion's ear, "of the things that matter."

"I opine," observed Polly, looking admiringly at her friend, "that you will go to work with those eyes of yours to cast spells on some of these newcomers."

Evelyn laughed her low laugh of genuine enjoyment.

"Polly Van Cortlandt to speak thus, who has half the young men of these colonies in her toils!"

"Ah!" said Polly, a slight shadow falling over the brightness of her face, "I have the young men of my own Company,¹ or those boys with whom I

¹ A peculiar feature of Dutch colonial life was the formation of boys and girls (usually relatives, or in the same social set) into Companies, with distinctive colors, etc. All their amusements were in common, and the comradeship thus formed lasted into maturer years, so that marriages were frequent amongst members of the same Company.

6 GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

played, or who used to fasten on my beef-bone skates or draw me over the ice on a sledge. But when it comes to men—real men, who have seen the world and have accomplished things themselves—it is then, sweetheart, that *I* fail and *you* succeed.”

She spoke without bitterness, but with something of regret.

“Is it of much import,” inquired Evelyn, and there was a suspicion of sadness in her tone, “even if what you say were indeed true? We are perchance for them the playthings of an idle hour, or they for us.”

Then she added:

“I am wondering what will my Lady Bellomont be like. Beautiful, men say she is. And how she will endure what must appear to her the dullness of our provincial life.”

At that instant the attention of both was attracted by the sound of trumpets, just as the lumbering coach, with its solemn coachman and gay foot-boy, turned into the Broad Way.

“Can it be,” cried both girls together, “that they have arrived, and that we shall miss the pageant?”

Each leaned eagerly out of the window nearest her, and Polly called to the negro to find out, if he could, what was the meaning of those trumpets and whether the new Governor had arrived. The negro came back breathless. It was not the Governor, but only the Guard turning out from the Fort and marching as escort to the gentlemen who were to sail down the Bay a certain distance to meet His Excellency.

So the coach rolled again upon its way, and brought both girls to that stately mansion on Queen Street, with its checkered brick walls, its lozenge-shaped windows and the entrance door above which

DAUGHTERS OF COLONIAL DAYS 7

were wrought in massive iron the family initials and the year when the house was built. There too was the *stoepe*, with its benches whereon the girls had so often sat and talked of that event which was now at hand—the arrival of a new Governor. His coming had been of special interest, because it was believed that, as he occupied an exalted position both socially and politically, he would be likely to restore to the gubernatorial residence some of that state and elegance which had been sadly lacking during the last régime. It was rumored also that he would bring with him a brilliant staff and many celebrities. The whispers that had reached Manhattan concerning my Lady Bellomont as to her eccentric—not to say, scandalous—conduct, had only whetted public curiosity, and particularly that of the female sex. Evelyn had often wondered how so gay a dame as they had heard described would fit into the small life of that *dorp*, which had become a city.

The foot-boy sounded the great silver knocker on the door, and the two occupants of the coach, dismounting, suddenly became conscious of the hunger engendered by their long drive and the previous sail over the salt water. For their nostrils were regaled with savory and mingled odors from within—roast goose with its garnishings, pound-cake and crullers, coffee and spiced wine. They could scarcely wait till, having divested themselves of their outer wrappings, they heard the gong sound in the hall, answering to the striking of that clock which but of late was a novelty in the colony. It announced in clear, musical tones the hour of noon and dinner.

CHAPTER II

A COLONIAL MATRON

AT the head of the table, presiding with much grace and dignity, sat the grandmother with whom Polly Van Cortlandt had lived since her childhood and the death of that relative's husband. Vrow Van Cortlandt—or Madam Van Cortlandt, as she was more generally called—was a woman of strong character and clear commonsense, an excellent type of those matrons who were in a very real sense the pioneers of Manhattan. Her dark eyes still sparkled at times with the same light that now danced in Polly's; her shrunken cheeks showed a mottled red where once had been a lovely bloom; her cap, tied under her chin, was of the finest muslin and the richest lace; her gown was of heavy satin, and her long pendant earrings were a priceless heirloom that had crossed the seas from Holland. She was merry at times, that old grandmother, or again she was sad, with the burden of all the years and of all the destinies that had been interwoven with her own. Even the very house in which she lived was an epitome of the annals of Manhattan.

She watched the two girls with an amusement that showed itself in just a nod, a twinkling of the eyes or a chuckle. She could enter into their feelings with curious exactitude. Full of life, of mirthful-

ness and of attraction for the other sex, she had once trod the streets of what had been, in her day of youth, merely a quaint village. She had assisted at tea parties, assemblies and dances, many of which had been in this very dwelling where Polly loved to entertain her friends. The old woman's eyes rested oftenest and most lovingly, as was natural, on the sparkling countenance of her granddaughter. But there were moments when they were turned also, with something thoughtful and inquiring in her look, on that other, who was merely a dear friend and welcome visitor but no part of that household. For it seemed to these experienced eyes that she was of an order altogether different from those who had passed as maids, as wives or as mothers through that mansion, where the observer herself, for two generations, had reigned supreme. Wherein that precise difference lay, Madam Van Cortlandt, perspicacious as she was, could not determine. Something in the delicate pencilling of the eyebrows, in the sensitive lines about the mouth, in the haunting depths of the eyes, presaged suffering.

"If I had a son unmarried now," she mused, "should I not shrink from seeing him become the husband of one who, if I be not sore mistaken, will have more than her share of sorrow?"

But the old woman felt instinctively that, if there were tragedy, there was also nobility in every line of that face.

"I believe, in truth, I should risk it," concluded she; "for here is no common type of maid, though differing from my darling Polly as the lily differs from the rose."

The girls, unconscious of these reflections, gave the grandmother a somewhat desultory account of

their visit to Polly's aunt in Morrisania, where the two had spent a week, and then began to talk about the topic uppermost in their thoughts—the coming of the new Governor. Meanwhile old Peter, the negro who had grown gray in Madam's service, stood behind her chair and with a broad fan flicked away the flies, while listening eagerly to the conversation.

The room in which they sat was all green and gold, with a heavy wainscoting of dark wood. Its furniture was solid and substantial; the chairs were high-backed, with broad, brocade-covered seats. The silver on the table was likewise massive, quaint but rich in pattern, and bearing with it from overseas, whence it came, something of the character of its first owners in Rotterdam. The viands were rich rather than varied, though Madam Van Cortlandt still prided herself on the skill with which she could make, or cause to be made, all those good things that were dear to Dutch hearts. Polly, too, was a notable cook. There was, in fact, no branch of housewifery which she did not understand, having been trained under "that incomparable woman," as old Dominie Selwyns had described her grandmother. The latter's experience went back indeed to pioneer times, when her grandmother, whom she vividly remembered, had put her hand literally to the plough, procuring by her own hands almost all the necessaries of life.

Through the lozenge-shaped panes of the dining-room window came the noontide sun of that bright day, which was bringing the new Governor to Manhattan. Deep in Evelyn's heart were thoughts concerning him of which the others knew nothing. These thoughts she could discuss only with her

father, a quiet and studious man, for whom she kept house in a charming little cottage near the river.

"I hope," said the grandmother, "that this Governor will be an improvement upon the last. There is sore need of it. The office lost all its dignity when the King's representative was seen to consort with smugglers and, as some would have it, pirates. Colonel Fletcher was, in truth, no man for the post."

"And everything was so dull in his time," added Polly. "As for social life, there was none at all."

"Our liberties," continued the grandmother, ignoring Polly's interruption, "have been many times and gravely imperilled by these men whom our Sovereign Lord, the King, has sent. I make exception of the good Dongan."

"But," said Polly, with a mischievous sparkle in her black eyes and a mocking grimace at Evelyn, "was he not a Papist, and did he not hold strange worship with Jesuits and such like at the Fort?"

"It was so," assented the old lady, "but he was none the worse man for that—a good Governor, active and far-seeing and willing to grant, as indeed he did, toleration to all men to worship God as their consciences approved."

She glanced almost involuntarily at Evelyn, who had been strangely silent. But it was part of the girl's fascination that her silences were often full of a meaning that impressed itself upon those around her. Her face just then had a glow upon it, and there was a light in her eyes as if her unspoken thoughts were in answer to the old lady, who better than most people seemed to understand her. When she broke silence, it was to say:

"The Sovereign of England was at that time Catholic, until he was driven forth—"

She stopped abruptly, and Madam Van Cortlandt, with her laugh that was still mirthful though it broke and cackled, completed the sentence:

"By our Dutch William, married to James's own daughter." Then she added more gravely: "A great man to our way of thinking, who might have done as Hollanders mostly do, let folk worship God as they would, but the English, with their political intrigues and their fear of the Catholics, would not have it so. Do you know that William was once in friendly alliance with the Pope of Rome?"

"No," answered Evelyn, "I did not know that, and was he then willing to sacrifice everything for—"

"For the sake of a crown," said Madam Van Cortlandt, composedly finishing the sentence. But there was a note of sadness in her tone as she added: "When you have grown as old as I am, you will know that few of the heroes we have worshipped could withstand temptation."

"He is no hero of mine," said Evelyn, with a glow in her eyes as though a lamp had suddenly been lit there. "I hold him to be both treacherous and cruel."

"Remember," reproved the old lady, with sudden severity, "that you are speaking of the reigning Sovereign, whom may the Lord God bless and protect! No one at my table shall speak ill of him."

She spoke with unusual heat, as though this right-minded and intelligent woman, who had read much and conversed much with men of many minds, were defending the Protestant idols against doubts that had arisen in her own mind. And looking full at Evelyn, who was perforce silent, she continued as if in answer to the expression of the young girl's face:

"He had the peace and safety of the realm of England to think of."

To this statement Evelyn made no reply, though dissent from that view was shown in every line of her face. Polly meanwhile was visibly bored. She could not help wondering how Evelyn, who so keenly enjoyed the gaieties and harmless frivolities which the town afforded, and was the centre of many a social gathering, could be thus vividly and passionately interested in those dull subjects which her grandmother and the old people discussed. Even with them such discourses were only occasional, for the female portion of the community preferred to talk amongst themselves of the number and quality of their slaves or indented servants, of recipes for the making of cakes or confections of various sorts, or to hear or retail the latest gossip of the town—the weddings and births, the marriage feasts and caudle parties, the latest betrothals and the most recent deaths. For even the deaths afforded topics for much conversation—the number and distinction of the mourners or of the relatives to whom the *aansprecher* (or death herald) made funereal announcement. All details were of interest: the width of the mourning bands, who bore the coffin to the church, how the house looked, and how many enjoyed the wine and cake, the pipes and tobacco, with which the funeral guests were regaled on their return from the burial. As if in rebound from the fearful solemnity, the human heart there as elsewhere, driven as it were to extremes, turned with keenest relish from mourning to human comforts and to the companionship of its fellows.

Madam Van Cortlandt, though capable when opportunity offered of conversing on any subject, was deeply interested in all local affairs. Taking her knitting bag with her to provide employment for

her hands, and her spectacles in the pocket of her black silk apron, she often sallied forth for a visit, or round of visits, to other matrons. In such gatherings were discussed all those happenings, large or small, which form the sum of human life as it goes on, scarce perceptibly, from generation to generation. But Madam Van Cortlandt was also foremost amongst those who could turn at will from such topics to talk of politics, whether they related to the *Patroon*, still beloved of Dutch New Yorkers, or to that Kingdom of England, which ruled the destinies of the American colonies. She was fully cognizant of all that related to the local government. She could discourse upon the iniquities of Leisler, for by marriage connections, training and ideas, she was totally opposed to one whom she designated as a "foreign boor." Heated discussions upon this subject of the usurper often took place in her drawing-room, or wherever her social circle chanced to meet for a game of lansquenet. For there were many who regarded him as an enlightened patriot, and were prepared to defend his usurpation of the government, and the series of tyrannical acts which followed, including his persecution of the small minority of Catholics who had made Manhattan their home. With all these actions Madam Van Cortlandt had no sympathy whatever. She held that they were totally opposed to the Dutch idea of toleration. She would wax eloquent, too, upon the tyranny of a later English governor, Andros, particularly in the famous dispute on the bolting of flour and the destruction of the Charter of New York. Like most young girls of her age, Evelyn was indifferent to such matters, save where they touched upon religion. Like her father, she was a Jacobite in

politics and an ardent Catholic, and chafed under the restrictions imposed upon members of her faith, who were allowed to have neither priest nor church.

Polly, on her part, was glad when dinner was over, especially as she had found the trend of conversation distasteful, and feared that Evelyn, who was a great favorite with her grandmother, might say something to offend the latter. It was a relief to escape to her bedroom upstairs, where the two made such additions to their toilet as the occasion demanded. The grandmother remained musing after the young people had left her:

"These Papists," she said to herself, "for I make sure this girl is one, though she has never admitted so much in my hearing, are like to have a hard time if all I hear from England be true. Evelyn's father used to attend the Popish worship in Dongan's time, or so I have been informed. That will tell against him, and he will be, in truth, a marked man. And this girl—"

She paused and sighed deeply. Then, as if wishing to drive the matter from her mind, she arose from her chair and, with a step that was still light considering her years, went to inspect the jam cupboard, taking a ponderous bunch of keys from her apron pocket. She also gave orders that the coach should be at the door at a quarter before two to convey them all to some vantage point where the arrival and its attendant ceremonies might be witnessed.

CHAPTER III

THE NEW GOVERNOR

PRECISELY at the appointed hour the girls descended the stairs, prepared to accompany their grandmother, who looked very stately and handsome in her wide bonnet and outdoor mantle of rich satin. Polly's eyes were fairly sparkling with excitement, and even the graver Evelyn had seemingly forgotten those very serious thoughts which, like the deep waters of a stream, flowed steadily beneath the ripples on the surface. She was looking particularly lovely in a gown of yellow lutestring, trimmed with silver lace in the most modish fashion possible. She made an excellent foil for the dark-haired, red-cheeked and vivacious Polly, who was gowned in crimson sarsenet.

The coachman, more pompous than ever, since he was to drive old Madam, sat stolidly upon his box, and saluted the ladies by raising his whip to his cocked hat. The negro boy, Jumbo, his eyes rolling with anticipatory enjoyment of the promised excitement and in admiration of the sumptuous dresses of the ladies, closed the carriage door upon them and then mounted to his station at the back. The ponderous coach rolled on its way down the Broad Way in the direction of the Fort. For there were to arrive at the landing-place near Their Excellencies

and suite, escorted by the gentlemen of the Council, the Mayor and other prominent citizens, who had sailed down the Bay to meet them.

The town wore an air of expectancy. Flags were flying from all the public buildings and from many private residences. The gardens could only show their tiny buds of promise and shoots of living green, as though they would say that, had it been but a month later, they too would have given forth color and fragrance to greet the newcomers: "laylock" trees to perfume the air, peonies, gilly flowers, pinks, mignonette and early roses to delight the eye. The warships in the harbor stood ready to join with the guns of the Fort in firing the salute. The citizens of all classes were walking about in great excitement. Merry chatter and wiseacre surmises of all sorts were to be heard. Mechanics in their leathern aprons jostled dominies and physicians, who could be distinguished by their high pointed hats, their wide-skirted coats of broadcloth, their short breeches and buckled shoes, and the gold- or silver-knobbed canes which they usually carried in their hands. Gentlemen in doublets and breeches of brocade or satin were also there, wearing muslin cravats edged with rich lace and with ruffles of lace at their sleeves. These rivalled indeed their wives and daughters in the costliness of their attire, though the latter were in gala dress that day, the matrons distinguished from the maids by wearing the coif of matronhood under their bonnets. The women of the lower classes in linsey-woolsey or drugget gowns, dyed by themselves with the juice of certain plants, made a picturesque showing, the brightness of coloring being relieved by snow-white kerchiefs and, in the case of the older women, by frilled caps.

All waited with a like impatience, differently as it might be manifested, for the first sight of that potentate from beyond seas—that new ruler who held in his hand the power of life or death and, to a great extent, of joy or sorrow too. Only the few who had travelled as far as England, or had correspondents there, knew anything about him. Because of the disturbances of the Leisler period, which had divided the town into warring factions and still left its traces, there was unusual anxiety in the breasts of many. For no man could tell what side Lord Bellomont might espouse.

The Van Cortlandt coach drew up at a point where a fine view of the proceedings might be obtained, its occupants differently affected by these moments of suspense. The grandmother both felt and displayed a certain philosophic calm. She had seen many pageants in her time, governors coming and governors going. And the excitement and joyous interest which had heralded the coming, had very often with more reason marked the departure. But the girls, different as they were in most respects, felt the same heart-beats at that moment, though Polly more openly showed her agitation.

At last there was a blare of trumpets, followed by the surging forward of the crowd, which was now silent for the most part save when some in advance raised a cheer. The royal colors, those of William of Orange, ran up on the Fort; the guns boomed out their salute, and for good or evil His Excellency, Richard Earl of Bellomont, was Governor. The thrill of excitement that ran through Evelyn's brain, bringing the tears to her eyes and causing her to grasp convulsively her companion's hand and press it, was displayed by Polly in a series of exclamations:

"Oh, how splendid it all is! I can just see over yonder the uniforms and—yes, oh yes, there is the carriage!"

It was the state coach, similar to that in which Governor Andros had ridden and which had been purchased by the Corporation of New York. The grandmother's dim eyes, catching sight of it, remembered with a sudden flame of wrath how the tyrant's stern face had looked out from it, and how his no less haughty wife had barely inclined her head to the greetings of the populace.

There was no delay at the Fort, for it had been deemed expedient that, since there might be malcontents about, the coach should drive straight on to the *Stadt Huys*, where the oath of office would be administered. Madam Van Cortlandt recalled with a shudder—for the old are always more engrossed with the past, when they were in the fighting line of life—how Governor Sloughter had been hurried thither. It was in the dead of night that time, for the Leislerians were on the alert and had made a determined resistance to the landing of his Lieutenant, Nicholls. Then had ensued that tragedy: two tall gibbets had been erected from which had swung two awful figures—the erstwhile, self-constituted Governor of the colony, Jacob Leisler, and his son-in-law, Milborne.

But neither Polly nor Evelyn gave a thought to what was past. They were absorbed in that pageant, brilliant and engrossing, in what they saw and what promised to be. They craned their necks eagerly from the carriage windows, watching the decorous and somewhat ponderous tread of the pikemen and train-bands and the military company serving as escort. They looked impatiently past

the postilions and outriders, in their brilliant accoutrements, past the gay caparisons of the six white horses, to the state chariot and the Governor. Both girls—but especially Evelyn, whose imagination was the more vivid—felt a swift pang of disappointment. For there was my Lord Bellomont, resplendent indeed in his military uniform, but stout and thick-set, with hair cut short and a countenance which, to Evelyn at least, was distinctly repellent. The small eyes, she thought, had something fierce and sinister in their expression. That face and its expression, indeed, stirred the deeper depths within her, so that for a moment she forgot the glitter of that passing show.

“He will be no friend to us,” she thought, with one of those swift flashes of intuition that had brought home to her mind many a vital truth.

But Evelyn's attention was distracted by the sight of that face at his side—a face proud and petulant, and with traces of other emotions and experiences which the eyes of the young observer were incapable of reading. But the countenance thus revealed brightened with sudden interest into an animation that lent it a certain charm, as my Lady Bellomont, leaning slightly forward, let her gaze pass over the wrinkled visage of Madam Van Cortlandt and rested it upon the two girls. It was as though this spoiled beauty, who had lived for excitement and pleasure—not always of the most innocent kind, according to popular reports—had said to herself:

“Oh, in this detestable place to which, as I told my Lord, I would rather die than come, there are really civilized persons, young women who would not disgrace a ball or rout in Belgravia.”

The carriage, however, swept on, Polly bursting

into a laugh at the expression which she saw upon her companion's face.

"It is not for beauty my Lord Bellomont has been chosen to govern this colony," she cried, "and he is an aged man."

"Did you expect, then," put in the grandmother, who had been silently observant, "that the new ruler of these colonies should be a gay spark, a target for your arrows? In truth, he has turned sixty, so they say."

"There is some beauty in the wife," observed Polly, though half doubtfully.

"Yes, and a little more than that," agreed Evelyn thoughtfully.

"I do not think I like her face," decided Polly.

"Her poor Ladyship," said the grandmother tolerantly, "was married when she was but twelve years of age. One might believe that her path has been not all rose-strewn."

"Married to that face," exclaimed Evelyn, "it might be a slow martyrdom."

Madam Van Cortlandt protested.

"Oh, fie, Evelyn!" she said. "My Lord Bellomont is of tried bravery as a soldier, and men say that he has ideas in his head about reform and I know not what."

But Evelyn was obdurate in the dislike which she had taken to the new Governor—whether from some premonition of evil or merely from a feminine prejudice founded upon her first disappointment in the man's appearance, she would have found it hard to say. Polly laughed him aside with satirical humor.

"With the help of Evelyn's most lively imagination," she declared, "I had pictured the Governor

a fine gentleman with curled locks falling over his shoulders, a clean-cut countenance, and a figure of slender proportions. Alack, but he is a disappointment!"

But the attention of both girls was drawn to the many members of the suite and the numerous officers whom the Earl of Bellomont had brought in his train. Most of these men were young, dark and fair, merry and grave, with the curling locks reaching to the shoulder which the observers had missed in the Governor. And whether they wore a military uniform or civilian costume, they were all very splendid in their apparel, as if their aim was to impress these poor Colonials with an idea of their magnificence.

There was scarcely one of these new arrivals who did not take note of the two girls looking out from the windows of that stately, if cumbrous, old carriage, as if from the frame of a picture. So might Cinderella have peered out from her fairy coach. Opinions were, of course, divided as to the respective merits of the two, but the balance was in favor of Evelyn, especially amongst the older men. It was generally the young subalterns or junior members of the staff who preferred the dark beauty of Polly, with its glow and sparkle, and the damask red cheeks and the eyes that regarded them so roguishly.

The procession moved on, and the pompous coachman presently saw the decorous time to follow, for which the girls within the coach had waited with such impatience. He finally forsook the Broad Way to the martial music of the bands and the sound of silvery chimes from the bell in the Dutch Church at the Fort, which, as some said, had been cast largely of silver, and to which were now added joyous peals from the English Church, Trinity. He

showed his wisdom, since that street was lined three deep with spectators, and crowded wherever possible with vehicles. He turned into a quiet street, which would bring the expectant ladies to a safe corner near the *Stadt Huys*, or City Hall. The better to attain his end, he urged the staid horses into a trot, rarely permitted to those dignified animals. This unusual pace caused the coach to roll and rumble no little, but even the grandmother did not rebuke the driver, since his speed was in a good cause.

The old City Hall stood gaunt and grim, and its lights were often a beacon to those out upon the water or to vessels coming up the Bay. This bare and ugly building had now perforce to take on some appearance of festivity, in so far as flags and streamers, mostly of orange, could effect the transformation. But the stern rigidity of its outlines, its bald and hopeless ugliness, seemed to say: "By no plastering on of gay colors can you transform me. I am of those to whom all change is abhorrent. Rulers may come and rulers may go, but I represent all the solid sentiment of the people. I am civic worth and civic dullness personified."

With looks of smiling recognition, the officers and members of the suite recognized and pointed out to one another the two girls in the coach as if they were already old acquaintances. My Lady Bellomont's languid eyes brightened once more into a look of interest, until the splendid cortège was swallowed up within the grim portals of the *Stadt Huys*. Madam Van Cortlandt and her two companions pointed out to one another the various members of the Council, most of whom were at that time on the same side of politics as the Van Cortlandts—that is to say, anti-Leislerians—and thus

Madam's intimate friends, or even relatives. They also exchanged greetings with the occupants of other coaches, or with pedestrians who stood about the doors of the City Hall. Then Madam gave the order to the coachman to drive first to the home of Mistress de Lacey, who was but a visitor to the Van Cortlandt household, and thence back to the imposing residence from which they had started. Meanwhile, within the *Stadt Huys* the oath of office had been taken, and a new régime had begun for the colony of New York.

The Governor who had thus arrived with so much pomp and majesty and been received with such elaborate ceremonies, could not have foreseen that he was never to leave those shores again; that, before many years had passed, his bones would lie beneath the Fort, and that the silver plate from his exhumed coffin, after a decade or two more had elapsed, would be stared at by the curious in a museum. But he did not know, and that day the pride of life and the pomp of circumstance were uppermost. Lord Bellomont was jubilant at having secured so honorable an appointment, the emoluments of which were considerable, and in which it was said rich pickings were to be had. He was jubilant also that he had bent the capricious will of my Lady to obey his wishes, and forced her to accompany him on this mission, for previously, when he was assigned to a West Indian post, she had allowed him to go alone while she had lived riotously in London. Here, his proud and jealous heart told him, she would be under his own eye. He would force her to behave decorously, save her from misconstruction, and so make the best, if best there could be, of so ill-assorted a union.

CHAPTER IV

JACOBITE AND CATHOLIC

THE house which Evelyn de Lacey inhabited with her father stood upon Pearl Street, at that portion which was then known as "The Waterside." It was upon the corner of what was once Winckel Street, but was later named Whitehall after the famous residence which the great Governor Stuyvesant built there. But no mansion was that of the de Laceys. It was a comparatively small, two-story house, constructed of the prevailing glazed brick, with lozenge-shaped window panes in their leaden sashes, and gables turned towards the garden. Clambering over the walls, and reaching even to the high-pointed roof with its crow-feet chimney, were luxuriant vines. The adjoining garden was a delightful spot wherein the usual prim arrangement of flower-beds and borders was departed from, and the flowers in the summer-time grew in bewildering profusion. The nearest neighbor, on one side, was the mansion of the late Mynheer Steenwyck, once a prominent citizen of Manhattan. On the other side was a neighbor that Evelyn liked much better, and was not inconveniently close—the East River. The girl was never tired of watching the river from the window of her room with the play of light and shadow upon its surface. She liked to

watch the oyster boats setting out early in the morning for the oyster beds in the Bay; or the merchant vessels, stately brigantines or more modest sloops, as they sailed for distant ports. She had also glimpses of the Fort, the Bowling Green, and of what went on there—all sufficiently distant to be attractive.

The garden of this ideal home was most absorbing to Evelyn. In addition to those flowers which grew in such abundance, and with a degree of disorder which to the mind of their owner constituted their chief charm, Evelyn had a corner reserved for vegetables to supply their daily needs, and a piece of ground devoted exclusively to the herbs and simples which she compounded into medicines with a skill acquired from an old and once famous physician, now dead, Doctor Van Kierstade, who had taught her many things during her childhood and girlhood. To the mind of many of her admirers, never did Evelyn look more charming than when, clad in a simple garment which she reserved exclusively for gardening, she worked amongst those plants that were as dear to her as if they had been living things. She had been busy all those April days in doing whatsoever she could to promote growth, and she was longing for the time when the flowers of the garden, or the more prosaic green things, would show their faces one by one, like a gathering of old friends.

When Evelyn returned from the pageant that afternoon she found her father in his study, and, as it seemed to her, in an unusual mood of dejection. The broad casement of the room was thrown open, as if inviting in the tendrils of the vines upon which later honeysuckle, wisteria and rambler roses would

cluster in luxuriant abundance. Their form of beauty alone invaded the solitude of the man, who had been transformed by the course of events from a man of action, a soldier, even a courtier, into the student and dreamer. He could catch glimpses of the river from that window and feel at times that pungent breath of salt from the Bay. But he could catch no glimpse of the Fort or the Bowling Green as could Evelyn from her upper window. It seemed as if nature had shut him in with herself, and there were reasons which he considered sufficient for avoiding the hospitable, easy and eminently genial society of the city.

Gerald de Lacey was still in the prime of life, but had travelled much and seen much active service, particularly in the Low Countries, as Major in one of the Hussar regiments. He had first come over to the colony with Governor Dongan, accompanied by his wife and young daughter. He had subsequently returned to England, whence the course of events, resulting in the accession of William of Orange, had again driven him forth. He was then a widower, and with his one daughter had come to New York and taken up his residence in a house which had been built for the Dutch minister and which Major de Lacey had improved to his taste. An Irishman and a Catholic in full sympathy with the cause of King James, he had resigned his commission in the Hussars on the accession of William of Orange, and later, for urgent reasons, had come back to that colony, where previously with Dongan, under an extended leave of absence, he had spent some pleasant years. Of a fiery and impetuous nature, which he had subdued to outward composure, he chafed in secret under the enforced idleness, but

hid his disappointed hopes as much as possible from his idolized daughter, finding solace in the companionship of his books, which happily he truly loved.

Recognizing perhaps the incompleteness of such a life as his, he made every possible effort to keep Evelyn in the forefront of the city's social circles. He admired almost inordinately the qualities which he discerned in her, as well as the rareness and fineness of her beauty, which recalled that of her dead mother and appealed to his fastidiousness. His means, though not large, were sufficient for their needs, and by a rigid personal economy, which he did not permit Evelyn to realize, he contrived to give her the modish and often expensive costumes which one side of the nature of the girl passionately loved. There was another side to her character, as yet undeveloped, which would make her willing to wear sackcloth and live austere for the sake of her father or anyone else whom she loved.

Even had Evelyn been aware of the sacrifices which her father made to supply her with all she needed, she could not have offered any successful opposition. For that was one of the matters upon which Gerald de Lacey was inflexible. Rarely had his will run counter to that of his child; but, when it did so, it was as effective as finely tempered steel in the hands of a skilful swordsman. He always declared that she was to dress as he thought fitting, and according to the state in life to which she properly belonged. Her mother had been the daughter of a commoner, ennobled for distinguished service to his country, and Gerald himself came of ancient Norman stock. To these commands Evelyn had offered but little resistance, since it is so easy to render obedience when one's secret inclinations fit in with that duty.

The father had watched her from the window, as she alighted from the Van Cortlandt carriage in that gown of gold lutestring which had been so much admired, and the perfection of her appearance filled him with a pride which partly consoled him for the bitter reflections of that day. When Evelyn entered the study he was sitting at the table with the same volume of poetry open before him which had been unread all that afternoon. The sound of the trumpets, coming through the open window, had been harrowing for him. For had not he too landed at that selfsame landing-place, and passed from the Fort to the *Stadt Huys* with another Governor, his chief? All that had happened when life was fair and young, and while the wife, whom he had so passionately loved, still lived and shared, in her eager but earnest way, all his pursuits and all his interests. How gladly she followed his fortunes to the New World, where he hoped for advancement in his double career of soldier and diplomat! Governor Dongan had been interested in his prospects, and they had shared in common the same hopes and ideals, and had worked for that broad and comprehensive scheme of freedom and toleration for all. The last of the Stuart Kings had been then on the throne of England. And now, though still comparatively young as years are counted, he had lived to see Dongan hunted like a wolf, his dearly beloved wife dead, and James, the hereditary Monarch of England and by every human and divine law the rightful Sovereign, a wanderer on the Continent. His own personal fortunes had sunk with theirs, his future was blighted, and he lived here almost in hiding, never knowing what turn of events should make of him a fugitive and an outlaw.

Entering the room in her yellow dress, Evelyn brought with her as it were a splendor of sunshine. Her young beauty concentrated all that remained of the sun that was setting, and likewise, as it seemed to the observer, all that remained to him of life. She approached him softly and laid her hand ever so gently and caressingly on his shoulder. She was not given to effusive demonstrations, which indeed were rare between the two. But, after one look at his face, she bent and kissed him. She realized, as in a flash, how much need he had of sympathy and tenderness. She felt conscience-stricken, too, that she had been absent from him when perhaps he had needed her. But there she was somewhat mistaken. He had had need also of solitude in which to fight his bitter battle, when he had sent her away a few days before to accompany Polly on a visit to relatives of the latter's in Morrisania. The father raised his head and met his daughter's glance. It was plain to see where she had got a portion at least of her beauty and charm, though the heartsore man was just then reflecting that she had so strong a look of her mother.

"You did not go out to see—?"

"The passing show," said her father, completing the sentence. "No, love, for in such an assemblage there could be no place for me. I could not raise a cheer, nor," he added more lightly, "even my hat to the representative of the usurper. So I would have been in all truth a marked man, and that would have been perilous for us both."

Evelyn sat down beside him with a countenance that was sober and thoughtful, putting aside her taffeta scarf, which was of a deeper shade of gold than her dress.

"Perhaps it was not meet that I should have gone," she said.

Her father interrupted her quickly.

"Most certainly you should have gone," he said emphatically. "Our cases, my dear daughter, are different indeed. My life is done, and yours but begun; I have sworn allegiance to one prince, and may not take such an oath to another. At least, that is my way of thinking, though, now that the fact is accomplished, I shall meddle no more with public concerns, and there is no danger that I shall plot treason. Besides," he added, "you, as a young maid, were not obliged to give outward token of loyalty."

"No, no," cried Evelyn, "I never so much as bowed my head nor waved my handkerchief."

The father smiled.

"So that was the way of it," he said, "absent in spirit, though present in the body."

And he thought how like that little touch was to her mother.

"It was a fine sight," Evelyn cried, warming to enthusiasm, "all save the Governor himself, who was odious."

Mr. de Lacey laughed a pleasant, mellow-sounding laugh, that had something contagious in its melody.

"Governors are not chosen for their personal attraction, I trow," he said, "but a matter more grave than his personal appearance is the stock of which he comes. He is of a family which the poet, Dante, would have described as 'an evil brood.' If we can estimate these colonies by Ireland, and the new Governor's policy by the proceedings of these Cootes in that country, then is there little hope for us Catholics."

There was silence for a brief interval in the study, of which the shadows had come early to take possession. Evelyn moved restlessly but did not speak. The expression of His Excellency's face had filled her with a pronounced hostility and a vague anxiety.

Her father presently resumed:

"But I would not do this man injustice. There are those who say that he is both honest and well-meaning, and hath in his head some ideas of good government. So that perchance the day that is dawning for these colonies may be fair, after all."

Evelyn, with an impulsive movement, laid her hand upon the finely formed one of her father, which lay flat on the table before him, and upon which shone a blood-red garnet, catching the last lingering gleams of light.

"You will be prudent, father dearest?" she cried.

"Aye, I will be prudent," he answered, adding quickly, "unless honor should counsel otherwise."

He raised his head proudly as if the emergency had already arisen, and, rising to his feet, looked down on Evelyn, who had likewise stood up.

"What would my little Evelyn counsel in that case?" he inquired.

"That we should both die," she answered with sudden passion.

"May God avert the occasion, at least from you!" the father said solemnly.

But the girl knew that he was pleased, and her heart had answered this other dear heart which had been her all during her years of childhood and of youth.

CHAPTER V

NEW FACES

ON the next afternoon Evelyn de Lacey, wearing this time a sober costume of cloth which she had herself woven and dyed, accompanied her father on a walk which led them down past the Fort, where in bygone days he had occupied the room above the gate. He noted, with an involuntary contraction of the brows, the orange flag waving, but he said nothing. Evelyn noted the expression that had crossed his face and understood its cause. He had never got accustomed to the sight. Probably the father's inclination would have been for a quiet walk through the fields or along the waterfront, but he knew that his daughter would naturally prefer to meet some of her friends, who were sure to be upon the parade, then the fashionable promenade.

As they passed the Bowling Green, a number of officers were playing bowls with the keenest zest, and with jests and laughter that rang out gaily in the silence of that spring afternoon. At intervals during their sport they paused to survey the passing groups of gaily dressed women and men, for in richness the men's attire almost surpassed that of their feminine competitors. Evelyn de Lacey was once more the cynosure of all those observers, who, in their careless or supercilious ignorance, believed

these colonies to be barely on the verge of civilization and a place where there was little to admire and much to criticize. Scoffs and jeers were alike silenced by the face of the girl, to which corresponded a well-proportioned figure, held erect as a dart and supple as a willow. It was evident, too, to those who took the trouble to follow her movements, that she was a person of note in the community. Hats were continually being doffed to her, and there were smiles and cordial greetings alike from those in carriages and pedestrians.

There were two officers upon the Green, who, suspending their sport, had given a closer attention than all the rest, not only to this girl, but also to her companion. They took particular note of Gerald de Lacey. There was something in his tall, erect figure that betrayed the soldier, and something in the profile of that face, which was never once turned towards them, that marked him out from his fellows. He was unconscious of that gaze, which he might perhaps have found disturbing. Just at the moment, as if to give the observers a still better opportunity for their observations, Polly Van Cortlandt, attended only by her negro maid, intercepted her friends, and began an animated conversation. As they stood thus in the full sunlight of that April day, her brilliant beauty made as usual a foil for that other companion whose subtle charm was even more perceptibly felt by the two who stood still upon the Bowling Green.

The men on the Green offered an equally strong contrast to each other. One was a medium-sized, compactly built man, with an eye that would be invaluable in the field, a lean and bronzed face that at once commanded attention and inspired confi-

dence. It was that of a strong and resourceful man, who had had experience of life and its ways, without succumbing to its evil. He was, in fact, Captain Egbert Ferrers, who had already won distinction in active service. His companion was taller and paler, as if the sun had been unable to take effect upon a skin that was thick and a complexion that was dull. His hair was red and his eyes of a pale blue, with a trick of making themselves as expressionless as a mask. Lieutenant Prosser Williams, who bore by courtesy the title of Captain, was counted by some a handsome man, and was quite willing to coincide with that opinion. But to the close observer there was a suggestion of coldness, of craft, even of cruelty, which repelled. For the rest, with slightly stooping shoulders and an almost exaggerated slenderness, his general appearance was that of a man of fashion, rather than of a soldier.

"Where in the name of all the gods of Greece," he said presently, "have I seen that face before?"

"Do you refer," Captain Ferrers inquired, somewhat curtly, "to the beautiful face of the lady?"

For Captain Ferrers, seasoned as he was, had himself received from that exquisite face an impression so strong that it seemed to blot out all other features in the landscape. It had shaken, too, his pride and self-confidence, and that belief in his power to resist feminine charms which had become proverbial amongst his comrades.

"No," said Prosser Williams, "I can take my oath that, save for a momentary glimpse of it at the carriage window yesterday, I have never seen that face before—no, nor one like it. I was speaking of her companion—a youthful father or an elderly husband, it matters little which."

The suggestion, no less than the other's tone, irritated Captain Ferrers. Nor would he admit to himself the idea of a husband. The next instant he smiled whimsically. What a man of straw he was proving himself, after all!

"I did not overmuch observe the lady's companion," he said quietly.

"Eyes only for the fair," said Captain Williams, with the faintest perceptible sneer. "Yet even that perfection of beauty, which I did not dream these colonies could produce, did not blind me to the man. He is worth noting, and I could swear that I have seen him before and at no distant date."

His attention thus specially directed to the father, Captain Ferrers, perceiving that the two were still in sight, strolled away from his companion, and took up his position at a better point of observation on that smooth greensward, where so lately he had been strenuously engaged in rolling about the balls as if that endeavor were the sum total of his aspirations. Now something serious had happened, though it was only the second glimpse he had caught of the face of a girl, earnest, innocent and hauntingly beautiful. Her back was now turned towards him, so that he saw instead the radiant countenance of her friend, whose sparkling eyes of black, raven hair and damask cheeks did not in the least appeal to him. Moreover, he was curious to have another look at that man who had attracted Prosser Williams' attention, for something in the latter's remark had struck him. From where he stood, in such a position as to be unnoticed by those whom he wished to observe, his keen eyes had a very distinct view of Gerald de Lacey's face, lined and careworn in the strong light as he smiled down at his daughter's

friend. Egbert Ferrers drew in his breath with a sharp exclamation:

"By heaven," he cried, "I too have seen him before, and I remember where." Then he added, with growing irritation: "If that sleuth-hound of a Williams has but got hold of a clue, there will be trouble, but I will be hanged, drawn and quartered, if I assist his memory."

Something in the alternative he had proposed for himself made him shiver slightly. There had been so much of such happenings within the memory of living men in England. At the moment he stepped forward unconsciously from his place of concealment, and his eyes met those of Gerald de Lacey, which had in them at first merely a look of careless inquiry, suddenly changing, as it appeared to Ferrers, into one of uneasiness. At the same instant, too, Evelyn, turning her head, looked full into his face. The double sensation he thus experienced so curiously upset him that, scarcely waiting to perceive that the tall man on the pavement was hurrying his daughter away, he walked swiftly across the lawn where a game was still in progress and eager bowlers called out to him as he passed. He walked on rapidly, hardly knowing whither he was going, till he found himself on the shore where rows of palisades had been erected against suspected inroads of the French. He was unnerved to a degree that neither he nor any of his friends would have believed possible. For there comes, no doubt, in every life moments when some great issue seems forcing itself to the front and forcing into the background all that has been previously of paramount importance.

He stood staring out at the water where miniature

waves chased one another under the cool brightness of that sky, deeply blue though mottled with white clouds. The breath of the salt air coming up from the ocean was reviving. He was still warm from his game, and felt the need of such refreshment, as he watched with abstracted gaze the sails of the fisher-boats and some Indian canoes, which dotted the wide expanse of water before him. He had only one idea clear in his mind: to avoid any questioning from Williams, which might complicate matters, and to advise the father of this girl, whose very name was unknown to him, to leave that town at the earliest moment and to take with him his daughter (or his wife) out of reach of influences that might in some fashion be brought to bear upon them.

He began to argue too in his mind, as if the matter were of vital importance, that this girl could not possibly be the wife of the man whom he had just recognized. For he had been told at the time that he was married, and had been married some years. Why, his wife would be nearing middle age! He drew a breath of relief, and then it flashed upon him with disturbing force that death might have intervened, and the man be married again to this young and charming girl. He suddenly felt a curious sense of desolation darkening his mind, as that cloud was just then darkening the Bay. A sense of danger to come and a possible loss smote him, so sensitive is the human soul to weird impressions. If it was necessary that the tall man with the worn face should remove to some distant place with his daughter (for so he persisted in calling her), he knew that he himself would miss something that gave color and interest to these landscapes and to the quaint Dutch town, the characteristics of which he had previously

scarcely noted. He felt a strong desire to study that face and that character, and find out for himself what lay behind that beauty, which he assured himself with the power of experience could not be merely superficial. He wanted to know the meaning of the expression lurking behind those uncommon eyes, and he told himself with sudden resolution that he would do so at the earliest possible moment. He walked back again across the Bowling Green and through the stone courtyard to the Governor's residence where he had his quarters. The father and daughter, who had awakened such interest, had gone; the gay groups on the pavement had thinned out, and the balls on the green had ceased to rattle. Prosser Williams was nowhere to be seen.

Meanwhile, Mr. de Lacey and his daughter had returned home, unaware that new influences had come into their lives. Evelyn lingered amongst the herbs and flowers in her garden, conscious of a new excitement, which she was young enough and impressionable enough fully to appreciate. Surely, those groups of bowlers on the Greer, typical of life and energy had given a new interest to the sometimes monotonous existence of Manhattan. Nor had she been unmindful of the glances of interest and admiration she had caught on those two faces which had most impressed her. They seemed to have singled themselves from the others in her consciousness. Towards one she felt a half-formed dislike or annoyance, which had its origin in something that was bold and insolent in his glance. And that man's hair was red, and his eyes were pale blue. As for the other, she had got no farther in her impressions than that she would like to know his name, and perhaps to discover if he danced as well as he

40 GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

bowled, and if he were really as bright and full of interesting experiences as he seemed. But her father, having hurried into the house, sat with his head buried in his hands in deep and anxious meditation. So far removed are the preoccupations of one generation from those of another.

CHAPTER VI

THOMAS GREATBATCH, SMUGGLER AND PIRATE

ON the streets of the town, during those closing years of the seventeenth century, a certain type of men was to be seen, easily distinguishable from all others. Their dress consisted of loose trousers, short open jacket, a sash of scarlet around their waist, and a bandolier of the same flaming color over their shoulders. Their bronzed faces, fierce mustachios and bold eyes proclaimed their calling. They were avowedly smugglers, but also—as everybody whispered, but few said aloud—pirates. Smuggling and piracy had become, in fact, a common avocation, and it was broadly hinted that citizens of prominence were interested at least in the smuggling operations, to which they lent their countenance.

During the régime immediately preceding that of Lord Bellomont, the smugglers had grown bold, being under the patronage, it was said, of those in authority. Piracy upon the high seas, and in the vicinity of New York, had become so common that my Lord Bellomont was entrusted with a special commission to inquire into that abuse and its remedy. He had early announced to the Council his determination to put a stop to the nefarious traffic. This announcement had not succeeded in striking terror

into the hearts of men who had been accustomed to defy or evade the law, and to hear at intervals fulminations against themselves and their calling, which were followed by no vigorous action. But the Earl of Bellomont, a resolute man and accustomed to command, went a step farther, and this with the approbation of the King and others in high places in the mother country. He declared his intention of founding, in default of a navy, a privateer service, to which the wealthy men of the colony, particularly those who had maritime interests, should contribute. Sailing the high seas, these privateers would meet the pirates on their own clement.

This announcement of his was the chief subject of conversation at every dinner table in the town, and in the taverns where men of all shades of opinion met for the discussion of public, and sometimes private, affairs. And it was being discussed on a certain afternoon under the spreading boughs of that famous elm which sheltered the tavern of *Der Halle*, by two men who sat as far apart as possible from the stragglers that now and then came forth from the tavern to enjoy the coolness of the air under the great tree. One of these wore that dress which many were now beginning to fear, but which had been so long a familiar feature of the Dutch city. In an ordinary peaceful community that costume would have been startling, but to the inhabitants of Manhattan at that epoch the smuggler, thus boldly proclaimed by his costume, was a picturesque and almost admired figure. It was no uncommon thing to see such men seated at the tables of notable citizens, or smoking a friendly pipe and drinking a bowl of punch with them in the taverns. For it was these men who brought to the port of New York rich stuffs,

GREATBATCH, SMUGGLER AND PIRATE 43

gold, precious stones, wines and spices from the Orient, no less than such ordinary products as sugar, molasses or rum. If sometimes, as was alleged but never openly avowed, their illegal trade merged into the darker calling of pirates, it only seemed to lend them an added attraction in the eyes of many otherwise law-abiding citizens, or the charge was conveniently held to be slanderous and unproved.

The member of this calling, who appeared under the tree of *Der Halle* tavern that day, was a broad, thick-set man, with a coarse and strongly marked countenance, upon which smallpox had set its seal. This Thomas Greatbatch, who smoked in short, fierce puffs from a huge pipe, was so typical of his class that he was a hero to adventure-loving boys of the town. Also he was on terms of something very like intimacy with many grown men, despite their secret disgust at his boastfulness, coarseness and insolence, no less than the suspicions they must have entertained as to his character. The man who sat opposite to him at table was as far removed from him in station as in appearance or manners. A newcomer to the colony, of mixed English and Dutch extraction, Mynheer de Vries had made himself a power by the vastness of his commercial operations and the wealth of his establishment. He had purchased the dwelling, lately left vacant by the death of the celebrated Cornelius Steenwyck, which adjoined that charming dwelling wherein Major—or, as he now thought it safer to be called, Mr.—de Lacey and his daughter had taken up their abode. His coat and small clothes were of finest broadcloth of dark wine color, with silver buttons. His waistcoat was of brocaded satin, with jabot of fine lace. His clear-cut features were aristocratic in type. His

hands were long, white and thin, and upon one finger sparkled a jewelled ring of priceless value. Upon this bauble the eyes of his companion were covetously fixed from time to time, for he was fully aware of its value. Possibly he was thinking that, had he been upon the deck of his good ship, he would have lost no time in possessing himself of such a gem, and with scant ceremony to its owner. The talk of the two men was at first unimportant:

"See yonder mackerel clouds," said Greatbatch, pointing with his pipe-stem to the firmament. "'Mares' tails,' as we call them, Mynheer, and a good name enough. Well, as sure as the sun's in the heavens now, that means bad weather, and a signal to Captain Greatbatch to make sail before it comes."

His companion's eyes followed the direction of the pipe-stem to where fleecy masses of cumuli, like the unshorn wool of many lambs, were crowding together in masses upon the azure expanse of sky. Here and there, other trailing clouds broke the blueness with exquisite effect.

"You are, no doubt, right," said the other, in even, courteous tones. "Though I may not claim your knowledge of the weather, I can believe that we are near a change."

"I'll sail at sun-rising," Captain Greatbatch said decisively. Then, as his round eyes dropped from the sky to the water, he burst into a great guffaw: "What a sight they are, those Vrowen, by—"

Mynheer raised his hand in deprecation of the coarse oath with which the observation was seasoned, nor did he see anything especially ludicrous in the to him customary sight of comely red-cheeked women rowing their flat-bottomed boats, piled with

GREATBATCH, SMUGGLER AND PIRATE 45

market produce, over the broad river from the sandy cliffs beyond.

Greatbatch, however, continued to chuckle and mutter to himself as he watched those placid oarswomen, with their caps tied under their chins and no other head-covering to protect them from the sun. Then, as the rum which he was imbibing (that Barbadoes brand, of which he himself had brought into port full many an illicit cargo) began to warm him, he burst forth:

"I know that you gentlemen are shaking in your shoes, for has not my Lord Bellomont—a curse upon him!—made laws against the honest profits of us men of the sea?"

"It is most certainly true," said Mynheer, bending eagerly forward and dropping his voice, "that it will be extremely perilous for—"

He stopped and peered all around the great elm tree, for so considerable was its girth that it was a common boast of the tavern how many men it took to encircle it. He even looked up into the branches, lest any adventurous lad might be emulating the birds by finding a foothold amongst the foliage.

Greatbatch laughed a scornful laugh.

"Parlous," he echoed, "since ever I was a lad in my teens, I have lived in the teeth of peril; and if you mean by that dangers to the body, I snap my fingers thereat."

He did snap his fingers in such close proximity to Mynheer's face that the latter drew back in disgust.

"Then, there's another peril that you gentry are afraid of, and that is your reputation and your standing with these Governors that they send out here from the old country to take the bread out of folks' mouths."

After another alarmed look around the place, where the few who were present seemed to be absorbed in their own concerns, and only the birds in the branches above were near enough to have overheard, Mynheer said:

"With one part of your speech I am most heartily in accord; for reputation is of a surety what we gentlemen have to safeguard. If we have winked at your—" He paused for a suitable word, while Greatbatch eyed him truculently. "At your evasions of the law."

Greatbatch laughed a deep, hoarse laugh, for well he knew that the euphemism was but a paltry way to describe those daring deeds of his, some of which might be called crimes, but in which, in so far as it was safe, he gloried.

"My Lord Bellomont," went on Mynheer, "has determined to put down with a strong hand all illicit traffic, and with still greater zeal such attempts, if any such are made, as may imperil the lives and property of His Majesty's lieges upon the high seas."

Perhaps there was a faint note of satire in the smoothness with which this was said, too subtle for the ear of Greatbatch, and Mynheer fancied that he caught in the latter's deep growls such expressions as "white-livered, chicken-hearted cowards." But he thought it wiser to take no notice. In so far as was possible, the matter must be settled amicably with this ruffian, who knew so much that implicated himself and many other prominent citizens of Manhattan, directly or indirectly, in that piracy which had made the high seas a terror, or in that smuggling which was making the port of New York notorious for evasions of the law. That many high-minded citizens looked with horror upon the

GREATBATCH, SMUGGLER AND PIRATE 47

former of these practices, and with disapproval upon the second, did not alter the fact that many others were involved therein. And, though they did not care to admit the fact to themselves, they were perfectly well aware that the success of this Captain Greatbatch in bringing cargoes to New York must have been often attained by foul and even murderous means. Such a form of open robbery, frequently involving the loss of human life, was rendered picturesque by being practised on the main, rather than upon a lonely road.

"Aye," said Greatbatch, irritated by the other's caution no less than by the liquor he had imbibed, "the Governor wants to enforce navigation laws and to confiscate ships and cargoes for the customs dues. He tries hard to take the bread from honest seamen, but mark you, Mynheer, he has passed a law against them that knowingly entertain, conceal or hold correspondence with pirates."

And he laughed long and loud at the dismay which was visible on the countenance of Mynheer at this reminder. Also, he raised his voice to a pitch which caused his companion to protest in great alarm, as he said:

"As for my Lord Bellomont's scheme to place privateers on the seas in place of pirates, why, what are they but a pack of hell-hounds? And Cap'n Kidd for their Commander, oh Lordy, Lordy! Why, man, if I mistake not, he will be the most daring pirate alive to-day, the most dangerous sea-rover that ever trod a deck—aye, and I make no doubt the most expert of cutthroats. And here's to his health, I drain my glass to him."

Mynheer had noticed with consternation that, even as the man spoke, a gentleman strode out from

the tavern and occupied a place not far removed from them on the other side of the tree. He recognized him at once as belonging to the Governor's household. He had seen him when, with other notables of the town, he had gone to meet the newly arriving Governor, and when he attended the installation ceremonies at the *Stadt Huys*. He had since met him at various social gatherings, and was aware that his name was Captain Ferrers. The latter seated himself unobtrusively, smoking a pipe and sipping a glass of beer which the waiter brought him. Mynheer whispered a word of warning to his companion, upon which the latter, turning, and as if to include the newcomer in the invitation, cried aloud:

"Come, drink to the health of Cap'n Kidd, newly appointed by His Excellency's worship policeman of the seas. Drink with me to Cap'n Kidd, like to be the most daring pirate that ever sailed the high seas."

After an instant of astonishment, a look of humorous intelligence crossed Ferrers' face. The man and his costume proclaimed his profession, which was henceforward forbidden. Also, there was a certain irony in the glance which the young man cast at the smuggler's companion. The latter, catching his eye, greeted him with a formal bow, which Ferrers returned courteously but carelessly. At which Mynheer, leaving Greatbatch with but little ceremony, advanced towards the officer with something deprecating, almost obsequious, in his manner.

"I was just telling this good man," he said, "that the days of his calling, as openly practised in Manhattan, are about numbered."

Greatbatch, hearing this remark, was highly incensed, and cried out;

GREATBATCH, SMUGGLER AND PIRATE 49

"Whether I be a good man or a bad man, more likely the latter, at least I am open in my villainies, for, sir, whoever you may be, I am just telling this worthy gentleman that the game he and the other big bugs have been playing in this town, is well nigh over, unless they can make a bargain with His Excellency's new pirate-captain, Cap'n Kidd."

And the fellow, overcome with tipsy mirth at his own humor and at the manner in which he had turned the tables upon his companion, went off into a roar of laughter. Meanwhile, scarlet with confusion and full of apprehension, Mynheer stood quite confounded. Greatbatch, seeing that his companion had deserted him, drained his glass and lurched away with a satirical farewell to his late associate.

"Will you join me, Mynheer," said Ferrers, with unmoved gravity, "in a glass of beer, or do you perchance prefer Madeira?"

But there was still that look of humorous intelligence in the keen, gray eyes, that made the burgher decidedly uncomfortable. Nevertheless, he accepted the courteous invitation with some eagerness. He had a weakness for the society of the great, and besides, there might be an opportunity of putting himself right. When his glass had been filled, Ferrers remarked:

"Yonder is rather a dangerous sort of fellow, I should opine, especially if it be in matters confidential. He dips too deep into the bottle for one thing."

"He is of ruffianly demeanor, I grant you," replied Mynheer, "but he is a trader and a most successful one, master of the trading vessel, 'Hesperia.'"

"Which vessel, if I might hazard a guess, has a history," said Ferrers.

Mynheer made a gesture of deprecation,

"It is a trader," he repeated suavely.

"Might one venture to suggest, in connection with that trade, the word 'illicit'?" inquired Ferrers.

Mynheer looked into the clear, gray eyes, and answered boldly:

"Smuggling," he said, "has been hitherto held by some persons in Manhattan to be a minor offence, if offence at all. Restrictions upon our commerce have been so burdensome and so vexatious."

"Granted. But the rich cargoes of these traders, how are they procured?"

He sipped his beer, but did not look into the other's face, since he had no mind to play the inquisitor.

"How?" stammered Mynheer. "Why they sail the high seas to distant ports and—"

"It is in these ports, then," inquired Ferrers, in the manner of one interested in a debatable point, "that they procure those cargoes of costly merchandise, which, as I have heard tell, often include jewels of price, gold and the finest of stuffs?"

As Mynheer did not at once reply, since he knew that that question cut into the very heart of the subject, Ferrers lightly closed the discussion:

"I pray your forgiveness," he said, "for entering upon a topic which to be sure, and at least in so far as I am concerned, is purely local."

And remarking upon that which Greatbatch had before made subject of conversation, he said:

"What a very extraordinary figure those market-women cut, and how skilfully, if placidly, they use the oars!"

Following his lead, Mynheer discoursed upon that topic, presently pointing out, however, that the great clouds presaging high winds were banked up to the west, behind the pile of great rocks.

GREATBATCH, SMUGGLER AND PIRATE 51

"But, perchance you know, Captain Ferrers," he explained, "the local tradition that these winds are forever driven back, not by the rocks, as might seem most natural, but by the spirits of departed Indians. Why, even we burghers have a kind of belief in it."

"Which would be but another instance of ingenuous credulity," Ferrers said slyly, and the other, realizing his meaning, once more flushed from chin to forehead. "As for example, if one were to credit the sea stories of yonder fellow that has just left us."

But Mynheer, becoming exasperated under his smooth manner, answered with something of impertinence in his tone:

"Even as when His Excellency holds it for certain that Captain Kidd will exterminate the sea-robbers."

"Have you acquaintance with this Captain Kidd?" inquired Ferrers, apparently unheeding the thrust.

"But a slight one," replied Mynheer, adding with a return to his former caution: "Men say that he is both brave and skilful."

"Were he not the former, at least," responded Ferrers, "he would scarce have undertaken his present service."

At which Mynheer permitted himself a peculiar smile and slight raising of the eyebrows, as he added:

"And my Lord Bellomont commends him highly."

"My Lord Bellomont commends him highly," assented Ferrers, echoing the precise form of words used by his companion.

Then he asked a question:

"There is in this town," he said, "a gentleman of the name of de Lacey?" For that much he at least had learned, together with the fact that the lady with the beautiful eyes was his daughter.

"Yes, yes," said Mynheer, "Mr., formerly Major, de Lacey. I fancy he does not make use of the military title now. Do you chance to know him?"

"I have but seen him," said Ferrers.

"He is a man of books, and takes little part in the affairs of these colonies. A most agreeable fellow to meet, but he goes not at all into society. He lies low now. For he came out at first to these parts with Dongan."

"Ah," said Ferrers, a quick flash of interest in his eyes, "and Dongan was a recent Governor here, but since succeeded to the Earldom of Limerick."

"Exactly so," answered Mynheer. "He was the only Popish Governor New York has ever had, and, because of his religious opinions, some were against him. Honest and a worthy ruler,¹ as I believe him to have been, he fell under suspicion by reason of his Popish practices. This de Lacey came hither in his train."

"And here remained?" inquired Ferrers.

"Oh, he has been in England since, but the reason for his leaving there, I know not. Mayhap, it was political, for some will have it that he is a Papist, though nothing is known to a certainty, and he is assuredly Irish, a nation none too friendly to the King's Majesty."

As Ferrers made no comment on this information, the other added:

"His daughter, whom perchance you may have noticed, is a charming girl, and, since the two are my near neighbors, I am in a position to judge. It

¹The Sheriffs sent a resolution of thanks to King James for having sent Colonel Thomas Dongan, "of whose integrity, justice, equity and prudence, we have already had a sufficient experience at our General Court of Sessions."

GREATBATCH, SMUGGLER AND PIRATE 53

is said that she wields the weapons of her sex, beauty and the rest, remorselessly with the young gallants of the town."

"They have my sympathy," said Ferrers, "for we are all alike powerless against the fair."

Light as was his tone, he knew that he could testify to the strength of those weapons when wielded by one possessed of such attractions as Evelyn de Lacey.

Since there were signs that the bad weather predicted by Captain Greatbatch was even then approaching, Ferrers presently took his leave. As they shook hands in parting, Mynheer said:

"Is your interest very keen in this question of illicit traders?"

Ferrers replied with his humorous smile:

"Only in so far as beseems the Household of my Lord Bellomont."

CHAPTER VII

AN ESCAPED BIRD

EVERYBODY was an early riser in that town, wherein the English in point of numbers and social influence were already beginning to dispute supremacy with the Dutch. The sun, on rising high in the heavens, would have been quite surprised to find any denizens of the place still inclosed in the *bedste* (or wall cupboard), wherein the sleeping of the majority was done, or even in those luxurious bedsteads, high from the floor, curtained and canopied, which in the houses of the wealthy had replaced the *bedste*.

It would thus have been no matter of astonishment to any passer-by to see Evelyn de Lacey working amongst the flowers in her garden, while they were still wet with dew, or amongst the herbs from which she compounded perfumes or simple medicines. However, on one particular morning some weeks after the arrival of the new Governor, Evelyn was delayed by a series of small domestic occurrences, so that it was full nine o'clock before she went out to her appointed task. Her costume was simple as befitted her work, but not even the much-admired lutestring brought out to better advantage the slender gracefulness of her perfectly proportioned figure, or her absolute lack of self-consciousness, which lent

such ease to her movements, than did this linsey-woolsey of a becoming shade of blue. As she raised her head from a plant which she was pruning, with something maternal in her touch, she became aware that someone was standing outside the latticed wall of the garden and watching her—a woman whose dress, studied in its carelessness, had touches about it not native to Manhattan. When her eyes met those of the girl through one of the apertures, she laughed and, advancing to the gate, addressed Evelyn in a softly modulated voice:

"I crave your forgiveness for thus interrupting your work. I am exceeding anxious for some information as to this town of New York. I wonder, in truth, that they have not changed the name."

She spoke with a hint of satire in her tone, as though she were laughing at some person or persons unknown.

"It is often called Manhattan," suggested Evelyn.

"And once was called New Amsterdam. It has had its vicissitudes, this pretty burgh, like so many of us."

The lady, as she spoke, was giving full meed of admiration to the Colonial. For admiration is freely given, even lavishly bestowed, by women of a certain type upon others of their sex, provided that the object of such flattering regard in no way interferes with their own plans or preferences. Thus this fine lady, who stood before the gate, was thinking: "What an exquisite creature to be thrown away here, as a lovely fern in a shady wood!"

Evelyn, who for an instant had been puzzled, was now tolerably certain of the passer-by's identity, and in her mind arose the doubt as to whether she should allow that knowledge to appear or should await a hint from the other. She remembered the

eyes, with the jaded, weary expression, though not without their beauty; the mouth, marred by lines of discontent; the general aspect of one prematurely aged and yet artificially young, which did not destroy traces of a beauty that must once have been considerable. The ease, and even elegance, of the other's movement and manner would be unmistakable to this girl, who had known other types than the provincial, even if she had not recognized one whom she had seen under particular circumstances. She waited, therefore, with the pruning-knife in her hand, a graceful figure and full of a distinction which was keenly appreciated by the visitor.

"I dare swear," the latter said, leaning carelessly upon the gate over which ran a fragrant vine, "you have never chanced to feel like a bird that had slipped for an instant from its cage."

Evelyn shook her head, with that smile which was reckoned one of her greatest charms, so full was it of sympathy and intelligence.

"Our free air of Manhattan is against such a feeling," she answered.

"I envy you most heartily," sighed the other, "for I am out of my cage this morning."

Her eyes wandering over the garden, she presently exclaimed: "Oh, but this garden is an enchanting spot, and these flowers are such as our first mother might have tended in Paradise."

And she ended her eulogy with a few words of Dutch, which completed the comparison.

"But I am not Dutch, Madam," observed Evelyn, quietly.

"No, and so I would have sworn. But what then? English?"

"Irish," replied Evelyn, proudly.

"Ah, true, I might have guessed it. That type is a most lovely one. But was it not in Dutch company that I saw you first?" inquired the lady.

"And where was that, Madam?" asked Evelyn, though she knew very well indeed. The lady not answering, as though she did not wish just then to reveal her identity, Evelyn presently added:

"Perchance it may have been with my close friends, Madam Van Cortlandt and her granddaughter, Polly."

"Precisely so," said the lady, nodding as if pleased, "for I remember to have heard that name." Adding after a pause: "And that name is not then yours?"

"No, Madam, for mine is Evelyn de Lacey," the girl responded.

"De Lacey, de Lacey," repeated the visitor, as if puzzling over something in her own mind. "I seem to have heard the name, though where I cannot say. But in truth it matters little, for there is a saying that people may meet where hills will not."

She asked no further question, but said instead:

"Will you do me a favor, Mistress Evelyn de Lacey, and accompany me in a walk, just to show a poor stranger this charming little town of yours?"

She held out her hand with such winning grace that, even if Evelyn had not known who she was and had not been assured of the impossibility of refusing her request, she still would have consented willingly. And this despite the fact that there was something under all the courtly elegance of this exterior that jarred upon her—something sophisticated which instinctively revolted her. It was the meeting of two extremes: the cold, proud purity of the Irish girl, now living as a Colonial, and the worldliness of the woman, who, if common report were to be

believed, had scorched her brilliant wings in the flame of folly. Evelyn felt, despite this instinctive repulsion, a certain attraction toward this woman, and that quite apart from the knowledge of her station, which made the episode of this morning seem like a rare adventure.

"Most certainly, Madam, I shall go with you," said Evelyn, "if you will be pleased to wait until I have put on my bonnet." She hesitated, being uncertain what the etiquette of such a moment demanded: "And may I meantime offer you a seat in our drawing-room?"

"Thank you, no," replied the lady, "rather I shall walk about, if I may, in these garden paths and dream that I—I too am in Paradise."

With the slightest possible delay Evelyn procured a wide bonnet of straw, much more simple than that which she had worn with her gold lutestring, but so charmingly trimmed with flowered ribbon, and displaying the unerring taste in dress which was one of the girl's attributes, that the lady cried out in admiration. To Evelyn her language of praise seemed affected and insincere, but it was, in very truth, just then genuine. They passed out of the gate and, when Evelyn would have turned in the direction of Broad Way and the Bowling Green, the lady checked her.

"No, no," she said, hastily, "not that way. I want something new, something different."

Evelyn, at once understanding and marvelling at her own stupidity in supposing this lady would wish to walk over ground with which she was daily familiar, led her by way of some of the more obscure streets, and outwards towards the Wolfert's Valley, where it lay along the shore. As they went, the lady

kept up a running fire of comments upon the town, which she declared resembled one great garden. She admired in her exaggerated fashion the trees, lime and elm, ash and locust—the last giving forth so pleasant an odor that she stopped to inhale it, as though it were a rare perfume. She talked of the rivers, praising their breadth and cleanliness, of the Bay where the oyster fishers with their wide rakes brought in the highly profitable bivalves, and of the wild ducks which hovered in such numbers over the water, and had attracted her from the first with their gray and purplish plumage. She gave much attention to the names of streets, commenting upon them with an almost childish interest and curiosity.

“What may be the name of this one we are now approaching?” she asked, pausing to receive an answer.

Evelyn replied that it had formerly been known by two names, Borger Joris Path and the Glass-makers' Street, but was now named after the reigning Sovereign, William of Orange.

The lady tossed her head with some petulance.

“And to think,” she exclaimed, “that they have ended by naming it ‘William’! Ah, Mistress Evelyn, but ultra-loyalty is a wearisome quality. And here again is Nassau, which was much better entitled Pieweman, for that last hath something quaint and pleasing about it, since it conjures up a picture.”

“And this Gold Street,” she again commented, “sounded to my mind vastly prettier by its original title of Golden Hill. How pretty it must have been with masses of golden grain, which now, as I perceive, have disappeared! Tell me, Mistress Evelyn, why do people ever reject the poetry and retain the prose? Why do you Colonials cast all your poetry into that stream yonder?”

She pointed as she spoke to the slow and somewhat sluggish stream, which flowing inwards from the Hudson—for the two were now upon their homeward way—passed through the centre of the city, spanned by bridges and with a pretty walk on either side.

But her talk was not all of the city through which they passed. She sometimes gave utterance to strange and startling sentiments, which she excused by the assertion that that morning she was a bird out of its cage.

"For in the ordinary course," she declared, "I have a string attached to my foot, or some obsequious person, who follows in my track, will not let me out of sight."

She spoke her mind freely, too, as to persons and things, for intuitively she trusted Evelyn. She criticized such personages as John Nanfan and Thomas Weaver, both of whom had accompanied my Lord from England and were both high in the Governor's counsels.

"As for John," said the lady, "he will lead my Lord Bellomont into mischief, for a more narrow and puritanical being was never bred by the Covenanters."

Now Evelyn, being aware of the close relationship in which Mr. Nanfan stood to my Lady Bellomont (being in fact her brother), was astonished at this freedom of discussion; all the more so, as she had heard her father express a very similar opinion, and presage trouble for those of the Catholic Faith from his presence.

"Aye," said the lady, as if talking to herself, "he is already weeping over the usurper Leisler's bones, who, as it seemeth, was detested by more than half of the decent people of the colony. Such a one

should be left in peace, now that he is dead, though Governor Slougher may have done an ill thing in hanging him. The Papists must have rejoiced, for he too was their sworn enemy."

"They had no hand in his death," declared Evelyn, speaking with an earnestness that caused the lady to look at her.

"Had they not?" she inquired. "Yet I have heard his opponents called Papists or King James' men."

"King James' men many of them were not," said Evelyn, "and I have heard said that there was no Papist amongst them, all being Dutch or of the Dutch-English party. And in truth, Madam, those of the ancient Faith are but a handful here, and mostly of the lower order."

Again the lady looked keenly into the face that was more beautiful now in its excitement.

"You are too young and beautiful, child," she said, with some abruptness, "to trouble that charming head of yours with such vexatious questions."

Evelyn, seeing something like suspicion in her manner and perhaps a note of warning in her words, said no more, and indeed they were just then approaching the garden gate again. The lady stopped abruptly, and, laying her hand upon Evelyn's arm, said with an earnestness and a frankness that startled the girl:

"I know not whether I need explicitly inform you whence it is that I have escaped, and that my cage is down yonder." She waved a slender hand in the direction of the Fort, as Evelyn dropped the conventional curtsey required of her. "You may perhaps have heard strictures upon my past conduct. If such should reach your ears, remember

before you judge me that I was married, a child of twelve, to a man of mature age. His life was of the camp and field, and mine was left to run in whatsoever groove it would. What it might have been, I know not."

There was a look of deep, brooding melancholy in her eyes, as she turned aside an instant, walking on to the very gate in silence. There she stopped and, permitting Evelyn to enter so that the two were facing each other, said:

"From all the tiresome ceremony which His Excellency thinks it necessary to inaugurate here, from all its pomps and from all its works, from my ladies and from some of my gentlemen-in-waiting, I pray to be delivered. And," she added with a gleeful laugh, "I have delivered myself from them all this morning."

As Evelyn remained silent, finding nothing appropriate to say, the Countess of Bellomont took her hand and, giving it a friendly pressure, said:

"I thank you for having aided me in this delightful adventure. I thank you for having behaved with so admirable discretion and, though knowing my rank, for having suffered me to follow my whim. Oh, I will want to see more of you while I stay here in this—"

She was on the point of saying "desert," but being intuitively aware that Evelyn would resent such an appellation as applied to her Manhattan, which during their walk she had repeatedly professed to love, the lady left the word unsaid and proceeded:

"For it is rare to find a congenial soul, for congenial we are despite the vast gulf—I mean in worldly experience—that lies between us." Then she added mournfully: "But I am not quite certain whether

we may meet often, or with the delightful freedom of this morning."

For she knew, though she did not say so, that Lord Bellomont was not only jealously exclusive in permitting no men of the colony to have more than the most ceremonious and conventional acquaintance with her, but he was also disposed to keep the Colonial women at arm's length from his wife and to forbid anything that approached to intimacy.

"But one thing I know to a surety," the lady concluded, "that I, who have so loved courts that it was like taking my heart's blood to leave them, do now most heartily abhor the stupid pomp and state here where it is meaningless."

She dropped the girl's hand with a sigh and, giving her a last friendly smile and nod, walked quickly away. With curiously mingled feelings, Evelyn watched her figure hasten down towards the Fort in the morning sunshine, and presently turn into the Broad Way, which had once been an Indian trail.

CHAPTER VIII

SHOALS AND QUICKSAND

IT was sometime later, after a conference with the cook and the trying of a new recipe for Deventer cookies, that Evelyn was able to resume her interrupted labors in the garden. Her eyes had still a glow in them, her cheeks an unwonted color, from her walk in the fresh morning air and the pleasant flavor of excitement. For was there not something exhilarating and past the common in thus having been brought into touch with someone out of that great world which has forever its enchantment for the daughters of men, especially when it is seen from afar, like a mirage of ocean? And Evelyn had also been permitted a glimpse into a heart, the sealed book of life, which awed while it thrilled her.

She was for the second time conscious that someone was standing outside the wall—someone who threw a dark and clearly defined shadow upon the garden path. When Evelyn glanced up from her occupation of tying with fine and delicate fingers a fallen vine to a trellis, as though it had been a sentient thing, she saw before her the taller of the two men whom she had first noticed on the Bowling Green, and whom she had since seen, though at a distance, in various social gatherings. His face,

paler than ever in the morning light, was thrown into strong relief by the redness of his hair. There was a smile lurking in the blue eyes and about the lips which Evelyn did not like. Her antipathies were both strong and quickly formed. She enveloped herself in a frosty veil, delicate and intangible as mist, but absolutely impenetrable.

"So might fair Flora have appeared to her devotees," the young man began. But the expression of the eyes that looked into his steadily warned him to proceed on other lines. "I throw myself on your compassion," he said, bowing low, "I would appear to have lost my way, and am looking for a street which will lead me to the Ferry."

"You have indeed lost your way," said Evelyn, with some significance, for she was aware that it was both unnecessary and unwarrantable for him to have addressed her when he could have made his inquiries of the proper officials, the sentries stationed at various points, or even of some ordinary passer-by. Besides, despite his exaggerated courtesy, the whole tone and manner of the man was offensive. Nevertheless, she believed it best to assume that his desire for information was genuine, and gave him the requisite directions in a voice so icy that to go a step further would have seemed impossible even for this man of fashion, to whom all Colonials seemed a fair target for insolence. But the man in question was not easily abashed.

"My most humble thanks," he said, "that the goddess has deigned to point a guiding finger."

Evelyn turned her back as though her conversation were ended, and resumed her former occupation.

"But I must pray you," persisted the young man, "to be more explicit in your directions; whether it

be the sun, or a still more potent cause, my wits are quite bewildered."

Evelyn, slightly turning her head, regarded him with cold surprise, as though he had not spoken, and as if she wondered what might be detaining him.

"Come, be kind, fair Flora," began the intruder again, "and set a poor stranger upon the right way. I am Captain Prosser Williams, at your service, of His Excellency's Household."

He seemed to think that this last announcement would be overwhelming, but Evelyn, who was already well aware of the fact, made no change in her attitude, and at that moment a voice, the sternness of which was accentuated by its quietude, spoke from an unexpected quarter:

"I should advise you, Sir, to make your inquiries at the nearest tavern."

Captain Williams, taken aback, glanced hastily at the study window, and there saw Gerald de Lacey, his face pale and with a dangerous light in his eyes. The younger man felt at first inclined to stand his ground, but, thinking better of it, turned away with a muttered apology, followed under his breath by an imprecation. His eyes were full of malignant anger at the father's rebuke and the contempt with which the daughter—if such she were—had received the announcement of his name and title, from which he had expected very different results.

"These Colonials," he reflected, "hold their infernal heads high. We shall have to teach them a lesson or two. As for the father or husband, whichever he may be," he struck one clenched hand upon the palm of the other, "I shall reckon with him yet. I am more convinced than ever that I have seen the

fellow ere now, and it might be of value if I could but remember where. What an air the girl has, what a carriage of the head! By all the gods, she hath beauty and a style that belies her surroundings in this cursed hole of a Manhattan."

When the unwelcome visitor was completely out of sight, Evelyn entered the study where her father was pacing to and fro in some agitation.

"Well," he said, "that was a pestilent visitor you had, Evelyn, in this Prosser Williams."

"You caught his name with wonderful precision," said Evelyn, laughing.

"I have some knowledge of him before, and, were he twenty times a member of the Governor's Household, he is the last man I should welcome to my house. And," he added with some annoyance, "by what ill fortune did he find his way hither?"

Evelyn had a tolerable certainty that it was no fortune at all, good or bad, which had brought the intruder to the garden gate, but deliberate intention on his part. For she had caught his gaze full upon her on the few occasions when she chanced to be near him. Still, she did not care to put this intuition into words.

"After all, dear heart," she said, "it matters little. What harm can he do?"

"That is to be seen," said Mr. de Lacey with a sigh. "He is a dangerous enemy, and serving such a master—"

But there he stopped.

"I had another visitor this morning," Evelyn began, by way of diverting him from the late incident which she saw had seriously upset him.

"Another visitor?" questioned the father.

"Yes, while you were out. One who went further

than this Captain Williams, and asked me to act as guide through the streets of the city."

"To act as guide?" echoed the father.

"Yes. And the visitor, being this time of the feminine gender, I was forced to consent."

"Why were you forced, and who was this compelling personage?" inquired the father.

"She described herself as a bird escaped from the cage," answered Evelyn, "and her cage was in the precincts of the Fort."

A flash of quick intelligence crossed Mr. de Lacey's face.

"My Lady Bellomont!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, Her Excellency."

There was silence in the room, for to Gerald de Lacey this second meeting was scarcely less unwelcome than the first. He could readily imagine how a woman of Lady Bellomont's calibre might be attracted by Evelyn's freshness and charm. Such a fancy on her part could be little more than a fine lady's whim, but under existing circumstances it might be dangerous in the upshot, and anything like intimacy would prove unsettling, and in more ways than one undesirable, for Evelyn. He was tolerably familiar with the Countess's antecedents, and, though Dame Rumor had not alleged anything positively evil against the lady, many tongues had been busy with her name during the absence of Lord Bellomont at his former post. One thing at least was certain, that she had spent those years in the most riotous company that the gay society of the English capital could afford.

Now it must be owned that Evelyn had been flattered by the particular notice of the courtly dame, and she only regretted that prudence forbade

her to mention the episode of that morning to Polly Van Cortlandt or others of her associates. The elder woman had indeed exercised a certain fascination over her inexperienced mind. She had piqued her curiosity, and given her a vivid desire to meet again and know more intimately that product of a far different life. Something of this feeling she permitted to appear in the lively description she gave her father of the lady's appearance and manner, and of her delight at the quaint aspects of Manhattan and her admiration of its beauties. Seated in his favorite chair near his table, upon which fell the full light of that early summer noon, Mr. de Lacey regarded his daughter with the half-whimsical, half-melancholy smile which made his face so attractive—with that same attraction which was conspicuous in Evelyn.

"My dearest," he said, "I wonder by what fatality it is that we elders have to assume forever the rôle of beacons, pointing out the hidden dangers of the fairest coasts."

He sighed, for in truth he, whose life had held so much of adventure and brought him into contact with so many and such notable personages, in many and varied scenes, could fully sympathize with the interest thus awakened in his daughter. He knew that her poetic and imaginative mind had been charmed by the glimpses offered her of an enchanted territory.

"It is an unamiable office," he continued, with a wry face, "but alas! useful. I must exercise it when I remind you that that fair coast in question, under existing circumstances, may have numberless shoals and quicksands. Our little bark must steer away from it, at least until we can take the soundings."

Seeing the look of disappointment that passed across his daughter's face, he cried impulsively:

"Ah, Evelyn, little Evelyn, you find it hard to forgive the beacon!"

This was sufficient to arouse that other side of Evelyn's nature and bring it to his assistance, so that she could assure him, though not in words, that she was prepared to follow a light that she had found hitherto so trustworthy.

After the girl had left the room, intent on some domestic problem which led her to the kitchen and the company of their negro servant, Mr. de Lacey had to struggle with his own desire that Evelyn should appear as became her birth and antecedents, and shine as it seemed evident she could do, if the opportunity were given, at the viceregal court. But, apart from my Lady Bellomont altogether, such knowledge as he had of the Governor and of his past made him aware of the dangers which might accrue to them both if they were brought too much to his notice. Their own safety lay in obscurity, in so far as those people were concerned. For Lord Bellomont had been active against James II, and had been by him attainted and deprived of offices and emoluments. Hence, there was likely to be great rancor in his mind against all who had been adherents of the late monarch. Also, he was known as a bitter anti-Catholic, and here again Gerald de Lacey knew that there might be danger. The Governors who had followed Dongan, though themselves Protestants, had given but little heed to religious questions. But with this one, he felt certain, it would be different, all the more so as John Nanfan and others of the same stripe were high in his favor.

CHAPTER IX

THE DAWNING OF LOVE

EVELYN DE LACEY and Polly Van Cortlandt were waiting together in that solemn, tapestried room upstairs where Madam Van Cortlandt received her guests. They were waiting impatiently for that solemn function to be over, when they might go down to join in the dance that would presently be inaugurated to the sound of black Cæsar's fiddle.

The sunset light was still beautifying the air of Manhattan. The atmosphere was all burnished gold, with here and there light flecks of pink, or green or violet, falling over the two rivers and the harbor, whence great ships sailed forth to distant trading ports. Glinting as they fell on the guns at the Fort, the rays formed a glory about Nutten Island, whither the thick clusters of nuts had tempted some school-boys and had all but precipitated, through their presence there, an Indian massacre. Falling over Staten Island and the heights of Sewanaka and the cliffs of the Brooklyn shore; falling on the town of Manhattan, with its solid and substantial houses, flanked by gardens; on its interlying clusters of woodland and its *graft* or stream, flowing serenely where later a populous thoroughfare was to carry its thousands of daily wayfarers; falling on

the Dutch church, within the confines of the Port, on that of the Huguenots, and on Trinity, the place of worship of the English colonists; falling over the country houses that dotted the villages of Chelsea and Greenwich.

The smell of the "laylocks" was in the air, and floated in through the windows of that mansion where the festivities were on foot; it mingled with those of a dozen other flowers or flowering shrubs, which adorned that prim and formal garden—a garden which, despite its size, compared ill with that other wherein Evelyn de Lacey reigned as a queen among the flowers. Here the *paes bloemen*, as the Dutch called them, were but secondary to the rows of trees, standing sentinel, and the prim boxwood hedges and borders for the flower-beds.

Near the window, looking out upon its orderly neatness, stood Polly and Evelyn, making that striking contrast which always impressed the observer. The tapestried room with its dark walls, rich in storied interest, offered an excellent background for what was really the beautiful picture of the two girls. In the foreground was the impressive figure of Madam Van Cortlandt, richly clad in a gown of mulberry silk with trimmings of lace to match the cap upon her head. In her ears were those jewels that had come down as an heirloom through generations.

This was the picture that caught the eye of the two men who had walked thither from the Fort, coming together not for any love of each other's company, but because their destination chanced to be the same. These men were Captain Egbert Ferrers and Captain Prosser Williams. The eyes of both involuntarily turned from Madam Van Cort-

landt, who gave them ceremonious greeting, passed over Polly, brilliant and attractive as was her appearance, and fastened themselves upon that other, who, in the opinion of both, outdistanced all competitors. In another instant they had been introduced and were bending low over the hands which the girls, in their character of hostesses, extended.

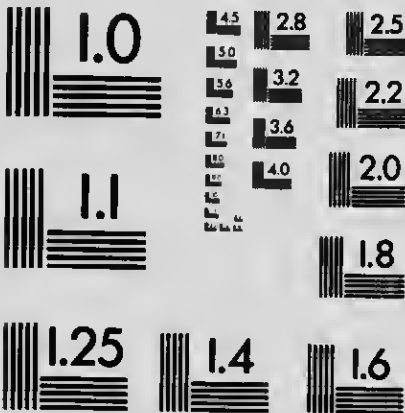
Such an introduction had been eagerly sought by both men ever since their arrival in the country, and, it having seemed difficult to secure, Captain Prosser Williams had endeavored to forestall it, as has been seen, in a way which he now bitterly regretted. He knew that his cause was already prejudiced in the eyes of that girl, whom, here in these stately surroundings, it appeared more than ever worth while to please. It is true that she gave no sign of having had any previous knowledge of him, and extended her hand without the slightest trace of embarrassment or resentment. At that moment he saw that, in her eyes, he was merely a guest of Madam Van Cortlandt, whom she received with courtesy, as in duty bound. But in some fashion or another she conveyed to him by every word that she spoke, and by every gesture of her slender hand, that he had placed himself as far off as the poles from her, and that there she meant to keep him. Her attitude only incited him to a firm resolve to know her better, and only gave additional value to herself and her attractions. He felt the indiscretion of which he had been guilty the more keenly, when he had time to observe the elegance, even courtliness, of these surroundings, where the whole atmosphere was such as to make condescension, much less insolence, an absurdity.

Evelyn talked with the two men indifferently.



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But, when the strains of old Cæsar's fiddle came invitingly up the broad stairs, she promised the first country dance to Captain Egbert Ferrers, who was prompt to seize the opportunity, and found all her dances engaged for Captain Williams until so late an hour in the evening that it amounted to a refusal. Biting his thin lips with vexation as he followed the other guests downstairs where the dancing was to take place, he vowed that he would take no other partner for their infernal country dances, and stood sulkily against the wall, wearing his most supercilious expression.

There was a soft glow of excitement on Evelyn's cheeks, a light of interest in her eyes, which made her face more charming; and the smile that she bestowed upon her partner as she passed close to where Williams was standing, made him once more curse his own stupidity. For he now clearly perceived that he had irretrievably lowered himself in the eyes of this glorious girl, who he knew was the daughter and not the wife of Mr. de Lacey, and, as he told himself regretfully, the only one worth a second glance in all this mudhole. But, even as he paid her that tribute, he began to feel something like malignant hatred against her, which his admiration only increased. That she, a mere provincial, should deliberately attempt to snub a man connected with some of the most influential families of Great Britain and occupying his present position—a man, too, who had been regarded as an arbiter of fashion and of beauty, who had moved with a distinction sufficient to satisfy even his own overweening egotism through that gay and brilliant society of which my Lady Bellomont had been a leader—was galling in the extreme.

As for the other member of His Excellency's staff, it was clear that he was frankly and entirely fascinated. He had never been a lady's man, and was held in fact to be quite impervious to feminine charms. But this young girl of the colonies appealed to him in such a variety of ways that he found her simply irresistible. In the first place were those personal attractions of hers, which were justly celebrated in the most exclusive circles of Manhattan, but which he did not seek to analyse, for they satisfied him entirely. He liked, too, her simplicity and directness of speech and manner, the absence of conscious effort to attract. He liked the touch of the unusual about her, and the subtle charm arising from the poetry of her nature as well as from an uncommon power of sympathy. All the women he had known seemed, in comparison to this girl, artificial and insipid. It was not often, he thought, that mind and matter were so happily combined, and he freely acknowledged that it was to his undoing. He had seen the girl scarcely a dozen times in all; he had never spoken to her before that evening, and yet they were already in sympathy, on excellent understanding. As any shrewd observer might have perceived, this soldier, who had distinguished himself in more than one campaign, was more than half in love. He would not have believed it possible, had he been told so a month or even a fortnight previous. With scarcely an effort, beyond the mere desire of her sex to be agreeable, Evelyn de Lacey had conquered a heart that had withstood many a stubborn onslaught. So absorbed was Captain Ferrers that he scarcely noticed the massive, oaken staircase by which they descended, nor the rich furnishings of the rooms below, where even now

the negro servants were busy lighting wax tapers in sconces all around the walls.

Evelyn, on her part, was decidedly pleased with her partner, of whom she had retained a favorable impression from that day upon the Bowling Green. His manner, in its absence of affectation, won her approval; bright and sympathetic, he was quick to catch the point of a jest, or to be moved when the topic was grave. Moreover, she was woman enough to feel that it was a feather in her cap to have been claimed for the first dance by this officer of the Household, who was already gaining popularity in the town. She was by no means averse to heighten the excellent impression which she was quick to perceive she had made. Polly had often taxed her with being fond of admiration, and she had to confess to herself that she was. Only she knew how to discriminate, and did not care for all sorts of admiration; it must be something worth while.

So the two, being mutually satisfied and therefore in the best of spirits, set out to dance with a number of other couples "La Belle Katherine," that favorite of country dances, and they at least enjoyed it to the uttermost. When the dance was finished, Captain Ferrers, with a certain diffidence that Evelyn found to her taste, made a request which was not as modest as his demeanor.

"If I might hope," he said, "to be favored with another and again another dance?"

Now Evelyn would have felt very well inclined to dance with that agreeable man all evening, if only because he was a change from her ordinary partners. But, apart from the fact that she had already promised most of her dances, she knew what the rigid etiquette of the town demanded, and was

never over-lavish of her favors. So that Captain Ferrers had to be content with the last dance before supper, which took place about half-past nine, after which the dancing ceased. And though he did not imitate his brother-officer in standing at the wall and looking sulky, but promptly engaged Mistress Polly and half a dozen others, he had none the less lost interest in the festivity, and waited with an impatience, which happily he did not show, for his next dance with Evelyn.

Meanwhile, Captain Williams, reconsidering his first decision, made his bow and requested the honor of a dance with Mistress Polly Van Cortlandt, the more especially as he saw her surrounded by a goodly number of those whom he already knew to be the most eligible young men of the colony. He could catch now and again some bright or witty remark of Polly's, and hear her pleasant laugh sounding musically through the room. Surely, he decided, such a partner was not to be despised, and moreover it might be possible to hear from her some of those particulars he wanted to know about her friend. Of course, Mistress Polly's dances were already promised, but, unlike Evelyn, she managed to find one for this member of the Governor's staff, who had the glamor come overseas about him. She was naturally the more anxious to do so, since she perceived that Evelyn had already appropriated the other officer.

In the course of conversation, Captain Prosser Williams managed to secure from Polly a good many bits of information about the elusive Evelyn, in whom, however, he tactfully avoided showing any special interest. Though he was quick to perceive that the honest-hearted girl was enthusiastically de-

voted to her friend, he cynically wondered how such a friendship would endure the strain of some bitter rivalry or some adverse interest. He determined in any case to stand well with Polly, for he clearly perceived that this house of the Van Cortlandts was likely to play a considerable part in such social activities as the colony might afford. And, whatever might be his supercilious attitude towards Colonials in general and denizens of the Dutch metropolis in particular, he was by this time aware that the society of some of them might be eminently well worth cultivating. So much had he learned since he had been willing to agree with my Lady Bellomont that death would be preferable to an enforced exile in these overseas possessions.

When supper was served, Captain Williams and his partner were in such a position that they could observe both Captain Ferrers and Evelyn, and even exchange scraps of conversation with them. Captain Williams was quick to perceive the look of interest on the face of his fellow-soldier, a look to which the girl fully responded. This fact was immediately noted by the quick-witted Polly, who cried out:

"What can be the absorbing topic that interests you two so much?"

Both seemed slightly disconcerted at the question, which Captain Ferrers lightly parried, indulging in a fine play of words with the lively and vivacious Polly. But it was evident that he had aroused himself from something much more absorbing, for with Evelyn he had been discussing some of those personal topics which are sure to arise when two people are fully in sympathy.

At that moment Madam Van Cortlandt entered the dining-room, followed by negro servants carry-

ing huge silver salvers on which were dishes of roasted oysters, bread, butter and celery. When justice was done to these viands amid a lively fire of talk from the four, who had now moved their places together, the oysters were followed by jellies, custards and whipped cream, served in tall glasses, and that variety of *kuchen* (or small cakes) for which the Dutch housewives were famous. There was much jesting upon some *kuchen*, thickly studded with nuts, which Polly herself had made and shaped into the devices of hearts and "true lovers' knots."

"True lovers' knots," said Captain Ferrers, absently taking one of the cakes in his hand and gazing at it as though he were pondering some weighty problem.

"How far and how long do they bind those of your inconstant sex?" Captain Williams asked of Polly, though his eyes were really fixed upon Evelyn.

"If our sex be inconstant," said Evelyn, lightly taking up the challenge, "why should it not be so, since all things in life change?"

Then Williams distinctly heard Captain Ferrers say, though he had drawn back a little from the others and spoke in a whisper:

"No, you would never be inconstant. With you, believe me, love would be till death."

"And why not after?" responded Evelyn, half laughing and yet with a shadow of seriousness in her lovely eyes.

"After death?" said Ferrers. "Oh, I cannot follow you so far."

Then was felt that sudden gravity which falls at times on the lightest conversation, as if from a passing realization of the inherent gravity of life.

Prosser Williams felt a slight shiver run through him, as though he were being present at a tragedy of some sort. He hated all such sensations, and he also hated Evelyn because she refused to discuss any question seriously with him.

Polly Van Cortlandt's quick wit soon brought it home to her that she was being overlooked in this conversation, and that the seriousness of the other three had left her, as a child might be left, laughing on a shore. She began to think that, after all, those gay groups of her own Company were preferable—the boys and girls with whom in childhood she had picked nuts or berries on the Catiemuts or other hills, in baskets bought from the *Wilden* and of the Company's chosen color of green. For Polly had always desired that her Company should follow the color of hope. Those boys and girls were now young men and women grown, but Polly was none the less their leader and their queen. She felt curiously piqued, and her good temper was ever so slightly ruffled. Too loyal to Evelyn to accuse her—for indeed, as her sense of justice told her, Evelyn was not to blame—she blamed rather these cavaliers from overseas, and especially her own partner, Captain Williams. For she could not deny that, if he were supercilious and affected, Captain Ferrers was decidedly likeable, even if he had permitted himself to become absorbed in her fascinating friend.

Polly was not sorry when, the supper having disappeared, they returned to the drawing-room where tables were set for cards. Not was she sorry to rid herself of the society of Prosser Williams, and to reign with her usual undisputed sway at a table of basset. The older people were presently ranged at other tables, where negroes had placed silver candle-

sticks with wax candles to aid their failing sight, and gold-lacquered boxes of ivory fishes for counters, besides little piles of Louis d'ors, doubloons, or other foreign coins. At these tables might be seen engaged in the more serious game of lansquenet some of the chief men of the colony. There were two of Madam Van Cortlandt's sons, who already had stolid sons of their own. There were Nicholas Bayard, and Philip Livingston, and Mynheer de Vries; there were Phillipse, Van Rensselaers, Lawrences and de Peysters, though these latter were on the other side of politics. There were Delanceys, Van Brughs, de Mills, Van Schaicks and de Riemers, both men and women, all of whom were soon mutely engrossed in their favorite pastime. They dealt their cards, their kings and their cavaliers, their *knechts* or knaves, their *atouts*, with as much seriousness as though they were playing that game of life which, even in the quiet town of Manhattan, was just then becoming complicated.

Evelyn, like Polly, took her place at a table of basset, which was played by most of the younger people, and had beside her Pieter Schuyler, one of the best-known young men in town and her devoted admirer. He was short and broad-shouldered and had brown eyes that laughed a great deal in fellowship with a set of white teeth. He was foremost in all sports, and enjoyed a wide popularity. Madam Van Cortlandt had it very much at heart to make a match between these two people. She would be glad to have him for Polly, save that he was related to her within the forbidden degrees, and that there was the other and still more unsurmountable obstacle—he showed no special preference for Polly's society. His father was a man of wealth and

influence in the colony, and, since Polly was out of the question, Madam Van Cortlandt would fain have secured him for Evelyn, whom she regarded almost as another granddaughter. She beamed approval, therefore, when she saw them side by side at the table and evidently upon the best of terms. For Evelyn sincerely liked Pieter, though she had never thought of him in the light of a possible husband.

It had not been, either, without design that the sharp-sighted old lady, who had observed the trend of affairs that evening, had placed both Captain Ferrers and his brother-officer at table with the older people, where, as she said, they were sure of a good game. Now it must be owned that, while Captain Ferrers courteously did his best to enter into the play, his thoughts were often wandering, and he would readily have exchanged the better game for the worse to have been at the table with Mistress de Lacey. Captain Williams, on the other hand, with the instinct of a born gambler, was soon absorbed in the cards with a success betokened by the increasing pile of coins in front of him.

Ferrers noticed that Evelyn entered with the greatest enjoyment into the game that she was playing, though it was not for coins, that being deemed unsuitable for the young folk. Also he saw that she appeared to be on terms of the friendliest intimacy with the good-looking youth at her side.

CHAPTER X

THE WHITE FLOWER AND THE EAGLE

ONE fine morning, when the summer was in its golden prime, Evelyn took her way to that camp on the banks of the Collect Pond in the shadow of the Catiemuts Hill, where the *Wilden* had their encampment. Her mission just then was to procure some of the wax from the bay berries for the waxing of the floors, and some fresh fish from the Rockaways, a certain number of whom had arrived but the day before and marched up the Broad Way, their faces painted blood-red with the juice of the beet root. The morning was rarely fine, the trees were all fresh from the recent showers and gave forth sweet perfumes; the birds, trilling softly, seemed the voices of those trees in the shelter of which were groups of men and women, native to the soil, with bronzed faces, coarse, straight hair, and costumes of skins, enlivened especially in the case of the squaws with adornments of flashing color.

The coming of the girl was greeted with such demonstrations of joy as these people permitted themselves. Evelyn had been long since adopted a member of the tribe, being looked upon as a great "medicine woman," for she had often successfully used in their behalf remedies which she had learned from old Doctor Hans Van Kierstade, who had been

until his death a famous physician in the colony and had made a pet of Evelyn. He had taught her to compound salves and simples from various herbs, and all this knowledge the young girl had applied to cure the ailments of the savages. From the *Wilden* themselves she had gained in turn many valuable secrets as to the properties of herbs and dyes to be extracted from various plants. She had brought her Indian friends on this occasion, as she often did, sundry little objects such as thimbles, scissors, or small mirrors, these last being especially coveted by the squaws. She offered these objects as gifts or bartered them for fish and other commodities. She seated herself familiarly on a grassy knoll, and conversed with the savages in their own tongue, which she, in common with many young people of the town, had picked up from frequent association with the tribespeople almost from childhood upwards. For it was one secret of Evelyn's influence at the encampment that she, more than any of the others, had gained a proficiency in their dialects. Having rested after her walk, she made her purchases of fish and other articles, conversing pleasantly with young and old alike. But, this bartering concluded, she approached a group of girls, who were busy stringing clam shells together for *wampum* or *sewant*. Such strings of shells passed as currency among the Indians, and made these tribes—the Manhattas, from whom the Dutch metropolis took one of its names, and the Rockaways, who inhabited a district still nearer the sea—the richest of Indians, because they could collect the most shells. In a few moments Evelyn was deep in conversation with these workers, and from their signs and gestures, and those made by their visitor,

THE WHITE FLOWER AND THE EAGLE 85

it was evident that the subject under discussion was one of great gravity. She was, in fact, instructing her special class of Christian catechumens. She was continuing amongst them the work begun with the elders of the tribe by Father Harvey and other Jesuits, who had lived within the precincts of the Fort in the time of Governor Dongan, and had still resided there even under his immediate successor. They had used all their efforts to christianize the tribes until the stormy times of Leisler had driven them away. It is true that members of the Society of Jesus continued to come thither from Maryland or Philadelphia from time to time to minister by stealth to the few white Catholics or to preach the Gospel to the savages. But, since there was close watch kept to prevent such visits and such ministrations, these were naturally few and far between, and Evelyn had taken it upon herself, great as was the risk of discovery, to teach the Indian girls and children their Catechism and nourish in their hearts the seed which the missionaries had sown.

It was while she was thus engaged that Captain Ferrers appeared upon the scene. He had come thither in quest of fish for the gubernatorial household, and was pleasantly surprised to find Evelyn de Lacey amongst the *Wilden*. He stood aside for a moment in the shadow of a tree to observe the scene, and, as some perception of its meaning began to dawn upon him, he was filled with an uneasiness which amounted almost to foreboding. From her upward gestures and the seriousness of her mien, he was readily led to suppose that she was instructing these wild people in the Christian mysteries. That in itself presented her in a new light, since he had thought of her only as a most ornamental appanage

of drawing-rooms and a charming companion in the ways of ordinary life. But, surprising as he found the discovery, for one rarely expects to find deep seriousness in what is beautiful and charming, he would have regarded it as merely another phase in a most interesting character had he not been suddenly struck as by a blow. For that gesture which Evelyn made so frequently, and which the savages imitated, was all too familiar to Ferrers. Though a Protestant himself, in so far as he had any religion, he had had a Catholic mother. She had died in his early boyhood, but he could not be mistaken in the Sign of the Cross. Like a flash he realized what the girl was doing, and the peril in which she was thus involving herself. For he already knew enough of the disturbed state of Manhattan, as well as of the fanaticism rife in the entourage of the Governor, to be aware that the religion, of which that sign was the symbol, was now both inconvenient and perilous to its professors and likely to be more so in the future. Not wishing that Evelyn should be just then aware of his presence, he drew further into the shadow of the trees with a feeling that he was intruding on something personal and necessarily secret.

The instruction had apparently come to an end, for Evelyn very wisely made it brief to suit these untutored minds, and it was evident that she was talking to them carelessly upon other topics. She took up the *wampum* shells, and was beginning to string them with great speed and dexterity when presently an interruption came. There was a wild, whirring sound that caused Evelyn to spring to her feet enthusiastically, while an old squaw, rising beside her, pointed dramatically upwards

THE WHITE FLOWER AND THE EAGLE 87

with her withered hand. Pigeons and various other birds were rising in such numbers that for a moment they almost obscured the brilliant sunshine. The squaw, it was evident, was apostrophizing them in the picturesque language of her race. To Evelyn, while the sight was not new, it was always impressive. It stirred her pulses and caused her heart to beat joyously with its movement of life and freedom, its swift rushing skywards. Captain Ferrers lingered a moment or two longer in the shadow of the trees to watch that scene, to be struck with new admiration for Evelyn's fairness, thrown into relief as it was by the bronzed skins of the Indians, and for her gestures, so graceful and expressive. Though he could not understand her words, there was something in her whole attitude that gave the impression of mental superiority and a latent force which grave circumstances would surely develop. The *wampum* workers and the oldest squaws gathered about her and listened to what she was saying, their black, beady eyes passing from her face to the birds in their flight overhead. There was an eager joyousness in the girl's bearing, as though that breathless rush had communicated to her its excitement. Her face, aglow with soft color, was turned upwards so that the curves of her chin and the delicate poise of her head upon a slender neck were emphasized. Beside her, in hideous contrast, was the old squaw whose christian name was Monica, and who with bronzed arm pointed towards the birds. Captain Ferrers, stepping out from his place of concealment, advanced to the side of Evelyn, who gave him a smile and a quick glance of recognition without diverting her attention from the paramount object of interest overhead.

"It is the birds going northwards to feed upon the wild carrot," she explained, turning slightly towards him while her eyes still followed those winged children of Nature far through the blue vastness of the sky.

When the birds were almost out of sight, growing indistinct in the distance, Evelyn with a half-sigh turned her attention to the young officer, who stood silently beside her, impressed by that scene so characteristic and so completely outside his previous experience.

"It is so splendid!" she cried.

He agreed with her, presently adding:

"I would not have expected to find *you* here."

"No?" responded Evelyn. "Well, that is because you know little of me and my friendship for these *Wilden*, as we call them here. They have made me a member of their tribe."

He laughed in sympathy with her laugh, though he was uncertain whether she spoke in earnest or in jest. Presently deciding that it was the former:

"And you speak their language?" he inquired.

"Many of us do here," she answered, "for, from our childhood, they have been amongst us."

"You were holding a very interesting conversation with them but this moment, when the birds startled you," he said, with some abruptness.

At this remark the laughter died out of Evelyn's eyes, and a veil of reserve was drawn between him and her, for that was a subject upon which, perforce, she maintained the utmost secrecy. The keen eyes of Ferrers noted that the topic was unpleasant, and, but too well aware of the reason, he changed it.

"I have come here for fish," he explained. "My

THE WHITE FLOWER AND THE EAGLE 89

Lady Bellomont has a fancy to taste fish fresh from the sea, which has been brought hither, as some have told her, by these people. It is highly commended."

"Not more than it deserves," said Evelyn. "I have already made my purchases. There are so many things the *Wilden* have to sell."

She pointed towards a basket which a young negro girl, her attendant, had laid beside her on the ground.

"A visit here would much entertain Her Excellency," observed Ferrers, adding with some craftiness, "if you would but deign some day to act as her interpreter."

Evelyn expressed her willingness to do so, with the thought in her mind that she would be by no means averse to see and converse once more, and in an informal manner, with the lady of the cage. But she carefully refrained from saying anything of her morning's adventure with the Countess of Bellomont to the man beside her.

Despite the shadow of restraint that had fallen on Evelyn's manner, the two chatted pleasantly a few moments longer. As for Captain Ferrers, he would willingly have prolonged that interview indefinitely, for here under these trees he found his companion still more charming than in the conventional atmosphere of the drawing-room. But Evelyn was not so unmindful that time was passing and that she must be returning homewards. When she had made the first movement in that direction, signing to the young negro to take her basket, the same old squaw, who had pointed to the flying birds, arose from the ground where she had been squatting, while observing the pair. She began to address some sentences to Evelyn, pointing, as she

spoke, from her to Captain Ferrers, and her words produced in the girl an effect of extreme annoyance, not unmingled with confusion. She shook her head in vigorous dissent, frowning to show her displeasure, while still the squaw went on:

"This is a great war-chief who has come over the water with the Great Captain, the Governor, our Brother and Corlear. He seeks the White Flower for his mate, and the tribe are pleased. For he has the frame of a warrior and the eye of an eagle; and his eye is good, since it rests upon the White Flower. She will take him one day for her mate. It is well; it is well."

The women standing about and the braves, who lurked in the trees, cried out their agreement with the sentiment, saying: "It is well; it is well." The young girls, the *wampum* makers, took up the chorus, and some of the older women, crowding about Ferrers, patted him on the shoulder or pressed his hand, thus saluting him as the fitting mate for the White Flower.

"What is it they are saying?" inquired the officer, trying to reproduce some of the soft Indian words which he had caught.

Evelyn, very naturally, did not proffer her services as interpreter. Perhaps some idea of their meaning dawned upon Captain Ferrers, as he noted the girl's embarrassment. For he did not insist, merely saying:

"They include me, I perceive, in their friendship, which most certainly I owe to you, and I opine it is good policy to conciliate them."

"Oh, yes, yes," cried Evelyn, grateful for the turn he had given the matter, "conciliate, always conciliate."

THE WHITE FLOWER AND THE EAGLE 91

She made a signal to her negro attendant, and began to walk away, when Captain Ferrers cried reproachfully:

"You will not leave me to their tender mercies in purchasing the fish."

And Evelyn, mindful of the obligations of courtesy, caused the *Wilden* to bring forth their choicest piscatorial offerings—bluefish, perch, whitefish, bass and crabs, which last would be a novelty for the viceregal table, if only, as Evelyn explained, there was some experienced person at hand to reject the poisonous part and prepare them. Once the fish had been chosen, however, Evelyn delayed not a moment in leaving Captain Ferrers to himself. He smiled at the haste with which she withdrew from his society, for its probable cause had occurred to him. But there was a pleasant warmth in his heart towards these *Wilden*, who had, as he felt sure, given this cherished member of their tribe into his keeping.

"In faith," he said to himself, "I would the matter were so simple of adjustment. But Mistress Evelyn will demand a skilful wooer. Lucky the man who can win her favor."

But the *Wilden* said amongst themselves:

"The White Flower flies. It is well. But the eagle will pursue."

CHAPTER XI

FRIENDS OR ENEMIES?

FROM the suggestion of Captain Ferrers that Her Excellency should visit the Indian encampment, resulted in fact Evelyn's next meeting with my Lady Bellomont. In a brief note Evelyn was asked to be in attendance on a certain day and at a certain hour to lend her valuable assistance to the Countess of Bellomont in interpreting the Indian tongue. The request was very courteously worded, and came from one of Her Ladyship's ladies-in-waiting. On that occasion Evelyn was accompanied by Polly Van Cortlandt, who was quite elated at the prospect of meeting thus at close range that woman who so far had awakened far wider interest, especially among the women of the colony, than the Governor himself.

Great was Captain Ferrers' disappointment to find that his plan, in so far as he himself was concerned, was a failure. For my Lord Bellomont, after his arbitrary fashion, claimed his services, and it was Captain Williams who was chosen to attend Her Excellency. This latter had always made himself particularly serviceable to the capricious lady, humoring all her whims and falling in with all her prejudices. She accepted, after her languid fashion, his almost slavish services, and was quite

content to have him in her train, while she was not without a certain pique that Captain Ferrers should be so much less amenable to her more or less unreasonable caprices.

"Captain Prosser Williams," she once said caustically to one of her ladies, "was born to play the rôle of tame cat in a lady's boudoir. But what should we do without him in these wilds?"

To Evelyn, also, it must be owned, the substitution of Prosser Williams for Captain Ferrers was a considerable disappointment. Since their last meeting she had thought of Captain Ferrers very often, as she worked in her garden or, with her capable hands, assisted in such domestic affairs as required her attention. There was a pleasurable excitement in the thought of his openly displayed admiration, which, as instinct told her, hovered closely upon the borderland of love, though she had no certainty as yet that he had passed it. To her clear commonsense it seemed improbable and visionary that a man, fresh from the great world and from the excitements of court and camp, should fall so easy a victim to a girl who was chiefly of provincial training and had but a limited knowledge of life. Nevertheless, in his manner and voice, so simple, so true and so unartificial as she felt them to be, there was quite enough interest revealed to afford a real pleasure and stimulus to their meetings.

Evelyn and her friend reached the encampment first, as in duty bound, and as the quick eye of Prosser Williams told him. He felt a certain excitement at that moment, as if he had been called to a combat. It braced his languid nerves, and lent an unwonted animation to his manner. Evelyn seemed to arouse such latent strength as lay in a nature enervated

by idleness and self-indulgence. She was an enemy whom he would like to subdue—beautiful, graceful and alert, as had been the tigers which, on first coming out of college, he had gone away to shoot. Her cleverness and her clever perceptions incited him to anger. He fancied she would have been more attractive and more pleasing to mankind in general without them. Beauty was the only thing that mattered, and goodness—if he could recognize it at all, and even supposing it to be genuine—was but a negative and often inconvenient attribute which, in his eyes, could add nothing whatever to a woman. Nevertheless, Evelyn's beauty captivated him and gave her a distinct advantage, when she looked at him with those coldly scornful eyes which belied the conventional civility of her words.

As he presented the two girls to my Lady Bellomont, he was surprised to note that, after a gracious greeting to Mistress Polly, she took Evelyn's hand in hers while she whispered something that he could not catch. His nimble brains set to work at once to puzzle out what possible acquaintance there could have been before between the two. For acquaintanceship, it was evident, there had been. But, puzzle as he might, he could not here receive enlightenment. One thing, however, was clear, and that was that Evelyn had won Her Ladyship's favor. He had known her before to show a marked partiality for beautiful women, when they interfered with no purpose of her own. In this case it was quite apparent that she wanted the girl beside her. She regarded her with evident admiration, and she uttered enthusiastic little exclamations at Evelyn's cleverness in speaking the Indian dialects, and would scarcely acknowledge the fact that Mistress Polly

spoke them almost as well. Her Ladyship noted with keen interest the ascendancy of the beautiful and high-bred girl over these wild, untutored beings. Prosser Williams, walking with Polly, who laughingly acknowledged herself to be quite in a secondary position with the *Wilden*, observed it also, and it lent fuel to the strange flame of mingled hatred and perfervid admiration which he felt towards Evelyn, and which was to a certain extent the outcome of her very contempt and dislike. Had she responded to his advances, she would have been merely one of the many pretty girls with whom he had passed an idle hour. It must be owned, however, that the attraction which she seemed to possess for the hitherto invincible Ferrers had lent her a value quite apart from her intrinsic merits; and of course the approbation of my Lady Bellomont was another feather in Evelyn's cap. There was no jewel to which court favor would not have added, in the young man's estimation, an additional lustre.

Evelyn, meanwhile, was discoursing quite simply and unaffectedly with the Indians. They crowded about her affectionately, and at her bidding showed all their wares to the wife of the "Great Captain." Some of these treasures they had brought from the shores of the Atlantic, whence the sea rolled outward till there was no land between there and the coast of Ireland; some of them were brought from the fastnesses of the Jersey heights or from the salt marshes of Long Island. They included bead-work, dyes, berries, fresh and fried fish, native tobacco, willow withes, oak knots, cat's-tails or bulrushes, and baskets of numberless colors. Not for years had Captain Williams seen Her Ladyship more charmed or interested. Here boredom vanished as

if by magic, and she seemed to regard Evelyn as the priestess of all these mysteries of Nature and Nature's children, as having arranged the whole varied show for her entertainment.

Meanwhile, failing Evelyn, Prosser Williams had been making himself agreeable to Polly, who he angrily declared was worth half a dozen of such frigid, unapproachable beings as that pale girl beside my Lady Bellomont. Yet he knew in his heart that he would have given all that other's attractions, and indeed the combined attractions of all the women whom he had hitherto known, for one such friendly smile as he had seen Evelyn bestow upon Captain Ferrers. Even with the Indians, he saw that her frigidity had disappeared. Her face alight with interest, she talked to them brightly and naturally and with an unaffected friendliness.

"I perceive," he said to Polly, in his sneering voice, "that Mistress de Lacey has a genius for subduing the aborigines."

"Yes," agreed Polly, who was bravely struggling with a sense of pique at the indifference to her of my Lady Bellomont, and was therefore less careful than usual of her words. "And she is their teacher and something of a missionary as well."

"Missionary?" echoed the young man, starting back in affected astonishment. "Has the young lady perfections in that direction too? And I pray you, what kind of a missionary?"

The expression on the inquirer's face caused a vague alarm in Polly's mind. She remembered too late that the subject of Evelyn's religion was altogether taboo in their circle. It was practically ignored, for, since the stormy days of Leisler and recent enactments in Maryland and elsewhere, it

was decidedly dangerous to be suspected of Popish leanings and unpleasant to have any sort of intimacy with those of the proscribed faith. In fact, the prejudice that had been more or less passive in Dutch New York, save in the days of Leisler, had sprung into life since the accession of the Protestant champion, William of Orange, and was now likely to change into active hostility. Polly would, therefore, have been only too willing to change the subject, but the curiosity of her companion, once aroused, was not easily set at rest; in so far as Evelyn was concerned, it was fairly consuming.

"So this all-perfect lady," the officer remarked, "is then of a religious turn?"

"Oh, yes, in truth," said Polly, "she is of a religious turn." And she added apologetically, as though she had said something disparaging: "But not unduly so."

Prosser Williams laughed at the qualification and then asked:

"Is it your Dutch church which claims her allegiance?"

Polly shook her head and laughed, for all of a sudden it seemed to her supremely ludicrous that Evelyn de Lacey should "sit under," as the phrase went, good Dominie Selyns.

"It is Trinity Church, then, that she attends?" persisted Williams. "And yet, if my memory serves me right, on the numerous occasions when officially I have been obliged to go to church, I caught no glimpse of Mistress Evelyn."

"No," said Polly, beginning to flounder in deep water. "She is religious, I opine, without much of church-going."

And she knew that she spoke the truth since there

was no church for Evelyn to attend. As for the occasional Masses in private houses which Catholics surreptitiously attended, they were guarded with the utmost secrecy and had never come to the knowledge of Mistress Polly.

"That is a mode of worship," said Captain Williams, "which I do infinitely prefer myself, but it is not one which usually finds favor with the devout."

Though, to Polly's relief, he changed the subject, the train of thought thus laid in his mind led him to entertain some half-formulated suspicions.

Before my Lady Bellomont took her leave after exhaustive purchases, which delighted the *Wilden*, and the distribution of sundry trifling gifts, she gave a hint to both the girls of the series of entertainments which she was planning at the Fort. These were designed to bring together the various social elements of the colony that had been sadly split up and divided by the internecine strife which had been raging ever since the régime of the usurping Leisler, and which his execution had caused to break forth with renewed fury. For though Lord Bellomont had chosen to range himself upon the Leislerian side of the controversy, he had been unable as yet to effect anything like a peaceful understanding between the contending parties. With Evelyn, Her Ladyship had had but little opportunity for private conversation, but she said:

"You add discretion to all your other charms. For I have not heard so much as a whisper of that little adventure of mine."

"I have not mentioned it," said Evelyn simply, and Her Ladyship felt that in that simple assertion there was truth. But Evelyn, bethinking herself, added: "Save to my father. I tell him everything."

"Then he, too, is discreet."

"He can always be trusted," replied Evelyn, "and he himself advised me to make no mention of what was a trifling incident, which would merely excite the idle curiosity of the gossips."

"He spoke the truth," said Lady Bellomont, "for you cannot know how trifles have been sometimes magnified to my grievous harm. And I will tell you that it is not permitted me to go forth unattended, nor to do those things for which the meanest woman in the town has liberty."

From that time forth Evelyn's sympathies were always keenly aroused in favor of the Countess Bellomont, who she could perceive had so much to contend against in her domestic circumstances. She was disposed to regard my Lord in the light of a tyrant, and did not give sufficient consideration to the fact that perhaps the stern and arbitrary measures restricting his wife's freedom were the result of the lady's folly.

The two girls were very much elated by the promises the Countess had made of successive gaieties at the Fort and the gubernatorial residence. They took their homeward way by Queen Street, in which Madam Van Cortlandt lived, and where they were sure to meet a goodly sprinkling of the fashionable world and many of their acquaintances, to whom they might impart Her Excellency's good tidings and at the same time make known the honor that they had enjoyed in being admitted so familiarly to Her Ladyship's company. The two fell into dispute as they walked on the subject of Captain Prosser Williams. Evelyn declared him to be "an odious man," whose outward civility concealed an insolently supercilious attitude towards Colonials.

Polly defended him with some heat, declaring that she had found his manner agreeable and his speech full of witty sayings and pretty compliments.

"And I speak without prejudice," said Polly frankly, "for all his interest, Evelyn, is in you, though he strives to mask the same by petty sneers and innuendoes. You would have but to raise your finger to have him at your feet."

"Where he might stay, in so far as I am concerned," said Evelyn. "Even if you were right, which is absurd, since I have scarce exchanged a dozen words with him, and he has been meanwhile in better company, his is an admiration which I freely declare I do not want."

"Your favors are all for the other," said Polly, with a touch of malice.

"Polly," cried Evelyn, and this time there was a hint of real annoyance in her manner, "you are in a provoking mood to-day."

"The truth is not always palatable, my Evelyn," said Polly, laughing. "But if you have cast your arrows at Captain Ferrers, where is the harm, and which of us would not do the same? Especially, my dear, since they have found sure lodgment."

"Your imagination runs away with you, my pretty Polly," laughed Evelyn.

It must be owned, however, that this assertion of her observant friend was gratifying in the extreme. It was something to have even been supposed to have made such a conquest, in however limited a sense that term might be understood. For she could not conceal from herself that the young officer under discussion occupied already a considerable share of her thoughts and imagination. This latter had been excited to a still greater degree by

an account given her by a young subaltern, with whom she had lately danced, of Captain Ferrers' prowess and gallantry. He described in detail how, in the late war, Ferrers had led a charge, bare-headed, his face pale and his eyes glowing, cheering and encouraging his men until he had fallen with a wound which was believed, at first, to be mortal. Evelyn's informant, full of boyish enthusiasm, had added other details as to his superior officer's general character, his popularity with the men and his upright and honorable demeanor, all of which had fitted in with her own impressions.

"I marvel oftentimes," rattled on Polly, "that your conceit does not become inordinate with all your conquests. But, no, you take them calmly, and seem to find it of no moment that you have laid by the heels these two sprigs of nobility and Governor's men."

"Who but Polly could prattle on with such absurdities?" cried Evelyn, laughing again and more heartily.

"All the while knowing that it is sober truth," returned Polly. "And a true prophet I was, for said I not that you were like to set the new-comers distracted? Were it any other but yourself, I should be the color of the leaves with envy and well disposed to hate you."

"You can afford to be generous, with half the town at your feet," retorted Evelyn. "And as for hating me—oh, never, never do that, Polly, whatever may betide." Her eyes filled with tears as she added: "For victories won at that price would be dearly purchased."

An affectionate squeeze of her arm and an affectionate word or two exchanged between them cemented their pact of friendship more strongly than ever.

CHAPTER XII

DANGEROUS DAYS

THE government of my Lord Bellomont was marked in the first place by a return to the courtly elegance, pomp and state that had fallen into desuetude at the mansion in the Fort since the days of Sir Edmund Andros. Once more the state carriages went forth into the town with postilions and outriders; pomp and ceremony were the order of the day; the rich costumes of my Lady Bellomont, worn with grace and distinction, were the cynosure of all feminine eyes. Entertainments, mostly formal in character, were given frequently, though there were not wanting the gay dances which had been announced to Evelyn and her friend by Her Excellency. These were chiefly of her contrivance, assisted by the ever-pliable Prosser Williams, the other men of the Household and the naval and military officers. Enlivened by the strains of an orchestra of negro minstrels, who played on the battlement of the Fort, these assemblies brought together all the young people of the Dutch metropolis, and were keenly enjoyed by the hostess herself. For it was her only opportunity to escape the jealous vigilance of my Lord Bellomont and to mingle freely with the youth of both sexes, whose society she found an agreeable

change from the elderly magnates whom the Governor entertained at dinner.

But, even during the course of these festivities, the sharp-eyed husband never entirely relaxed his scrutiny of his wife's movements. He was quick to observe any special marks of friendliness on her part towards any of the Colonials. And his jealousy extended not only to those of the male sex, but even to women. Thus he noticed, at one of the first dances, the favor which Her Ladyship extended to Evelyn de Lacey, who was looking her very best, and was also guilty of monopolizing, in so far as his duties permitted him that busy evening, my Lord's favorite aide-de-camp. Hence it was that after a few curt words of greeting, altogether at variance with the courteous manner which he usually displayed at social gatherings, he turned his back upon Evelyn, with frowning brows and pursed-up lips. This circumstance was seen by Prosser Williams with keen pleasure, and mentally noted for future use. Also, when next he addressed Evelyn, he lent to his manner a certain undercurrent of insolence, which not only the girl herself, but Egbert Ferrers, saw and resented.

However, there were graver matters claiming the public attention just then, and the attitude of the Governor gave cause for anxiety to more than one class of the citizens. Thus at the suggestion of a certain clique, who had managed to secure his ear, and who described themselves as "the people's party" and the champions of Protestantism, the Governor was induced to condemn the action of one of his predecessors, Colonel Slougher, by whom Jacob Leisler and his son-in-law, Milborne, were put to death. He exerted all his influence with the King,

who had reversed the attainder pronounced on him by the deposed sovereign, King James, and had made him Earl of Bellomont, to procure an Act of Parliament removing the attainder from Leisler and Milborne.

This action, which was highly unpopular with a large and very prominent section of the community, and another succeeding action of Bellomont's were discussed with much warmth at one of Madam Van Cortlandt's assemblies, at which were present a particularly large gathering of the aristocratic, or "long coats," party. The allusion in this title was to the short coats worn by the tradesmen and laboring classes. Leisler was the self-constituted champion of the people, but his whole régime appears to have been a series of lawless, tyrannical and arbitrary acts against everyone who opposed him. Amongst the representatives of the leading Dutch families assembled, with a fair intermixture of English or Huguenot colonists who sided with them, there was great indignation, and, as they met around Madam Van Cortlandt's card tables, they talked of little else but this or that move on the part of the Governor, who had apparently declared war upon their faction. As they sipped the spiced wine and ate of the *oly keochs*, or doughnuts and pound cakes, with which they were regaled, they denounced in more or less courtous tones the policy of the government, and resolved as far as possible to oppose it. It was Mynheer de Vries who had brought the latest piece of intelligence, and, as it was passed around amongst the various groups, the faces of those who heard it were a study in themselves.

"At midnight," he announced, "on the fourteenth day of this month, the body of Leisler and his son-

in-law, Jacob Milborne, are to be exhumed and buried again with honor under the Dutch church."

There was a horrified pause among those who heard the announcement, for this was an open defiance of that powerful coalition which had procured—and, as it seemed, for just and reasonable causes—their execution as "lawless usurpers" and for a series of tyrannical acts against the person and property of their opponents. Amongst others, Evelyn de Lacey was dismayed by the intelligence, for she had learned from her father of Leisler's unrelenting hostility to the Catholic Church and its adherents, and how he had conspired with the infamous Coode of Maryland and others to destroy that religious toleration which Maryland had at first openly proclaimed, and which New York under its Catholic Governor, Dongan, had obtained from a Catholic King. If my Lord Bellomont had given his official sanction to the glorification of such men, it was but too easy to guess what her co-religionists had to expect. As in a dream, she followed the further course of the conversation, in which the cool, even tones of Mynheer de Vries seemed to dominate.

"Regarding the good Vrow Leisler," he said, "her affection for that tyrant must have grown since his death. For was it not common knowledge that he treated her most harshly? And as for poor Mary Leisler," he paused, with an expressive smile and movement of the head, "do we not know that she was coerced, pretty and amiable girl as she was, into a marriage with a vulgar boor and tool of her father, Jacob Milborne?"

"Yes, yes," agreed several voices, "and he was old enough to have been her father."

Madam Van Cortlandt, in her calm judicial manner, took up the subject:

"It must be owned," she declared, "that there seemed to have been but little love lost between those women and their respective husbands during life, and poor Mary had but a short married life. But they cannot be held blameworthy in striving to have the attainder removed from a father's and a husband's name."

Justice and commonsense were so obviously on the side of this impartial view that no one present was bold enough to offer a protest. Evelyn de Lacey, sick at heart, could not help thinking that these were mere banalities in presence of those graver issues that might arise for the people of her faith. The triumph of the Leislerians meant relentless war upon them, though utterly without reason, since there was neither church nor resident priest in New York, and the Catholics were besides mostly poor and obscure and so entirely devoid of influence of any kind that they could not be considered dangerous even by those most bitterly prejudiced against them. Yet she could not sympathize with Polly's outspoken and indignant denunciation of all concerned, for she was aware at least of its futility. Of far more importance was the look of determination she could detect upon the faces of such men as Killian Van Rensselaer, Nicholas Bayard and Stephanus Van Cortlandt. The two latter had suffered in their person and property at the hands of the Leislerians; indeed the last had had to endure the wanton destruction of his furniture and valuables and to witness insults offered to his wife, while he himself was thrown into prison. He had been denounced in scurrilous language as a "devil

of a Papist," and subjected to virulent abuse. These were not men to submit tamely to such acts of aggression, as they had already shown in the summary justice which had been meted out to the aggressors through the instrumentality of their powerful faction. Nor would they, without a vigorous protest, permit this new Governor to cast an aspersion on the lawfulness of that execution. Nevertheless, amongst them all was visible a note of anxiety, for the gauntlet had been thrown down, and there was danger for all who would pick it up against a ruler who had such influence with the King. Evelyn, reflecting upon it all and noting their anxiety, was aware that her own and that of her father must be keenest of all. For though these respective factions, which had been changing once peaceable New York into a battle-ground, might war fiercely for rights that each one held most sacred, there were none powerful enough, or perhaps broad-minded enough, to espouse the Catholic cause or to provide, as those same Catholics of Maryland had done in the days of their predominance, an asylum for the oppressed of every faith. Evelyn was eager to get home and discuss this new phase of affairs with her father, who was so fully informed in all the details of that contest from its very beginning. She remembered how often he had said, speaking with full knowledge and deliberation:

"If all these colonies had been settled, as was Maryland, by the Catholics, there would never have been persecution on this side of the broad ocean." But he had added sadly: "No sooner did the Protestants grow powerful enough in Maryland than they began to legislate against freedom of worship for others and especially those of that faith which

had given them liberty to grow and flourish. And that despite the protests of the Quakers, who were themselves bitterly persecuted, and others of liberal minds."

So strong was the feeling in that assemblage that cards and all other amusements were very soon eschewed, and for once Madam Van Cortlandt's excellent viands suffered considerable neglect. It was decided amongst the elders that they themselves, and as many as they could influence, should refrain from all participation in the function of the following Wednesday night, leaving it altogether to that faction which, with some notable exceptions, were the more obscure and less important members of the commonwealth. The younger people, however, were resolved if possible, without of course participating in the demonstration, to see what was likely to be a strange, weird sight. Pieter Schuyler organized a party to consist of his cousin Lily, Evelyn de Lacey, a married sister of his own, Vrow Van Brugh, with her husband and one or two others. The young men made every arrangement to enable the ladies to see the spectacle without being themselves observed, and to provide for their safety in the event of any disturbance.

When Eveiyn went home and mentioned the matter to her father, he looked grave at first. But when he heard of whom the party was to consist, and that it was to be headed by Pieter Schuyler, of whom he had a high opinion, he made no objection. For he, who had been in his youth of a disposition to see all and adventure all, felt that he could not refuse to allow his daughter whatever privileges were consistent with her age and sex.

"The ashes of Jacob Leisler," he said thought-

fully, "thus resurrected, may prove an evil influence, and sow again the seeds of discord which grew and flourished during his stormy career."

"You have a vivid recollection of this Leisler?" Evelyn inquired.

"Most certainly I have," answered her father, who, though he had often alluded to the subject, had never told Evelyn precisely what had been his own relations with that stormy petrel of Colonial New York. "Good cause have I to remember him, since I was of those against whom he directed his machinations. He was no common disturber of the peace, though his words and acts were outrageous. Yet I know there be reputable men in this town who applaud his deeds and believe him to have been a true patriot and a champion of the people's rights."

He leaned back in his chair with an abstracted gaze, as though he were thinking aloud, and Evelyn, her chin upon her hand and her eyes upon his face, listened intently.

"His enemies claim that it was all for self-advancement that he forced himself to the top, where he had no rightful place, and committed while there the most arbitrary acts. Also, as I had good reason to know, he persecuted all who differed from him, and especially those of the Catholic Faith."

After a pause, he added in his truthful and candid fashion:

"The truth about that unhappy man may lie somewhere between the two extremes. Such is the opinion of Father Harvey, who was for years my friend and adviser. Leisler may have had some glimmerings of a high ideal as to liberty and the rest, but he blundered stupidly and criminally in many acts of his administration and in the treatment

of all who were opposed to him. I much fear, indeed, that his popularity arose in no slight degree from his loud-mouthed denunciation of Popery and his championship of Protestantism."

"He persecuted those of our faith shamefully, as men say," cried Evelyn, her cheek flushing with indignation, "and for that alone he deserved death."

"Ah, my Evelyn," said her father, "that is the summary mode with which youth ever disposes of an adversary. And if persecution of us Catholics here in this free America, or over yonder in England, were worthy of death, there would have to be a wholesale slaughter. This doughty Teuton has had for companions in guilt quite a high-placed company, and even his executioner, Governor Sloughter, was instructed to give no freedom to Catholics."

"So Leisler was not Dutch?" said Evelyn.

"No, he was German born, and Milborne, I believe, was English. They were no native products."

"I am glad of that," cried Evelyn, who had a sincere liking for the Dutch, amongst whom she had grown up.

"Will you not come with us, father," asked Evelyn, "to see this singular sight?"

Her father shook his head with something like a shiver.

"To me it would be but grewsome," he said, "since I remember all too vividly that dismal rainy day when Leisler and his son-in-law were left swinging upon that gibbet. I went far out of my way to avoid the spectacle, enemies though they were."

On that memorable Wednesday evening, for the better view of the dismal cortège, which yet par-

took of the nature of a triumphal procession, the group of young people had obtained permission to take their stand on the *stoepe* of one Christian Barentsen, on the West side of the Broad Way, where late had stood the Dutch Company's garden. From there they saw that strange, weird sight, which somehow froze the marrow in Evelyn's bones, so sensitive to external expressions was her mood that night. The streets of Manhattan were strangely still as they waited. At every seventh house, lanterns upon a pole relieved the darkness and threw strange shadows. The trees waved mournfully in the wind, and the waters of the Bay, of which glimpses could be caught by the watchers, lay cold and black under the dim and uncertain starlight, save where they reflected the lights of the warship and other vessels at anchor near the Fort. The stentorian tones of the Watch broke the ominous stillness.

"Twelve of the clock, midnight," they cried. "All's well. Weather fair but cloudy. Funeral of the late Herr Jacob Leisler and his son-in-law, Jacob Milborne."

Presently these voices of the night appeared in visible form—four sturdy men, with dark-blue coats faced with orange, rattling their long staffs as they walked. Pausing, they peered into the faces of that group which they saw waiting silently on the *stoepe* of Christian Barentsen's house. Pieter Schuyler exchanged a word with them, whereupon they moved off, after a ponderous salute to the ladies. Other groups had begun to form, and soon there were heard the feet of marching men and the sound of music, played by the band—not loud and aggressive, as was Leisler in his lifetime, but subdued and mourn-

ful. Surrounding and following the gun-carriage, upon which reposed all that was mortal of the usurper and his associate, marched at least twelve hundred men. There was something grimly determined in their aspect, something ominous, as it appeared to Evelyn. The train-bands, of which Leisler had been a Captain, turned out in force, as did many mechanics and such leading citizens as were their supporters, whilst my Lord Bellomont, it was said, gave his countenance to the proceedings from a window. Torches lighted the procession, and cast unearthly shadows on the faces of the men who walked, lending a ghastliness to their aspect, as if they were disembodied spirits who moved silently through the darkness to those strange obsequies.

Evelyn felt her eyes fill with tears, though she could not have told why, as she recalled how the restless, indomitable spirit of one at least of those thus honored had pervaded that town, and had gone even beyond the limits of the colony in the working out of his plans.

"Still enough now, in all truth," said Evelyn to herself, and there was no shadow of resentment, but only a great pity in her heart as she breathed a prayer that the all-merciful Lord might accord pardon and compassion to those misguided souls, whose influence for evil had not ended with life, but was being evoked now to give new vitality to that spirit of discord which had marked the coming of Lord Bellomont and was to outlast his life.

Meanwhile, in awed whispers, scarcely above their breath, Evelyn's companions were calling one another's attention to this or that prominent citizen who, deserting his own order, was thus openly identifying himself with the Leislerian party.

"Abraham de Peyster," cried Polly, "Rip Van Dam, Cornelius Schoonhoven, Gerard Beekman."

"Abraham Gouverneur, Peter Delancey, Stephen Delancey," said the married cousin, "and look! look! Polly, Evelyn, there is the Lieutenant-Governor, Mr. Nanfan, and Mr. Thomas Weaver."

"I marvel that my Lord Bellomont is not there in person," said Polly scornfully.

"Well, there is one of his aides-de-camp," added Pieter Schuyler, "Captain Prosser Williams."

"Where? Where?" asked Polly eagerly.

"Over there, near Charlie Lodovick, the Captain of the train-band," directed Pieter.

And so the cortège moved on like some shadowy phantom train, past the crowds that silently lined the way. There was no attempt at a hostile demonstration, nor at any demonstration at all; no indication as to how the mind of the people leaned. The bell of the Dutch Church tolled as the procession passed within the precincts of the Fort, where the Dominie stood ready, in gown and bands, to perform the ceremony—with no great willingness on his part, since his sympathies as well as his connections were all with the other side. Still it was a duty that must be done, and there was no other of the cloth to replace him. He was, therefore, compelled to receive, as it were, back into the Fold those whom, as tradition asserts, all the Dominies had definitely opposed while living. Pieter Schuyler was full of solicitude when he perceived that Evelyn, usually so strong-nerved and composed, was pale and trembling. He blamed himself in no measured terms for having suggested such an expedition, but Evelyn, rallying, laughed away his solicitude, and Polly vindictively added:

"For why, indeed, should you be overcome, my dearest Evelyn, by the burial of the odious, hateful man?"

Evelyn laid her fingers on her friend's lips:

"For to-night," she said, "let us speak no evil of the dead. For it is a grievous thing to think that the strongest and most turbulent must come to this impotence."

"Well, the fellow has had," laughed Pieter's brother-in-law, Jan Van Brugh, "what few others can boast of, and that is a second funeral."

"And it still remains to be seen," said Pieter Schuyler, with unusual heat, "whether the home government can send out men to trample on the opinions of the majority."

The honest fellow delivered himself thus, with the more heat, since he felt it a grievance that members of the Household had set themselves of late, as it seemed, to monopolize—not only his cousin and dear comrade, Polly, but what was far worse from a sentimental point of view—that other whom the young man had so long and hopelessly worshipped. But the bell had ceased to toll, the last sound of the funeral music had died away, and the party retraced their steps, sobered despite themselves by what they had witnessed. They went first to leave Evelyn at home, where she found her father waiting.

"So," he said, as he listened to her account of all that had transpired, "Lord Bellomont has chosen to throw down the gauntlet to one faction, and has extended the hand of friendship to the other. How will it work, I wonder, for the peace of these colonies?"

CHAPTER XIII

FEARS REAL AND IMAGINARY

THAT war of factions, which was daily reaching a more acute stage, threatened to put brother against brother and to make bitter enemies of those who had been previously lifelong friends. One day it was the suspension of a prominent member of the Council that agitated the aristocratic party, running like a shiver from one end to the other, or the still graver intelligence that such magnates as Nicholas Bayard or Stephen Van Cortlandt had been arrested and would have to stand their trial for offences connected with the Leisler affair.

And, as if the atmosphere were not sufficiently tempestuous, a rumor of another and still more serious nature began to spread everywhere like an ominous whisper. It crept through the streets of the nascent metropolis, through the tranquil gardens of the Smit's and the Wolfert's Valleys, through the stately mansions of Queen and Pearl Streets, and down the streets that skirted the Bowling Green, through the lanes and byways inhabited chiefly by negroes, and up through the *bouweries* and country houses of Greenwich and Chelsea villages, out by the Boston Post Road and Bloomingdale, to where the estates of the landed proprietors began to dot the banks of the Hudson, thus introducing into the

New World the customs of the old. The guns of the warship seemed actually to bristle belligerently, and the sloops and brigantines, whether they came from South America or the West Indies, were all a-quiver with that same sinister rumor. And it was that "the French of Canada," together with the Indians who were in alliance with them, were marching to an attack upon New England, to be followed, if not accompanied, by an onslaught upon New York. The wildest reports were in circulation; the words, "massacre" and "slaughter," were on every tongue; the air was vibrant with alarms that seemed to be repeated in the very whisperings of the trees, lining the streets or clustering in the cherry orchards.

Lord Bellomont took official cognizance of these reports by ordering the strengthening of the Battery, which extended over the waters of the harbor at that point of land whereon, since the days of Stuyvesant, had stood the Fort, changing its cognomen with each successive ruler. There was a repetition of that excitement which had prevailed during the term of office of Lord Bellomont's predecessor, who had ordered the building of a Battery. For then it had been proclaimed "that the Governor and Council, in consequence of actual war between the King and Queen on the one hand and the French upon the other, has been informed that a squadron of ships are ordered to invade that city, and therefore orders that a platform be made upon the utmost points of the Rocks and the Fort." "Whereupon," as the Governor said, "I intend to build a battery to command both rivers." In pursuance of that intention, he had further given instructions to the Corporation of the city, "to order the inhabitants

of the out ward of the city and Mannings and Barnes Islands to cut down eighty-six cords of stockade, twelve feet in length, and to have them ready at the water's side to be conveyed to New York at the charge of the city and country."

All these orders had been duly carried out, to the great relief of the present dwellers in Manhattan. For there was the Battery ready to repel the invasion, which had never previously been undertaken either by the French of Canada or any other French. Equally groundless, indeed, proved the rumor upon this occasion, to the disappointment of the Earl of Bellomont, who was a soldier before everything else, and of the military members of his Household, as well as of the soldiers garrisoned in Manhattan and the sailors on board the warship in the harbor, who were all pleasantly excited and diverted by the possibility of a fracas which had proved so disturbing to the peaceably inclined citizens.

While New York was thus holding its breath because of a rumor which later proved without foundation, opportunity was taken by malicious persons to sow the suspicion that the Papists might make common cause with the French of Canada and betray the city into their hands. These sinister whispers increased in volume till honest citizens, going forth of an evening, were terrified by their own shadows, which they magnified into Popish conspirators. Every dark corner was supposed to be peopled with them; they were poisoning the wells; they were about to burn the town. Such strange sights were seen as gentlemen, armed with sword-canes or other weapons of defence, drawing upon their dearest relations or most intimate friends in the dusk of the evening, mistaking them for

emissaries of the Pope of Rome. There was not a man from one end of Manhattan to the other who could have told where these Papists kept themselves hid, or could have estimated their numbers—which were indeed so ridiculously small that, if they had been made public, they would have turned all those valiant citizens into a laughing-stock for the town. Many or few, these scaremongers insisted on being devoured by them. They saw strange lights in the sky, but would not admit the hypothesis of auroras or any other natural cause; even the marsh lights in swampy places were supposed to betoken the advance of that mysterious enemy. When or how they had received arms or other offensive weapons, what ships had been guilty of such transportation, no one stopped to inquire. A reputable citizen, who suffered at other times from no particular lack of courage, spent an hour one fine evening in dodging behind trees to avoid his next-door neighbor, who was similarly employed, as each took the other for a murderous Papist bent on his destruction. Even barking dogs were regarded with suspicion, as having been set on by lurking Popish scouts to bite the calves of godly church members; and a horse which ran away was supposed to have had nettles put in his ear or pepper in his eyes by the same nefarious traffickers. Of course, many of those who made capital of all these fears, and used them to incite greater zeal for the Protestant Succession in England and for its champions upon this side of the water, were busily engaged in trampling on other people's liberty in New York. Again, there were others—and the headquarters of these level-headed Manhattanese was in the mansion of Madam Van Cortlandt—who mocked at such idle terrors, and

FEARS REAL AND IMAGINARY 119

openly declared that they were old wives' tales, invented by the Leislerians to injure their enemies.

In the Governor's Household opinions, it was said, were divided. My Lady Bellomont was quite indifferent to all this uproar, and with her amongst others was Captain Ferrers, who knew too much concerning people of the Catholic faith to believe anything that was said. On the other hand, the Governor, influenced by John Nanfan and others, whether from motives of policy or from a sincere belief in the dangerous character of the Romanists, regarded the situation gravely, and held long conferences regarding the defence of the city from these supposed enemies within, no less than from those without. To Prosser Williams the matter was supremely indifferent. Like the majority of those who followed the fortunes of William of Orange, and in so doing forswore their allegiance to the hereditary sovereign of Great Britain, he affected extreme hatred of all adherents of the Pope of Rome, and was ready to charge them with any atrocity. But, in his secret mind and sometimes in company with my Lady Bellomont, he permitted himself to make sport of the timorous citizens who tilted at windmills and otherwise emulated the surprising feats of Don Quixote and his worthy squire.

As the agitation thus grew from day to day, Captain Egbert Ferrers felt no little anxiety on behalf of Mistress Evelyn de Lacey. She and her father might, he feared, become in some way or another victims of misguided zealots, who, as he angrily declared when communing with himself, could see no farther than their noses, and were as fearful as mice where Papists were concerned. He could not confide his misgivings to anyone, and

Lord Bellomont, being just then taken up with a variety of matters, required such constant attendance from the members of his Household that it was difficult to find an opportunity to put Evelyn and her father upon their guard. And so events were shaping themselves in a manner which, as shall be seen in the sequel, was to prove disastrous to the cause of Catholicity, as well as extremely vexatious to those with whom this narrative is immediately concerned.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SHADOW OF CAPTAIN KIDD

AS before mentioned in this narrative, Lord Bellomont, acting on instructions from the King and several powerful noblemen, and, as the disaffected whispered, with a view to replenish a depleted treasure, had inaugurated a new system of privateering. Its object—real or ostensible, according to the view taken of the transaction—was to protect commerce upon the high seas from the ever-growing boldness of pirates, and also to put an end, as far as possible, to smuggling, which had caused New York to be regarded as the chief centre of illicit traffic in the Colonies. The voice of rumor, which had long been secretly busy with the matter, was now unloosed, and told the wildest tales of “notorious and inhuman pirates” who infested the seas, some even claiming to have commissions from the late Governor of New York. Under the very noses of the authorities, these pirates had brought costly wares and the products of the most distant lands into the city. This was often done, it was alleged, with the connivance of prominent citizens and in defiance of restrictive ordinances, which were held to be tyrannical and oppressive. Thus, when one of the leading women of society appeared one evening at an assembly with a superlatively fine jewel, it was

whispered about that it had been given as hush money to her husband by a pirate, who had obtained it by the murder of an Eastern princess. A well-known merchant was rumored to have under his bed a large box of gold dinars, which had been obtained by similar violent methods.

Hence it was that, since the navy was much weakened by the late wars, my Lord Bellomont had suggested to the King the employment of private men-of-war, and wealthy New Yorkers, notably Robert Livingston, either impelled by patriotic motives or for their own profit, expressed their willingness to co-operate in the inauguration of the new system, and to contribute towards the expenses of the impromptu navy. Through the representations of Robert Livingston, Captain Kidd received from Lord Bellomont, with the sanction of the King, full power to capture and deal as he saw fit with pirates, with whose methods and places of resort he was familiar. This appointment later subjected the Earl to severe criticism. But, besides the recommendation of a thoroughly reputable citizen, he had some warranty for his choice of a Commander. For in 1691, four years before Lord Bellomont's appointment, two members of the Council, Messrs. Monville and Willett, were deputed to attend the House of Representatives and acquaint them with the good service rendered to the Colony by the "said Captain Kidd in attending with his vessels the arrival of the Governor, and to urge that it would be acceptable to His Excellency and to this Board that some suitable reward be made him." And the reward was actually given, the Receiver General being instructed to pay to Captain William Kidd the sum of 150 pounds currency (a large sum

THE SHADOW OF CAPTAIN KIDD 123

of money at that time) for his "good services done to the Province." Now it is very possible that this reward and the honorable mention of the celebrated commander were greeted with shouts of derisive laughter by such men as Captain Greatbatch and those others who were in the habit of taking a convivial glass at the tavern of *Der Halle* and elsewhere. But the honors and emoluments then conferred at least gave Lord Bellomont justification for that selection which turned out so ill.

The robbers of the sea and those dealers in illicit wares who assembled for their smoke and glass at the tavern, were at one in mocking at the appointment of the redoubtable Kidd to patrol the seas. Whether their amusement arose from actual knowledge or from the general probabilities of the case, it is impossible to say. That he might fill his new office with credit where other nefarious traffickers were concerned, they did not doubt; but that he would refrain for one moment from laying hands on whatever booty came his way was in their estimation beyond all credence. So like a thunderbolt came down upon the town the tidings concerning the "Quidder (or Quedah) Merchant," a vessel which was laden with a particularly costly cargo. The merchandise on board, consisting of Oriental gems and gold, the finest wines and the richest stuffs, was said to reach what seemed in those days a fabulous value. The mystery pertaining to her capture set afloat a crop of rumors, which at first could not be verified. Dark and terrible were the hints thrown out at the taverns amongst usually well-informed seafaring men and riverside characters, as well as at the assemblies, the supper parties, the dances and the card parties, in which Dutch New York delighted. The

capture of the most valuable cargo that had crossed the seas in many months shook public confidence once and forever in the new system of privateering, and also showed to the minds of many upon what an unstable foundation it had rested. So distorted were some of the rumors that they actually called into question the highest authorities, who were accused of complicity in the disaster.¹

One evening, when the public excitement was at its highest, and the parlor of *Der Halle* was fuller than usual, Mynheer de Vries conversed in mysterious whispers with half a dozen of his cronies. That public room of the tavern was a cheerful spot, its broad-beamed low ceiling catching the cheerful flames that leaped up from the hearth and played over the tables, on the pewter mugs, and on the anxious or cynically smiling faces of those present. In almost every group might be heard the name of Captain Kidd, whom rumors, as yet unsubstantiated, connected with the disaster. During a pause in the conversation, all eyes turned suddenly towards the door. It admitted, when opened, a terrific blast of wind, which, like the ominous breath of coming disaster, sent a shiver through the room. There was a stamping of feet and everyone looked expectant. But it was only Captain Greatbatch, who had just returned from a perfectly honest and legitimate voyage; or so it appeared, for the Captain was cautious, and now realized that Lord Bellomont was of a temper very different from that of the late Governor, who was charged with having given

¹The balance of probability seems to be that Lord Bellomont acted in good faith in the appointment of Captain Kidd, though that pirate after his arrest charged both Governor and King with complicity in his enterprises, and a clamor was raised by the Earl's political opponents.

THE SHADOW OF CAPTAIN KIDD 125

commissions to pirates, having associated with smugglers, and permitted them to make a rendezvous of the mansion in the Fort. Greatbatch's vessel had just returned from the Island of Curaçoa. The cargo he had brought was duly entered and paid for at the Customs, and all questions answered. Still there were some who whispered that other wares had reached the port, and had passed from the Captain's cabin to persons unknown on shore. But that again might have been merely arguing from the possibilities.

The Captain cried out that it was a wild night, a sentiment with which the company could unanimously agree. It was evident, however, that all were waiting for news which this rude sea-dog might tell, if he would; or at least for opinions which he would be likely to express with his customary brutal frankness. Greatbatch was, at first, in a surly and uncommunicative mood. He sat down with his order of two fingers of rum and some eatables at a table well removed from the others. They were all too cautious to approach him until the second portion of rum, which he presently ordered, took its effect. Then the smuggler began to address remarks to Mynheer de Vries and other prominent men who sat at the same table, and each of them winced at his coarse familiarity and what it implied, glancing furtively at his neighbor to mark the effect. The room in general had been waiting for this moment when the Barbadoes rum would unloose Greatbatch's tongue.

"Mynheer de Vries and gentles all," he exclaimed in his deep, rough voice, "I give you a toast which the men of the seas here present will drink with pride."

There was a movement of interest and yet of uneasiness, intensified by the entrance of two figures in heavy overcoats. With a thrill of dismay—for what might not Greatbatch divulge?—it was noted that these were Captain Egbert Ferrers and Captain Prosser Williams, the two best-known members of all the Governor's Household and those who had most identified themselves with the social life of the colony. Nodding to those of their acquaintances whom they perceived, they sat down at a table, ordering two glasses of hot negus, for the night was bitterly cold and they had had a long tramp.

After a momentary survey of the two new-comers, whom he did not recognize or to whose presence he was indifferent, Captain Greatbatch once more called upon the assembly to drink his toast. There was a gleam of triumphant malice in his eyes, and his face broadened into a grin of malignant drollery, as he cried out:

"I give you a toast, gentles, to one who nearly a decade since received a hundred and fifty pounds current money of these colonies for services rendered, being also publicly thanked for those services, though no mention was made of other irons that he had in the fire. It is the same one who has been placed over us all, young and old men, by His Excellency's worship, with what motive God knoweth. I give you, gentles and seamen here present, the health, the prosperity, the good fortune of the greatest sea-rover that ever left this port or any other, Cap'n William Kidd."

So far there was nothing that anyone could object to, were it not the innuendo contained in that allusion to His Excellency, which, in fact, would have been well enough received but for the presence

THE SHADOW OF CAPTAIN KIDD 127

of two of his gentlemen. There was a confused murmur from one table or another, and each one hesitated to raise his glass to his lips.

"What?" cried Greatbatch, exploding with riotous mirth, in which Captain Ferrers felt a strong inclination to join. "Is there no one to drink to the health of the mighty Captain, who has been placed over all that we may be kept within the bounds of the law, that he may suppress smuggling—save the mark!—and piracy, and instruct us in our duty?"

The murmurs grew louder, and amongst the lower order of those present brows were dark and scowling, while the gentlemen, who might have otherwise treated the matter as a joke, felt disturbed and uneasy because of the presence of the two officers. No glass was raised, however, save that of Greatbatch, who, having risen to his feet, held his liquor poised in mid-air, while he looked maliciously around.

"Why, what ails you, gentlemen?" he cried, addressing himself more particularly to that table at which sat Mynheer de Vries and his friends. "Won't you drain a glass to Cap'n Kidd, the favored puppet of my Lord Bellomont?"

But here there was an unexpected interruption. Leaning back in his chair and looking the speaker full in the face, Captain Ferrers said quietly, though there was sternness mingled with his jesting tone:

"My friend, propose what toasts may seem good to you, but I would advise that you leave out of them the name of His Excellency."

The words were greeted with applause by those who sat around Mynheer de Vries, and at two or three other tables where gentlemen or respectable tradesmen had gathered. Those of the seafaring

class, who held together in one corner, watched and waited.

"And who are you," roared Greatbatch, truculently, "that comes into a house of public entertainment and attempts to interfere with liberty of speech?"

"Who I am matters not," said Captain Ferrers, crossing one leg over the other and regarding Greatbatch with smiling composure. "But you will show your wisdom by taking my advice."

"I give my toast," persisted Greatbatch, with a malignant scowl at the young officer, "to Cap'n Kidd, made Admiral of the Seas."

Then addressing himself directly to those in the corner of the room, from whom he was sure at least of a measure of sympathy, he added:

"Three times three, my hearties, for Cap'n Kidd, who with his private man-of-war is free from this day on to rob whom he will. Drain your glasses to the Governor's pet, who will make him, I doubt not, a fine gift of the 'Quidder Merchant.'"

In an instant the room was in a tumult, Captain Ferrers with one bound was at the ruffian's side, and, seizing him by the collar, forced him into his seat, adding a stinging blow to the fellow's ear. Prosser Williams, though inwardly execrating the inconvenient loyalty of his companion, sprang forward perforce to his assistance, drawing his sword and putting himself on guard. To their side sprang also Pieter Schuyler, who had looked in for a moment on his way from a card party at Vrow Van Brugh's, whence he had escorted his cousin Polly and her friend home to Madam Van Cortlandt's, where Evelyn was spending the night. His mind was still full of the girl and of the words that she had spoken,

and of her aspect, as, hooded and cloaked, she had smiled at him from the open door of the house, and had bade him a pleasant good-night. To be thus brought from her presence into a brawl, the outcome of which seemed doubtful for a moment, was a decided shock, but there was an excitement in it too. The half-score of gentlemen present felt that they would have to support Captain Ferrers for appearance' sake, although some of them had reasons which made an open quarrel with Captain Greatbatch exceedingly unpalatable. They were, however, easily outnumbered by the group of seafaring men in the farther corner, some of whom were familiar associates of Greatbatch, and had been involved in many of his desperate enterprises. Others were honest sailors who had no particular connection with him, but the whole twoscore or more were prepared to stand by their fellow-tar, so that the affair seemed likely to assume an ugly aspect. Rising to his feet, Captain Greatbatch rushed like a bull in the direction of his late assailant, but the latter, cool and unperturbed, though exceedingly angry at the insinuation which had been made, stood his ground and waited, refusing even to draw his sword in such an unworthy quarrel. Hastily summoned from the kitchen, the inn-keeper, a fat Dutchman, peaceable and good-humored to the last degree, threw up imploring hands and begged his patrons to keep the peace. While so doing he sustained in his substantial person the onrush of Captain Greatbatch, whose unsteady legs made his progress uncertain. Clapping his hands to his stomach and exclaiming that the wind had been knocked out of him, the would-be peacemaker only added to the confusion. The low-browed men drew near, some of them with

dirks drawn, others with brawny fists upraised, and with curses on their lips, prepared to vindicate the right of mariners to talk as they pleased. Loud voices, growls of anger, and the bellowing voice of Greatbatch made a pandemonium unspeakable; and a riot of a very serious character seemed imminent when the cool, even tones of Mynheer de Vries, who had mounted upon a stool, was heard above the tumult.

"Worthy men all, I implore you to keep the peace. Here are you menaced with a very grave matter. For we have in the company two of the Gentlemen of His Excellency's Household."

There was a startled pause, during which the tumult of voices momentarily ceased, and even the fiercest of the brawlers stood uncertain. Greatbatch himself, held back by a gigantic tradesman in leathern apron, who whispered in his ear and strove to calm him, cast a sullen but somewhat apprehensive glance in the direction of Captain Ferrers. That officer had not moved an inch, but was waiting for his would-be assailant carelessly. But the smooth voice continued:

"One of these gentlemen has most properly resented a jesting remark of the worthy Captain Greatbatch, who, with others of his profession, has felt somewhat sore concerning the appointment of Captain Kidd to a post of authority."

Greatbatch, scowling and sullen but somewhat subdued since the quality of the adversary was made known to him, turned his blood-shot eyes from his opponent to the speaker, whose remarks he was inclined to resent.

"Now I doubt not," went on Mynheer, "that Captain Greatbatch will cheerfully explain that he

THE SHADOW OF CAPTAIN KIDD 131

was ignorant of these gentlemen's presence, and could have meant no offence to them, and that his misplaced pleasantry was but an idle jest, without intention to reflect upon His Excellency's person or authority."

Greatbatch, though he was not too tipsy to realize the awkward position in which he had placed himself, continued at first to growl that he'd be hanged if he'd offer an apology to yonder springald:

"He gave me the lie," he muttered fiercely, "and a clout in the ear to boot; and, gentleman or no gentleman, it must be a blow for a blow."

"I pray you, gentlemen and good people," said Captain Ferrers, laying aside his coat and his sword with it, "to let him come on, if so minded, and settle this matter forthwith. For it is a lesson this surly brute doth well deserve, who has dared to speak thus in my presence of the representative of the King's Majesty."

"God bless him!" cried several officious gentlemen. "Aye and Lord Bellomont, too!"

But Greatbatch, whether deterred by the determined aspect of Captain Ferrers or merely abashed by his dignity and fearing to get himself seriously involved with the highest authorities, suddenly changed his tune and came forward instead to tender his humble apology for the words that he had said, hoping that the gentleman would not hold it against him, nor report unfavorably of him to "His Excellency's worship."

Captain Ferrers thereupon consented to consider the incident closed, and, resuming his coat and sword, took his leave of Mynheer and the other gentlemen, making his acknowledgments to Pieter Schuyler, who had shown himself ready if necessary

to take up the quarrel. On the homeward way with his fellow-soldier, who said but little and for more reasons than one was displeased with the occurrence, Captain Ferrers said thoughtfully:

"I fear me much that yonder ruffian has expressed the popular opinion." At which Prosser Williams, narrowing his eyes, looked at him without reply.

Since this narrative cannot deal in detail with the oft-told story of Captain Kidd and the troubles which his misconduct entailed for Richard, Earl of Bellomont, it may suffice to say that that celebrated sea-rover had indeed, as very soon came to be known, turned his attention from the business of privateering, which he found unprofitable and even futile. Since both pirates and smugglers kept out of his way, he determined upon a bold stroke which should establish his fortunes and, if successful, pave the way for other adventures. There is no doubt that he took advantage of the plenary power which had been given him, and also seemed to rely upon the countenance and support of His Excellency.

He it was who had seized upon the "Quidder (or Quedah) Merchant," an East India merchantman heavily laden with rich goods, in which many merchants of Boston and New York were interested. He burned his own ship "Adventure," which was in need of repair, and, boarding the prize, sailed for the pirate mart of Madagascar. There he disposed of the rich cargo for what would be over a million dollars of present currency. On hearing that his piracy was known in England, and that he himself was excepted by name from all clemency shown to other sea-robbers, he put his gold, jewels and other ill-gotten goods on board a sloop and, returning to native waters, ran ashore on Gardiner's Island.

THE SHADOW OF CAPTAIN KIDD 133

There, his true character was not known at first, and he was given food and drink, with the hospitality usual at that epoch. Then he began to display his true character. He imposed silence on the proprietors of the place by the most awful threats, while on the other hand he bestowed a handsome present of rich stuff on those who assisted in concealing his identity. For there were only too many who were willing to profit by Kidd's exploits, as long as they could do so with secrecy and success. A certain color was given to all the wild rumors when Kidd, having buried his treasures on Gardiner's Island, had the audacity to run into Boston Harbor, and on his arrest, which evidently he did not expect, he represented himself as the victim of a mutiny and addressed a forceful appeal to Lord Bellomont, as one friend might appeal to another.

The Governor, who was greatly disturbed by the reports which had gone about and which his friends and admirers repudiated with scorn, turned a deaf ear to the pleadings of his whilom commander, and, after correspondence with the Home Government, had him sent in chains to England. Summary justice was there dealt out to him, and he was executed. But even that stern measure did not silence the tongues of the malicious, who declared that the pirate was but a scapegoat, who had ventured too much in capturing the "Quidder Merchant," and had suffered the penalty for other men's schemes, no less than for his own.

BOOK II

CHAPTER I

PERSECUTION REVIVED

IT may be that the strife of faction, which marked the Earl of Bellomont's term of office from its first inception in April, 1698, together with those troubles resulting in the death of Captain Kidd and culminating in the extreme severity with which he thenceforward pursued all illicit traders, so embittered him that he was eager to wreak vengeance upon someone. Or it may have been the hereditary hostility of his family—and particularly of his father, Charles Coote—towards his Catholic fellow-countrymen in Ireland, which broke out with still greater venom here in the New World, where arbitrary power was placed in his hands. But it is certain that, about two years after his arrival, he yielded to the anti-Catholic influence of John Nanfan and others, or perhaps himself outstripped them in the race, and invoked the rigors of the law against the Catholic clergy, and the Jesuits in particular.

The law which he saw fit to pass at a session of the Council on August 9, 1700, came with the force of a stunning blow to the few scattered Catholics, who had gone their way in peace and obscurity, and

had not taken any part in the troubles between the contending parties. Its injustice was manifest to the majority of right-minded citizens, including a large proportion of the Dutch settlers who, until the evil days of Jacob Leisler, had been averse to active persecution. It is true that there were laws for the regulation of public worship and the like, which had told against the Catholic clergy and made it necessary to hold Catholic services in secret places and without the cognizance of the authorities. But still there had been no overt acts, and the presence of Catholics, if suspected, was winked at by the easy-going officials.

In the time of the Catholic Governor, Dongan, and with a Catholic sovereign reigning in England, Catholics had been enabled to assemble for public worship in a chapel at the Fort and were ministered to by the Jesuit Fathers whom Dongan¹ had brought over in his train. The time came when that Governor, who had striven so hard to procure for others the freedom of worship which his co-religionists for that brief interval enjoyed, was "hunted like a wolf" by the vindictive Leisler, and Catholic priests were banished from the colony. Since the English Protestant Governors following Dongan had taken no active steps against the missionaries or other priests, it had been hoped that Lord Bellomont might pursue the same policy, despite the unsavory reputation of his family for religious intolerance of the most envenomed kind. But those hopes were doomed to come to a peremptory end.

¹ A Protestant historian writes: "Dongan was a man of integrity, moderation and genteel manners, and, though a professed Papist, amongst the best of our governors" (Smith, "History of New York to 1762").

It was a sultry midsummer evening, when the Dog Star was reigning over the town. The city lay languid and enervated, expecting relief only from the sea-breeze that at night blew up from the Bay. All day Manhattan had sweltered under the fierce sun, the reflection of which from the glassy surface of the water seemed to intensify the heat. Not a breath stirred the leaves, which drooped listlessly downwards. The sun set like a ball of fire, crimsoning all the West; the stars, as they came forth, were obscured by a heat mist; while the young moon, rising white and clear, likewise took on a ruddy tint as it left the cool shadows gathered on the horizon.

Gerald de Lacey had been feeling all that day an unwonted depression, for the trend of events, which he closely followed with the mind of one trained to think upon such matters, and his considerable inner knowledge of the workings of governments had caused him to fear that some stroke was imminent. He had had some letters from Father Harvey, a Jesuit now of the Maryland Mission, who had been closely associated with New York in Dongan's time, and always yearned after the Dutch capital. As he had been Mr. de Lacey's particular friend and confessor in those days, which now seemed dream-like in the peace and security that they offered to men of all faiths and especially to the previously sorely-tried Catholics, there was a peculiarly intimate and affectionate bond between them, almost that of father and son. The good priest had been preparing de Lacey for what he felt certain would happen. Gerald knew now that, behind all his fears and misgivings, there always had been hope. And this hope had grown stronger, since Lord Bellomont

had been over two years in the colony and must have been well aware that the Catholics, even if they were such as the fanatics affected to believe them, could have no power to do harm to a living soul. But, no doubt, the doughty Earl was anxious to make a great show of loyalty to the Protestant Succession, and to retrieve what he had lost in public opinion by the ill-success of his privateering scheme. He wanted the King to know that there was a safe man at the head of affairs in New York, and so took the lead in a new outbreak of intolerance, which was presently spread to the neighboring colonies.

On that inauspicious day, Mr. de Lacey had gone out for a walk, and, sitting down to taste some new cider under the trees of *Der Halle*, had suddenly heard the news. He had given no sign as he listened to the talk concerning it, though his heart was beating fast and his pulses leaping. The spirits that, according to local tradition, held back the storm winds behind the pile of great rocks, must have been keeping them very close that day, for scarce a ripple stirred the languid bosom of the river, and the sails of the boats hung listlessly in a great calm. As de Lacey finished deliberately his drink with mine host, the latter shook his head over the startling news of that day, but drew forth no expression of opinion from his customer, whose religious opinions were of course unknown to him. Holding his head very high and with some new animation stirring through all his frame, that loyal member of the proscribed faith walked quickly home. On the way he encountered Captain Ferrers and exchanged salutes with him, though their acquaintance, through deliberate caution on the part of Evelyn's father, had been of the slightest. He fancied that

the young officer looked hard at him, but perhaps it was only fancy. For it was highly improbable that Ferrers could know what was only dimly remembered by some older people here in Manhattan—that, when de Lacey had been attached to the Household of the Catholic Governor, he had practised the Catholic faith in the chapel at the Fort. Most of those who remembered must have believed that he simply attended these services out of courtesy to his chief, and inquired no farther. As to his subsequent persecution by Jacob Leisler and his expulsion from the colony, it was something which had been suffered by many of the leading citizens, especially those of the Bayard party. Hence the term "Papist" was often applied indifferently to members of this party and those who were really Catholics, and it was probably taken for granted that Gerald de Lacey was only one of the former. For some time after the coming of the new Governor, Gerald had had another fear in his mind, and this was that either or both of the two officers who were so prominently connected with my Lord Bello-mont, might have an inconvenient memory of certain events in England, which had been the immediate cause of his leaving that country. But the time had passed, and he had long since persuaded himself that they had failed to recognize him, and it was most improbable that they would do so now.

When he reached home Evelyn had not yet returned. She had gone to take dinner with her friend Polly Van Cortlandt, after which it had been her intention to spend an hour or so as usual with the *Wilden* at their camping ground. This intention, however, she relinquished on hearing the ominous news at the Van Cortlandts', and hurried home,

reaching there but a few moments after her father. She found him walking about in the garden in evident agitation. Catching sight of Evelyn's pale, troubled face, he came towards her with both hands outstretched. In that sultry, storm-laden atmosphere some presage of future trouble seemed to weigh upon the minds of both. The heavy scent of many flowers smote upon their senses. They were the late flowers which Evelyn had tended, and which had replaced with their richer coloring the narcissi, pea blossoms, and the various pale blooms of the spring and early summer. Heliotropes, poppies, nasturtiums, pink, crimson and white roses, pansies and marigolds filled the beds and spread in luxuriant profusion over every available corner.

"Well, little daughter," said Mr. de Lacey, a light from within illumining his face, which nevertheless appeared unwontedly lined and careworn to the anxious eyes that scanned it, "so a blow has fallen at last, which, as I fear me much, is but the precursor of many another."

"O father dearest," cried Evelyn, "it is dreadful, and it may have such consequences."

"There is but small doubt that it will," said Mr. de Lacey. "The clergy, and especially the Jesuits, are always the first to suffer, and then it is our turn."

He was furthermore convinced, though he did not say so to Evelyn, that his own position would soon become, if it were not already, extremely perilous. In all the talk that was sure to follow upon this measure of the Governor, the fact would surely be brought to light that he was a Catholic, having been intimately associated with Dongan in whatever efforts were made for the welfare of his co-

religionists. Also, it was quite among the possibilities that the memory of one or both of those members of Lord Bellomont's Household might suddenly awaken to what had been his record in England and to the causes of his leaving that country.

"But," he said at last, rousing himself as if from a deep reverie, "if persecution comes our way, we can meet it as did our ancestors in the Faith. You know well, little daughter, that our family can boast of more than one martyr for the Faith, and indeed the Irish people of those days were all confessors, even when they did not reach the higher plane of martyrdom."

"We will meet whatever comes, my father and I together," said Evelyn.

In moments of deep excitement she did not talk much, as though her thoughts were too deep for speech. But there was a glow in her eyes that made it seem as though a lamp had been suddenly lighted behind them, and the light seemed to shine out from her eyes and communicate itself to others. Her head was held higher, and every fibre of her body seemed to express courage and resolution. She could perceive too the exaltation in her father's bearing. This new call-to-arms had roused him, as of old the sound of the trumpet, when he had taken up material arms for king and country. Evelyn now felt ashamed of the depression and the fear that had overmastered her, when first she had heard the news at the Van Cortlandts'. The soul within her seemed to take fire from that pure spirit which, in patient endurance, had already undergone a martyrdom, and was now ready once more for the combat.

Out of the blackness that had settled upon the town, as they still lingered in the perfumed stillness

of the garden, they heard the Watch coming with rattling staves and hoarse voices, proclaiming as usual the hour, the state of the weather, and lastly the Act of His Most Worshipful Richard, Earl of Bellomont, Baron of Coolony, Governor of the Province of New York, Captain General of the Forces, etc., against all Jesuits and Popish priests, forbidding under grievous penalties all exercise of their ministry, with dire penalties likewise for those who should harbor or consort with them. The two stood listening with blanched faces, for this solemn proclamation appeared to bring the new departure home to them. To Evelyn, whose heart beat high with indignation, it seemed absurd and outrageous to suppose that such measures should be taken here in this peaceful town, resting between its swift-flowing rivers and with its harbor that, but for the presence of the warship, appeared a peaceful haven where it might have been supposed that the oppressed of all nations would seek and find shelter. Father and daughter heard with a new sensation the gates of the town being shut, simultaneously with the announcement by the Watch of the hour of nine and the firing of the gun from the Fort. That simple act somehow suggested a restriction of freedom—bars which shut them and their fellow-Catholics off from the free exercise of their religion. Henceforth, they felt convinced, the slightest turn of events might involve them in material ruin, if not place them in actual peril, since the temper of the Governor and of his advisers of the Protestant party was thus shown. The law, which for the moment chiefly concerned the clergy, might presently be extended to the faithful laity, if indeed they were not already touched by one of its clauses. Experience everywhere had

shown that intolerance, once let loose, had but whetted the appetite with the clergy as first victims.

To Evelyn that hour seemed a momentous one, marking an epoch in her life, which now seemed to have been idle and frivolous up to this moment. She reproached herself that she had ever left her father alone in his solitude, even though it had been at his express wish and almost command. Her love of dress, the solicitude she had shown for her clothes, came out of the darkness to reproach her. She was keyed up to a pitch of enthusiasm which only youth can know, and which made it seem as if no sacrifice would be too great that might help the cause or give her a share in the trials that were gathering about it like storm-clouds around a point of light.

"It would be after all so fine a thing, father," she said, "if we should be called upon to suffer for the Faith."

He reached out his hand and stroked her hair as he had often done when she was a child.

"That is my own brave girl," he said. "But for the moment we must be merely prudent, changing nothing in our ordinary mode of life lest suspicion should be thereby excited. There are but few, I think, who know to any certainty what religion we profess, and these few can be trusted."

He stopped and paced up and down the garden walk for a brief interval, as if to recover command of himself. Some flowers that had fallen from the bushes in a heavy shower of the night previous, gave forth a sweet odor as he crushed them under his feet, as a heart crushed by pain gives forth its sweetest fragrance of charity and faith.

"After that," he said at last, for in Evelyn's

silence he felt only the strong support of her sympathy and the assurance of her strength, "after that we must do as God directs. I have been reading with all care the Act, which is now made public and which I shall read to you presently—or such portions thereof as may be pertinent. We must not conceal from ourselves that, once it is put in force, it gives a broad scope for oppressive acts, even toward the laity."

Though he did not say so to her, he knew that her teaching of the Indian catechumens might very easily bring Evelyn under the Act, while he himself might—and, as he admitted, with some justice—be prosecuted, even on an accusation of high treason, for his open profession there of the Catholic faith, as well as for services rendered in England to the late King and against that other whom he had considered as a usurper.

"They will be able to indict me," he said to himself, "if such should seem good to them, on a charge of 'consorting and conspiring with Jesuits,' though in truth my connection with those saintly priests and missionaries, either here or overseas, has been altogether of a spiritual nature, and politics was scarcely so much as mentioned between us. But who will convince them of that, since their desire is to exterminate Catholics and make these colonies wholly Protestant?"

To Evelyn, however, he merely said that she must be careful in her future relations with the *Wilden*, and must bind them to the closest secrecy, which they above all people were capable of maintaining. The warning given, he fell back into something more than his customary cheerfulness, and laughed and jested so that Evelyn wondered at

his light-heartedness, as he took her arm to lead her into the study, where she was anxious to hear the wording of the Act against Popish ministers. At the Van Cortlandts' they had been chary of repeating all its phrases. Gerald de Lacey threw his hat boyishly into the air with a laugh that was reminiscent of his youth, crying out:

"And meantime, three cheers for the Jesuits and all other Popish priests."

Though he had not raised his voice, the echoes seemed to catch the sound and repeat it, and Evelyn laid her hand on his arm with a new terror. By the light of the wax tapers their heads were presently bent together over the printed formula of that Act, while moths, coming in from the garden like messengers from the outside darkness, hovered about their heads, and the cry of a night-bird might be heard sounding hoarsely through the gloom. The father's clear, decided voice read, while Evelyn rested her arm on his shoulder, with a gesture full of confidence and affection:

"Whereas divers Jesuits, priests and Popish missionaries, have of late come and for some time have had their residence in the remote parts of the Province and others of His Majesty's adjacent colonies, who by their wicked, subtle insinuations, industriously labor to debauch, seduce and withdraw the Indians from their due obedience to His Sacred Majesty and to excite and stir them up to sedition, rebellion and open hostility to His Majesty's Government.

"Be it enacted that all and every Jesuit and seminary priest, missionary or other spiritual and ecclesiastical person made or ordained by any authority, power or jurisdiction, derived, challenged,

or pretended from the Pope or See of Rome, now residing within this Province or any part thereof, shall depart from it before the 1st day of November, 1700.

"And be it farther enacted by the authority aforesaid.

"That all and every Jesuit, seminary priest, missionary and other spiritual or ecclesiastical person, etc., that shall profess himself or otherwise appear to be such by preaching, teaching of others to say any Popish prayers, by celebrating Masses or granting absolutions or using any other of the Romish ceremonies or religious worship, by what name, title or degree soever such person shall be called or known, who shall continue, abide, remain or come into the Province, or any part thereof, after the 1st day of November, shall be deemed and accounted an incendiary and disturber of the public peace and safety and an enemy to the true Christian religion and shall be judged to suffer perpetual imprisonment, and if any such person being perpetually imprisoned shall break prison and make his escape, he shall suffer the pains of death, with penalties and forfeitures as in case of felony.

"And it is farther enacted by the authority aforesaid that every person who shall wittingly and believingly receive, harbor, conceal, aid, succor or relieve any Jesuit, priest, missionary or other ecclesiastical person of the Romish clergy, knowing him to be such and being lawfully convicted before any of His Majesty's Courts of Record within this Province, shall forfeit 200 pounds of current money of this Province; and such persons shall be farther punished by being set in the pillory upon several

days and also be bound to the good pleasure of the Court."¹

"And," cried Mr. de Lacey, striking the paper sharply with his hand to emphasize his words, "every charge against the Catholic priests and missionaries, as I from my former close connections with affairs do fully realize, is false as hell. The missionaries ever labor to keep the Indians under their control loyal to the Government under which they live. That they have done much in this respect for the government in these colonies I am well aware. And at the present moment no priests or missionaries are resident in these colonies, for they come but occasionally to exercise their ministry."

Evelyn's eyes filled with tears, and she could not trust herself to speak, as she remembered the saintly, all-enduring and indefatigably devoted men who, by carrying the Gospel to the Indians, had done so much to civilize them, and, by keeping them under control, had prevented many a ferocious act.

"It has ever been the darling project of my Lord Bellomont," her father continued, "to place Protestant ministers amongst the savages,² and he and all his advisers now lament that, as a matter of policy, such was not done before. Though," he added, with a laugh, "one of the chief obstacles to that scheme, as he and others declare, is the difficulty of inducing men of the cloth to take up their abode amongst the redskins. But, nevertheless, he would drive away and hunt to death the only men who are willing

¹See Livingston, Smith, Van Schaick. "Laws of New York from 1664 to 1751," chap. 84, p. 34; Brinley Bradford, "Colonial Laws," Vol. I, p. 428.

²See "Documents Relating to Colonial Laws," Vol. IV.

to give their lives for the Gospel. He has offered rewards for their apprehension, which even the Iroquois have scorned. He has striven, as he declares, to cause 'implacable hatred' between them and the Indians, and has denounced them to the latter as liars and impostors."

His voice choked with emotion, and he rose and walked to the window, whence he presently returned, saying:

"Ah, little he imagines the manner of men with whom he has to deal, when he seeks to terrify them with threats of imprisonment or death. Are they not braving death daily in the strongholds of the pagan Indians, or following them through trackless forests?"

"Oh, why was this odious Earl of Bellomont sent to rule us," cried Evelyn, indignantly, "and suffered to make such laws!"

"He is but invoking against us, or placing on the statute book, laws which already prevail over yonder, and which Dutch William most gladly will put in force. So you see, my Evelyn, what prudence will be required on your part."

"Boldness would consort better with my present mood," exclaimed the girl.

"Prudence is nevertheless the true courage, and what will be most helpful to all concerned," said Mr. de Lacey. "For, as to your relations with the *Wilden*, Lord Bellomont will not lightly pardon any action upon your part, which puts in peril his favorite plan of detaching the savages from the Catholic faith. He will hold you almost as a missionary if he should but discover that you are continuing at the camp the teachings of the good Fathers." He drew a long breath and then said,

smilingly: "However, he has but sounded the tocsin, and we have a breathing space."

While father and daughter thus conversed, and during the days that followed, that law of my Lord Bellomont offered food for conversation in every dwelling and in all the taverns of Manhattan, as well as throughout the country, since, in almost identical language, it was promulgated in Massachusetts through the influence of that fanatical scion of the Coote family.

CHAPTER II

AN ENEMY DECLARES HIMSELF

THE sky was still overcast, though a slight coolness had crept up from the Bay, relieving the sultriness of the previous day. As he looked out of the window that morning, Evelyn's father had said to her that surely there would be rain. But high noon and dinner hour had passed and still the rain kept off, though the sun was obscured and there was a perceptible dampness in the air.

Soon after dinner Evelyn set forth, walking by the banks of the stream towards the Collect Pond and the Indian encampment. For she was full of anxiety to put her catechumens amongst the *Wilden* on their guard, lest by word or sign they should betray to hostile observers the creed which they professed, and so implicate the missionaries, if any of them were present in New York Colony, besides proving ruinous to her father and herself. The encampment presented a scene of indescribable animation, to which the vivid reds and yellows of the squaws' dresses, contrasting with the green of the trees, lent color. Some of the women were busy pounding corn in the stump of a tree to the accompaniment of a low croon that had something wild and weird in its musical cadences. Others were weaving corn leaves into mats or tying them up into brooms,

while still other groups were stringing clam-shells. The last-named carefully separated the whole shells without blemish for the more valuable *wampum*, whilst the broken or defaced shells served for the inferior *sewant*, both being used as currency.

As Evelyn came walking through the woods, with the fragrance of pine and sassafras and other woodland odors in her nostrils, she stopped to listen, for the old squaw, who was usually the spokeswoman of the tribe, was detailing to a group of listeners an account of Captain Kidd. The romantic story of that sea-rover had apparently seized upon their imaginations, told as it was with the wild hyperbole of their race.

"The great chief of the *Sank-ni-canin* [the fire-makers]," the old squaw was saying, "had sailed over the big Sea Water, and had seized upon the war canoe that came thither from beyond the setting sun. In it were the gifts of the great Manitou—shining metals and stones that glittered. The chief had taken these and buried them in the earth, or in the depths of the dark waters."

Evelyn knew that the speaker was here referring to a pond on the Eastern point of Sewanaka, which had an uncanny reputation amongst the Indians. For, though it was near the ocean, its waters were never still, but always bubbling, and perfectly fresh. So the *Wilden* declared that it was guarded by a Manitou or spirit, and to this spirit, as the old woman declared, the chief of the "firemakers" had entrusted from time to time his stolen treasure.

Evelyn could not repress a shudder as the gruesome history of Captain Kidd was thus recalled to her mind. For she well remembered having frequently seen that notorious pirate, swaggering about

AN ENEMY DECLARES HIMSELF 151

the city streets with his great pistols at his belt. He had been on friendly terms with many of the principal inhabitants, and had married the daughter of a respectable family. She had heard his end described: how he swung in chains from a ghastly gibbet over beyond the seas in London, while much of his rich booty, at least such as he had buried on Gardiner's Island, was recovered through the honesty of the Gardiner family. Enough was still missing to excite the cupidity of mariners; for tales were rife amongst them of a treasure as yet undiscovered, the remaining portion of the "Quidder Merchant's" cargo. And this was part of the booty which the Indians believed to have been entrusted to the Manitou, who for no earthly consideration would yield it up to mortal man.

Evelyn's mind was, however, much more fully occupied just then with the possibility of danger to her father, herself, or the missionaries who had implanted the seeds of faith in the minds of the *Wilden*. She had no small difficulty, at first, in explaining to the forest people the danger which would accrue to herself and to their beloved "blackgowns," if it were discovered that they had been taught the Gospel mysteries, and had been baptized or were about to receive the waters of baptism. But once they realized Evelyn's meaning, they formed a circle round her and firmly bound themselves by a Silver Covenant of friendship to speak no word which might betray her, and to guard, if necessary with their lives, this beloved "pale-face member of their tribe" from every danger. This last clause in the new Covenant was framed by the *Wilden* themselves, for to Evelyn it never occurred as yet that here on this hitherto free soil of Manhattan, where she had

played as a child and spent those years of her early womanhood, either her life or liberty could be in danger.

When she left the Collect Pond that morning, pausing an instant to survey the tiny island on the water's glassy surface where already one or two bits of local history had been enacted, she turned her steps to the Broad Way. There she presently beheld coming towards her with champing of bits and clanking of bridles the outriders and postilions, heralding the approach of the state chariot. Within its luxurious depths Lord Bellomont sat stiff and erect in his elaborate military uniform beside my Lady, who appeared, as Evelyn thought, somewhat faded and worn in the broad light of day. Opposite them was Captain Ferrers, whose eyes for an instant caught and held those of Evelyn. The listless face of Lady Bellomont brightened into momentary pleasure at sight of the girl, who had interested her from the first. She said in a voice which, whether intentionally or not, was quite audible to Evelyn, as she addressed Captain Ferrers:

"She is truly a most lovely and charming girl."

The young man so addressed felt the warm color rise to his face, and there was a light in his eyes at that meed of praise, which Lady Bellomont saw with amusement, not untinged with pique. For it was not usual for the men in her immediate environment to find other interests than herself. In her younger days she had been accustomed to reign as a queen paramount in her particular coterie—one of the gayest and, it is whispered, most riotous in London. After a brief glance at the subject of the remark, to whom he vouchsafed the curtest of salutes, Lord Bellomont turned in the opposite direction:

"Captain Williams does insist," Her Ladyship continued, in a whisper, "that this Mistress Evelyn de Lacey is but a naughty little Papist."

The blood receded quickly from Captain Ferrers' face. It was as though my Lady had dealt him a blow. For he had been totally unaware of the suspicions generated in the mind of his fellow-soldier by that chance remark of Polly Van Cortlandt's. His own observations at the encampment of the *Wilden* had convinced him that this imputation was true, but it was hard to conjecture how much or how little Captain Williams knew, and why he had been so imprudent, or so malicious, as to convey his knowledge to a quarter where it was likely to be dangerous.

"Your Excellency," he said hotly, "may well defy Captain Williams to bring any proof."

Lady Bellomont looked steadily at him for a moment.

"Were it even so," she said at last, "we shall do what is possible to protect her."

As Captain Ferrers shot a glance of gratitude at the speaker, Lord Bellomont, turning quickly, inquired as to the subject of their discourse.

"We were talking about Papists," my Lady said, audaciously.

"If the orders I have given be obeyed," said His Excellency, with a frown, "there shall not be in all this colony, nor in His Majesty's adjacent province, a single adherent of the Romish superstitions. Such persons are a menace to the state."

"And is their number so considerable?" inquired my Lady with malice.

But Captain Ferrers knew that she spoke thus, rather in opposition to my Lord than from any

special sympathy with the class of people who, in the mad excitement following the accession of King William, were persecuted everywhere in the British dominions and everywhere reviled. The Protestant Succession was the fetish of the hour, to which all were ready to bow down, and no one could safely declare himself a professor of the ancient faith by which England had been raised to her highest glory.

To my Lady's query His Excellency replied testily:

"The proportion of these Papists may be small, but they are a pestilent people whom we must root out lest they conspire to our detriment with the French of Canada."

"In my belief that is a chimera," declared Lady Bellomont.

"What is a chimera?" said my Lord. "The Papists or the French of Canada?"

"I but mean their connection with each other," answered Her Ladyship. "Men have assured me that none was more zealous against those same French and all other enemies of the province than the present Earl of Limerick, once Governor Donagan."

"Women," cried His Excellency sternly, "should most fitly busy themselves with their fripperies, leaving the affairs of state to men."

"Mayhap, we might sometimes make a better handling of them," said Her Ladyship, but in a lower voice and with a smile at Captain Ferrers, who had naturally taken no part in the discussion.

Meanwhile Evelyn de Lacey stood watching the state carriage till it had disappeared in the distance. She felt the more gratified at the pretty compliment from Lady Bellomont inasmuch as it had been

AN ENEMY DECLARES HIMSELF 155

addressed to Captain Ferrers, in whom she already felt something more than an ordinary interest. As she was turning to pursue her way, she heard a voice at her elbow saying:

"In what direction goes the fairest lady in Manhattan?"

Evelyn, turning, saw beside her Captain Prosser Williams, bowing low with plumed hat in hand. Instantly her face, which had been soft with smiling interest, grew cold and distant. Her first impulse was to reply to his query: "In quite another one from yours, Captain Williams." Instead, she merely bade him a ceremonious good-morning, and, averting her face from him, stood slightly aside that he might pass on. Her whole demeanor was so intentionally repellent that the man's pale face flushed with annoyance. He winced and bit his lip angrily. As he showed no signs of stirring, Evelyn, with a formal bend of the head, prepared to leave him, but she had barely taken a step when he overtook her, saying in low, vehement tones:

"Who has been at such pains to prejudice you against me?"

"No one," replied Evelyn, "since I have scarce so much as heard the mention of your name."

She spoke almost disdainfully, staying her steps with an abruptness that could not but convey her desire to be freed from his company. But Prosser Williams showed no disposition to leave her, and, with deliberate insolence, inquired:

"So it is merely that something has ruffled my lady's temper this morning?"

Evelyn deigning him no reply, the man added in a tone that was full of malignant meaning:

"Have the savages down yonder been something

156 GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

dull this morning? Mayhap, they did not patter their Aves to your taste, or bend in adoration to the Virgin?"

The blow told. Evelyn felt in every fibre of her being the cruel consciousness that this man had learned her secret, and so held her in his power. But she bravely held her head high, and passing him again, this time decidedly, she said coldly:

"I beg that you will not detain me longer, Captain Williams. I am in haste."

He made no further effort to delay her, but said as she walked on:

"Disdain, sweet Mistress Evelyn, is oftentimes a costly luxury."

And, with this implied threat in her ears, Evelyn turned a corner and escaped him.

CHAPTER III

GLADNESS AND TEARS

EVELYN was undecided as to whether or not she should communicate to her father the anxiety which had been consuming her since Prosser Williams had so broadly hinted at his knowledge of her religion. She was aware that it would constitute an unpardonable crime in the sight of Lord Bellomont and his advisers to instruct the Indians in the tenets of the Catholic faith. For it was part of the policy of the Government to keep the savages pagan rather than permit them to come under the influence of the missionaries, since the latter were falsely supposed to be ready to conspire with the Canadian French and to lead their Indian catechumens into a league with the Catholics and aborigines of the north.

Her mind was so disturbed that she absented herself for many days from the Van Cortlandt mansion and from the society of Polly, whose sharp eyes might have quickly discovered her perturbation. She was sitting in her room one afternoon, looking out towards the Fort, where the flag of William of Orange was flying. The warship, lying at anchor in the Bay, seemed the very symbol of that power which, like some dreadful dragon, might reach out a claw to seize her. It was with very mingled feel-

ings of pleasure and apprehension that she heard Polly's voice calling from the garden below. It would be so pleasant to see her again, and to revert, if that were possible, to the happy days before the coming of Lord Bellomont, or at least before his power had been displayed in a manner so adverse to herself and her co-religionists. And yet she was afraid lest something in her bearing or a chance word on her part should convey to Polly, and through her to others, any confirmation of what might be already suspected as to herself and her father, and as to her own relations with the *Wilden*. Not that she distrusted Polly for one instant, but she dared not put her upon her guard, or confide a secret to her which, in the present circumstances, might prove perilous even to the confidant.

The sight of the bright-faced girl standing down there amongst the flowers, in the flower-sprigged and much-beribboned muslin gown, recalled with a sudden thrill that was half a pang that other noonday when they had gone to witness the arrival of the new Governor, and had first laid eyes on those various personages who were destined subsequently to play such important rôles in their own life-drama. Leaning out of the window, Evelyn inquired whether Polly would come up, or if she herself should go down.

"Dearest friend," urged the other, "come down, I pray you. What I have to tell you, will be best told in the garden."

As Evelyn descended the stairs she reflected with relief that the other's news must needs be of a pleasant nature, to judge by the brightness of her face and her happily excited manner. She laid an arm affectionately on Polly's shoulder, and the two began

to pace the familiar flower-strewn paths where since girlhood they had exchanged confidences and chatted over the various episodes of life in Manhattan.

"It is full a week," began Polly reproachfully, "since I have seen or heard from you. And in that time has happened—oh, I can scarcely believe it myself, it came so sudden and seemed so wonderful. Nor do I know whether to be sad or joyful."

"Your face decides for the latter," commented Evelyn.

"Yes," answered Polly, though her face at the instant was sober enough, "I believe I am more joyful than sad, and yet—"

She fell to stirring the syringa bushes near which she stood, while Evelyn waited with a smile for the secret which already she had divined.

"Do you remember, Evelyn," said Polly suddenly, lapsing into that vein of reminiscence in which the former had been indulging as she came down the stairs, "our excitement that spring day when we drove with my grandmother to see Their Excellencies arrive?"

Ever so slight a sigh escaped her and she looked wistfully at her friend.

"I was so elated with the notion of meeting all those strangers who had come from overseas to enliven our old Manhattan. How exciting it was! And yet, my dearest," with a despondent little shake of the head, "there was no use entering the lists, and I might have known it at once. To those men of His Excellency's Household and to the officers of the regiment, save for a few subalterns, I have been as nothing, while you—"

"Oh, my dear," cried Evelyn, "why will you talk such nonsense!"

"But nonsense that is true," declared Polly, nodding in support of her words. There was a silence in the garden as if all the flowers were listening for the confidence about to be made.

"So I gave up all hope of the new-comers," went on Polly, "and consoled myself with the thought that our old friends are best. Henricus has always wanted it, since we played together in our Company; and a day or two ago he threatened that, if I would not have him, he would go away overseas. I did not precisely want him to go, so—in short, dear, I am going to be married."

She finished almost shamefacedly. Evelyn gave a cry as though it was something sad and lamentable that the other had confided to her.

"But Polly," she protested involuntarily, "you are so young, and you have so many to choose from."

"But at least you will own that my choice has been good," she insisted, "and that my Henricus is the dearest of them all—except your Pieter. Once I was very fond of Pieter, cousin though he was, but that is over long ago."

She plucked absently at the leaves of a syringa bush, and, picking them to pieces, strewed the path before her as she concluded rather dreamily:

"So I am to be married soon, and we shall have as great a wedding as ever was seen in New Amsterdam, and you will be first of the bridesmaids."

But, even as she announced this intended festivity with all her wonted gaiety, her voice suddenly broke and, turning aside, she wept openly and unrestrainedly. The tears gathered in Evelyn's eyes as well and rolled down her cheeks, and thus it was a strange sight to see the two girls still standing be-

side the syringa bushes and celebrating with tears this news that should have been so joyful.

"I should be glad," said Evelyn at last, "yet I feel as if my heart would break."

"And mine is broken," sobbed Polly, "only I suppose I must marry someone."

"Yes," assented Evelyn, "you must marry sometime. It's the common doom. But it can never be quite the same between us two, and no one, Polly, can take your place."

Polly for only reply wept still harder. Then Evelyn roused herself.

"How selfish and how ridiculous I am!" declared she. "Your betrothal will please most people, and your best friend should surely be joyful."

But Evelyn was not joyful, for this man whom Polly was about to marry had never seemed to her worthy of such a wife. He was narrow and puritanical and, despite his family connections and traditions, had identified himself with the Leislerian faction. She suspected, moreover, that with Polly there was very little love in the matter. She had consented to marry Henricus Laurens from sheer weariness at his pertinacity; perhaps, too, from some little sense of pique at her failure to succeed with those more brilliant new-comers, and finally because such a match would be advantageous, and the wealth and social position of the young man would establish Polly amongst the leading young matrons of Manhattan.

To Evelyn it seemed scarcely possible that the temperament of the prospective bridegroom, which she divined to be both hard and cold, would harmonize with that of Polly. The two were fundamentally different, with a difference that could not

be bridged over, and which, in the estimation of this keen observer, promised but little happiness for a girl of Polly's training and antecedents. Warm-hearted, affectionate, and with a nature that turned as if instinctively to what was bright, she had been the very idol of her grandmother ever since that lady had adopted her out of a household of many sisters and brothers and brought her up as her own. Evelyn well knew, however, that this betrothal, which was to be duly signed and sealed in the presence of numerous relatives of both parties and some intimate friends, was a serious matter. Once Polly had given her word, she would never recede from the position in which she had placed herself, and it would be worse than useless for her friend to point out those shoals and quicksands which she foresaw must lie ahead of her. So, impatiently wiping away the tears which would gather in her eyes, and which were not entirely, as Polly supposed, for the loss of her girlhood's friend, Evelyn took the most effectual method of cheering Polly by causing her to talk of the preparations that would soon be under way, and the festivities that would accompany the marriage.

"And Henricus will have the wedding follow very speedily upon the betrothal," Polly informed her, and Evelyn thought she spoke somewhat ruefully. "Perhaps he is afraid I shall run away from him," she added with an effort at a laugh. Then looking, not at Evelyn, but away over the garden: "And since I have given my promise I do not seem able to oppose him in anything. I feel as though he had bewitched me."

Though Evelyn did not comment on this information, it in no way surprised her. Her quick insight

had made her aware that such would be always the case with Polly. Her influence over the man would cease with her consent to the marriage. And, that marriage once an accomplished fact, she who had been a power and a force amongst her young associates would become and remain to the end of the chapter merely the wife of Henricus Laurens.

Polly, who was wonderfully brightened by the discussion of the wedding gaieties and all the pretty clothes which were in course of preparation, said suddenly:

"And you must marry, too, Evelyn. Oh, if you would but decide to become the wife of Pieter, that dear Pieter who is so splendid a man, we could be married on the same day, dear, and from our house!"

There was a look on Evelyn's face that chilled the other's enthusiasm; it was so aloof, so mournful.

"I do not think I shall ever marry," she answered, "at least not for very long. And I fear much it can never be Pieter, although I love him dearly in quite another way."

Polly wondered if Evelyn's aspirations had soared higher, but that, as she instinctively felt, was not a subject for discussion.

"Happiness does not come my way," declared Evelyn, "though I have had pleasure and gaiety in abundance, and you well know I have enjoyed it."

While they stood thus, forming a lovely picture, Captain Ferrers came up the street with his quick, alert gait. The look with which he accompanied the action of taking off his hat to Evelyn, was quite unmistakable to the observer. Polly noticed too the slight tremor that passed over her friend, and the look of interest and excitement that came suddenly into her face.

"If that be he," reflected Polly sagely, "such a passion would be hopeless, even though he is plainly infatuated. And why must she let her thoughts stray from all those she has known in these colonies and who have so much admired her, to these men of another world, who perchance will go away and forget her? Though no king," she added, in her loyal enthusiasm, "were too good for Evelyn."

"Mayhap, if I had not been here," she said, with a gaiety that was a trifle forced, "Captain Ferrers might have come in to pay his respects."

"No," said Evelyn, "though often enough he passes the door."

"To admire—the garden?" laughed Polly.

"Sometimes he has stopped for a word," remarked Evelyn, "but I have never asked him to enter the house."

She did not say what her reasons were, but she now more than ever held aloof from the young man, since the new provisions of the law might at any time, if it had not already done so, place her father and herself under the ban. She clearly perceived that, under such circumstances, it was not fitting that a member of His Excellency's Household should be a visitor to their dwelling.

"Oh, life, life!" she exclaimed suddenly. "What a puzzle! What a tangled web it is! I make no doubt that for me it will grow harder. I am intended to walk in the shadows, Polly, as you are in the light."

With a swift, impetuous gesture, she threw her arms around her friend's neck and kissed her.

"How I shall miss you," she cried, "the friend whom I love above all others! How glad I am that *your* future at least is safe and secure!"

CHAPTER IV

THE PAST IS INVOKED

POLLY VAN CORTLANDT had been right in her surmise that, but for her presence, Captain Ferrers would have entered the garden. It had been his intention to have a talk with Mr. de Lacey and at any rate to put him on his guard. For, though he was unaware of what Captain Prosser Williams had said to Evelyn, thereby showing a knowledge of her relations with the Indians, a conversation had taken place upon the previous evening between the two officers which had determined Ferrers upon an immediate course of action.

The two men had been smoking together on the roof of the Governor's dwelling—that same Whitehall which had been built by Governor Stuyvesant many years before when the town of New Amsterdam was still in its infancy. The closed-in space upon the roof was a favorite lounging-place, especially for the men of the Household, and it chanced upon that occasion that these two, who were so uncongenial, were left alone together. Though they were constantly being brought into contact, since they of all the others mingled most freely with the townspeople, there was but little intimacy between them. They usually avoided anything like confidential intercourse, and the silence between them remained

166 GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

for some time unbroken till Prosser Williams said abruptly:

"Have you any recollection, Ferrers, of having seen that traitor and knave, de Lacey, before?"

"I did not know," replied the other, trying to speak carelessly, though he was instantly on the alert, "that there was a traitor or knave named de Lacey."

"We may differ as to terms," responded Captain Williams, "but probably you know full well to whom I refer. If not," he added presently, with a scarcely perceptible sneer, "I may refresh your memory by declaring that he is the father of Mistress Evelyn de Lacey."

"Ah, indeed," said Captain Ferrers, and his companion, striving hard to see his face in the light that was growing dim, continued:

"Indeed, I may have occasion to refresh your memory on *other* points as well. But one will suffice."

"You are very kind," Ferrers answered with a certain grim civility. He was holding himself well in check.

"I asked you," went on the other, "if you had a remembrance of that man. I will tell you at once that *I* have a very decided one, though I could not recall it to mind on that first occasion when together we saw, standing with Mistress de Lacey and her friend, the tall man whom we both remembered."

He waited, but Ferrers made no attempt to assist him conversationally, and he presently resumed his narrative:

"The occurrence to which I refer did not take place in these Colonics. It was in London and on

the occasion of the enthronement of King William, whom may God save!"

Ferrers bent his head as in duty bound, and the self-constituted narrator proceeded with his story.

"There was a tumult, and a man was handled roughly by the crowd for refusing to cry 'God save King William.' There were other circumstances to which I need not refer, but I knew him then, and I know him now as a pestilent disturber. Having been in one of King James' regiments, he was forced to retire because of a wound. But to the last he made himself conspicuous. To the last he rendered such service as he might, in public or private, to the Papist king."

There was a malignant fire in his eyes, and a note of savage triumph in his voice, which caused Captain Ferrers to tremble for the fate of Mr. de Lacey and his daughter. But, preserving a cool demeanor, he attempted to rally the other.

"You have, in truth, a wondrous memory," he said, "and I thank you for having given, in words so few and concise, a history which is common, we must own, to many a gallant gentleman."

"Well, I had the satisfaction on that long-distant day of raising the hue and cry against *that* 'gallant gentleman.'"

He repeated the last words with an accent of bitter mockery, but Captain Ferrers, anxious to hear more, gave his attention in silence.

"He contrived to escape arrest, flying from place to place, though openly declaring in more than one that he was a Catholic and acknowledged no King but James. It was discovered that he would fain have followed that monarch to France save for the wound by which he had been incapacitated. Fur-



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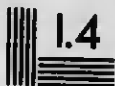
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ther, it was learned that he had long been under suspicion as a pestilent disturber and dangerous emissary of James. He fled to these Colonies where he had been formerly in the service of the Papist, Dongan, and had been driven forth in the time of that excellent Protestant and loyal champion, Jacob Leisler."

"And how came it that you did not immediately recognize him?" inquired Ferrers, striving to maintain his calmness.

"For the reason that I had seen him but once, on that memorable occasion in London."

Ferrers laughed as he said: "You would make an excellent—er—I mean to say that you should have been detailed for secret service."

Prosser Williams reddened.

"I have a nose for disloyalty," he declared, "and I hold it as certain that such men as this cannot escape the displeasure of Lord Bellomont, especially since the late decree."

"His Excellency scarcely intends, I should presume," said Ferrers, controlling himself with an effort, "to deal with individual cases. The late decree was rather, I would opine, a large public measure to prevent the spread of the Romish religion."

Prosser Williams' eyes narrowed.

"It can be made to fit whomsoever it will," he replied significantly, "and this man who was dangerous yonder may easily become dangerous here."

"He seems peaceable enough now," remarked the other, with apparent carelessness, "but such matters are scarcely in my department. I am a soldier, and no policeman."

"All members of His Excellency's Household must be such, if need demand," said Williams

sententiously, with a venomous look at his companion.

"I hope my duty will be something better fitted for a gentleman," said Ferrers with a laugh, which Williams well understood and which goaded him to madness.

He answered with a cold and deadly malignity:

"Decree or no decree, this de Lacey is dangerous. He must be watched; if need be, he must be arrested. Such an enemy of the King's Majesty should not be at large. Nor," he concluded, smiling unpleasantly, "can he be shielded by petticoats, however interesting."

Captain Ferrers was grave enough now and the rebuke which he administered to the other was scathing. After Ferrers had abruptly left him, Williams sat still and reflected, while his eyes wandered absently out over the Bay, silent and dark save for the stars which, strewn in the firmament, were reflected on its surface.

"There is a heavy score between us, Egbert Ferrers," Williams muttered. "And, if I mistake not, you will yourself supply the means to pay it."

It was this conversation that brought Captain Ferrers to the cottage, which he, however, did not enter because of Polly Van Cortlandt's presence.

CHAPTER V

THE WARNING

WHEN Captain Ferrers paid his deferred visit, he was at once ushered into Mr. de Lacey's study, where the latter sat absorbed in his books. It was early afternoon and the sunbeams, slanting through the vine-covered trellis without the window, played in patches on the floor. Evelyn had gone out with Madam Van Cortlandt and Polly to pay some visits and take coffee at the house of some of their friends. The elderly ladies brought their knitting on these occasions, putting their heads together over the latest gossip of Manhattan, while the younger chatted gaily, their chief topic at present being Polly's betrothal and approaching marriage. Evelyn's father had been strongly of opinion that it was more essential than ever for the girl to keep out amongst the people and enter into such festivities as the summer season afforded, and thus ward off any suspicion that might attach to them under the Governor's edict.

To Ferrers it was a relief to find Mr. de Lacey alone. What he had to say, he considered, had best be said in the absence of Evelyn. Gerald de Lacey received his visitor with his usual easy courtesy. For some moments the two men talked of subjects of public interest, concerning either the old country

or the new, but, at a slight pause in the conversation, the young man came to the point with a directness that pleased Gerald de Lacey.

"I trust," he began earnestly, "that you will hold me to be neither meddlesome nor intrusive when I say that I have come hither expressly to put you on your guard."

Though Mr. de Lacey could not help being startled, his demeanor was perfectly composed as he replied:

"And for that consideration I thank you."

"Remember," said the visitor, "I am not making any inquiry as to what bearing recent legislation, once it comes into force, may have upon your religious belief. Only I would beg of you to exercise the greatest caution."

He stopped and looked into the calm and still smiling face before resuming:

"Now that the feeling against persons of the Catholic faith, engendered largely by political strife, has become acute, and because of a recent occurrence, I am convinced that something more than discretion will be necessary. Charges will be made against you, and in the present temper of men's minds—of those in high places, as witnessed by the law just passed—those charges will be pressed home."

"And the nature of these charges?" Mr. de Lacey inquired.

"Possibly you may remember," said Captain Ferrers, "an occasion a dozen years ago in England, when His present Majesty was being acclaimed. There was a man, lately an officer in a Hussar regiment, who created a disturbance by leaping from a car and waving his hat, breaking into open declarations for King James and for the Catholic religion."

There was silence. Mr. de Lacey's face, flushing warmly at first, paled again. Captain Ferrers, who seemed to be studying the pattern of that carpet which had been brought overseas by the late Captain Kidd's "Antigua" in the days when that searover was a peaceful trader, continued:

"That man, though it may be opined that he was lacking in worldly prudence, commanded all my admiration. I can feel even yet a thrill at the gallant act. Unhappily, though, I was not the only spectator. Others in that multitude may have shared my sentiments, but probably the majority held divergent views. It chanced that one of those latter, who was foremost in raising the hue and cry, is now in Manhattan. He professes to have recognized the malcontent, and such recognition he will have no scruple in using as a weapon against him. Under present conditions that weapon might prove fatal."

"And you, sir," said Mr. de Lacey, in a voice full of emotion, "are willing to render service to that imprudent man, simply because you applauded, despite your better judgment, an insensate act?"

There was a slight embarrassment in Captain Ferrers' tone and manner as he answered frankly:

"My admiration for an act of loyalty would indeed have been a sufficient motive, but it is not my only one."

He saw that his hearer was listening with head slightly bent forward, and proceeded:

"It is due to you to mention that I have a more than common interest in Mistress Evelyn de Lacey. She attracted me from the very first moment of our meeting, and, perhaps rashly, I have permitted myself to hope—"

But Mr. de Lacey shook his head in dissent.

"Do you not perceive, Captain Ferrers," he interposed, "how detrimental under existing circumstances, and in your present position, such an alliance would be?"

"If Mistress Evelyn will but deign to consider my suit—" the young man was beginning impetuously.

But the other again interrupted him.

"If I know Evelyn, she will never consent to bring misfortune upon anyone, even though he be brave and chivalrous enough to desire her favor. You would ruin yourself for what may after all prove to be but a passing fancy."

"Your daughter," replied Ferrers, with an emotion not to be misunderstood, "is not one to excite a passing fancy."

Gerald de Lacey could not but acquiesce in this opinion, and he said:

"If that be so, so much the worse for you."

Then struck by a sudden thought, he added quickly:

"I trust in God that it has not gone farther than yourself, that Evelyn—"

His voice broke, and, though Captain Ferrers felt an exultant thrill of joy at the mere suggestion, he answered gravely:

"I have spoken no word."

An irresistible, half-whimsical smile hovered about Mr. de Lacey's lips as he inquired:

"Are words the only means by which men and maids communicate their minds?"

But he immediately continued more gravely:

"Besides the reason I have mentioned, there are others and, in my opinion, still graver ones which

must be taken into account, but which we may waive for the present. Such would be the question of religion. As this attachment must therefore end in unhappiness for both, I must trust to your honor, Captain Ferrers, that this matter go no farther."

The Captain looked him steadily in the face an instant before he answered firmly:

"I am afraid, Mr. de Lacey, that I can give you no such pledge."

There was a silence between the two men as they sat regarding each other. Without the wind kept up a gentle southing in the tree-tops. Through the window, diffusing itself through the apartment, entered from time to time a subtle indefinite mingling of garden scents from flower-beds where the sun lay warm.

"You are frank at least," said Mr. de Lacey after a moment, "and I am helpless."

"You misunderstand me utterly," the other hastened to explain, "if you believe that I could take advantage of your situation. My meaning is, that I must be governed by circumstances as to any declaration I may make to Mistress de Lacey. For these two years past we have been meeting frequently, and she has given me no sign that she holds me in higher esteem than any other of her acquaintances. But matters may come to a crisis at any moment, and then I shall tell her of this attachment, which, daily growing stronger, has created an almost intolerable situation for myself."

Gerald de Lacey's face, frowning at first, gradually relaxed into a look of interest and of sympathy. His keen perception told him that, under ordinary circumstances, here was a man who might indeed prove worthy of Evelyn.

"Though I cannot relinquish hope," went on Ferrers, "I am sensible that for the present there is but one consideration of importance, and that is your safety and the safety of your daughter. Remember it is of that I have come hither to speak."

Mr. de Lacey's usually smooth brow was wrinkled into a frown of perplexity, as he sat looking, not at the speaker, but out into that garden which had been hitherto the symbol of peace.

"Not only," said Captain Ferrers, "must I reiterate my warning to be upon your guard; but I would beg you to make those preparations that may be necessary, should flight become urgent."

"Flight!" echoed Mr. de Lacey.

"It may become imperative at any minute," declared Ferrers earnestly, "and, when that moment comes, I shall let you know without delay."

In the pause that followed Ferrers perceived from the movement of his lips that he was praying. When he spoke aloud, it was with a forced composure which somehow reminded the observer of Evelyn.

"It is of my daughter I am thinking," he explained, "for a soldier's life has inured me to change. I will take your advice, however, and make what arrangements may be necessary."

"Matters may go on as they are for some time," said Ferrers, "for there is no special suspicion of you or your acts, save in the mind of one man."

"One man?" queried Mr. de Lacey, curiously.

Ferrers hesitated an instant before answering firmly:

"Captain Prosser Williams. I mention his name that the warning may be the more efficacious. But there is Nanfan, and there are others who would be dangerous enemies, if once they are informed of all."

At the mention of the name, Prosser Williams, Mr. de Lacey nodded, and a light came into his eyes. He remembered him well as the very man—a fanatic adherent of William of Orange—who, on that memorable day in England, had raised the hue and cry of the mob against him. And it was the recognition of his pallid face, red hair and light-blue eyes, some two years before upon the Bowling Green, that had occasioned several subsequent days of uneasiness. As time passed on, however, Mr. de Lacey had hoped either that Prosser Williams, who was by no means familiar with his appearance, had failed to recognize him or that he had decided to let bygones be bygones.

"I shall be upon my guard," he assured the other quietly, "for well I know what an inveterate foe Captain Williams can prove. I have been living so obscurely that I had trusted public attention would have passed us by."

Captain Ferrers could not precisely agree with this opinion. How, he thought, could Evelyn possibly fail to attract attention? And even her father was not one to remain unnoticed. He refrained, however, from putting his thoughts into words, while Mr. de Lacey proceeded meditatively:

"If Captain Prosser Williams has discovered my identity and desires to use that knowledge to my detriment, no prudence of mine can avail."

"That is true," the other assented, "if it be his intention to lay information against you. At present I do not know. But it is of a certainty better to prepare for flight."

"And my daughter?" asked Mr. de Lacey, with a sharp glance at his adviser.

"She too would be safer far from Manhattan,"

replied Captain Ferrers decidedly. "And my advice in that direction is most surely disinterested."

"There are difficulties," objected Mr. de Lacey. "I should infinitely prefer to investigate the ground alone. Persecution is rife in many of the neighboring provinces as well as in our own."

"In the meantime," suggested Ferrers, and it must be owned with some eagerness, "Mistress Evelyn might in all safety, I opine, remain until you should have secured a foothold elsewhere. And, occasion necessitating your departure from Manhattan, might it not be announced that business had called you suddenly from home? Mistress Evelyn might then, as would seem most fitting, remain with her friend, Madam Van Cortlandt, even after Mistress Polly's wedding."

"Yes, that would perhaps be best," agreed Mr. de Lacey, with reluctance, "though I must first wait upon Madam Van Cortlandt and inform her frankly of all the circumstances. Should danger threaten Evelyn, the Van Cortlandts are very powerful."

"And," interposed Captain Ferrers, "there will also be in her favor the interest of Lady Bellomont, who is extraordinarily well-disposed towards her. She will do whatever is possible to protect her."

Even as he spoke, he knew her power to be limited—nay, that her very predilection for the girl had prepossessed Lord Bellomont against her. However, it was finally agreed between the two that, at a given signal from the Captain, Mr. de Lacey would leave the town and later make such arrangements as he could for Evelyn to follow him.

"This religious madness," said Ferrers, rising to take his departure, "as every sane man hopes, must

178 GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

soon subside, and you will then be free to return once more to this Colony."

"May God so will it!" answered Gerald de Lacey. "In the meantime I shall await your signal."

"I will not conceal from you," said Ferrers, as he returned the other's cordial farewell handshake, "that it may come at any moment."

CHAPTER VI

A STAUNCH FRIEND

AND come it did, a hurried message, when the purple shadows of night were creeping over Manhattan, and the stars, like tiny points of silver, pierced the darkening sky. It was a word merely, but Gerald de Lacey knew its import.

Before that sign had reached him, which he knew was very certain to come, Mr. de Lacey had made all necessary arrangements, even to the packing of his clothes. Also, he had waited upon Madam Van Cortlandt to inform her of the danger which threatened and the possible inconvenience to herself that might result from giving shelter to Evelyn. He felt that he could not allow his daughter to accept that hospitality, while her prospective hostess was in ignorance of the charges that might be formulated against her, either directly as being herself a Catholic and having striven to spread the Catholic faith amongst the savages, or indirectly as her father's daughter.

Madam Van Cortlandt was seated upon the *stoepe* before the door, knitting in hand. She had concluded for that morning her inspection of the household and those other matutinal affairs which she never delegated to anyone. She would not suffer the reins of domestic government to pass even into the hands

of the clever and capable Polly. She was thus always a busy woman in spite of the numerous slaves, of whom some had been brought over from Africa in the ship, "The Good Prophet," and sold in the slave-market at the foot of Wall Street, while others were native of the soil, and had been so long in the service of the Van Cortlandts that they considered themselves part of the family.

The old lady was somewhat surprised to see Mr. de Lacey coming towards her. She had known him for a number of years, but never with anything approaching intimacy, his visits to her house having been few and far between. As he advanced, raising his hat in salute and bowing low, she was struck by something new in his aspect. The fine face framed in the curled and silver-streaked locks, worn after the fashion of the times on the shoulders, and the tall figure set off by the cinnamon-colored surtout and buff waistcoat which opened slightly to show the white ruffled shirt of fine Holland linen, were impressive in the extreme. The countenance wore a new expression, in which were blended anxiety, resolve and sadness. Madam Van Cortlandt noted the change in this man, whose whole appearance and personality she had always admired. She liked all that she knew of him, holding him in a regard quite apart from the consideration he commanded as the father of her favorite Evelyn.

The two chatted at first of matters in general, while the absent gaze of the visitor noted mechanically the details of the entrance door which now stood open. He observed its division into two parts, the upper part of which was perforated by glass bull's-eyes, the spoon-shaped latch of solid brass and the massive handle, as though those details had some

occult connection with the subject which engrossed his mind. He made complimentary references to the happy event which was soon to transform the sprightly Polly into a dignified matron. The old lady on her part became reminiscent on the subject of her own betrothal and marriage, when customs were simpler and the principal door of the house was thrown open only when a bride went forth or when death visited the dwelling.¹ She talked in interesting fashion of the Dutch dominies, who, religion apart, were a social power in the colony.

"You have heard, I make no doubt, Mr. de Lacey," she said, "that old saying current amongst us Dutch: 'As the dominie sneezes, so sneeze we.'"

And she expatiated upon the tolerance which, as a class, those Hollanders had shown to all men. This subject of tolerance led naturally to that upon which Mr. de Lacey was most anxious to speak. In as few words as possible he told of the danger which threatened him, not so much through the provisions of the new decree against Catholics, as by reason of the intolerance of which it was the manifestation, and in view of his antecedents which were known to a member of the Governor's Household who seemed likely to prove inimical. He informed her of the warning which had been given him by Captain Ferrers, and of the opinion of the latter, in which he fully concurred, that he should leave the Colony of New York for a term at least.

Madam Van Cortlandt listened, her wise, kindly eyes upon the speaker's face. She nodded at intervals, so that the lace of her cap flapped about her ears, her knitting-needles meanwhile lying idle in her lap. When he had finished, the old lady ex-

¹ The custom was known as the "threshold covenant."

pressed her full agreement with the advice given by Captain Ferrers, and suggested of her own accord that Evelyn should remain behind as her guest until the fugitive had found a refuge, or indeed indefinitely. For, as she said, her affection for Evelyn was nearly as great as for her own granddaughter, and, in the loneliness following upon Polly's departure, the company of the girl would be a real boon to her. Though Gerald de Lacey represented to her all the possible risks and inconveniences to which the harboring of Evelyn might expose her, the old lady stoutly declared that such considerations would not weigh with her for an instant.

"We Van Cortlandts," she exclaimed, with some pride, "should have influence enough to protect her even against this Governor whom they have sent out here to interfere with people's freedom. And a grievous matter it is," she added, with honest indignation, "that such things should be in these colonies, where before the days of Leisler intolerance was unknown."

She threw out a suggestion or two on her own account. One was that Evelyn should be left to the last moment in ignorance of her father's proposed departure. She could thus all the more easily and naturally take her part in the final preparations for the wedding and enact her rôle of bridesmaid. Another suggestion was that Mr. de Lacey's departure should take place upon the very day of the wedding, which was now close at hand. He could even appear for a few moments amongst the guests, and then slip away whilst the attention of the town was fixed upon that event of social importance.

When Mr. de Lacey rose to take his leave, all the details of the plan had been pieced out between the

two, and, with a warm hand-clasp, Madam Van Cortlandt assured him that he and his daughter were certain of having in her a staunch friend. She stood looking after him as he went, deeply meditating. For she was much more alive to the complexities of the situation than she had chosen to let appear. If once the "dogs of war" were let loose against the de Lacey's by an actively hostile influence, emanating from the Governor's Household, it would be difficult indeed to protect them, and an attempt to do so might be the cause of vexatious proceedings for those who had essayed the rôle of protectors. For, as Madam Van Cortlandt reflected, Mr. de Lacey's political past—above all, his staunch adherence to the Catholic faith and his intimacy with members of the clergy—would make of him a very proper subject for a terrorizing example to his fellow-Romanists, adherents of the "Popish superstition" and enemies to the King's Majesty. Evelyn too had, without doubt, rendered herself amenable to those persecuting laws by her labors amongst the savages and her efforts to keep alive in them the spark which the missionaries had kindled. Though the Van Cortlandts were powerful, the old lady mused, they might not be sufficiently so to protect those notable enemies of the Protestant supremacy. This had been shown in the evil days of Jacob Leisler, when members of the family had suffered severely. And it was the Leislerian faction that was now in favor with Lord Bellomont and his fanatical supporters.

Thus pondered the old lady, her knitting forgotten as she watched with absent eyes the white butterflies flitting about and heard the drowsy drone of the insects, announcing a continuance of the heat. She

decided amongst other things that Polly must be told nothing at all of the matter. For loyal-hearted and devoted to Evelyn as she knew her to be, it was not so easy to be sure of her prospective husband. Madam Van Cortlandt had uneasy misgivings on the score of that gentleman; in fact, she alone of all the relatives had been dissatisfied with Polly's choice. For, whatever might be his advantages of wealth and position, the keen old eyes read the man as a narrow-minded bigot, a very fanatic in his hatred of Popery. And a certain jealousy of Polly's partiality for Evelyn had been plain from the first, and had been displayed in the antagonistic attitude he assumed towards the girl. Therefore, in Madam's mind it was settled that Polly should be kept out of the secret, at least until that time when Evelyn should have rejoined her father. Mr. de Lacey's absence, when discovered, would be explained by the assigned reason of pressing business, which would leave it to be supposed that it was in the Barbadoes that he had interests.

The huge clock in the hall sounded the hour of noon and dinner for all the burg of Manhattan. immediately afterwards, the silver gong summoned Madam to her place at the table. Behind her chair stood old Peter, with a fan in his hand to drive away the flies. Polly and Evelyn entered the room a second or two later, conversing as they came of some late items of fashionable news and of the bridesmaid gowns and the bridal finery just as a little more than two years before they had gossiped about the arrival of the new Governor.

CHAPTER VII

THE SEPARATION

EVELYN was kept in ignorance of her father's intention to leave the colony so that she could the more readily permit herself to become absorbed in Polly's marriage preparations. Active culinary work had been in progress for days before, and in this the two girls had their share under the immediate direction of Madam Van Cortlandt. Certain rich confections and a variety of dainty dishes were added to those substantial viands which the veteran negro cook, Maria, surpassed herself in preparing. Forgetting all troubles and suffering, and permitting that shadow of doubt and suspense which hung over her to be dispelled by the brightness of the moment, Evelyn entered light-heartedly into all that was going on. In the large kitchen, with its brightly burnished vessels, its sanded floor and its huge fireplace, or in the adjoining quiet room, the two girls spent their mornings, stoning raisins, weighing out flour, shelling nuts and measuring spices for cakes of many descriptions—rich pound cakes, doughnuts, fruit and honey cake, and *kuchen* of half a dozen varieties. Jellies, creams, custards and rich confections of many sorts were prepared to tickle the appetite and menace the digestion of the sturdy burgher folk of Manhattan. The more

serious labors of the kitchen were in charge of an augmented staff, under the leadership of Maria and ably directed by Madam Van Cortlandt herself. This department undertook the preparation in various ways of turkeys, wild duck, geese, ham with partridges, pigeons, and game pies of a composite character. Upstairs in Polly's room stood the *kos*, or linen chest. It had been that of her grandmother, and great-grandmother before that. It was elaborately carved and tipped with silver, and was now destined to become the property of Polly, since her grandmother had bestowed it on her as a gift. It would be an article of furniture both substantial and ornamental, in that new home wherein the prospective bridegroom was to install her. This home stood in a newer and more fashionable quarter than that in which Polly had grown up, being situated at no very great distance from the Fort and overlooking the Bowling Green.

The contents of the chest were a particular pride and pleasure to Polly. The linen which it contained had been bleached under the sun of Manhattan and woven by the girl's own hands from the finest flax, grown in a piece of ground adjoining the garden. It had then been transformed into household and personal linen, with daintily embroidered initials. To the marriage chest some piece of linen had been added almost daily for years, as was the custom in all well-appointed Dutch households, and each was a perfect specimen of finest hand-sewing. There had been, moreover, the dear delight of choosing gowns, some of which were hand-woven and dyed with the juice of various plants, for it was the pride of every Dutch maiden or prospective matron to excel in every branch of feminine industry. Other costumes

were of brocade or taffeta or lutestring, which had been brought from overseas.

These preparations being finally concluded, nothing remained but the decoration of the house itself, into which task both girls entered eagerly, with Jumbo, the foot-boy, as their chief assistant. With his white teeth showing in a broad grin and his eyes rolling in enjoyment, he brought from the garden armfuls of flowers—snowballs, geraniums, pinks, nasturtiums and late roses,—supplemented by those which Evelyn had sent thither from the more luxuriant profusion of her own flower-beds. Those, with masses of greenery, transformed the blue and gold of the drawing-room and the green and gold of the oak-panelled dining-room into veritable bowers, the fragrance of which was supplemented by the gardens without.

As the new Dutch church was undergoing repairs, the Dominie consented to unite the two prominent members of his flock in the house. At the appointed time, which was late in the afternoon, the worthy minister repaired thither. He advanced into the drawing-room to salute Madam Van Cortlandt in his small-clothes and tunic of black, the latter with cuffed sleeves and deep ruffles of lace. In one hand he carried his cocked hat, and in the other his silver-headed cane. Under his arm was the book, which a negro slave had carried thither, and from which he was to read the marriage service.

Upstairs the bride had donned her bridal finery, with the assistance of her negro maid and under the supervision of Evelyn de Lacey and the other bridesmaids, who were all relatives of the bride or bridegroom. Polly drew her dearest friend aside a moment into the deep embrasure of a window overlooking the

garden where their confidences had been so often exchanged, and they conversed together with something of awe and solemnity in their tones. Evelyn, who had the more vivid imagination, felt more deeply the significance of that day's happenings, and had the greater reason for her misgivings, inasmuch as she saw in the prospective bridegroom a man of domineering character and narrow puritanical views, who was personally inimical to herself. Even Polly, whose bright and cheerful nature usually basked on the surface of things, was for the time impressed.

"Does there not seem something terrible," she said, "in a contract that is irrevocable, and that can scarcely be undone, save by death?"

"Which can never be undone save by death," corrected Evelyn. "But in that lies, after all, I opine, its best chance of happiness."

Their conference, however, was of but short duration, for the summons came from below that the Dominie was waiting, and they heard through the open window the chimes from the steeple of the Dutch Church, pealing out for the bridal.

Followed by the other bridesmaids, Evelyn descended the stairs with Polly to the rooms below, where were already assembled all that Manhattan could boast of wealth and influence. For the moment political differences were forgotten. Nicholas Bayard, head of the Dutch-English party, jostled shoulders with Abraham de Peyster, Samuel Staats, Peter Delanoy, Abraham Gouverneur and the other leaders of the Leislerian faction; while the Schuylers, the Van Cortlandts, Van Rensselaers, Minvielles, de Riemers, and Delanceys, all prominent in the aristocratic or anti-Leislerian faction, mingled freely with the Edsalls, Lodovicks, Derbyles and others,

who had been more or less actively interested in the other side of the great troubles. A prominent figure was John Nanfan, brother of Lady Bellomont and then acting as Lieutenant-Governor, who had espoused the Leislerian cause and otherwise identified himself with the fanatical Protestant element. He had walked thither from Whitehall with Captain Prosser Williams, with whom he was on terms of great intimacy. Having paid their respects to Madam Van Cortlandt, who was receiving her guests in a gown of colored satin, resplendent with family jewels, the two stood apart to observe the scene.

Standing with his back against the wall to catch the first glimpse of the party descending the stairs, was Captain Ferrers, in a handsome suit of velvet with brocaded waistcoat. His lean, bronzed countenance wore an expression of eager interest and animation. It was patent to the merest observer that he was more than commonly interested. In the background were all the negro slaves of the household and other establishments of the Van Cortlandt family, whose privilege it was to be present in their holiday costumes, the men wearing the family livery. It was also the function of old Peter, the majordomo, and of Maria, the cook, as the oldest and most respected of their number, to attend the bridesmaids when they passed silver plates to take up a collection for the poor.

Having donned his long white gown, the Dominie stood waiting in the centre of the drawing-room, while the hush of expectancy was broken by the strains of the negro orchestra, stationed in the hall outside. It struck up a bridal hymn, which had been in preparation for weeks. To this music the bride and her attendants came down the stairs, at

the foot of which waited a tall, dark young man, with a narrow face, thin lips and eyes close together. Polly was looking her best, with a radiant aspect of brightness and youth, the peach bloom of her cheeks and the sparkle of her dark eyes set off by the whiteness of her dress and her bride's crown of metal studded with precious stones—an heirloom from at least three generations. To the majority of those present it seemed of course that she was the chief centre of attraction. Yet there were some to whom the bride and the other bridesmaids were as puppets, and Evelyn the pivot upon which turned their thoughts, and towards which their glances were directed. Her gown was of white lutestring, and her bonnet also of white, with trimmings of soft ribbons and flowers. As she came slowly down into the flower-embowered room, she resembled nothing so much as a rare and delicate flower, which only a connoisseur could properly appreciate. The grace of her movements, so simple and so natural, the expression of her face, the look in her eyes of grey, shadowed and darkened by some stress of feeling, lent her an indescribable loveliness. In the midst of all the jubilation of the marriage feast, there was for her a note of underlying tragedy in the menace that hung over all those of the Catholic faith, and especially over her father and herself. For perils, she knew, were closing thick and fast around them, though the latest developments had been mercifully hidden from her.

This added charm in Evelyn's appearance was keenly felt by at least three men in the room. The intensity of their interest and its kind varied, of course, with the nature of each individual. These three were Pieter Schuyler, the girl's old friend and

long-devoted admirer, and the two officers of His Excellency's Household, Captain Ferrers and Captain Prosser Williams. The former of the officers could scarcely explain his feelings. He seemed inspired at the moment with some new and lofty enthusiasm for what was right and good, and to a desire to win Evelyn by some intrinsic merit of his own, which would make him worthy of her. He who knew all that was impending over her, and the trial that awaited her when she learned of her father's proximate flight, could best interpret the shadow of tragedy in those beautiful, haunting eyes. He pledged himself anew to her service and to her defence, surrendering his whole heart into her keeping. He waited, with an eagerness which caused him to forget the bride and all the other figures in that pageant, for the moment when Evelyn's eyes should meet his, and her smile, infinitely sweet for her friends, should reward him for his patience.

The gaze of Prosser Williams was likewise fixed upon the first bridesmaid's face with an expression in which such love as he was capable of feeling was blended with a kind of hatred. For had she not persistently repelled his advances? At that instant, he felt indeed, if he analyzed his own feelings, as one who had been shot through the heart by that intensified and fatal beauty. He leaned against the wall cold and pale, with but one thought in his mind—how he could overcome the girl's distaste for himself which she so plainly manifested, or, failing that, in some fashion or another secure her for his own. As Evelyn turned to take her place beside her friend and facing the minister, Captain Williams' glance, momentarily diverted, encountered that of Captain Ferrers, and he knew then for a cer-

tainty what he had long suspected, that here was a rival and one by no means to be despised. There was a gleam of deadly hatred in his eyes, which the other, regarding him steadily, caught and interpreted. Captain Williams was recalled to a sense of what was passing about him by the voice of John Nanfan sounding in his ears.

"That is a striking wench yonder, the tallest of the bridesmaids."

"Yes," answered Williams, with a coldness of which he was unconscious. "In truth, she is striking, that bird with fine plumage."

"Too soon to have outlived your enthusiasm, Captain," said the Lieutenant-Governor, with a laugh. "But who may be this fair prodigy, whom I do not remember to have seen before?"

To Captain Williams it seemed incredible that, during his two years in the colony, Mr. Nanfan should still be inquiring as to the identity of Mistress de Lacey. But he remembered that the Lieutenant-Governor had been for a certain portion of that time in Albany, and, having himself a wife and family, would naturally be less interested in the beauties of Manhattan. He answered very briefly:

"Her name is de Lacey."

"Ah!" said Nanfan, to whom at the moment this name conveyed nothing. Nor did Captain Williams enlighten him any further. He had information which would have deepened the other's interest, if not his admiration, but that information would not be given until all hope of winning the young girl by ordinary and fair means had vanished. Nor did he in any case desire such help as Mr. Nanfan could undoubtedly have given, until his own plans were fully matured.

"Who are her people?" asked the Lieutenant-Governor, after a pause. "Are they amongst the notables of these colonies?"

"As I have been informed," answered the Captain, with apparent carelessness, "they are not native here, and they are poor."

"Beauty in distress," commented Mr. Nanfan, with a sneer. "With that face she may ensnare some young idiot, who will find her charms compensation for her lack of fortune."

The young man was conscious of a kind of rage against the speaker, but he forced his lips to a smile, as he replied indifferently:

"She has, I make no doubt, snared many a one before now."

Mr. Nanfan regarded him curiously, with eyes that were keen and penetrating; but the cold, lifeless face told him nothing, and at that moment the opening words of the marriage ceremony gave the signal for silence.

When the Dominie had concluded the service which transformed Mistress Polly Van Cortlandt into Vrow Laurens, and had in fatherly fashion kissed the bride, the latter, smiling and radiant, turned to receive the congratulations and good wishes of her friends. Beside her stood Evelyn, who, as she now glanced about the room, caught the gaze of Captain Ferrers. She drew in her breath sharply, for, if ever devotion were legible in the eyes of man, she could read it there. She flushed ever so slightly, then paled, but the smile which she gave him was very sweet, though tinged with sadness. For with the realization of his absolute devotion had come upon her with full force the difficulties separating them, which any forecast of the future must show.

And yet the knowledge she had just gained lent a brightness to her eyes and an unwonted animation to her manner. It was as though a cup had been held to her lips, of which she had sipped, but had not dared to drink. But the menace which Captain Ferrers had read in the eyes of his fellow-officer constrained him to be prudent, lest by any act of his he might increase those difficulties and even perils which he very clearly saw were lying in wait for Evelyn at every turn. It cost him a painful effort to keep away from that one person in whom all his interest was centred and to mingle freely with the other guests, while something like a cloud of disappointment fell over the brightness of Evelyn's mood. At her side, with a devotion which she appreciated, though she could not return it, hovered Pieter Schuyler. Once she sighed as she said to herself:

"Oh, if I could but make Pieter as happy as he deserves to be, and settle down like Polly to be a matron of Manhattan!"

But deep in her heart she knew that, apart from the religious considerations and the other difficulties which would now tend to separate them, there was another reason more potent than all. In this gay scene participated the chief burghers of Manhattan, with their wives and sons or daughters, Councillors of State and civic dignitaries, officers from the garrison and naval men from the ship in the harbor, as well as all the gilded youth of the colony; but there was one guest who in her mind dominated all the rest, and that was an officer from the Household of Lord Bellomont. She, however, followed Captain Ferrers' example and made herself very agreeable to all the guests, each of whom, and notably the young officers of the garrison, came

to have a word with her and to surround her with an atmosphere of admiration and of adulation of which she could not but be sensible. Mynheer de Vries, amongst the rest, came with his smooth and polished voice to offer some stilted compliments to his charming neighbor, who, he said, was the pride of that quarter in which they both resided.

"It is no small thing," he said, "to possess in our corner of the burg one of the chief beauties of Manhattan."

Whilst he was thus conversing, Mynheer's small, cold eyes moved restlessly about the room and discovered the girl's father. Apparently, he had just come in, and Evelyn noted with a thrill of pride that in all that assemblage there was none of more distinguished bearing than he. He was evidently looking for her, as by that time she had moved away from her conspicuous position beside the bride. After he had paid his compliments to Polly, keeping up with her a few moments' interchange of gay badinage, and conversed a little with Madam Van Cortlandt, he advanced in Evelyn's direction. Mynheer and he exchanged greetings, after which de Vries passed on, moving about amongst the guests in a fashion of his own that was almost stealthy. Left momentarily alone with his daughter, Mr. de Lacey drew her hastily apart into the embrasure of a window, and the anxious eyes of the girl noticed a new excitement in his manner and at the same time a profound sadness. He regarded her intently for an instant without speaking, and then remarked in an effort to speak lightly:

"The bridesmaid costume suits my Evelyn well, and I am striving to impress that fair picture on my memory."

Evelyn looked at him with some surprise. Certainly his manner was unusual, and his words awakened in her mind a deep foreboding.

"For I have made my appearance at these wedding festivities from motives of policy, as well as to salute the bride and to say farewell for the time to my little daughter."

Evelyn stared at him aghast.

"Do not look so horrified," the father cried, "lest attention be directed towards us. Now is the moment for courage. Nor must we be seen for long in conversation. You will hear all from Captain Ferrers and Madam Van Cortlandt. You are to remain with her for the present, until I have made such arrangements as may make it possible for you to join me. As soon as it is prudent, I will write."

"But why, oh why, can I not go with you?" cried Evelyn, despairingly.

"We have considered all the circumstances," answered her father, "and it is wiser that you should remain here until it be possible for me to return, or until I have got a secure refuge somewhere. In the latter event, or should any emergency arise, I will send at once for you."

Utterly overcome by this intelligence which had come upon her so suddenly, the girl could scarcely speak, while her father still regarded her with the same mournful intentness.

"And now," he added, taking her hand for a moment in his, "it is best that I go forth as quietly as possible from this house. To avoid observation, I shall leave Manhattan while these festivities are still at their height. My present destination is—" and, bending close lest any other should hear, he whispered to her the name of a little town in an

THE SEPARATION

197

adjacent colony where a friend had offered him a place of refuge.

The father and daughter looked into each other's eyes for a moment longer, in a mute agony of farewell. To Evelyn it seemed as if all her life was crumbling around her. She had never been separated from her father, save when, for a week or a fortnight, she had been the guest of the Van Cortlandts or some other friends.

"Farewell, then," the father said at last, "and may God have you safe in His holy keeping, little Evelyn, little Evelyn, till we meet again!"

His voice broke and he turned away to mingle with the crowd. It cost the girl a supreme effort of will at that moment to restrain her tears and suppress all outward signs of that pain which, in its sharpness and severity, rent her heart with a physical pang. Just at that instant Captain Ferrers, who had been watching the progress of events, came towards Evelyn and, offering his arm, suggested a little stroll in the garden. Acting upon the suggestion, which she joyfully accepted and the motive of which she understood, she was thus enabled to clasp her father momentarily in a farewell embrace, before he stole away hastily through the garden gate.

CHAPTER VIII

CLOSER IN GRIEF

WHEN Mr. de Lacey had sped silently away into the darkness, Evelyn felt towards Captain Ferrers a fervor of gratitude for having procured that last consolation for her father and herself, and at the same time for having withdrawn her from that gay scene within doors, which just then she felt to be intolerable. The two remained alone in the perfumed stillness of the night, with flowering shrubs all about them and the tall trees waving with a rhythmic movement above their heads.

For several minutes the young man did not intrude by so much as a word upon the young girl and her sorrow. He was holding himself in strong constraint lest some avowal should pass his lips, which might embarrass future relations between them. As he stood near her with folded arms, leaning against a tree, he rapidly reviewed the situation. He felt that at that moment he would gladly have resigned his position, with all that it might hold of future preferment, if by so doing he could win this one woman, whom he loved above all others, for his wife. But he knew that such a course of action would only increase the peril of her situation. He himself would be powerless to protect her amongst so many and such influential enemies. Even Lady

Bellomont could do little and my Lord's wrath would be but strengthened tenfold by the loss of an officer whom he had found singularly useful. Moreover, as he told himself, he had had little reason as yet to be certain of Evelyn's favor. It was not her nature to wear her heart upon her sleeve, and, aware as she was of all the obstacles between them, she had gone out of her way to seem unconscious of his preference for her society. For one wild moment he asked himself whether he could possibly induce her to fly with him to England, or still better, to the Continent, where they might bury themselves in a happy obscurity. But his common sense told him that, even were Evelyn willing to desert her father in the hour of trial, which from her character he knew to be unthinkable, it would be next to impossible for them to encompass such a departure safely. Vessels sailing for ports beyond the seas were subject to strict inquiry, so that, even if he were certain that his love was reciprocated, he could not ask her to take so perilous a step.

Yet, even as breaking silence he went on with business-like deliberation to explain the causes of her father's hasty departure, and the plans which he had laid in concert with Madam Van Cortlandt, he felt in the mingled emotions of that hour a sweetness which he remembered all his life. The girl's charm, her delicacy of outline, the warmth and sympathy of her expression, were heightened tenfold by the very depths of her sorrow and anxiety, as in the white of her bridesmaid's costume she stood beside him on the garden path. She had forgotten everything for the moment but the thought of her father setting out thus alone in the darkness of night. With her eyes fixed upon the speaker's face, she

listened silently while Captain Ferrers briefly explained how the recognition of her father by Captain Williams and his clear recollection of all that had transpired in London, together with evidence that he had since obtained of his being a Catholic, had made it expedient that he should immediately remove himself from peril so imminent. Captain Ferrers gave it as his opinion, based upon remarks which Captain Williams had let fall, that the latter's plans were well laid and that he might at any moment procure Mr. de Lacey's arrest and transport overseas for trial in London. He informed Evelyn of the conference which he had held with her father, and he in his turn with Madam Van Cortlandt, and how all their plans had been laid before he had sent the final note of warning to Mr. de Lacey. The latter was now to seek safety in the town of Salem, in the Colony of Massachusetts, where it was hoped that he might remain in an obscurity which meant safety. Once his departure was discovered, if questions were asked, it could be answered that he had left town on business. It would meanwhile seem quite natural that Evelyn should remain with Madam Van Cortlandt in the first lonely weeks following the wedding. Even the bride herself, on account of her husband's well-known sympathies, would be kept in ignorance of the true reason for Evelyn's extended stay at the Van Cortlandt mansion. For Madam Van Cortlandt's keen instinct had led her, where politics were concerned and above all where there was question of the Catholic faith, to distrust Polly's husband.

After Captain Ferrers had told her all, Evelyn was silent for a moment, standing amongst the fragrance and beauty of the flowers and seeming

to the lover's eyes more beautiful than any of them. So human and so tender she appeared, with the tears starting from her eyes, streaming down her cheeks, and falling unheeded upon her wedding finery. The sight very nearly upset Egbert Ferrers' resolution. But in an instant Evelyn had regained her composure, and the young man could not help admiring her noble and dignified aspect.

"I thank God," she said at last, "that my father is gone. Yes, and all the heavenly friends who are watching over us. But, oh, I would that I could have been with him!"

Her eyes fixed upon Captain Ferrers' face in an appeal that deeply moved him, and again he found it hard to repress the passionate avowal that rose to his lips. He explained to her quietly and gravely how inadvisable such a course of action would be at the moment, since it would provoke immediate inquiry and would very probably compromise the safety of both. It was expedient that her father should go first, especially as his religion and political antecedents placed him in the graver danger, and as it seemed less likely that Captain Williams would take action against the daughter. So quietly had Mr. de Lacey lived that his absence from the city would scarcely be noticed at first, whereas that of Evelyn would be known immediately. Once the fugitive had reached a place of safety, it would be easier for her to join him, and it might even be supposed that both had gone to the Barbadoes on matters of business. Meanwhile, as Madam Van Cortlandt declared, failing any new developments, the young girl could remain indefinitely with her.

"I have been so selfishly intent on our own concerns," said Evelyn, turning to the young man be-

side her with a new light of gratitude in her eyes, "that I have been sorely remiss in thanking you for your generous help, for your exceeding great forethought and consideration. What should we have done without you?"

"Never speak of it, I do entreat you," said Captain Ferrers, "since it is I who am most deeply in your debt for having been allowed to serve you."

Never had the two felt so near together as when they were thus united by this common interest, this grave issue almost of life and death. Each felt a glow of happiness in the other's presence, which gave to Evelyn a sense of inexpressible comfort in her present desolation. But she would not for worlds have expressed just *that* on such a sentiment. Instead she fell to talking of her father, saying that it was her dearest wish to rejoin him at the earliest moment.

"And you," she said to Captain Ferrers, "will help me, will you not?"

"Yes, in truth," cried Captain Ferrers, "I will help you always and in all things. For I am constrained to tell you that I would give my right hand, and even my very life, to serve you."

The mournfulness in Evelyn's eyes, as she regarded him, pierced him to the heart. Perhaps she saw before her the bright vista of love and happiness that might have opened before them but for the cruel entanglement of circumstances which held them as in a net.

"How hard it is," cried the young man impetuously, "to think that I am thus bound hand and foot, so that a move in any direction whatsoever might work your ruin!"

"And yours," responded Evelyn, "which is some-

thing that I will never permit. Whatever may befall, I beg of you to stand aloof."

"Cruel counsel," exclaimed Ferrers, "which I would fain hope is inspired rather by your head than by your heart."

A lovely wave of color crept into Evelyn's cheeks and a light into her eyes, but she merely said:

"You will but involve yourself in needless ruin, and be then powerless to help us—the outlaws."

"If it were but a question of myself," cried Ferrers hotly, "Heaven knows that it would matter little. I would give up all, and do all, to be but assured of your regard and to have a chance, however remote, of winning you for my wife."

Into Evelyn's face, more beautiful than ever with the touch of warm and living color, came an expression which betrayed the loving depths below. When she spoke, however, it was firmly and composedly:

"You must not speak, nor must I hear, words which will bind you to anything. From this moment forward, you are a friend whom I shall value above all others. But with my faith proscribed, with perils everywhere, I must have no ties save my father."

"Be it so then for the moment," agreed Ferrers. "I shall not intrude further upon you with the avowal of my sentiments, which, believe me, I had not meant under these circumstances to make. At least, I may offer you my friendship with a steadfast will to serve you."

"I have never doubted either," replied Evelyn sincerely, "only they must not be used to your detriment. For so unhappy are all the circumstances—"

"Unhappy, in truth," interposed Ferrers, with a sudden burst of vexation. "Why must it chance that you are of the proscribed faith, of—"

But there Evelyn stopped him peremptorily, with a proud uplift of her chin and an enthusiasm which the young man found inexpressibly charming.

"You must not think," she said decidedly, "that I am not most glad to suffer something for religion's sake. It would be an honor unspeakable to die for the Catholic and Apostolic faith."

Though her companion naturally could not feel as she did, nor experience any emotion at the thought of that faith, he nevertheless respected it as that of his dead mother, and was more favorably impressed than ever by the courage and loyalty of the girl, which appealed to all that was finest in his own nature. Yet he only cried out, with a kind of terror:

"But you will be prudent. You will not speak in such terms to anyone else. And this I beg of you, if not for my sake, for that of your father."

"For his sake—for your sake, if you will," said Evelyn, with a smile, "for all our sakes I will be careful and chary of my words. As a first step in prudence, will it not be wiser that we should leave the garden and return into the house lest our absence may lead to remark?"

"'Tis most unpalatable advice," said the young man ruefully, "but, as it is a dose of my own medicine, I must swallow it."

In silence they moved on together, in his mind no other thought than that of their meeting that evening and the new bonds that had been forged between them. As they neared the house the negro minstrels were playing a lively strain and the bride, preparing to depart upstairs to doff her white gown

for another, was looking for her dearest friend and chief bridesmaid. Ferrers knew that presently, after the bride had gone, all would be footing it lightly in "La belle Katherine" or "Money Musk," as though there were no care or sorrow in the world, no aching hearts, no persecution, tyranny and death.

CHAPTER IX

AN UNWELCOME MEETING

WHILE the wedding festivities were still at their height, the tall figure of a man might be seen descending with rapid steps the path which led to the Water-Gate. As he passed the tavern of *Der Halle* and glanced through the open window, he saw that the brightly lighted room was almost devoid of company. Many of those who gathered there of an evening for a pipe and a social glass, were above at the mansion where the gentility of the town were celebrating the union of two of its most prominent families. Only a few scattered groups of two or three, mostly of the seafaring class, were assembled. Gerald de Lacey paused and, out of the dreariness of his approaching exile, regarded wistfully that homely, familiar place, whence light and comfort seemed to irradiate. Even the broad and genial countenance of mine host, as he sat behind the bar, was suggestive of good cheer. So suddenly that he had not time to take any precautions, the door opened and Mr. de Lacey found himself confronted by Captain Greatbatch, that notorious smuggler to whose name so many people were ready to affix a harsher epithet. The fugitive would have passed on quickly, but the other hailed him:

"May I beg to know your errand, comrade, that you go so fast?"

The man so addressed slackened his pace and waited, for nothing could have been worse for his desire of secrecy than that he should excite suspicion, even in the mind of this sea-rover. Greatbatch, having caught up with him, laid a detaining hand on his shoulder, from which Mr. de Lacey impatiently freed himself, while the other peered at him a moment in the deep gloom.

"Ho! is it you, Master de Lacey?" he cried.

The fugitive, who had hoped that he might escape recognition, made no further attempt at concealment, but answered carelessly:

"Aye, Captain Greatbatch, it is I."

"I should ha' thought," said Greatbatch, with a cunning glance out of the corner of his eye, "that you would ha' been up at the great house with all the gentles for the marrying."

"And so I have been," replied Mr. de Lacey, "though such merry-makings are but little to my taste. I am a man of books."

"Which makes you so pale and pasty," said Greatbatch, aware of the contrast between his own rubicund, even purplish countenance and that of his companion.

"Moreover," added Mr. de Lacey, composedly, though inwardly fuming at the necessity for such an explanation, as well as at the insolent familiarity of the other, "I am leaving Manhattan for a brief period, and, as the weather is fair and the wind favorable, I sail to-night."

"For Barbadoes, mayhap," queried Greatbatch, inquisitively, "with Rogers Master on 'The Mermaid.' He sails for Madeira, St. Thomas and Barbadoes."

There was more than a note of suspicion in the fellow's voice, and in the look that, turning round, he fixed upon the fugitive. Mr. de Lacey, making no direct answer, said:

"In the last place I have acquired interests that demand some looking after. And it is a fair wind for sailing and good weather."

"Better'n we are like to have in these colonies, by ——" exclaimed Greatbatch, swearing a great oath, "as you may know, Master, if you be, as I might say, o' the trade."

He gave his listener a poke in the ribs to emphasize his words. Mr. de Lacey, puzzled for a moment, was presently relieved, for he saw how far off the scent was the seaman, to whom matters maritime were of paramount interest. His laugh, therefore, seemed to Greatbatch a confirmation of his suspicions.

"And mighty close you have been about it, Master," he added with something of admiration, "but none so quiet as will not be found out in the long run. And wise you are to run away, if trouble is brewing, though my plan is to brave it out. My Lord Bellomont"—and he added under his breath, "curse him!—is hard on the traders, harder than ever since he got bit by Cap'n Kidd, whom he had set to lord it over all of us and do the pirating for the Governor and for the King's Majesty, as I make no doubt, and as folks say. Only that Kidd gave them the slip and cried 'By your leave, gentles, I'll do the piratin' for myself.' Oh Lud! when I thinks on it." He stopped to give a roar of laughter and to slap his knee with his great red hand: "To think how he was cotched!"

Looking around to be sure that they were alone, and lowering his voice, he continued:

"Though there be some that say the Governor was deep in it as another man, and, if all had gone well with Kidd and he had played fair with his mates, he would ha' had his profit out o' the 'Quidder Merchant,' and a deal besides. What think you, Master?"

"'Tis a wise man that puts not his thoughts into words these days," answered Mr. de Lacey, guardedly, "and, in truth, my own opinion would be that all that relates to His Excellency must be but idle gossip."

Greatbatch snorted his unbelief.

"You are close as an oyster," he said, "and right you may be, but Tom Greatbatch's way is to speak his mind fair and open."

"Well, each to his own fashion," Mr. de Lacey responded lightly, "only beware that one of these days you do not run your neck into a halter."

Captain Greatbatch scowled, whether at the warning itself or at the picture thus conjured up. But he said no more just then, and the two walked on in silence. They were upon the wharf now, which lay cold and pale in the dim starlight. To Mr. de Lacey the scene was one of consummate dreariness, so strongly does the temper of the mind color even inanimate nature. The river spread out black before them; there was an odor of salt water, wet wood and tar intermingled. Save for an occasional light gleaming out from a vessel at anchor, that vast sheet of water might have been a desert plain.

"There's the brigantine, yonder," said Greatbatch, pointing with one thick and grimy finger; "'The Mermaid,' Rogers Master. A rough voyage he had of it last time. He was chased by a French privateer. He struck a great gale of wind off Sandy

Hook, which carried away his boom and washed three able-bodied men overboard."

He still assumed that his companion was about to embark on "The Mermaid," and turned in that direction. In fact, Mr. de Lacey's destination was far other. He was going to board a small sloop, which lay quietly at anchor at the foot of the Smith's Vly, and which was to take him to the Colony of Massachusetts. It was highly important that his place of refuge should be secret from all but his two or three staunch friends, and for this tavern brawler, this smuggler, to gain any knowledge whatsoever of his movements, was something to be prevented at all hazards. He might, he feared, even be obliged on some pretence or another to abandon for the nonce his plan of escape. As it seemed likely that Greatbatch, who did not appear to be going anywhere in particular and was full of curiosity, might insist on seeing him aboard ship, Mr. de Lacey suddenly stopped:

"Captain Greatbatch," he said, "I will be frank with you. As I am leaving Manhattan with no charge against me, nor even a suspicion of being involved in smuggling operations, it is of the greatest moment to me that I should not appear in your company."

For an instant the coarse face of Greatbatch grew purple with indignation, and his bristling eyebrows were drawn down in a scowl. But whether from policy or because the words tickled his sense of humor, he burst into a laugh. Giving Mr. de Lacey a push, which at another time would have been highly resented by that gentleman, he cried:

"Go your ways, then. Tom Greatbatch thrusts his company on no man. No, by the Lord Harry!

he don't. Nor is Rogers Master overfond of me, though he might want me yet to get his chestnuts out of the fire."

"Good-bye, then," said Mr. de Lacey gaily, adding, though he well knew the uselessness of such counsel: "Mum's the word!"

"Mum's the word!" repeated Greatbatch.

Greatbatch looked after the retreating figure apparently heading for "The Mermaid."

"Mum's the word, till it suits Tom Greatbatch to open his lips. There's your canting Christian for you and, as some folks say, a pestilent Papist. Thick as thieves he used to be up yonder at the Fort with Dongan and the Mass priests, when I was shipping for my first cruise. And now doin' his bit o' tradin' on the quiet, I make no doubt like the rest o' the gentles; keepin' the bread out of us poor men's mouths and sneakin' away when the chase grows hot."

He would like to have gone down and interviewed the skipper of that vessel by which he supposed Mr. de Lacey to be about to sail. But he had his own reasons, growing out of his various practices, for giving Rogers Master and other honest seamen a wide berth. The brigantine consequently weighed anchor without Greatbatch being any the wiser and without having on board one Gerald de Lacey, Gentleman, late Major of Hussars. And a few moments later, in a spanking breeze and headed for Long Island Sound, sailed the sloop, "Anna Maria," Jenkins Master, upon which had really embarked a fugitive from persecuting laws.

CHAPTER X

HUSBAND AND WIFE

SITTING on the porch before his house and smoking an evening pipe in tolerably close proximity to the de Laceys' dwelling, Mynheer de Vries was the first to notice that it was untenanted. He rose from his chair and, still smoking, strolled down the street for a cautious survey of his neighbor's premises. He stood outside the gate, and allowed his eyes to wander over the lovely profusion of the garden. They noted that the study window was closed, and that no gleam of light came through crack or cranny. Though the observer was not readily susceptible to outward impressions, he was conscious of that indescribable sense of blankness, of loneliness, that belongs to a habitation whence human presence has been withdrawn. Mynheer wanted to be certain of the fact, and softly unlatched the garden gate and entered. He walked from path to path, unmindful of the sweet fragrance of the flowers. He drew close to the house, and peered in through the smallest crack that the closed shutters afforded. The aspect of the study proved convincingly to his mind that Gerald de Lacey's absence was more than temporary.

"He was at the wedding," mused the inquisitor. "I saw and spoke to him, but I have not seen him

since, and here is the house closed up. Now, why this sudden departure?"

He looked carefully all over the exterior of the house, as though he expected that an answer might be forthcoming from the four walls. He knew that Mistress Evelyn de Lacey had been visiting the Van Cortlandts for some days previous to the wedding, and would probably remain for a few days afterwards with the grandmother. This was quite natural and to be expected. But where were the father and the servants? The two negroes, mother and daughter, who did the work of the cottage, were not slaves. The younger, Elsa, had long been Mistress Evelyn's maid and personal attendant, as the mother had been her nurse. By a sudden inspiration Mynheer went round to the kitchen door; it was locked. He looked in the kitchen window; all was dark and still. That settled the matter to the mind of the inquirer. If the master of the house were expected back shortly, the servants would not have gone. For the elder woman in particular rarely stirred from her comfortable quarters.

Mynheer de Vries returned thoughtfully along the darkening street to his own mansion. Through the window he could see his wife, who was fat and went seldom abroad, knitting near a marble-topped table.

"In the ordinary course of events," reflected Mynheer, as he ascended the steps to the porch, "de Lacey would have notified me, as his nearest neighbor, of his departure and have asked, I opine, my good offices for the protection of his property, and even perchance of his daughter, though that would be the affair of the Van Cortlandt family."

He tried to solve the problem, and, in his impatient

curiosity, felt resentful towards his wife because she sat so placidly in her chair. He had an angry feeling that he would like to drag her thence into the swift current of public affairs. The feeling was but momentary. She was better as she was, and infinitely less troublesome to him, than if she were one of these meddling women, who, from the first days of the Colony, had taken a leading part in colonial affairs and had pulled many a political string. Mynheer stroked his chin, as he often did when troubled, and thus cogitated:

"How has de Lacey got himself involved, and in what? If it be in trading operations, what does he know and how much might he tell, if his whereabouts were to be discovered?"

The true reason for Mr. de Lacey's departure did not occur to him. He had not been in the colony in Dongan's time, and had never chanced to hear much of his neighbor's personal history or of his close connection with the Catholic Governor. He himself was very moderately interested in religious affairs, and was ready to "sneeze with the Dominies" only in so far as that nasal exercise was expedient. He had no fear of Popery. He never thought of it at all, and so had never imagined the de Laceys or any others of his own circle coming under the anti-Popery laws.

The only possible alternative to complicity in smuggling operations was a too pronounced activity on the anti-Leislerian side of the great controversy, though, in truth, he could not recall a single instance where his neighbor had meddled with present-day politics, or taken any public part in the troubles that marked the whole course of Lord Bellomont's administration. Still, he thought, it might be quite

possible that, though living a very quiet life, he had made himself in some way obnoxious to the Governor and his chief advisers, who were frankly Leislerian, because of his and his daughter's intimacy with the Van Cortlandts and others of the aristocratic party.

This supposition was more agreeable to Mynheer than the other. He himself had maintained a very safe attitude of neutrality between the parties. He was as friendly with Samuel Staats or Abraham de Peyster as with Nicholas Bayard, Pieter Schuyler or Stephen Van Cortlandt. But, in so far as illicit trading with Greatbatch or others of his kidney was concerned, things were very different. Mynheer was here deeply involved. He had allowed his habitual caution to fly to the winds in his passion for gain. He was fairly consumed by the desire to make money, for acquisitiveness was the dominant note of his character. He had, therefore, good reason to feel uneasy. If Mr. de Lacey had really been obliged to leave Manhattan for reasons connected with illicit traffic, it might very well become necessary for Mynheer also to take the road. For it was likely, from all the circumstances, that his own operations had been on a far larger scale than anything that could have been attempted by de Lacey. Also, the fugitive might very well have been informed by Greatbatch and others of the wary merchant's connection with smugglers and their doings. If then it chanced that he were recaptured, might he not be tempted to make revelations which, incriminating others, would save himself? Mynheer, smoking vigorously, pondered on what kind of man de Lacey really was, but could not come to any decision, so apart were the two men in character as in standards of conduct. One thing alone became clear

to his mind, and that was that the secret of his neighbor's absence must be kept as long as possible. He himself would do all in his power to maintain such secrecy, and thus lessen the chances of his capture and the possible revelations that might follow. And this determination on his part was the easier inasmuch as he had a certain amount of friendly feeling towards the late inhabitants of the cottage and a profound admiration for Mistress Evelyn and for the social success which she had attained. In any case, the attitude that he took was a providential circumstance for the de Laceys. Otherwise Mynheer, who was no little of a gossip and usually well-informed as to what was passing in the town, might very well have thrown out hints in the taverns, or whispered in the drawing-rooms that a prominent resident of Manhattan had disappeared.

Mynheer further resolved to find out what he could of the causes that led to such disappearance. He promised himself to sound Greatbatch, who could be brutally frank at times, and to listen to the talk of the seafaring frequenters of *Der Halle*. He even determined to address a few discreet lines to Mistress Evelyn de Lacey, whom he had long regarded approvingly as a distinct asset to their neighborhood, volunteering his assistance in case of need. This, he considered, would please the Van Cortlandts. He considered it a grievance that he should be no longer able to catch glimpses of Evelyn at her work in her garden or passing up and down the street. Mynheer had always been an admirer of beauty, and his own "gude Vrow" had long since passed the stage when she was agreeable to the eye. Her virtues or her qualifications were certainly not of an ornamental character. Mynheer could scarcely

conceal from himself the conviction that she was a blot on the landscape. Hence he had permitted himself, always within the bounds of discretion, to find a refreshment to the eye and a solace to the spirit in observing their fair neighbor.

He went into the house after this exhaustive review of the subject, and carefully inspected the rich furnishings of the place, as if he had never seen them before: the silk damask curtains, the rich carpets, the flowered tabby chimney-cloth, the velvet arm-chairs, with trimmings of silver lace. And, though he did not go upstairs to inspect his own and his wife's wardrobe, where rich silks, satins and brocades abounded; though he did not descend into the cellar to visit the ample store of wines, he mentally appraised all these things, and knew how much he was indebted to Greatbatch and his like for such luxuries. As an embargo was laid on nearly all foreign goods by the home government, his mansion and many a mansion in Manhattan would otherwise have been bare indeed. For even the wealth that he had acquired would not have been sufficient to provide so many luxuries by legitimate means.

Vrouw de Vries watched her husband, in placid wonderment, as he made the tour of the room. She sincerely hoped he would find there no speck of dust, which would be sure to annoy him exceedingly. For she was not the housekeeper that she had been, and even the best of slaves were not always to be trusted. On this occasion, however, either the slaves had done their work efficiently, or Mynheer was too preoccupied to notice.

"I owe something to Greatbatch," Mynheer remarked at last, sinking into one of the Russian leather chairs, which he used in preference to those

of velvet with silver lace, the latter being chiefly for ornament.

Vrouw de Vries raised her large, heavy-lidded eyes:

"Not a heavy sum, I do trust," she exclaimed.

Mynheer waved his hand. "No sum of money at all," he returned curtly. "I was thinking of other things, and it might be as well if you did not interrupt me."

His voice was a shade less cool and quiet than when in company. His wife's knitting-needles clicked as a sign that her share in the conversation was concluded. But the name of Greatbatch awakened disagreeable recollections in her mind. She remembered a great, uncouth fellow, who had come lumbering in, with his smell of tar and with big muddy boots. These latter had been the occasion of a severe scolding to herself from Mynheer. She had not noted the muddy tracks in time to have them removed, and Madam Van Cortlandt and her granddaughter had inopportunely happened in for an afternoon call. The good Vrouw sighed, and her husband moved impatiently. He disliked those audible sighs, yawns and other signs of inward discomfort, in which his wife indulged. She had not, it must be owned, a manner such as Mynheer had carefully cultivated. He had married her, the daughter of a small shop-keeper in Salem, a town in the neighboring Colony of Massachusetts. That was before prosperity had overtaken him on the way of life. The two had been happy so long as the Vrouw kept her good looks, and before Mynheer had made money, chiefly through those very trading operations which now kept him in fear.

De Vries had come to Manhattan, and bought this fine mansion of the late distinguished citizen,

Cornelius Steenwyck, and, as it might be said, stepped into the shoes of the owner. Being related distantly to one of the leading Dutch families, Mynheer was received into society, although he was practically a stranger and people knew little about him. He had a smooth and easy manner and a faculty of avoiding all friction, which gave him a factitious popularity. He became an important man in many directions, taking part, as Steenwyck had done, in all civic affairs, and had recently been made a Member of the Council. He was regarded as a public-spirited citizen and one of fine intelligence and liberal views. While avoiding the Scylla and Charybdis of partisan politics, he was an ardent supporter of William of Orange, especially when in company with the officers of the regiment or members of the Governor's Household. He was a welcome visitor in both Dutch and English houses.

But into all that fine society his wife could not follow. Her avoirdupois alone would have been against her, even had her manner and deportment been such as to win her recognition. And, though her husband did not neglect her any further than was compatible with the life he led, much less ill-treat her, he became more exacting and more alive to her faults. The woman felt that he was being separated from her more and more, and by a gulf which could not be bridged over. Beneath all her placidity, she pondered in a dull, brooding way over this grievance. She hated that society which absorbed her husband, and would have liked to be revenged upon it. She never expressed such thoughts aloud, however, and, with all his astuteness, her husband had no suspicion of their existence.

Nor did de Vries know that his wife cherished a

particular grudge against Evelyn de Lacey for no other reason than that she had often heard her commended by Mynheer, and had herself seen with her dull eyes how well those commendations were merited. Often, when her husband was out, she had stolen to the window to watch the girl at work in the garden or passing the house. It is true that she discounted these perfections, which were so far removed from her own style of good looks—at least, from those which she had possessed in her youth. Yet, something within her slow consciousness assured her that the praises bestowed upon Evelyn were less than she deserved. Sometimes, when in a particularly bitter mood, she used to amuse herself by imagining accidents by which the girl's beauty might be destroyed. She would imagine a scar which would disfigure, a thrust that might put out one of the eyes, a scorching fire that would burn away the lustrous hair and the little ringlets that played so fascinatingly around Evelyn's face, an injury to the spine to cause a stoop, rheumatism to cripple the graceful movements, unsightly burns to mar the symmetry of the slender hands. Any or all of these things would silence her husband's eulogies of the girl and prevent her being held up as a mirror of perfections. Not that Vrow de Vries would have herself inflicted any of these injuries, for she was incapable of physical violence. But she would have been well content if such things had happened "by the visitation of the Lord," or in any other conceivable way.

Mynheer, perturbed and busy with his own thoughts, little imagined the turmoil that, under that placid exterior in the arm-chair, raged more fiercely than any storm his own nature could know.

"Should de Lacey be involved," Mynheer said, speaking aloud as he sometimes did in moments of abstraction, "it may fare ill with Mistress Evelyn. Her great beauty might not avail her there."

"Her great beauty!" The words were as a torch to set on fire those combustible materials that were smouldering within the listener. The knitting-needles were still an instant.

"If you were but a widower, de Vries," said a voice from the arm-chair, "this Mistress Evelyn might be added to the other fine furniture of the house."

Mynheer, turning, regarded his wife with eyes wide open in astonishment. Then, nearly closing them as he watched her:

"She might or she might not be," he responded sententiously. "She soars high, that bird of Paradise, or I am much mistaken."

Observing the dull crimson flush that mantled the heavy, faded cheeks, he added:

"Were I in the market, good Vrow, I should bargain for more costly wares—such wares, I mean, as would pay for themselves. Mistress Polly Van Cortlandt, now Vrow Laurens, would have suited me better on all accounts."

The raging fire was calmed a little by this declaration, which the wife intuitively knew to be the truth. Her husband was not one to repeat the mistake of his earlier life and marry a penniless girl. Mynheer, still keeping his eyes fixed upon the heavy face and shapeless figure, said:

"So, poor fool, you are beginning to repine that the Lord has taken from you such measure of beauty as you had. For you were a comely wench, Marije, when I married you, or the wedding would never

have taken place. And you cannot say but that I have held to the bargain."

"Yes," the wife said, "you have held to the bargain because you were afraid to lose the good opinion of your fine friends."

He knew that there was a modicum of truth in what she said, though he took credit to himself that that had not been his only reason. He remarked quite veraciously now:

"I would that I had nothing but the women, plain or beautiful, to disturb my thoughts. So, if your mind be running in that groove, you may save yourself the trouble. Beauties to me are but pictures, a pleasant part of the landscape."

He waved his hand to indicate the wide freedom of his thoughts, and in fact spoke the truth, for ambition, greed of gain and the desire to appear well in society were his master passions. Nor was he altogether dissatisfied with his wife, who had hitherto played with tolerable skill the part of housewife, and who had never until that day, so far as he knew, troubled her head about his outside affairs. It was a noticeable fact, nevertheless, that never thereafter did he speak in his wife's hearing of Evelyn de Lacey. A word to the wise was sufficient.

CHAPTER XI

PROSSER WILLIAMS' RESOLVE

THE days that followed the wedding were singularly lonely for Evelyn. Save Madam Van Cortlandt, there was scarcely anyone with whom she could exchange a word. Polly had been removed from the scene, accompanying her husband on a trip into the neighboring Colony of Pennsylvania, where they were to remain a month at least. Even the town of Manhattan seemed, in so far as its social side was concerned, to be suffering a reaction after the excitement of the wedding. Evelyn kept as much as possible aloof from the various young girls of her circle, with whom she was more or less intimate, lest questions might be asked concerning her father. The loss of his companionship was most grievous to her. She missed his bright, half-whimsical conversation, his interest in all her affairs, and the home life now so sadly interrupted without any definite prospect of being resumed. Her anxiety for him often kept her awake at night, as she pictured him in the loneliness of his exile, and perhaps in deadly peril of his life. For the first weeks she made her unwillingness to leave Madam Van Cortlandt an excuse for absenting herself from the dances and assemblies at various houses, which she had previously much enjoyed. But her hostess was of

opinion that such a course of action, if long persisted in, might draw upon her the suspicion of the curious or ill-natured. It would be wiser to act in all respects as she had acted before, and, if questions were asked concerning her father, it might be replied that he had gone away on business.

Hence it was that, with a heavy heart and the shadow of a great fear obscuring her usual brightness, Evelyn began to participate once more in all the gay doings of the town—much to the delight of Pieter Schuyler, who was unwearied in his attentions to her. No less intense was the gratification afforded by her presence to Prosser Williams, for he was thus enabled to press his unwelcome attentions upon her, all the more so as Captain Ferrers had been obliged to accompany Lord Bellomont on a visit to his government of Massachusetts. It may well be recorded here that His Excellency was always received with great enthusiasm in those parts, where he was more popular than in New York. On the occasion of that particular visit, a banquet was held in his honor, and a presentation made to him of many pounds in gold, which was highly acceptable to his depleted treasury.

Though fully aware that Prosser Williams had been the author of all her father's troubles and the cause of his flight, Evelyn was nevertheless compelled through motives of policy to conceal her repulsion as best she could, and avoid making an open enemy of one whom she knew to be secretly inimical. She had the distressing consciousness that he had been only holding back his hand against her father and herself out of his professed admiration for her. Captain Ferrers had feared that he was going to proceed to extremities and arrest her father, which

indeed was part of a skilfully constructed plan. But that first part of the scheme had failed of its operation because Prosser Williams on the occasion of the wedding was so struck anew by Evelyn's beauty and charm that he determined, if he could, to win her by fair means in the absence of Egbert Ferrers. If these means failed, then he was prepared to go any lengths. He had made up his mind to marry her, bitterly as his friends in England would resent his union with a penniless girl. He had thrown all other thoughts to the wind; his cold and calculating nature was inflamed through and through with an ardor which he would have hitherto deemed impossible.

To Evelyn it was no little of a trial to be forced to take the man's hand and tread with him the measure of "La Belle Katherine," "Money Musk" or the "Maid of the Mill." She listened with inward loathing to the exaggerated compliments which he believed all women desired. In an endeavor to be agreeable, the unwelcome suitor comported himself generally in a manner which caused Evelyn to detest and despise him. So fatuous was this fine gentleman, who had been spoiled by the notice of many fashionable dames, that he fancied he was making progress because the girl did not actually repulse him. He began to plume himself upon his success, and, as he went superciliously about the streets of the town with an insolence which made him universally unpopular, he indulged in various soliloquies, some of which were addressed to Gerald de Lacey.

"My fine fellow, you will feel my hand one of these days, unless Mistress Evelyn can be brought to terms. If she consents, I will do her the honor to

marry her, and a good thing it will be for her to get out of this beggarly colony, as soon as my time is up. If she refuses"—he clenched his hand and a dark look came over his face—"if she refuses, I will bring you both down with the same shot."

Musing thus, he went to *Der Halle* to keep an appointment with Captain Greatbatch at an hour when he knew that only the habitués of the place would be present. He frequented the tavern because he liked to indulge there, as he might not do elsewhere, that passion for gambling by which he had dissipated quite a respectable fortune in England. These losses had induced him to accept a position in His Excellency's Household, and, leaving the riotous company which he had affected in London, to come out to the colonies. Almost since his arrival he had dealings with Greatbatch and a finger in that notorious smuggler's pie. By this means he hoped to retrieve his fortune and secure a goodly pile, which, on his return to England, he might spend in his former extravagant fashion. However, in this place where, like Lady Bellomont, he considered himself an exile, fate had smitten him in the form of a penniless girl, and cried halt to all his calculations. Greatbatch, on his part, had counted much on the young man's influence, which he believed had kept him unscathed during these days so troublous for one of his profession. He treated him, therefore, with an almost servile deference, though he was well aware that the Captain was to a certain extent in his power, since he could at least injure and discredit him by making use of the knowledge he possessed. The young officer was partly misled by this servility as to the real character of the man, which was a mixture of cunning

and brutality. He treated him accordingly with arrogance and ill-concealed contempt.

Having ascertained by careful scrutiny from without that there was no one of consequence present, Prosser Williams passed through the room with a curt nod to mine host, who seemed to expand in girth and in geniality with every passing day. He seated himself at a remote table with Greatbatch and began to converse in low tones with the man, whom he regarded merely as a pliant tool. Their talk at first was chiefly of matters of trade, in which Prosser Williams showed the keenness of a huckster, for, where his own advantage was concerned, he could drive the hardest of bargains. But there was something else that evening on which he desired to sound Greatbatch. He had long had it in mind as one of his schemes that, all else failing, he might contrive to have Evelyn conveyed on board the brigantine "Hesperia," of which this fellow was master, and sail away to some distant port where he could force his captive to marry him. Such things were common enough, and would cause, when all was over, only a nine-days' wonder. He counted much on his own influence with the Governor, and the influence of his highly connected relatives in England, to help him to weather the storm, which he did not conceal from himself would be raised, not only by the girl's father, but by the Van Cortlandts and other influential Colonials. Still, he could finally represent the affair as a romantic escapade, and Evelyn, once securely in his power, would have to support him in that contention. It would be made to appear that it was merely an elopement with the girl's knowledge and consent. Nor did he stop to consider that those who knew

Evelyn would never believe such a story. He would have a powerful weapon against the girl in his knowledge of her father's antecedents and the threat to have him arrested and even—as might very well be—put to death, should he make too great an outcry. He would long ago have acted against Mr. de Lacey from mere hatred of the Catholic cause—to which was added hatred of the man who had eluded him in England, and rebuked him that day in his own garden—had it not been for the pressure which he hoped to bring through the father on the daughter to compel her to accept his suit.

Of late he had shown a fatal indecision, which had arisen from the hope that Evelyn was beginning to regard him more favorably. In that event, of course, it would be his policy to cover up all traces of the father's political and religious convictions, for these would constitute obstacles to his marriage in the eyes of his own relatives, from some of whom he had expectations. He told himself that, once married, he would be master, and it would be easy to coerce Evelyn into at least outward conformity to the established religion. His thin lips tightened as he told himself that no wife of his would be permitted to profess, much less to practise, the Romish superstition, nor consort with Jesuits or other dangerous characters. Mistress Evelyn would be on a very different footing then from that of the spoiled beauty who had reigned over a large circle of Manhattanese.

He had made up his mind that that evening would be a fitting opportunity to broach the subject to Greatbatch, since the matter must be brought to a head. He was weary of delay, and it would be easier to act in the absence of Ferrers, in whom he

recognized, not only a formidable rival, but a possible circumventer of his schemes. He had plied his boon companion with rum until the latter was in a state, not of irritation as in the earlier stages of intoxication, but of compliance. He leaned his arms on the table, bending confidentially towards the smuggler, and opened the subject. He represented a friend of his as being smitten with the charms of a certain young lady, whose parents might offer opposition to the match; therefore, in the event of an elopement, could that friend trust to Greatbatch to carry through the project?

"If the wench be willing," said Greatbatch, with a wink, "it would be no great matter."

"But should she not be willing?" inquired Williams.

"Ah, that is a horse of another color," replied the smuggler, scratching his head; "there would be the devil and all to pay about forcible abduction." Then he added, peering into his companion's face: "Tell me, Master, is she of the people?"

"No, and be hanged to your cursed curiosity!"

Greatbatch shook his head with a surly scowl at the rebuff.

"If your friend be a wise man," he declared, "he will attempt no such enterprise now, when disturbances of all kinds are rife, and we skippers, as it is, are trembling for our skins."

"And some of you might well tremble," suggested Williams, significantly, "had they no friends at court, or if those friends turned against them. Then it would be a matter for the halter and the gibbet."

He made an expressive gesture, and Greatbatch, thoroughly alarmed, agreed.

"I'm your man for the job, whatever it be,"

he hastened to assure the other, "provided that the night be dark and a strong wind blowing, with a quiet potion for the maid that she be not heard."

There was something in these details which was revolting even to Prosser Williams, when mentioned in connection with Evelyn. He mentally resolved that, only in the last extremity, would he proceed to such a course of action, and then it would be the girl's own fault. She would bring it on herself, since he was prepared to take all chances and marry her openly and honorably to his own great detriment. So absorbed was he in these thoughts, and so vividly appeared to his mind the face of the girl, that he scarcely noticed at first that Greatbatch was speaking again.

"And I hope your honor's friend will remember that I am a poor man, ruined since the Governor and many others have turned honest."

Prosser Williams frowned.

"Shut your scurrilous mouth, you dog," he said; "such talk is hanging matter. But, as to your gain in this business, be assured it will pay you well, if it be successful."

"The sooner the better then," exclaimed Greatbatch, animated with a great courage from the rum he had been steadily swallowing.

"My friend will let you know all in good time," said Williams, "if his fickle fancy does not change. And, meanwhile, keep your mouth shut; that is the important matter."

"For what port would your friend wish to sail?" inquired Greatbatch, unwilling to let the matter be thus lightly disposed of. "How would Barbadoes suit? I have a mind to take a run down there for a cargo of rum, sugar and spices, all aboveboard and honest."

"Barbadoes will do as well as another place," returned Williams.

"Which minds me," went on the smuggler, and it would be hard to say if there was any other association of ideas in his mind than the mere name of the island, "of a chap I saw slipping away to Barbadoes for reasons of his own."

"What chap?" asked Williams idly, out of the merest curiosity. He was standing up with his hand on the back of the chair, preparatory to departure.

"One of your good sort—canting, hypocritical knaves they mostly are; a bookish fellow, too, but deep, I make no doubt, in matters of trade."

"A bookish fellow," repeated Williams slowly, struck by the expression, and remembering to have heard Gerald de Lacey described as a man buried in his books.

"Aye," said Greatbatch, nodding his head, "one Master de Lacey, an impudent knave with his nose high in the air."

Greatbatch little knew what a blow he had inflicted by that idle bit of gossip. Had he known he would have rejoiced.

"De Lacey!" echoed Williams, bending forward over the chair-back. "And did you say he had gone to Barbadoes?"

"Gone this month or more," cried Greatbatch, pleased with the interest which he had excited. "Stole off as quiet as a mouse, the night of the big wedding up yonder."

Prosser Williams straightened himself, and by a violent effort recovered his composure. That weapon which he had believed would be most effectual in subduing Evelyn was thus snatched from his hand. He had been fooled, cajoled. Even Evelyn's

apparent civility had been, no doubt, part of a plan to keep him quiet. The bird had taken wing, not, as this idiot, Greatbatch, believed, on account of the smuggling operations, but for those other and graver reasons which would have made it possible for him to terrorize both father and daughter. And who had given the alarm? His mind turned to Ferrers. But the suspicion was too vague, the possibility too remote, to permit of action. He left Greatbatch without a word, and, as he went out raging and fuming, he stood an instant under the great tree, which now waved its branches in solitude. Not a creature was stirring under its shadow. He looked with angry, gleaming eyes out over the river, as though it had been an accomplice in the flight. It was covered with small, white waves, beating restlessly against the shore, and surging about the base of those rocks behind which, as the Indians believed, a Manitou kept the winds imprisoned. The thought in Prosser Williams' mind was that the time had now come for action. At least, the departure of Gerald de Lacey took the obstacle of an angry father out of the way. Two courses were now open to him: either to employ that which he had just suggested to Greatbatch, or, since that might be attended with difficulties if the girl, as seemed likely, continued on at the Van Cortlandts, to cause her arrest. In his fury against her, he inclined to the latter alternative, which, he concluded, might in the end best further his plans. When she found herself in imminent danger of imprisonment or still more dire penalties, she would no doubt be glad to procure her release on any terms. For with his influence he could obtain it, and she would then be forced to accept him as her husband. He swore an

oath that she would be obliged in some manner or other to do this very thing before that moon, which now appeared as a pale crescent behind the cliffs across the river, was at its full.

As he turned to leave the spot, he saw the figure of Mynheer de Vries approaching. De Vries saluted the Captain in his bland fashion, remarking on the beauty of the evening, and Prosser Williams thought of questioning him as to the truth of Greatbatch's story. Mynheer was a near neighbor of the fugitive, and might even be possessed of some other information. But, when Williams broached the subject, it slipped off the smooth, polished surface of Mynheer as water from the face of a rock, and had only one effect, that of putting the latter upon his guard. In his mind it was important that this young sprig of nobility and attaché of His Excellency should know nothing. He parted from the other as soon as he could, and went into the tavern to discover from Greatbatch, if possible, the reasons for de Lacey's departure, provided always that he was acquainted with that fact.

Prosser Williams, on the other hand, seeing that nothing was to be gained by lingering, went on his way, making a point to pass by the Van Cortlandt mansion in the hope of catching even a brief glimpse of Evelyn. He was more intoxicated than ever at the thought of her, now that new obstacles seemed to spring up in his path, and he was more than ever resolved to win her by foul means, if not by fair. The very resentment that he felt towards her for having, as he believed, outwitted him and got the better of him in the matter of her father's flight, only gave an impetus to his ardor.

The trees were beginning to shed their leaves,

which rustled along the street as he passed. There were only late flowers in these gardens that attracted the eye in all the residential parts of this colonial town, the monotony of which he hated. He paused outside the iron fence that enclosed the grounds of the Van Cortlandt dwelling. He looked up at the gable of the house where it turned towards the garden. He noted abstractedly the date of the building of the house, the initials of the family, the vane upon the gable top and the other adornments which the fancy of the anchor-smith or worker in iron had added. He allowed his eyes to travel downwards thence to the windows, the porch and finally the garden, but no sign could he catch of the girl who, to his amazement and even dismay, took a foremost place in all his thoughts. He felt this failure to catch even a glimpse of her as a new and distinct grievance, as if she had planned it, and he slowly walked away with a crushing sense of defeat and humiliation. Through his fierce resentment towards her and all whom he believed to be concerned in the father's departure, he seemed to hear in the wind that swept up from the Bay the tones of her voice, full of the vibrant quality which had so often thrilled him when in her presence.

"What an infernal fool I am," he soliloquized, "to let her gain such a mastery over me! But by the high heaven, if ever I win her, it will be worth it all—aye, and a thousand times more!"

Long before he reached Whitehall, which he stopped to examine curiously as though he had never before seen it, he had come to the determination to take the bold step forward of a declaration to Evelyn. Then he would know whether it was to be war or peace between them, and would be prepared to act accordingly.

CHAPTER XII

THE KERMESSE

THE town was all agog over the *Kermesse*, which was to be held that year upon the Common.¹ Booths were being erected for the display of almost every imaginable variety of wares. Cattle were being brought from the farms on the Hudson, from Jersey, the Heights of Hoboken, Weehawken, and even from the adjoining colonies. Early on that September morning when the fair was to open, the tribe of the Rockaways arrived from the seashore with their merchandise. They came, urging their swift canoes along with skilled, sure strokes of their paddles into the great Basin just below the Long Bridge at the foot of Broad Street. Waiting for them on the shore were a crowd of idlers and numbers of children. These latter had long looked forward to their coming, displaying their eagerness with shining eyes, animated gestures and merry talk and laughter. They ran and skipped around them, escorting that solemn procession of painted and feathered Indians, copper-colored and shining with grease. The squaws were especially conspicuous in dresses of glaringly vivid calicoes and necklaces of bright beads or shells.

The arrival of the *Wilden* ushered in the week of

¹The Common, the present City Hall Park.

the *Kermesse* which stirred the sleepy Dutch town to its depths. There was no family of prominence which had not visitors for the *Kermesse*, and a round of gaieties, quite apart from the weekly assemblies, kept the young people in the highest of spirits. Everyone met everyone else at the *Kermesse*, and gay groups wandered amongst the stalls, watched the various trials of skill, the wrestling and the jumping, visited the Punch and Judy show, or admired the splendid specimens of cattle. The wares of the *Wilden* attracted perhaps the greatest number of buyers. All their products were in demand: their pottery, their embroidered moccasins, the sand for floors, the baskets of numerous shapes, the cat's-tails, oak-knots and willow withes (which latter would be formed into brooms or mats); the bay-berries from the wax of which candles were made, the elder and other berries for dyes, the dried clams strung on sea-grass, and above all, the assortment of fresh fish, which the latest arrivals had brought with them—lampreys and eels and sunfish, white and yellow perch, sturgeon, bream, cod and sea-bass, with salmon that would have tempted the appetite of an anchorite.

Evelyn de Lacey and a merry party of young girls escorted by their beaux had come hither. Pieter Schuyler was in close attendance, overjoyed at the opportunity thus afforded. His honest, manly countenance, deeply bronzed by the sun, was radiant. He was in the best of spirits, and entered with zest into the laughter and jests, though he had been quick to notice the shadow of anxiety and sadness that hung about the girl like a cloud over the sunshine of that pleasant morning. Lord Bello-mont, who had just returned from Massachusetts

with Her Excellency and members of his Household, made his appearance early in the day to declare the *Kermesse* opened. He was attended by many officers from the garrison and the warship, together with the chief of the train-bands, the mayor and civic functionaries. After he had withdrawn, my Lady remained on, with but one of her ladies and Captain Prosser Williams in attendance. She had a whim to wander at will about the place, and, meeting Evelyn at one of the stalls, attached her to her party.

"I want to talk to you," said she. "Where have you been hiding this long time that I have not seen you?"

In answer Evelyn informed her that she had remained a good deal in the house because of Madam Van Cortlandt's loneliness after the marriage of her granddaughter.

"Do not let her tie you to her apron strings too much," my Lady cried petulantly. "The young were never meant to be weighed down by the heaviness of the old."

To this Evelyn made no reply, as the speech jarred upon her.

"And your father?" continued my Lady inquiringly.

As the girl, taken aback by the suddenness of the question, was at a loss for a fit reply, Her Excellency proceeded calmly:

"I have lately learned that he is absent." The girl could scarcely repress a start. "I regret it on my own account," went on the speaker lightly, "for I have heard that he is a charming, agreeable man, and I would fain have met him."

Evelyn responded that her father went very little abroad, that he was absorbed for the most part in

his books, but that the pleasure would have been mutual, she was sure.

"There are other things," Lady Bellomont said significantly, "which I have been told about him, and which interested me more. I liked what I had heard of his courage and loyalty in these time-serving days."

Evelyn was astonished, and it required all her self-control to conceal the consternation which possessed her.

"But," my Lady said, dropping her voice a little, "it was an enemy that told me this—one hostile to your father and of whom you must beware, for presently, if it serves his turn, he will tell the same story to my Lord Bellomont or to my brother, Mr. Nanfan, which will be equally perilous. It was wise of Mr. de Lacey to leave Manhattan. I would that you also," she spoke with a little worried pucker of the brows, "were out of harm's way till these troublous days are past."

The solicitude implied by the words, and the tone in which they were uttered, touched Evelyn. For the first time she believed that this woman, despite the wagging of inimical tongues, was not altogether heartless, frivolous and false. But as with faltering voice, in which were evident the sorrows and anxieties of these many days, Evelyn tried to thank her, Lady Bellomont added hurriedly:

"Who that enemy is I need scarce say. Little doubt but your keen wit has already discovered him. And have a care, be wary," she cautioned, "he is both powerful and dangerous."

But here Lady Bellomont's attention was claimed by various notables of the place, who crowded assiduously about her, preventing her from enjoying,

as she claimed, that hour of freedom. Evelyn took the opportunity to slip away; she looked around for Pieter who had been her escort, but he had disappeared. She was anxious to collect her thoughts and work out in her mind this new problem that had presented itself. What, if Her Ladyship, whom so many accused of being capricious and spiteful, should change from that attitude of kindness, and make public the information that had been so mischievously offered her, as if to pave the way for the other stroke that was to come? She drew close about her the cardinal (or great cloak) which she had brought with her, since the day was chilly, as if thus to shut out those cares and troubles which were gathering thickly about her. How could she be sure that her father was safe, even if he had reached that temporary haven in the town of Salem? For was not that also under the government of Lord Bellomont, and was not a set of fanatics at the head of affairs there, to whom persecution seemed as the breath of their nostrils? And if safety could not be assured there, even to one living in obscurity, what was to be the outcome? Maryland, late the home of religious liberty for all men, the sanctuary of the New World, was now rendered likewise perilous for Catholics, who had granted that liberty. The infamous Coode and his faction were still in power, and Governor Seymour was a deadly hater of the old faith and its adherents.

Leaving her gay companions, Evelyn turned her steps towards that portion of the Common where the *Wilden* offered their wares, and the old squaw, who had an almost maternal affection for her, noted at once the cloud upon her brow and the signs of weariness and trouble in her aspect.

"Our pale-face sister mourns," she said, "and her heart is more troubled than the sea when the storm wind blows over it. But her red-skin brothers and sisters are with her in her trouble. The Silver Covenant binds them, and they will never forsake her."

The assurance was strangely comforting to Evelyn in the desolation that seemed to close round her with a presage of coming disaster. She basked, as it were, in the warmth of those friendly beings, who gathered about displaying their wares for her to admire and pressing tokens upon her. While thus standing in their midst, she saw with a shiver of apprehension the tall figure of Captain Prosser Williams. He had been following her with his eyes all that morning, and had come at last to the resolve that there and then he would force her to listen to his suit. If her reply were favorable, well and good. Matters might then go on as they were, and her father proceed to Barbadoes—or to Hades—for all he cared. But if it were otherwise, if she dared to refuse an offer which seemed to him so great a condescension and so admirable a bit of good fortune for her, then he would bring force to bear upon her—such force as would compel her to yield—through Greatbatch or through the prison cell. He would terrify her with the grisly spectacle of the hangman himself, and snatch her, as it were, from the gibbet prepared for a recusant and a traitor, a seducer of the savages, a "consorter with Jesuits"; and would make her his wife in spite of them all and in her own despite. In the last resort she would be obliged to choose between Jack Ketch and himself. With very little ceremony then, he approached her. As time went on he was more and more furious, when

he thought of the escape of her father, and determined not to spare her.

"You had best come away from here," he said almost roughly. "Your association with these people exposes you to great risks, and one of these days it will cost you dear."

Evelyn was disposed to refuse at first, raising her head haughtily and drawing back a pace or two. The remembrance of her father, however, as well as of those other interests which might be at stake and of Ferrers' warning to her not to antagonize the man, caused her to follow his lead, albeit with a disdain which she strove to cover by a half-laughing petulance.

"What have the *Wilden* done to you, Captain Williams," queried she, with apparent amusement, "that you are so fierce against them?"

"It is not a question of these savages at all," he answered, with a gesture of contempt in their direction. "To my mind they are but dirty, ill-smelling, greasy beasts, little removed from the brute creation."

Evelyn flushed up, but made no reply. "Some brutes," she reflected, "did not wear feathers in their heads, nor paint themselves red." She walked away in the direction which Williams indicated. Although she believed him to be her mortal foe, she realized the importance of keeping as long as possible on a footing of amity, or at least of conventional civility, with him. She scarcely noticed that he was leading her to a retired spot behind some of the stalls where a group of trees formed a kind of rural arbor. There was a rustic bench there upon which, with but little ceremony, he invited her to be seated. As he himself remained standing for the moment,

Evelyn mastered her repugnance towards the man sufficiently to speak.

"I thought," she said, for the silence had begun to be irksome, and the man's intent gaze offensive, "that you were in attendance on my Lady Bellomont."

Prosser Williams gave a short laugh.

"I have purposely lost my Lady Bellomont in the crowd, and she will not be sorry. I have more important matters of my own to attend to than playing lackey to any fine lady."

Evelyn might have retorted that to her mind it was the rôle for which he was peculiarly fitted, but she wisely forbore. Sounds from that gay and animated scene reached her ears. She could hear the familiar intonations of friendly voices, and catch glimpses of costumes which she knew to have been prepared for this week of festivities. As Captain Williams remained silent, Evelyn asked presently with wondering eyes, that had something of mockery in them, and with a satirical little smile about the lips, that enraged the unwelcome suitor:

"Is your business then so *very* important?"

"Yes, to me," he answered curtly, "and to you also."

"To me," echoed Evelyn, raising her eyebrows and eying him coldly. "I scarcely think," with cool, composed emphasis on the words, "that any business of Captain Prosser Williams can be of importance to me."

"Then I shall endeavor to convince you of your mistake. I shall not waste time in preliminaries, and I suppose it is idle to talk of love to a young lady of your loftiness, who fancies herself secure upon a pedestal above ordinary mortals."

Evelyn laughed outright as if he spoke in jest, though in truth her heart sank at the realization of the crisis thus suddenly forced upon her.

"Yes," she remarked casually, "it would be, as you say, quite idle to enlarge upon such a subject. I assure you it is very far removed from my thoughts."

"Well, it is not removed from mine," retorted Prosser Williams hotly, "and I shall take this opportunity of telling you that, upon your present conduct and your answer to the question I am about to put, will depend your own safety and that of others."

"So you are condescending to threaten me."

There was unutterable scorn expressed in the low-voiced comment of the girl.

"I am condescending to anything," declared Prosser Williams, "which will further my suit with you."

"You take a strange way to awaken my interest," said Evelyn, drawing away from him.

"I will resort to any means, I care not what, short of actual violence," said Prosser Williams.

"And even that, if need be, shall not be left out of the reckoning."

Evelyn tried to rise, but, taking her hand, he forcibly detained her.

"You *shall* hear me," he said insistently, "that I may know from this moment upon what footing I stand. My infatuation for you—call it by whatever name you will—has made me reckless. If you will not listen to an avowal of love, you shall at least hear my determination to win you for my wife at all costs, or—"

"The alternative, pray let me hear the alterna-

tive," cried Evelyn passionately, for indignation had now overmastered every other feeling. "Will not so generous and chivalrous a suitor, whom one cannot choose but detest, put his meaning plainly into words?"

The man's face was white with fury, so biting was the tone and so scathing the words, but he answered sullenly:

"You know very well with what you are threatened, you and your Papist father, as recusants, traitors to the King's Majesty, consorters with Jesuits, seducers of the savages."

He poured out the words fast and furious, as if they were in danger of choking him.

"I know enough," he finished, "of your father's antecedents to have him hanged as high as ever were hung those two godly and innocent men, Leisler and Milborne. It is the duty of one loyal to the King and to his country to denounce such a one."

For the life of her, Evelyn could not repress a shudder.

"And as for your dainty ladyship, there is matter enough against you to make it a choice between a dungeon and a gibbet."

But Evelyn was brave again, and faced him with proud composure.

"I, and I alone," he went on, "with my influence here and in England, can always protect you and save your father."

"In spite of your loyalty and patriotism, your duty to your King and country?" sneered Evelyn.

He bit his lips. "A truce to your irony!" he said darkly. "I care nothing for it. I offer you the alternative of a highly advantageous marriage with me or death and disgrace."

"There cannot be a moment's choice," returned Evelyn with convincing sincerity. "I would infinitely prefer the latter."

As she spoke, she made another effort to rise, but, grasping her by the hand, he strove to draw her towards him, pouring out in wild incoherent language the mad passion which at the moment possessed him more than ever. Quite opportunely for Evelyn, footsteps were heard approaching, and Captain Ferrers stood a moment in astonishment and perplexity before the pair. Doffing his hat hastily, he would have passed on had not Evelyn, now freed from Williams' compelling grasp, exclaimed hurriedly:

"Will you give me your arm, Captain Ferrers? I would fain return to my friends."

The glance exchanged between the two men was full of deadly enmity. Open and undisguised aversion and contempt were in Captain Ferrers' look, as well as a deadly anger. For Evelyn's manner and her appeal to him had convinced him that the fellow had dared to offer her some affront. Happily he was still better aware than Evelyn of the necessity of self-control and the avoidance of all open hostility. He gave the girl his arm, with a bow that was purposely ceremonious, and together they walked away. As for Captain Prosser Williams, he stood an instant uncertain what course to take. Then, slowly turning his back, he strolled off in an opposite direction. For some moments there was silence between Ferrers and Evelyn. The latter was struggling for self-control which should prevent her from making any disclosure that might precipitate a conflict between the two men, and Captain Ferrers was full of an indignation which it required the whole force

of his will to master. When at last he spoke, it was in a low voice, unsteady with emotion:

"Has he dared?"

But Evelyn answered quickly:

"I implore you to take no notice. You know what a quarrel at this moment might mean to us all. But from this time forward, we may be assured, Captain Williams will throw off his disguise."

She spoke with a foreboding conviction, and Captain Ferrers, aware from her manner no less than her words that some crisis had been precipitated, hurried her from the spot. In their agitation the two scarcely heeded the animated scene through which they were passing. Mechanically they pushed their way among the throng of buyers and hucksters, the merely curious or those intent on purchase, and their friends, to whom Evelyn nodded and smiled abstractedly, while Captain Ferrers doffed his hat. Ferrers had but one thought, namely, to see his companion under the friendly protection of the Van Cortlandt roof, which would afford her at least a temporary shelter. He felt sure, though she had not said so, that Evelyn had rejected Captain Williams' suit, advantageous as such an alliance would have been for her from every point of view, save as to the character of the man himself. Such rejection would goad that unwelcome suitor to an insensate rage, all the more deadly as it was cold and crafty. Captain Ferrers knew the character and reputation of the man, and was aware besides that it must have been no light fancy, but a genuine passion, which had impelled him to offer his hand in marriage to a penniless girl. In fact, that he had done so surprised him no little, as it hardly tallied with his idea of the man's nature. But, though his

delicacy forbade him to ask any questions, he knew beyond a doubt what her words had implied. And Prosser Williams in the rôle of a rejected suitor, with his power and influence over Lord Bellomont, was dangerous beyond words. Evelyn herself, though she was apprehensive of danger, could not have dreamed that one who posed as a gentleman would stoop to the methods which Ferrers felt sure the other would employ without scruple. For the social circle in which Williams had lived his whole life, had been of a sort to demoralize anyone; and it was but too probable that he had lost sight of even those ideals and traditions by which men of his class were ordinarily bound.

So full was Ferrers of these reflections that he walked almost in silence beside the girl, whose face he could but dimly see, so closely was it shaded by the hood of her cardinal. This glimpse of her saddened countenance stirred his pulses and awakened in him a pity and a tenderness that, for the time being, almost cast into the shade that warmer emotion which her presence, and even the sound of her voice, had hitherto awakened. How helpless she was! How helpless would be her friends in presence of the perils that threatened her!

At Madam Van Cortlandt's door he left her, with a few hurried words of warning. He implored her to be on her guard, to stir but little abroad and never unattended, until he should have discovered something at least of his fellow-soldier's plans. There was a hint of emotion in the manner of both as they parted. Events were bringing them so closely together in thought and feeling, and yet, as Evelyn was quick to recognize, forcing them farther and farther apart.

For many a day afterwards Captain Ferrers preserved the image of Evelyn as she stood in the open doorway, the scarlet cardinal falling back to reveal the soft white frock beneath. He felt that he would do anything in the world to win her by all fair and honorable means, such as would ensure her own safety and that of her father. He cursed the stupid laws and senseless bigotry which could make victims of such as these, and which now stood in the way of all his happiness.

CHAPTER XIII

A BLOW THREATENS

MEANWHILE events in the colony had been such as to spread consternation, not only among the few and scattered Catholics, but also among all who, having ranged themselves against Leisler, were counted without a particle of foundation as enemies of the Protestant cause. To Dutch Manhattan, and those of the English whom inter-marriage or long residence had led to make common cause with the Hollanders, the news came like a thunderbolt that Nicholas Bayard, head of the anti-Leislerian party, had been arrested. The charge against him was treason and conspiracy against the liberties of his fellow-subjects. Society was paralysed by the shock. The weekly "sociables" and other forms of entertainment amongst the higher circles were suspended; and, while the older men and women still met in anxious gatherings in the drawing-rooms of Madam Van Cortlandt, the Schuylers, Phillippses, Spratts, Provosts, Van Schaicks and the rest, their conversation dealt altogether with the political situation and the growing dissatisfaction in that element of society with the administration of Lord Bellomont and his fanatical supporters. The arrest was a direct blow at most

of the leading Dutch families, who had believed themselves so influential and their position so secure. For perhaps none among their members surpassed Nicholas Bayard in character and ability or in the elegance of his surroundings and the luxury of his dwelling. That house which Bayard had lately built in the region of the Catiemuts Hill, where it was reached by the fresh breezes of both rivers, had become a landmark in the Colony. "Mr. Bayard's chimney and Mr. Bayard's red front door" were beacons out over the river and a species of traveller's guide on land. It was whispered about in those anxious gatherings that the costly appurtenances of his dwelling had been handled unceremoniously, and even damaged considerably, by the party who had gone thither to make the arrest. In their search for the hidden master of the house, they were said to have behaved with inconceivable rudeness to Madam Bayard and other persons of condition.

Madam Van Cortlandt was much upset by this happening, having her own reasons for feeling it acutely. For Mr. Bayard was connected with her by ties of kindred, through intermarriage between the families and long friendship, and his situation was without doubt sufficiently serious. She was, moreover, very well aware that at least one of her sons, Olaf Stephenson Van Cortlandt, might very possibly become embroiled, as indeed proved later to be the case. Then Polly, who had but lately returned from her wedding journey and taken up her abode in the fashionable quarter of the town down near the Fort, could bring her but little comfort. During the frequent visits which she paid to her grandmother and her beloved Evelyn, she was at

times moody and depressed, quite unlike her old vivacious self. For her newly-wed husband had already tried to impose upon her many of his puritanical views, and was making himself openly conspicuous among the Leislerians. It was even whispered that he had taken a leading part in procuring the arrest of Nicholas Bayard. The bright horizon of Polly's life was thus already clouded, and this added another to Madam Van Cortlandt's many causes of anxiety. With Evelyn in her house and under all the circumstances, it was necessary to observe the greatest caution. It was but too clear to the mind of the old lady that Polly's husband would be glad of an opportunity to deal a blow at that friend of his wife's whom he had always disliked. In his fanaticism, probably, he would consider that it was a public duty to rid the colony of a zealous and active adherent of Popery. Therefore, Madam was troubled far beyond her wont, the placid stream of her existence seeming of a sudden to have been forced into swift currents and dangerous eddies.

Madam Van Cortlandt had not hitherto said a word to Evelyn of these troubles in so far as they concerned herself, but always preserved her cheerful and easy composure. The two sat together on the very evening when the *Kermesse* had come to an end. They discussed the cattle that had been exhibited or sold, the various weaves of cloth, the webs of linen, the embroideries and the leather-work. Forgetting graver cares, they gossiped a little, as women will, of the betrothals that were impending, and of couples that had been seen much together during the course of the week; of the sadness that was imprinted like a mask on the once sparkling

face of Cornelia de Peyster, whose lover had been killed by Indians; of how charming the Schuyler girls and Marije and Annetje Provost had looked in their modish new gowns; how the fat and sluggish wife of Mynheer de Vries had roused herself to come in a sedan chair to the *Kermesse*, and had visited every store. They discussed the costumes which Lady Bellomont had worn, her bonnets which had come from beyond the water, and her exquisitely embroidered scarf, said to have been the work of Continental nuns.

Sometimes little silences would intervene as the elder lady studied with admiration the fine and delicate profile of her young guest, the lashes of whose eyes rested on smooth-skinned cheeks, while her fingers drew the thread in and out of the bit of tapestry on her lap. Those silences of Evelyn struck Madam Van Cortlandt as being in themselves interesting: they were restful since they suggested repose; they were sympathetic, for from time to time the eyes that were raised and the smile in them showed that the quiet worker was in touch with her companion. Then too her silences were thoughtful, as Madam reflected, never for one moment indicative of a light and frivolous mind, to which repose is abhorrent; in themselves eloquent, they contained the elements of strength, power and self-control.

Madam, speaking at length, reverted once more to the crucial matter of Nicholas Bayard, which they in common with all the town had discussed so often.

"Much grieved I am," she said, "for himself and for his wife, Judith, whom I remember as so beautiful a bride, when she came here from Boston Town.

Should aught befall her husband, I verily believe the woman's heart would break."

Evelyn considered the suggestion, but she did not dispute it. To her it seemed that hearts were not brittle, but stretched and expanded under the pressure that was put upon them until they could endure all things. Confident now of a sympathetic listener, which she no longer dared to expect in her granddaughter, Madam poured out for the first time to Evelyn some of the apprehensions which were darkening all her horizon. What she alone kept from her were her uneasiness concerning the girl herself and the danger of her presence in the house, now that the Van Cortlandts might have enough to do to protect themselves. She spoke her mind with great freedom concerning the new bridegroom, and declared that she alone of all the relatives had stood out against such a marriage, the more so as it had never been, or at least was not until very recently, a marriage of love for Polly.

"My only hope is," she said, "that Polly's bright and wholesome nature may correct defects in his character. At least, we can continue so to hope, though my experience of life has been," she added with a sigh, "that the wife's nature changes, rather than the husband's, whose characteristics become but more marked as the years go on."

While thus the pair conversed, they cited before them, as it were, every one of those figures who were then filling the canvas of old New York. The scene about them was one of indescribable peace. The room in which they sat was a small, chintz-furnished boudoir close by the drawing-room, from which a broad stairway of oak wound upwards to Madam's bedroom. Through the open windows, in that soft

September night, came the odor of the flowers in their prim beds, so unlike the profusion of Evelyn's own garden. Presently the clock in the hall sounded.

"Bless me," cried Madam, "if that is not already half past eight."

The exclamation roused Evelyn from the reverie into which she had fallen, a reverie in which Prosser Williams and his highly distasteful wooing played a part, and the figure of Captain Ferrers seemed thrown thereby into high relief. In happier times and under more fortunate circumstances, she could not conceal from herself the latter might have played an important part in her life. It might have been that the old lady, who still watched her intently, divined her thoughts, for she said suddenly:

"A man to be marked amongst many is that Captain Ferrers. He is one whom I do sincerely like and esteem."

A wave of color passed over Evelyn's face, so odd was the coincidence of Madam's remark with the current of her thoughts.

"But, my child," said the older woman, speaking with her wise, tender gravity, "it would be foolish to let your imagination dwell too much on one whose life must lie so far apart from yours. Much less should you permit him to engage your affection."

She paused, scarcely permitting herself a glance at the face before her; but, as Evelyn made no rejoinder, she continued:

"I speak as a mother might speak to a dearly loved daughter. And do not misunderstand me, whatever may be your sentiments, for he is beyond question your devoted admirer. I will go farther and say that unmistakably he loves you."

There was an inscrutable expression in the eyes

that were raised to Madam's face, but sadness seemed the dominant note—a sad hopelessness that could not be roused to enthusiasm even by recognition on the part of this woman, whom she knew to be both wise and discerning, of a love that was but half-expressed. If it were true that Captain Ferrers loved her—as by many tokens he had led her to believe, so that she herself was all too sensible of his devotion—it only made the prospect before her the more unspeakably difficult.

“May I venture a question?” said Madam. “Has he spoken of his feelings?”

“Only indirectly,” Evelyn answered. “I have sought to avoid the subject.”

“As was most wise,” commented Madam, “at least until—”

But she could not speak the words of hope that her heart suggested. The ending of that sentence must be indefinite. She was filled with a great pity and sorrow. If circumstances had been different, this would have made an ideal match. She had read the young man's character with her keen, discriminating glance, and she knew him to be worthy—a brave and honest gentleman, of a charming disposition too, such as she might have selected for Polly, had the choice been hers. But Evelyn now spoke with that fine dignity and composure which Madam had so often admired:

“No one can know better than I,” she said, “that such an attachment must be hopeless. When I have gone to join my father it will perhaps die a natural death.”

Madam was very doubtful whether any attachment inspired by such a girl would be so fleeting; but she did not express any further opinion, and

indeed at that very moment the two were suddenly and rudely interrupted. There was the sound of footsteps coming hurriedly along the broad walk outside; the latch of the garden gate clicked, and in another instant Jumbo, the foot-boy, tapped at the open door of the room where the two ladies sat.

His eyes were rolling with excitement, as he breathlessly informed them that Mynheer Ferrers, the Captain, had given him a note and bidden him take it as speedily as he could to the ladies of the house. The gentleman had so impressed upon him the necessity of haste, and also of delivering the note to none other than Madam Van Cortlandt or her guest, that the boy had very nearly got into serious difficulties. He had run headlong into pedestrians who, thinking him a footpad, had loudly called for the Watch. Needless to say, Jumbo did not wait for its arrival. He had collided in the hall downstairs with Peter, the butler, who had staggered back against the wall, with the ejaculation: "The good Lord ha' mercy!" On recognizing Jumbo, he had dealt the boy a hearty cuff upon the ear, which had only served to expedite his progress.

"Massa Ferrers, he say 'Hurry, hurry!'" cried Jumbo.

Evelyn, to whom the note was addressed, opened it and read that at any moment a force would be sent at the instigation of Prosser Williams to arrest her. Lord Bellomont had spoken plainly of the matter, describing the accused as "an insolent and pernicious Papist, who broke all laws and consorted openly with the enemies of the King's Government." The matter was so urgent that Ferrers implored her to take instant measures for her safety. She must find concealment somewhere, until her friends could

arrange for her escape to her father. The young man did not say in the letter, what he very well knew to be the case, that the arrest would be simply a cover for the designs of Prosser Williams. That miscreant, as he could fancy, would bring all pressure to bear to procure Evelyn's release, making marriage with himself the condition. He would promise the authorities that, once he had become master of the situation and the girl had been freed from the pernicious influence of her father, he could guarantee that she would become a good Protestant, or at least be made to conform to the established religion and abandon all her dangerous practices. Evelyn, in reading Captain Ferrers' note, was able to piece out for herself very much of what he did not say. She too knew that this action of Captain Williams, if actuated in the first instant by revenge, was but a step to the prosecution of his suit. For an instant she felt helpless and bewildered. Then she roused herself and read aloud to Madam Van Cortlandt all that the young man had written save one manly and tender sentence wherein he had placed himself at her service, declaring that he was willing, could it advance her interest, to resign his position at once. With a sigh, Evelyn decided that such an action on his part would be fatal. It would incense Lord Bellomont more than ever if he were to lose one of his favorite officers on account of this girl.

"Shall they then dare to cross the Van Cortlandts' threshold," Madam cried, "to seize my guest?"

But almost as she spoke she remembered Nicholas Bayard and her heart sank within her.

CHAPTER XIV

AN ALLIANCE OF HATE

ON the afternoon of that memorable day a curious conversation took place between Mynheer de Vries and the newly-wedded husband of Polly Van Cortlandt. The two had met on the covered bridge in front of the *Stadt Huys*, where merchants were in the habit of congregating of a morning to barter goods, and where, by order of the Governor, a formal meeting was held every Friday after eleven of the clock. But there were no mercantile men on the premises just then, and no hint of traffic, as the pair stopped for a moment to chat, leaning on the wooden railing and looking down into the waters of the *Graft* or Pond, as it took its slow way through Broad Street. When they had conversed a little on current topics, and the young husband had responded indifferently to the compliments which the elder man paid him on the subject of his bride, young Laurens broke out hotly on the matter of Nicholas Bayard's arrest, which he declared had been only too long delayed. His listener was by no means averse to hearing the young man's views, adroitly leading him on by questions which conveyed nothing of his own opinion. Also, Henricus was induced by the same skilful process to air his discontent with the part which the Van Cortlandts had played

from the first in political affairs, aligning themselves, so to speak, with the people's enemies.

Mynheer heard all this, while maintaining with dignity and resolutely his own cautious position upon the fence. He committed himself neither to any blame of the Van Cortlandts nor to any deprecation of their opponents. He prided himself on having the right word for every emergency, and he had long ago taken the measure of this fanatic, whose narrow and puritanical nature was accentuated by the training of a Calvinistic mother, and who was also anxious to ingratiate himself with John Nanfan, and through him with Lord Bellomont. In such company it behooved Mynheer to be cautious, and cautious he accordingly was.

"I have a sore grievance even against my newly-wed wife," Laurens said petulantly.

"With a wife so charming," interposed Mynheer suavely, "grievances must fly like thistledown before the wind."

"Strong measures will be necessary with this one," said the young man with a disagreeable laugh.

"I may tell you that the grievance is good flesh and blood, bone and sinew."

Mynheer became instantly aware that his companion was alluding to Evelyn.

"The baggage has established herself in the Van Cortlandt homestead," said the younger man, sourly, "and I have told Polly that I hold it the height of impudence."

"Remember," said Mynheer, shaking a reproving and very waggish finger at him, "you are speaking of one who, by a popular decree, has been declared altogether charming. The beaux hereabouts credit her with both beauty and parts."

"She has the art to perfection of deceiving ordinary men," said Henricus, with an air which plainly said he considered himself extraordinary. "She has never drawn the wool over my eyes, and never will."

"Yours," said Mynheer, indulgently, "were engaged with one so surpassingly fair—"

His companion waved an impatient hand as if scornful of the suggestion, but, do as he would, there suddenly rose before him a vision of Polly as he had first known her. Boy and girl together, they had belonged to the same Company. As children, they had picked berries together, skated on the pond, or coasted down that steep hill leading to the bridge where the men now stood. Later they had continued that good comradeship, which, in the case of Laurens, had ripened into warmer sentiments. Laurens forgot for a moment Mynheer, who was watching him intently, and his own grievances. He seemed to see Polly the leader of their Company, bright, gay and vivacious, imposing her views upon them all. On that very hill she had stood as a queen, and he an abject slave. If it pleased him immensely to recall her thus, his pleasure was by no means diminished by the thought that now and henceforward it was for him to command and Polly to obey. His will must henceforth be dominant. He was jubilant at the reflection, which in turn had led to another. He remembered how his enmity to Evelyn dated from the time when the latter had outrivalled Polly, as a child at first and later as a woman. He had bitterly resented her beauty and her charm, which had led to the defection even of Pieter Schuyler and others of the Manhattan youth, who were bound by every conventional law

to remain staunch to Polly. For every bit of social or personal success that had been hers, he hated Evelyn in almost greater measure than for her personal dislike of himself, which she had never been at pains to conceal. He was quite aware that, if Evelyn had had her way, there would have been no Polly waiting for him at home in that pretty house overlooking the Fort and the Bowling Green. All these recollections passed through his mind in swift succession as his eyes rested on that hill of old memories. He smiled at the thought of the triumph that had been his in marrying Polly—a triumph the greater for the slow persistence by which she had been won; and he promised himself a fresh triumph over Evelyn, when he should compel Polly to keep her at a distance, if not to break off all relations with her. He had heard some rumors which filled him with a vague hope that Evelyn might be disposed of so effectually as never again to come between him and his wife.

Mynheer had meanwhile been waiting patiently until his companion should speak again. He saw the alternate softness and harshness of his face, and that dreamy look fixed upon the hill, which gave him a cue to the other's thoughts. When young Laurens spoke it was to disavow any other motive for his depreciation of Evelyn than that he was unusually clear-sighted.

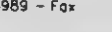
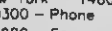
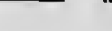
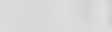
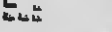
"Too clear-sighted by half," said Mynheer, pleasantly. "Believe the word of one who is nigh double your age that it is better to go through life with eyes half shut."

He was thinking at the same time, as he regarded the dark and narrow face before him, what a mixture of fool and prig, and possibly knave, this young man



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had turned out. Aloud he spoke cheerily, inviting his companion to come up to the house and have a pipe of choice tobacco and a glass of Madeira, which had come straight from overseas.

"Through the Customs I will hope," said Henricus, but his laugh this time was more genial, for the afternoon was wearing chill and Mynheer's wine was notably good.

Mynheer waved aside the subject after his graceful fashion, and on they went until, at the gate of the now deserted cottage, the younger man stopped suddenly. The profusion of flowers in their very luxuriance suggested some neglect, and Mynheer, who felt uneasy, was fearful lest his companion would guess the secret that he himself had been at pains to conceal.

"I wonder where this de Lacey keeps himself hidden," Laurens said suspiciously.

"Buried in his books they tell me," exclaimed Mynheer, with a careless wave of his hand.

"You are his nearest neighbor and should know," said Laurens, "but he must be lost in contemplation at the present moment, for he has no light."

"He is an odd fish," conceded Mynheer, "a far other sort of person than you and I, who value most the society of our kind."

"His kind," said Laurens, slowly and venomously, "would be dangerous."

"In quality, perchance, but not in quantity," said Mynheer, lightly, making a move onwards. "I mean that there are not many of his like."

"So much the better for these colonies," cried Laurens, still vindictively. "I would like passing well to have a peep at him and his books just now. What say you, Mynheer?"

He laid his hand on the gate, but Mynheer, taking him by the arm, led him away.

"That may not be thought of, Laurens," he said, persuasively. "As you know, he is my neighbor, and a touchy fellow at that. I should not, for a bag of golden guilders, let him find me in his garden, or engaged in the inspection of his premises."

Laurens unwillingly abandoned his investigation. He had suspicions which he would have liked to allay; for, though he had heard no word as yet of Mr. de Lacey's departure, he thought there was something unusual about the appearance of the house. The tobacco and the wine, produced with unwonted alacrity, changed his thoughts into pleasanter channels. He even exchanged a few civil words with the good Vrow de Vries, whom he usually ignored. She had earned his approval by a sentence or two which she had let drop when the name of Evelyn de Lacey came again to the surface, and which were the expression of strong disapproval, even of smothered hatred. Though Mynheer frowned darkly, the opinion thus expressed, together with the two or three glasses of Madeira that young Laurens had drunk, loosened the latter's tongue, and Vrow de Vries heard and never forgot many things which had been before unknown to her, and which showed that the girl, whom she had so much hated, was in danger of disgrace, of punishment, and probably at least of exile. Such things were far worse than the torments which she had been wont to invent for her.

The conversation gave Mynheer also, as he had hoped, much additional information, as well as a measure of relief. For it dawned on him that after all it was not smuggling operations in which de Lacey had been engaged, or at least that that was

not his only offence. But the knowledge made him mentally determined, in so far as his own personal security and convenience permitted, to befriend both the girl and her father. Against his wife, whose dull eyes glowed and who had so evidently enjoyed to the full young Laurens' tirades against the girl, Mynheer was filled with indignation, and he resolved to make her feel his resentment in a variety of ways.

CHAPTER XV

THE BLOW FALLS

WHILE Madam Van Cortlandt and Evelyn were still discussing Ferrers' note, they heard the sound of feet outside on the pavement. These footsteps, heavy and portentous, told their own tale. All the trees in the garden seemed agitated, as if the wind that stirred them had in its breath something sinister and ominous. Madam Van Cortlandt turned pale, and Evelyn, for the instant losing her self-possession, sat helpless and trembling. Then the elder woman, who had known in her time alarms from the Indians and from a foreign foe, roused herself and gave the order in short, sharp tones, though the aged voice was tremulous:

"Quick to the *bedste*. Conceal yourself there as best you may. I will await the visitors."

Rallying her forces, Evelyn protested that she would not leave her hostess alone. Madam was imperative, even angry, and the girl, realizing that argument was futile, hurried up the stairs leading to Madam Van Cortlandt's sleeping apartment. There stood the bed, stately and imposing as its habitual occupant; two steps led up, on either side, to the feather mattress, piled high and covered with a quilted satin coverlet. Above was the canopy, whence descended curtains of finest damask, still drawn back

for the daytime. It was not to that bed, however, that the fugitive made her way. In the wall, just behind the handsome bedstead, was something that seemed like a cupboard. Happily, there was a small space between the wall and the massive bed, which it would have been impossible for the girl to move. Evelyn, who, as a child, had often played here with Polly, stooped down hastily and, creeping under the bedstead, found sufficient room for her slender figure to stand erect near the cupboard while she partly opened one of the doors. She then slipped quickly into one of the shelves, or bunks, which had served as a sleeping-place for preceding generations. A couple of feather mattresses and a pailasse of straw were still left there, and the girl ensconced herself between them, leaving her head out so that she could breathe. Thus she remained, listening eagerly for sounds from below.

Madam Van Cortlandt hastily despatched her trusty old negro maid to remove from Evelyn's sleeping-room every trace of her presence, and then calmly awaited the invaders. In her mien was something more than her usual stateliness—a sternness which fully matched that of the men, whom she immediately recognized as amongst the grimmest and most hostile members of the Leislerian faction. She knew that they would revel in their present work, which would give an outlet at once for their political hatred and their insensate rage against Popery. They would consider themselves as servants of the Lord whilst thus hunting down an innocent young woman.

"I would fain be informed, Captain Tobias Ransom," she said coldly, "what it is that has brought you into my house."

"The business of the Lord," answered the leader, who was a New Englander and a Puritan, "as well as that of the King's Majesty, and of His Excellency, our good Governor."

"If you will name that business, I may be enabled to understand the motive for this unseasonable intrusion."

"A warrant has been issued on complaint of divers persons against a member of the accursed Popish sect, whom you are said to harbor under this roof—one Mistress de Lacey, who has made herself amenable to the law by consorting with Jesuits and the enemies of the King's Government, and has striven to draw savages from their allegiance by teaching them pernicious and abhorrent doctrines, and bringing them under the dominion of foreign Mass-priests and the French of Canada."

The charges, thus formulated against Evelyn and put in concrete form, startled the old lady, though she had heard much of their general tenor from Mr. de Lacey. The matter, as now stated, seemed to her very serious, and for an instant she did not know what reply to make.

"There is no one under the roof of a Van Cortlandt," she answered, "who is a traitor to the King's Government."

"Can you deny, at least," cried the leader, "that there is here one Evelyn de Lacey, a Papist, professing—yea, practising, in so far as she may—the abhorrent doctrines of Rome?"

"The religion of my guests," said the stout old lady, "is a matter between their Creator and themselves. I neither know nor seek to know how they worship God. Nor will I give you information of any sort to help in your nefarious task."

"Do you, then, obstruct the officers of the law, who, by the King's warrant, seek a prisoner?"

"In no way do I obstruct you," responded Madam. "You are free to search this house from the garret to the cellar, though I warn you that I shall protest against the outrage in the proper quarters."

"Protest as you will," retorted the leader, "my duty is clear."

But his men, exchanging glances, betrayed some uneasiness. Van Cortlandt had long been a name to conjure with in these colonies, and the English Governors had oftentimes changed with portentous suddenness from one faction to another. However, they had no resource but to follow their leader, who, after dividing his men so that some should remain upon the ground floor, mounted the stairway to institute his search. The mistress of the house had instructed Peter to attend the search-party, and the old negro, indignant at an intrusion which to his mind infringed upon the family dignity, silently obeyed. All the while he cast furious glances at them, rolling his eyes so that little except the whites showed; but he knew that any attempt at resistance would be worse than useless.

Seating herself, Madam meanwhile awaited with stern composure the outcome of that search, which was of so momentous importance for them all. Her sleeping apartment being at the top of the stairs, she heard above her head the heavy tread of the inquisitors. She was aware that they had crossed the room and approached her bedstead, which in its solemn dignity might have seemed sufficient to overawe any less fanatical folk than those who had come. When they had gone thus far, she leaned back in her chair and, closing her eyes, waited breathlessly.

To Evelyn these moments seemed like hours. She had drawn in her head, so as to be completely hidden between the two mattresses, at the moment when she heard the search-party mounting the stairs. She could hear them tramping around the room, poking under the bed, moving aside some heavy pieces of furniture and tossing things about recklessly, as if to show their contempt for the very richness of the appointments. They prodded the bed and, raising the linen valance, looked underneath. Then someone said something about the *bedste*, and an argument ensued. During its continuance the blood throbbed in Evelyn's ears, and her heart beat so painfully that she could scarcely hear. The contention seemed to be that surely there would not be a *bedste* in this luxuriously furnished and Anglified dwelling. Evelyn was beginning to breathe more freely, when one fellow, who had been especially persistent in maintaining that no Dutch house—and particularly one which had been begun in pioneer times—could be complete without a sleeping cupboard, suddenly thrust his hand between its doors and the great bedstead.

"It is there," he cried with triumph, and he strove to open the doors in so far as was possible.

"If it be so," argued Captain Ransom, angered at the obstinacy of his subordinate, "how could anyone have reached there without moving that weighty piece of furniture, a thing manifestly impossible for a young and slender woman? For it must be remembered that the occupants of this dwelling, whither the Lord has sent us, could have no knowledge of our coming, since all our proceedings were attended with the utmost secrecy."

This seemed an unanswerable argument, but the

man who had discovered the *bedste*, unwilling to be deprived of the merit of his discovery, hovered as near as possible to the aperture. Finally he thrust his pike down into the feather bed. But for the thickness of the mattress, the body of the brave girl would most certainly have been transpierced. Exercising wonderful self-control, Evelyn uttered no sound and made not the slightest movement. Only her lips moved in a simple and earnest prayer for help and safety. She had been asking all along, as she lay there, that Divine protection might be with her, that the Mother of God and her good angel might watch over her—not for her own sake alone, but also the sake of her hospitable entertainers.

Fortunately the leader, who was an obstinate man, had made up his mind that no human being could have forced a way in between the bedstead and the cupboard, and that there would not have been time to move the former. And even the man who had taken pride in the discovery of what he believed might be a place of concealment, after a few more futile thrusts and after flashing his lanthorn through the chinks of the cupboard, was almost convinced that no one could be hiding there. For, even if she succeeded in effecting an entrance, he thought she would certainly have betrayed her presence by an exclamation, a scream or a movement. And so the leader gave the order and they moved away. Evelyn, with devout thankfulness for the visible protection which had been accorded her, still lay motionless, while she heard the heavy tramp of the searchers ascending to the upper story. Only then did she momentarily uncover her face and take a deep breath. The man had left the door

of the cupboard open, so that the intolerable closeness of the atmosphere was somewhat relieved.

However, she was upon her guard, feeling convinced that there might be danger yet, and that the man who had seemed more suspicious than the rest might come stealing back for a final examination of that possible hiding-place. Prepared for such an event, Evelyn heard the stealthy step of the fellow, who apparently still had hopes of surprising the fugitive. She drew her head well in underneath the two feather mattresses and lay motionless as before. Once more she was in imminent danger from the pike-thrusts which the fellow plentifully bestowed upon the mattresses. They were of a thickness to defy him, and, in sullen disappointment, he rejoined his comrades. The whole party, crestfallen and sheepish, went downstairs again to where Madam Van Cortlandt was waiting to receive them with cutting reproaches and cutting sarcasm.

"I trust," said she, "that you have found to your liking this poor dwelling, which has been inhabited by three generations of Van Cortlandts, all loyal men and true to King and country."

"We are the humble servants of the Lord," said Captain Ransom, "and this work was given to us to do, against the mighty no less than the lowly."

"Against an aged widow and a defenceless girl?" asked Madam Van Cortlandt severely. "I trust that no such work may be given to the men of my race, nor can I believe that the Lord will sanction it."

The leader scowled, but he could find no ready answer, and, giving the signal for his men to depart, he paused upon the threshold of the room to hurl back a defiance.

"Woe to those who seek the company of the wicked; their iniquity shall find them out!"

"In which case it should have found you out long ago, Tobias Ransom," said Madam Van Cortlandt. "Take your own warning and depart from here in peace without adding to the offence already committed."

Probably it was that consideration which caused him to refrain from further speech and to lead his men down the gravelled walk and away through the iron gates into the town. The light from the lanthorns, hung out by each seventh householder, fell upon them as they marched away, and their footsteps alone seemed to break the silence of Manhattan. Madam Van Cortlandt listened till she heard them dying away in the distance. Then slowly, but with a heavy heart, she mounted the stairs to release Evelyn and to assure herself of her young guest's momentary safety. The two women stood together in Madam's room, looking into each other's face for traces of the late ordeal and recounting their experiences. At last Evelyn said:

"But I must not remain another hour here. I have even now brought too much trouble upon this house."

"The house can take care of itself, I opine," said Madam, trying to speak lightly, "but it is for your safety that I am apprehensive. This same or another search-party may return, with a leader less wise in his own conceit and more fully informed as to your recent presence here."

"These men or some others will return," declared Evelyn, decisively, "and I am absolutely convinced that there is not a moment to lose."

For she was thinking of Prosser Williams. She

realized to the full his deadly malignity, which would never abandon the chase once he had embarked upon it. She could picture to herself his rage, though her imaginings fell far short of the truth, and how he would revile those unsuccessful seekers. "Fools" and "dolts" would be the mildest of his epithets.

"But whither can you go?" inquired the old lady, in perplexity. "You dare not leave the city to-night. The approaches by water and by the Boston Post Road will doubtless be watched, and, as to the houses of our kindred, every one would be suspect."

She paused and added with a sigh:

"Polly, who, were she informed, wou'd give her right hand to save you, is powerless with such a husband."

"I will not enter into any house," declared Evelyn, with decision, "for it would but be repeating elsewhere the trouble and inconvenience which I have occasioned here. I will go to the *Wilden*. Their island has sheltered others before now in troublous times, and it will shelter me until the heat and cry has died away a little and it is safe to rejoin my father."

Madam looked at the girl doubtfully, for, though in some respects the plan commended itself to her, she could not bear to think of the hardships and discomforts which might thus be entailed upon one so dear to her.

"But can you trust these savages?" she inquired.

"With my life," answered Evelyn. "I have been made a member of their tribe, and they have made with me the Silver Covenant of friendship, which is a tie they never break."

"Then you will be safe, in truth, at least for the time being," admitted the old lady, who had no

inconsiderable knowledge of the manners and customs of the Indians.

"The idea came to me," declared Evelyn, "as I lay there in my place of concealment and prayed for help and guidance, so that I regard it as providential."

"We may humbly hope that it is so," assented Madam Van Cortlandt, "and I can send a servant with you."

"It is best," replied Evelyn, "that I go thither alone. A servant might be recognized as one of yours. I must trust to the obscurity of the night and reach there as best I may."

Madam very unwillingly gave her consent, as no other course seemed open, and she knew that Evelyn was brave and determined. The latter took with her only a very small package of those things which the negro maid brought forth from their place of concealment. Then arraying herself as simply as possible, and after an affectionate and sorrowful leave-taking of her old friend, she set out into the darkness of night.

CHAPTER XVI

A NOCTURNAL FLIGHT

THAT was an experience which Evelyn never forgot, even in the still more thrilling ones which came after. Wrapped in a dark, hooded cloak, she hurried along in the shade of the hedges, which were now turning yellow, or in that of the iron railings, which seemed gloomily to shut in the various residences. She passed by devious ways from Queen Street into the Broad Way, turning at the sound of an approaching footstep into Glassmakers' or Pieweman's Street, the names of which had lately been changed, in honor of the reigning sovereign, to William and Nassau.

She then pursued a straight course beside the deep stream that ran through the heart of the town, with a path on either side. There were moments when her brave heart stood still, and she cowered in the shadow of a wall or in some masonry behind an abutment, lest a belated passer-by should regard her too closely or ask questions. For it was rare indeed to see a woman alone at night on the streets of Manhattan, especially after the city gates had been closed and the guns from the Fort proclaimed the hour of nine. At the Tea Water pump she paused an instant for breath, and she could not tell why, but the ghastly story connected with the place came back

to her. She recalled how a young man had been brought to trial before the court charged with the murder of his sweetheart, who had gone sleigh-riding in his company. Her body had been found in a well by this place. And suddenly the lurid reflection of that tragedy seemed to envelop Evelyn and to depress her spirits. She hurried from the spot, but not before a man appeared, as it seemed, out of the very earth. She drew her cloak closely around her and endeavored to hurry on, but the man kept pace with her, thrusting a coarse red face close to her, so that he might peer at her under the hood of her cloak.

"What pretty light o' love is this who goes so late?" cried a husky voice, which, with a swift pang at once of terror and disgust, she recognized as that of Captain Greatbatch. He caught hold of her cloak and strove to detain her, but Evelyn, snatching her cloak from his hand, again hurried on, crying: "Detain me at your peril."

Greatbatch, whose curiosity was whetted by this behavior, determined to discover at least with whom he had to deal. He hurried after her as swiftly as his half-intoxicated condition would permit. Both pursuer and pursued were coming just then to the Delancey apple orchard, which the girl had no mind to enter with this ruffian in hot pursuit. She stood an instant, considering whether it might not be better to make him aware of her identity. But such a course of action, she felt, would be dangerous in the extreme. While she hesitated, Greatbatch overtook her and, with a sharp jerk, pulled the hood backwards, thus revealing a face that was deathly pale, save for a scarlet flush of indignation in each cheek. The seafarer was happily but little familiar with Evelyn's

appearance or that discovery might have cost her dear. As it was, he stood still, surprised and momentarily abashed at the unexpected sight of that lovely, refined countenance as it was revealed by a light from the lanthorn which hung from a neighboring pole.

Though the glimpse of that countenance, which Evelyn hastened to conceal, did not enlighten Greatbatch much, it came with a shock of amazement to a tall man who was walking hurriedly towards the pair. He had heard the sound of voices, and, although he had not recognized that of Evelyn, he felt certain that there was a woman in distress. His own curiosity, which was as great as that of the sailor, made him hasten forward. In that one glimpse he became aware that the cloaked figure was that of Evelyn de Lacey, and that she was being annoyed by Greatbatch. He did not wait to ask himself what combination of circumstances could have brought the girl here alone and unattended from a household so conservative as that of Madam Van Cortlandt. He only saw clearly that his intervention was required, and he laid a hand on the ponderous shoulder of the smuggler, with the query:

"What is this roystering?"

Greatbatch turned in a fury, but, seeing who it was that had accosted him, he was sober enough to moderate his tone.

"Have you an eye for a pretty wench, Mynheer?" he inquired, with a wink.

"Hoity toity. What a question to put to a Member of Council!" cried Mynheer, with a laugh. "And I would advise you, my friend, to let this pretty bird of night go her way. Sometime I may tell you wherefore."

He pointed significantly towards the Fort, though he spoke as if affecting to believe that the smuggler's first surmise was correct. Bending nearer, he whispered:

"You will get yourself into trouble, my Greatbatch, and troubles are thick in your path already."

Grea'batch ripped out an oath, but he momentarily forgot his quarry, and Mynheer, adroitly placing himself as a shield before the girl, contrived to signal to her that she should go upon her way.

"As I am your true friend, Captain," he whispered to the sailor, "I would advise you to leave the spot. For yonder nightingale has sharp eyes and a quick tongue. Also, she may know more than it would be expedient for you to have told."

Still muttering and cursing, Greatbatch turned upon his heel and began to lurch away in the opposite direction, stopping every once and a while to look back. Until he had turned a corner, Mynheer never moved, but, once he had seen the fellow out of sight, he hurried after Evelyn. She on her part had recognized, with mingled relief and consternation, her influential neighbor. If he had delivered her from one danger, might not the fact that he had recognized her in that momentary glance, when his eyes meeting hers were full of recognition, constitute a grave peril of another sort? He would immediately surmise that only an extraordinary train of circumstances could have brought her out thus in the darkness without protection.

"Mistress de Lacey," the man said, gaining her side, "I do not know, nor shall I seek to know, what has brought you hither. But, if I can serve you, you may rely upon me as your neighbor, and, perchance you will allow me to say, as your friend."

Now, in making that speech, Mynheer had departed a good deal from his habitual caution. For though, in so far as did not conflict with his own interests, he was disposed to serve both father and daughter, partly from the prudential motives that have been previously explained, he certainly would not run the risk of endangering himself. And though his sympathy had been strongly excited by that glimpse of Evelyn's pale and anxious face, he felt a measure of relief when the girl, speaking in a low and unwontedly tremulous voice which touched him deeply, said:

"You can only serve me, Mynheer, by being absolutely silent as to this meeting and by asking no questions as to my destination."

"If you could but trust me—" urged the man, reproachfully.

"Believe me, it is better not. As you shall presently hear, I make no doubt, the fewer who are involved in my sad fortunes, the better."

She held out her hand in farewell, for she appreciated the genuine kindness in his usually cold and impassive voice, and she said:

"Most heartily do I thank you, Mynheer, for your offers of service and good-will."

There was nothing for him to do but retire, though he watched Evelyn till she too was out of sight, lest some further misadventure might befall her. Meanwhile he turned over in his mind the problem of her destination. Whither could she be going, and was she in flight? If so, was it for the same reasons that had induced her father to take his departure from the city? Slowly he retraced his steps homewards, while Evelyn pursued her way in a deadly loneliness, terror and isolation, which lay like a

pall on her spirits. The people of Manhattan kept early hours, and sleep was over all. Only the glimmering lights on the warship in the Bay, the wavering, uncertain light from the lanthorns on the poles, and the stars overhead, bright and deep-set in the azure like jewels in the mantle of the Eternal King, relieved the darkness. The houses were all dark; the gardens gave forth their fragrance indeed, but all that remained of their luxuriance was hidden under the veil of night. The orchards rich with fruit, golden red or purple by day but now invisible, added only to the host of shadows that accompanied the girl on her way. Even her excellent nerves and high-hearted courage had been shaken, and those shadows distorted themselves around her into strange shapes as she had to plunge into stretch after stretch of darkness, which, palpable and horrible to her disturbed senses, seemed to suffocate her. The slightest noise of a night bird calling or stirring uneasily in its nest, or of insects rustling in the dried grass by the roadside, made her start. A hitherto unknown fear was her companion on that lonely walk, till the real danger which was menacing her, and which might at any moment confront her, faded into insignificance. It seemed to her that that walk, which she had so lightly and fearlessly taken a score of times, would never come to an end and that her old happy confidence, the light-heartedness with which but yesterday she had taken this path, would never return.

She tried to pray as she hurried forwards, but her lips faltered and she felt it impossible to utter that trustful prayer of an hour or two before, when she had lain concealed in the *bedste*, and when she had felt so strongly the almost visible protection of her

Mother in heaven and of the God for whom she was suffering this persecution. Only once or twice a passing footstep appalled her with the recollection of Greatbatch, or with the possibility of encountering someone who might, like Mynheer, recognize her. Yet the sound cheered her and caused her heart to leap with a great throb of relief, when she learned there was someone besides herself awake in Manhattan. She once drew cowering into the shade of a clump of trees, when a belated wayfarer passed close by, whistling the tune of "Money Musk." Then she hurried on, striving to cover as much of her way as possible while that cheery sound was still in her ears. And thus she, who had never been out in the darkness alone before, amazed at her own cowardice and her actual shrinking from shadows, reached at last her long-familiar destination, the Indian encampment near the Collect Pond and in the shadow of the Catiemuts.

CHAPTER XVII

SAFE WITH THE WILDEN

EVELYN breathed a long, deep breath of relief when she came forth at last from the clusters of locust, linden and oak trees, which bordered the Indian encampment. She made her way with the practised step of long familiarity to the tent of the old squaw, whom she called by her Christian name of Monica, for she had been baptized by Father Harvey on the festival of that saint. Monica was awake in an instant, and to her Evelyn told her story, in so far at least as she could make her understand. The eyes of the old woman flashed fire, and, drawing her aged form to its full height, she poured forth in her native tongue a voluble stream of invective against the enemy, only portions of which Evelyn could understand, despite her acquaintance with the Indian dialects. Turning to the girl, the squaw assured her that the tribe would be as one in defending her, that the tomahawk would be brandished in her defence, and the swift arrow wing its flight to the heart of her enemies. She was a child of the tribe, which was bound to her by the Silver Covenant of friendship. Hence no one should molest her there, nor in any other stronghold of the Manhattas or the Rockaways.

With a mournful shake of the head and some of

those expressive gestures which she had adapted from her red brothers and sisters, Evelyn made her old friend understand that there must be no violence undertaken on her account, no warrior scalped, no tomahawk brandished, no arrow winged, and no torch applied. What she asked of them was concealment for a few days, until she could leave the colony and go to seek her father. Then Monica pointed with dramatic gesture to the wooded island in the centre of the stream.

"There," she said, "have the squaws and the papooses remained hidden when the braves of the tribe have painted their faces and gone upon the war-path, or when our enemies have threatened, coming towards us as the black cloud of night to put out the daylight."

Evelyn's eyes brightened and her cheeks glowed at this happy thought. There, in the days of her childhood, she had played at hide-and-seek with a band of comrades. She knew the tall grasses, the weeds and the bushes. She might lie concealed for days, with the watchful Indians on guard, until it was possible for her friends—Madam Van Cortlandt, Captain Ferrers and the rest—to devise some means by which she might leave the city. Nor did Monica delay in placing her in that place of refuge. Calling two young braves, she rapidly explained to them as much as she thought necessary of their guest's story, impressing upon them above all the necessity for concealment on her part and secrecy upon theirs. She ordered them to paddle the fugitive straight to the island, taking such food as might be necessary in case that a watch should be placed upon the encampment by the morrow. This food consisted of fruit, nuts, and cakes made from maize pounded

between great, flat stones and baked in the cinders. The old woman knew that the meats they ordinarily used, the stews cooked in their great caldrons and the like, would be too strong for the girl.

The young Indians quickly detached a canoe from the shadow of the bank, where a number of them lay in waiting, and prepared to paddle over to the island Evelyn and a young girl (one of her catechumens), whom Monica was thoughtfully sending to bear her company. For the blackness of night covered the island, which was so thickly wooded that even the light of the stars could scarcely penetrate thither. Very deftly the Indian girl, a true child of the forest, arranged for her white sister a couch of moss and leaves, with an extemporized pillow filled with the fragrant pine needles which Monica had given her. This couch, with a thick blanket for coverlet, was arranged in the very depth of the woodland thicket so that, in case of alarm, discovery would be almost impossible. Wearied out, Evelyn lay down at once with the Indian girl stretched out at her feet and one of the young braves standing sentry. The other, as instructed, took back the canoe to its place, lest a clue might be thus given in the event of pursuit.

For some time the fugitive lay awake, oppressed by the strangeness of her surroundings. The tall trees overhead made an almost impenetrable curtain, through which she could catch but faint glimpses of the sky. The aromatic scents of the woods, stronger in the coolness of midnight, came pungently to her nostrils, and only the unearthly hooting of an owl, or the scream of some other night bird, broke the stillness. Her mind rapidly reviewed the events of that evening, starting from the now seemingly

distant moment when the note of warning from Captain Ferrers arrived. The thought of him rushed back upon her: the slight, alert figure, with its eagerness of movement and a strength that was expressed in every line of the clear-cut face with its well-defined chin and the steel-grey eyes. She remembered the look in those eyes when she had last seen him, the tone of his voice and his words, so few and yet so charged with an emotion which told its own story. Hers he was; and her heart throbbed with a gladness that all the miseries now crowding fast upon her could not suppress. That man of the world (the term being here employed in a favorable sense), who had come so far and seen so much, had given himself, as he told her, entirely and completely and with a full devotion into her hands. But her heart sank again as she realized that that knowledge must only add to her suffering, since a single step forward on his part would be ruinous for them both. Also, she had now to go where she might see his face no more. That thought seemed intolerable here in the darkness—a darkness which, in its chill desolation, typified her life.

There was but one gleam of light, and this was that she should soon, if all went well, see her father, hear his dear voice again, and resume that companionship which she had missed. That at least was something to warm and cheer her. She recalled his description of the place in which he had made his abode, told in the one or two letters he had ventured to write. That description, couched in his half-whimsical style, did not sound alluring. But, after all, he was there, and his presence constituted home. If only there were not the pain of parting with that other, and leaving behind, perhaps forever, all the

dear and happy associations of her beloved Manhattan.

Her thoughts likewise strayed to Madam Van Cortlandt, who had been as a mother to her, and to her dear, warm-hearted Polly, who had striven to show in every way the same affection, but in whose manner and bearing of late there had been a certain constraint. And this she knew to have been engendered by the coming between them of an alien and inimical personality. So the first hour or two wore away, and Evelyn fell into a deep sleep, from which she woke only as the first pale light of dawn whitened the landscape. It took her some moments to realize that she was neither in the luxurious sleeping apartment at Madam Van Cortlandt's, nor yet in her own room at the cottage, but here in the camp of the *Wilden*, a fugitive and under the ban of the law. It was the strangest awakening in her life, and it remained long fixed in her memory.

CHAPTER XVIII

PLOTTING ANEW

DURING the next day the search was continued vigorously, though, by the direction of Prosser Williams, also with secrecy. It was not at all his purpose to give widespread publicity to the arrest of Evelyn, and that for a variety of reasons. But inquiries were made at every place where there seemed the remotest possibility that the girl might have taken refuge. Full of baffled rage and spite at the failures of the well-laid plans by which he had hoped to take Evelyn unawares, and mystified by her complete disappearance, he knew not what further step to take. It indeed occurred to him that she might have fled to the camp of the *Wilden*, though that seemed improbable in view of her presumed ignorance of his intentions and the difficulty of reaching there on such short notice. But he did not care to send thither any search-party. The few to whom he suggested such action very strongly dissuaded him therefrom, because of the danger of stirring up trouble with the savages, who would resent the presence of armed men in their camp, whether the girl were there or not.

His only resort was to proceed thither himself in the most casual manner. Making purchases more freely than was his wont, he wandered about amongst

the Indians, with eyes and ears keenly on the alert. He even made futile attempts to enter into conversation with old Monica, but, since she was totally unacquainted with English, and the inquisitor had not even the most fragmentary knowledge of Indian dialects, those efforts proved futile. Despite the closest scrutiny, he could find nothing to indicate the presence of the fugitive at the encampment. In the manner of those with whom he strove to converse, or to bargain for fish or trinkets, there was the same grim impassivity and imperturbable gravity as ever. Even the old squaw, Monica, whom he knew to be the trusted friend of Evelyn, gave not the slightest hint of hostility towards himself, nor yet of uneasiness. Even when he mentioned Mistress de Lacey's name with a view to taking her by surprise, there was not so much as the quiver of an eyelash to betray anything like guilty knowledge of Evelyn or her whereabouts. She spoke a few words, which he was absolutely at a loss to understand, but which seemed to be in praise of the white maiden. He turned away impatiently and returned from that fruitless quest in a greater rage than ever.

It occurred to him several times that Captain Ferrers might be in some way responsible for the girl's disappearance, or at least cognizant of her flight. But he dared not question him upon the subject, since it was not his policy to make known his own share in the matter. Nor did there seem anything in the aspect or bearing of the other to suggest the unusual. He busied himself with the work he had to do, and was closeted with Lord Bellomont and certain members of the Council for the discussion of matters of importance. It seemed to the mind of Prosser Williams, which he fancied was so astute,

that his associate must be in complete ignorance of all that had transpired concerning Evelyn.

But Captain Ferrers had meanwhile been active in taking such measures as were possible for the young girl's escape from the Colony, and her safe journey to that New England town where her father had found a temporary asylum. There she would have at least a breathing space, until it might be possible to make other and better arrangements. He contrived to see Madam Van Cortlandt after nightfall on the day following Evelyn's flight. He entered the house through the garden at the back and with every possible secrecy, for he felt sure that the dwelling would be carefully watched. On that occasion the young man frankly declared that it would have been his dearest wish to marry Evelyn and, resigning his position, cross the seas with her to England or, still better, to the Continent. But, apart from the fact that the girl herself would not for an instant entertain such a proposal, he was aware that it would draw upon her a still more malignant hatred on the part of Prosser Williams, who, through his influential relatives, was powerful both in England and in the Colony. Such a hue and cry would be raised as would make their safe departure extremely problematical. In her pique at the defection of the household staff, even Lady Bellomont, who at present seemed well disposed towards the girl, might act in a fashion directly contrary to what might be expected. Nor would her partiality for the girl, even if it could be relied upon, count altogether in her favor with the Governor himself. Since it had been his policy to frown upon any intimacy between his wife and the Colonials, he had already, as Captain Ferrers well knew, shown

a marked coldness towards the girl, because my Lady had noticed her.

Madam Van Cortlandt was quite of his opinion that, even if Evelyn had been willing to forsake her father in these troublous times, and if the other obstacles could be removed, a marriage at that particular juncture would probably prove disastrous for them both. It was far better, as she believed, to await the course of events. Changes had occurred before both in policy and administration, and changes were certain to occur again. Her suggestion as to the present crisis, which Captain Ferrers accepted with a certain reluctance, was that he should seek out the only one whom in her opinion it would be absolutely safe to trust, namely, Pieter Schuyler. She could answer for him that he would be quite capable of putting aside his own personal prejudices or desires to serve Evelyn honestly and single-mindedly. She was certain that he would go to any lengths to save the girl from trouble, much less from danger. Somewhat pointedly, and as Captain Ferrers remarked to himself quite needlessly, the old lady had further declared that Pieter Schuyler had been devotedly attached to Evelyn from boyhood upwards, and had entertained hopes of finally winning her affection in return. But what progress he had made in that laudable enterprise, with which the hearer could so fully sympathize, Madam did not state. The hope which Ferrers had laid up in his bosom since his last interview with the girl, vague and indefinite as it had been, somehow contradicted the presumption that the patience of this persistent suitor would be rewarded. Still, the very suggestion of such a thing had occasioned his reluctance to apply for any help from that quarter.

Captain Ferrers recognized, however, that it was necessary to have as auxiliary one who knew both the town and the people, who could procure whatever might be required, and select the subordinates to play the minor parts in the perilous drama which involved the safety of their dearly prized friend. Recent events had made men cautious, and it was only such a motive as love that could be counted upon absolutely. Moreover, the Captain's own personal impression of the young Colonial confirmed the recommendation which Madam Van Cortlandt's sagacity and keen discrimination rendered valuable. Having once made up his mind, Ferrers acted with his accustomed promptitude and sought out the young man at his father's mansion in Pearl Street. That was a strange meeting. The two men were perfectly well aware of each other's aims and hopes, although, in Pieter's case, Evelyn had never encouraged them. Pieter told himself frankly, whenever he reviewed the situation, that Evelyn had already made it plain that the tie between them was purely one of friendship and old association. But her efforts to impress that fact upon him, and the absence of anything like coquetry, had only urged him on to a deeper fervor of devotion. The cordial friendship which she accorded him kept alive the hope that, where he had gained so much from a girl notoriously chary of her favors, he might with time and patience win still more, or she might be induced to marry him on the strength of that very friendship. Lately he had realized that the coming of Captain Ferrers and his marked preference for Evelyn's society had rendered very unlikely the fulfilment of such a hope. He feared that the newcomer, whose virile qualities were coupled with a

singularly winning personality, had captivated her fancy, if not actually won her heart. Nor could he conceal from himself that her preference was well bestowed. Hence it was that, though Pieter's jealousy burned fiercely at times, he had been able to control it, and acknowledged that it was a fair fight in which the better man must win. Therefore, he took cordially the hand which Captain Ferrers extended and accepted his invitation to come out of the paternal dwelling and walk down by the Water Gate, as if on their way to the Ferry.

"What I have to say, Mynheer Schuyler," explained Ferrers, "can best be said, I think, under the open sky. And I opine that it is due to your father and the other members of the family that it be not said under their roof."

Pieter, guessing instinctively that Evelyn must be concerned, followed him without delay. Without losing an instant, Captain Ferrers talked all the way, placing before his companion the imminent danger in which Evelyn stood of imprisonment, exile and perhaps worse. He informed him of her temporary place of refuge with the *Wilden*, and the necessity for her immediate departure from Manhattan. He never so much as enjoined secrecy on his hearer, nor appealed to his love or loyalty. He simply put unreservedly in his hands himself, his position and his future prospects, together with Evelyn's safety. It was the action of one chivalrous man towards another, and Pieter felt the appeal and responded to it with all the generosity of his nature. Evelyn must be saved, even if she were saved for this stranger and by his own help. Ferrers was risking far more for her than he himself could do, though that mattered nothing. In truth, it was a proof of

the reality of his love for the girl that he thought first of her, trembled at the danger which threatened her, and deplored the hardships and discomfort which she was now enduring. He would have flown to her side at once, if that could have availed anything.

As Captain Ferrers could not spare much time lest his absence should be noticed, it was hastily decided between them that horses must be procured and held in readiness at a given place, and a suitable escort provided for the girl. Evelyn's own negro maid, Elsa, seemed to Pieter the most desirable companion, since she was trustworthy and absolutely devoted to her young mistress, and since ladies often travelled thus attended. He also deemed it advisable that the horses should be placed in charge of Madam Van Cortlandt's foot-boy, Jumbo, whose discretion was proverbial, and who had a remarkable resourcefulness. He could accompany the travellers for as much of the way as Evelyn might desire, but he and the girl, Elsa, were to return separately, lest their appearance together might be noted. It was agreed that the three should take horse at a given point soon after sunset on the following day, and should proceed for some little distance along the Boston Post Road. Striking off after a time into the country, while keeping a parallel direction, they would then follow by-paths with which Evelyn was familiar—for, as Pieter remembered with a sigh, they had often ridden over them together—until they were well clear of the city. The maid, Elsa, was a bold and fearless rider, and, under Jumbo's guidance, it would be impossible for them to miss the way. Before resuming their journey, they were to take some hours' rest at the house of a spinster cousin of

Pieter's, who lived at some distance from Manhattan. On receipt of a letter from Pieter, she could be trusted to receive the travellers kindly to ask no questions and to observe the needed reticence in the event of pursuit or of vexatious inquiries. And, in her turn, this cousin would suggest other places of rest along the way. So were the details of the journey settled.

Meanwhile, Captain Ferrers was to despatch by a trusty messenger a letter containing all necessary instructions to Evelyn at the camp of the *Wilden*. While ostensibly engaged in the purchase of fish for the Household, the messenger would leave the epistle in old Monica's hands to be delivered at once to her young guest.

CHAPTER XIX

FAREWELL TO MANHATTAN

THE darkness of night had fallen over Manhattan, and the air was heavy with the fragrance of the surviving flowers and of the orchards. The pursuit, which had been hot upon Evelyn's tracks, had somewhat slackened. There had been a second inquisitorial visit to the house of Madam Van Cortlandt, which had naturally proved futile, and also to the dwelling of Polly, who then for the first time learned with grief and dismay the charges that had been made against her life-long friend and the danger in which she stood. The plan conceived by Captain Prosser Williams and the malignant brood whom he had stirred up to the proper degree of evangelical wrath, was to allow the furore to die and, while waiting and watching, to have apparently become convinced of the hopelessness of the pursuit. They were of opinion that the said tenacious Papist, Mistress de Lacey, was no doubt concealed in an unsuspected place, to which, through some act of imprudence on the part of herself or others, she might be traced.

Happily for the success of Ferrers' plans, Prosser Williams had confided to the officers of the law, and to others interested in the search, his conviction, amounting almost to certainty, that the fugitive

would attempt to leave the city by water. For, judging from the previous testimony of Greatbatch that the girl's father had gone by brigantine to the Barbadoes, it seemed certain that Evelyn would make an effort to rejoin him there. Orders were given, therefore, that the strictest watch should be kept on the Water Gate and the wharf, especially on all vessels sailing for southern ports. Hence it chanced that but slight attention was paid to the Boston Post Road or the Eastern Post, which stretched off into the country from the Bloomingdale Road.

As was the custom for ladies when travelling, Evelyn de Lacey wore a black velvet riding-mask over her face, which concealed her identity from the casual observer. As previously arranged, she was attended by her negro maid and jumbo. All those not engaged in an inquisitorial search would therefore be perfectly satisfied with the appearance of the party. With her heart full of a desolating grief at all she was leaving behind her, though buoyed up with the hope of shortly rejoining her beloved father, Evelyn rode at an ordinary pace, so as not to attract attention, until they came to the inn at Rivington Street, just a mile's distance from the City Hall, where travellers often stopped to take a glass of wine. Here the travellers intended to deflect from the main road and seek a by-path into the country. But it was necessary to exercise some caution, since their movements might be watched from the inn windows. Alighting, while the two women waited breathlessly in the shelter of a clump of trees, Jumbo surveyed the premises, and brought back word that the tavern was empty save for two gentlemen, whose identity was known to him.

Thus encouraged, Evelyn rode slowly by, her eyes resting sadly upon that familiar place which she had so often regarded indifferently. It seemed to her now like the last link between her and chill desolation. There was a blazing fire on the hearth and cheerful lights, beacons as it were in the darkness. The two men of whom Jumbo had spoken, and whose identity presently became known likewise to Evelyn, advanced toward the door conversing in a light and merry fashion. With a leaping of the heart and an emotion that brought tears to her eyes, Mistress de Lacey recognized Captain Ferrers and Pieter Schuyler. The two continued to discourse jestingly for the benefit of mine host or the inn servants, but, raising their glasses of Madeira to their lips, both told by that expressive gesture and the expression of their faces all that they would have said had they dared to speak or appear conscious of the horsewoman's identity. For a single instant, reckless as the act might be, Evelyn removed her mask, and both men saw the expression of that lovely face, pale but full of resolve and with a smile which each one felt to be reward sufficient for all his devotion. Each turned to the other and drew a deep breath, as the figure upon the horse, lightly touching the animal with the whip, sped out of sight, striking off from the Boston Road into a by-path which Jumbo had indicated.

Upon Evelyn's soul fell a weight of depression as the inn faded from her view. As with her two attendants she plunged into the surrounding darkness, it seemed to the girl as if her heart would break. But she strove to raise her spirits and reanimate her courage by the thought of the joyful meeting with her father, and the hope that a future might

dawn when a return to Manhattan and to the familiar scenes and people of her youth might be possible. Further than that in anticipation she dared not go. Whatever might be the sentiments which Captain Ferrers entertained towards her, and which had just been told again, more eloquently than in words, by that brief glance at the inn door, it were folly to suppose that she could permit him to brave the Governor's displeasure and incur the penalty perhaps of high treason by allying himself with an outlaw. No, she told herself; a far more likely occurrence would be the return of Lord Bellomont to England, taking Captain Ferrers with him, long before she should see Manhattan again. And her heart ached with a poignant pain that she could not have thought possible a short time before, when she had gone with Polly—her dear, warm-hearted Polly—to see the passing of the gubernatorial procession.

She told herself that henceforward she must set herself to the task of promoting by every means in her power the well-being of a father whom she loved with the intensity peculiar to her nature, and which was all the deeper for the reserve and self-repression she practised. Her care must be to keep their whereabouts concealed from those who were hostile, or who might be indiscreet in Manhattan, and particularly from Captain Prosser Williams, who she knew would continue to pursue her with all the resources of his malice. New England was no safer in point of fact than New York, except that there they would be more obscure. For Lord Bellomont ruled paramount there, and was there better liked than he had ever been by the Dutch. But, since Maryland was no longer accessible to Catho-

FAREWELL TO MANHATTAN 299

lics, Gerald de Lacey was without a safe refuge, and had chosen Salem because he had been recommended to go thither by a friend, who had in fact placed a dwelling at his disposal.

As Evelyn rode along through the darkness, all these reflections chased one another through her mind, and the conviction grew upon her that their only resource lay in complete obscurity. She did not quite realize how difficult it would be for such a father and such a daughter to remain unnoticed. She was, however, fully in accord with her advisers, who had sent her a detailed letter of instructions, in believing that it would be better for her to send her maid back to New York once she had safely reached her destination. For it would assuredly attract attention were she to have a black servant in that new habitation where her own identity was to be lost.

It was very late when the travellers, weary and exhausted, pulled up at the quaint and substantial residence where they were to be received for the night. Mistress Schuyler extended the most gracious hospitality, asking not a single question concerning their plans and convincing Evelyn at once of her reliability. A hot supper was in readiness for them, after which they sought almost immediately the rest of which they were so much in need. Scarcely had the dawn whitened the landscape than they were up and away again on that journey, which it was vitally necessary should be accomplished with all possible speed. After various pauses for rest and refreshment at places suggested by Mistress Schuyler, they finally put up at a little hostelry on the outskirts of Boston Town, whence Evelyn was to take the stage to Salem, and where Jumbo

was to remain until he could dispose of two of the horses, retaining the third for his return journey to Manhattan. Evelyn parted with real regret from the faithful lad, who was associated with some of her happiest hours. It was the breaking of another link with the past. She pressed into his hand a piece of gold with her cordial thanks, and bade him above all things maintain that secrecy which was so necessary. Elsa was to remain in Boston for a day or two until she was rested, and was then to return to her native city by the stage-coach. Evelyn knew that Elsa would be very loath to part with her, but she saw the necessity of exciting no remark and furnishing no clue to those who might institute inquiries or even follow in pursuit. A message was sent from Boston an hour or two in advance of her arrival, since the shock might be too severe for her father, and so he was waiting to clasp to his heart with an emotion too deep for words that idolized daughter who was thenceforth to be the companion of his exile.

BOOK III

CHAPTER I

EVELYN'S NEW HOME

A DREARY road, darkened by the gloomiest trees of the forest, led into Salem by way of the turnpike road from Boston. This passed through a gap in a hilly ridge, with the frowning pile of "Norman's Rocks" to the north. These hills attained a bad eminence during the witchcraft frenzy. For it was upon the bare and bleak ledge at the top of the cliff that twenty innocents had swung on ghastly gibbets, a testimony to high heaven of truly diabolical malice blended with ignorance and credulity.

A little beyond the turnpike road, in a sheltered spot secure from general observation, stood a wooden house of two stories with a garret. It was surrounded by a plot of ground in which grass grew luxuriantly, but not so much as a daisy or other wild flower showed its head. Over it two trees, an elm and a willow, cast shadows that were funereal and added to the general gloom. It was in this secluded dwelling, lent to him through the kindness of a friend and one-time comrade of his soldiering days, that Mr. de Lacey found a place of refuge. There he was

joined by Evelyn when she fled from persecution and from the malice of her enemies in New York.

Salem itself presented certain natural beauties. Trees of many sorts, some of them a relic of primeval woods, gave their luxuriant shade to the streets. The rivers—North and South, Forest and Bass—lent a beauty of their own to the scene. In secluded spots upon their surface, near the green wooded shores, white and sweet-smelling water-lilies floated upon the surface, in contrast to their ugly and rank-smelling yellow caricatures which also gathered there. Salem could boast of many handsome dwellings, mostly with lawns or flower-beds before them, where the Endicotts, Hutchisons, Sewalls, Porters, Putnams, Leas, Houltons and the rest had had their abodes almost since the beginning of that old Bay Colony, which was second only to Plymouth in antiquity. To Evelyn the whole atmosphere was one of gloom, and in striking contrast to the pleasant social life of the Dutch colonial town she had lately quitted. There everybody knew everybody else, and the young people had an almost uninterrupted round of wholesome pleasures and amusements, which in no wise interfered with the useful domestic lives of the women and their proficiency in household arts. Here, amongst these sour, sanctimonious folk, she was afraid to display that natural gaiety which since recent events alternated in her with moods of almost tragic sadness. For true to the Celtic character, hers was a dual nature of mirth and sadness, all too readily influenced by her surroundings. The Puritan gloom oppressed her, and moreover she had to put aside her pretty gowns, her elaborate scarfs and silken hoods in which, as she owned to herself, she had formerly taken an al-

most inordinate pleasure. But now it was necessary to conform to the ways of the town and array herself with the sombre simplicity of the women thereabouts. Any departure from the prevailing fashion of the place would have been fraught with considerable danger. Curiously enough, however, the simplicity did but enhance her charm, and the deepening of the melancholy which at times appeared in her lovely eyes would have made her more dangerously attractive to those over whom she had exercised so powerful a fascination, and whom she had left behind in her beloved Manhattan. Her father had likewise donned the high, pointed hat and the long, skirted coat, and the two often laughed to see themselves thus transformed into Puritans. Evelyn missed her garden, for not a flower would grow in the stony soil surrounding their present abode. She sorely missed the cottage, with its views of the Bay and river, and the gay and pleasant household of the Van Cortlandts, where she had spent so much of her time. She missed her dear, warm-hearted Polly, dearest of all her girl friends; she missed the loyal devotion of Pieter Schuyler and the motherly kindness of Madam Van Cortlandt, but most of all, and in far deeper and subtler fashion, she missed that other who had so lately come into her life and had carried before him all lesser affections. Although she was neither demonstrative nor impressionable by nature, the tidal wave of real love, which had thus swept her from her moorings, was all the stronger because of the obstacles by which its path was obstructed. She knew it seemed utterly improbable that she should ever marry Egbert Ferrers. For besides the difficulties which arose from his position in the Household of the Governor and through the

jealous vigilance of Captain Prosser Williams, who would at once take measures to ruin them both, there was the personal question of religion. She herself, as a professor of the Catholic faith, was virtually proscribed, and was in actual danger of imprisonment or even severer penalties because of her work amongst the savages. But, even had the late decree remained a dead letter, she would never have wavered in her resolution to marry none other than a Catholic. To her mind, indeed, the very severity of the persecution made it essential that husband and wife should be united in doctrine and in practice.

During that dreary time when scarcely a word of news reached them from Manhattan, the father and daughter found in each other's companionship their solace for the surrounding gloom, and the tie between them became more close and tender than ever. Mr. de Lacey had the additional consolation of a few books which he had been able to bring with him and of some others which he had found on the book-shelves of his present residence. Evelyn, on the other hand, found her days filled up by a variety of occupations, the chief of which was the household work. For her only assistant was a young Puritan girl, whose name of Joy was altogether a misnomer. The latter had, however, a certain taste for cooking and for housework, which Evelyn set herself to train and develop. She taught her to make some of those delectable dishes which she herself had learned in the Van Cortlandt household. Evelyn's proficiency in all household activities, and particularly those which pertained to the culinary department, won the respect and admiration, not only of this Abigail herself, but also of the neighbors. They were astonished that so young a girl should be a

past mistress of domestic science, which with them, after their cold and cheerless fashion, was almost a religion. On the other hand, they resented deeply the isolation in which the young girl held herself from the solemn and uninteresting social affairs in which they delighted. Without being able to explain it, they felt Evelyn's superiority, and it enraged them. The reluctant admiration, which in the minds of many gave place to envy, sowed the seeds of malice, which was destined later to bear bitter fruit. Apart from the galling fact of her beauty, it annoyed them to find her their superior in knitting, sewing, weaving and in such accomplishments as dyeing and extracting virtues, medicinal and otherwise, from plants.

Closely adjoining the house was a road, darkened by the trees of a forest. To Evelyn this seemed inconceivably dreary. As she told her father, it always reminded her of that forest wherein the Tuscan poet had lost himself, and where wild beasts or other evil things might be lurking. It differed as widely as possible—or such, at least, is the force of imagination—from those friendly woods skirting the dear, old town of Manhattan, where the *Wilden* had their dwelling, and whither Evelyn had fled for refuge. Here indeed, as there, was the fragrance of sassafras, pine and other aromatic growths, and here "the incommunicable trees," waving overhead, seemed to indulge in a speech of their own contriving, to which the passing winds lent their whispers. Here the wild grape spread its vine, the moss its velvet carpet, and the feathered minstrels gave their concerts.

But to the young girl's mind those woods were inseparably connected with the gloom of Puritanism,

and she knew that they were popularly associated with witch meetings, the details of which were being constantly poured into her ears by those of her neighbors with whom she was brought into contact. Their minds were still full of those fables which, at the time of the witchcraft excitement, had been so widely circulated. They told how men and women, previously of good repute, had gone in the dusk of the evening, or at midnight by the glare of pine-knot torches, to take part in devilish orgies, to be admitted to the devil's sacrament, and to sign the book wherein Satan enrolled his votaries. Hellish brews were made with wolf's-bane, cinquefoil and human blood. Drum beats sounding through the night and a trumpet blast, shrill, weird and blood-curdling, summoned to those unholy rites wizards and witches, who, while retaining the outward semblance of familiar personages, were in reality invested with dreadful powers over their fellow-beings. Though Evelyn openly mocked at these fables, and rebuked Joy and the young girls with whom she came in contact for giving credence to them, nevertheless they seemed to heighten the gloom of the atmosphere, and she turned with relief away from the forest shades to the banks of the tranquil streams or to the busy walks, where she seemed to breathe more freely. There at least she lost the haunting shadows of Goody Bishop, Goody Nurse, Goodman Jacobs, Goodman Willard and the rest of that hapless company, who had upon Witches' Hill paid with their lives for the folly, the malice and the credulity of their neighbors.

CHAPTER II

A WELCOME VISITOR

ONE evening the twilight was casting weird shadows over the quaint village where long since the first settler, who had landed from "The Mayflower," found an asylum from the storms of persecution, no less than from the ocean waves. For her father's sake Evelyn had been making a determined effort to seem cheerful, but, when he had returned to his books after their early supper, Evelyn went out for a solitary walk, wearing her sad-colored mantle and hood over the grey gown and kerchief of a Puritan maid. She was recalling to herself the various features of Manhattan: the Fort where the sunset gun would but have sounded; the *Stadt Huys* looking out over the river, grim and tall as a sentinel; the Maid's Path, where lovers walked; the North and East Rivers, with the broad sweep of their waters mingling with the Bay as they hastened downward to the ocean. She longed for one breath of fresh salt air, one glimpse of the familiar streets. Her mind was in a tumult of old memories, hopes and regrets, through which, like a golden thread, ran the thought of Captain Ferrers. All at once, as though the intensity of her thoughts had invoked a phantom, she saw some one standing near her in the garb of a Puritan, with long coat

and high pointed hat. The man was regarding her intently, and, though she was startled for an instant, the heart cannot long be deceived.

"Egbert," she cried, in her excitement using the Christian name as she had never done before. She could scarcely hear when he spoke, such was the tremor in his voice, and the passionate tenderness with which he addressed her. In her simple dress, which heightened her charm and accentuated her distinction, Evelyn seemed to Ferrers far more captivating than formerly in her finery of silk and jewels. He could only pour out broken words of love and of joy at seeing her again. His words left her thrilling with happiness and a fervor of devotion of which she could not have believed herself capable. Her emotion transfigured her face. It was as though an exquisite statue had come to life, a life which that instant Ferrers knew was given to him without possibility of revoke.

"My heart has been aching for a sight of you," Captain Ferrers cried, when his first emotion had somewhat subsided. "I could bear the pain no longer. I felt that, even at the cost of my life, I must see you."

"It is new life to me," Evelyn responded simply. "And, although it is unspeakably rash for you to have come hither, perchance it is better to die of sheer happiness than to perish of inanition."

She had spoken such words as she never meant to speak. They were wrung from her heart by the unexpected sight of him there before her, whom she had believed to be long leagues away.

"Then you will be my wife," cried Egbert Ferrers, and with a joyful movement he drew near to her to take her in his arms.

But in that instant the girl remembered.

"I cannot take back the words which I have already spoken," she said, "and it is useless to deny that I love you more than I can ever express. But our love is hopeless; the obstacles between us are too great."

"Time may wear away those obstacles which it is your will to erect between us. Once Lord Bello-mont's term of office has expired, he may return to England or be recalled by the Home Government. With him will go Prosser Williams, and the charges against you will fall to the ground. I shall be free then, and my movements will be of little importance. We can, if need be, leave these colonies, and seek some place of abode secure from alarms."

Evelyn only shook her head mournfully.

"Even were all things to fall out as you anticipate—and of that can we be sure?—there would still remain between us the greatest barrier of all, the difference of our religious beliefs."

"Oh, my best beloved," cried Ferrers, with a kind of despair, "will you then let that question of our different creeds stand between us and our happiness? For see you not that my mother was of your faith, and my heart is nearer to that than to any other."

Evelyn smiled at him with that smile of hers which, as he had seen it bestowed upon others, had driven Prosser Williams nearly to distraction. That smile, sweet and melancholy, was now full of dissent.

"It is not enough," she said. "For, in the love that I am offering you, it is your soul that I love no less than your body, a soul with which I hope mine may be eternally united."

There was a strange solemnity in her words—the

solemnity that exists only in moments of passionate emotion. The young man, whose knowledge of Evelyn had hitherto been confined chiefly to the lighter and gayer side of her character, was deeply impressed by her grave seriousness, and dominated as by a new and inexplicable influence.

"I swear," he cried, "that I will take the means to acquaint myself with all that concerns the Catholic faith, so that at the fitting moment I may enter that ancient Church. For the very ferocity and intolerance of our Protestant champions have forever turned my mind from the religion they profess."

"Then," said Evelyn, holding out her hands to him with an exquisite gesture of surrender, "if that be so, I am yours from this moment and forever."

With an impetuous movement Egbert Ferrers gathered her into his arms for one instant of joy unutterable and a kiss of betrothal that each one felt to be as sacred as a consecration. Then, quietly releasing herself, Evelyn said:

"For the present we can only wait. To me at least the years will seem as—"

She stopped abruptly, for a man and woman were coming along that forest road where people passed so seldom. With wonderful presence of mind, Evelyn made a prim, little curtsy to her companion, which he found inexpressibly charming, as she said:

"I bid you good-evening, sir, and should your business bring you hither again from the town of Lynn, I trust that you will visit my father at the wooden house near the Boston turnpike road, at the first turning beyond the hill."

Having thus adroitly given him her address, she left him and saluted in passing the two who had

approached, and who chanced to be no other than Ebenezer Cooke, a shopkeeper of the town, and Goody Willims, the mother of her servant, Joy. Both looked inquisitively from her to the stranger with whom she had been in conversation, and Goodman Cooke did not fail to note for future reference that the beautiful witch, as he called Evelyn, had a masculine visitor who hailed from Lynn, Massachusetts. As Evelyn walked homewards with her firm, rapid step, a new hope and joy filled all her being, transfigured that landscape, and lightened the Calvinistic gloom of a town darkened by the blood of innocent people.

When an hour later Captain Ferrers greeted her in her own dwelling, he whispered fervently:

"If I had not lost my heart before to the fine lady, I should have lost it irrevocably to the Puritan maiden. Oh, you are charming in that disguise, and have made me more hopelessly your slave than ever."

"And yet," said Evelyn, whimsically and half wistfully, "I miss my lutestring."

"Aye, your lutestring," cried the lover. "It was in that I saw you first, and I have kept the picture in my heart ever since."

She had added indeed to her toilet that evening some little coquettish touches which she could not resist, and love and happiness had added other touches which to Ferrers were more irresistible than all. That was an occasion long to be remembered, and which ever afterwards glorified Salem. Even to Mr. de Lacey it was an oasis in the desert to have congenial companionship once more, if only for a short time, and to find that the young man's devotion to Evelyn had not in the slightest degree

wavered. Captain Ferrers gladdened his heart by telling him of the decision which he had reached of making every effort to study Catholic doctrine and to have himself received, as soon as that were possible, into the Catholic Church. And such a resolve was the more impressive from the fact that it would imperil his liberty and expose him to vexatious fines, and perhaps to even graver dangers in view of the actual state of public affairs both in England and in the colonies. Soberly and quietly the lovers, when Mr. de Lacey left them together, spoke of their approaching separation, which they felt might be for long, since the risk involved by the visits of Captain Ferrers would preclude any speedy repetition of his daring attempt to see Evelyn and her father. He placed upon Evelyn's finger a ring of betrothal of great value and ancient workmanship, which had belonged to his mother. This was the outward sign and symbol of that union of hearts which each felt would be for ever, despite every difficulty and obstacle that the future might hold. But they could not have foreseen the new trials which were in store for Evelyn before their next meeting.

CHAPTER III

FATHER HARVEY

IT was again in the middle of a mellow October evening that the ponderous knocker on the door of the de Lacey's dwelling was sounded. It was soon after the Abigail had departed, and Evelyn herself opened the door. She saw before her an absolute stranger, tall and spare of frame, with iron-grey hair and eyes of steel-blue that had in their depths an expression of humor. His dress was that of the ordinary New Englander, but Evelyn knew instinctively that here was no Puritan. He inquired for Mr. de Lacey, without giving his own name. With a courteous gesture, Evelyn invited him to enter the little room which her father had converted into a study. Mr. de Lacey stood up at his entrance, glanced inquiringly in his direction, and then, with almost a cry of joy, exclaimed:

"My dear Father Harvey, by all that's wonderful and joyful!"

"Yes, it is he and no other," responded the stranger, setting down the capacious bags which he carried in his hands.

Mr. de Lacey seized the right hand thus released, and kissed it respectfully and affectionately. Evelyn, still standing upon the threshold, was filled with emotion at a meeting which she knew meant so

much for her father. For here was his beloved friend of the old Dongan days at the Fort in New York, his confessor and guide, who had suddenly appeared where they had not seen a Catholic priest since their arrival. He had heard of their presence there from the friend in Maryland who had given Mr. de Lacey the house.

Father Harvey glanced about him with some anxiety at the mention of his name aloud. But Mr. de Lacey, rightly interpreting the glance, said:

"Here in this house after nightfall, when our handmaiden retires, there are but our two selves, my daughter and I. Come hither, Evelyn, that I may make you acquainted with the best friend it has been given a man to have."

"After which," added the priest, "Mistress Evelyn will look for what is not to be found in a weary and travel-worn old priest, and," he continued more gravely, "one whose presence here may add to the perils which, as I understand, already encompass you."

"The additional peril is too slight for mention," said Mr. de Lacey gaily. "You are safer with us than you could be elsewhere hereabouts. Some caution will be necessary on the morrow, when our Abigail comes to do her work. But no one else is likely to enter our dwelling, and you can contrive to keep out of her sight altogether, or to assume what character you will."

"The first alternative may perchance be safer," answered Father Harvey, "though, as a hawker, I have travelled hither without adventure. I am on my way to minister to the tribes. One of these bags, which, owing to their weight, are a sore burden to the flesh, contains my altar-stone, vestments, holy water for baptisms and the rest. The other is full of knick-

knacks, which I have displayed at various stages of my journey, and which in the end will be used for gifts to my Indian converts."

He surveyed the bags whimsically.

"As a hawker," he said, "I have been somewhat over-successful, since the good wives along the way have purchased my wares, whether I would or no. I dared not refuse to sell, and so my Indians will be the poorer."

The priest then suggested that they might give him some place of concealment where he could rest for a few days and keep away from the eyes of the Abigail. Both father and daughter bethought them of the attic, which was both large and commodious, and where there was already a settle-bed of goodly proportions. The hiding-place agreed upon, Evelyn flew to the kitchen to prepare such a meal as her glad heart dictated for this welcome guest, and to make such other arrangements for his comfort as were necessary, leaving the two men in pleasant converse together.

The priest remained with the de Laccys for about two weeks, slipping out from time to time in the early mornings for a day's ministration to the nearest tribes, before Joy had come to do her daily work, and returning at evening after she had gone. He said Mass more than once for his kind hosts on his portable altar, and the father and daughter were enabled to receive, to their great joy, the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist. All the time the visitor's presence was unknown to the maid-of-all-work, whose business in the house but rarely led her to the attic, and for greater safety Father Harvey was enjoined to keep the door locked on the inside. One afternoon, however, as the early darkness of

the autumn day was falling, Joy suddenly bethought herself of some herbs which she had put to dry in the attic, and, as ill-luck would have it, Father Harvey, having grown a trifle careless through familiarity, had omitted to lock the door. Up went the maid, who was intent on making a pot of savory soup, to get the necessary herbs. And so swift was her ascent that by the time the priest realized that some one was coming, it was too late for any attempt at concealment. At first he had a vague hope that it might be Evelyn who had come up with a message from her father. When he saw instead the sturdy, thick-set girl, with her clumsy shoes and working-girl's attire, he could scarcely help smiling, though he knew that his discovery might have serious consequences for himself. He trusted at first to the growing darkness that he might not be espied, and so sat perfectly still at the table where he had been writing. The Abigail came on gaily, singing a verse of a hymn with a peculiarly nasal sound, which was the nearest approach to worldly dissipation permitted her. Then all at once, as she was reaching for the herbs, she became aware of the motionless figure and the face which looked white in the gathering gloom. The words of the hymn ended in a hoarse croak in her throat, and she began to quake with a dread that for a moment or two found expression in inarticulate sounds. Father Harvey, though pitying her terror, thought it best to preserve an absolute immobility, lest any movement might still further betray him. So he sat motionless, though the shaking hand of the girl, which already had grasped the bunch of herbs from a line above his head, sent down upon him a shower of the thyme which had been intended for the soup.

"I felt like a duckling prepared for the pan," said the priest afterward.

But the sight of the herbs falling all over the figure, which still remained silent and motionless, seemed to increase the girl's terror!

"The Lord be my helper and my stay!" she croaked out.

"Amen!" said the priest half audibly, and that word apparently broke the spell which had held the girl as if chained to the floor.

"May He help us in all our needs!" she groaned, as she swiftly retreated towards the stairs, looking back over her shoulder at the horrifying apparition.

"From the power of the Evil One deliver us!"

"Amen!" murmured the priest again.

The stairs being reached by this time by the so badly named maid-of-all-work, she tumbled down at the imminent risk of life and limb. She burst into Evelyn's room, trembling in every limb and her teeth chattering audibly.

"I saw Satan himself," she cried. "I saw the Evil One."

The quaver in her voice gave the words a peculiar grating sound, which left Evelyn uncertain whether to laugh or to be alarmed, for she feared lest the girl had suddenly gone demented.

"Why, where is he, and what is he like?" she inquired.

"Fire and brimstone are coming out of his mouth and nose," declared Joy.

Evelyn, regarding her uneasily, inquired again rather to gain time than from any curiosity.

"Did your devil speak? What said he?"

"He said 'Amen,'" declared the girl in a whisper that was still more sepulchral and in a voice still more

quavering than before, as though that were the most terrible thing that he could have said. "He said 'Amen.'"

"Be still now, Joy," said Evelyn soothingly. "You have affrighted yourself about nothing."

"He was all in black," went on the girl, unheeding the admonition. "And he moved not so much as a finger to brush away the herbs."

"Herbs? What herbs?" asked Evelyn, impatient because of her dread of the girl's supposed insanity.

"The herbs of grace—no, rather I mean the herbs and thyme for the potage."

A light suddenly broke upon Evelyn.

"Where were those herbs?" she demanded.

"They were in the attic, and I, having the work to do that the Lord commanded, went thither to procure some for the soup, when—O great Jehovah!"

The girl pronounced the sacred name without the least suspicion of irreverence, and Evelyn perceived that, by some deplorable mischance, she had indeed made her way to the attic.

"Now listen to me, Joy," said Evelyn sternly, "I forbid you henceforth on any pretext to go into the attic."

"And I will obey," chimed in the girl instantly. "The Lord knoweth that I will go no more into strange places, nor wander in pastures—"

"Do not mind about the pastures," interrupted Evelyn, "but attend to my words and go no more into the attic, where, it being dark, you have needlessly affrighted yourself by a shadow."

"It said 'Amen,'" declared the girl, in the same sepulchral voice, as though she were chanting in a choir.

"To show you that all is well," said Evelyn, "I will go myself up to the attic."

The Abigail implored her to stop, but Evelyn persisted in her intention, taking with her a wax light from the chimney place. Joy waited below with her eyes starting from their sockets, but with a tinge of pleasant excitement now that she herself was free from peril. She expected every instant to hear a scream of terror from her young mistress. But, needless to say, none came, and Evelyn descended soberly, reproving the girl for her excitement. She handed her a bunch of herbs, and sent her down to complete her interrupted work upon the soup. She also declared that henceforth she would keep the attic locked.

"Thou needst not," said the girl, with solemnity; "I will go there no more."

And she went on her way, muttering:

"For the Arch-enemy was in the attic, and he said 'Amen.'"

It was many days, in fact, before Evelyn could get out of her handmaiden's head the terror thus occasioned, or bring her back to a normal frame of mind. For, as many of her fellow-townspople had already shown, Joy seemed quite prepared for any visible manifestation of the powers of darkness. Father Harvey was, of course, greatly concerned at the possible ill results to his entertainers of what he called his own carelessness in having omitted to lock the attic door. But both his host and Evelyn strove to reassure him, pointing out that their Abigail was wholly disposed to regard what she had seen as a vision from the other world, and never so much as thought of any other explanation of her terrifying experience. Also, it had the good effect of enabling

her young mistress to forbid her further access to the attic.

"Even if the prohibition were required," said the priest, with a humorous twinkle in his eyes, as he recalled the expression of the girl's face when she had first caught sight of him. "Still," he added, "so singular a thing withal is human nature that there might be a fascination strong enough to bring her back thither—not for herbs this time, but for information. She might desire another peep at that awesome object which so rivetted her gaze."

"Had you not said 'Amen,' Father," laughed Gerald de Lacey, "she might have been tempted to return. But that utterance brought her terror to a climax."

"I could not resist it," said the priest, with the touch of school-boy drollery that crept out from under his gravity. "It was for all the world as though she were repeating the psalms at the *Tenebræ*."

He presently added penitently:

"Though, after I had followed that foolish impulse, I feared much that such a bit of folly might have evil consequences. For there is an irresistible conviction about the sound of the human voice, and spirits are not wont to talk, even the feminine ones. Eh, Mistress Evelyn?"

But Evelyn would not accept the challenge, to which she responded only by a shake of the head.

"Is it not strange," the priest continued, "how, even in moments of grave stress or peril, there is often an inclination to discover the ridiculous? Though I was sorry for her plight, too, I laughed so merrily after the departure of that poor girl that I was compelled to hold my sides. Only I would fain hope that her discovery of me may not compromise

my kind hosts. This was a thought sufficient to sober me and put a stop to my untimely merriment."

Having assured him that he did not apprehend any special danger from Joy's adventure in the attic, since she believed the apparition to have been supernatural, Mr. de Lacey presently remarked:

"Humor is most certainly a gift of the gods, Father, and I marvel how you have retained that gift, which I so well remember, during all those years of trials and vicissitudes."

"Paradoxical as it may appear," replied the priest, "there is nothing which does so heighten one's sense of humor as the thought of eternity. With that broad outlook before us, how trivial, how whimsical, and how mirth-provoking seem the happenings of time!"

They fell to talking then of various colonial matters, and especially of Lord Bellomont and the laws which he had made.

"These Cootes," declared the priest, "were ever a pestiferous race in Ireland, as I have heard from people of that country. Their chief aim has always been to destroy the Church of God."

"Those laws he has made bear hard upon your Order," observed Mr. de Lacey.

"All penal laws that persecute men for conscience' sake bear hard upon our Order," answered Father Harvey. "But our founder has provided it with a pair of broad shoulders to bear such mishaps, when he prayed that we should be persecuted everywhere."

"To human nature," said Evelyn, "it seems an awful prayer."

"Sublime rather," responded Father Harvey, "and it has been fully answered. It keeps us in training, you see, Mistress Evelyn. Otherwise we

Jesuits might become the terrible fellows our enemies represent us to be."

Evelyn could not help regarding the speaker with awe. That fine, strong face, alight with humor, would have borne, she knew, the same calm and cheerful aspect at the stake or on the gallows. The talk between him and his host then turned reminiscently upon the times of Governor Dongan.

"Some complaints, I know," said the priest, "have been made against him by the French of Canada for his anxiety to keep the Indians apart from them and so hinder their evangelization. But it is most certain, too, that he had a strong desire to promote missionary work, and sought English-speaking Fathers for that purpose. I have read a letter of his to the Viceroy, Denonville, wherein he declares that the King—"

Here Father Harvey paused to add: "King James, God bless him!" to which Mr. de Lacey and Evelyn answered a fervent "Amen."

"He declared that the King had as much zeal as any prince living to propagate the Christian faith, and that he had asked him to send some Fathers to preach the Gospel to the natives."

"If only that good Governor had stayed with us!" cried Evelyn impetuously.

"Yes," the priest assented, "the designs of God are mysterious, but I opine that it is His will to found His infant Church here, like St. Ignatius founded our Order, on the safe basis of persecution. Dongan also relates in that same letter how careful he had been to preserve the French missionaries from harm, ordering his Indians not to exercise any cruelty or insolence towards them."

"Was it not part of his scheme, too," inquired

Mr. de Lacey, "to bring the Irish in some numbers to New York, both for the good of those colonies and of the Church?"

"In truth it was," replied Father Harvey, "and I would to God he had succeeded therein, for the efforts of the enemy have at the moment prevailed in driving hence all but the merest handful of true believers."

The priest then went on to give Governor Dongan's lively account of the diversity of religions in the colonies under his control, for all of which he had obtained a charter of liberties.

"There were," he wrote, "Calvinism in four languages, Lutheranism in German, Quakers with abundance of preachers, especially women, singing Quakers, ranting Quakers, Sabbatarians, anti-Sabbatarians, Jews—in short some of all sorts of opinion and the most part of none at all. But, as for the natural-born subjects of the King in Long Island and other parts of the Government, I find it a hard task to make them pay for their ministers."

"He was a wonderful man, that Irish Catholic Governor," said Mr. de Lacey thoughtfully, "as we who knew him best can testify. Had he but been allowed a free hand, what wonders, even in the temporal order, he would have accomplished for these colonies, and with what leaps and bounds would they have progressed! In my opinion there is no other who can stand beside him."

"Not even the 'hurricane Reform Governor,' as men have entitled Lord Bellomont," smiled the priest. "But in truth you are right, de Lacey. For, though some others have had their qualities, it seems to me that, what Pieter Stuyvesant was for the Dutch, the present Earl of Limerick was for the British."

After a brief pause in which he appeared to be thinking the matter over after his deliberate fashion, he resumed:

"For besides his devotion to true liberty and his respect for the rights of all men, he showed a strong hand to the enemies of the country and strove hard to promote immigration. He oftentimes reminded the Home Government that there were not more than twenty British families in the Colony of New York, though in Long Island and elsewhere both English and Dutch were increasing."

"There has been a most singular blindness in it all," commented Mr. de Lacey, "and intolerance has been the fatal keynote of nearly all the establishments in the New World, except of course Maryland."

"Williams and especially Penn made efforts in the direction of tolerance," conceded the priest, "but, with those exceptions, intolerance has indeed prevailed to the detriment, political as well as religious, of those foundations. To Maryland people of all sorts flocked to enroll themselves under the banner of freedom. So would it have been in New York, had the policy of Dongan been continued. And as for the colonies of Massachusetts, Connecticut and the rest," the priest held up his hands with a gesture, half-whimsical and half-despairing, "it has been a reign of butchery. They offered huge rewards for the slaughter of savages, who might have been civilized and gained to Jesus Christ."

There was an accent of deep pain in the speaker's voice, and emotion seemed to impede his utterance as he thus spoke, for, like his brethren of Maryland, and together with the devoted sons of St. Francis, he had labored in season and out of season for the work of evangelizing the red-men.

"And furthermore," he said, "see what they have made Quakers, Anabaptists and other dissenters suffer, and of a surety Catholics, when they can catch one, though the number of these latter is pitifully small. For them all there has been the scourge, the whipping-post, the pillory, the branding-iron. For us priests perpetual imprisonment or, should we escape from our dungeon, death upon the gallows. The which, in truth, by the grace of Our Lord, we would gladly endure."

His listeners sat in awed silence, for they saw that for the moment he had forgotten them. He presently resumed more lightly:

"Were we Jesuits not as slippery as eels, Mistress Evelyn, they would have had a fine row of us upon the gibbets. Lord Bellomont offered one hundred pieces of eight to the Iroquois who should capture one of us.¹ But, even amongst the pagan or Protestant Indians, the wily sachems begged to be excused, declaring that any 'rudeness' to the missionaries might lead the distant tribes to make war upon them."

He laughed boyishly at the recollection.

"They were rude enough themselves sometimes, those same Iroquois," he continued, "but they could not stomach the politeness which their Brother Corlear, as they named His Excellency, meant to show us in making us dance to the hangman's tune."

"Here in New England, too, it is not religion at all," Father Harvey went on after a pause, "that is practised by these people. It is Matherism. In that blasphemous farrago of nonsense, 'The Prevalency of Prayer,' Cotton Mather enunciates all

¹ "Documents Relating to Colonial History," Vol. IV.

those principles of intolerance and the persecuting fanaticism which has made New England a byword, and which Bellomont in New York has emulated. At the same time, all innocent enjoyments are condemned, all rational liberty abrogated. In what can it end save atheism and despair?"

"The same story everywhere," added Mr. de Lacey. "Leisler in New York and Coode in Maryland, raving like maniacs against Papists, seemed to be haunted by visions in all the four elements. Leisler openly stimulated the pagan Indians against the French, and even congratulated them on the terrible massacre of Lachine, which led in its turn to other tragic occurrences. And, as for Coode in Maryland, we know how he has prevailed to make persecution the law in that once free state, and to repeal the good and just laws made by us Catholics, by which all were free to worship God as they chose."

"This very Salem," put in Evelyn, "where the Pilgrim Fathers came for sanctuary, has added its share of horrors to the rest."

"Yes, with that madness against witchcraft," assented Father Harvey, "which would almost seem to have been a diabolical hallucination, clouding the mind no less than the moral sense. Those innocent victims—'firebrands of hell,' they called them—paid the price of that folly. Think of fully a score having perished on yonder hill!"

"It is grewsome," said Evelyn. "The very air seems full of their sighs and tears."

She shuddered, which the priest observing cried:

"Oh, mistress Evelyn, this has been but grim talk for you."

But Evelyn interposed quickly:

"You are mistaken, Father, for why should I

be so delicate as not to be able to hear of those things which you and many others are ready to endure?"

Seeing that her eyes were full of tears, Father Harvey resolutely changed the subject. That evening their conversation, as they sat over their supper, had been unwontedly prolonged. For not often did Father Harvey discourse thus at length on what was agitating the minds of the few and scattered Catholics throughout the country. He began next to speak of New York and of many of the Dutch families which he had intimately known, and especially the Van Cortlandts. He knew and appreciated old Madam Van Cortlandt, who had been such a kind friend to the de Laceys, and even remembered Polly as a child, a sparkling little brunette, who had run to show him the new pair of skates which she had firmly believed were the gift of good St. Nicholas. It was a keen enjoyment to both father and daughter to hear him discourse of all those places and people but lately dear and familiar, as also to listen to the many pleasant anecdotes which he had to tell.

He gave an amusing account of a ludicrous mistake by which Manhattan was once thrown into consternation, and which might have had serious consequences. There was a certain Indian chief, named Brant, who had for a considerable time spread terror through the colonies. One night when the alarm went forth of "*Brant, Brant*" (which, in Dutch, meant fire), so full were the people's minds of that redoubtable warrior that they made sure it was he who was threatening the town. Practically the whole population rushed forth pell-mell from their dwellings, mothers clasping their infants and cripples hobbling along on crutches. Bald old men without

their wigs showed shiny pates that were believed by some to be gleaming tomahawks; portly and influential citizens, but partially dressed, filled the streets; hats were clapped on top of night caps, and breeches were drawn on inside out. Men, stumbling about in the uncertain light of the lanthorns, fell into each other's arms, giving a push here and a haphazard blow there, dodging the shadows of trees which they believed to be lurking foemen, flying from high shrubs which they mistook for tall Indians. Fat men ran with a speed long unknown, outdistancing their thinner brethren. Blind men blinked, timorous men shook, children whimpered, and all with one voice cried, as they sped towards the Fort, hoping for shelter: "Brant, Brant is upon us!"

Now, all this time the fire which had broken out in the Fort burned steadily. The sight of the smoke and flame increased the panic, for it was presumed that Brant was applying the torch to the town. The men, who at the cry of fire should have seized the fire-bucket which hung on the back porch of every dwelling and assisted in controlling the conflagration, were so scared by the imaginary Indian raid that, but for the soldiers of the garrison and the sailors hastily summoned from the warship in the Bay, the Fort itself would have been consumed and the fire have spread through the town.

With such light and pleasant converse did the good priest dispel the gloom of the previous discourse, which he feared had been too painful. It was a distinct loss to both father and daughter when their guest left them to go into Maine on missionary work amongst the tribes there. They missed his interesting talk and cheery ways, which had lightened

FATHER HARVEY

329

the loneliness of their evenings and made his visit appear as an oasis in the surrounding dreariness. But, most of all, they missed the Mass, which he so often said in the attic, where the Divine Mysteries were celebrated at sunrise before the servant came to begin her daily task.

CHAPTER IV

A NEW CONFEDERATE

TIME passed after that in the same monotonous fashion as before, broken only by an occasional letter from Madam Van Cortlandt, Pieter Schuyler or Captain Ferrers, which came by the Boston Weekly Post. They dared not make these communications frequent, since Captain Prosser Williams, as they learned, was still on the alert and still determined to discover the whereabouts of Mistress Evelyn de Lacey. He had various sleuthhounds on the track, and Captain Ferrers knew that he still kept up communication with Greatbatch. Williams had other and more mercenary reasons for this intimacy with the smuggler, of which his fellow-officer was unaware, though he also hoped, as Evelyn's friends surmised, to obtain through the smuggler some clue to Evelyn's disappearance. They did not, however, know that Captain Williams was on the wrong scent. He trusted that the skipper of "The Hesperia" might find tidings of her at the Barbadoes, whither he was obstinate in believing the de Laceys had gone.

Curiously enough, the information which Prosser Williams so eagerly sought was to come to him from another and totally unexpected quarter. In the interval elapsing since Evelyn's disappearance he

had entered into the most friendly relations with Henricus Laurens. And Polly, who was unaware of the active hostility which that young officer of the Household had shown towards her early friend, was quite willing to accept him as a guest at the high teas or evening parties which, in her character of young matron, she gave from time to time. Captain Williams had early discovered that Mynheer Laurens was inimical both to Evelyn and her father, and he was most anxious to increase the number of their enemies and to promote hostility towards them. Therefore, he most sedulously cultivated this new intimacy. Once or twice the young Vrow Laurens, in her enthusiastic and warm-hearted fashion, had spoken of Evelyn, whom she called her dearest friend. She had given unqualified praise to her beauty, her charm, her exquisite taste in dress and her many other accomplishments.

Every word of Polly's had been mentally and unreservedly endorsed by at least one of her listeners, and had whetted his desire to find himself once more in that captivating presence, and to hear that voice which always thrilled him with the deepest emotion. For Captain Prosser Williams never disguised from himself that he was hopelessly in love with Mistress Evelyn. In fact, had it been possible for her to reciprocate the affection he had to offer, as many an exemplary woman has done for a worthless man, there might have been a chance to redeem him, or at least to throw into abeyance his worst qualities. But even his overweening vanity and egotism did not blind him to the fact that Evelyn regarded him with thinly veiled aversion. However, seated at the Laurens' hospitable board and at one of those high teas, which solid and substantial meal was the

most pleasant and informal meal in Dutch New York, Captain Williams gave no outward token of the tumult which had been awakened within him by the mention of Evelyn de Lacey's name. He cast down his eyes as if in displeasure, while he slowly sipped the spiced wine with which the guests were regaled, as though he desired to take no part in that conversation.

Henricus Laurens, from the other end of the table, frowned angrily at his wife's words of praise for the fugitive.

"Polly," he said warningly, "do you not remember that this whilom friend of yours, whom I have requested you to drop from your list of acquaintances, is under the ban of the law, and should not be so much as mentioned before a member of His Excellency's Household?"

Polly's eyes flashed fire. She glanced at Captain Williams, whose eyes were still cast down and whose whole aspect declared that, though he would not give expression to his sentiments out of deference to his hostess, he fully coincided in that opinion.

"Your commands in that matter, Henricus," Polly said, "must go for naught, since Mistress Evelyn de Lacey has been, and is now, my dearest friend. Those who do not wish to hear her name must absent themselves from my presence."

Captain Prosser Williams bent his head, while a faint, ironical smile played about the corners of his mouth. Also it occurred to him that this anger of hers was most becoming, giving an additional sparkle to her eyes and increased animation to her features. A possibility likewise came into his mind that, in her indignation, she might be indiscreet. Therefore, he said suavely:

"Though it be with regret that I must agree with Mynheer Laurens, I would remark that, if you chance to know of this young lady's whereabouts, a word of warning—"

"I know nothing of her whereabouts," interrupted Polly. "To my sorrow, I must confess that I have not had the merest hint of her present place of abode, her refuge from tyranny."

There was a thundercloud on her husband's brow and a very real disappointment in the mind of Captain Williams, for the sincerity in his hostess's voice was unmistakable. There was a sneer upon his lips as he said:

"You are a loyal friend indeed. But I would fain have given you a warning from one who was somewhat in the secrets of the Government."

At that instant the young Vrow Laurens distrusted the honesty of her guest, though it would have been impossible for her to have explained why or wherefore, and at that same instant also Henricus Laurens was aware as never before that he would be rendering a service to the man before him, as well as to the law, if it were possible for him to discover the place of Evelyn's retreat. Just then he had not the slightest clue, nor, as he believed, had Polly, but he was of opinion that Madam Van Cortlandt was fully cognizant of the girl's movements, and he resolved then and there to obtain through Polly the desired information. He reflected that, while satisfying his own private spite against the girl, such a move on his part would give him rank as a true patriot, zealous for the Protestant religion and devotedly loyal to the reigning Sovereign, while placing in his debt the influential young man who now sat at his table. He was quite convinced that he could never

make Polly a deliberate accomplice in such a scheme, nor would he have been altogether willing so to debase her kindly and generous nature. But he did hope that, were she once aware of the place of Evelyn's concealment, she might reveal it to himself through a certain lack of prudence or of suspicion in her temperament. Sooner or later he would discover Evelyn's secret, and then the old score would be paid off a hundredfold, and his own interests meanwhile furthered.

In the course of the evening Laurens put his chief guest upon another scent. They were smoking together and examining some curious spoons of odd workmanship, which had been bestowed by Mynheer de Vries upon Polly as a wedding gift. The two men spoke for a few minutes of Mynheer, his manners, his influence and the extraordinary kind of wife he had chosen. While discussing this latter, Henricus Laurens said:

"That dull, slow wife of his has one merit. She is a good hater."

The remark in itself would scarcely have aroused the curiosity of the languid guest, who cared very little about the characteristics of most of the Colonials. But he was struck by a certain significance in his host's manner.

"Good hater?" echoed he. "One might have as well expected to find so vital a quality in a jelly-fish."

Henricus laughed. "It is jealousy or I know not what," he said, "but no enemy of the much-talked-of Mistress de Lacey could exceed Vrow de Vries in bitterness against her."

This piece of information, which he affected to deride, was carefully noted by the guest, and in-

spired him with a sudden interest in that shapeless mass of humanity which hitherto he had regarded with disgust or aversion. He even determined to make an early call upon her. For hate and jealousy in women he knew to be far more potent than the generous and disinterested friendship of his present hostess. Aloud he only remarked:

"This jealousy is a pestiferous weed, and one never knows in what garden bed it will crop up."

Then he inquired as an afterthought:

"Has Mynheer himself by chance fallen a victim to this charmer?"

Mynheer Laurens shook his head.

"Not he, in truth. A more cautious fellow has never lived. No woman that was ever born could make him lose his head. It is, I make no doubt, some chance words of admiration he has let fall which, coupled with the praises of this girl which it is the fashion to pour forth, has incited her to anger."

"It is an amusing comedy," said Captain Williams, "which might justly be entitled 'Beauty and the Beast.'"

But he said no more, dismissing the topic as indifferently as though the affairs of Mistress de Lacey, and still more those of good Vrow de Vries, could not possibly be of moment to one of his rank and station. He took his leave early, with a kindling resentment against the mistress of the house in whom he discerned an opponent. He was resolved, if occasion offered, to make use of the thick-witted Colonial, Laurens, whom he despised, and likewise of Vrow de Vries, though he had but little hope from that quarter. There was indeed a chance that, living near, she might have picked up some bit of

336 GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

information, or that her cautious husband, who seemed possessed of universal knowledge concerning the doings in that and other colonies, might have let drop some valuable clue to the mystery of Evelyn's disappearance.

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CHAPTER V

A CLUE DISCOVERED

IT was a noticeable fact that, since her adventure in the attic, Joy seemed to have changed. Her cognomen was more than ever a misnomer. She seemed more dark and sullen than before, and regarded every word and act of her young mistress with scarcely veiled suspicion. Outside the house, in her own home and elsewhere, she had heard whispers of various kinds concerning the de Lacey and especially Evelyn. The latter's reserved demeanor and her aloofness from the townspeople excited their ire, while the girl's proficiency in household arts, which they declared unnatural in one so young, provoked their jealousy. A fertile source of suspicion was her knowledge of the medicinal and other virtues of plants, a knowledge which she had gained in the first instance from Kierstede, the celebrated Colonial doctor, and in the second place from the *Wilden*, who had shown her how to prepare Seneca-oil for cuts and bruises and a variety of herb brews and other remedies. She was thus able to treat with surprising skill the minor ills of humanity. She freely placed all her knowledge at the service of her poorer neighbors in Salem, as in Manhattan, and it became the common opinion amongst them that this young maid was as good as

any doctor. They did not scruple to avail themselves of her services, which of course were offered gratuitously, and they freely acknowledged the efficacy of her remedies. But, behind her back, they shook their heads and whispered. There was something suspicious in the possession of such knowledge, coupled with a marvellous personal beauty, which was but heightened by the simplicity of her Puritan attire.

Another circumstance which served to swell the tide of unpopularity that was threatening to submerge Evelyn, was her friendliness with the neighboring tribes. Amongst them, as with the *Wilden* at home, she became an honored guest, earning their good-will with trifling gifts, or ministering to them in their illnesses. Like the home Indians, they invented for her terms of admiring endearment, and used the most extravagant epithets in describing her beauty. Many of them believed that it was a Manitou or spirit which inhabited the frail and beautiful form. And especially was this the case when, having discovered by cautious inquiries that numbers of the Indians were Catholics who had been won to the true faith by missionaries from Maryland or Canada, she spoke to them of religion, heard their catechism, and instructed the children, regardless of the fact that she was thus imperilling her liberty and perhaps her life, as she had done in New York. She strove in every way to continue the work of the missionaries, baptizing those in danger of death, and making a certain number of converts amongst the pagan Indians. Always she impressed upon them the need of secrecy and caution in speaking of religious matters or of her ministrations amongst them, and they faithfully obeyed her admonitions.

A CLUE DISCOVERED

339

They gave in return their gifts of bead-work, baskets of perfumed grasses, berries and fish, and they taught her new secrets of forest lore, or perfected her in those she had already learned from her old-time friends, the Manhattas and Rockaways. The bronze-colored faces, the beady black eyes which softened at sight of her, wore for her a more kindly and homelike expression than the countenances of the grim Puritans who surrounded her, and from whom she shrank instinctively in spite of many traits of character which she had learned to admire. If but the light of the true faith had been given, some of them would, as she said to her father, have made splendid Christians.

"If their eyes were not so perpetually turned to the powers of darkness," responded her father.

It chanced that, when she had thus become the centre of much surmise and of more or less ill-natured gossip, a shopkeeper of the village, Ebenezer Cooke, who had a certain prominence in local affairs, wrote a letter to his sister in Manhattan, and this sister was no other than Vrow de Vries. The latter resembled her Dutch mother, who had been fat, indolent and finally bed-ridden, while Ebenezer Cooke, an exact image of his late father, was tall, thin and lantern-jawed. Of extraordinary activity and going much abroad amongst the people, he was unlike his sister in having a rare gift of loquacity and an ear wide open for gossip.

So the letter that he wrote contained an account of this girl, whose beauty he described with perfect impartiality, being a widower and having no female relations. He dwelt in glowing language on her accomplishments, which had aroused suspicion that the devil himself might have a hand in her affairs.

He further declared that she had come to Salem but recently, hailing from no one knew where. The name by which she was there known was assuredly not Evelyn de Lacey, but the keen instinct of jealousy caused the fat woman, seated in her arm-chair with her inevitable knitting in her hands, to surmise that the person so described was no other than the fugitive from Manhattan.

The knowledge occasioned her a curious exultation. She blinked at the letter, which she laid beside her on the table, as though it were a living thing. She moistened her lips, as if tasting some delectable morsel. And then she began to think in her slow fashion to which of the two men who she knew would value the information, she should impart it. The result of her cogitations was that she sent one of the slaves with a message to Captain Prosser Williams. For he, in following the scent upon which he had been put by Mynheer Laurens, had visited her more than once, and had won his way into her good graces chiefly by his depreciation of the much-praised Mistress de Lacey. While she waited for an answer to her summons, she reflected with complacency that the letter had come at an opportune time, when Mynheer was absent for a couple of days on business in the Jerseys. For he would have been certain to oppose any action by her in the matter.

When the message was brought to Captain Williams, he was smoking with some other members of the Household staff and officers from the Fort, who were seated around various little tables at the game of lansquenet. Captain Ferrers, who had been playing at a somewhat distant table, noticed that, on receiving the note which he instantly read, Captain Williams, keen gambler though he was, got up

with a hasty apology and left the room. Now between these two men there had recently been less cordiality than ever, for Captain Ferrers, well aware of his associate's connection with the persecution of the de Laceys, found it hard to preserve towards him even the ordinary conventional civility which prudence required. On this occasion it immediately occurred to him that the note thus received might be in some way connected with the fugitives. He was instantly on the alert, and, withdrawing as soon as possible from that assemblage in the officers' room at Whitehall, he took his way, though vaguely and without any definite idea as to what he could do, along that familiar street which led to the de Laceys' deserted dwelling.

Ferrers half expected to see a light in one of the windows, which would be a sign that the wanderers had returned. But he laughed at himself next moment for the conceit. The house lay there, still and deserted, and even the once luxuriant garden, now bereft in great part of its flowers and foliage, presented a scene of chill desolation. He stood leaning upon the gate, with a heartache so poignant that it seemed to him that he must again undertake at any risk that journey to Salem. He had never realized before how Love, that smiling youth, could rend and tear one with the fierce agony of a separation that might be of indefinite duration. As he stood thus, he was aware of a voice that appeared familiar, though it reached him from a certain distance. He presently traced it, with a start of surprise, to the de Vries mansion, from the drawing-room of which gleamed lights and the pleasant glow of the fire on the hearth. Without any definite intention, he passed on in that direction. That glow

of light from the mansion and that sound of a masculine voice struck him as somewhat odd, since he was aware that the head of the house was absent from the town.

As the voice he had heard approached the open door, and a step came crunching down the gravelled walk, Egbert Ferrers drew back into the shadow of the stone wall, for the voice was that of Captain Prosser Williams, and he clearly perceived by the light of the lanthorn upon the pole the face and figure of his fellow-officer. The latter stood still an instant, looking about him and drawing on a pair of gloves, and it seemed to the observer that the pale face wore a look of exultation. After a brief pause, Captain Williams walked hastily on, apparently taking his homeward way to the gubernatorial mansion.

Captain Williams was, indeed, exultant, for he had had a wholly satisfactory interview with his ally, who, unexpected as it was, had proved more powerful than all the rest. He had found her sitting unwontedly erect in her chair, with a color approaching to a purplish crimson in each heavy cheek and a light in her dull eyes. Thus transformed, it appeared to the visitor that she had something more distinctly human about her, as though a jelly-fish had suddenly shown signs of life. Hardly had they exchanged the conventional greetings, on the part of Prosser Williams with a little more than his usual scant measure of civility, when the woman snatched a letter from the table beside her and thrust it into his hand.

"Read that," she said.

He eyed her curiously a moment before he unfolded the paper, which had been previously unloosed from its silken fastenings.

"It is then of moment?" he inquired.

But Vrow de Vries merely repeated, with feverish excitement:

"Read! Read!"

In his eagerness to obey her, the young man let fall his cloak and displayed his rich doublet of brocade, his collar of fine lace and curled tawny hair, falling low on his shoulders. Somehow his attire, his general air of fashion and the quality of his clothes seemed out of place in that drawing-room and in marked contrast to the woman in the chair beside him. As he read, the pale face flushed, the eyes became more eager, and the young man drew in his breath more sharply:

"Most excellent Vrow," he cried, "this is indeed great tidings."

For he had immediately drawn from that letter the same conclusion as herself.

"You think then that it is *she*?" inquired the mistress of the house anxiously, flushing with delight at the cordiality of her visitor's tone.

"Of a surety it is," assented Captain Williams emphatically. "There can be none other in these colonies who would fit that description—none other who is so adorable."

He spoke thus, forgetful for the moment of prudence and of the bond of mutual hatred that united him with the fat woman in the chair. In an instant he perceived his mistake; the bubbling laughter disappeared from the woman's lips, her triple chin, which had descended into the folds of her neck, grimly resumed its position, and the fire that flashed from the beady eyes was baleful.

"You too," she cried, "whom I have credited with sense and judgment!"

"You have not credited me with blindness," the young officer said defiantly. "And blind I should be, if I did not perceive her exterior gifts."

"But you have told me," argued Vrow de Vries, eyeing him resentfully, "that you hate her."

"And I have told but the truth," the Captain replied, "for in very truth I do, and more than you can ever understand. But hatred does not close the eyes of a man to beauty."

He sat down again and said in a different tone:

"If you will but give me this letter, good Vrow, you shall be fully satisfied that my hatred exceeds yours, as the sun does the pine-torch. I will track her to Salem, and then we shall see, you and I, how little that same beauty will avail her."

Vrow de Vries was satisfied, though she would have preferred that this member of His Excellency's Household, whose visits for many weeks had been the stimulus of her dull life, should have unreservedly agreed with her as to the small claims of Mistress de Lacey to admiration. But here she felt was genuine hatred; nor did she pause to ask herself how it had been excited, nor guess how quickly it might melt away, if the conflicting passion of the man's love had been reciprocated.

"I will give you the letter," she said, slowly and deliberately, "and leave the matter in your hands. My husband will do naught, since it is his policy to meddle in no wise with the affairs of others. Therefore, this matter must be kept secret from him."

Prosser Williams readily promised, and, having possessed himself of the letter, sighed with relief to reflect that his visits to that house and that uninteresting creature were nearly over, since her use-

fulness as an ally was gone. Nevertheless, he sat back in his chair a moment and watched her.

"Of late," resumed the woman passionately, the dull, crimson flush deepening in her cheeks and rising from cheek to forehead, "our disputes concerning this girl have been many and violent. I have pointed out to Mynheer that she is an outlaw, an enemy to the state, and to the Protestant religion and the King's Majesty. He hath laughed at the contention that a young maid like that could be dangerous to any one save impressionable young men. He hath flouted me, or roundly taken me to task, for meddling with affairs which in no wise concern us. He hath praised her beauty, as well as her courage and her spirit, though he will not tell me when he hath seen these latter proved, and all that the more to anger me."

She stopped, almost choking with passion, as she remembered the bitter things which her husband had said. She had received indeed an unwonted amount of verbal abuse from Mynheer, because she had spoken her mind concerning their late neighbor in the presence of Captain Prosser Williams and young Mynheer Laurens.

"Oh, it is clear to me," she cried, "that she has thrown an evil eye at him, and has bewitched him."

"Bewitched!" That word cast a flood of light into Prosser Williams' mind. He thought he saw a new way out of his difficulty. Instead of a vexatious process of law, warrants and other procedure, which would be necessary to get possession of the girl there in another colony, and which would bring odium on himself with Lady Bellomont and many others as the prime mover in Evelyn's arrest, here

was a far simpler process. It would leave the matter entirely in his hands, and enable him to play the part of rescuer, and otherwise to comport himself so as to earn the good opinion of the girl herself, and incidentally of many others to boot. He determined, without saying a word to any one, to leave directly for Salem. But he did not confide this intention to Vrow de Vries. Merely warning her to observe the utmost secrecy as to the letter and his visits to her house, he bade her a hasty good-evening and went out into the darkness, all unconscious that he had been observed by Captain Ferrers. He felt as though he were walking on air. He took the very stars to witness his triumph and the malignant joy that possessed him at the belief that Evelyn de Lacey was now in his power. Mingled with his burning desire for revenge, because he had been previously scorned and outwitted, was a longing to see her again and to hear once more the tones of her voice—a longing which was scarcely surpassed even by that of his brother-officer. And hope surged up within him that, alone and friendless in that place of exile, she might be induced to hear reason and listen to his suit. He vowed to himself by those pale stars above his head, shining beside the white radiance of the Milky Way, that, if she would not accept him willingly, he would attain his end by force.

But he had to think the matter out carefully. He had in the first instance to devise some excuse for asking an extended leave, though that would be easy. There was always the plea of urgent business, and he had seldom asked for such favors. But he had also to consider that the late fury against witches, which under the administration of Governor Phipps had stirred the Colony of Massachusetts

and convulsed Salem village, was at an end. There had been a reaction. Men in high places, municipal officials and the like, were ashamed of the part that they had played in the late trials, and remorseful at the lives that had been sacrificed and the cruelty that had been practised upon many innocent persons. He argued, however, that the few years that had elapsed since the era of the witchcraft excitement, had not materially changed the temper of the people's minds. There must still be a sufficient number of persons firmly imbued with the lately universal belief that the devil operated through human creatures. Gloomly superstition must be lurking yet in the farm-houses, in laborers' cottages, and in the breasts even of ministers of the Gospel, who had made themselves so prominent before. Even the reaction that had ensued had had time to spend its force, so that he counted much on being able to stir up the smouldering embers of a fire which had destroyed its victims on Witches' Hill. In fact, he inferred from the tenor of the letter from Salem that the belief in sorcery, in the evil eye and the like, was still a force to be reckoned with at the scene of those tragic events. He was fully determined to make the venture, and he planned out every detail, in so far as he could, before reaching Whitehall.

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Meanwhile Captain Ferrers, more than ever convinced that his brother-officer was meditating some new villainy against Evelyn and had possibly discovered her hiding-place, was filled with an agitation difficult to control. Uncertain what to do, he walked on in the same aimless fashion to the tavern

of *Der Halle*, hoping that he might pick up some information there. Captain Greatbatch was in the tavern, as he was sure to be, whenever the brigantine, "Hesperia," was in port. Captain Ferrers was aware that the smuggler, for one reason or another, was in constant communication with Captain Prosser Williams. He had not yet heard the current report that Williams was protecting Greatbatch, and, through his influence, saving him from the clutches of the law and allowing him a certain latitude in carrying on his nefarious practices.

Captain Ferrers entered almost unnoticed in the wake of a bluff sea-captain, whom he presently heard Greatbatch introducing to some others as the captain of "The Prosperine." He sat down quietly at a table, and ordered a glass of Madeira. This was brought to him with a plate of Deventer cookies. He broke and ate one of these almost mechanically, and slowly sipped his wine, while his ears were open to the talk at the other table. He had very little hope of solving the mystery there. Yet he knew that Greatbatch was more or less incautious in his cups, and he waited in expectation of some chance word that might give him the clue to Captain Williams' movements. Now, though Captain Greatbatch was as usual well-primed with his favorite potion of rum, his talk for some time was purely of seafaring matters. Nor did he so much as mention the name of Prosser Williams. The old sea-dog's rough voice rose higher and higher in argument or dispute, but he uttered no word of information that could in any way be useful to the listener. Vexed with himself for the unreasoning impulse which had led him ~~there~~, instead of following Captain Williams back to his quarters, he was

about to rise and pay his reckoning when he heard the name of Mynheer de Vries. Greatbatch's voice had sunk to a lower pitch, and the talk had become plainly confidential. Suddenly, however, he raised it as if in argument, and Captain Ferrers heard him say:

"This would-be aristocrat who mingles with the gentles, and who has for his wife the daughter of a shopkeeper in Salem."

The word acted upon Captain Ferrers with the force of a shock. Vrow de Vries had her family connections in Salem, and Captain Williams had been paying her a visit in the absence of her husband. All was now clear to him, as though revealed by a lightning-flash. The woman had been giving intelligence of the presence of the de Laceys in Salem to their bitter enemy. What the motive of Vrow de Vries might be, he did not stop to ask himself, but he rose and almost mechanically paid his score, exchanged a word or two with the landlord, and sped out of the tavern.

Only the next morning Ferrers learned that Captain Williams had asked for and obtained leave of absence. There was no immediate action that he could take. It would be almost impossible for him to obtain leave at the very moment when his associate on the staff had left town. His one resource was to confer with Pieter Schuyler, who announced his intention of proceeding immediately to the Massachusetts village, whence he would keep Captain Ferrers informed of the other's movements, and take what steps were possible to warn and to protect the girl. The two men likewise had a conference with Madam Van Cortlandt, as they relied considerably upon her advice. Captain Ferrers, with a

350 GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

real anguish in his heart at being thus chained to the spot, made Pieter Schuyler promise that, if his assistance were needed or if any plan were decided upon, he should be summoned, and then, leave or no leave, he would go at once.

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CHAPTER VI

A NEW DANGER

AFTER his arrival in Salem village, Captain Prosser Williams lost no time in discovering through the mediation of Ebenezer Cooke, brother of Madam de Vries, all that he wished to know concerning the occupants of that dwelling hard by the turnpike road from Boston, and thus set at rest any lingering doubts in his mind as to their identity. He did not make known his own real name or station to his informant or to any other residents of the place. Nor did his dress reveal anything, since he was clad as a merchant in sober apparel, and even his curled locks were hidden under a wig. Thus he was enabled to remain in the village for days without attracting the attention of either Evelyn or her father. On the verge of the forest which adjoined their house, he watched for an hour at a time for a glimpse of the girl, which he but rarely got, but which, when secured, served as fuel to the devouring flame that consumed him. He spent the intervening time in ascertaining the sentiments of the people, both in regard to Mistress de Lacey herself and on that so lately all-engrossing subject of witchcraft. Representing himself as an ultra-Protestant and champion of the present King's supremacy, he was made welcome in many houses of the town and

amongst various classes of the population. He also frequented the taverns, and felt, as a doctor feels a patient's pulse, the temper of men's minds. As he had expected, he found that amongst the older people, the more ignorant, and those who had been active persecutors, much of the old credulity was still alive. Needless to say, he lost no opportunity by word or gesture, or by a recital of the treatment even at that day accorded to witches in England, to feed the flame and lend fuel to the fire. On the other hand, many and weird were the tales which were told him, and which made all the air around vocal with the death cries of witches, or with the shrieks, the complaints and the outcries of their supposed victims. He was as familiar with the names of Rebecca Nurse, Elizabeth How, Goody Bibber, Rebecca Fox, Mrs. Bradstreet and the other reputed witches, as with those of Mary Walton, Abigail Williams, the Parris children, Rev. Nicholas Noyes, his fellow-clergyman, Parris, and others of their chief accusers. The astute young man of the world seemed to be sounding every depth of credulity, ignorance, diabolical malice and superstition, and following all the windings and turnings of human nature in its attitude towards religious matters or the supernatural, once it has escaped from the guiding hand of the Church. But the most curious result of all was the effect of his discoveries upon himself. He who had cynically disbelieved in the truths of religion (such religion at least as that of his parents), and who mocked, in so far as was safe, at creeds and ministers and ceremonies, was now impressed far more than he would have cared to own by these strange narratives of sorcery and of the influence of the devil upon the very bodies of men,

A NEW DANGER

353

Some unexpected vein of superstition had cropped up within him, and disposed him to find some possibility of truth in what had at first appeared ludicrous. Also, he was half persuaded that the influence of Evelyn de Lacey over himself was more than natural.

CHAPTER VII

TRIED FOR WITCHCRAFT

IT was late afternoon when the Town Marshal and the constables, charged with the arrest of Mistress Evelyn de Lacey on a charge of witchcraft, proceeded to her house. They were accompanied by a crowd of more or less excited people, the majority of whom still remembered the witchcraft excitement of several years before, and, though less under the influence of that delusion than their elders had been, were nevertheless curious to watch all stages of the proceedings and to hear the accusations formulated against this stranger who had settled in their midst.

The sun, burning low in the west, seemed to have an evil gleam, and cast a lurid glow over the landscape and the trees of the wood, which had the appearance of burnished copper. Coming forth from farms or dwellings along the route, dogs barked furiously in angry protest at the doings of that band. The men in their high, pointed hats and full-skirted coats, and the women in their wide, gathered skirts and sad-colored hoods and mantles, moved along as so many shadows. The wooden dwelling near the turnpike road showed windows gleaming in the red light of the sunset. Evelyn was alone in the house. Her father had begged her to accompany him, as

she often did, for a walk, but she had remained at home to prepare the high tea or substantial supper which, according to the Dutch fashion, supplemented the midday dinner.

For many days their servant, Joy, had absented herself, and had even fled from Evelyn when she chanced to meet her, nor would Goody Wilkins, her mother, offer any reasonable excuse for her defection. Evelyn had noticed also a new and forbidding demeanor in the various neighbors, some of whom she had attended in illness, and had relieved by means of her medicaments. Though she had not said anything to her father, she felt convinced that there was something in the air. She feared that Prosser Williams and some of her enemies in Manhattan were plotting some new mischief.

Nevertheless, it was a distinct shock to Evelyn when that sinister group appeared before the house. There was a knock, which sounded portentous in the darkening air. Evelyn paused to steady herself by a silent prayer; then, recognizing that resistance of any sort would be futile, she advanced to answer that final summons at the door, which was followed by a deep, masculine voice, saying:

"Open in the name of the Lord!"

The girl threw the door wide open, and stood firm and composed on the threshold. Prosser Williams, who had stationed himself where he could command an excellent view of the proceedings without being himself visible, could discern every feature of the girl's face. He felt his heart throb with the old longing and the old infatuation. He was conscious of a tumultuous joy at the sight of her, and was thrilled as always by the sound of her voice, and especially by the thought that this time there



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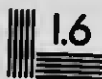
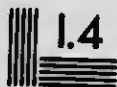
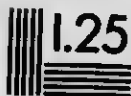
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would be no escape for her, save through those good offices of his for which he would demand the only acceptable reward. He chafed at the tedious process of law and the delays that would be necessary before he could urge his suit and claim her for either his wife or his prisoner. At least, if all else failed, he could not this time be balked in his revenge and the satisfaction of that strange hatred which always went hand in hand with his perverted love.

The young girl, hearing the order for her arrest, asked only that she might be allowed to take with her what might be actually necessary, and also put on her mantle and hood. The permission was granted, but two women from the crowd were chosen to accompany her to her room, and inspect every article that she took with her. They also read the hasty line which she left for her father, imploring him to take no step, to commit no act of rashness, but patiently to leave the issue with God. Fetters were then put upon her hands, and she went forth from the house between two constables, preceded by the Town Marshal and accompanied by a motley crowd. A last gleam of light, like a sardonic smile, played over the bleak surface of the Witches' Hill, and, as the strange cortège moved on through Prison Lane up Essex Street into Town House Lane and thence to the prison where she was to be detained, Evelyn's eyes wandered over the landscape and caught glimpses of the Beverley shore beyond the river, with the wild indented coast of Marblehead. It was fortunate for the prisoner that the fury of the late terrible delusion had spent itself, for she thus escaped the brutal treatment then meted out to the accused.

TRIED FOR WITCHCRAFT

357

It is possible in fact that, save for Prosser Williams, who had stirred up the smouldering fires of superstition in the breasts of a handful of zealots, the accusation would never have been made. A fanatical few, together with the rank and file of the ignorant, had never been convinced of the folly and wickedness of the former trials, or felt ashamed of their tragic consequences. These were still disposed to invoke the old colonial law against witchcraft, and had the support of a sufficient number of men of influence to constrain the magistrates to issue a warrant for the arrest of Mistress Evelyn de Lacey and for her detention in prison until a special session, about ten days from then, should be held.

The memorable session was held in the dusk of evening. The prisoner was brought from the prison to the old meeting-house on Hobart Street, where the special session of the court was to be held. Two or three ministers were present, and sat beside the magistrates, looking with sour and solemn faces at this beautiful young woman, who at least was guilty of absenting herself from the church services, whose name did not appear on any parish register, and who had never come forward to take the sacrament. Many witnesses were also present, prepared to give testimony against her, though not, as in former trials, to make specific charges against her of having bewitched or "afflicted" (as the phrase went) any particular individuals. That phase of madness had died out. But there were vague and general accusations against her of being unnaturally well versed in all domestic accomplishments. Her very beauty and the charm of her manner were cited against her, and especially the influence which she was known to exert over the neighboring In-

dians, conversing familiarly with them in their own tongues. She was said to possess power over dumb brutes, and to have an uncanny skill in medicine and in the preparation of various medicaments. It was singular that none made any charge of having been injured by her, although many declared their belief that her superhuman powers might at any time be exercised in the spells of sorcery. The most damaging testimony was given by Evelyn's own servant, Joy, who testified to having seen Satan himself in the attic of the de Lacey's dwelling; or, if it were not Satan, then her young mistress's familiar spirit. Her evidence was corroborated by her mother, Goody Wilkins, who testified that her daughter had returned to her from the aforesaid dwelling in a condition of mortal terror, and had consented to return only on the assurance that she would never be required to revisit the upper story of the house.

Prosser Williams listened carefully to all the evidence. Concealed from notice, as he supposed himself to be, he feasted his eyes on the beauty of the young girl's countenance. He was filled with a reluctant admiration, which enraged him, too, and stirred up within him the malignant spirit of hatred that always mingled with his infatuation, as he noted the high courage of the girl and the proud coldness of her bearing. Her contemptuous gaze swept in turn over all of those who composed the court—magistrates, ministers, accusers and constable—as though she could not help but marvel at their folly and feel a certain compassion for their blindness.

While Joy was giving her testimony, Evelyn smiled and shook her head, as the girl, who had been really as fond of her young mistress as it lay in her

nature to be, stumbled over her evidence and had to be freely prompted by those to whom she had previously told her tale, or who had suggested to her various additions. Her narrative also was noted with something like exultation by Prosser Williams. For, though he totally disbelieved in its supernatural character, he saw that it was likely to prove very damaging to the prisoner, and might be used at another time and place as proof positive against her. For he intuitively guessed that the figure in black, which had sat motionless and said "Amen" to the girl's prayer, was neither demon nor wizard, but probably a Catholic priest, whom the de Lacey were harboring at a time when such an act was strictly prohibited by the recent decree of Lord Bellomont.

On the conclusion of the testimony, a minister, who chose to make himself conspicuous as Parris and Noyes had done in the former trials, got up and made a rambling speech in the course of which he cried out, "that they must pray and be upon their guard, lest the Lord should once more do terrible things amongst them by loosening the chain of the roaring lion. Then would the devil come amongst them in greater wrath, cruelty and malice than ever, and the loud trumpet of God be heard thundering in anger upon the town and upon the country. Such creatures as the young female before them, invested with the dangerous snare of human beauty, having lifted up their heel against Christ, would by the fellowship of devils and the hellish mysteries of the covenant witches work to their destruction." Despite the gravity of her position, when judged by the experience of the past and the fearful tales she had been told, Evelyn could not repress a laugh,

which was immediately seized upon by the reverend preacher as a sign of her inveterate hardness of heart.

The presiding magistrate, who seemed perturbed and uneasy, began to question the prisoner, who of course denied all charges against her, and animadverted with something of scorn on the credulity of her accusers, and still more of those who, presumably educated, would entertain such charges. As she stood before them in all her youthful beauty, her slim upright figure revealed by the falling back of her hood and mantle, her fettered hands behind her back, and her small head upraised to show the curves of her throat, Prosser Williams thought that never in the gay and gracious days at the Van Cortlandt mansion had he seen her look so beautiful.

"Why, sir," she said, "does it not appear contrary to common sense and reason that, were I indeed a witch and possessed of the powers with which you endow me, I should remain here upon trial or suffer these manacles an instant on my hands?"

One of the magistrates at least looked uncomfortable, but the majority of her accusers simply glowered angrily upon her. As they did not answer, she continued scoffingly:

"Should I not rather mount on a broomstick and fly out through yonder casement, as you say is the manner of witches? Or, better still, should I not change each one of you, worshipful gentlemen, into a rabbit, a mouse, a guinea-pig, or whatever would be least harmful to myself?"

The judges and the jury, the clerk and the constables, looked uneasy at this suggestion, which many of them took as a threat.

"Or should I not transform your Honors, the

magistrates, into fierce dogs or wolves, who might devour all the rest?"

Prosser Williams marvelled at the girl's audacity, and the gay spirit which thus moved her recklessly to defy the court. Perhaps he thought she did not fully realize the peril of her position, or did not believe that the charges against her were serious. But the efforts of her dauntless spirit to turn the accusations against her into a jest, while at the same time offering an apparently unanswerable argument, were met by a stern reprimand from the court for her ill-timed levity, and a hint that the severity of her sentence would be augmented by the expression of such sentiments on her part. She, however, persisted in her argument, though this time with a countenance of due gravity:

"But can I offer a stronger plea in my behalf? For would it not be impossible that I should possess superhuman power and not use it to my own advantage and to the detriment of those who falsely accuse me? I marvel, not at the credulity of yonder poor serving-maid, but at you, learned gentlemen."

Her plea was not entertained, though the allusion to their credulity angered them, and the possibilities she had suggested sent cold shivers of apprehension down the spine of more than one of those whom she had designated. For might not her powers, temporarily in abeyance, be suddenly manifested to their grievous hurt? And it was certain that each felt as unwilling to assume the characters she had severally assigned them as did Their Honors, the magistrates, to do execution upon them in the indicated manner.

As for Joy, under the influence of superstition, her terror of her late mistress, who had treated her with

so much kindness and to whom she had seemed attached, was pitiable. Now that she had given evidence against her, she feared to look in her direction. It was a pitiful sight to see a young woman thus alone and defenceless in such an assembly. Her very courage was in itself pathetic. But to Prosser Williams the sight was gratifying in the extreme, for thus, he argued, would her pride be brought low. It angered him, however, to observe how calmly she bore herself, and how her quick intelligence caused her to regard the proceedings as an unmitigated farce and to turn judges, accusers and the officers of the law alike into ridicule. He wondered if she had heard the grewsome stories of the punishments that had been inflicted upon reputed witches and wizards within the last decade. He could not know that it was a glimpse of his face, which she had caught despite his efforts at concealment, that had spurred her on to a reckless gaiety of demeanor. Yet, he would have been rejoiced if he had known that it had likewise chilled her heart with a cold and deadly fear. For no sooner had she seen him than she knew what she had previously suspected, that he and other enemies in Manhattan had been mainly responsible for her present situation. She fancied even that the campaign against her had been of his sole contriving, though in truth it had had its source in the jealousy and wounded vanity of the women about her, no less than in superstition.

In her heart, too, was a harrowing anxiety concerning her father. She rejoiced that he had not been at the house when the constables had come to apprehend her, lest he should have been tempted to resist. But she feared now that, once he had been

informed of her imminent danger, he might place himself in deadly peril by some attempt at rescue or some bold defiance of the court, and thus fall into the hands of their unrelenting enemy. The appearance of Prosser Williams there meant ruin, entire and absolute. For should this court, which she was keen enough to see was divided against itself and in some sort half-hearted, acquit her, it would be but to send her to that other tribunal in Manhattan, where more malignant foes would make her undoing certain. As it was, she turned with relief from the pale face and gleaming eyes of that member of Lord Bellomont's Household to the grim-faced select-men, magistrates and ministers by whom she was confronted. There was something weird and uncanny in the whole scene. The pines and hemlocks without trembled and shivered in a mournful wind. The improvised courtroom was dimly lit by pine-knot torches, stuck in rude sconces. The pulpit, grotesquely magnified, loomed above the prisoner's head, forbidding as though it showed a ghostly occupant. The gallery was filled with an excited throng of townspeople, who had followed the prisoner thither, and were stirred almost to frenzy by this threatened recrudescence of the witchcraft excitement.

While the most futile questions were being put, and a bewildering array of witnesses were being brought against her, the elder of the two magistrates seemed to be disposed in her favor. Whether it was that he remembered the disapproval which had been meted out by sane and unbiassed men to those who presided at former trials, when the first madness had passed; or whether he was merely impressed by the youthful loveliness of the prisoner, her quick

wit and calm demeanor, he laid strong emphasis upon the fact that no evidence had been as yet adduced to prove bodily harm done to any of the witnesses by her contrivance.

At this there arose a tumult, and all seemed to be speaking together. Dignity and decorum were lost. One man cried out that the prisoner should be put to the torture, since she refused to confess. Another suggested that the punishment meted out in the past to all accused of sorcery should be recapitulated to inspire this reputed witch with salutary fear and confusion. Meanwhile, the central figure in that strange scene stood apparently unmoved, though the girl's heart quailed within her as she heard that wild uproar, the vile names she was called, the fierce muttering rising into shouts against her. Her delicate and sensitive nature was deeply affected by the horrors of the scenes depicted, when, the judge having at last obtained silence, the clerk read aloud the account of former trials, the imprisonment in dismal dungeons and the culminating tragedy on the bleak and dreary hill, which had been to her an evil omen ever since her arrival in Salem. Her mind, however, rose into the region of prayer. All the faith and hope, every divine impulse of charity, which had consciously or unconsciously shaped her life, came now to her aid. She gave thanks with a certain exultation of spirit that she had been found worthy to follow this new way of the cross, and to ascend her Calvary. She rejoiced in the knowledge that her exile and that of her father, such privations and discomforts as they had since experienced, and her present sufferings as well as the grim possibilities of the future, could have been avoided, had she renounced her faith

and placed her abjuration in the hands of Lord Bellomont.

"O Lord!" she said, "I give Thee thanks that Thou hast thought me worthy, who have been so fond of worldly pleasures and of the brighter side of life."

Captain Prosser Williams, utterly unable to guess at such sentiments as these, sat gloating over the scene and at the terror, the humiliation and the degradation which that girl, so late the idol of a brilliant circle, must be feeling. It is true he had it in mind that he would not permit matters to proceed to too great extremities; that, once she was safely lodged in the Town Prison he would visit her, declaring that he meant to save her and that in the end, if it became necessary, he would claim her under the warrant formerly issued by the Government of Manhattan, and have her conveyed to that city, where she would be safer. He hoped, in fact, that, once her spirit had been broken by the terror of her situation and all that she would be called upon to endure, she would be willing to accept voluntarily a suitor who must be associated in her mind with all that was gay and pleasant, and who, through his official standing and his influential connections in England, could offer her a very desirable alliance. It was not, therefore, without design that, when the tumult was at its height he permitted her to see him, only to encounter a cold and haughty stare full of contempt and aversion. Springing from his place in the ardor of his infatuation and in the height of his exultation at her humiliating position, he took advantage of the uproar to advance towards her, though he had no definite idea as to what it would be wisest to say. He had some vague intention of

practising a deception and whispering that he had come thither with the intention of protecting her. But the lovely eyes of Evelyn measured him coldly from head to foot, as she said curtly:

"Have you too been bewitched?"

"Yes, and by you," answered Prosser Williams, flushing from chin to forehead at the contempt of her tone and his red hair seeming to gleam redder than ever in the light of the pine torches.

"Believe me, good sir," said Evelyn, mockingly, "that I have never troubled to cast a spell in your direction."

With that she turned her back upon him. He controlled by an effort the furious rage which possessed him, and, trembling all over with passion, returned to his place just as the magistrate called anew for order. The silence that again ensued was broken by a sound sufficiently terrifying to drive all other matters from the minds of those present.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE RESCUE

THIS sound, the most appalling that could greet colonial ears, was the war-whoop of Indian raiders, ringing through the outer darkness. It was a sound to strike terror to the bravest hearts, for the pioneer stories of Indian atrocities and of wholesale massacres, with all the grewsome details accompanying them, were still fresh in the people's minds. Men in the courtroom sprang to their feet in consternation; women huddled together or hurried towards the door, through which they were afraid to pass lest swarms of Indians might be lurking in the darkness. Even the judges abandoned their places; the clerk and the constables stood in an anxious group, and the first thought of Captain Prosser Williams was as to how he might secure his personal safety. For he had no relish for the tomahawk or the scalping-knife; still less did he desire to be carried away into captivity and furnish sport for the Indian lodges. Nor were there many seconds in which to deliberate. There was a blast of air coming in through the open door and a rush of feathered warriors, their faces thickly daubed with the ominous red that suggested they were upon the war-path. The prisoner stood still, with hands bound at her back and now forgotten by the fiercest of the

witch-hunters. She was suddenly seized from behind by the strong arms of an Indian brave, and so excessive was her terror, so complete the surprise, that she was borne with scarce a struggle to the door. Mingled with her alarm was a curious relief that at least she would be freed from the devilish malice of Captain Prosser Williams. It darted through her brain that there might be some hope for her in her knowledge of various Indian dialects and in the fact that she was a member of one tribe and had made with it a Silver Covenant of Friendship.

The warrior mounted a horse which stood waiting, and lifted her by a swift movement to its back. It was only when they had gone some distance from the door that, to her intense astonishment, a voice whispered in her ear:

"Evelyn, my love, be not afraid."

Hope, joy, amazement succeeded one another in swift succession through her mind. Surely the grasp in which she was held was infinitely gentle, surely the voice that spoke was that of Egbert Ferrers. She asked a breathless question, and he answered without slackening rein, whilst behind them came the tramp of other horses and the confused sounds which showed that the town was awaking to the peril by which it was threatened. For the scene there was an indescribable one. The tocsin sounded the alarm and spread terror amongst the inhabitants. Many stole forth from their houses to seek a hiding-place they knew not where. Others barricaded themselves within their dwellings, the men looking to their firelocks and the women giving what assistance they could in these preparations for defence. Pine-knot torches flashed here and there through the darkness, and sent their gleams over the coldly-

flowing rivers, where the dry stalks of the lately beautiful water-lilies rested on the surface of the water, symbolical of the fair lives that had been wrecked and ruined in that vicinity by false and idle superstitions. The heavy veil of blackness had fallen upon the woods skirting the town, which to the minds of the terrified inhabitants seemed to be peopled with savages, ready to spring forth at a given signal and with tomahawk, torch and scalping-knife to make havoc in their paths. The trees nodded and whispered together, as if in consultation.

Everything was furtive and stealthy, but, after that wild war-whoop and the trampling of galloping horses, there ensued an ominous and terrible silence on the part of the invaders. Imagination ran riot, picturing the foe as creeping on insidiously and noiselessly until vantage points would be found in every street. Even the boldest of the citizens, members of military companies and train-bands, who had armed themselves to make some attempt at resistance, were silent, oppressed by that terrible stillness. They felt a reluctance to raise their voices above a whisper and to ask of the night the secret which it did not give. Once the stillness was broken by the nasal tones of an itinerant preacher, reciting aloud from the Psalms:

"Fear and trembling have come upon me, and darkness hath covered me. The fear of death hath fallen upon me. My heart is heavy within me. Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy upon me. For my soul trusteth in Thee."

In that hour of universal terror, perhaps in the ears of many sounded the dying shrieks of witches hanged upon the hill, and the groans of tortured victims, seared with the branding-iron, scourged and

thrust forth into exile. Blood guiltiness was upon the town—a guilt which now might have to be expiated, and which thus added to the general alarm. The dawn was whitening the sky before relief came to the terror-stricken inhabitants. No adults in that town, it might be safely said, had slept that night, and with pale, haggard faces they looked out over the cold and silent rivers, upon the deserted streets, where appeared no savage form, and upon the woods, where the trees whispered and nodded together harmlessly, with soft soothing murmurs and with no lurking painted foes.

Prosser Williams remained with a score or two of men in the securely barricaded meeting-house, upon which a second attack was expected. He was the first to suspect that there had been no Indian raid at all, or that, if so, it had been with the object so readily effected of releasing Evelyn, who was known to be on friendly terms with the Indians. For by the time he had recovered from his first panic, he saw that she had disappeared, nor could any one give any tidings of her. With the arrival of the dawn men and women came out, and shamefacedly confronted one another. Every one put questions which none could answer. But in the general sense of relief, curiosity and even hilarity began to prevail, at least as much hilarity as was consistent with the Puritan gloom, where mirth was regulated by statute. Captain Prosser Williams found himself almost alone in the mad rage which possessed him when he began to realize that a trick had been played, or that, at the very worst, the whooping savages had been merely friendly Indians, who intended no raid upon the town, but were merely anxious to deliver from bondage one whom they con-

sidered as their benefactress. The young officer, who was possessed of sufficient bravery to carry him with credit through the ordinary affairs of life, now felt ashamed of the cowardice with which he had acted, and this shame added to his fury against the authors of the rescue.

As for the judges and the jury, the constables and the select-men and the people of Salem at large, who had for the time being forgotten Mistress de Lacey and her affairs, their relief was so great that it was difficult to stir them into anger or into any species of activity. Some there were—and amongst them the elder of the two judges—who were glad to have the affair of the reputed witch taken out of their hands, for they felt that her trial and condemnation could reflect but little credit upon themselves or upon the town, and that proof of actual ill-doing upon her part was wanting. There were others who believed that the whole scene in the courtroom was an illusion of the senses, specially planned and carried out by the witch who took that means of disappearing. Vainly did the man most interested rage and storm, crying out against the escaped prisoner and retailing at length the injury that was done to mankind in general and to Salem in particular by the snares of the Evil One, manifested in the spells of sorcery. The Town Council and the others were not at all inspired by these arguments to attempt the recapture of so dangerous a character as the sorceress. Angry as they might be at her disappearance, and at the possibility that a trick, human or preternatural, had been played upon a grave and reverend assembly, they felt no particular anxiety to bring her back into their midst. Surely it was better that she had gone before worse hap-

pened, if really she had been a witch with power to spirit herself away. If she were not a witch, they were rid of the responsibility of condemning or acquitting her.

At last, Captain Prosser Williams was compelled to reveal his own identity and to threaten them with the severe displeasure of Lord Bellomont for having permitted the escape of both father and daughter, who were fugitives from New York. He described them as dangerous Papists, consorters with Jesuits and suborners of the Indian tribes. He urged upon them that, if they had for a moment escaped an Indian foray, the tribes now so peaceful would very possibly be incited against them, since such dangerous enemies of the King's Majesty and the Protestant religion were at large.

It was by arguments such as these that the enraged and disappointed officer induced a sturdy band of Puritans to take horse and ride forth from the town in hot pursuit of the fugitives. But such haste as they made was not sufficient for Captain Prosser Williams, who feverishly spurred on, impelled by the double motive of love and revenge. Both were now stronger than ever within him, and, as he went, he sought everywhere for some trace which should convince him that the pursuers were upon the right track.

When the cavalcade reached the deserted house of the de Laceys, the morning sun was shining full upon it. Prosser Williams had it examined only to find that Mr. de Lacey too was missing. Continuing their pursuit along the turnpike road, which, according to a number of witnesses, had been taken by some savages, the horsemen made their way by glade and forest until they finally came to a deserted

and half-ruined dwelling to which the sunlight lent a certain glory. Something in the aspect of the spot suggested it as a possible halting-place. Descending from his horse, Captain Williams nosed about the premises as a hunting-dog might have done, but could find no trace of his quarry. With all his astuteness, this most determined of the pursuers never thought of disturbing the fallen leaves and twigs which covered the well. There he would have found the cast-off disguises of the fugitives, and he could thus have convinced himself, as well as his more or less reluctant companions, that neither witch nor Indian had been responsible for Mistress de Lacey's disappearance; they had been deceived by a simple trick.

This latter aspect of the case had presented itself to his mind, but he could not of course be certain, and he knew not whom to suspect. For how could word have been so quickly carried to New York of the suspicions against the reputed witch and her arrest? He thought of Pieter Schuyler and others of the Van Cortlandt family as possible accessories to the plot, and he distrusted Captain Ferrers, though of late he had striven to convince himself that that officer was no longer interested in the fair outlaw.

CHAPTER IX

A REUNION

DESPITE her bewilderment, which made her fancy that she was dreaming, and with a sense of rest and security that she had not for long enjoyed, Evelyn was borne through the streets of Salem and out into the cool fragrant air of the autumn night. Presently, she asked in the same breathless whisper:

"My father?"

"He is safe, and you will see him soon."

"And the Indians?"

"We are the Indians, your father, Pieter Schuyler and myself, with about a half a dozen from the encampment, who have returned there quite peaceably."

At a short distance from the town they were met by a figure, holding a horse provided with a lady's side-saddle. To Evelyn's delight she recognized the familiar smiling face of Jumbo, Madam Van Cortlandt's foot-boy. Speedily mounting upon the waiting horse, she rode on with Captain Ferrers, while the boy followed them on foot to the place at some distance from the town where Mr. de Lacey and Pieter Schuyler were to meet them. That was an idyllic ride which neither of the two ever forgot. In the fragrant stillness of the woods, which were

yet vocal with the soft whispering of trees and the twittering of birds, disturbed in their nests, the two rode on, supremely conscious of each other's presence and of the bond that united them. In the hearts of both was the full knowledge of their mutual love, made stronger and more intense by all that had transpired and the vicissitudes that might still lie before Evelyn. They scarcely spoke lest the wind might catch the sound of their voices and reveal their identity to possible listeners. Besides, that silence was so solemn and sacred, as if it were the very crowning and perfection of their love. Nor would Captain Ferrers have forced upon the girl any declaration that might have seemed incongruous or proved embarrassing under the circumstances. Only once or twice he said half-audibly, so that it seemed as if it might be but part of the murmuring sounds around them:

"My love, my dear love!"

His heart was swelling with love and pity for all that she had endured, and with fierce indignation against those who had been the authors of her sufferings. But, as if divining his thoughts, she had responded in the same quiet voice that alone seemed harmonious with those scenes:

"I am so happy here with you, Egbert, and knowing that my dear father is safe."

Sometimes there was a rustle in the leaves that caused Captain Ferrers to peer carefully about him and look to his weapon. But the next instant he smiled at his mistake, for it was only some tiny animal, some denizen of the forest busy about his own affairs, or the dead leaves stirred into momentary life by the gentle wind. They arrived at the appointed resting-place all too soon, for the gladness

of their hearts and the happiness they had experienced in being once more in each other's company. Even after dismounting, they still lingered a little to prolong that sense of solitude which they had found entrancing.

"It has been pure happiness," said Captain Ferrers, drawing a deep breath, "after the pain of our parting, our separation, the fear and the suspense."

"It will be a dear memory," answered Evelyn simply.

"With a dearer hope," added Captain Ferrers. "Let me hear you plight your troth once more and say you will be mine."

"Always and forever," Evelyn responded, "whether in meeting or in parting. But words are useless, for we know now."

She gave him her hand, and together they passed through the door of that half-ruined building where at first there seemed to be no light. But that was simply part of the precaution that had been taken lest pursuers might be upon their track, though the building stood away from the main road and was surrounded by trees. Within there were lights, and a fire blazed upon the hearth, carefully screened from possible observation by cloths hung over the window. Evelyn perceived two figures awaiting their approach, and in another instant she was in her father's arms, and Pieter Schuyler was waiting close at hand for a warm and cordial handshake.

In the joy of that reunion they forgot for a few moments all that they had endured and the peril in which they stood. It was decided that they should take the risk of remaining there till morning, and, at the first hint of dawn, start upon their journey. As if by magic appeared the smiling face of Mistress

Evelyn's own maid, Elsa. She provided the savory supper, of which they presently partook, and the couches of moss and leaves, with extempore pillows formed of saddle-bags and articles of clothing. But it was some time before any of the party felt inclined to tear themselves away from the pleasant group about the fire, where each one had to relate his personal experiences.

The three men of the party and Jumbo, who had followed them thither, took turns during the watches of the night to guard against a surprise. They had all calculated with tolerable certainty the course of events in Salem—the fear of the Indians, which would last during the night, since there could be no assurance of safety until daylight; the confusion, the terror, the excitement, and the impossibility of organizing an efficient search-party, while the homes and the very lives of the townspeople were threatened by an unseen and, to the imagination at least, a formidable foe. Once the daylight had shown the groundlessness of such alarm, however, they surmised that the search would almost certainly be prosecuted to discover and recapture the prisoner and punish the authors of that sensational rescue. Especially did the group of friends feel assured that the malignant activity of Captain Prosser Williams would be exerted to spur them on. For, though he might in a moment of panic have been deceived by the terror of a supposed Indian raid, he would be the more anxious to find and revenge himself on those who had baffled his efforts. That was a night which none of those present were likely to forget. That bare and dismal room, to which the fire had given an air of homely comfort which was inexpressibly cheering to them all, had been the scene

of a joyful reunion. And there was told the story which led the minds of all back to Manhattan, and showed the various threads by which the present situation had been worked out.

The news of Mistress Evelyn's arrest had reached the city through Vrow de Vries, whose brother, Goodman Cooke, had written her a detailed letter, dwelling at length on all the circumstances, and with the additional information that, when the constables went next day to take the father also into custody, he was nowhere to be found. Accused of witchcraft, the young lady, he said, had been thrown into the town prison to await a special session of the court, which would sit in about ten days.

Now that letter had been read not only by Vrow de Vries, but by her husband. The fat woman, sitting in her chair, had glowed with delight and triumph, and in the exuberance of her joy had shown the letter to her husband, declaring that she had always believed there was something "inhuman and devilish" about the girl and her much-vaunted beauty. Mynheer, on reading that epistle, had flown into a rage and soundly berated his wife for her unchristian sentiments, though he was unaware of the active part which she had taken in bringing that misfortune upon their late neighbor. He was much perturbed by the intelligence, for, as far as his narrow nature would allow him, he had liked and admired Mistress Evelyn, and had felt a certain good-will toward her father. Moreover, it had been the fashion in the circles which he most affected to admire the girl, and he knew how unpopular would be any collusion with her enemies. That same selfish motive, too, of the possible revelations that might be made, if Mr. de Lacey and his daughter

were brought to trial, filled him with a vague alarm, for he was still under the impression that it was because of transactions with Greatbatch or some of his kind that the father had been forced to fly from Manhattan. Of course, he had heard later rumors concerning the girl, but had believed them to be wholly disconnected with Mr. de La. . . 's voluntary exile.

Mynheer had hastened to *Der Halle*, where he hoped to encounter Captain Ferrers. For he was anxious to make himself as prominent as possible in a cautious way in efforts to secure Evelyn's release. But that evening Captain Ferrers did not visit the tavern, nor was he to be found at Whitehall. In fact, it transpired that he had crossed to the Breuklyn shore by the ferry on official business for His Excellency. Mynheer accordingly betook himself to Lady Bellomont, and, on sending in his card, was granted an interview. For the astute merchant had noted Her Ladyship's interest in Mistress Evelyn, and was of opinion that he was doing himself as well as the young lady a service by showing his zeal in the latter's behalf.

Her Ladyship received him graciously, and thanked him cordially for the information. She declared that she was most deeply interested in the fair Colonial, and would take what steps were possible to assist her. Immediately on the return of Captain Ferrers, Lady Bellomont sent for him to impart the terrible news which Mynheer de Vries had brought and the truth of which could not be doubted.

"There are tidings which mayhap will have an interest for you."

He bowed and waited, for her manner conveyed that it was something of unusual moment.

"There is nothing to be said here," my Lady added, indicating by a slight gesture His Excellency, whom they could perceive through the window walking with arms behind his back on the Bowling Green. She then proceeded to inform him as concisely as possible of what had taken place in Salem.

Captain Ferrers, who had turned from red to pale and from pale to red again as he heard these dreadful tidings, waited in an agony of impatience for what else it might seem good to Her Ladyship to say.

"It is my wish," she cried, "that this lovely maid be rescued from the dreadful position in which she has been placed. I am ready to do anything in my power, but alack! I fear that my influence, openly exerted at the present moment, might work her further ill. But with you it is different. Whether it be true or no, as some men say, that you love the maid, at least the instinct of humanity will urge you to go to her help."

"I shall ask for leave this instant," Captain Ferrers cried, making a movement towards the door.

But an imperious gesture from Lady Bellomont arrested him.

"In the ordinary way it would be refused," she said, "since Captain Prosser Williams is also absent. I shall endeavor to obtain leave for you and also the recall of Prosser Williams, who, I opine, is expected here soon. But I must ask it upon some frivolous pretext, when His Excellency is in the right humor. Any pretext, in truth, would be better than the true one. It is only in the last extremity, and if all else fails, that I shall make appeal to my husband on behalf of the maid."

Captain Ferrers next took his way to the dwelling

A REUNION

381

of Pieter Schuyler, who had but lately returned from Salem. But as the de Lacey had not seen Prosser Williams, nor been in any way molested, they had all come to the conclusion that he was not in the town. During his visit, Pieter had gained some familiarity with the place and its environs, which was later to prove very serviceable. Since all his movements had been undertaken with secrecy and caution, he had escaped observation, and had never come under the notice of Prosser Williams. Pieter immediately consented to start once more for Salem in company with Captain Ferrers, and between them, in the inspiration of that moment, was evolved the plan which seemed so hazardous and upon which so much depended. After a hasty conference with Madam Van Cortlandt, the further details were added to their original scheme that Jumbo should accompany them to assist with the horses, and Elsa, Evelyn's maid, should proceed by stage to Boston in case her services should be needed.

Captain Ferrers, having obtained leave through the good offices of Lady Bellomont, took horse with Pieter Schuyler for Salem. On reaching their destination, they had debouched from the main road to avoid observation, and had suddenly come upon the deserted house in the woods. They had stopped to examine it, before deciding finally on their future plans. To their amazement, the door had suddenly opened and a man appeared on the threshold, habited like a Puritan and muffled in a cloak, with hat drawn down over his eyes. Involuntarily the hands of the two young men had flown to their side-arms, when, to their amazement, the man removed his hat and suddenly revealed himself. It was Mr. de Lacey.

He explained that he had been watching them through a crack in the shutter, and had made sure of their identity before coming forth. He had abandoned his dwelling in Salem on learning of Evelyn's arrest, knowing very well that, as actually happened, the myrmidons of the law would return to seek him there and incarcerate him in the same prison. In his present disguise he had hung about the jail and the streets of Salem in his anxiety to get news of Evelyn. Finally, having learned of the presence of Prosser Williams and that that inveterate enemy was hot upon his track, he had left the town and had taken temporary shelter in this deserted place. He was fully resolved to strike a blow for Evelyn's freedom, even if it were to cost his life, either when she was on the way to the meeting-house, where the trial was to be held, or in the very courtroom itself. During the next few days, and while awaiting the trial which they knew had been fixed for the late afternoon of the following Wednesday, the men had perfected all the details of their plan. Through the friendliness of Evelyn with the tribes, it had been easy to procure from them the necessary disguises and the assistance of half a dozen braves. Indeed, had her three gallant rescuers so willed it, they could easily have prevailed upon the Indians to strike a blow in her defence. But to that, of course, they would not consent.

Their plans having been thus far successful, they had all met at last in these strange surroundings. With a new sense of rest and security, such as she had not known since her incarceration, Evelyn lay down to sleep. And sound, indeed, was her slumber until the first pale light of day crept through the shutters and she was awakened by Elsa. The horses

were ready without, Evelyn mounted and, while awaiting the signal for departure, turned to cast a last glance at that ruined abode where she had experienced some hours of real happiness. In the company of her father, her lover and her friend, with the minor sense of well-being engendered by the presence there of those humble friends who had played their part in the great drama of her life, she felt that she was leaving behind her a luminous spot in her lately troublous career.

The men of the party cast off the Indian disguises, which were unceremoniously consigned to a disused well and covered up with leaves and twigs. It was also considered better that they should presently separate; Evelyn with her father to take one road, the two gentlemen with Jumbo another, while Elsa was to return by stage to Boston, as she had come, and thence back to Manhattan. The fugitives hoped to pass across the borders of Pennsylvania, which was outside Lord Bellomont's jurisdiction, and thence to Maryland, where they might count on a brief respite, though it was the opinion of all that their stay must necessarily be brief, since persecution was rife in that once favored land of sanctuary.

The farewells were peculiarly affecting. The very uncertainty of their next meeting caused Evelyn and Ferrers a veritable agony. It seemed heart-rending to feel that the love which so strongly united them was powerless to prevent that anguish of separation. For an instant's space, whether by accident or design, they were left alone, and the girl was clasped in her lover's arms. She clung to him with tearless eyes, her face pale and drawn with the intensity of her emotion. She controlled herself by an effort, as Pieter Schuyler, who suspected,

though he did not know, the tie of betrothal which bound her to his rival, came forward in his turn, gallant gentleman that he was, with a lip that quivered, though he strove to take a cheerful view of his future prospects.

"O my brave, noble Pieter," said Evelyn, "how I shall miss you all! God alone can repay you for what you have done."

And those were the last words that he or Captain Ferrers heard as they stood for a last glimpse of that slim and graceful figure and that lovely face distorted by the excess of feeling. At a turn of the road Evelyn turned and waved her hand, Mr. de Lacey waved his hat, and they were in another instant out of sight and hearing.

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CHAPTER X

A COUNTERPLOT

THE de Laceys reached the Colony of Maryland in safety. Had the proprietary government been still in the ascendant, with the Catholic freedom from every kind of intolerance, these two sorely tried members of the ancient faith might have settled down there in peace and security. But the Calverts, and the Catholic government they had founded, were dispossessed. Persecution against dissenters, and of course against Catholics, was relentlessly enforced. Negotiations were continually in progress between the authorities of Maryland and those of other colonies to restrict the liberties of Catholics, to render their position intolerable, and even to banish them entirely from the land. Intolerance like a fatal miasma had spread upwards from Virginia and downwards from New York and New England, and it required the whirlwind of the War of Independence to clear away this mist.

It was, therefore, deemed inadvisable that the fugitives should linger long in that congenial atmosphere where they were so cordially received. A plan was formulated by their friends in New York by which they were to be conveyed by the sloop "Anna Maria" to Sandy Hook, where they were to board the brigantine, "Mermaid," of which the honest

seaman, Rogers, was captain. Once on board the brigantine, a safe passage to the Spanish dominions in the south was assured, where they might hope for at least a temporary security until a lull in the storm of persecution should enable them to return to New York.

Meanwhile, counterplotting had been going on in Manhattan, and Vrow de Vries again appeared as the evil genius. The autumn winds were laying waste the garden which Evelyn had so carefully tended, and blighting with its chilly breath the foliage of those splendid trees of Manhattan, when Captain Prosser Williams stood once more within the luxurious apartment which Vrow de Vries dominated from her chair. He was walking up and down impatiently, glancing from the lean, dark figure of Mynheer Laurens, who had also been summoned to the conference, to the living antithesis offered by the mistress of the house.

It irked Captain Williams much, in his present mood of fiery impatience, to have thus to propitiate his repulsive and uninteresting hostess. The latter watched him out of her dull eyes, in which smouldered a fire of resentment, as though she had been quick to read his thoughts. She purposely continued her conversation with her other guest until the young officer's impatience had reached its limit.

"And what," he said at last, "is this notable intelligence which you so urgently invited me to hear?"

"If you will but seat yourself," the woman said, "I will make known to you such late news as has reached me."

There was a hint of dryness in her tone, which served as a warning to her fellow-conspirator. He complied instantly with her request, and, seating

himself ruthlessly upon one of the silver-laced chairs which were kept more for ornament than use, he prepared to listen. Vrow de Vries, slowly unfolding a letter, read it in a thick, guttural voice, which sounded as though her considerable avoirdupois impeded her utterance. The first part of that epistle proved a thorn in the flesh of Captain Williams. For it fitted in all too well with his own dark and brooding thoughts, and forcibly reminded him how, in common with the good people of Salem, he had been baffled and fooled. For Goodman Cooke gave his sister a prolix account, embellished with many a flight of fancy in which superstition played its part, of the scene in the court-house at Salem.

Since no trace of Indians had been found in the town, and those in the nearest encampments were pursuing their ordinary avocations without any hostile intent whatever and professing utter ignorance of the late attempt, the believers in witchcraft, including a considerable number of the townspeople, were of opinion that the whole occurrence was an illusion of the senses, created by the evil power of the reputed witch and the spirits with whom presumably she was familiar. A panic had ensued, it was believed, in the course of which the witch had transported herself far beyond the limits of the town.

Captain Prosser Williams, visibly bored and with a bitter smile upon his lips, sat back in his chair playing with the tassel of his sword-hilt. All disposition towards credulity had vanished from his mind with his departure from Salem, and he was intimately convinced that Mistress de Lacey's friends in Manhattan were at the bottom of the affair. He was curiously irritated, moreover, by the solemn interest with which Henricus Laurens lis-

tened to the recital. He could not refrain from saying, in an obviously sneering tone:

"Are you also, Mynheer, a believer in witchcraft?"

Laurons' face flushed at the taunt, but he answered defiantly:

"Strange things occur which are beyond our human judgment; and where Papists are concerned, who shall say that the powers of hell may not interfere in their behalf?"

Prosser Williams laughed.

"Devilish they may be in their deeds, these Papists," he said, "but at least they have the wit to despise such follies."

Vrow de Vries somewhat sharply recalled both men to the subject of the letter, the conclusion of which was of sufficient interest to arrest the wandering mind of the young officer. For Goodman Cooke had heard a rumor that two people, corresponding exactly to the description of the father and daughter, had arrived in Maryland, where they were known to consort with Jesuits and other Papists. Also it had been bruited about that a young sailor, who had been employed by Captain Jenkins of the sloop "Anna Maria," had openly boasted in a tavern, when in his cups, that his master was about to take to Sandy Hook, near New York, two fugitive dissenters. On being plied with questions, he had disclosed the date upon which the "Anna Maria" was to sail. He knew nothing further, save that the passengers were probably to be put aboard some vessel sailing for overseas or for a southerly port.

The fat woman's eyes sparkled with triumph as she read, for well she knew the delight with which such information would be received by that influential member of His Excellency's Household, who

now sat carelessly in her best silver-laced chair. It gave Vrow de Vries singular pleasure to be thus pulling strings of which her husband was ignorant, and having her part, as he had his, in the movements of the day. It responded to a latent ambition within her to be even temporarily the associate of men for whom her husband, in their public or official capacity, had a profound respect. Also, it gratified her idle jealousy of her late neighbor, which had been fanned into a flame by her husband's praise. But whatever her sentiments or those of Henricus Laurens, who showed great pleasure at this important information and at the circumstance that the date mentioned still allowed time for action, they were mild in comparison with those of the chief conspirator. There was no lack of interest now in Captain Williams' aspect. His apathy had vanished as if by magic. For, just when he felt himself baffled at every point and the coveted prize seemed to have slipped from his grasp under circumstances most humiliating to his self-esteem, here was an opportunity offered to regain all that he had lost and to take a notable revenge upon those who had outwitted him, while doing a service to Lord Bellomont and the State which should merit a rich reward. Moreover, the hope of finally securing the person of Evelyn sprang again into life. For that ill-starred love of his had but increased with the obstacles by which it had been confronted, and never had its ardor been greater than when Evelyn had appeared pale, helpless and in bonds in the courtroom at Salem. Her image rose before him as he had seen it then, and filled him with an almost intolerable longing to look upon her again and to hear her voice, even if it were in anger or contempt. He forgot

Vrow de Vries, who was watching him curiously, and Henricus Laurens, who, however, was chiefly concerned at the moment with the thought of what steps might be taken to bring these two fugitives to justice.

The pallor of Prosser Williams' face was heightened by two spots of dull, red color in either cheek. His eyes gleamed with a baleful fire, and his breath came short and sharp. He dared not trust himself to speak. The conflict of emotions was too strong, and he feared that it would become too painfully evident to the eyes that were watching him. He rallied sufficiently, however, to reply to the questions which Henricus Laurens was already putting, as to what should be done in the present emergency. The two men conversed together purposely in low tones, which were not always audible to their singular hostess, who observed them with a smile of pure content. For she knew that she had set in motion whatever engines of destruction they might choose to employ. It was agreed between the confederates that the services of Greatbatch should be called into requisition, since Prosser Williams held him in the hollow of his hand. Just now when Lord Bello-mont was making furious efforts for the suppression of illicit trading, it was widely suspected that that notorious smuggler, accused likewise of acts of piracy, was still at large simply because he was protected by an influential member of the Household, who also stood well with Lieutenant Nanfan and the other prominent men of the extreme Protestant party.

Captain Prosser Williams, while apparently taking Mynheer Laurens into his confidence, concealed from him his ulterior plans for obtaining possession

of Evelyn as his wife. If she could be brought to listen to his suit, she and her father would still be spared all annoyances. If this plan failed, she must be seized as a prisoner, whose release he should obtain from Lord Bellomont on the condition of marriage with himself. As in the case of the young Colonial opposite him, his zeal for the Protestant cause was used as a mask for selfish motives. Taking leave with scant ceremony of Vrow de Vries, the two hurried off towards the tavern of *Der Halle*, where Greatbatch was sure to be found whenever his vessel was in port. They were so fortunate as to find him there. As a sharp cutting wind was blowing outside, the tavern appeared particularly inviting, and Greatbatch was enjoying with even more than his usual relish his portion of Barbadoes rum. His purple face aflame and his tongue loosened, he was drinking, swearing and grumbling when the two young men entered the room. He no longer uttered public denunciations of His Excellency, since Prosser Williams had put him upon his guard. But, since grumbling was his favorite pastime, he usually found some pretext for its exercise, and just then it was directed against the young fops, and dandies who were sent out by the home government to prey upon the colonies in general and honest traders in particular. Though he mentioned no names, those present were quite aware of the object of his animadversions, and a smile played over their faces as the door opened to admit the particular young fop whom he evidently had in mind.

As Captain Prosser Williams threw aside his cloak because of the heat indoors, it was universally conceded that he merited the title. His satin waistcoat was as gaudy in coloring as it was rich in ma-

terial, and upon a doublet of heavy silk fell his curled and perfumed locks. Greatbatch's manner changed to a cringing civility as the approaching officer greeted him with a careless nod, striking him on the shoulder and exclaiming:

"Well, old sea-dog, drinking the ocean dry as usual!"

The two young men then seated themselves at a table close by, whence the officer, leaning back in his chair, addressed the smuggler in a voice inaudible to most of those around.

"Remain here after these others have gone. Mynheer Laurens and I have business of weight to discuss with you."

This suggestion made the master of the "Hesperia" not a little uneasy, but he had no choice but to obey, since he was far too deeply in the toils to refuse. Besides, his curiosity was all-devouring, and he wanted to discover what business could have led these two to seek him just then. He found the time long till the guests slipped away one by one, including Mynheer de Vries, who had suavely greeted the young officer and his companion, serenely unconscious of the new act in the drama that had been enacted in his own drawing-room. The two young men regarded him with secret amusement, knowing that he was quite ignorant of recent developments and that his wife was determined to keep him so. They, on their part, were equally unaware that the urbane and polished man of the world had pulled certain strings which had brought to naught their late machinations in Salem town. They little guessed that, as a result of his appeal, Lady Bellomont had put Captain Ferrers upon the scent, and had asked leave for that officer on a

A COUNTERPLOT

393

frivolous pretext, which the Governor in a fit of good-humor had granted.

Now Mynheer, as he sipped his wine, wondered what new devilment these young men might be planning; whether they were simply passing an idle moment, or about to engage in some shady transaction with the smuggler. He waited a considerable time, but as others were going and none of the three in whom he was interested showed signs of stirring, he strolled out at the door with a genial good-night. But he did not go very far. He drew up the collar of his cloak, and gathered it close about him as a protection against the biting wind, while he took up a position on the other side of the great elm. If Greatbatch was the last to leave, Mynheer was determined to have a word with him and find out what was afoot. For he had noted Captain Williams' action in leaning over to whisper to the smuggler, and had surmised what was said.

CHAPTER XI

AN EAVESDROPPER CAUGHT

GROWING impatient out there in the bleak coldness of the night, Mynheer went cautiously over to the window, and for a single instant peered into the room. He saw that, once all the other guests had gone, the two young men had bent their heads together. The astute observer felt assured that something of unusual importance was under discussion. He wondered if it could be about the de Laceys, and he was more than ever resolved to find out. His curiosity whetted, he resumed his position on the other side of the great tree and waited.

It seemed a long time, but he was at last rewarded by seeing the young officer and his companion come forth, still in close conversation, while the smuggler remained within. Mynheer did not venture to move until he had seen them turn a corner and vanish from sight. Then he stole cautiously to the door and entered. Greatbatch, who had been patronizing the rum quite steadily all the evening, was now in a drowsy state. His head had fallen forward on his breast, and he snored loudly. Mynheer gave an order for hot negus as an excuse for his return, and mine host, with a furtive glance at the clock, went out unwillingly to execute the commission. The

AN EAVESDROPPER CAUGHT 395

merchant laid his hand heavily on the shoulder of the sleeper. Greatbatch started, and shook himself as nearly awake as his tipsy condition permitted. He did not recognize Mynheer, but continued the conversation as though the young men were still present.

"I can tell you, gentles, that the risks are great, and if the 'Hesperia' has never shown her heels to a foe, she puts herself in danger this time."

He showed a disposition to fall asleep again, and Mynheer, without speaking lest the sound of his voice should cause him to realize his mistake, gently prodded him to go on.

"It's all very well for you, Cap'n Williams, if your heart's set on carryin' off the girl, as you asked me to do before. But if I take her off the sloop, witch or no witch, Papist or no Papist, it's you that's to be responsible, and so I tells you. And, if Mynheer Laurens is to back me against loss, let him put down the money."

He dozed off again, waking with a start at the touch of Mynheer's hand on his shoulder.

"Have it your own way, gentles, next Friday afternoon, by four o' the clock, off Sandy Hook."

The man continued to mutter, but his talk became more and more incoherent and he showed a disposition to fall off asleep. As mine host was due at any moment with the hot negus, and as it was already past the usual hour for the tavern to close, Mynheer sat down close by the tipsy man, and bent himself eagerly to the task of eliciting some further bits of information about what he now saw was a concerted plot to carry off a girl from a sloop. In his mind all the probabilities indicated that the girl in question was no other than Mistress de Lacey.

He was so intent in the endeavor to make Greatbatch speak intelligibly, and so little apprehensive of the danger of interruption at that time of the night, that he took no precautions and never perceived that the door had been softly opened to admit a tall man wrapped in a cloak. A hand was presently laid on his shoulder, and, starting violently, he found himself confronted by Captain Prosser Williams. The expression on the latter's face was menacing in the extreme, for he had caught Mynheer in the act of putting questions to Greatbatch, which showed that he had learned much if not all of the carefully concerted plan. It was fear of what the smuggler might reveal to any chance comer that had brought Captain Prosser Williams back, though he pretended it was to seek a lost gauntlet. Paler than ever with rage, he now stood eyeing Mynheer, who rose slowly to his feet and confronted him. In the breast of the latter were all sorts of conflicting emotions, in which predominated fear of Captain Prosser Williams. Not indeed physical fear, but the apprehension of what revenge he might take, for this might be of such a nature as to interfere with many of his own schemes and seriously impair that fabric of social position, the surface popularity which he had built up, and the good understanding which he had been at pains to cultivate with the Household of Lord Bellomont. In those instants that elapsed, while the two stood confronting each other and the stillness of the tavern room was broken only by the snoring of Greatbatch, Mynheer was chiefly occupied with devising some means of escape from his mortifying and dangerous position, and thus gave but little thought to the girl whose safety was imperilled. It was Prosser Williams who broke silence,

in a voice scarcely articulate owing to the fury which was consuming him.

"Mynheer de Vries," he said in a menacing tone, "I find you here spying, in a most unwarrantable and contemptible fashion, into what does not concern you, and striving to extract information from a drunken man."

For once Mynheer's aplomb completely deserted him, and he strove to stammer out some excuse. The other, without heeding him, went on:

"Since you have forced yourself into this matter—to what extent I know not, since I cannot be aware of how much or how little this drunken brute has revealed—I will charge you with responsibility for any failure of these plans which are for the good of all concerned. I demand, therefore, your promise of secrecy."

"And if I refuse?" Mynheer said slowly, for his manhood was striving to reassert itself.

A wave of pity swept over him for the misfortunes of the girl, who had been so lately but a charming young maid busy in her flower-garden.

"If you refuse," echoed Prosser Williams, and there was an ugly look in the pale eyes, "if you refuse, I shall ruin you, that is all. You must give me your oath to repeat no word of what you may have heard or surmised, nor in any other way take advantage of what you have learned."

Still Mynheer hesitated, for the forces of good and evil, which he had striven to hold so nicely balanced, now contended within him. He was tempted to throw discretion to the winds and defy Prosser Williams, whose influence might be less great than was popularly supposed, and against whom in turn Mynheer might use strong weapons. But the habit-

ual caution of a life prevailed. He was sorry for the girl, but his sentiment toward her and her father was not sufficiently robust to balance the risk that he would run by antagonizing this powerful member of His Excellency's Household.

"You are slow in making up your mind," said the young officer with a sneer, "but Mynheer de Vries has been too long engaged in the exercise, popularly known as 'jumping whichever way the cat jumps,' not to do so now."

Mynheer's face flushed with an anger to which he dared not give expression, and Prosser Williams, who read something of what was passing in his companion's mind, assumed a more bullying tone.

"You may give your word or keep it," he cried, "for I know full well that, since I have caught you spying and striving to make a drunkard talk in the hope of being able to turn the information thus gained to your own mean and contemptible ends, you will be afraid to use that knowledge."

"Though your language is insulting and ungentlemanly to a degree," Mynheer said, with an attempt at dignity, "I will freely give you the promise you demand, for I feel assured that I may safely leave the matter in your hands, since it is not, as I feared, solely in those of this disreputable seaman."

Captain Prosser Williams, looking the speaker full in the face, burst into an insolent laugh.

"Call him by his name, a smuggler and a pirate, who has oftentimes drawn your chestnuts out of the fire," he said mockingly. "As for your word, I will take it in default of better security, since it is at your grievous peril you will break it. And now to set this drunken animal upon his homeward way before his tongue does further mischief."

AN EAVESDROPPER CAUGHT 399

He roused Greatbatch with no gentle hand from his slumbers, and with mine host's assistance raised him to a standing posture, not without angry growls and sullen protests from the sleeper. Once on his feet, however, the smuggler shook himself together, and went off with unsteady gait in the direction of his lodgings near the wharf. Captain Prosser Williams, as he too prepared to depart, threw back from the door at Mynheer a good-night full of such mocking politeness that the merchant's face was tinged with red.

"My best wishes, too," he sneered, "for a close tongue which will keep you out of mischief."

Mynheer made no answer, nor did he offer to accompany the departing guest as in other circumstances he would have done. Dropping into a chair, he needed the gentle admonition of mine host that it grew late before he bestirred himself to take the homeward road. His head bent in his hands, he was conscious of an acute feeling of shame and degradation, and one which would always recur whenever he was confronted with this insolent minion of an oppressive government, as in his anger he designated Prosser Williams. He felt, too, that the humiliation of that evening had placed him in such a position with the young man that the latter could at any time use against him this new weapon, and represent him to the Van Cortlandts and other influential friends of the de Lacey's as one of those who had betrayed the girl. As usual, the personal element was uppermost in his mind, but he had some feeling of pity and of remorse where his late neighbors were concerned. He knew that a word said to Madam Van Cortlandt, to Pieter Schuyler or to Captain Ferrers would be sufficient to save them.

With a sick loathing at the thought of his own cowardice, he went out into the night. It was starless and dark, and the air seemed thick and heavy with the coming storm. Mynheer walked slowly and with a heaviness of gait such as he had never known. He felt as if a burden had been suddenly laid upon his shoulders. Hitherto, in fact, in so far as smuggling operations and dealings with the most lawless of sea-rovers were concerned, he had walked in devious ways, and he had not been over-nice in inquiring as to how those ill-gotten goods were acquired. But in all those respects his conduct had been no worse than that of many men who stood high in the colony. Consequently, whatever guilt he had incurred did not weigh upon his soul, for he was pre-eminently a conventionalist. But to connive, however indirectly, at the abduction of a young girl whom he had long known and admired, and at the arrest of her father, was another matter altogether, and one which, if it ever became publicly known, would expose him to the condemnation of a large section of his fellow-townsmen.

As he stumbled along in the darkness the struggle in his mind was intense and painful. He tried to reassure himself with such specious arguments as men very commonly put forth to screen their faults. Captain Prosser Williams had declared that the scheme he had in view would redound to the good of all concerned. But reason and commonsense alike told him that that officer's injunctions to secrecy, the expression of his face and what he knew of his character, belied this statement. When Mynheer reached home, he was surprised to see his wife still in her chair in the drawing-room. Also, after her own dull fashion, she appeared to be in

AN EAVESDROPPER CAUGHT 401

radiant good humor. Her mood jarred upon him, though he was far indeed from guessing its cause. He answered her shortly, and was utterly disinclined for conversation. He was thoroughly dissatisfied with himself and his own course of action, though he argued that he had no alternative but absolute ruin. He knew that he acted like Pilate, who would have saved the innocent if he could have done so without sacrificing his own prospects.

CHAPTER XII

THE TRAGEDY OFF SANDY HOOK

THE sloop "Anna Maria," having on board Mr. de Lacey and Evelyn, arrived duly at Sandy Hook, and there lay to in waiting for "The Mermaid," which was to receive on board her two passengers. Of the events which afterwards transpired, various accounts were given, and it was only the chief participators who were aware of all the circumstances. One thing became known for certain in Manhattan, that the sloop was overhauled by the brigantine "Hesperia," commanded by Greatbatch, and that with him were Captain Prosser Williams and Henricus Laurens, two zealous champions of the Protestant cause. The latter had obtained special powers, which gave the sanction of the law to whatever was done, and protected the skipper of the piratical craft from any injurious consequences. Mynheer Laurens, besides his motives which have been already mentioned, was actuated by a burning desire to distinguish himself in the eyes of Lord Bellomont, and through him in those of the King's Majesty, as an ardent supporter of the Protestant succession.

Though Captain Prosser Williams was not unwilling to be placed in the same category, he had nevertheless undertaken on personal grounds an ex-

THE TRAGEDY OFF SANDY HOOK 403

pedition in which he felt himself perfectly safe. He laughed long, though not loud, as he paced the deck of the "Hesperia." For he was in high spirits at the approaching success of his schemes.

"Since His Ex.," he jested, "is so desirous of hanging Jesuits, or any others of the black-coated gentry that he can catch, as to offer high rewards to the savages for their capture, he will of a surety be glad, when I have told all I know, to lay his hand upon this girl, who has kept alive the Romish superstition in these dirty brutes of *Wilden*, and upon her father who is a prize worth bagging."

Then he fell to thinking with curious consistency of Evelyn and of those charms by which she had subjugated his hardened and cynical heart. As he leaned over the side of the vessel, as it lay close to the "Anna Maria," the figure of the girl and those eyes of hers, so different in expression from all other eyes, seemed to beckon him on. He could scarcely await the result of the attack by Greatbatch, which was to put the sloop and its passengers in their power. For he had an alternative in his mind, more daring, more fraught with peril and more delectable than that of conveying Evelyn a prisoner to New York. This was to persuade Greatbatch to sail away for foreign ports with the coveted prize. He had inveigled on board of the piratical craft a young clergyman, attached to an English church, under the pretext of taking a pleasant sail down the Bay. The latter, who was not without social ambitions, was flattered by the notice of the brilliant young officer of His Excellency's staff, and readily responded to the invitation. Prosser Williams felt that Evelyn must sooner or later yield to his importunities, after which he would be enabled to arrange matters with

Lord Bellomont, who had some respect for the young officer's influential relations in England. The autumn afternoon was darkening to night; rough weather was presaged, the crest of the waves showed white, the sea-gulls flew low, and the boats of the oyster fishers were making shorewards in haste. Prosser Williams felt his heart beat high, and his imagination was excited by the thought of how infinitely preferable would be his own particular scheme than to await the tedious and sordid processes of law. He felt quite noble and virtuous that he was prepared to sacrifice, or run the risk of sacrificing, his prospects in England by a marriage with this obscure girl. He had almost persuaded himself that, like a hero of romance, he was hastening to her rescue, when his thoughts were interrupted by the appearance at his side of Henricus Laurens, who reminded him that it was time they appeared on board the sloop to give an appearance of legality to what Greatbatch had already done there, and to arrest father and daughter formally in the name of the law. Prosser Williams received the reminder coldly. He would have preferred to have allowed Greatbatch to manage the affair in furtherance of his own secret scheme. But he could not well refuse to accept the services of this influential Colonial, which he had at first earnestly desired. He saw that his associate was feverishly anxious to avoid any charge of complicity in a mere piratical outrage.

Controlling himself, therefore, he followed his companion on board one of the ship's boats, which lay ready to convey them to the sloop. Greatbatch had gone forward so far as to bind and render helpless Captain Jenkins and his men, while Evelyn had been torn from her father and imprisoned in the

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THE TRAGEDY OFF SANDY HOOK 405

cabin. Boarding the "Anna Maria," they saw to their astonishment the prostrate figure of a man, lying on a pile of sail-cloth, whom, to the dismay of Henricus Laurens, they discovered to be Gerald de Lacey. They stood a moment in some perplexity, till Greatbatch coming hastily forward declared that when he had attempted to separate the young lady from her father, the latter had fought like a wild-cat.

"I had like to ha' lost my life," the pirate said, sullenly, "and *he* got a scratch."

Breathing freely when he heard the smuggler's statement that Mr. de Lacey had received but a scratch, and more anxious than ever to put matters on a legal basis, Mynheer Laurens drew near to the wounded man, and by the light of a lantern above their heads, which relieved the growing darkness, began to read the warrant for the arrest of one Gerald de Lacey and his daughter, described as Popish recusants, accused of various felonious and treasonable practices, contrary to the laws of England and of the Colony of Manhattan.

It was a strange scene. The tall figure of Captain Prosser Williams kept somewhat in the background, with a cynical smile on his pale face; Henricus Laurens flushed with fanatical rage and exultation as he read, while Greatbatch, unusually silent and subdued, stood by, his coarse face giving signs of perturbation. In the shadow, so that the light scarcely touched him, lay the accused, who had fought a brave, though unavailing fight in defence of Evelyn.

When the warrant had been read, Mr. de Lacey looked up into the face of Henricus Laurens, whom he had so often met in the amenities of social inter-

course, and said, while a whimsical smile crossed his face:

"Another messenger has been before you, sir, whom I must preferably obey."

Not understanding his meaning, Mynheer began to bluster, and called to his side the constable who had accompanied him:

"Do you not perceive," said Mr. de Lacey, quietly, "that I have received my death-wound?"

Henricus Laurens was startled out of all his composure. It was an event which he had never for a moment anticipated. He turned furiously upon Greatbatch, but Mr. de Lacey was speaking again:

"Since I cannot survive I implore you, whatever your opinions and prejudices, as an honorable man, as the husband of Evclyn's dearest friend, to do what I am unable to do and protect my daughter."

"But," stammered Laurens, disconcerted still more by that appeal, "she too is included in these charges. She has made herself amenable to the law."

"If you cannot protect her *from* the law," said the wounded man, solemnly, "I conjure you, at least, to protect her *by* the law from the clutches of a villain."

It is possible that some light was thrown into the perplexity and confusion of the young man's mind by the remark, which he found to be startling in the extreme. But, telling himself that it was the vain fear of an idolizing father, an attempt to injure an enemy, or perhaps supposing that he referred to Greatbatch, he answered stolidly:

"The law will afford her all needful protection."

"To its tender mercies and yours, sir," Mr. de Lacey said in a faintly ironical tone, "I commend her."

THE TRAGEDY OFF SANDY HOOK 407

His weakness seemed to be increasing and, believing that death was imminent, he raised his voice, so as to be heard by all about:

"I would have those present to know that I die, as I have lived, in the Catholic and Roman faith. In that cause I am content to have lost my life."

By a final effort he added:

"God save King James, whom I hold to be the true and lawful sovereign of England!"

Mynheer Laurens grew red with anger, while the dying man, his voice sinking to a whisper, fell to praying that, since through evil laws no priest could be had to shrive him, the merciful Saviour would absolve him from all his sins and bring him to the eternal happiness.

Presently a difference of opinion arose amongst the chief actors in that drama, which had assumed so tragical a character. Captain Prosser Williams, though annoyed at the occurrence which might provoke remark and awaken public sympathy for the de Laceys, was nevertheless secretly delighted that another obstacle was about to be removed from his path. Conferring apart with the smuggler, he soundly rated him for his "clumsiness," and held the approaching death of Mr. de Lacey as another weapon above his head. Greatbatch, on his part, assumed a surly demeanor and threatened to sail away with the "Hesperia" and wash his hands of the whole business. Captain Prosser Williams, however, prevailed on him to remove the young lady to his brigantine without delay, before she should become aware of her father's condition.

At this juncture Mynheer Laurens unexpectedly interfered. Whether stricken with remorse or anx-

ious to make a good appearance in the eyes of the constable and other witnesses, he declared that common decency demanded that the girl be permitted to attend upon her dying father, after which the law might take its course. Prosser Williams inwardly cursed his associate, who, in his quality of magistrate and member of the Council, could not be disregarded. Controlling his anger, he protested that he had merely wished to spare Mistress de Lacey so painful an ordeal.

"It cannot be spared her," retorted Henricus Laurcns, curtly, and at his mandate the door of the cabin was opened and the young girl came forth. It had been the brutality of Grcutbatch, coupled with insulting remarks which he had let fall concerning the fine gentleman who was anxious to carry her away, that had caused Mr. de Lacey to unshathe his sword and make this unavailing attempt to defend his daughter.

Captain Prosser Williams drew far back into the shadows when Evelyn came forth from the cabin. The light of the lantern showed her face deadly pale, her eyes haggard, and her beauty temporarily obscured. But there was no outcry, no word of complaint or reproach as she threw herself on her knees beside her father, holding his hand already cold in approaching death and talking to him in heartbroken whispers. For one glance at his face had sufficed, and she knew the dreadful trial that was in store for her. By a swift movement she unfastened from her neck a small crucifix and held it before the fast glazing eyes, and, forgetting even her sorrow, murmured prayers and the Sacred Names that alone can give hope to the dying Christian. Her father, who had repeated clearly and dis-

THE TRAGEDY OFF SANDY HOOK 409

tinctly each act of contrition or supplication, said suddenly:

"But last evening, my Evelyn, we read in the 'Imitation' of the 'bright day of eternity.' It is dawning for me."

A sob broke from Evelyn and a wailing heart-stricken cry:

"My father, oh! my father!"

The agony of that cry seemed to trouble him, but he spoke again, more faintly.

"In that day we shall meet. Pray for me in the time of my purgation. To God I commend you. Oh, Jesu, mercy! God be merciful!"

He said no further word, for, with one convulsive movement, his gallant spirit fled. In the gloom of night that had fallen on the face of the waters, Death, the most thrillingly dramatic end to every enterprise, had thus cut short the tangled thread of a human life. Evelyn de Lacey momentarily forgot her surroundings, and even the blow that had fallen, in the one absorbing desire to help her dead father with her prayers and accompany his beloved soul to the very judgment seat of the Most High. Awed into inaction, none stirred or made any attempt to interfere with her in those first few moments. Even Prosser Williams curbed his impatience, and waited in a silence broken only by the lap of the waves, the scream of a sea-bird or the flapping of the sail in the freshening breeze. The salt air of the ocean blew into their faces, and there was a desolating sound of almost human anguish in the wind. Then all at once they were aroused from their lethargy by other sounds, which stirred them all to action, and awakened as if from slumber those on board the "Hesperia." Greatbatch with an oath flung himself

into the waiting boat, and hastened towards the brigantine. For, coming like a phantom ship out of the darkness, the "Mermaid," Rogers Master, had drawn near. Greatbatch and his crew, at first, believed it to be one of the French privateers, which were ever lurking about the coast, and made such preparations as they might for defence. But, taken by surprise, the advantage was all with the assailant. A short, sharp conflict took place, which was heard on the Breuklyn shore and reverberated through the heights above. Its echoes even reached as far as Manhattan, and set the townspeople to wondering.

On board the sloop still remained Evelyn, praying by the side of her father, whose eyes she had closed and whose features had taken on the majesty of death. There also remained Henricus Laurens and the constable, whose attention was completely absorbed by what was going on aboard the "Hesperia," and Captain Prosser Williams, who was filled with anxiety for the success of his schemes and with the fear that Evelyn might still escape him. An expedient suddenly occurred to him upon which he proceeded to act. He released Captain Jenkins and his men, with the assistance of Mynheer Laurens and the constable, and commanded them to set sail and make all possible haste to reach Manhattan. The skipper, who was indignant at the treatment that had been meted out to him and was loud in his denunciation of the murder that had been committed on board the sloop, still saw some reason in Captain Williams' expressed desire to save the lady any further unpleasantness and to put her ashore as speedily as possible with the body of her father.

"It's one of those damned Frenchmen," Prosser

THE TRAGEDY OFF SANDY HOOK 411

Williams remarked, "which is trying to overhaul the 'Hesperia.'"

"And a good thing, too, if she sank her to the bottom," muttered Captain Jenkins, revengefully.

"Well," suggested the other, "you do not want him to get the 'Anna Maria' into the bargain."

"No, that I don't," cried the skipper, who was leaning over the rail and peering into the darkness. Then he cried suddenly and joyfully:

"By the Lord Harry, it's Rogers and the 'Mermaid,' and Jenkins will stand beside him against the pirate."

While they still remained in parley, a boat put forth from the "Mermaid," bringing to the sloop's side Captain Ferrers, Pieter Schuyler and three or four sturdy members of the crew. In his rage and despair, Prosser Williams seemed to lose all control of himself. He raged and stormed, and, seizing Evelyn in his arms, strove to force her over the vessel's side into one of the boats with some wild idea of landing her upon Nutten Island. He loudly called upon his associates to aid him, and prevent the escape of a dangerous prisoner. But, even had they been willing to engage in so deperate an undertaking, it was too late. The rescue-party were already on board the "Anna Maria," and a blow from Captain Ferrers' sword caused Prosser Williams' arm to fall powerless to his side. It was a dramatic moment when the two officers of Lord Bellomont's Household looked each other in the face, with such sentiments as may readily be imagined. It was only the calmer counsels of Pieter Schuyler that prevented Ferrers from inflicting then and there upon his fellow-officer such chastisement as he felt to be richly deserved. And so ended

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412 GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

Prosser Williams' last effort, and in sullen rage and despair he had to witness the removal of Evelyn and the dead body of Mr. de Lacey to the "Mermaid," while he and his associates were left to return to the "Hesperia" and its crestfallen commander, Greatbatch.

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CHAPTER XIII

AN ALLY WON

MADAM VAN CORTLANDT sat in that self-same room from which Evelyn de Lacey had fled from the inquisitorial search of Captair Tobias Ransom and his company of train-bands, and the old clock was ticking away the moments of a rainy noon. The mistress of the house had been very busy of late, for it was the time of the year when much household work had to be done, always under her personal supervision. Butter had been made and packed away in firkins in the buttery below stairs. Salt beef and pork, and fish salted or smoked by a process taught the white settlers by the Indians, had been stored away in the deep, dark cellars under the house. The capacious bins had been stocked with an abundant supply of such vegetables as would keep during the winter season. And now Madam Van Cortlandt, who was feeling the weight of her years, was disposed for rest. Her mind and heart, however, were sorely troubled by the recent events in the public and political life of her beloved Colony of New York, and by those troubles which had befallen Evelyn de Lacey and her father. She had often recalled the father's last visit, and the sentiments of regard and respect with which he had inspired her. She was fully acquainted with the part which

Captain Prosser Williams had played in the troubles of the father and daughter, and of his late dastardly attempt, which had resulted so tragically.

As she sat thus thinking of all those things, her knitting-needles lying idle in her lap and the tears dimming her eyes so that she had to remove the spectacles from her nose and wipe them, the door opened. The old woman's face brightened when she saw that it was Polly. Almost immediately, though, she noted that the bright face which looked in upon her was clouded, and that it had already lost its look of joyousness and youth. In fact, there had been that day one of the many stormy scenes between husband and wife, concerning the part which Hercules Laurens had played in the de Lacey's misfortunes, and which only of late had come to the knowledge of Polly. Even before her marriage, she had been aware that her future husband was arrogant and domineering by nature and inclined to the narrowest fanaticism, but, after the manner of young girls, she had trusted that her power over him would be sufficient to soften and subdue the asperities of his character. Her few months of married life had dispelled many illusions, but she had been altogether unprepared for his conduct towards her best friend and the torrent of coarse invective which he had poured forth against the de Lacey's, her own family and friends, and even against herself.

She was fairly boiling over with indignation, but she knew that it was little use complaining to her wise and experienced grandmother, who on other occasions had merely bade her to restrain her tongue from words which she would afterwards regret. The constraint which she put upon herself raised a slight but perceptible barrier between the two women,

which each keenly felt. The thought of Evelyn came upon Polly with such force as almost to move her to tears. She recalled her now—brilliant, beautiful, sharing all her enjoyments in a loving companionship that had never been clouded by the shadow of a quarrel. The memory of that friend combined with the dreary sound of the rain on the garden walks and the pavement tended still more to depress her spirits.

Taking up her knitting again as an excuse for not seeming to observe Polly's troubled face, Madam Van Cortlandt began to talk of Evelyn in her place of exile, down in the Spanish Colony of St. Augustine, whither she had been conveyed safely by Captain Rogers in "The Mermaid," and whence she had written one or two heartbroken letters. Polly with some abruptness confided to her grandmother her idea of making a personal appeal to Lady Belmont to use her influence in securing the pardon of her friend and permission for her to return to Manhattan. With passionate determination she overruled such objections as Madam Van Cortlandt put forth on the score of her husband's probable opposition to the scheme, and the old lady was but too glad to snatch at that forlorn hope of securing Evelyn's return to Manhattan and the termination of all her woes. She stood therefore at the window and watched her granddaughter proceeding on her mission, despite the heavy rain, towards that mansion which Petrus Stuyvesant, "the Headstrong Peter" of the Dutch, had so many years before erected. There was something wistful in her expression, and her eyes once more filled with tears. For her mind was full of sad and troubled thoughts.

Polly had no difficulty whatever in securing ad-

mission to the gubernatorial dwelling and the presence of Lady Bellomont. For the latter had an extreme curiosity to know more about Evelyn de Lacey and her father, of whom she had heard but fleeting rumors. She guessed at once that the visit of young Vrow Laurens at that juncture could be connected with nothing else. The Countess of Bellomont sat in a boudoir which she had fitted up for herself, and wherein she had gathered odd trinkets of many sorts. An odor of perfume, distinct but delicate, mingled with the salt breeze from the Bay. My Lady was in a house gown of pale pink, over which she wore a scarf of blue, with a profusion of costly lace. It was a costume which emphasized that curious blending of the young and the old in her appearance. The face showed numerous lines, fine and almost imperceptible at a distance; the eyes, deep-set and dark-circled, had an indescribable weariness in their expression. She was devoured with *ennui*, despite the excitement which raged within and without the mansion, but of which she caught only faint echoes. She knew that Lord Bellomont had been in outrageous humor, which might have been in itself a distraction, if he had not absented himself for the great part of every day. She, therefore, greeted the visitor very graciously, since her presence was a relief from intolerable boredom. With an interest which effectually aroused her, she listened to the various adventures of Evelyn, and expressed the greatest sympathy for her sad case. She promised to use what influence she had, though doubtful of results.

"The moment," she said, "is inopportune. The Earl has but lately returned from his government of New England, and is sadly perturbed over many

disquieting occurrences. Yet I am willing to do my uttermost."

Deeply musing, she sat turning the jewelled ring upon her finger, so that the emerald, sapphire, ruby and diamond, which met there, caught each a different light.

"I have been unable," she said, "to discover the whereabouts of Captain Ferrers. When I have inquired, I have been met with doubtful glances and a determination not to speak. As for Captain Prosser Williams—"

"Oh, that thrice-detestable being!" cried Polly, impulsively.

My Lady smiled, though she said warningly:

"Speak not your mind so freely, if you are bent upon a mission of diplomacy. I am told he is confined to his quarters in a raging fever. Otherwise I might have heard more. As I am informed, His Excellency paid him a visit immediately on his return and since then—"

She paused abruptly, for she did not care to add—since Vrow Laurens might be of a less discreet temper than her friend Mistress de Lacey—that My Lord came thence in a white fury, execrating all concerned in the late affair. After raging and storming, he had been closeted with John Nanfan, Weaver and others of the most fanatical faction, a council to which Mynheer Laurens had been admitted. There had been a rumor, too, that the arrest of Pieter Schuyler was hotly debated, as well as that of Rogers and others, who had been privy to what Lord Bellomont described as an audacious defiance of the law. But the skipper had merely extended his cruise in southern waters, and Pieter Schuyler had not been arrested, but had been warned to leave the colony for

a time, until the pleasure of His Excellency should be known. As the Countess was well aware, her husband had been exceedingly disturbed about a petition, and not the first one, which had been sent to England from many prominent members of the colony, protesting against his arbitrary proceedings and the restrictions he had imposed upon trade. In consequence he had received from the King an intimation that his mode of action would have the result of driving many men of note away from New York, and that it must be discontinued. The reprimand was galling in the extreme to his proud and overbearing nature, and this, with attacks of the gout from which he periodically suffered, had not improved his temper.

Altogether, Lady Bellomont felt that it was a singularly inopportune moment to proffer to His Excellency a request in favor of a girl against whom he had been prejudiced from the first. Still the Governor's wife was deeply concerned to hear of Mr. de Lacey's death and the loneliness of Evelyn in her exile. She looked very grave when her visitor informed her that the common report of the town was that Captain Ferrers had been arrested and thrown into one of the dungeons of the Fort for his gallant intervention in favor of the father and daughter. She shook her head doubtfully, as she remembered that startling intelligence.

"If he has done so much," she said, "to his favorite officer, what can we expect on behalf of one whom he chooses to consider as a dangerous enemy to the state and a Papist?"

She presently dismissed her visitor, with a promise to do all that she could for Mistress de Lacey, in whose welfare she was deeply interested, but that

she must bide her time. In bidding Polly farewell, she said:

"You and I and all her friends should rather rejoice that Mistress de Lacey is in a safe refuge, far from the malice of her enemies. We should rather strive to keep her there, than to bring her back to these unhappy colonies where strife of faction is forever raging. For myself, I am weary of it all. But you may count always upon my friendly interest in that charming girl."

And with that Evelyn's friend was necessarily content for the present.

CHAPTER XIV

CONDITIONAL PARDON

LADY BELLOMONT waited for some days until the storm had abated before approaching His Excellency upon the subject of Vrow Laurens' request. Seizing what she considered to be a favorable opportunity, she began with apparent carelessness and in the most casual manner:

"Is not this a singular adventure in which Egbert Ferrers has become involved?"

"Aye, singular," growled His Lordship, who sorely missed the services of his most efficient officer, "and devilishly traitorous and disloyal in the position which he occupied."

"Perchance I do not understand," said Lady Bellomont, "but is it not rather a case of romantic gallantry, wherein any young man of his temper might easily figure?"

The Governor's countenance darkened.

"He has a warm advocate in the Countess of Bellomont," he observed drily.

"Until this moment," said the Countess, composedly, "I should have imagined that he would have found his advocate in you. Since I have heard so often you declare how serviceable he had been. But let that pass. My concern is rather for the unfortunate young lady involved in this affair."

"And why, Madam, I pray you," said the Earl, scowling, "should the wife of His Majesty's representative have any concern for a Papist, and one who has been, moreover, a dangerous meddler in forbidden matters?"

"Alack, Sir," my Lady answered, "I have the concern that one woman, be she queen or peasant, has for another who is in grievous straits. For here is the young maid, after being exposed to trials and vexations of many sorts, now alone and exiled from home and friends, having seen her father slain in an attempt to defend her. I vow it is enough to melt a heart of stone."

The Countess wiped her eyes with a pretty handkerchief of lace. My Lord was momentarily softened. His wife was looking particularly charming in a costume which he had often admired, and he did not find it unbecoming in one of the fair sex to feel compassion for the woes of others. It gratified him since he had been accustomed to discover in the woman whom he had so early married only the hard cold brilliancy of her social exterior. He even put his hand upon her shoulder, and regarded her with a grim smile.

"So you *have* a heart," he said, "though it is a something difficult to find."

My Lady smiled back at him in return, saying:

"Yes, I have a heart, and it will be full of gratitude to my Lord, if he will but exercise the royal gift of clemency and permit this poor maid, who has suffered enough, to return to these colonies."

"To wed this romantic fool of a Ferrers?" His Excellency inquired.

"Or to remain unwed, if it so please you," said my Lady, "until Egbert shall have returned home and forgotten her."

My Lord drew his wife towards him with a movement of unwonted tenderness.

"In my busy life, weighted down with public cares," he said, "I have had but little time to know you, and perchance I owe you something for my neglect."

"Could we all but repair our mistakes so easily, Richard, as you can," Her Ladyship said with a sigh, "for you have unlimited power in your hands!"

The Governor sat down somewhat heavily in his chair at a desk strewn with papers, and my Lady, with that grace and charm which she knew so well how to employ, laid her hands upon his shoulders and leaned over him, pointing to a blank sheet of paper which lay before him.

"A few strokes of your pen," she said, "will give me great pleasure and to others happiness."

But at the moment, as though he could have foreseen what was in progress, and indeed he had learned that the Countess had gone to seek His Excellency at his office to proffer, as she had said, an urgent request, Captain Prosser Williams was announced. My Lady raised her hand haughtily, Lord Bellomont dropped the pen which he had taken in his hand and his whole countenance changed as if by magic. Every trace of softness disappeared. For although he was not altogether pleased at the interruption the very name of Prosser Williams recalled many things to his mind which he had been in danger of forgetting. He remembered all that the young man had told him in distorted and exaggerated terms of Mr. de Lacey's seditious proceedings in England and how he had made himself obnoxious to His Majesty. Williams had also dwelt upon his exertion under Governor Dongan to spread the Catholi

CONDITIONAL PARDON

423

faith, not only amongst the Indians, but amongst the white people of the colonies. Nor did Williams hesitate to make many lying additions to his charges against de Lacey, such as negotiations with the French of Canada and other enemies of the King. He declared that de Lacey had been the open friend of the Jesuits and, no doubt, their agent in the colonies of New York. He had laid great stress upon Mistress Evelyn's activities amongst the savages, declaring it to be part of an organized plan, in which father and daughter were confederates, to spread the Romish superstition through all the tribes. He repeated more strongly than ever his accusations against Pieter Schuyler and Captain Ferrers, whom he blamed for the recent escape, declaring that the skipper Rogers was only their tool and accomplice. He represented their conduct as an open defiance of His Excellency's authority and of the King's Majesty.

In fact, he had so thoroughly inflamed Lord Bellomont's mind against all concerned that he now bitterly reproached himself for the momentary softness he had felt toward his wife. The very appearance of the young officer, pale and haggard from the violence of his late emotion, his fury and baffled spite, the wound he had received and the fever that had supervened, caused His Excellency to remember that the man had powerful relatives in England, and might make or mar a Governor desirous of preferment. He, therefore, listened with deep attention to the new details which Captain Williams had to give, and which were put in such a way as still further to aggravate the choleric Governor. After which the accuser proceeded boldly to lay before the

Earl a plan, which should, as he said, go far to conciliate all parties concerned.

"For I would venture to declare," he said tentatively, "that the Countess herself would much desire the pardon of some of these malcontents, and especially of Mistress de Lacey."

This was purely a surmise on the young man's part to discover, if possible, what had been the reason for Lady Bellomont's late interview with her husband, from which she had withdrawn in disgust upon his entrance. The Earl gave him no information, however, save an impatient nod of assent.

"If I may make bold to suggest, there is also a powerful faction of Colonials to whom the pardon of Mistress de Lacey would be acceptable."

The Governor stared, as though the man before him had lost his senses.

"You are pleading for the maid," he cried, "you who but just now were her chief accuser."

"I will explain to Your Excellency's satisfaction," said the young man composedly. "But in the first place I would premise that it will be necessary for the success of my plan that Captain Ferrers be kept in durance or sent to England for trial."

Lord Bellomont, to whom this advice was highly unpalatable, moved the papers restlessly upon his desk.

"Leave me to deal with Ferrers," he said shortly, "and say as briefly as may be what is your plan with respect to this girl."

"It is," said Prosser Williams firmly, presuming upon his influence with the Governor, "that you grant her a free pardon for all offences, reversing also the attainder upon her late father, on the sole condition that she marry me."

His Excellency, turning about in his chair, confronted the other with a look of blank astonishment, which caused the pale face of the younger man to redden. Then he burst into a roar of laughter.

"By all the gods," he cried, "I begin to believe that there is something in this Salem foolery after all. The wench has bewitched you all. Ferrers has lost his liberty and put his neck in jeopardy; young Schuyler had to fly from the consequences of his intervention in her behalf, and now you, whom I have held to be her bitterest enemy—"

"And so I am, sir, her bitterest enemy. But it has been my way never to be beaten at a game upon which I have once entered. Besides which I will freely own that I have been bitten by a love mania which gives me no rest."

This again appealed so forcibly to Lord Bello-mont's sense of humor that it was hard to make him serious again. But Prosser Williams, nothing daunted and indeed encouraged by my Lord's mirthfulness, went on to explain that the Salem matter could be easily settled, since numbers of the population there were ashamed of the witchcraft delusion and also at the trick by which the girl had been rescued. As to the indictment of Mistress de Lacey by the Colony of Manhattan, that could be readily quashed by the pardon of His Excellency on condition that the girl should agree to marry a loyal Protestant and have done forever with Papists and Jesuits. There was something in the Governor's remembrance of Evelyn de Lacey that made him feel doubtful if this latter part of the agreement could be very easily carried out. But the young man before him had had considerable success, or so it was said, with the fair sex, and might very well get the

start in the race with young Schuyler, who to his supercilious mind was merely a Colonial, or with Captain Ferrers, who was before everything a soldier. Prosser Williams himself was ready with the assurance that, once his wife, there would be no difficulty whatever in managing this hitherto refractory Papist. There was a gleam in his eye as he spoke and a cold cruelty in his aspect, which the Governor noted, but which did not prevent him from giving his assent to the proposal, saying:

"Be it so, then, and I trust I shall be rid forever of this troublesome business. But if she refuse to accept the offer of pardon?"

"We can make, I think, sir, such demand upon the Spaniards, amongst whom, as I opine, she has taken refuge, that they will be forced to give her up."

So Lord Bellomont signed the paper which the young officer had in readiness, hoping that the pardon thus offered would also please his wife. However, he inquired of Captain Williams:

"Was not this maid's troth plighted to this Schuyler, which might make trouble here?"

"Her ambitions flew higher, sir," declared the officer. "Her design was to wed Egbert Ferrers and bring him over with her to the Romish creed."

His Excellency's face grew purple at this truth, which to Prosser Williams was only a surmise, but which would have created such a scandal.

"An officer of my Household to become a Papist!" he cried. "The outrageous baggage, I have a mind to put her in a dungeon, or let them hang her, if they will, on Salem Hill."

"You have promised, sir, to let me be her gaoler," reminded Prosser Williams.

"Aye," said the Governor, "I have promised

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CONDITIONAL PARDON

So, if you can catch the bird, keep her. But, if you do not force her to amend her ways, I will hang you both, and have done with it."

Prosser Williams then took his leave, and Lord Bellomont congratulated himself upon that upshot to the affair, which he believed would please at once his wife and those cursed Colonials, whom according to the hint from the highest quarters it was now his mission to conciliate.

CHAPTER XV

AN OFFER OF MARRIAGE

GOING forth with the document to which His Excellency had appended his signature, Prosser Williams was sanguine enough to hope that, if Captain Ferrers could be kept out of the way, Evelyn might be so tired of the loneliness of her exile as to be willing to listen to his overtures. He resolved upon the bold move of calling in the first place upon Madam Van Cortlandt. He approached that dwelling with mingled feelings. It thrilled him with vague stirrings of hope and at the same time with something of the blankness of despair. For the associations that it recalled made his chances seem slender of winning the love of a girl whom he had so cruelly wronged and subjected to so intolerable a persecution. As he stood a moment watching the house, which had suddenly turned into a witness against him, he felt that the shadow of Evelyn's dead father rose between him and the object of his pursuit as he could never have done in life. Only the solitary hope remained that she might consent to marry him for the sake of a pardon which would permit her to return to the society of her friends and to the places for which she had always expressed so warm an attachment. He did not know her exact whereabouts, which was in a convent in the Spanish

city, but he hoped that he might obtain that information from those who had been her most intimate friends.

He was conscious, too, of considerable trepidation in confronting the somewhat formidable mistress of the house, who was no doubt aware of many of his misdeeds where Evelyn was concerned, or who at least must be strongly suspicious. He was ushered into her presence, where also he found Polly, who of late had been his very determined enemy. It was a trying moment; the very pendants, which hung in the old lady's ears and swayed with every movement of her head, seemed to his fancy to give weight to the accusations against him, as they added to the dignity and impressiveness of Madam Van Cortlandt's richly attired person.

She received him with a conventional courtesy more deadly than any open hostility. He knew, before he was a moment in the room, that he had been placed upon the black-list of that household forever. Of course he did not know, though he suspected, that Captain Ferrers and Pieter Schuyler had kept her informed of all that had transpired, and had laid the blame where it belonged—amongst other things—for the inquisitorial search of her house. Polly, more openly hostile, barely returned his salute, and, withdrawing to a distant corner of the apartment, busied herself with a piece of embroidery. It was with the greatest difficulty that that hardened and cynical man of the world was able to retain his composure, and turn from ordinary subjects of conversation to that of Evelyn.

Once he had broached that topic, however, his effrontery seemed to return, as well as his powers of dissimulation. He told in moving language of his

devotion to Mistress de Lacey, which had never changed nor faltered, even in the face of her bitter and unjust prejudice against him. He explained, as he believed to their satisfaction, all that had taken place. How he had gone to Salem for the purpose of protecting her, and had again boarded the "Hesperia," with the sole purpose—which he had been obliged to keep secret from his associates—of rescuing Evelyn from the piratical attack of Greatbatch. The latter, he declared, had been paid by certain fanatics of the colony to secure possession of Evelyn. Polly blushed a deep red at this allusion, for she felt certain that he included her husband amongst them. Nor could she deny such an allegation. In conclusion, his voice trembling with emotion, he displayed the pardon, which he had himself obtained from the Governor, with but the added condition that the girl should become his wife. On no other terms, he said, would Lord Bellomont listen to such a petition. He appealed to each of his hearers in turn to take note that he was acting in a perfectly disinterested manner, and was willing, for the sake of an unrequited love, to risk the displeasure of wealthy relatives and even of the Home Government.

Madam Van Cortlandt, who had never wavered in her opinion of the man and of the methods he employed in his pursuit of Evelyn, could not but admit the sincerity of his passion. Nevertheless, she was totally opposed to his suit, and felt convinced that Evelyn would prefer perpetual exile to a union with this suitor, whom the old lady herself both disliked and despised. She did not, however, give expression to these sentiments, but drily inquired in what manner could be arranged, even taking the consent

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AN OFFER OF MARRIAGE

of Evelyn for granted, the religious differences between them.

Captain Prosser Williams, with some hesitation, replied that of course, as his wife, it would be necessary for Mistress de Lacey at least outwardly to conform to the established religion.

"Were there no other obstacle, that alone," Madam Van Cortlandt said gravely, "would prove insuperable. Any one who has known Mistress Evelyn de Lacey as I have, must be aware of that."

Prosser Williams reddened and bit his lip, turning at the same time an inquiring glance towards Polly. Now that young woman, less experienced than her grandmother, and who in the earlier days of their acquaintance had been more favorably disposed towards the young officer, had relented considerably in her attitude towards him. She had been deceived by his protestations of devotion to Evelyn, which she knew to be genuine, and by his explanation of the part he had played in subsequent events. She had had no communication with Captain Ferrers or Pieter Schuyler, and her grandmother had kept her in ignorance of their part in the various transactions and their knowledge of Prosser Williams' nefarious schemes. Hence, when the young man displayed the pardon, she had immediately foreseen the prospect of enjoying once more the society of her dearest friend, to whom, as the wife of an officer in His Excellency's Household, would be added a prestige which would silence the most hostile tongues, that of her husband included. Already she rejoiced in the pleasurable anticipation of astonishing and confounding him by the fresh information which she had to give. As to the question of religion, which naturally she had never discussed with Evelyn, she

could not believe that any difficulty would arise. She fancied that it would be a very easy thing for her friend to appear on the Sabbath in the nave of Trinity Church with this brilliant young officer at her side, and herself an appanage of the gubernatorial establishment, even if she chose to practise her own religion, as she had hitherto done, in secret.

Prosser Williams caught the sparkle of her dark eyes and the smile which she now quite willingly accorded him, and he knew that, in so far as she was concerned, his case was won. Her influence with her friend, which could only be by correspondence, he felt sure would be altogether upon his side. As for Madam Van Cortlandt, her manner, no less than the decisive tone of her last remark, gave him but little hope. He intuitively felt that he had not prevailed at all with her. It was only at Polly's earnest entreaty that she consented to forward the conditional pardon to Evelyn, together with a letter from the detested suitor, though she utterly refused to disclose the fugitive's place of refuge. And with that concession Prosser Williams had to be satisfied.

When Mistress Evelyn de Lacey refused in the most emphatic manner to accept the amnesty which had been offered on such conditions, her letter produced on the minds of Madam Van Cortlandt and her granddaughter a precisely opposite effect. When Evelyn declared that, leaving Captain Prosser Williams and his odious proposal of marriage out of the question altogether, it would be impossible to give up her faith that was dearer than life and for which she would gladly suffer martyrdom, the elder lady saw therein the expression of a noble nature. She admitted that it was just what she would have ex-

AN OFFER OF MARRIAGE

433

pected, and that she would have been disappointed in any other answer.

"These Romanists, Polly," she said, "are not like others, who change their religion like a garment, and it is unthinkable in any case that Evelyn could have consented to marry that altogether odious person."

But Polly was quite of another mind. She warmly defended the young man, and declared that Evelyn was unreasonably stubborn in her prejudice against him. And as to the question of religion, Polly surprised her grandmother, and justified the fears she had always entertained as to the influence of her fanatical husband upon an impressionable nature.

"Henricus says," Polly broke forth with great bitterness, "that those Papists are sly and underhand folk, who practise their religion in secret."

"But my dearest child," cried her grandmother aghast, "how can they do otherwise when all public profession or practice is forbidden, especially by the laws of 1691 and the more recent law of our present Governor?"

Polly was in no mood to hear reason and continued hotly:

"Henricus, who is a Councillor and knows of what he speaks, declares that they are plotting to undermine the State, to exterminate Protestants, and to found the Romish superstition in these colonies with the Pope of Rome as ruler."

"Why," exclaimed the grandmother much distressed, "they are but a handful, poor and scattered."

"Their number no man knows," declared Polly, "and they are forever intriguing with the French of Canada."

"Can you believe," inquired the grandmother

sternly, "that Evelyn, who even in trifles is the soul of honor, and that high-minded gentleman, her late father, were engaged in such conspiracies?"

"I believe naught against Evelyn," said Polly, "save that, being herself deceived, she did the work of the Jesuits in leading the *Wilden* to Popery and so to league with the French."

"If," demanded Madam Van Cortlandt, "you could credit these fables, would it not be a crime against the State to bring so dangerous a person back to the colony, or for an officer of the Household to marry her?"

"But if she were once of the Protestant faith?" Polly suggested.

"That she will never be," Madam Van Cortlandt declared decidedly, "and to put an end to all these discussions I will tell you, though as a matter which it is advisable still to keep secret, that she is the betrothed wife of an honorable gentleman, and one who is in every way worthy of her, Captain Egbert Ferrers."

But, even before this astounding announcement, Polly's indignation had vanished. And presently her disappointment expended itself in a shower of tears.

CHAPTER XVI

THE CLOSE OF A RÉGIME

BUT for those events which shall presently be related, there is little doubt that new troubles would have been in store for Evelyn de Lacey through the unremitting and malignant activities of Prosser Williams and that infatuation of his which had cost her so dear. His rival, Captain Ferrers, was kept in close imprisonment, though, through the intervention of Lady Bellomont and His Excellency's own partiality for his favorite officer, there had been a considerable mitigation of the first severity of his confinement. He was permitted to occupy a room in the Fort, and, but for the influence of his fellow-officer, would probably have been liberated. Pieter Schuyler was still debarred from returning to Manhattan, and was therefore powerless to do anything in the girl's interests.

Meanwhile the peace of the colony continued to be disturbed by internecine feuds, and by an active persecution of what was called the aristocratic party, the members of which kept alive their portion of the struggle and were prepared to do battle with all and sundry. The anti-Popery laws were more stringent than ever, both there, in Massachusetts, and the other New England colonies, while Maryland was being made notorious by all manner of oppressive acts against Catholics and a war against

the Jesuits, who in the first councils of the Lord Baltimore, the earliest and amongst the best of the Calverts, had established religious liberty and made that colony the true "land of sanctuary." Never in the world's history had been chronicled a more flagrant case of injustice than the treatment which was meted out to Catholics in that corner of the New World, where they and they alone had given unrestricted freedom to all.

Richard, Earl of Bellomont, had during his whole administration done his worst in that direction, and had, as he believed, been largely successful in weeding out Popery and dealing harshly with all who presumed to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience. He had also dealt sternly with the illicit traders, especially after the ignominious failure of his amateur navy, wherein the notorious Captain Kidd had figured. He had made the most vexatious restrictions upon trade so as to drive the larger merchants to desperation. A gloom seemed to have fallen over Manhattan. All those brilliant parties which my Lady had given at the Fort, with negro minstrels playing on the balcony, were suspended. Social amusements, even amongst the pleasure-loving Dutch, were almost at a standstill. Irritation, anxiety, mutual ill-will prevailed everywhere.

In the midst of it all came the news from Whitehall that my Lord Bellomont was seriously ill. Consternation was general, especially amongst those who had approved of his policy and supported his strong measures. At *Der Halle* men talked in subdued whispers of the crisis that might be at hand. Even Greatbatch was impressed, and reduced to something like silence, though of late he had been more snarling than ever since the failure of his late

attempt, the damage to the "Hesperia," and the refusal of Captain Prosser Williams to pay him the large sum he had promised for the capture of Evelyn de Lacey. Greatbatch was furious against him and kept up a sullen and ominous growling, which he dared not raise above a whisper or circulate further than his group of worthies, since he knew that whatever immunity he enjoyed was owing to the young officer's protection.

Mynheer de Vries strolled in and out restlessly, seeking for news. He had not been the same man since he played the part of Pilate and had suffered the innocent to go unwarned. His narrow eyes seemed smaller and closer together than ever. His very figure seemed to have dwindled, and he had lost something of his suave complacency, though no one except Captain Prosser Williams was aware of his transgression. The death of Mr. de Lacey affected him unpleasantly, and, as he smoked his pipe of an evening on the gallery, the sight of the deserted house and garden weighed upon his spirits. He recalled how pleasant it had been to see Mistress Evelyn amongst the flowers or passing up and down the street. He was shorter and more exacting with his wife, who was inwardly exultant, though she dared not give it outward expression, that the much-praised Evelyn was at a distance, and was being speedily forgotten, as she hoped, in the press of other affairs. Besides, since the girl had made herself amenable to the law, the topic was an unsafe one, and there were few who cared to expatiate upon the offender's beauty and charm or accomplishments. Even her warmest friends, it seemed, must now be content to remember her as one who had passed out of their lives.

There was a gathering at the house of Madam Van Cortlandt on one of those evenings shortly after the news concerning His Excellency had been made public. On that occasion there were no Leislerians present, so intense had grown the feeling between the parties, save of course Henricus Laurens, whom the grandmother would not consent to exclude. But he found himself isolated. Cold looks, chilling civilities, and curt nods of recognition, from those who had once been intimate friends, filled him with resentment. He sulked and glowered, laughed spiteful laughs, and let fall many a bitter jibe. His mind was busy with the thought of how through the influence of Captain Williams, Nanfan, and the rest, he could work injury to those arrogant factionists who dared to slight him. He was glad when he won their money at lansquenet, and furious when he lost.

In the midst of it all, Mynheer de Vries entered the room and stood scrutinizing the card-tables, where the wax lights cast curious shadows on the faces of the players, each with his pile of fishes beside him to mark the golden guilders he was winning or losing. The newcomer was wondering, as he looked about the handsome room, how that which he had to tell would affect the various persons present. He waited for a fitting pause in the game and, advancing to the hostess, bowed low over her hand. The various players at the tables glanced up curiously. Those near gave him greeting, but all were plainly anxious to resume their game. Mynheer de Vries said to Madam Van Cortlandt, in a voice which was heard all over the room:

"His Excellency, my Lord Bellomont, died half an hour ago."

The cards dropped from the players' hands simul-

taneously at all the tables, as if a magic wand had touched them. Men sprang to their feet and women sat back in their chairs. There was little regret in that assemblage, but excitement, emotion and conjecture on every face. Henricus Laurens sat staring stupidly at the cards before him, as though he had received a stunning blow. People crowded about Mynheer to learn the latest details. Throwing open the window, he cried:

"Listen to the bells announcing his demise."

There they were, sounding out through the streets of Manhattan with their ominous tolling. And as the guests, in confused groups, talked and surmised and wondered, the rattling staves of the Watch were heard without on the pavement, and presently their voices declaring the state of the weather and the death of His Excellency, Richard, Earl of Bellomont, Baron of Cooloney, Governor of New York and Massachusetts, Captain General, etc. That was in the year 1701, memorable to some of those with whom this narrative is concerned. Awestricken and full of a vague expectation and unrest, Madam Van Cortlandt's guests, breaking up the gathering very early, went away to their homes to await the happenings of the morrow.

On the fifth day of March took place a pompous funeral at which the magnificence of the colonies of New York and Massachusetts was exhausted. The flags on the public and many private buildings, as well as on the ships in the harbor, were at half-mast. The bells from every steeple tolled out like the voices of deep sorrow. There was, however, little sorrow for the passing of my Lord Bellomont, save in those whose fortunes were directly affected by his death. Stern and unlovable, his qualities for good or evil

were not such as to attract popular affection. If he were honest and sincere in his efforts at reform, as so many averred and as was probably true, he awakened stormy passions, stirred contending factions into bitter hatred of each other, and had cultivated by every means in his power that ill crop of persecution against Catholics which it took all the years till the American Revolution to weed out. A strong man, wielding a considerable power for evil, whether intentionally or not, a choleric and a masterful man, he lay still now within the coffin under the massive silver plate which recorded the dates of birth and death. The reins of power fallen from his hands, only the iniquitous laws he had passed accompanied him as accusing spirits to the Throne of the All-seeing God, with but the plea of invincible ignorance, if that could be admitted, and the prayers of those whom he had bitterly persecuted, to help him.

The streets were crowded to witness that pageant, brilliant with the uniforms of soldiers and sailors. Every face amongst the spectators bore traces of a different emotion, for each was wondering how this great change would affect that atom of the universe which is called self. Some few there were who gave a thought to the State, and a still smaller handful of poor and obscure people wondered if the demise of the late Governor would give any relief to the religion which the dead man had striven to drive from that corner of the earth. The *Wilden* sent their detachment of stalwart chiefs to the burial of their "Brother Corlear"—some bowed and old and themselves hastening to the eternal hunting grounds, others alert and eager. Captain Prosser Williams, an impressive figure in his glittering uniform, walked

amongst the mourners—a mourner probably he was for the position he was losing and for the failure of many a hope and many a scheme. He was pondering, as he walked, what would be the temper of the next Governor, and if it would be possible to retain his place in the Household and so give time for the execution of his various plans and of the ventures with Greatbatch and others by which he hoped to retrieve his fortunes. Above all, he was still eager for the possession of Mistress Evelyn de Lacey, and he cursed the evil fortune which had brought about the death of Lord Bellomont just when he was about to reach out the long arm of arbitrary power to secure the person of the girl. Madam Van Cortlandt was with Polly in the family carriage, driven by the pompous coachman and with Jumbo hanging on by the straps. The minds of the two were turning reminiscently to that April morning when, with Evelyn de Lacey, they had watched the arrival of this very Governor in all the pride of place and power.

Looking out upon the funeral pageant from the room in the Fort where he was now imprisoned, Captain Ferrers, pale and haggard from his long confinement, met the glance of Prosser Williams, who was glancing upwards. It was a strange, long look which the two men exchanged, a look replete with many emotions. They too, like Madam Van Cortlandt and Polly, suddenly bethought themselves of that morning just three years before, when the whole town was in jubilation at the arrival of Richard, Earl of Bellomont. Both were possessed by the thought of Evelyn as she had then first appeared to them, and her image still seemed to dominate the scene, as though she were really present.

442 GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

There was a memorial service for the dead, solemn hymns and canticles being sung and prayers offered, though not for him. It was a solemn but ineffectual service, and at its close the body of the late Governor was lowered into its grave under the chapel of the Fort, although it was later buried in St. Paul's churchyard. A few years more and the plate from his coffin was sold to relic-hunters for a museum.

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CHAPTER XVII

THE RETURNED EXILE

THE weeks and months of anxiety and suspense amongst the various elements of Manhattan had subsided into a calm, when the new Governor, one of the weakest and most worthless of Colonial rulers, Lord Cornbury, assumed the reins of government. It is needless to dwell upon the wild tales that were told of his administration, and of the idle and vicious habits of a man in whom an arbitrary will was co-existent with feebleness and incompetence. Of such high rank as to be connected even with royalty, he disregarded every convention and trampled at his pleasure upon all rights.

However, on his arrival, he espoused the cause of the anti-Leislerians and reversed in almost every particular the policy of his predecessor, thus giving relief to a large and influential class of the population. He frowned upon the fanatical proceedings of the Leislerians and caused the arrest of many of their leaders, while releasing from bonds such men as Nicholas Bayard and Stephen Van Cortlandt. It only concerns this narrative to show how his attitude affected the fortunes of those who are immediately connected therewith.

It was June, when the city was gay for the Pinxter festival. The cottage where the de Lacey had lived

showed doors and windows open once more. Mistress Evelyn, garbed now in simple black, was in the garden, busy with the flowers that strayed over the paths. It was her mission to restore them once more to order.

As Mynheer de Vries passed by, he saw that graceful figure, half hidden by the vines, the rambler roses and the peonies. Evelyn's face, when she turned it towards him, had lost little of its beauty, though the traces were plainly perceptible there of all that she had endured and of that saddest and most grievous experience by which she had been deprived of her father. At first he felt a constraint, a certain reluctance in approaching her, remembering his part in that last tragic occurrence. Then he remembered that only one man could charge him with complicity in that affair, and it was most unlikely that he would ever have the opportunity of revealing the secret to Mistress de Lacey. It was accordingly with his smoothest and most plausible manner that Mynheer approached the gate to express his delight at the return of so delightful a neighbor. Evelyn returned his salutations gravely, indeed, but with the friendliness that she manifested towards all who were connected with the old, happy life of that town, whose every stick and stone was dear to her. She extended her hand with a gracious invitation to enter. This Mynheer declined, but he hastened to impart to her a piece of news which he hoped would be singularly agreeable to her.

"You had some acquaintance," he began, "with Captain Prosser Williams, who was a member of His late Excellency's Household?"

Evelyn turned away her face to conceal the emotions excited by the mention of that name. But,

apparently busied with her flowers, she answered quietly:

"Yes, I had some acquaintance with him."

"I fear that I am awakening associations of a painful nature," Mynheer went on, "but some facts concerning that young gentleman may be of interest."

"No fact concerning him can interest me either now or at any future time," Evelyn burst forth impetuously.

"You will pardon me, however, a last reference to him and his affairs," the inveterate newsmonger insisted. "It is merely to make known to you that he has become amenable to the laws of this province, and that through the contrivance of those whom his insolent manner has offended, or who like myself were aware of his more serious misdemeanors, he has been at last brought to book."

Mynheer hoped for some expression of the girl's satisfaction at this intelligence. But the young girl's face gave no clue to her thoughts, and she remained silent. He proceeded to inform her that the young man by his wild extravagance, profligacy and losses at the gaming table had accumulated debts which had caused his arrest. Mynheer did not precisely state, though he allowed it to be inferred, that it was through his agency that wires had been pulled to procure his imprisonment and the consequences that followed. The merchant had never forgiven him for his demeanor on that memorable evening at *Der Halle*, and for the loss of self-respect which, in so far as he himself was concerned, had been the result.

Hence he had seized a favorable opportunity to bring the various debtors down on their prey like vultures, and to ensue other and more serious

charges being brought against the culprit. On being promised immunity, Greatbatch, who had many a score of his own to settle, was ready to give every evidence in his power against the accused and to prove conclusively that he had been deeply involved in illicit traffic. Lord Cornbury, who was little likely to proceed to any great lengths against smugglers or any other class of malefactors, so long as they did not interfere with his schemes for personal advantage, was nevertheless delighted to press any charge against one who had been so intimately connected with the last administration.

"I know too well," ventured Mynheer after a pause, "what a baleful influence he has exerted over your fortunes. He was your enemy from first to last, while—I humbly pray you to forgive the allusion—aspiring to be more than a friend. Such pretensions might be readily understood and would have been pardonable, had he pursued a legitimate path to attain so enviable an end."

A wave of color, similar to that which dyed the roses on the vine beside her, crept into Evelyn's cheeks, but, when she spoke, it was with a haughtiness which caused Mynheer to feel that he had been indiscreet.

"Such purely personal matters," she said, "are not fit subjects for discussion, and certainly cannot be of any interest now."

Mynheer was disappointed, for he had been really anxious to get further information as to the exact extent of Prosser Williams' interest in this girl. He began again more slowly and impressively, because of the rebuff that had been contained in Evelyn's words, though they were softened by that smile which to men and women alike could be so winning.

"Since he was arrested for debt," he resumed, "other offences have been alleged against him, and this day sails from the Port of New York the good ship, 'Victory,' having on board Captain Prosser Williams, who is to be tried in England for offences against the laws of these colonies; and, if his powerful relatives do not intervene, his punishment will be severe."

Triumph and exultation were in the speaker's tone. The day of his vengeance had arrived, and he looked for corresponding sentiments in his listener. But despite the joyful relief which she could not help feeling, since she had been sorely afraid of new persecutions set on foot by that unrelenting enemy, the girl was conscious of an emotion of pity for the downfall of that once brilliant young officer. For she had the rare generosity of character which refuses to take pleasure in the misfortunes of a fallen enemy.

"These colonies," Mynheer said, "are happily rid of him. And," he piously added, "as the Good Book declares, 'the way of the transgressor is hard!'"

"As for transgressions," said Evelyn, "which of us are free from them?"

Now this remark, as well as the young girl's disappointing attitude, greatly perturbed Mynheer. For he feared that through her late father, or in some other way, she had become cognizant of his own transactions with Greatbatch, as well as with that secret compact which he had made with Prosser Williams. Also, being ignorant of the state of affairs between Mistress Evelyn and Captain Ferrers, it occurred to him that the damsel's fancy might have been caught after all by the brilliant plumage of that bird of folly, who had now fallen into the

fowler's snare. In which case he would have shown a most lamentable want of tact in coming to her with such disastrous information. Perhaps she was less disposed to rejoice than to mourn for Prosser Williams, who had been her consistent admirer ever since his arrival in the colony. "Women," Mynheer reflected, "are strange beings, and who could tell?"

Being anxious to solve his own doubts, however, he ventured further:

"He was your dangerous enemy," he observed, "as I had some occasion to know."

"Yes," assented Evelyn, suddenly, "he was my most dangerous enemy, and, as you say, Manhattan is well rid of him. And yet—"

Mynheer looked at her inquiringly:

"One may have some grains of pity for a fallen enemy, since the best of us, Mynheer, are weak and worthless."

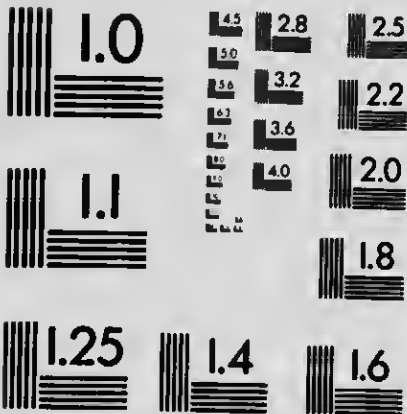
Mynheer's enthusiasm was thoroughly chilled. Her attitude was one which he could in no wise understand, and he was haunted by the suspicion that she was far more fully informed than he had believed possible as to his own transgressions. He presently bade her a ceremonious good-morning, and left her to resume her work in the neglected garden with a deep sadness in her heart. For the information that he had been at such pains to give, while relieving her of a cruel anxiety, had brought back a host of memories. She recalled how the malice of her unscrupulous foe, now severely punished, had brought about the death of her dear father, and, as trifles will recur to the mind even in the gravest moments, she was reminded of the day when she had first noticed Captain Prosser Williams upon the Bowling Green, and of that other occasion, when

with characteristic insolence he had appeared at the gate of this very garden and had been so sternly rebuked by her father. She seemed to see the noble figure of the latter, as he stood at the library window, and her tears fell silently amongst the flowers for him and for that past in which they had been so happy.



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CHAPTER XVIII

PINXTER MORN

MANHATTAN was at its gayest. The trees, dressed in their most exquisite costumes of feathery green, tossed their branches merrily, exhaling the fresh odor of new verdure; the gardens were ablaze with the midsummer glory of flowers—roses of every hue, nasturtiums, pinks, peonies, phlox. Sweet William and mignonette filled all the beds or strayed over the paths; flowering shrubs, late lingering lilac and syringa perfumed all the air; wistaria, clematis and rambler roses made festive all the trellises. The people of the town rivalled the flowers in their bright-hued garments. Faces were radiant, as if the gloom and darkness of the late troublous times had passed; there was the laughter of happy children mingling with the songs of the birds. For it was Pinxter day, to which the elders, only less eagerly than the little folk, had been looking forward for weeks. Picnics were arranged on every hand, by boat, by carriage, or, for the less favored ones of fortune, on foot. The peregrinations of these latter extended no farther than some spot by the river in the Wolfert's Valley, or in the comparatively rural quietude of Greenwich Village. Some there were who drove in heavy family coaches up along the Hudson, through Westchester or to

the domain of the patroons in the very heart of the State.

Young Vrow Laurens, who was to form part of a large gathering of friends consisting chiefly of the Van Cortlandts and Laurens' relatives and connections, was going to spend the day at the country house of Nicholas Bayard. She came over quite early in the forenoon to throw her arms around the neck of Evelyn de Lacey, who, having returned from her exile with a full pardon, had once more taken up her abode in the cottage. It seemed as though she sought by that embrace to give her friend a share in her own exuberant vitality and in the wholesome cheerfulness of the moment. Evelyn had naturally declined to be a guest at any of the larger picnics, since the death of her father was as yet too recent.

"How fine you are looking, Polly!" said Evelyn, surveying her friend with sincere admiration and noting the various details of her costume, worn for the first time on that occasion. It consisted of a gown of green and mauve, showing glimpses of a petticoat of purple velvet, and a wide bonnet trimmed with green and mauve ribbons. Green stockings and fine morocco shoes gave a last touch to her finery, and emphasized her resemblance to a bird of bright plumage, with black, shining feet. Polly, nothing loath, displayed all these new clothes which she had specially got for the holiday, then linked her arm in that of her friend, and began to walk with her up and down those garden paths, where together they had strolled in the care-free days now past. From time to time the warm-hearted young woman squeezed Evelyn's arm, crying:

"Oh, but it is splendid to have you here once more! It makes Pinxter day the more joyful!"

For Evelyn it was painful, too, though she did not obtrude such reflections on Polly's joyous mood. From childhood upwards, she had gone forth, usually with the Van Cortlandts and nearly always accompanied by her father, to spend that festival of Nature in one or other of her rarest haunts. But not by one word would she dampen that joyousness which had seemed to spring forth anew in young Vrow Laurens and to cause her momentarily to forget all that had been dark, dreary or unpleasant. Even the gloomy and fanatical figure of Henricus Laurens appeared to have been temporarily eliminated, and she was back once more in her girlhood's days with Evelyn in the garden.

Carefully avoiding all unpleasant subjects, the two talked of the latest gossip of the town, of betrothals and marriages in that circle wherein Evelyn had been so popular, of how Lady Bellomont, by a ruling which some thought arbitrary, had been prevented from leaving the shores of Manhattan till the affairs of her late husband's estate had been adjusted and her own considerable liabilities settled. Peevish and discontented, shorn of the state which she had affected to despise and probably had never really valued, the great lady complained of being thus detained in those colonies, which at the best had seemed little better than a place of exile. Polly told of the eccentricities of Lady Cornbury, who, impetuous and grasping, made rounds of visits, seeing at every dwelling something which she coveted and for which she freely asked, so that the townspeople got into the habit of concealing valuable objects when her arrival was expected. She further informed Evelyn of the storm of indignation which had been excited when Her Ladyship had employed

as domestic servants several prominent young ladies of the colony, including one of Polly's sisters, whom she had invited to visit her. Being too poor to pay for servants, she had adopted that expedient to keep the gubernatorial mansion in order. Polly related many humorous incidents of the enforced residence there of the supposed visitors, and of the manner in which each had made her escape.

"But never again, I opine," said Evelyn, "will she procure such servants."

For every young lady of quality in the town had been trained from her youth to proficiency in all household arts, and could have given her indolent Ladyship many valuable hints in domestic management. As for the Governor himself, Polly could only hold up her hands in horror, and declare that he was a scandal to the town, having even been discovered by the Watch clad in women's dress and decidedly under the influence of liquor. The Watch were bent on taking him to the Guard House, but discovered at length to their horror that it was the Governor. This somehow tickled Evelyn's sense of humor, and Polly declared that it was good to hear her laugh again with something of her old merriment. When Polly, with another embrace of her friend, finally took her departure, she said as she paused wistfully at the gate:

"But you will be left alone, Evelyn dearest, alone on Pinxter day."

The tears sprang to the girl's eyes, as the thought of her father recurred, with a swift pang of remembrance. But, hurriedly forcing them back, she declared:

"It's enough happiness to be back in Manhattan amongst you all, and where my dear father seems a

living memory. Later I will take Elsa and go for a walk through the dear, familiar streets, to see the Pinxter growing everywhere and feel that I have a part in the festival. Do not fear but that it will be a happy one."

Was it the spirit of prophecy that comes to poetic natures which made her feel, as she made the prediction, that upon that day of rejoicing some joy was to shine out from the clouds of grief and desolation that had long enshrouded her? She leaned upon the gate to watch the departure of her friend, and then turned her eyes upwards through the green of the tree-tops to the blue firmament above. It almost seemed to her that her father was near at hand, and that, as of old, he was urging her to the joy of spirit and to delight in all that pertains to youth.

For it was not destined that she should spend that day in the society of Elsa, who, with her mother, was once more installed at the cottage. Both those devoted domestics were more solicitous than ever for the young girl's physical and material well-being, contributing no little by their warm-hearted devotion to remove the sting of loneliness. The mind of Evelyn that morning was busy with many thoughts, and amongst them the recollection of Egbert Ferrers. The memory of him and of the part he had played in the drama of her late years was very precious to her, and yet she was somewhat perplexed by his late course of action. For she had heard some time before, shortly after her return to New York in the good ship, "Mermaid," that he had been released from prison by Lord Cornbury, and had even been offered an important position in the Governor's Household. Although Evelyn's trust in him had

never wavered, it was both unaccountable and saddening that he should allow so long a period of time to elapse before seeking her. She pondered over the pros and cons, and wondered if he had not been informed of her return, or if urgent business had called him away from Manhattan.

But, even on that radiant morning, the mystery preyed upon her spirits, for day had passed after day with no word of Captain Ferrers. The one inquiry that she had ever permitted herself to make, was of Madam Van Cortlandt, as they had sat together in that selfsame room whence she had gone forth into exile. The old lady had answered with some constraint, for the matter had been vexing her own mind, that she understood the young officer had left the colony immediately after his release from prison. It was possible, she added, that the Governor had made that a condition of his pardon, but she did not know.

Evelyn resolved that, on Pinxter day, she would allow no shadow of disquiet concerning that absent lover to cloud the glory of the sunshine. She told herself, with a proud uplift of the head, that she would wear no willow for any man. And then she reproached herself for the doubt such a thought implied, not because of any intrinsic merit of hers which should ensure constancy, but because of the innate truth and fidelity of the man, to whose nature disloyalty would be abhorrent.

"I would as soon suspect my own dear father of disloyalty," she said, throwing back her head to drink in the lovely June air and letting her eyes wander over the blue vault of heaven, cloudless save for a tiny fleck of white here and there. She seized in her arms a mass of flowers which she had cut

456 GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

from various bushes to carry over later in the day to Madam Van Cortlandt, who had remained at home, declaring herself too old for Pinxter junketings.

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CHAPTER XIX

A PLEDGE REDEEMED

AS Evelyn stood thus, with her back to the street, an exquisite object amongst all those fair works of the Creator, she suddenly felt an arm steal about her, and, turning, was suddenly confronted with the one person in the world who could appease that heart-hunger which she knew had been all the time consuming her.

"My dearest," Captain Ferrers said, "I have strained every nerve to be with you on your Pinxter day, which must be all joy and no sadness."

Evelyn, looking at him for an instant, burst into tears, remembering that last occasion upon which they had met. The young man was at first somewhat disturbed by those tears, which seemed to him so unlike Evelyn; but, catching her murmured words of explanation and trying to adopt a matter-of-fact tone, he said:

"Your father, whom I too learned to love and revere scarcely less than yourself, is far happier than we could have made him by our best endeavors. And to please him we must be happy. Come, Evelyn, where shall we spend our Pinxter day?"

"Where but in wandering through the dear streets of old Manhattan," said Evelyn, bravely rallying.

"The gardens are all in bloom, and then we shall

go to take high tea at five o'clock with Madam Van Cortlandt, as I have promised to do. She is alone."

It was a proof of their absolute trust and confidence in each other that they talked as though they had met but yesterday, and had belonged to each other for countless years. Nor did Evelyn ask a single question. Captain Ferrers, indeed, threw into his words, his tone, his manner and every glance of his eyes, all that the most loving heart could desire. He praised the beautiful picture which Evelyn had made, with the mass of flowers in her arms, when he had caught that first glimpse of her after the weary interval of their separation. He told her how the low tones of her voice had haunted him through the tedious term of his imprisonment, and that he had often awakened from sleep with that voice in his ears. There was plenty of such talk to fill all their wanderings through the dearly loved streets of Manhattan, where, as Evelyn had said, the gardens were all in bloom. Before leaving the cottage, like two children, they had helped Elsa prepare a basket, which was to be taken to Golden Hill, where they intended to have a picnic. Elsa was to await them there, and she had the assistance of Jumbo, who, having a holiday had presently appeared to console himself in the society of Evelyn's maid, to whom he was formally betrothed, for his disappointment when old Madam had refused to order out the family coach and accompany the picnic party to the pelisades.

Meantime the two who had been so happily united, and who felt as if they could never weary of each other's company, took their way through the Smit's Valley down by the Water Gate and by the Maid's

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A PLEDGE REDEEMED

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Path to stroll by the stream which flowed through the heart of the town. Thence their steps led to Delancey's Orchard, past the Lisperard salt meadows and finally down Crab Apple Street, towards the Rutgers Farm. By the noon hour they reached Golden Hill, which as yet scarcely showed the promise of all the yellow grain which gave the spot its name. And there they found that the black people had prepared, in a most delightful nook under the waving shadow of a locust tree, the tempting meal which they were to enjoy together. Thence they had a view of the lower streets of the town, and out over the East River, the surface of which caught the golden glitter of the sun here and there, broke into little ripples and wavelets, chasing each other like children at play as if in accordance with the spirit of jollity that from cock-crow in the morning had roused the whole town to laughter and merrymaking. That Pinxter day was a happy one for Evelyn after all she had gone through. And, in truth, happiness was its fitting accompaniment, since that festival merely signified mid-June, when the Pinxter flower was in bloom and the hearts of the roses, dyed with love's own hue, gave forth their fragrance from every garden.

But the reunited lovers talked too of graver matters besides that pleasant jesting talk that was mingled on Egbert Ferrers' part with loving speeches and on Evelyn's with smiles of pure happiness. They spoke of the political state of the country, which had settled down to apparent calm after all those mad excesses of factional hatred. Evelyn related how Mr. Nicholas Bayard had been thrown into prison, tried and sentenced to be executed in the most barbarous manner. He had been saved

only by the demise of Lord Bellomont. She further pointed out with wonder and gratitude how their enemies had melted away one by one. Captain Nanfan, one of the most deadly persecutors of Catholics, had been arrested when seeking to leave the colony, for alleged deficits in the public accounts, as well as for arbitrary acts when in power. On his release from prison by order of the Home Government, steps were taken to rearrest him till he took refuge on a man-of-war in the harbor, and, leaving all his goods behind, sailed destitute to England. Thomas Weaver had fled to escape arrest on much the same charges. Lord Bellomont was dead and William of Orange himself had passed into eternity. They touched lightly upon the subject of Captain Prosser Williams, which Captain Ferrers knew must be deeply painful to Evelyn, and the successful rival said:

"I' faith, Evelyn, although he has got nothing more than his deserts, there is one matter in which he has my sympathy, and you know very well what that is, since the fellow had the good taste to be stricken to the heart by the surpassing charms of one we wot of."

"I own to a feeling of pity for him," said Evelyn gravely.

"Not pity which is akin to love, I do trust," jested Captain Ferrers, with some faint trace of uneasiness.

"No, it might well be akin to another feeling," answered Evelyn, smiling, "but there, he has gone out of our lives, and all our sky is cloudless and serene."

Captain Ferrers had kept to the last the gravest matter of all which he wished to discuss with Evelyn

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A PLEDGE REDEEMED

461

here under the blue arch of heaven. He wanted to ask her to name a speedy day for their marriage.

"But why in such haste to get into new bonds," laughed Evelyn, "when it is but six weeks at most that you have cast off the old ones?"

There was a touch of malice in the tone and in that reference to the length of time which had elapsed since his release. Then she added more seriously:

"But, in truth, there are graver matters, which must be touched upon before such a day can be named for us."

"Of those matters I will presently speak," said Egbert, "since in the consideration of them I have spent these six weeks past. But, seeing the great vicissitudes of life, I warn you that I will not permit the realization of our happiness to be delayed any longer."

Evelyn waited to hear more, her head slightly bent in an attitude of attention, so that the curves of her neck showed delicate and slender in her perfect grace of movement. Her eyes, darkened in color by emotion and always with the hint of sadness in their depth, wandered from the honest and manly face of her lover out over the sunlit surface of the water. She was apparently composed, though, as was natural, her heart was beating as she listened to the ardent plea of that man whom, as she had no mind to disguise from himself or any other, she loved most devotedly.

"On the day," continued Captain Ferrers, "that Lord Cornbury gave the order for my release, it was my impulse to come with all speed to seek you, as I heard you had been restored to your home and friends. But, as you say, there were grave matters to be considered first, and so I made the sacrifice."

Evelyn still listened quietly. That sympathetic quietude of hers was one of her greatest charms.

"I made haste without delay," said the lover, "to the Colony of Maryland, where I sought out Father Harvey that he might pour upon my head the waters of Baptism, conditionally, since I could not be certain that my mother might not have had me baptized in her own faith. There was but little delay for instruction and reading, since our good Jesuit had already given me books, and I had devoted my long leisure in the prison to study. However, my dearest Evelyn, he made me into a full-fledged Christian, administering Baptism, Penance and the Holy Eucharist, making me thus a soldier in a new army without prejudice to the old. And now, my love, he is waiting, as he told me with a happy twinkle in his eye, to admit me to another Sacrament, in which, however, I shall need a partner. He bade that partner to make no delay, and so I hastened here on this joyful Pinxter day to ask that, as this token of your love, you consent to our immediate marriage."

Evelyn could not speak for that first moment. Her joy was too deep for words at these tidings, which were beyond her highest expectations. It touched her to the heart to think that this noble and honorable man, to whom she was prepared indeed to give herself without reserve, had been so mindful of his promise, as well as so fully convinced of the truths of the faith as to have allowed not a day of his freedom to pass without seeking Father Harvey.

"Oh, Egbert," she cried at last, "what happiness you have given me, greater than I had ever believed it possible again to enjoy!"

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Egbert Ferrers stretched out his hand, and took that of Evelyn as it lay idly in the lap of her black dress.

"And you will consent?" he inquired eagerly.

"When I owe you my life and liberty," cried Evelyn, impetuously, "they are yours to command."

"Your fancied debt to me must not enter into the matter," cried Egbert Ferrers, decidedly. "I ask you now to give me your love, as though the incidents to which you refer had never happened."

Evelyn laughed her pleasant, musical laugh, but her voice was full of emotion as she answered:

"Believe me, dear, that I had learned to love you long before you rescued the witch at Salem, or saved me from those other horrors, though you cannot object to my loving you the more on account of those happenings."

Egbert Ferrers was satisfied, and even jubilant, with that admission. But Evelyn presently asked more soberly how it would be possible for them to be united by a Catholic priest, who would perform such a ceremony at the peril of his life.

"Father Harvey has thought of that," answered Captain Ferrers, "he will be in the Jerseys before long, at the house of one William Douglas."

"I know him well by repute, a brave and loyal Catholic," cried Evelyn.

"Then at his house the marriage will be performed. Since the Jerseys belong to the Quakers, there will be no risk, and our union will be legal, as here it could not be. But we must make haste, since already there is talk of converting these colonies into a Royal Province, where no priest can officiate."

Evelyn then gave an unreserved consent that the wedding should be at Father Harvey's convenience.

"This very day, my love," said Egbert Ferrers, "we shall arrange further details with her who has been your earthly providence, Madam Van Cortlandt."

So it was agreed, and the waning hours of that beautiful day found the lovers at the familiar house of the Van Cortlandts, where the bride-elect had passed some of her happiest hours, and where Madam Van Cortlandt took each of the young people in her arms with murmured prayers and blessings. Evelyn felt her heart full of emotion as when the great clock struck five, simultaneously with the sounding of the gong, she sat down as of old at the table over which Madam Van Cortlandt presided. There were the cold fowl and the home-cured ham, the cream and the berries, the rich and varied cakes and other sweetmeats, and there was the warm welcome that breathed upon the lovers as a benediction.

After supper, it being still light, the three sat out upon the *stoepe* discussing their plans, with the radiance of that memorable Pinxter day fading into twilight about them. Captain Ferrers told their hostess of his hopes, of the promise Evelyn had given and of the suggestion of Father Harvey, who some ten days later was to be in New Jersey.

"And we shall see to it that you are there," said Madam Van Cortlandt, addressing Evelyn. "I will make all the necessary arrangements and, the marriage ceremony once performed, none will ask further questions. As for Lord Cornbury, he cares little what religion we profess, nor if we even return to heathendom, provided we trouble him not."

As Captain Ferrers escorted Evelyn home, they passed by the tavern of *Der Halle*. Lights shone from every window, and a group of men were gathered

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465

about the great elm. The market-women in their flat-bottomed boats with quaint headdresses were going homeward to the Breuklyn or Jersey shore, rowing vigorously the while. It was still another of those familiar scenes which Evelyn de Lacey held dear, for she had not yet recovered from the wonder and delight of being again amongst her own people and in the town she loved. The tears gathered in her eyes, moreover, at the associations which rose in her mind in connection with that place, where, as she was well aware, more than one scene in the drama of the last years had been planned out.

A short distance from the tavern the lovers encountered Greatbatch, lurching along towards his favorite haunt, and now feeling comparatively easy in his mind, since the restrictions against smugglers had been much relaxed. His face was a deeper crimson than ever, and his bulky figure seemed to have gathered weight. He stopped as though he had seen a ghost when confronted with Evelyn. He pulled off his hat with a clumsy gesture, and pulled his forelock, with something terrified and imploring in his look. His knees fairly quaked under him. Never in the memory of living man had the smuggler appeared so moved.

"I ax your pardon," he said, addressing Evelyn, "for all that's come and gone."

The girl's eyes were fixed gravely upon him for a moment. She had grown pale as death and her lips trembled.

"It was not by my will, but by an accident as I might say, that Tom Greatbatch did that deed. And one of the dirtiest villains unhanged led me into that enterprise because I dared not say him nay."

"I forgive you," Evelyn said at last, and as though these simple words were all that her lips could frame, "and I pray God to forgive you likewise, now and hereafter."

The girl's words had a still more pronounced effect upon the smuggler. He gulped and swallowed hard, struggling with his emotion, and he winked several times for the tears that were threatening to fall and disgrace him. He tried to speak, but, after more than one ineffectual effort, he turned away with a parting salute of his forelock.

"The old infernal ruffian," said Captain Ferrers, "who should long ago have been hanged."

"He gave my father a sweeter grave than life," said Evelyn, "and after his fashion he is repentant."

Egbert Ferrers clasped the girl's hand tightly, and they moved on for a few moments in silence. Then he cried, impulsively:

"Each moment I see some new trait to make me love you more dearly still, if that were possible."

"Your love, Egbert," returned Evelyn, "has been the supreme gift of God to me in my sorrow and desolation."

In parting at the gateway they were silent for the very lack of words to express their feeling to each other. For their love was part of the great solemn mystery of life which had enfolded them in a union that should never end.

CHAPTER XX

HAPPINESS

THE wedding of Captain Ferrers and Evelyn, which offered such a contrast to that of Polly Van Cortlandt and Henricus Laurens, was, however, a memorable event in the Van Cortlandt household, and marvellously strange and solemn. For early in the morning the family coach had been ordered out, with the pompous coachman on the box and Jumbo up behind, to accommodate the bridal party, consisting of the bride and groom elect, of Madam Van Cortlandt and Polly, and of Pieter Schuyler, who had nerved himself for the ordeal and had declared that, as he had been with Evelyn and her future husband in sorrow, he desired to be with them in joy. The coach jolted along the stony road down to the ferry of Van Borsum, where it was taken on board the scow and thus conveyed across the North River to the Jersey shore. A short drive led to the house of Mr. Douglas, and in the oratory there the ceremony was performed and was followed by a Nuptial Mass at which bride and groom received Holy Communion for the first time together. Then they were entertained at an elaborate breakfast by the master of the house and his wife. Father Harvey renewed his acquaintance with Madam Van Cortlandt, and reminded Polly, who regarded him at first with un-

disguised coldness and distrust, how she had come as a merry child to show him her first pair of beef-bone skates. He exchanged many pleasantries with the two young men, and especially with his new spiritual son, Captain Ferrers, and made many jesting references to Evelyn's Salem adventures and his own experience with Joy.

"She dressed me with herbs in the attic," he said, "but it turned out afterwards to be no laughing matter when she served me up as a familiar spirit to the witch during the trial at the courthouse."

He drew Evelyn apart for a moment, and conversed with deep feeling of her father's death, telling her how well he had loved him and what a grievous blow had been dealt him by Gerald de Lacey's tragic end.

"Yet we cannot doubt," he concluded, "that, in the gathering of the elect, he is looking down on the happiness of this day."

The good priest then took his leave, for he was sorely needed in one of the neighboring missions.

"As an outlaw and a hunted man," he said merrily, "I must take time by the forelock, and come and go as best I can."

When Madam Van Cortlandt expressed her indignation at such a state of affairs, the missionary said gravely:

"It is marvellously good for us, dear lady. And after all the servant is not greater than the Master, Who had not whereon to lay His head."

He gave a special blessing to the wedded pair as they knelt before him, the soldier-like figure of Captain Ferrers and Evelyn like some exquisite flower in her white bridal gown and bonnet. With this blessing of the holy missionary upon them, and

the prayers of Mother Church, they began their wedded life together.

Shortly after their marriage they took up their abode in the cottage, as it had been Evelyn's dearest wish to do. Though Captain Ferrers, having resigned from the army, had declined the advantageous post which he had been offered by Lord Cornbury, he had determined to settle for the time being at least in the colony, and to engage in business with one of the leading firms.

Hence it was that Mynheer de Vries, smoking on his gallery of an evening or strolling by the cottage on fine mornings, had the undeserved satisfaction of seeing his fair neighbor once more at work in the garden, though his manner with her, when they frequently met in drawing-rooms, lost little of its constraint. The knowledge of his wrongdoing kept him at arm's length more effectually than any coldness on her part would have done. As for his wife, her bitterness and chagrin at the failure of all her plans, the downfall of the chief of her fellow-conspirators, and the prosperous marriage and other blessings which had come to the detested Evelyn, were so great that they nearly brought her to death's door with an attack resembling apoplexy. Her mind, after that brief spurt in which she had striven to emulate her husband by the pulling of social and political wires, became duller than ever. She never again attempted to go beyond the range of domestic affairs, and indeed remained more than ever a prisoner in her chair, apathetic to the last degree and ever adding to her weight.

Wearing her bridal costume of white, Evelyn with her husband took the familiar road to the Collect to pay a visit of gratitude and friendship to the

good *Wilden*, who in the time of need had befriended her. She dared not visit them as often as of yore, lest some evil tongues might stir up new persecution against them or her. But the Silver Covenant of Friendship that bound them together remained no idle word. Old Monica, as of old, was the spokesman. She expressed the gladness of the tribe that the Eagle had won the White Flower, who was as beautiful as ever in her white garments. She asked from the Great Spirit many moons of happiness for the young couple. Also, on the part of the tribe, she presented them with rich gifts of beadwork and useful baskets and mats for their house. She offered a wampum belt to wipe away all tears, another to bring joy to the dwelling, and a third to smooth the path of life. The young couple were not outdone in generosity, bringing with them a variety of such gifts as the savages most prized.

Another visit which the newly-wedded pair made was to Lady Bellomont, who, having at last settled her affairs, was on the eve of departure from the colony. She expressed herself as much gratified with the attention, and together the three reviewed many of those events which had marked the brief and stormy régime of her late husband.

"Do not judge my poor Richard too harshly," she said. "He had the faults of his upbringing and his environment, and he fell into the hands of evil counsellors, notably Captain Prosser Williams. As for you, Egbert," she added, with one of her most winning smiles, "despite his harsh treatment, instigated by your archenemy, he entertained for you a real regard."

In parting she held Evelyn's hand in a close pressure, and bending forward kissed her affectionately.

"Think kindly," she said, "of the bird who, out of the cage of idle pomp and state, finds herself after all very lonely."

One more event in the history of the hero and heroine, who have passed across these pages to illustrate the history of their time and the troubles which attended the colony of New York, remains to be told. This event was a reception given at the mansion of Madam Van Cortlandt, which for so many years had been a second home to Evelyn. It was given in honor of the young couple, who already were established as favorites in the colony. It had been postponed till the autumn of the year so that the first period of Evelyn's mourning might be over. All the notables of the town were present, including many of the more moderate Leislerians, who had welcomed the new era of peace—the Van Rensselaers and Van Cortlandts, Van Schaicks and Van Dams, the Livingstons and de Peysters, Laurenses and de Riemers, men and women alike arrayed in those rich and costly garments for which the burghers and matrons of New York were noted. The large rooms were thrown wide open and lighted with numberless wax candles. A negro orchestra enlivened the occasion with appropriate strains, and the refreshments served were on a more extended and rich and varied scale than ever.

The anti-Leislerians present were now joyous and exultant. Anxiety, if any were felt, had shifted its base. Mynheer de Vries, with that secret still locked in his breast, was moving about as freely as ever amongst the guests, and dropping here and there such fragments of gossip concerning the new administration as had reached his ears. There was an air throughout all those spacious apartments as

though an iron grip had been relaxed. True, those present were disposed to ostracize Lord Cornbury and to condemn the proceedings both of himself and his erratic wife, but they felt themselves to be then and thenceforward masters of their own fate. There was an air, too, of expectancy. All were awaiting the arrival—a sign and symbol of that new freedom, since both were known to be Papists—of those for whom that particular reception had been given, Captain Egbert Ferrers, late of the staff of Lord Bellomont, and his young wife, who was popularly reported to be even more beautiful than had been Mistress de Lacey.

And beautiful she was as she entered upon her husband's arm, though under all the radiant happiness of her exterior was the deep sadness that no after-joy could entirely eradicate. In her hair were a thread or two of silver; in her manner the indefinable mark of one that has suffered. For, in all her present happiness, she could not forget the tragic death of a father who had been also her friend and companion.

When Polly, who was overflowing with delight at the recent turn of affairs and could never rejoice enough at having her friend once more at her side, drew Evelyn apart for a few minutes of confidential talk, the two in the course of conversation touched lightly upon Lord Bellomont, whose coming and whose stormy years of government had marked for Evelyn an era of tribulation.

"May the Lord show him mercy," said Evelyn, "and so I pray every day."

"But he was your cruel enemy," said Polly in amazement.

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said Evelyn with a smile. "though he has caused me bitter grief. Oh, could I have but foreseen all that was to befall, when we set forth that day to witness his arrival!"

Then she added more lightly:

"But after all he brought me, too--"

"Your paragon of a husband," said Polly with a sigh, glancing over to where Henricus Laurens stood, morose and fanatical as ever.

Evelyn then displayed to her friend a ring, a priceless ruby set in diamonds and with a rare and ancient setting.

"From Lady Bellomont," Evelyn explained, "with a note sending her love to us both and her regrets that it is but little likely we shall meet again."

"And so we might write *finis*," the bride added, "to the administration of Lord Bellomont, and to the sojourn of My Lady in these colonies."

"*Finis* to all the past, my love," said Captain Ferrers, who had drawn near.

"Except my friendship and memories," said Evelyn.

"And so our best greetings to the future," cried her husband, his eyes upon his wife's radiant face, while Polly with tears in her eyes warmly echoed the sentiments and Evelyn smiled upon them both with a smile that spoke volumes.

THE END

