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W Y O M I N G.

CHAPTER I.

"On Susquehannah's side, fair Wyoming!"
CAMPBELL.

WHOEVER stood on a particular mountain summit of northern Pennsylvania, upward of half a century ago, looked on a landscape unexcelled in beauty by any other of the central colonies. The valley, many hundred feet beneath, exhibited an expanse some twenty miles in length, by three or four in width. The extreme fertility of its soil fully appeared in the most profuse luxuriance of vegetation.

At this early period, the amount of surface cleared by the pioneers of husbandry was somewhat deficient to that still covered by forest-trees, supported in towering growth by the alluvial bed which produced them. Of these, the elm, the sycamore, and the black walnut, spreading their limbs to great extent, and thickly covered with verdure, appeared to that usual advantage by which they are ever signalized in forest or grove.

Through this fair valley, discernible at times through the chasms of the woodlands, flowed in silence a river of surpassing beauty. Winding its way among the green flats that carpeted the plain, it finally escaped through a rocky defile, and was lost to view in a wilderness of hills and mountains wild as that by which it had entered.

Beyond, and at each extremity of this valley, to the utmost stretch of vision, the prospect afforded the contemplation of the beholder a map of country as wild and, apparently, inhospitable as it was beyond question grand. Neither spire, nor roof, nor chimney of the habitation of man was perceptible. It was, saving what inconsiderable mutation the action of elements and time had wrought upon it, the same, doubtless, as when formed by the creating hand. Nothing which mortals had done in any degree changed the rugged features of the boundless waste.

Viewing this attractive picture, now mellowed by the hues of the setting sun, on a summer's afternoon in the year 17—, were a man and boy. They were in the van of a small party of emigrants. After a journey of much fatigue and difficulty through a desolate region of sixty miles, and that, too, over a road little improved from the condition pertaining to it as an Indian footpath, it may well be supposed the travellers would, encountering the prospect we have

attempted briefly to describe, for a short space of time pause to contemplate its loveliness and grandeur.

The little party was composed of but six individuals. The chief personage was a man apparently at the meridian age of life, and, from his dress and personal bearing, claiming rank in the first grade of society. The display of baggage by which he was followed, in quality at least, might be considered, at that early day, indicative of wealth. Somewhat in advance of his party, he had arrived at the brow of the mountain on foot, attended by a lad who had ridden at his side. The latter, in whose features might be traced some resemblance of the parent, had known the recurrence of no more than ten or eleven changes of the seasons. He was slight and graceful of figure; his slender form exhibited to advantage by the short jacket he wore, closely buttoned to the chin; his curls of light brown hair escaped from under his cap, now invested with additional lustre, occasioned by the exercise of riding, and moisture induced by the warmth of the day. The youth carried a small riding-whip surmounted with a silver cap, with which he occasionally touched gently the pony he rode, or swept away the flies that were making unceasing assaults on his flanks, limbs, and ears. Sliding from his saddle with a feather's lightness, he stood at the side of his senior companion, and, as his pony, at the extent of the rein, fed on the leaves of a bush, regarded the prospect before him.

The vehicle now coming up, drawn by a pair of stout horses, was well laden with goods of various description, suited to the purposes for which they were intended. Beneath it, by prescriptive right from time immemorial allowed his race, marched a large bull-dog. On the front seat, though but temporarily occupied, was the wife of the emigrant, a lady whose appearance betokened refinement of manners, and whose face indicated amiability of disposition. At her side was another person, who, with whip in hand, the observer would ascribe to a different rank in society. His fresh and buoyant expression of face, and energetic mould of body, would anywhere procure him attention. Added to this was a sprightliness of humour which, to a country lass, might be considered charming. His name was Barnabas Pike, so registered in the church archives of Ballykeelartifinny, County An-

4
trim, Ireland, if, in geographical accuracy, we are not at fault.

Gaining the summit, Barnabas assisted the lady down from the seat she had occupied. In a few moments the procession closed by the arrival of two other personages mounted on clever nags, and clamorous in a discussion relative to the merits of bull-dogs and bull-terriers, practically considered; the one maintaining the efficacy of the cross, the other adhering to the unmixed blood. Hearing with the importance of the subject, but for their opportune arrival in presence of authority, the argument seemed likely of finding conclusion in appeal to arms. As it chanced, however, one of them relieved his feelings by chafing his adversary's shin with his spur; which the other resented by protruding his tongue, scarce inferior to that of the giraffe in length, and turning up his nose in high disdain.

Of these two characters, he of the spur was a lad some twelve or thirteen years old, with complexion rather dark, and eyes as black as it is possible for that hue to be drawn. The pupil, distinguishable in the organs of others, was not so in his. His hair was dark as his eye, and curling slightly, was something coarse of texture, and rebellious against restraint. In form he was rather more stocky and robust than his brother Walter, already described. His name was Charles.

The other was a person of some peculiar distinction; more indebted for it, however, to his usual bad luck and physical construction, than to mental endowment or habits of honesty. His feet and hands had been favoured with great precocity of growth, and, without disparagement, might have safely been submitted to measurement against those of any other urchin or adult in the district whence he came. A pair of full cheeks almost buried his very small gray eyes, and gave an air of distortion to a face extremely red and round. Over his whole body was sown a thick crop of scarlet freckles. A mouth ever open, to the display of what has been termed a couple of large butter teeth, may complete the picture. Adding, however, before he is dismissed, that a mystery of an unpleasant kind had cast a veil over certain members of his family, and which had proved an obstacle to his acquirement of a surname. While this untoward circumstance defeated the youth of his paternal appellation, it likewise interfered with his claims to such worldly possessions as his paternal relative, supposing him in the ordinary course of human events to have had such, might leave for distribution under the statutes of intestacy. But this question of doubt never being clearly settled by the best witness in the case, it was left forever problematical, when, a few years thereafter, the

mother dying, imparted no clew to the son's paternity. He had therefore grown up under the one name of Jeremiah.

Such the group who halted to bestow a glance on their future home. The gentleman beheld the evidences of a good soil, as before alluded to, and other features in the landscape that promised much the forwarding of agricultural interests. The lady dwelt on the varied scene of lawn and grove, the rich verdure resting on the forest, and the golden beams hallowing the distant hills. Walter said the river was a pretty river, though doubting whether it was, after all, so sweet a stream as the brook at home; where his water-wheel was. There were some fine meadows, though, along its banks, and Toby (his horse) would have fine times in the tall grass; and the river itself seemed to have water enough in it to keep him drinking all the days of his life. Charles intimated that it was all well enough, so far as he knew, and evincing disinclination to add more, stopped. As for Jeremiah, he was denied a look at the view at all, since, after his usual luck, a small fly had inserted itself at this moment between his eyelids, leaving him about the same as stone blind.

"Very well," remarked the gentleman, "I am glad we cannot discover anything objectionable in what we look at. A few months in this fair valley will, I have no doubt, make it as much home to us as that we have left in exchange for it. But we have not yet heard the opinion of Barnabas; he has, perhaps, seen more of the world than we, and can speak advisably of the scene."

"Faith," said the Irishman, "it's but a poor judge I am ov sahes, as ye call them; but ov all the sanes iver I looked at, one at Ballykeelortifinny bate thim all."

"And what was that?" demanded the other.

"Sure enough," responded Barnabas, gaining confidence; "and what could it be, indeed, but the most exhilarating bit ov a row iver that blessed the whole north of Ireland! And is it not many a poor fellow who was carried off the ground dead as a stone, reminders it wid pride to this very hour, and all his kith, kin, and generation backward and forward, for a century and more, is praising it yet. Just to give yer honour a little insight into it, now. Ye see there was an ould grudge betwene the pape ov two parishes, and indivering had they been, off and on, at fairs and markets and the like, for the last twenty years and more, to have it ended. So—"

"Well, Barney," interposed the other, "I guess we will listen to the rest of this matter of chivalry hereafter. The sun is nearing the top of the mountain yonder, and we shall have but time to reach the shelter of one of these houses below us,

ere it is dark. You will drive on after us, therefore, since we walk down this steep descent."

In the dusk of evening, the party halted before a house in the valley beneath, where a board attached to a pole proclaimed "entertainment for man and horse." It was the sign of "the Buck;" and the branching horns of a forest patriarch graced the top of the shaft. Partaking, with appetites well sharpened by travel, such fare as the hostess of the Buck spread before them, the party retired early to bed. On the following morning they arose with light hearts, amid the carolling of birds and murmuring of the waters of the Susquehannah.

CHAPTER II.

"Of moving accidents by flood and field."—*Othello*.

JOHN HENDERSON, to whom the reader has been introduced in the foregoing chapter, was a native of one of the New England colonies, in which he had been educated, and where he had grown to favour both in point of private character and mental endowment. He had, on many occasions, been the recipient of official honours, the duties pertaining to which he had uniformly discharged both to his own honour and the advantage of others. When not occupied in the discharge of these delegated duties, he had employed his time in avocations of husbandry.

Several months in advance of himself, he had sent forward an agent to this valley of the Susquehannah, of which accounts so flattering had reached his ear, with directions to purchase a tract of land, and erect upon it buildings for temporary use. In furtherance of these views, the agent had made choice of a location greatly in compliment of his judgment and taste. The tract lay on the western bank of the river, and extended over a rich alluvial flat and hillside to the ridge of the mountain running parallel with the course of the Susquehannah. The site selected for the mansion was on the second flat, as the different platforms of land, receding like steps from the stream, are commonly termed, in order that the buildings might be secure from the spring freshets, which annually swept, with destructive violence, the first or lowest of these tiers of low land. The building, thus placed on the brink of the second, overlooked the first bottom, that, without tree or bush, stretched out to the river's bank. Some few hundred yards in rear of the edifice the mountain began its ascent. On one side of the dwelling murmured past one of those delightful brooks which, flowing down over rock and pebble, are nowhere so worthy of admiration as in mountain districts. Passing through the

appurtenant grounds, the little stream pursued its noiseless way through the bottom-lands until mingled and lost in the greater stream that received it. Opposite to the point at which the creek entered the river, and on the farther shore, a cliff of barren rock, destitute of vegetation save the clump of pines on its brow, arose to the height of several hundred feet above the tide. The base of this precipice stood opposed to the whole force of the current, which, thrown nearly at right angles upon it, was broken by the immovable bulwark, and whirled away in disorder and foam.

The small party of emigrants, refreshed with an early breakfast at the Buck, set forward in the direction of their habitation. Entering the river at a ford, they soon became witnesses of an adventure. Our youth Jeremiah, at all times star-actor in every drama of mischance, had entered the water with emotions, to say the least of them, something at war with that coolness of mind and steadiness of seat and rein the occasion called on him to exercise. When about half way over, they gained the deepest part of the ripple, where the swift current broke against the flank and side of his horse with a roar and tumult which threw his presence of mind a little off its centre; creating, at the same time, a dizziness of head and confusion of sight exceedingly ill-timed. Casting his eyes down, it appeared that the bottom of the river was suddenly passing from under him. The trees, likewise, on the distant bank, operated upon by the same impulse as the river's bed, were moving away up stream. The bewildered rider, overcome by the optical delusion, gave himself up for lost; and, throwing back his head, closed his eyes tightly as he braced himself in the stirrups, and pulled with all force on the reins of his bridle. The horse, in answer to this appeal of the bit, settled back on his haunches, and, finally, going down entirely upon the slimy surface of a small rock, was swept with his rider into the deeper waters below the ford. Jeremiah let go his hold of the rein, and tumbled, with open mouth, into the surging tide. The quantity he gulped, at a single swallow, put a stop to all efforts he was making to summon assistance. In this dilemma, he clutched at whatever came in his way. His success was flattering, since he finally laid hold of the tail of the horse, and, fastening to it with a death-grip, was dragged not only to the shore, but literally high and dry upon the beach.

The desperate hold Jeremiah had taken being, with much difficulty, broken, he and Walter rode forward, while, from the roughness of the way, the residue advanced at a slower pace. The route of the young horsemen, after a time, brought them to an Indian village, inhabited by a remnant of

this receding race, who yet retained a foothold in the valley. Passing this, they proceeded on. At this place those in rear made a halt when they came up. On setting forward again, they soon met one of the advance party returning with precipitate haste. It was the hero of the ford, who, with hat off and arms swinging, greeted them with such pedestrian headway as might have done honour to the fleetest of the Olympic racers. His eyes, that had been closed to the terrors of water, were wide open on land; and, blowing like an oversped horse, he ran to the front of the procession, and gasping, as it were with the last breath, "He's dead!" fell flat in the road before the horses of the wagon. The lady sprang down with a note of consternation from the vehicle, and flew in the direction Jeremiah had approached. Henderson threw himself on the horse his other son was riding, and followed, soon passing his wife on the way. Barnabas, under the same impulse, laid whip to the team horses, and, in driving forward, had come near crushing the head of the ill-omened messenger panting in the dust. Henderson, having passed a small elevation, proceeded half a mile farther on, where he became witness of a sad spectacle.

At this spot the road branched in different directions, so that the young riders had been unable to determine which of the two routes it was proper for them to take. They had, consequently, sought information at the door of a hut near at hand. But no one from within took note of their salutation at the portal. The smoke issuing from the chimney of the hovel induced them to think it inhabited, and Jeremiah passed around to its rear, hoping to find some one there. Here was an open shed attached to the hut, beneath which the youth had no sooner put his head than, uttering a yell of terror, he ran off at full speed on the return. Walter, with fewer years, but more nerve, presented himself at the spot, and beheld the cause of the other's alarm. A lad with distorted features, the effect of strangulation, was hanging, and apparently dead. His neck was inserted between two poles forming part of one of those ordinary racks, common to every farmer's yard or stable, in which fodder is placed for cattle. In clambering to the loft above it, the youth, whose trap it had so singularly become, had fallen; while his neck, passing between the two poles at the top, became inextricably fastened as it slid down to the bottom. Walter seized a rail, and placing one end of it between the poles, exerted a sufficient lever power to break away one of them, nearly decayed as it was, and the body fell to the ground. He then rolled it into the open air.

Henderson having arrived, directed his son to ride back to Barnabas and send him

in pursuit of medical aid, intimating that some one at the Indian village could perhaps direct him to a physician.

"And what has been the matter?" inquired Barnabas, as the lad rode up, who, we may add, had passed the excited mother on the way, and relieved her mind of the painful apprehensions she was entertaining. "A person hung, Barney," said the boy; "and a negro I guess—he had a dreadful black face."

"Hung! hung is it you are saying?" returned the Irishman; "was iver the like heard tell ov! It's much mistaken I've been in this same new counthry, thin. I was afther supposing the pape all hathens hereabouts. Lord help me, but how soon the fashions and the fine arts take root! Out ov the way a bit, Walter, me lad, I must drive on and see till it. Was there any one there that's had experiance, do ye know? Faith, I'm scarce belaving they know how a cord is to be tied in this wild ragion."

"There was no cord," said the boy; "his neck was between two poles!"

"St. Patrick! but you take the breath out ov me body!" responded Barnabas to this with a face of wonder. "Don't spake of it—the hathen Turks! It's murther, downright murther, upon me soul! It must be done over agin just in the way of his own atonement, and to save the falings and sinabilities ov his family."

"Stop, Barney," said the lad; "father wishes you to go back and get a doctor." "A doctor! is it sure ye are now, but it's a bit of a rope?"

"No, it's not a rope," said the boy; "and, besides, he wishes you to make all haste. He said some of the Indians back yonder could tell you where to find a doctor."

"So, so," pursued Barney, mounting the horse from which the other descended, "I'll be afther the doctor, if yer sure it's not the cord he is wanting; or anything else, so that the affair be decently inded. Betwane two poles!" he muttered to himself, riding away, "like a hog, faith, wid his head fast in a gate. The bastely unchristian hathens!"

The messenger had proceeded but a short distance when he received information touching the subject of his errand. Following the directions given him, he soon summoned the Esculapius of the neighbourhood to attend the call of emergency.

CHAPTER III.

"Great Doctor Cautic is a sage,
Whoso merit gilds this iron age."
FESSENDEN.

The moment that Master Walter had departed to communicate his message to Barney at the direction of his father, the latter gentleman gave more particular scrutiny

to his examination of the prostrate body before him. The boy, who had so nigh terminated his human career, in a manner, too, save when the result of accident or mischance, never especially acceptable to our notions of good fame, had apparently reached his thirteenth or fourteenth year. The extreme blackness of visage presented to view on his first being discovered, had now, in a measure, subsided, while it gave place to that reddish hue peculiar to the Indians of America. His features were of an exceedingly attractive character, and, submitted to the closest inspection, had suffered not in comparison with those of any other youth of the same age claiming descent from either of the four great families of mankind, who people, with their millions, the various nations of the globe.

Little time was, however, taken up by Henderson in paying court to the perfection of either limb or feature, where the anxiety to rescue life from the stoppage *in transitu* it had so singularly encountered alone occupied his thoughts. But in that helpless and unofficiating condition in which ignorance of medical and surgical remedies places the most of men, he was obliged to stand a sort of useless sentinel over the body, without hope of giving it any assistance. It was, therefore, with feelings of dismay that the party perceived the approach of Barney, unattended by any person whatever.

"Did you find a physician, Barney?" inquired the gentleman of the panting messenger, who was gazing everywhere else than where he should.

"I did, sir," answered he, and, forgetting to extend the response to any particulars more definite, continued his perplexing search after the newly-fashioned apparatus for taking life, of which he had been informed by Walter.

"And is he coming?"

"Faith, yes," replied he; "and the way he loped off on his game leg, I was afther thinking his boat would come to anchor here befor I did meself."

"What do you say? his boat?" interrogated the master.

"His boat, sir," the other answered. "He towid me he'd row down in no time. It's the only vehacle he has, sir. Nather horse nor mule, colt nor ox, that I saw; nothing alive and brathing about him but bunches of dried roots and withered laves."

"I guess you have made a mistake, Barney," said Henderson, with an air of disappointment. "He is not the physician."

"No mistake about it," responded the other; "if he is not a doctor, the haper a doctor is there iver in the whole world, sir. I smelt him a hundred pole afore I got to his shanty. Fragrant scents, and oodors, and all the unspakable smells, sir, that iver was seen by mortal eye! By the powers,

sir, his hovel was kivered over with twigs and laves, and vigtibles and roots, till it looked like a horse's head in fly-time. And the inside ov it! Gad, you could hardly brathe."

"Well, you told him what had happened, did you?"

"Ay, did I," said the Irishman; "and snatching down his oars from two pegs on the side of the house, he put out for the river like an overland express."

At this moment a man ascended the river's bank not far from where the group were standing, and came forward at a rapid pace. He was tall, slender, and remarkably erect, walking with a step of much alacrity, peculiarly signalized by a sudden jerk of the head and body obliquely backward as the right foot came to the ground—an effect produced by the lameness of his hip—a malady that had, at the same time, somewhat disproportioned his limbs in point of size and length. Over each shoulder was slung a large hempen bag, both well distended by their contents, and constituting, to all appearances, a load sufficient for a South American mule. In each hand he carried a stout walking-staff, supplying commendable substitutes for that efficiency of limb whereof nature or mischance had seemingly deprived him. His dress was purely domestic; the materials of which it was fabricated being, beyond doubt, produced by the looms of the settlement, while his feet were shod with a pair of thick, heavy boots, of a leather significantly termed pot-metal; the heels sheeted underneath with hob-nails, bidding defiance to the wear and tear of stone and gravel.

The features of this man's face were exceedingly sharp and acute; a style of physiognomy heightened and set off to the greater advantage, that there was scarcely any flesh to stand between the bones and their covering of skin. It may therefore be deemed almost impossible to imagine a face more strongly marked. The bones of the cheek, of the brow, and the jaws stood forth in the boldest relief, so that the skin thrown over them hung, as it were, on these prominent ossicles as a wet cloth is caught on the knobs of a chair, and to which it is dependant for its state of suspension. His eyes were very small, and twinkled beneath his overshadowing brows.

Henderson turned hastily to this individual, and inquired of him whether his master was at hand. To this interrogation, dictated on the presumption that he to whom it was propounded was but the servant of the physician, no response whatever was given, other than the fixed stare of the stranger. Doubting whether he had made himself understood, and thinking that perhaps his question had fallen on the benumbed ear of a deaf man, he imparted a stress more pointed to his tone and man-

ner, and again demanded, "Is your master coming?"

The light breeze of summer falling against the trunk of a thrifty oak could not have had a more trifling effect. The man received the query as he had the other, with stern look and immoveable silence. Meantime the party gazed from one to the other in that mute and puzzled air betokening an utter inability of comprehending what all this might be leading to. At length, to their relief, the old man with a cracked and piping voice, made yet more ludicrous by his singular and vehement gesticulation, began his reply.

"Now, mister," said the old man, "I s'pose you think you're somebody. I don't know—maybe you mout be—maybe mout not; but I've seed, for my own part, mind, a few more afore to-day in my time and generation. And, sir, a man doesn't live half his days here in the woods to be skeered by an owl at last, either—or to be bullied by any speculatin' interlopers, who swarm in upon us, of late, like gad-flies and cockroaches, sir, from New-England and Massachusetts Bay, and the log-jail country over in the Jarsies—coming here to show off their high-larnt pranks, and play the fool in calf-skin boots, sir, with straps under 'em; and lace their ribs with stays, and stomachers, and cussed cossets, sir, and such like abominations: and all this in the place of comely buck-skin trousers like my own; and other Christian adornments of the body, that an honest man may be proud to serve his Maker in, and foller his employment."

"But, my good friend," interrupted Henderson, "all this oratory can have no possible effect with me; all I desire to know is, whether your master, whom I suppose you to serve, is to be expected here or not."

"By the glory of the botanical creation!" ejaculated the old man, "bud, root, and stem! Master! my master! Doctor Phineas Jaws serve a master! I'll tell you what, mister, you've said enough—that'll do. I take no more of it. Now I say," and he began to foam at the mouth, "not any more of your eternal insinuations and slurs on my profession, sir. I scorn 'em—I spit on 'em—I phlebotomize 'em; hang me, sir, I twist their necks off with the fingers of my vengeance!"

The last rhetorical figure was helped off with an energetic whirl or two of the right hand, and the casting of something imaginary on the ground, upon which he clapped a foot, and stood upon it in the attitude of him who tramps the neck of his worst enemy beneath his heel.

"By the powers!" shouted Barnabas, "that cock 'ell niver crow again! Just take off your hoof, doctor, and let me see the poor devil's comb. Faith! if that's

the way you come it oover your patients, by me sowl, but I'm ather thinking you've been larning your trade of the great Juggernaut, I think they call his name."

This happy speech of the Irishman was like a chance incident sometimes in the progress of a battle, the turning-point in the issue of the dialogue. It produced, for two reasons, an effect altogether unlooked for on the wrathful man of medicine. He was pleased with the compliment so earnestly paid to the success of his oratorical symbol, and doubly so on receiving his professional title. Henderson by this time understanding his man, took advantage of the reflow of the tide, and proceeded to put matters on their proper footing.

"Doctor Jaws," said he with a bow, "your experience in life must long since have made you sensible that the intercourse of strangers is not unfrequently attended with blunders. I am hopeful you will attach no consequence to that of which, on this occasion, I confess myself unwittingly guilty. I beg your pardon, doctor, and offer you my hand."

"I take it, sir," responded the other, "and give you my own in return, as freely as ever I did a decoction or cataplasm. You will find that Doctor Jaws is neither scullion in manners, sir, nor fool in science. I'm proud of your acquaintance, sir, and of your'n, ma'am, and your'n, Mr. Irish, and your'n, little boys," as he bowed to them severally. "It will do me honour to show you the wonders of the settlement, sir; the best hunting-grounds, eel-wears, and cat-fishing-pools. Also, to furnish you with anything in my line—salves and plasters, drops and washes, and different kinds of iles and gums."

"I will bear it in mind, doctor," said Henderson; "but for the present, here is a case demanding your immediate attention."

"God bless me!" said he, looking at the body, "what is it? snake—mad-dog—lock-jaw! How did it come? drowned, bit, choked—or was he killed? Maybe pisen—been eatin' any wild roots? Let's pulse him; bless me! no more fuss in his blood than in the juice of a wild turnip!"

"He was found hanging by the neck," remarked Henderson.

"So, so," mused the medical character; "a case of choke, then. I'll just move his neck a mite, to see if there's anything like a kink in it."

"Remember the cock, doctor," said Barnabas, "if ye're going to take howld of him by the neck."

"Just to twist it an atom," said Doctor Jaws, "to find if the nape is broke, or only out of jint. 'Case if its snapp'd off, there's nither root nor yarb in all King George's provinces will save him." Saying which, he stooped down, and raising the shoulders

of the boy upon his knee, set to work at moving the head backward and forward, as far to the right and left as the bones and muscles would permit.

"I do believe," said he, "it's not exactly all right and tight hereabouts; it certainly is a mite out of the regular fix. If I'd time, now, to make him a hot decoction of bone-set, I could bring the joints together agin as nat'ral as the teeth of a steel-trap. So we'll try another plan. Now, Mr. Irish, you just hold on to his legs while I give him a jerk by the head."

Barney obeyed the order; and the pulling of the two, in different directions, was speedily answered by a sharp snap of the spine.

"Halt!" shouted the experimenter, "halt! it's in. I thought some of the tacklin' was out of gear. His life's saved without the hot decoction of boneset. Now sit down, Mr. Irish, and hold his head in your lap."

The practitioner now drew a knife from a large pouch, suspended by a strap over his shoulders after the fashion of a modern game-bag, and held the blade to the nostrils of the patient. This he watched for some time with silent scrutiny. Not satisfied with the result of his experiment, he next laid a small feather on the upper lip; this he regarded for several moments, as he had done the knife-blade.

"A case!" he at length exclaimed, in a sorrowful tone; "a case, by the Hockey-spoon! I've done for him all that man could do, sir; but you see he's as empty of air as a pair of old bellowses. It ain't my business to breathe for him, you know; I didn't make his lungs and lights, sir, and can't help it if they're good for nothing, and won't go."

"Can you think of nothing else, doctor?" asked the lady.

"I'll try needin', ma'am," said the doctor; "if that don't do, I'll knock under to it as the most stubborn case in the books."

This last process seemed likely to prove availing; but whether the effect of returning respiration, or the forcing from the lungs what air they contained, certain it was, that in a few minutes the little feather was blown from the lip. This was hailed by the operator by a shout of exultation, who now figured about his subject like a disciple of the geological school over his crucible when discovering, by the application of chemical tests, the existence of some metal rare and valuable. He gave utterance, at the same time, to a stream of technical eloquence that had bid defiance to the pen of the fleetest chirographer, had any such attempted the report of his speech. At length spasmodic heavings of the chest, and, at intervals, painful and laboured gaspings at the mouth, seemed to promise, though at sad expense of suffering, a slow return to life. But these exhibi-

tions of extreme agony on the part of the poor patient, and which grew in their intensity with each succeeding moment, and on which the little group of by-standers were gazing in mute and feeling silence, failed altogether of producing corresponding emotions in the breast of the professional operator. Limping around the body, or leaping over it, he hailed every painful exertion with an exclamation of delight.

"Now you see, Mr. —Mr. —"

"Henderson," that gentleman added, to whom the remark was about to be addressed, and for whose name the doctor was fishing.

"Ay, Mr. Henderson," resumed the other, "now you see the beauty of skill. This chap, now, owes his life to the simplest of all cures in natur'. Just that jerk of the neck; that jerk, you may depend on it. Now you see his neck'll grow agin as strait as a mullin-stalk. See how beautiful his breath comes; regular, sir, as the drawing of a blister!"

"Poor fellow," said the lady, regarding the contortions of the recovering boy; "shall I not permit him to inhale a little volatile salts, doctor? It may hasten his revival."

"Bah! no; beggin' your pardon, ma'am; not for the whole world, ma'am," the physician replied, in great haste, with his hand raised in forbidding attitude. "I hold these abominable mixes to be, ma'am, the greatest cuss on aith. It's a slur on the Maker, ma'am, who has given us all cures in the roots, the leaves, the bark, and the juice of weeds and trees. Now there's your mercury, your nitre, your opium, your rat's-bane, and your antimony, all of them destroying angels and evil sperits. Then your tools of death and destruction: the lancet, the knife, and the fossip, all butcher-knives in the hands of your college executioners, ma'am. A man has never entered on a regular fit of sickness with any comfort since they came into use. No, no, ma'am; none of your exhalations, if you please; they only bedevil the nose to no purpose. Now the ailment is not in this feller's nose, at any rate; so why would you doctor that? My system is, to lay the axe at the root of the evil. Now a little of the ile of turpentine, rubbed on the scuff of his neck with a woollen rag, would do him more good than all the nose-ticklers in the country."

Any farther discussion of the merits of medical practice was, for the present, interrupted by the arrival of two persons, whom it may be proper, for reasons hereafter appearing, briefly to describe. The one was a gentleman of middle age, well, and somewhat elegantly dressed, who was mounted on a blooded animal that he managed with the ease and grace of a practised horse-

man. In form he was somewhat corpulent. He wore short whiskers, cut squarely at the bottom of the ear, and a small mustache, that much augmented the haughty and severe character of a face in which emotions of the milder and more amiable class were but little indicated. A pair of high boots with polished spurs, small clothes buttoned at the knee, a red vest, and drab hunting-coat with large pockets, constituted his dress. To which, however, may be added a cloth cap with leather shade in front, fastened more securely to the head by a small strap passing under the chin.

At his side rode, on a led horse, the reins of whose bridle he held in his own hand, a little girl not over ten years of age. Her brown curls streamed out from under a gipsy hat of straw tied with blue riband, and which displayed, to much advantage, her face and neck. She wore a dress closely fitted to her youthful person, of a plain colour, and well adapted to her mode of travelling. Over this was a light gray skirt, longer than her dress, fastened by a girdle at the waist, made to open down at one side. This article of her attire was intended to be worn or removed as the exercise of riding and walking might, alternately, demand its use or render it unnecessary. Worsteds gaiters of the same colour and material were worn upon her feet. These equipments seemingly betokened her growth and education in society more fashionable than what pertained to this new settlement. She was certainly an attractive child, though, at the same time, unfavoured with those peculiar traits of feature that constitute remarkable beauty.

The doctor stepped into the way, before the two riders, in such manner as to intimate his desire they should stop; an act, perhaps, referable to that predisposition of professional men, resorted to on most occasions when opportunity occurs, of displaying their triumph in any matter of miraculous skill.

"Good-day to you, Colonel Dinning," said he, pulling off his hat, and bowing more in attempted ceremony than with natural grace; "I hope you are better of that little grip of the gout, sir: I was just coming over, sir, to bring you a little more of the poplar bark and hemlock. Ay! little Ruth, too; I hope the little lady is well of the headache to-day?"

This address of Doctor Jaws, intended by him to serve the double purpose of salutation and blast of his own trumpet, was received by the rider without either word of response or look of recognition. The practitioner, however, affected to take no heed of the iceberg on which his politeness had been shipwrecked, and continued, turning to the party of strangers,

"Mr. Henderson, Colonel Dinning; Col-

onel Dinning, Mr. Henderson; Mrs. Ditto, Colonel Dinning; Mr. Irish, Colonel Ditto. These two fine little boys, sons of the lady and gentleman, I presume; names unknown. This other young chap, squirming here on the ground, my patient; just saved from the gallows, sir; cured of a stoppage in the windpipe, and a kink taken out of his neck-joint."

The rider bowed respectfully to Henderson, and, courteously raising his cap, made his obeisance, over the pommel of his saddle, to the lady. He merely cast a glance of the eye at Barnabas, who, in good time to the mention made of him, had jerked off his hat and slipped it under his arm, following up the movement with two alternate scrapes of each foot upon the ground.

"Here appears to be a case of difficulty, sir," said Colonel Dinning, dismounting, and handing the reins of the horse to Barney; "can I render you any assistance?"

"I believe, sir, that none is requisite now," replied Henderson; "the lad seems past danger, and, with what care his attendant here may give his case, no doubt he will soon be well again."

"Ay," interrupted the doctor, "leave him to me for that; a plaster of burdock and mullin leaves will take all the sore out of his neck in a jiffy, and make it as sound and stiff again as a dead saplin'. I'll warrant him, in two days, to carry a fifty-six on top of his head as easily as a nigger does a dish of hot corn."

"Judging that you are a stranger in this settlement, sir," remarked the colonel to Henderson, unheeding the interruption of the professional enthusiast, "it may be you have no place of convenience in which to receive the lad. Let me, therefore, tender you the use of my mansion for that purpose."

"I am your debtor for the well-meant courtesy," said the other; "the boy, however, is not a part of my company; he was accidentally found hanging in this hut, and we have tarried merely to aid in his restitution."

"True," responded the colonel, "I did not notice. I see he is one of the Indian race, whose tribe live yonder. No—let me see—I think not either," as he regarded the features of the boy more closely. "Doctor, attend to him strictly. Never mind, sir; we waive your remarks about the matter just now. Take him into the hut, see to him promptly, and, when restored, bring me your bill. Good-day," he added, bowing to the group, and, proceeding to mount his horse, slipped a silver coin into Barney's hand. "My house, sir, you will find a few miles up the valley on this road. It will give me pleasure to entertain you there. It is not in my power, madam, to promise you many attentions from those of your own sex under my roof; this young lady is

the only female of my household of rank to receive visitors; and her age, as you perceive, would warrant you little entertainment as a companion. Nevertheless, I can assure you a welcome to my bachelor abode. It may afford you indifferent compensation for the lack of better society in these settlements."

"I give you my thanks," said the lady; "and, when installed in our new dwelling, shall be happy to reciprocate the offer."

Colonel Dinning rode slowly away with his little charge, who made her obeisance at parting simultaneously with her companion, and, with a face of beaming earnestness, was soon propounding a multitude of questions and queries respecting the new people whose acquaintance they had made. Barney assisted to carry the Indian lad within the hut, where he was left under the care of Doctor Jaws, when the party pursued their way to their new habitation.

CHAPTER IV.

"Alas! misfortunes travel in a train."—YOUNG.

THE same day, after sunset, Colonel Dinning and his young charge, returning from their ride, approached the outskirts of the Indian village, when their ears were assailed by a cry of distress. It seemed to issue from a hut larger than the others by which it was surrounded, and located in the midst of the village. Feeling no disposition to involve himself in any resulting difficulty by interference in what he supposed to be a family war, he was about to ride past and leave the affair to such issue as those engaged in it might choose to suffer. On second thoughts, however, he concluded to reconnoiter the wigwam, and ascertain whether the case was such as prudence or humanity would justify him in taking part in. He therefore cautiously approached the building. These shouts appeared to proceed from the mouth of one individual only, dying away occasionally, and then breaking forth again with such renewed intensity as bore evidence of extreme suffering on the part of the utterer.

The tenement proved to be the council-room of the tribe, used in such seasons of the year or state of the weather as forbade their assembling beneath the trees of the forest in the open air. It was large, of an octagonal form, with a roof running up in the shape of a cone, and from the peak of which a stream of smoke was now ascending. It was enclosed on all sides except the entrance, and this was on the opposite side from that approached by Colonel Dinning. With cautious steps he therefore passed around to the aperture of entrance, where, slightly pushing aside the blanket

that did the office of a door, he looked in upon the cause of all this dismal outcry.

Seated on the ground, with their hands folded in their laps, and forming the outer circle of the convocation, were the squaws of the tribe, of all ages. With bare necks and shoulders, their black hair parted over the centre of the head, and hanging low, and their black eyes glittering in the blaze of the fire as they appeared to follow some object from one side of the room to the other, they presented a novel spectacle. The males inside of this ring formed another, extending the whole circuit of the room. They were likewise seated, with their dusky red blankets, worn by some over the shoulders, and by others used as cushions, on which they squatted down in the accustomed posture of their race. Some had pipes in their mouths, especially the patriarchs of the tribe, which they enjoyed with a show of calm indifference, strangely inconsistent with the nature of the ceremonies which had apparently summoned them together. The most deathlike silence, on the part of the Indians at least, prevailed. Nor could scrutiny detect, in any one of the many faces, any trace of feeling or passion whatever.

A fire was kindled and burning in the centre of the wigwam, the smoke and sparks from which were shooting upward to the peak in the roof. Across this aperture, that served as a chimney, was placed a pole, to which a rope was made fast, and descended to within a yard of the fire; and, at the end of this, denuded of his apparel, with his hands and feet drawn together by a cord, was suspended that heir of misfortune, the luckless Jeremiah. Thus tied, he swung from one side of the room to the other; necessarily passing, at each sweep of the rope, directly over the burning flame. The pain, other than what was caused by the tightening of the ligament around his wrists and ankles, and the occasional lodgment of a spark on his skin, was not so very great when performing the utmost revolutions of the swing. But as the sweeps became gradually shortened, and he passed over the flaming pile oftener and with less velocity, his situation became critical indeed; and at such times was it that he gave full play to his powers of lung. Then his tormentors, again starting him off, would leave him to finish his flight as before, by gradual diminution of sweep, until nearly resting stationary over the embers.

After gazing for some time with wonder on this tragedy of ruthless persecution, Colonel Dinning threw aside the blanket stretched across the doorway, and rushed into the midst of the ring.

"Murdering demons!" shouted he, "what is this you do?"

The Indians sprang involuntarily on their feet. So many dusky countenances glow-

ing with excitement, many of them with ferocity, suddenly building up a circumventing wall around the intruder, might, even to a man of more personal bravery than he, have been productive of much intimidation. In the excitement of his feelings, he seized the swinging cord and stayed its farther motion. No sooner was this done, than the most stalwart of the savages, he who had officiated as the priest of the sacrifice by keeping the cord in motion, confronted the white man.

"Him hang young Indian!" said he, "we hang him!"

"And who gave you right," said the other, "here in a Christian land, with your horrid inventions of torture, to take the life of his majesty's subjects without leave of law! Your necks will pay forfeit in atonement of a butchery so fiendish. Cut him down this moment."

"You cut him down, me cut you down!" said the dogged Indian, placing his hand on the haft of his knife.

The other, at the same moment, adroitly pushed away the Indian's hand, and drawing the knife from under the belt, severed the rope at a blow, and cast the victim several feet from the spot. And though he now stood on the defensive, with the instrument held in the attitude of one determined on parting with life at the dearest cost to the adversary, yet the odds presented by the fierce array who, with infuriated clamour, were gathering about him, augured but little hope of favour to the performer of the bold exploit. Tomahawks and knives, reflecting the beams of the burning pile, were flashing into view around him. At this critical moment, albeit, ringing clearly above the tumult of the throng, a shrill voice called out at the doorway, "By the eternal Hockey-spoon! what's all this caterwaulin' down with your meat-axes and skulpin-knives, every devil's brat of you! or," continued he, leaping into the midst of the affray, and laying about him lustily with one of his hempen bags in each hand, "I'll batter your daylight out between your ribs. Down with your cursed murder tools, I say, you brick-burnt dragons! away with 'em, or I'll floor you all like a stroke of gallopin' consumption!"

During the delivery of this speech, shot out between breaths in fragments, after the fashion of a man over-fatigued by walking up hill, Doctor Jaws had accomplished a perfect victory over the red men, whose heads and bodies he had belaboured with his medicine sacks with the same despotic authority of a schoolmaster who suddenly falls, with whip in hand, upon a phalanx of truant urchins under his charge. Those who so lately had drawn their weapons to make common cause in the slaughter of a single though dauntless man, now muttering to one another "the big medicine!"

were seemingly transformed to children, on whom the blows inflicted by the doctor's sacks were no less effectual than as many strokes imparted by the enchanting rod of a magician.

"Down on your hamstrings, you ily rascals!" continued the conqueror, having cleared an open space around the colonel and himself; "flat as flounders, all of you." The order was obeyed, so absolute a control did the "big medicine" exercise over the unenlightened and superstitious minds of the native foresters. The doctor eyed them deliberately for a minute or two, turning round to every part of the circle with an air of self-complacent triumph, equalled only by the fearless keeper of a menagerie, who enters within the bars of a cage to tyrannize over the shackled lords of the jungle.

"Nice doins!" said he, at length. "A purty bit of surgery agoin' on! Bin tendin' lectures in some of the university shops, I s'pose, where they cut a man up like a hog, and parbille him like the gambrel jint of an ox, to git the meat off his bones. Fine times, when a practitioner of the holy curin' faculty can't pass along the king's highway without having his ears split by such unaitly hallaboloos as this! All the bulls of Bashan, and the horned cattle on a thousand hills included, couldn't make half such a hollerin'."

"I'll tell you what," continued the speaker, beginning to arrange the contents of his sacks, which, owing to the service they had so meritoriously performed, were a little commingled; "I'll tell you what, my gentlemen of colour, any more of this skulpin and bully raggin, and you never see another ounce of doctor stuff out of these botany-bags—never. Rot me if I puke or purge a single man, woman, or popoos of your hull generation! Now, see here, you thievin' villains. Look at this picture of distress and destruction!" pulling, at the same time, from his sacks such another heterogeneous mass as perhaps no other portable laboratory, from the days of Esculapius downward, could have vomited forth. Liquids and salves, escaped from the vials and small earthen cups that held them, were mingled with roots and dried leaves. Pieces of paper, bursted open by the shock of war, had scattered forth their stores of seeds and wild berries, to be buried in the oils and greasy compounds that attracted them. Plasters and cataplasms, in sad disorder, had stuck to everything they touched, and held fast every wandering particle they caught. Indeed, the whole medley, presenting a chaos so deplorable, could not but provoke a smile on the face of Colonel Dimming, which he was at much pains to conceal. Far otherwise was the effect on the owner, who, bending over the scene of disaster,

exhibited a much more mournful visage than did the Prince of Denmark over Yorick's skull.

"A purty mux!" pursued he; "now look at that," hauling out a mixture, half of which stuck to his hand; "medicine enough lost there to carry the children of Israel from the Red Sea to Jericho! Who can battle against ailments with such a topsy-turvy concern as this? By the Lord! here's my sirups and bitters, fever drinks and eye washes, all in a puddle together! and my last bit of puke-root floating on the top of it: and not another piece as big as a toothpick this side of Mahoopany creek! Heavens alive!" he exclaimed, almost breathless, and turning white as a sheet, as he pulled forth an old manuscript book of receipts, so utterly crumpled up, and smeared over with turpentine and tar, together with other soiling fluids and untoward masses, whose names we know not, that the legibility of the document seemed lost forever; "there's the eend of all things! I'm a used up man, by cat! There goes the lost book of Jasher in the science of medicine! I'm done—done—done over!" the poor man ejaculated, rubbing his hands in unaffected agony. "It's all over—stock notch-potted—labour lost—time spent; and, last of all, here's the jewel of my soul, the great *Materia Medica*, spattered to death by the antidotes it taught me how to make. Not a King George's sixpence am I worth in the world. Colonel Dimming, maybe I had better take your advice, but my own candid opinion is, I'd better bust at once for the benefit of my creditors."

"Truly," said the colonel, "I regret your misfortune; and since an interference in my behalf produced it, your loss, doctor, shall be made up to you."

"Made up to me!" replied the other; "your hull fortin', Colonel Dimming, wouldn't buy me the value of one of them pages; onpossible. Bless my soul, what's that!" perceiving for the first time the body of Jeremiah curled up on the ground somewhat in the shape of the new moon. "Measles, is it?" said he, casting a glance at the boy's freckled skin. "On my word, they have come out gloriously; that's better than have 'em strike in. Lord! but I'm not sure they haven't struck down. Ay, ay! the seat of the complaint seems to be here," putting his hand on the nethermost part of Jeremiah's body; "and in a ragin' fever, too; the inflammation fairly burns my hand."

The boy, beginning to comprehend that, under the change of administration, he was likely, at last, to fall among friends, and anxious to present the most potent claims to their regard, set to groaning in the most pitiful manner he was capable of. The practitioner, considering it the effects of a relapse, was about to redouble his exer-

tions in the patient's behalf. The colonel, however, made a timely explanation of the matter. He also satisfied the Indians that the mishap which had overtaken the Indian lad at the hut was effected through no agency of Jeremiah; in fact, that to the latter the poor fellow was indebted for the life he now enjoyed. He farther assured them that the boy was past all danger, though he had been so nigh the verge of dissolution. Here Doctor Jaws broke in, and gave a circumstantial account of his miraculous skill, minutely describing the whole occurrence, and concluded by offering to stake his recipe-book against a thousand acres of cleared land, on the Shawney flats, that any other ten doctors would have had him dead as a Spanish fly and under the ground before sunset. Nobody inclining to take up the doctor's proffered wager, he closed the banter in triumph. The Indian council broke up, and Jeremiah, arrayed once more in his apparel, set out for the habitation of his master, where, following the directions given him by the colonel, he soon arrived. No lights were to be seen in any part of the house, and all being quiet, he concluded the family had retired to bed. Hoping to obtain admittance at some door in the back part of the building, presuming that there must necessarily be such, he groped his way around, where all was now doubly dark from the thick foliage of the grove. It had become necessary for him to clamber over a high board fence, the gateway through which, if there was one, he was unable to find. Gaining the top of this, and not being, at best, an expert climber, much less so under his present affliction, it was his misfortune to slip hold, and fall over on the roof of a small tenement now in the occupancy of the bull-dog, Brindle. This unexpected avalanche on the roof of his domicile, arousing him from the deep sleep of a fatigued emigrant, brought him forth with all his hair on end, and making more din, with the rattling of his chain and thunders from his throat, than the eruption of any single kennel ever poured out before. Bounding, with his terrific display of uncovered teeth, at Jeremiah, who was struggling upward, with half his body hanging over the eaves of the kennel, he fastened upon that particular part of the intruder's body which, of all others, at this time, was most likely to receive additional injury from the assault. His teeth (we gladly record) merely grazed the parched skin as they came together with a loud snap, and became securely fixed in the most voluminous part of his pantaloons. Jeremiah set up a yelling treble to the hoarse bass of the dog. The latter, however, true to his instinct, knew too well the advantage of his hold to surrender it by reason of the outcry of his victim. The various appeals for

succour made by the captive at length received an answer. A window, directly over the scene of conflict, was thrown up, and a head, extending over the sill, demanded. "And what's the mather down there, now? a bull-fight or a dog-fight?"

"Barney! Barney!" cried the boy, "help me! I'm burned!"

"Is it ye'reself, ye blackguard! I was thinking it Satan broke loose with a bit of chain to his hind leg. Burned! did ye say! Where's all the smoke from so much fire as ye're spaking ov?"

"No, no!" said the lad; "I'm bit!"

"Thin bite back, ye coward!" said the Irishman.

"Get out!" roared Jeremiah; for just at this time Brindle gave a few shakes of his head, which loosened the boy's hold and brought him to the ground. "Get out, Brindle! Murder! fire!"

"Och!" said the man at the window, "if it's Brindle that's burned up, it's meself that'll be down to him, and help him out ov the predicament afore he's hurt. Now," said he, as he felt his way down the stair, "the dog may be ov some sarvice in this new country of wild bastes; but, as for that speckled-back tarrapin, egad! his ashes is like to be all his worth, at any rate. Where's all ye're fire and fagots?" said he, approaching the lad, who, on all-fours, was dragging Brindle after him with feet braced; "where is it ye're tortling to in that style? and, by the powers! what sort ov a bobtail is this same that's dangling till ye?"

"It's the dog," said Jeremiah, faintly.

"Thin it's but a small notion he has in the matter of game," said the other, "to fall upon such a bird as ye'reself, Jerry; and little judgment or good taste, ather, to lay howld ov ye in that fashion. Brindle, let loose, ye brute! won't ye! Faith, Jerry, but I think he's fastened to ye wid a touch ov the lockjaw! Ye'd better just kick ye'reself out ov ye're trowsers, and ye'll chate him out ov a hard bargain."

At the urgent importunity of the Irishman's hands, tightly gripped about his throat, the dog finally loosed his hold of Jeremiah. Barney ordered him to bed, meanwhile reading him a lecture on the subject of late hours, and berating him for his own loss of sleep, and disgracing the family by an uproar injurious to the good order and quiet of the same. He finished his homily, as he half pushed and half lifted the lad up the stairway, by saying he was likely to do well in a new country where, the very first day, he had been drowned, burned, and throttled by the dog of his own house. Putting him to bed, where he soon became unconscious of the manifold grievances of human life, we leave him, and the others who participated in the drama of that day, without farther remark in this chapter.

CHAPTER V.

"Yet a fine family is a fine thing."—BYRON.

JEREMIAH WAS, on the following morning, the last to leave his couch of slumber. At daybreak, Barnabas had gone forth to occupy himself in sundry duties at the stable, from which he had not returned when the family sat down to breakfast; so that the champion of the preceding night was left the sole occupant of the chamber.

It happened that Mrs. Henderson had, the afternoon before, sent forth scouting parties throughout the thinly-settled neighbourhood in search of some maiden of all-work to assist her in the arrangement of her mansion. None could, at that particular time, be found, excepting one Peggy Hankins, generally in the employ of Colonel Dinning, and now visiting at home on furlough. By promise of liberal remuneration, she accepted the call, and engaged with Mrs. Henderson for two days only. She had arrived early in the morning, and, as the family sat down to their repast, went aloft to make the beds. Now the hero of the wigwam was quartered on a vehicle of repose rather singular of construction, though, in new countries, of very common use. It was a wide leaf, similar to that of a dining-table, attached by hinges to the side of the room; the front side supported by legs, which, when removed, permitted the leaf to drop down and hang perpendicularly with the wall. Thus let down during the daytime, it afforded no obstacle to the discharge of such domestic duties as the apartment might be required for.

The young gentleman, comfortable in the enjoyment of his morning's nap, was wholly unperceived by the kitchen divinity who ascended into the apartment. This may have been attributable to a habit of Jeremiah's of sleeping with his head off the pillow, and entirely covered up, a caution resorted to as a safeguard against ghosts and other suspicious night-walkers.

When the maiden entered the room for the first time in her life, the first thing sought by her, and found, was a small irregularly-shaped piece of broken glass set into a block of wood, the workmanship of Barney's hand, and used by him at his Sunday morning's toilet, and in the process of shaving. Standing before this mirror, Peggy was soon absorbed in the silent contemplation of such points of elegance as the reflected face presented. The gratification, though, was bought at much expense, inasmuch as but a small area being covered at a time, it was some moments before a survey of the whole tract could be made. Inclining forward now with one eye closed, and then its fellow, she was deeply intent in passing from point to point, like an astronomer with his telescope over the disk of the sun. Com-

pleting the observation, she smoothed down whatever rebellious hairs of the eyebrow were sinning against order, and removed, with her finger nail and the point of a pin, a small pimple that had, some time during the night, without authority of law, taken lodgment, obliquely, under the point of her nose. She then passed many times through her fingers, first moistened at her mouth, two pendent curls rather red, glutinous, and frizzly. Then smoothing down her apron, and taking a farewell look over her shoulder at the glass, she turned to waste a spare moment in reconnoitering.

"Law suz!" muttered Peggy, taking up Jeremiah's trousers; "now it can't be that big feller they call Barney squeezes himself into these here little bits o' things! it's impossible. Why, what under the canopy! they smell just like a chunk of roasted beef."

She directed her attention a moment to the pockets, *nulla bona*, then to those of the coat; the hand came back with the return of *non est inventus*. A few garments on the wall were inspected also; but the main object of attraction was Barney's chest. It was no part of the young lady's purpose to meddle with anything in this; her morals were paramount to any such indulgence; but the lid was up, and looking could do no harm. Therefore she looked in, but a red flannel shirt covered over the whole contents; she put it aside; then a few of cotton, then a red jacket and a corduroy coat, and various other articles, when she fell upon something that operated with strong adhesive powers on her curiosity. It was a small black box, concealed in one corner of the chest. Casting a hasty glance behind her at the door, she opened it. It contained what the girl had never seen before, if, indeed, heard of, a book, a rosary, and a crucifix. She gazed at them a minute, in her endeavours to determine the purposes they were intended for.

"What on airth," said she, slowly, "is all this! Beads! I do wonder, now, if this feller hasn't got a lover! What can be in that book? true-love songs, I'll lay anything. But this little thing," taking up the crucifix, "I don't know what in the nation to make on. It's the queerest little tool I ever laid eyes on in all my born days!"

She took the article to the window for the purpose of giving it a closer inspection, and stood musing over it, when suddenly a noise below convinced her that some one was coming up the stairway. Acting under the first impulse of alarm, she set about discharging the duties for which she entered the room, and, to this end, stepping hastily to Jeremiah's couch, slipped the front legs from under it. The shelf fell as speedily as the drop-board of a gallows, launching from it, with equal celerity, the

unconscious sleeper, who, rolling like a log across the chamber, brought up against the farther side of it with a shock that echoed through the whole house. The affrighted maiden caught but a single glimpse of the speckled phantom, and fled, screaming, down stairs into the breakfast-room.

"In the name of wonder!" exclaimed Mrs. Henderson, upsetting a cup of coffee, "what does this mean! Is the girl dying?" she added, looking at Peggy, who sank, gasping, into a chair, with the crucifix in her hand. "Speak, girl! are you hurt?"

"No—no—mum—the—measly—measly—"

"Have you the measles, do you say?" the lady demanded.

"Measly—spook!" she made out to utter.

"Spook, indade, ye felonious b—h!" thundered Barnabas, who at this moment entered the room, attracted by the uproar; and, snatching his crucifix from her hand, continued, "where did ye stole this, ye thaving, rid-headed, misbehaving atheist?"

"I ain't, I ain't! you nasty Irishman, you!" suddenly retorted the damsel, merging her affright in a fit of rage; "I ain't any sich a thing. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, to carry about sich conjurin' tools, like a vile wizzard as you be!"

"St. Pathrick!" echoed Barney; "but if it wus ye're uncle, or ye're aunt, or ye're grandfather, or any ither ov ye're male offspring that said that same regarding ov me, I'd—"

"Fy! Barney," interposed the gentleman of the house; "you will not quarrel with a woman!"

This preponderance of the scales of combat in the damsel's favour, by which the odium was, in a measure, shifted upon her adversary, rendered justifiable a few tears. Giving way to the weight of her injuries, she drew her check apron to her eyes, and went off in a shower of lachrymation. Adverting, with great effort, to the wound her reputation had received, vowing never again to look upon the hateful face of the Irishman, and protesting she would rather be dead than have such things said of her, she left the room, like Niobe, all tears. Barnabas also withdrew to restore his crucifix to its proper repository, and collect the other misplaced emblems of his religious creed.

It is not our present purpose to engross time by carrying the emigrants through the details of settling on their new domain, or dwell even at much length on the minor incidents of their history for a few years following; we intend but a slight sketch.

A neighbourly intercourse was in a few weeks' time established between the family of Colonel Dinning and Henderson. This, at the same time, extended more particu-

larly to the younger members of the two households, there being little in the characters and dispositions of the two gentlemen themselves to favour any particular closeness of intimacy. A yielding spirit of forbearance, however, obtained footing between them, from the mutual regard felt for the happiness and pleasurable pastimes of the children. The latter were therefore much together. On one occasion, little Ruth became for several months an inmate of the household of Henderson, during the absence of Colonel Dinning on a tour to the north. This being in the summer season, afforded a long holiday to the young friends, who passed it in the enjoyment of such sports and gambols as from time immemorial have been incident to that season of innocence and joy.

A daily participant in these exercises—since childhood sets up no icy barriers of distinction—was the Indian lad of the hut, whom Walter had taken rather under his special protection; and ignorant of his name, or unable to pronounce with ease his Indian title, had dubbed him, in recollection of past events, the *Hanger*. By this only was he known to the youthful band. Regularly as the sun came up with unclouded face was seen the *Hanger*, wending his way over the woodlands to the home of the new settler. On rainy days he did not appear with the same regularity, being rather shy of passing much time within doors; but on the green sward, in open day, he was more at home. And there, in feats of agility, in leaping, ascending trees, and other perilous achievements, he was unsurpassed. He was likewise, for his years, a proficient in throwing the tomahawk, and in the use of the bow and arrow. These exercises he practised somewhat to the astonishment of his young companions, who, pupils of a different school, were wholly unaccustomed to these more manly accomplishments, if it be permitted us to use the term.

At length, however, the boy failed to appear and play his part in the daily rounds. His absence being attributed to illness, or some domestic cause, he was *certainly* expected on the following day, but came not. For several days he was looked for by the little company, in whose ranks he had formed so efficient a member. Finally, the children under the charge of Barnabas (Jeremiah's distaste for Indians keeping him back) went over to the hut. It was deserted, the door fastened, and no traces about it indicating that it was now tenanted. They plucked a few flowers from a wild vine at the door, and came away with feelings of regret. In a few days they learned that the *Hanger*, in company of his mother, had left the neighbourhood, and departed in a direction unknown to any.

Little Ruth became a great favourite,

not only with her young companions, but with the adult members of the household, in which she temporarily resided. The two boys, in their efforts to please and gain favour with the little maiden, indulged at length a spirit of unquestioned rivalry. The object of their regard acted her part in this difficulty in the most judicious manner, though more from chance than from intentional prudence. There were points in both alternately attractive to her fancy, and neither claimed exclusively her attention and regard. Charles leaped a ditch boldly, and sprang from his horse without fear. He also lifted well at a weight, and could whistle loudly on his fingers. Walter had handsome hair, a white hand, and sang two or three songs in very tolerable style. Charles told several very thrilling stories of pirates and highwaymen; his brother, as many of fancies and Robinson Crusoe. So that the young damsel, whose part it mainly was to listen or look on, divided her time and admiration equally between the ambitious aspirants.

In a year or two, these sunny pastimes of youth were broken up. The boys were sent to an institution of learning in one of the eastern colonies, bidding adieu to their little playmate with feelings of deep depression. Some extracts from a letter of the mother to her sons, written a few years after their departure, may serve to fill up the chasm in this part of our history. It ran thus:

"MY DEAR CHILDREN,

"We had the happiness to receive your joint letter yesterday, enclosing the certificate of the principal as to progress in your studies. The flattering character of it gave us much joy. The tuition money due will be forwarded in this letter, which, together with the sum accompanying it for your pocket money, your parents hope may be acceptable to you both. They also trust it may be suitably expended. As your father contemplates paying you a visit in the fall, I shall forward by him the new collars and handkerchiefs. The latter, I presume, you will prize none the less for having been hemmed and marked by your old playmate Ruth. She was lately home on a visit, during her vacation, and spent some time with us.

"We have lately moved into our new house. Your father has expended quite a large sum of money in its erection, and putting up out buildings, also in improving the plantation; so that we are very comfortably conditioned; nothing, indeed, wanting to perfect our happiness but the society of our beloved children.

"Colonel Dinning is now at home, though we have only an occasional call from him, excepting when Ruth is at home, and then

he frequently attends her here to spend the day or afternoon. At this time he has just come back from the lake country, where he has been for some months. He brought with him a present for your father, a buffalo-robe curiously painted in the inside; and for myself, a beautiful pair of Indian moccasins, fancifully decorated with beads, slight remunerations, as he said, or rather tokens of his approbation for our kindness towards Ruth. He was not, at the same time, unmindful of you, as he has left presents for you both in our care. For Walter, a calumet, or pipe of peace; used, as is said, at several treaties, and presented to Colonel Dinning by a chief of the Five Nations. It is a very singular thing; and the colonel, in presenting it, intimated as his reason for bestowing it on my dear Walter, his coming some how to the knowledge that the donee possesses some taste for antiquities. The bowl is of various kinds of marble, all exceedingly beautiful; the stem of perforated reed, adorned with figures of animals and birds, together with numberless hieroglyphical devices. Gay feathers are likewise attached.

"For Charles he brought a rifle: the workmanship of an Indian on the Mohawk, celebrated for his mechanical ingenuity. The wood-work is of black-walnut, inlaid with silver, on which are carved figures of ships, animals, and men. On the broadest part of the stock is a death scene, strikingly executed. There are in this two figures, one of them falling backward to the ground, with arms extended and face upward, while the other takes down a rifle from his face; a face, the expression of which the artist has made terrible and malignant in the utmost degree. You will both of you be mindful to express your obligations to Colonel Dinning, the first time you may happen to be in his company.

"Walter will be gratified to learn that his quondam friend, the *Hanger*, was here during the fore part of the summer. He and his mother occupied the same hut as when you were here. He came over several times, after his arrival in the valley, but was very lonely. We saw him for hours roaming alone over your old playgrounds, but after a while, with dejected aspect, would wander away in the direction of his home. He has not made a bound or shot an arrow, that I am aware of, where he did both so frequently in your company. Your father took great pity on his lonely condition, and with much coaxing at length prevailed on him to enter the house. But though so much depressed in spirits, he had by no means lost his appetite, as he demolished nearly a whole pound-cake at one attempt. I told him you had all been over at his cabin after his departure a few years back, and how much you missed him; also,

that you had severally plucked flowers at his door, and preserved them still with much care. It quite affected the poor lad; a tear gathered in his eye, but he instantly brushed it away, as though he had unconsciously broken a rule of Indian faith or principle. It checked his appetite, and he ate no more of the pound-cake. At my request, he took the balance of it to his mother. We frequently after sent over to the Indian woman such presents as we thought would afford her pleasure. But Barney one morning found the door fastened, and nothing have we heard of them since.

"Happening to mention the name of Barney reminds me to acquaint you that he was married some two years since; and could you guess to whom? Bearing still in mind, as you must needs do, the circumstance of his snatching the crucifix from the hand of Peggy Haukins in high wrath, it will surprise you to hear that she is now his wife, and the mother of a fat boy several months old. After several weeks' search of a name, by making application to every one in the neighbourhood having taste in such matters, besides reading over the list in the Bible and all other catalogues anywhere to be found in print, Barney, as if suddenly stumbling on a new discovery, pitched upon the name of Patrick; and by that was the little stranger christened in due form.

"Your father often rallies him on the matter of the crucifix, and queries with him that so much vengeance could so soon give place to a union in matrimony. But Barney answers him, 'That it's himself would be the last man, or woman ather, to howld malice in his heart, and more especially forment the six,' as he pronounces the word sex. 'And for the matter of the crucifix, that he doesn't know of any individual standing more in the shade of it than Peggy's own swate self.'

"Jeremiah has so little altered for the better that it is hardly his desert to be spoken of at all. But that his protection is demanded of us as a matter of humanity, your father would have turned him out of doors long ago. Only a few days since he threw the loose round of a chair at our pet-lamb, and knocked an eye entirely out of its head: and during the past summer, he fastened Toby in one of the back stables to keep him there over night, and then, forgetting it, left him without food or water four days. The poor animal was so gaunt on his release, that I am sure Walter would not have recognised his own horse. And besides all this, the endless train of misfortunes attending him, putting out of view the loss of service (though that, to be sure, is not much), becomes a matter of heavy cost in the way of medical bills. During the winter he was nearly pressed to death under the pump-shed, which, being thickly

covered with snow, suddenly gave way and fell on him. This confined him to his bed upward of six weeks. Not long after his recovery, he tumbled from a load of wood under the heels of the oxen, and received a kick under the ear that left him in a state of delirium for many days, and before getting fairly over it, was taken down with the measles, which were succeeded with a prolonged attack of the mumps."

The letter closed with various items of good advice, touching diet, exercise, early rising, and moral observances, not omitting to subscribe her name, prefaced with those earnest and tender phrases, that flow so naturally from a mother's heart. One or two postscripts, the never-omitted parts of a female epistle, were appended.

"P.S.—I have been engaged, during leisure hours, in knitting you a few pairs of winter stockings, that your father will bring with him. I think you will like them, as they are of very fine wool, and more than that, the entire result of your affectionate mother's labour. Adieu.

"2d P.S.—I cannot send this long and tedious letter, as I fear it will be thought by you, without opening it to add another line. Let me pray you to take all care of your health, and be dutiful to those under whom you are placed. Your long absence, so trying to those who love you dearly, is endured, my beloved children, with a view to your future welfare and happiness. My blessing follow and protect you. Once more, adieu."

CHAPTER VI.

"When will the world shake off such yokes."
MOORE.

ADOPTING the privilege exercised by writers of fiction, we recommence our narrative at a period some ten years subsequent to the date of its opening.

The early part of the year 1775, and, indeed, the whole year itself, was, perhaps, one of the most exciting to the people of the colonies of any that preceded or followed, throughout the Revolution. Prior to the effusion of blood at Lexington, a spirit of discontent and murmur was manifestly prevalent throughout the different states; the happening of that event, therefore, and the battle of Bunker Hill following, wherein the colonial arms were first directed against the parent power, determined the manner in which the issue was to be tried. A call to arms was, without delay, echoed from one extreme of the provinces to the other. As may well be supposed, taking part in this issue, whose result one way would be freedom, and in the other treason, with its punishment, made it with many, the timid and the ambitious, an ex-

ceedingly perplexed question of solution; and this the more so, from uncertainty as to the side on which the scale would descend.

Many who, under the authority of the crown, were receiving heavy salaries and other official emoluments, were deeply sensible of the risk incurred by farther adherence to those powers from which they drew their golden supplies; and, on the other hand, were somewhat loth to cut off these streams of pecuniary income by the adoption of a cause which, though measurably consonant with their internal feelings, was so problematical in point of final result. Others had received titles from the sovereign, attended with large gratuities, or immense landed estates within the colonies, which became matters of too much consideration, both in point of honour and wealth, to be hazarded by an inconsiderate espousal of the peoples' cause against the arms of that monarch. With such, therefore, this gathering tempest, whose mutterings were growing louder and more fearful each succeeding day, was watched with painful and excited scrutiny. The tramp of every newly-mustered squadron, gathered from among the near and formerly respected neighbours of such favourites of the crown, fell with peculiar effect on the ear while marshalled away to swell the ranks of the so-called rebels.

Another class were halting between the enchantment of British gold on the one hand, and promised freedom on the other, which, even if gained, would probably be at the price of long servitude, wrought out unaided by pecuniary funds, and to be enjoyed in subsequent poverty. Others, who depended on the sale of their products for the maintenance of their families, were excited by the same considerations, and looked at the wide disparity existing between the treasures of the two conflicting powers, to one or the other of which they must apply for the rewards of their husbandry.

It may be said that another class, but recently arrived within the provinces, were held back by sentiments of instinctive repugnance against taking up arms with comparative strangers, and turning their bayonets against the breasts of their cherished friends and beloved relatives, with whom they had so recently parted, and the shores of whose distant island yet retained their own foot-prints. Yet, in a state of circumstances admitting the existence of no neutral body, it became compulsory with every one to assume an open and notorious stand upon either of the two sides at variance.

From the Atlantic cities, brought more immediately in contact with the emissaries from abroad, through the medium of maritime intercourse, and hence the points from which all information diverged, the panic

extended to the most distant of the inland districts, carrying with it, after the manner of an oft-repeated tale, the not unfrequent accumulation of additional importance or terror. And in this way even the affairs of Lexington and Bunker Hill, with the immediate causes productive of, and the consequences flowing from them, might well, by the time they could reach this distant valley on the wings of rumour, be invested with hues something darker than justified by the reality.

The discussion of these exciting topics, first indulged at the fireside, and, by degrees, as neighbour began to read the thoughts of neighbour, in knots and public companies, was finally, during the following summer, to be submitted to a public meeting of all friends of liberty, on a certain day, at the Buck. Of this public notice was given to all residents of the valley. It was therefore looked to as the hour of trial, when every person, by force of circumstances, would necessarily be driven from all concealment of purpose, and compelled to stand forth in whatever character it suited him to assume. By the friends of good order and quiet this approaching day was viewed with anticipations not unattended with much cause of alarm, well knowing the imbibed state of feeling already grown up between the Loyalists and Whigs, and which, under the least breeze of public commotion, was like to break out in acts of open warfare, and the shedding of blood.

"Now, Barney," said Mrs. Pike to her adored husband, who was standing at the window, early on the morning of the eventful day, taking off his beard, "you're not, then, set on goin' to that meetin' to-day at the Buck, be you?"

"Faith, am I; I'd be the very last man, darlint, to be found anywhere else."

"Now, Barney, don't. Let the plaguy Whigs and Tories settle their squabbles their own selves," pleaded the wife. "You know your temper well enough, Barney; and to run into such a jam of wranglin' chaps, all stark mad about the taxes, and the tea, and the Lexington scrimmage, you'd be sure to git your neck broke the very first man. And," she added, in a low and cautionary tone, "you know your other failin' too, Barney; and there'll be no eend to the apple-jack and black-strap to be drunk there."

"Out wid ye, ye parlavering magpie!" retorted the husband, pausing the scraping of his razor, and turning his head to frown down the offensive insinuation. "Is it afther prachin' me a sarmint ye are! Ye'd better put better words intil it, thin, than yer apple-jack and yer black-strap; the like of which ye niver found in your Bible, I fancy."

"Well, there now," replied the dame, recoiling before the torrent; "you needn't

wake up the baby. You know sartin sure it will take me a good half hour to git him to sleep agin—and who's to wash the dishes, I'd like to know! Will you want your Sunday clothes—that is, if you go?"

"Sure will I," said he, resuming his labours; "I'm not going to a mating of gintlemen patriots dressed like a strate scavenger, hinney—no indade—I'm standing more in the regard of me mither country, God bless her! What will they be afther saying of Barney Pike over there, when they come to hear he was not at the great mating? Och! it will be as good as death to me this minute. Because, ye see, they've warm hearts in Erin, all of them now bating time to the songs of fradom, and the cry for liberty rising through the roof of ivery turf-cutter's shanty, in spite ov the drums and trumpets ov rid-coats. True blood the Irish people have, darlint; and whether in the veins or out ov the veins, the villains that spill it can't be afther saying it came from coward hearts, or was iver cold to the prayer of want and destitution, ather. And are ye thinking, thin, it's meself that's paid away ivery sixpence to get away to this same country, will be found at the tail end of the hape, now that there's a chance of giving the British rascals a set-to."

This touched on the chord of patriotism, and dispelled all the precautionary objections of the wife. Therefore, taking out the better suit of the husband, in order that, as he had determined to go at all hazards, her own reputation as a tidy housewife might not suffer from any inferiority of habiliments, she handed them to him neatly brushed, with many injunctions to avoid getting them torn in the crowd; and should he eat during his absence, by all means to avoid having them soiled by grease spots. Also intimating that, as Mr. Henderson was a nice and orderly man, he could not better avoid difficulties than by keeping pretty close to that gentleman during the affairs of the day.

Loaded with which admonitions, and imprinting a kiss on the cheeks of the slumbering child, he was hailed from without by an individual already on his way to the Buck.

"Hurrah! Barney Pike!" said this person, a young man of perhaps nineteen, by the name of Summers; "you're slow on foot this morning. I thought you an early bird always, when a worm is to be taken."

"And ain't I here at your service!" demanded the other, coming forth from the door, and setting forward with his friend. "Such young grasshoppers as you can well scamper away a mile or the like, while a man of family, like meself, is taking off his beard. Now when ye come to the matter of shaving, and getting a wife and childher on yer hands, ye'll find, mayhap, that

yer mornings may be a little more occupied than ye find him just now. You've been absent a month or so?"

"Yes," said the other, "just come back last night; I'm in luck, you see—exactly in time to attend the meeting. And where is Mr. Henderson this morning? he will be there!"

"Sure will he," replied Barney.

"And I hear that Charles has come back from college," said Summers.

"Two weeks past," answered the Irishman; "and ye'll see him on the ground, too. Faith, he's grown to be a tough knot, be sure, as ye'll find in the district. Just come of age, and the devil a more fiery piece of metal ye've seen in yer life. The college wouldn't hold him any more, they say; for the matter of book sarvitute, and the listening to long prayers nights and mornings, and turning into the bunk at nine in the evening, didn't suit the bent of his inclinations, jist; so he kicked up a bit of a row one night, and obtained lave of absence the next morning. Thin he come home here, ye see, and has been making a sort of war on the blackbirds and crows, with a new rifle given till him by Colonel Dinning."

"Then we shall see him, you say?"

"No doubt ov that," said Barney, "if any fun is going on; and maybe there'll be that. He went over to the colonel's last night, and no doubt they'd be along together. They do say he has a hankering-like afther Miss Ruth."

"And where is Walter? he's not returned, is he?"

"No," said Barney; "he's made ov a different sort ov leather—more like to be cutting flourishes with a pen, than giving the passes in sword exercise."

"I always liked him rather best of the two," said Summers.

"Be sure," said Barney, "a nice, tight-rigged little chap he was; swate in his words, and kind ov heart, and ilegant in manners, too; but, somehow, he hadn't quite so much of the gunpouter in his make."

When the couple arrived at the Buck, they were of the first on the ground. Though it was not long before small companies, pouring in from all points of the compass, greatly augmented the gathering, which by ten in the morning amounted to more than fifteen hundred adults. To this might be added an almost equal number of boys, eager to witness the customary incidents attending a public assemblage; many of them, like the son of Hamilcar, brought there by their fathers, that they might early imbibe sentiments of implacable hostility to the enemies of their country, or take pattern from such demonstrations of patriotic fervour as the occasion might give rise to.

This large company was mostly scatter-

ed about in different places contiguous to the hotel, and in knots here and there were discussing the news of the day, and more particularly the exciting theme of the progressing revolution. The meeting not being as yet organized, the company in general were at liberty to seek for the enjoyment of such amusements as they might here find for their gratification. Youths of eighteen or upward were, in one place, testing their claims to physical agility at a game of hop, step, and jump. In another was going forward a spirited game of ball, denominated "round the stakes." Quoits were also in use; and other games of skill, activity, or strength were practised that it may not be essential to name.

But one of the passing incidents that in the greatest degree engaged the attention of those who found leisure to witness these matters of minor moment was the performances of a small person of antediluvian appearance, well known and much celebrated in the settlements by the appellation of Daddy Hokelander. In stature he did not exceed five feet: slim, withered, and half bent, with a physiognomy indicative of some imbecility of mind, without either hair on his head or teeth in his mouth, only accoutred in a shirt and pair of trousers upheld by one suspender, he was everywhere hailed as an inoffensive, half-witted, and eccentric personage.

The well-established reputation of Daddy Hokelander rested, as we may say, on three prongs; either of which, in his own opinion, was more meritorious than the groundwork of any other man's fame since the beginning of the world. These were, his prowess in fight, after the primitive mode of rough and tumble; his superiority as a dancer; and, above both or either of these, his fiddle. As to his dancing, we may say of it that modern taste would perhaps pay it but little reverence. It certainly had little of Parisian refinement in it. His excuse rests in the fact that his time was allotted him in those early days when sons and daughters of revolutionary sires were profoundly ignorant of the waltz, the pigeon-wing, the pirouette, and other prodigious displays; in the performance of which the artiste, at war with perpendicularity of attitude and reasonable scope of limb, achieves a thousand wonders whereof the human form was formerly deemed incapable.

On the occasion to which we refer, Daddy Hokelander made the barn floor at the Buck the theatre of his entertainments. A dense crowd stood around him, dealing out, in high glee, the fulsomeness of their flattery.

The discordant notes of the violin, which he deemed in his hand no less magical than others may have presumed those of the lyre had been in the hand of Or-

pheus, were repaid by excessive praises. But more especially so were his back-step, his side-step, his break-down, his double-heeling, and his glorious double-shuffle. These he accomplished on a yard square, his fiddle in one hand and bow in the other; his eyes, meanwhile, on his feet, that indeed wrought wonders in time to his own whistling. An exhibition so broadly ludicrous even to the eyes of the illiterate, had many charms, and called down the most boisterous applause. Every mock plaudit bestowed upon him by the coarse familiarity of the crowd, Daddy Hokelander answered, by a regular challenge to dance, or play "Hunt the Squirrel" on the violin, against any man between Sopus and Hocken: the former his birth-place, on the Hudson; the latter, a general term applied by him to the great west; both of them being, to him, the most extreme points of longitudinal scope with which he was familiar.

The first open demonstration of public sentiment on the ground that day, where, as must necessarily be presumed, were assembled men of widely opposite views, was evinced in the erection of a liberty pole immediately opposite the Buck. This was effected in comparative silence, save what orders, given in directions respecting the work, broke, at intervals, the stillness of the crowd. Many of those who looked on, though guarding against the betrayal of any emotions, felt inwardly the consequences of this overt act.

As soon as the emblem of liberty was secured in its upright position, and made fast by the earth heaped around its base, an individual was seen to remove his shoes and coat, and, with a cord coiled around his shoulders, ascend it with much alertness to within some twenty feet of its top. Here the rope was passed over a projecting arm of one of the branches, left purposely, and both ends permitted to drop to the ground. To this was instantly attached the American flag by those at the base, and, being run up, displayed its broad folds to the action of the breeze. The bold climber, still occupying his fearful elevation, embraced the shaft with his left arm, and, throwing out his right towards the floating banner, shouted, "There she goes, me harties, flapping the air like the wing ov a bird, jist; look till it, boys. A swate bit ov cloth to fly over the heads ov honest men; and a winding-shate may it be to King George and his hireling butchers, bad luck to them! Now kape time, lads, and shout all together; so, now, nine chares to the flag of freedom!" To the waving of Barney's right hand were sent up nine hurrahs as loud, as fervent, and as simultaneous as any that greeted the ear of Liberty's goddess in the opening of the war. An outbreak of popular enthusiasm, ap-

parently so general, might have been deemed sufficient to turn the whole tide of public feeling in one direction, at least to overawe whatever sentiments of loyalty might have existed among those present. Nevertheless, in the midst of this acclamation, a pistol-ball whizzed past the side of Barney's head, and lodged in the bark of the pole to which he was clinging. The momentum of the bullet not being sufficient to bury it wholly in the shaft, the Irishman plucked it out with his fingers.

"A nice kapesake," said he, holding it out in view of the crowd, "and it may be of service to the country some day. The gentleman Tory that handed it up may find it sticking in his own gizzard some time ahead, afore the devil comes to enlist him for the long service. I'll keep it safe the while. But this I'll say till him now, it come from the chamber-window, there, across the strate, and it's meself knows well from whose barrel. You'll see it in a museum, mayhap, a thousand year hince, ye Tory vagabond, with yer cowardly name under it, as the first ball fired at an honest man here away; and a poor shot in a worse cause it was, too." Saying which, amid the murmurs of those present, called forth by so despicable an attempt on the poor fellow's life, he descended to the ground.

An hour or more after this occurrence, and when the agitation it produced had measurably subsided, something like an organization took place, for the purpose of acting upon such resolutions, or the expression of views touching any matters relative to the subjects of controversy, as might be submitted. John Henderson, from the reputation he enjoyed in the district as a man of firm principles and sound views, was called on to preside over these public deliberations. On taking his seat as chairman of the meeting, which, that the proceedings might be heard by all present, was placed on the stoop of the hotel, he addressed the people in a speech somewhat exceeding half an hour in length, in which he adverted to the causes leading to the unhappy variance of feeling and action on the part of the inhabitants of the same provinces; to the conduct of the mother country in reference to the interests and rights of the colonies; their bearing, so long as endurance continued a virtue, the oppressive measures heaped upon them; and the necessity, under present circumstances, for every person within limit of the States to take part, on the one side or the other, in the impending conflict; a conflict already opened in blood on the heights of Charlestown. That, for his own part, his mind was fully made up; and he had secretly, before God, and he now did publicly, before his countrymen, openly avow his determination to shoulder the musket

in behalf of those rights he solemnly believed were trampled on by the English power. At the same time, it was not his purpose to inflame any man's mind, or to lead him into any hasty or inconsiderate resolve touching a question that so deeply concerned the lives and estates of the people; but, rather, to call on them temperately to view these weighty matters, and, under the exercise of cool reflection, adopt such course as their judgments might lead them to form.

These remarks, though entirely unequivocal as to the resolution entertained by the speaker, were, from their moderation and manly sincerity, well received, both by such as coincided with him in sentiment as by those who inwardly held different views.

The chairman was followed by others, who, with much more excited manner and inflammatory declamation, wrought deeper on the passions of the audience. Their fervid appeals to the prejudices of the multitude, and fiery denunciations hurled at the crown, may have exceeded, perhaps, the bounds of reason as well as proper decorum. At length, the mass immediately surrounding the officers of the meeting were thrown into something of disorder by the breaking through of a column of men armed with stout clubs, and some of them with swords and pistols. This body was headed by Colonel Dinning, whose position, respecting the great question at issue, had theretofore been somewhat problematical. Without, so far as was known, having openly espoused the cause of either party, he had still been regarded by the patriots with an eye of much distrust. Forcing himself upon the stand, attended by the followers that accompanied him, if not as guard, at least as backers, he stood near to the presiding officer, though with his face turned to the assemblage. His portly figure, the commanding tone of countenance, now brightened with a flush of excitement, his martial appearance generally, together with his established reputation as a man of wealth, liberality, bravery, and decision, were calculated, as may well be supposed, to produce no trifling impression on the beholders. Besides, he now stood before them under arms, with a short sword at his side, and a pair of silver-mounted pistols in his waistcoat. He at length spoke.

"I understand, sir," said he to the chairman, "that this meeting has been called, at whose dictation I know not, to discuss the questions pending between the crown of England, its loyal subjects, and those who stand in attitude of rebellion against it!"

"It has been assembled, sir," replied Henderson, "in part, at my dictation, and partly at the dictation of other men, whose

characters, in any respect, have never been made subjects of cavil, to avow publicly what sentiments we may entertain of late unfortunate acts towards the people of the colonies on the part of a sovereign, whose protection they have been accustomed to look for more than his exercise of arbitrary oppression. And these matters it has been designed to discuss in a manner consistent with peace and good order."

"Then," said the other, "I must remark that the turbulent and sententious conduct of this crowd do not promise much hope that the peaceful and conciliatory objects proposed are likely to be carried out."

"That observation," said Henderson, "whether true in point of fact, or otherwise, has little grace in the mouth of one who, while he purposes to play the orator, must needs face his audience with a sword on his thigh and fire-arms about his person. The cause of the people, if it is, as they believe, founded in principles of right, is not dependant on such agents for promulgation. I may take it for granted, no doubt, that Colonel Dinning's arms will be of no service to him in the enforcement of his remarks."

"The right to bear arms," said the other, "is a privilege common to any subject of the government; the power to prevent me from so doing must be sought for in some functionary of more extended authority than the temporary officer of a town meeting assembled without citation from the ministers of the law."

"As to that, my good friend," replied the chairman, "we shall not remain at variance; not a word is demanded of me to disprove what all present will admit to be true. The abstract right of bearing arms is placed beyond the pale of disputation; but, at the same time, the necessity, or the object of doing so, may rest in very different motives. And I take it upon me, farther, to add, that, though the official minions of the reigning prince have *not* summoned this meeting together, yet they will most probably still permit it so to be. Those who attend it, also, may find any efforts at intimidation less successful than vanity or presumption may have promised, even when backed by whatever exhibitions of deadly arms. I cannot think, however, that my friend's better acquirements in the law teach him that the *right* to bear mortal weapons will afford him, at this time, any legal warrant for their use."

"That is a matter with myself," said he; "and the occasion demanding their service will be one to reap favour at the hands of that power in whose behalf they are drawn."

Turning from this acrimonious dialogue, Colonel Dinning addressed himself to the people. His speech was characterized by tact, cunning, and familiar knowledge of

the moving springs of the heart. The most prominent of these impulses, by which the motives and conduct of men are regulated, were adroitly made the objects of his persuasive appeals, and in a manner that augured success. He represented himself to the concourse as one who stood aloof from the distracting themes of the day, not having sold himself as the tool or bondsman of either party, and was not, therefore, in a situation to be used as the cat's paw of faction, ever fated to be cast aside as useless when no farther drudgery remained to be done. He expressed a perfect willingness to act with those who elected to take up arms against the king as soon as he became persuaded that such course was undeniably right, or, on the other hand, to stand by his majesty until the fiat of nations should pronounce such fealty to be error. His object was to act prudently; to be denunciatory, in his course, neither to the one party nor the other; that, on a great subject like the one in agitation, it was hardly possible for any one to make up his mind in a day, or a month, or, perhaps, a year; that though some of his neighbours and former friends had taken much pains to poison him in the estimation of the public, yet he forgave it all, and hoped the disposition he was ever ready to manifest in what was orderly and peaceful would efface those slanders.

These, and other remarks alike crafty, were far from being without their effects. By disarming the minds of the hearers, and removing what prejudices existed in their hearts against the speaker, a door was opened for the introduction of other subjects, which, if adverted to abruptly at the outset, had fallen on ears entirely shut against their reception. He therefore dwelt on the indiscretion and unsafety of plunging headlong into rebellion, and the fearful results that would assuredly attend such as might take up arms against a power that, in the end, would put down every rank of opposition. And on this hypothesis, the speaker drew a picture of the distress that would ensue—the land filled with widows and the fatherless—men flying to the caves of the mountains, hiding from the offended and injured sovereign—estates, purchased by years of toil, confiscated to the government, their owners chased from end to end of the country, in want, in infamy, and perpetual banishment—or worse than all this, the heads of rebel subjects rotting over the doors of the temples of justice, or their bodies swinging from boughs of the forest, a prey to the vulture, the sport of the winds of Heaven, a terror to the sons and daughters of the land!

Taking advantage of the effects produced by these figures, he dwelt at much length on the power of the king, the number and bravery of his troops, trained un-

der the first commanders of the universe, and whose trophies had been won on the battle-fields of Europe. He also alluded to the acknowledged supremacy of the British navy, and the chain of English garrisons and military posts manned by their forces, and extending over the length and breadth of the land. Imboldened by the apparent success of his oratory, the speaker ventured an allusion to the flag.

"And yet," he cried, pointing to the banner, "in view of all this, what is it that madmen would have you do? Look on that emblem of discord, of rebellion, of blood! Who, of all those that have assisted in placing it there, will chose to stand here a year hence in irons, when its place shall be occupied by a gibbet? I wash my hands of the stain, my fellow-citizens, and protest before Heaven and to you that I hold myself guiltless of all evils that will fall on the heads of misguided men. No, no, my friends, let us rather invoke the spirit of peace than rouse from his slumbers the sanguinary demon of war. I think so *now*; you may think so when it is too late. *You* may think so, alas! when every thread of yonder floating bawble shall become the hangman's noose to take away your lives! Have we all gone mad, or are there some prudent men among us who will pull down an omen so boding of evil to us all?"

The orator paused. A sudden movement of a part of the crowd towards the object of his aversion plainly intimated that the fulfilment of his wishes was about to be accomplished. Another movement, however, stayed the impulse as suddenly as it had been awakened.

A youth, scarce past the season of boyhood, singly and alone, had rushed to the spot, and facing the approaching mass, stood on the little mound that had been heaped up at the base of the liberty pole. He was rather slight of figure, though well made, and showed a resolute and determined expression of face, more than making up for what might be regarded as deficient in stature and years. In each hand he held a cocked pistol, both of which he seemed bent upon using, and after what skill the advancing column evinced no anxiety to test.

"Back, back!" shouted he: "the man who approaches, dies!"

That so many should thus be checked by a solitary individual can only be accounted for on the grounds somewhere to be met with in print, that though but one or two could possibly be slain, yet each one of the advancing party was likely to suppose himself that very individual. Not a word, for a few moments, was uttered; the company, meanwhile, gazing upon this young stranger, whose face was wholly new to them all. He seemed in their eyes like a supernatural agent, dropped from the skies to

protect the banner they were intent on destroying.

"Blood," said he, at length, "will be the price of insult to this flag; any that choose to pay the forfeit will advance."

"Blood and ouns!" shouted Barney, as he snatched a cudgel from the hands of some one near him and leaped to the side of the youth, "but yer a clever sprig, whoever ye are! and if it's dying ye spake ov, I'll help ye on wid it, be me sowl!"

This movement of the Irishman was followed by Summers and a host of others, who, in point of numbers, soon exceeded the phalanx of the opposition, though inferior to them in point of military equipment. Seeing the turn that matters were likely to take by reason of the check given the advance of his gang, Colonel Dinning called out to them in tones of excited irritation to forward like men. The order was, however, not obeyed, and by this time it seemed impossible to set the current again in motion. The fever excited in their minds by his powers of rhetoric had, in a measure, cooled, and many, momentarily thrown off their guard, so much as to deem it better to remove the flag as a matter of policy, were now mustering in equal zeal with its defenders. Foiled, therefore, in his attempt, he shouted, while he leaped down from the platform, "Every lover of his fortune, his family, and his king, follow me!"

Here was to be the test vote. Many followed the lead with alacrity, others fell into the wake with hesitation. The number still was greater than the Whigs could have anticipated, and more than they were gratified at beholding. Knowing that there is ever, in public gatherings or in political communities, a floating mass which the greater body of a division draws to it by attractive influence, the patriots were not a little alarmed at the result. By small parties the crowd were continuing to pass over to the line of Colonel Dinning, until the current was effectually arrested by the successful, albeit not refined eloquence of Barney, who sang out at the top of his voice, "Trot over—trot over, ye double-faced, white-washed, rascal-ridden Tories! Trot over to the colonel, jist, ye flock of hamstrung wethers, ye. A swate lot of sneaking scoundrels, to be lid along like shape intil the devil's slaughter-house! and a nice bit ov news it'll be for yer wives and swatehearts to hear that ye shinned it off to the rid-coats, though the haper a loss it'll be to thim, ather, unless ye happen to come back alive agin. An ilegant company of blackguards, indade; brave soldiers yed be, too, I fancy, whin yer whole rabble were afraid ov the little lad here with an unloaded pistol! It's like the king will make boot-blacks of the whole squad. Troth!" he added, in huge disgust, "but may Satan fly away with yer cowardly

carcasses in a hand-basket! And by me fath!" said he, looking out along the street, "I'm not sartain but he's afther his own jist now, or otherwise I'm not knowing of him."

This speech dammed up the tide of desertion. Not a man more inclined to receive on his back the arrows of ridicule and denunciation, as he must have done in passing over the narrow strait separating the two factions. The last remark of Barney had reference to an incident, brought about, as it were, to quell the augmenting strife, if not the effusion of blood.

That which now attracted the notice of the belligerent ranks was a procession of boys, who, with a drum and fife in their van, were marching in solemn order towards the hotel, bearing some object aloft on the top of a pole. To this object, thus lifted into the air, the honours of the escort were apparently extended. The explanation of the riddle is simply this. Daddy Hokelander, closing his exercises in the barn at the commencement of the meeting, had concealed his violin beneath the hay in one of the mows. Being observed to do so by some of the boys, this musical Memnon of its owner's idolatry was dragged from its place of concealment and invested with a coat of tar and feathers. And thus, in mimic pomp of war, it was now made the hero of the martial escort, as already intimated.

Gazing at this feathered spectacle, for whose appearance they were unable to account, the ranks on either side measurably became forgetful of their animosities. The procession came steadily forward between the lines, where it came to a halt, and the music ceased playing. Daddy Hokelander himself, who, during the affray, had obtained a perch on one corner of the hotel stoop, was, as if by instinct, the first to detect the species of this new acquisition in the science of ornithology. Uttering a single note of despair, he bounded down from his perch and came to the rescue. The joke breaking upon the comprehension of the crowd, was at once claimed as public stock; and the zealous phrensy manifested by the poor fiddler to regain possession of his dishonoured instrument was encouraged by his old patrons crowding around him from all directions to mete out their mock condolences, and enjoy the eccentric demonstrations of his anger, his misery, and his folly. The approaching revolution even, whose throes already betokened a shock that ultimately dissevered the States from the English monarchy, was for a time, in this part of the Union, merged in this trifling incident.

It was sufficient for the purpose; the breathings of anger for the day were hushed. The parties, as if avoiding a second measurement of strength, like two champions of the ring doubtful of each other's

powers, were mutually disposed to let matters rest in their present situation. Ere the day closed, therefore, they had principally withdrawn from the scene of commotion; but not one of that assemblage was attended home with more desponding heart or crushed spirit than John Henderson. He had on that day been compelled to witness his eldest son ranged in the ranks of the opposition. Of this he had made no mention, but it weighed down upon his heart like a mountain of sorrow.

We add farther, that, in the confusion produced by Daddy Hokelander, the hero of the liberty pole had disappeared. Barney had sought for him in vain, to proffer the honour of his acquaintance and tender him the freedom of the district.

CHAPTER VII.

"And forth they wander'd, her sire being gone,
As I have said, upon an expedition."—BYRON.

The sun, whose mid-day beams had witnessed the scene of local strife at the Buck, was now throwing his last rays on the garden and pleasure-grounds attached to the mansion of Colonel Dinning. At this hallowed hour, when everything that is beautiful in nature invites us away from curtained halls and confined apartments, a young man and maiden were patrolling the avenues and shaded walks laid out between the dwelling and the banks of the Susquehannah. The young lady, well known to every resident of the valley as the colonel's daughter, was the quondam little Ruth, with whom the reader has already formed some acquaintance. But in the lapse of years, since the acquaintance was formed, she had changed from the child to the matured woman. That period, though not bestowing on her those extreme perfections, in point of personal charms, which the world are wont to esteem paramount to most other considerations, had, nevertheless, given her a comely and expressive face, a chaste development of form, and manners of simple and reserved dignity. It had, withal, stored her mind with a stock of valuable information, and gifted her with something of the lighter gloss of ordinary accomplishment.

Her attendant on this occasion was none other than he who had gained immortality in an hour: the bold defender of the flag at the liberty pole. Wandering arm in arm beneath the tall trees, whose shadows were now deepening in the gloom of night, they at length passed without the enclosure, and roamed along the pebbly beach of the river.

We will not pause to detail a conversation, which, from the mutually confidential tone it assumed, betokened that those who

partook in it shared deeply in its subject matter. Nor is it essential that reference be made to other incidents of that evening's stroll, justified, no doubt, from the long separation of the youthful pair. Immersed in the interchange of emotions, and perhaps unconscious that time stays not the regularity of his pace for the accommodation of mortals, two hours at least had passed ere they returned from the walk. Here they were not very agreeably surprised at perceiving Colonel Dinning leisurely walking with folded arms, amid the shrubbery of the garden. They parted, therefore, unseen by him, and the youth passed along the river's bank, with the view of gaining the public road beyond. The maiden crossed the enclosure, and approached the solitary muses.

"You walk late, my dear," said he, raising his eyes from the ground; "I was seeking you at the house."

"It is not *very* late, sir," said Ruth, placing her arm in his; "indeed, I scarcely expected you so soon. And what of the meeting at the Buck?"

"You have not been informed, then?" quietly demanded the gentleman.

"Indifferently," answered the young lady; "something about the matter of the violin, and the liberty pole, and so forth. All in all, it would seem you have had rather an unpleasant day of it."

"Yes, yes," responded he, "you say truly. We had indeed an unpleasant day of it. I would that I could see clearly the close of so unfavourable a beginning. Time, my child, must give us fairer suns ere long. But meanwhile, I fear we shall have to break with some whom we have before to-day called friends. It *was* an unpleasant time. It might have been otherwise; indeed, but for the foolhardiness of a strange brat of a boy (you will forgive me the word), it would have been. What nourishment this mad spirit of rebellion furnishes to babes and sucklings is more unaccountable than aught else. Yet there was to-day a wild young jackanapes who, with a single charge of lead, outbraved the best men on the ground. But for making war on boys, I could have spitted him on my sword as a scullion does a rabbit!"

"That might prove a hazardous warfare," replied Ruth, in tones of irony, besides tinctured, perhaps, with some little displeasure at the current of his remarks; "you cannot surely have forgotten Philip of Macedon and the starlings?"

"True, my learned historian," said the other; "and were the passage made applicable to goslings, I grant you its application."

"And yet, my dear sir," she replied, tightening her hold upon his arm, and looking with arch pleasantry in his face, "it seems, from your account, that this gosling had some little *game* in his composition. Me-

thinks he must have been a king-bird. However, excuse my ignorance in ornithology—I must take lessons of Daddy Hokegy—before setting up for bird wisdom."

This allusion to the mighty man of song and dance closed the dialogue, as, terminating their walk, they entered the house. In proper time the twain retired to their respective lodging apartments, albeit for different reasons, vainly to court, during a greater part of the night, that refreshment and repose which it is the prescribed province of slumber to afford.

We return to the hero of the liberty pole. Walter Henderson, some eight years anterior to the events last adverted to, had been absent from home. This time, therefore, during the lapse of which he had passed over the gulf between youth and manhood, was wholly spent abroad. His unlooked-for return, consequently, presented him before those who had known him only as a child, without the least clew to his identity. And when but just arrived on the day of the meeting, he had borne himself in a manner so chivalrous at the base of the liberty pole, it may not seem extraordinary that he was not recognised, particularly as the only two persons present who could have called him by name did not chance to see him. The hasty observations this opportune arrival at the meeting permitted him to make respecting the line of conduct pursued by the leaders of the opposition, may solve the mystery of his choosing to remain *incognito*, and for his hasty visit at the mansion of Colonel Dinning. We add, also, for the information of such as take interest in matters of the heart, that he had on sundry occasions made the post a vehicle of convenience in the transportation of his sentiments to the young lady.

Now emerging from the domains of Colonel Dinning and entering upon the highway, he had not proceeded far, ere it must be averred to his prejudice as a wary actor on the eve of a revolution, he was more observed than observing. Another individual travelling the same road, though in the contrary direction, had perceived his approach, and stepped behind a large tree to await his passing. This chanced to be his brother Charles, who but a few weeks prior had left him at the seminary. It was therefore with little difficulty that the one in ambush was enabled to recognise his brother, with whose air, step, and personal appearance he had been familiar from childhood. Suffering him to pass without word or congratulation, he stepped from his place of concealment, and moodily pursued his way in the direction of Colonel Dinning's. Walter, in the mean time, walked alertly onward towards the parental roof.

Eight years had wrought many changes on the surface of the country. Houses,

fields, and roads entirely new to him constantly appeared to his view. The Indian tribe had departed from the village of their former residence, and with receding steps gone deeper into the wilderness. At length, when not far from his father's house, he came to a small tenement, brilliantly illuminated by the glare of a pine-knot, and vocal with the sonorous vibrations of song. He was not long in recognising the voice of his old friend Barney, in strains of music poured forth in a style less dulcet than boisterous. Passing the window, he perceived this ancient crony with a child in his arms, rocking backward and forward in a chair, with as much earnestness and assiduity as though his life depended on the performance. The temptation of dropping in one moment to see his old friend could not be resisted; he therefore tapped gently at the door. It was opened by the matron, Peggy, who invited him to enter. Barney turned his head as he did so, and starting up from his seat, exclaimed, in unaffected enthusiasm, "On my living sowl! his very identical self! Troth! but ye're welcome. Peggy, darlint, take the young one till I lay howld of the gentleman's hand." And he did so with characteristic energy and delight.

"Be sated—be sated, yer honour," continued he, pushing to him one of the only two chairs of the apartment. "It's a great honour ye're doing me; and may I niver spake truth, but I'm the happiest man this side of the next world. Sorry am I to have been making such unchristian caterwauling, sir, over the babe, but I'm not much in the habit of singing by the scale, as your honour persaved, belike. The haper ov odds does it make to the young one though, so that it has enough ov the roor about it. Peggy, it's the brave young gentleman that stood up at the pole, ye mind. Gad, sir, but me heart has been hankering after ye iver since."

Peggy dropped her best courtesy in unison with Walter's salutation, who rose from his seat and gave her a respectful grasp of the hand. The heart of Barnabas fairly boiled over at witnessing this bestowal of courtesy on his spouse. It was yet more overcome when he patted the far-famed Patrick on the head, and, taking the baby in his arms, imprinted a kiss on its cheek.

"The devil fly away wid me now," murmured the Irishman to himself, "if it don't squaze the breath out of me! Indade, sir, ye'll pardon me, but in the respect ov true politeness, yer honour bates creation itself, from one end till the other."

"Not quite to that extent," said the guest; "however, I must confess an humble desire at all times to repay, with proper deportment, the favour of hospitality. It is natural for one's heart to warm when under an honest man's roof. Now if this

little fellow ever makes but half so true a patriot as his father, my notice of him will not have been unworthily given. I think you were the first man at my side to-day!"

"Ay," said the other, "and had been the first man to lave it last. The coward blackguards! I was a thrife in their debt for a bit ov cowl led in the morning. Ye'll recollect they kept a tight eye on me shelalah the while! I was wanting but a few flourishes ov the same to sind a dozen of them home with a bit ov headache in the calabash."

"Now, Barney," interposed the wife, "how you do go on! Maybe it's not agreeable to the gentleman. Take the baby, and don't tire out a body's patience with such fightin' stuff; and I'll set to and git some supper ready, for no doubt the gentleman is hungry."

"Troth! yes," responded her lord; "ye're in the right ov the matther, Peggy, and be about it immediately."

"No, no!" said Walter, "do not do so. I am much obliged, indeed; but I cannot suffer you the trouble."

"There's no throuble in the case," said the host.

"No!" remonstrated our young friend; "you will do me a favour not to think of it."

"Well, now," persisted Barney, "we've nothing very tempting to offer yer honour, but if you'll say the word, Peggy'll get what we have in a jerk or two, I'll warrant it. And ye'll not stand in the made ov a wilcome to ate all we have, and what's left beside, if it plases you."

The promised fare was, however, declined, and the conversation renewed by the visitor in some remark respecting Colonel Dinning.

"Yes," said Barney, "that was Colonel Dinning who prached so elegantly to thim all; but," lowering his tone, "barring and excepting always that he's a fast friend ov Peggy's here, I'm afther thinking that all he said was not law or sound gospel, ather. Ye'll recollect how he slavered thim oover wid the blarney, like?"

"Yes, I remember," said Walter, "a very crafty speaker; no doubt a shrewd, cunning man."

"Ye may say that same," replied the Irishman; "a cute chap, yer honour. He worms it intil ye like the point ov a gimlet. I'll warrant he knows the south side ov the heart from the north."

"He lives in some style, no doubt," said the guest.

"Be sure does he," Barney answered; "a thrifty gentleman; rides a good horse, shoots on the wing, and kapes iverything decent and proper in his house. It becomes me to spake well ov the accomplishments ov his household, yer honour," said he, glancing at his wife; "I've known some ov thim passing well meself."

"Ah!" replied the visitor.

"Ay, sir, I mane Peggy herself, that grew up under his patronage and protection, sir, till, as ye may say ov it, she took shelter under another vine and fig-tree."

"Indeed!" the young man answered to this piece of information: "I wish her both shelter of the tree and nourishment of the vine, then. But I presume, in taking her, you did not deprive the gentleman of his whole family."

"No," said the host; "fornent the wench ov a maid in the domestic apartments, that takes the place of Peggy, now that she's no more, and the stable boy, the chamber girl, and the farmer, and a few more, there's Miss Ruth."

"His daughter?" queried Walter.

"That's jist as yer honour plases," said Barney.

"How!" rejoined the other.

"Ye'll understand," said Barney, "it's not meself is going to make any discussion on the point. I call no man's female child his own daughter unadvisedly, by no manes, sir. If Miss Ruth is the colonel's child, why, thin, agreed, says I; and if so be that she is not, agreed, says I again; and that's the sum total ov the matther as to meself." This was said by Barney with accompanying nods of signification at his spouse, whose meaning was beyond the comprehension of the guest.

"And the mother of the young lady?" Walter suggested, with growing interest in the dialogue.

"Faith! yer honour, ye're putting the screws on tighter than iver," said Barney; "since it's a woman your fishing afther this time, maybe ye'd betther ask Peggy here. Ye'll not forget the saying ov 'set a thafe to catch a thafe,' hoping no offence to ye, darlint."

"I dare say your good lady will gratify me so far as that," remarked Walter to the matron, at the same time taking up Patrick and trotting him on his knee. "And what's the age of this little fellow, my good woman? It strikes me I have seen many worse geared youths than Patrick."

"And yer honour has taken a sort ov fancy to the cut ov his jib, thin?" said the happy father.

"As to his age, sir," put in the wife, "he's four years old next Ascension Day. I remember it well; for, you see, Mrs. Henderson looked right away at the almanac when he was born, and writ it all down in the Bible. And, furthermore, I mind, sir, eeny on as though it was but yesterday, Mrs. Henderson said she had jist got a letter from her son Walter, that's away to college now; and she said he'd be glad to hear of it, and she'd write to him afore long, and let him know all the particulars; and I've no doubt she did so, becase she's a woman of her word in every

way and shape; and, to this very hour, I never look at the dear child without thinkin' of her very words, for Walter was always a proper nice boy, and I know, a'most, he'll take to little Patrick."

"I've no doubt of it, madam," said the guest, in spite of himself a little moved by this trifle, "especially if he be of my sentiments."

"You are very good, sir, I must say," replied the heart-touched mother: "but you were sayin', a minute ago, you'd like to hear a word about Miss Ruth?"

"Ay; true," said he, with assumed indifference: "I think I did; you know her well, I suppose?"

"It's queer if I hadn't ought to," she answered, with an air of gratified consequence, and, smoothing down her apron, braced backward in her chair for a colloquial display, meanwhile prefacing her communication with a momentary silence and look of mysterious import.

"It's several year gone," began the wife, "that the colonel came to live in these here parts: and a fine-lookin' and fine-spoken man he was, too, as he is now, for that matter: and I myself kept his house fur him, and the like. It was a rather guess place then than it is now; sich awful swarms of bears, and painters, and Ingins, and other dreadful critters, that 'twas a'most as much as the vally of your precious life to step out o' door. Well, the colonel lived then where he does now (in the old house that's tore down at this time), purty much always buisey lookin' over deeds and bundles of papers with all manner of crooked marks and lines on 'em, and agoin' out into the woods with his compass, and chains, and Jacob's ladder, as I think he called it—"

"Jacob's staff, ye mane," interposed the husband; "it's not the Scripture instrument, ye'll bear in mind, Peggy."

"Well, well," said she, having no time to waste on matters so unimportant, "it was some sort of a surveyin' tool, at any rate. And so you see, sir, by runnin' a line here, and a line there, and a walk out this way, and that way, with his gun on his shoulder, the colonel got acquainted with all the Ingins hereaway, and with everybody else a'most. He was very purlite to the Ingins, you see, and many a glass of rum I give 'em with my own hand; so they made the colonel's house a sort of stoppin'-place when they travelled."

"Well, it happened, one night, jist as we was goin' to bed, and I was pinnin' up my curls in papers (bein' a little partic'lar in sich matters afore I was married), rap! rap! rap! went somebody at the door. So down I goes and opened it, and in comes a squaw that I had never laid eyes on afore in all my life, and a little Ingin gal about three or four year old only, and with a face

red as brick-dust. The squaw squatted down afore the fire, and the little gal, too, and sat there for some time warmin' their-selves. At last I up and spoke to her, and axed her if she and the little gal wanted to stay all night; but the dogs a bit could she understand a single word I said to her; but run on in the most outrageous sort of gibberish you ever heard on. As the colonel was abed, I couldn't think o' callin' to him up, so I give 'em a little somethin' to eat, and put 'em to sleep on a blanket or two on the kitchen floor; as you know, you can't get a squaw into a bed no way on airth."

"Well, about daybreak I heard the dreadfulest yellin' down below, so up I gits and peeps down into the kitchen, and there was the little Ingin gal all stark alone, and sich another ado and fuss she was makin' you never saw the like of. Then I went into the room to try to passify the little critter; but do you think I could do it! no more than I could fly to the moon! And when I went up near to take her on my lap, you mout as well try to git hold of a Jack-o'-Lantern, for she tore round the room jist like mad."

"Jasus! Peggy (begging yer honour's pardon)," said Barney; "it niver occurred to ye to surround her, did it? That's the way a betther man nor yerself took a dozen red-skins on a time."

"A pretty manœuvre in the military art, too, friend Barney, and the bold fellow well deserved a commission for it. But what farther, my dear madam?" inquired Walter, whose interest in the *denouement* of the wife's story was becoming somewhat absorbing.

"Well, I tried all I could to git hold of her arm, but she flopped out o' my hand like an eel. By-and-by the colonel, hearin' the racket, came down stairs to see what was up, so he spoke to the little thing in the Ingin tongue, and, would you think it? if she didn't come right up to him like a cossit lamb! You never seed any mortal thing take to another as it did to the colonel. So she soon come of her ravin' wildness, and settled down. Whether she took him to be an Ingin too, bekase he spoke the language, I can't say; but she was quiet when he was by. But the squaw had gone, and neither hide nor hair have we heard of her from that day to this."

The narrator paused.

"And that's all, my good woman, is it?" demanded Walter.

"Oh! I was on the pint of forgettin' another matter or two," said the woman; "how a body gits stupid sometimes. As I was sayin', jist afore breakfast time the colonel thought it best to have the little creetur rigged up a bit. So I got a basin of water to give her a cleanin'—as you know the Ingins don't trouble themselves

much in that way—and the colonel stood by to keep her passified. But, sir, as I put the water on her face and hands, I hope to die the very next minnit if the red didn't come a-streakin' and a-peelin' off till the water in the basin was jist like blood! The colonel's eyes fairly jumped out of his head with clean wonderment. And at last, sir, there stood one of the sweetest little things afore us with a face white as a lily, and eyes sparklin' as a coal. The colonel snatched her right up in his arms, and, from that very hour, I do believe, if he had fifty children of his own, he couldn't a-loved them half as much as her."

"A singular incident, indeed," remarked Walter; "and was there nothing about her person by which she could be known?"

"She was of a grand family, you may rely on that," said Mrs. Pike; "for, when I came to undress her for bed in the evening, I found she came from where gold grew, at any rate. There was a sort of little Ingin wallet under her clothes, hanging by a string from her neck. As I thought there could be no harm in jist lookin' in it, I did so, and there was a gold chain, with a locket, a brooch, and the splendidest pair of bracelets."

"Truly!" ejaculated Walter; "and what name was there on them?"

"The colonel looked and looked, but he couldn't find a sign of a name on 'em," said the wife.

"And how did he obtain her name, then?"

"The colonel gave the poor little critter a name," said the dame, "after a sister or a cousin of his, I believe."

"And what became of the ornaments?" asked the youth.

"They was carefully put away by the colonel," said the wife, "till Miss Ruth was old enough to wear 'em, and take care of 'em herself. And that she has done for some time past. I only wish you could see her, sir; a sweet, kind, good-tempered lady she is. So, then, you have the whole story now, and rather a queer one it is, too; for who on airth she is, or where she come from, goodness only knows."

In candour to the reader, and justice to the narrator of this tale, we are obliged to say that her story was, in a trifling matter or two, something defective. She omitted to make mention of a small item of jewelry found in the little maiden's wallet, and that was a gold ring. By some mischance on the part of Peggy, it was mislaid before Colonel Dinning came to an inspection of the trinkets, and was not, therefore, embraced in the inventory taken by him at the time. The last that Mrs. Pike saw of it was amid the stores of her own paraphernalia, and, omitting to make known this circumstance, it somehow happened that no one save herself, arrived at any knowledge of its existence.

CHAPTER VIII.

"What! gone without a word?"

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

We are obliged to retrograde. About the same hour that Walter was engaged in the interview with Ruth, one of a very different character was occurring elsewhere. His father, under weight of painful emotions, had returned a stricken man to his house. He sat in his parlour in company with but one other, his son Charles. It will not be essential to give the conversation in full that passed between them; we therefore take it up at such point as the exigency of our tale demands.

"I was under the impression you had taken your rifle away already," said the father.

"I did so," replied the son; "it was but some clothing I alluded to."

"You do not go to-night?" demanded the parent, with a tone of affectionate regard.

"Yes, sir," was the reply.

"And you return—when?"

"I don't exactly know," answered the son.

"You don't? Then I do not, of course," the other slowly responded. "My son, it is proper we should understand each other. I hope my relation to you may be some warrant for my speaking in plainness; it certainly compels me to the exercise of candour. I think you are now of age!"

"Yes, sir."

"You, perhaps, consider your education finished?" continued he.

"Yes, sir," replied the son.

"That far, you will probably allow, your parents have done well by you?"

"I suppose so," the other answered, indifferently.

"I suppose it is so," rejoined the father; "if it be otherwise, it will afford me pleasure to have the variance pointed out. For any lack of parental care, or kindness, or anxious concern for your welfare, at home or abroad, I am ready to atone, now or hereafter. Will you name the instance? You do not do so; I will hope it is beyond your power. If you leave me upon our present footing, justice and truth will bear

me out in saying we at least part square. It is true, for so many well-meant favours I might have preferred some claims to your gratitude. That, though, is not voluntary in the human heart, and, when not spontaneous, cultivation labours for its growth in vain. Have you anything more to ask at my hands?"

"I am not yet a beggar," was the surly reply; "besides, I know where to obtain without."

"We beg," returned the parent, "what is not our own. Anything I have which you deem yours of right, I suppose you will count it no dishonour to ask for?"

"I don't know that you have anything of mine," said Charles.

"Well, then, my son, I have but this to say: whatever I have bestowed upon you, from a purse never closed against your reasonable requirements, has been given freely as a father's heart and a father's hope could dictate. All the return required is that it may be to your honour and your happiness. That you should leave me unprovided with the means of beginning the game of life is alike unfair to you, and averse to my own inclinations. I will lay up no reproach against myself that a due portion of what I possess has been withheld from your interests and advancement. Before the sunset of to-morrow I shall remit to your order the available proceeds of one fourth part of my estate. I request you will inform me to what place I shall forward it."

"I shall be at Colonel Dinning's," was the short response.

"It shall be sent there," said the father. "Do well with it, my son. He of whom the Saviour spoke did not with freer hand divide to his offspring the portion that fell to his lot. Like his, the tenderest vibrations of my heart will follow you. Do not fear that the parent's yearnings for his first-born will ever forsake you in the hour of calamity. I would gladly say, in the words of Holy Writ, 'Son, thou art ever with me; all that I have is thine.'"

The anxious father covered his face with his hands, while the tears stole through his fingers and fell to the floor. Very different, however, was the effect on the impenetrable nature of the son. A donation so bounteous, attended, meanwhile, with emotions so fervent, awakened in his bosom no response of feeling, of gratitude, or of filial affection.

"There is but one matter more," resumed Henderson, regaining some portion of the composure whereof his remarks had bereft him; "I have done to you my duty; what can I do more? There is, then, a duty I owe the calls of my injured country. She has given me life, fortune, and the enjoyment of civil rights. In return, I am indebted to her for a firm adherence to her

cause, and the services of my arm. The exercise of these, which, with Heaven's permission, I feel it my duty to afford, will make it inconsistent for me to hold conference, save at the bayonet's point, with such as are her enemies. Recent circumstances oblige me, therefore, to ask you if I may presume you enlisted in the service of the British crown?"

"I am, sir," the son abruptly replied.

"Then our communications are at an end," said the father, rising from his seat. "Foes must we be, as such must we act. I would that God had spared me the pain of saying that my own roof can no longer shelter the issue of my own loins. Our business is closed."

Sullen and in silence the discarded youth arose and left the apartment. His father's face was turned from him as he went out. Thus terminated a conference exhibiting all that was fond, forgiving, liberal, and patriotic on the one side, and what was equally cold, morose, and unnatural on the other. But though it passed between the two alone, it had not escaped the vigilant ear of one who, in sickness and in health, in infancy and youth, joy and sorrow, had nurtured and watched over him. The mother, in an adjoining room, had been the unwilling and agonized auditor of every word that had been spoken.

The young man repaired to his chamber for the purpose of obtaining some articles of his apparel, which he designed just then to take with him. Coming down again, he passed quietly out over the paternal threshold, and bent his steps away. But his departure was, as yet, attended by another and more powerful appeal; one that momentarily thrilled him to the heart, nay, almost overwhelmed the wayward tendency of his purpose. As he passed through the gateway to enter on the highroad, he suddenly found himself encompassed by his mother's arms, who, hanging on his neck, wept in the overflowing fulness of her sorrow.

"My son! my dear son!" were the only broken expressions she could utter. Stunned for the instant by the suddenness and fervour of her embrace, the captive was on the point of answering the appeal, or falling a penitent at his mother's feet. A second thought, however, changed his purpose, and, taking hold of his mother's arms, he disencumbered himself of the restraint wherein they held him. Her hands fell to her side, and, for a moment, she bowed her face to the ground, as though the last cord of feeling had been severed by an act so severely repulsive. Looking up again, and placing her hands against his breast, she said, "Do not go! do not leave us thus!"

The young man stepped back, as though fearing again the subjugation of his resolve by the influences of her persuasion.

The very sympathy of her touch he deemed it wise to shun.

"I must go," said Charles.

"And why must you go, my dear son?" she earnestly inquired.

"I have promised to do so," he said; "I must keep my word."

"And can any word you have given be binding on you which, in its fulfilment, will estrange you from your parents, nay, destroy their peace forever?"

"But I have confirmed my promise by an oath," said the son.

"Oh! do not talk of oaths, dear Charles," replied she; "they are but the shackles of vain form, urged on you by designing men. Do not, I pray you, bow to the sanction of such poor mockeries as these."

"And would you have me perjured?" demanded the youth; "a laughing stock, a disgrace in the eyes of the world?"

"The laws of neither God nor man," said the mother, "will visit penalty or reproach on the breach of such vows as yours. It is not an obligation voluntarily assumed when youth and inexperience are snared in the toils of craft. Oaths, my son, forged in crime, and fettered on you by the hand of treachery, have little sanction to uphold them anywhere; the spirit of justice rends them as were the green withes by the strong man of Israel. Be not fearful of scorn and reproaches from the corrupt and vicious; those that lure you onward to the brink of danger, with smiles and false plaudits, would, did it suit their purpose best, throw you headlong down its steep. Oh! then return, my dearest son; come back with me to your father's side. The day shall not dawn that finds our hearts cold to you, and that whether it dawns in gladness or sorrow."

"Why, look you now, mother," said Charles; "suppose I do as you desire, what sort of reputation would it be building up for me? One thing yesterday—another to-day. It is the feather that the wind, in its changes, blows to every alternate point of the compass. And do you presume on your son's desire to have his name become the symbol of all that is fickle in undertaking and vacillating in execution? The honour of my family alone should forbid this."

"Do not make our honour," said the lady, "a stumbling-block to your feet. Our good or evil fame, my son, will little avail you in the path of error. It is to your own honour you will be most profited by looking; and the broadest charter for its acquirement is that sacred command that enjoins on us all obedience and honour to our parents."

"That may be; but there are other ways also," said the youth. "Men of commonable minds would count me a nice weathercock, to be turned by every breeze of ca-

price. What would such men as Colonel Dinning say of me?"

"What he may say of you," the lady replied, "I cannot answer for. The worst he may say of you, or any one, may be of little account. It is more the acts of men we are to stand in fear of than their words. And are you bound to respect the opinions of others more than the opinions of those who stand the nearest to you by the ties of blood?"

"Colonel Dinning's opinions, if it come to that, are as much to be regarded as anybody's. It is not long since that we should have had little difference on this point, I think," the son retorted.

"It is of trifling consequence," said the lady, "to grant or deny the truth of what you say. Circumstances, of late, have placed a broad gulf between him and us, and that he should at one time have been a friend, perhaps reconciles us with more regret to the separation."

"And who was it that dug that gulf?" demanded Charles, with energy; "a gulf so wide that the sovereign's arm can scarcely reach over it, even to the chastisement of his rebel subjects!"

"My son!" said the lady, with offended dignity, "an offspring's reverence, if not an offspring's pride, might well have stepped between your mother and a remark so offensive. Trials, though, have too much benumbed my spirit, otherwise it might be my duty to counsel you in the selection of fitter terms when speaking in my presence. But let it pass, I cannot chide. My love heals every wound you cause. May the God of Heaven avert the evils of a time that arms neighbour against neighbour, kindred against kindred, son against father! and the same Divine power that compassionated the Judean mother, and returned to her again the beloved one she had lost, restore you, also, my child, to the bosom of your stricken parents!"

Saying this, she moved towards him with her arms extended: her object was, however, defeated by his stepping quickly aside. Catching, though, his hand, she drew it quickly to her lips and impressed it with a fervent kiss. The son then drew his hand away, and rushing past her, was soon amid the shadows of night, buried in the distance. The afflicted mother gazed after him in silence; and when he was no longer to be seen, dropped her eyes to the earth, and stupified, as it were, by the blow, stood as though transformed to stone. After many minutes she slowly retired to the mansion, and Charles pursued his way, as intimated in the last chapter, to that of their opulent neighbour.

The unexpected arrival of Walter the same evening in some degree compensated the bereaved pair for the loss of his brother.

CHAPTER IX.

"Oh! but I love him! There's the rock will wreck me!"—ORWAY.

Much of the time spent by Charles Henderson in the valley, subsequent to his return from college, had been at the house of Colonel Dinning; necessarily in the society of his daughter. Every effort of which he was capable had been exerted to ingratiate the feelings and interest of the young lady in his favour; and Ruth, therefore inclined to bestow on the other brother a paramount share of her regard, had of late, it must be confessed, permitted the elder to occupy no inconsiderable portion of her thoughts. Her secluded location, where at that day society had not much to boast in point of extent or refinement, coupled with the assiduous attentions paid her, in manner, too, showing the utmost desire to please, had gained much on the natural candour and fairness of her disposition; thus running up an indebtedness against her for whose payment common gratitude became an urgent solicitor. In their frequent rambles upon the margin of the river, and rides amid the wild and romantic retreats, for which that valley is still celebrated, favourable opportunities were constantly occurring for the avowal of sentiments at all times deeply interesting to the youthful heart. Thus from one degree to another, Ruth, without directly encouraging, had yet permitted the discussion of these themes, until, with blushing cheek and downcast eye, she allowed her ear to be filled with declarations something impassioned in their character, together with many tributes to her charms, which, even if slightly at variance with her own convictions, were yet neither fatiguing in detail, nor the less relished for repetition.

The growth of this attachment bidding fair to ripen into mutuality, the young lady was fully aware, found favour in the eyes of her father. Any germe of affection which her bosom might, therefore, conceive for the young man, the warmth of this parental encouragement was necessarily calculated to urge into more expanded growth. The lustre of this growing flame chanced to be somewhat summarily dimmed by the arrival of the junior brother. Something like competition was, consequently, introduced in a market where a single bidder had wellnigh secured the entire stock, from the advantages of his monopoly. The walk on the evening of the preceding day had broken up the enchantment of this dream, so gradually weaving itself around the maiden's thoughts. She awoke from the delusion, and began to question her heart as to the tendencies it had, of late, given vent to. Her phantasies, which the may-around of agreeable fancies, whose gambols gave joy to sleep, now became

the haunt of other and more painful musings, which traversed her brain with ruder steps, and mocked her efforts at slumber.

Rather late in the morning that succeeded the already-mentioned interview with Walter, she arose, languid and unrefreshed, from her couch. Her father and Charles had ridden out on the execution of some errand connected with the events of the preceding day. It was ten in the morning, and they had not yet returned. Entering the hall alone, she sat down in a chair at a window overlooking the low flats which spread out along the course of the Susquehanna, and commanding a view of the western hills and mountains, now dressed in the glory of summer. In how many of the fair meadows she gazed on had she pursued the butterfly, and plucked the violets of spring, in more youthful days! They were happy, happy hours, and came back in rosy freshness over her recollection. And on many of the green hill-sides in view, attended by her youthful companions, had she roamed in search of the wild honeysuckle and berries of the winter-green.

Mingling with the contemplation of these objects came up the history of the past. Old thoughts and feelings, like birds in April, came back to nestle, as it were, in the nests of former seasons. And when she inquired the cause of this revolution a day had wrought in the current of her thoughts, what could it be but the return of one who had tarried long, but came back unchanged. A return, alas! that seemed, under the circumstances, to promise her little of happiness. A night of darkness and discord was gathering overhead. But, still, who can stay the impulses of the heart?

Seating herself at a guitar, she ran through some symphonies and preludes, as if unconscious of the strings she touched, or the harmony awakened by her skill. At length, accompanying the instrument with a voice of much sweetness, the maiden sung as follows:

The heart returns; the heart returns
Back to the realms of love and thee;
Its own sad prison-house it spurns,
And, fetterless, is flying free:
That bird swept not the waves more fleet
That sought the Persian olive-tree.

It lingers yet; it lingers yet
With pilgrim feet around that spot;
Where, deeply felt, can we forget,
Were vows of love; have we forgot?
Ask of thy heart, or mine, for both
Are thine alone; I claim them not.

Take back my heart; take back my heart,
I weary of its tuneless bent;
My bosom loins bids it depart,
And hasts away thine own to greet.
That bird swept back o'er waves less fleet
To rest at none nor wearied feet.

Finishing the last line, the lady rose from her seat, and at the door of the apartment,

in attitude of an absorbed listener, stood the object of her song.

"Walter!" she exclaimed, in a tone of surprise, and with a look of confusion betraying the existence of other emotions.

The young man, with recollection of the past evening in his mind, quickly advanced. His steps were, however, quite summarily arrested as the maiden resumed her seat and indulged herself in a burst of laughter.

"Why, now, Mr. Henderson," she said, meanwhile, to the astonished youth, and for the first time in her life dignifying him with this title, "were there ever such whimsical beings as you college-bred gallants! A lady is not permitted to hum over a bit of nonsense for one's idle amusement, but you must needs fly away to the moon on hearing it."

"How!" uttered the youth, struck almost dumb.

"Dear me!" the lady responded, in lackadaisical accent; "one would think you utterly demented! I had thought the sage wisdom of book lore capable of placing you far beyond the reach of trifling follies. But here you are, forsooth, struggling in the toils of such gossamer webs as a beetle would annihilate at one sweep of his wing. I could well find it in my heart, Mr. Henderson, to chastise your learned preceptors for sowing such idle flower-seeds in the soil of your understanding."

"Ruth!" began the swain, as though entering on the confines of an address replete with wonder, pathos, and admonition.

"Why, there it is again," interrupted the other; "one would think you grown prematurely old in the practices and plain dialect of the form-hating Quakers. Now humbler persons than yourself, more hampered by the observances of ceremony, have sometimes flattered me with the appellation of Miss Dinning. But these are matters of mere taste, I well know; and perhaps Mr. Henderson has found nothing in either classic tome (I think your sapient proficients term them), or black-letter volume (if I use the word in technical propriety), to make these rapid canons of etiquette compulsory."

"I do not know," said Walter, on whose crest the zephyr of this railleury began at length to elevate a few feathers, "that we were wont to quarrel in times past on the subject of either titles or forms of speech. Nor am I now disposed to combat your claims to any appellation it may best please you to assume."

This was something like the opening fire of a masked battery, and fell with the more effect on the assailable rank, that it had been both unexpected and provoked. The maiden gave way before a remark, whose point, she was led to apprehend, might be aimed against the uncertainty of her own origin. It was, however, the better manoeuvre, in

such emergency, to waive this subject, that was likely to promise so little triumph in the disputation, and she therefore resumed,

"Oh! I must disavow any desire to bring on a battle touching the matter of nomenclature. Ladies, you know, are poor actors in feats of chivalry of any kind. And I should promise myself trifling glory, indeed, were I to measure lances with one of whom I am favoured with accounts so flattering. Our sex are but lesser bodies in the human constellation, dependant on brighter masses for the few poor rays allotted us, by special favour, to reflect. And, furthermore, it may ill become me to play censor in matters of social intercourse until after in the practice of what inconsiderable acquirement in such, has fallen to my lot. You will pardon my delinquency, Mr. Henderson, and accept my prayer, late as it is in coming, that you will be seated."

"I do not know," replied Walter, with some show of sadness, "that I can do so. It would have been my greatest blessing once; but—"

"Mercy on us!" exclaimed the damsel, with ill-affected merriment; "why, you're enough to provoke the saints! Not sit down a moment? but I say you must sit down." And seizing his hand with rather more pressure by her own soft fingers than necessary for the purpose, she forced him into a chair. As she did so, her trembling lips and moist eye escaped Walter's observation; for he was, just at this moment, so perfectly bewildered, that he found himself in a sitting position without being able to tell exactly how he came so.

The young couple sat some time in silence. It seemed impossible to renew a conversation in which neither shared the least pleasure. At length the gentleman re-opened the session by touching on a theme at all times safe, that of music.

"You were singing," said he.

"Yes," replied Ruth; "and you were listening."

"I owe you an apology, Miss Dinning," said the other; "my approach was unwarranted. The doors being open, I was involuntarily drawn by the sound of your voice. I did not feel inclined to interrupt the song. Besides, old habits may have had some influence. I was forgetful of any changes since those days when early friendship paid no tribute to forms or fashions."

"Now pray, sir," said Ruth, with jocular persuasion, "don't suffer yourself to ride on these hobby-horses of sentiment; you don't know the danger to which it exposes one's nerves. My excellent despatch of the song was quite a sufficient inducement for the entrance; it is a no less flattering reason to myself, as ladies, you know, are never more highly complimented than in

offerings made to their accomplishments. Besides, I must beg of you not to waste a thought on the idle follies of childhood, which season is, as I may say, the fantastic gallopade of the equestrian corps, playing off their pranks of levity through the village streets before opening the doors at the general performance. After life always reflects back a smile of pity or a pang of painful humiliation on the childish indiscretions of youth."

"And other sentiments also," said Walter, "if your song be any index to your feelings. May I ask you to sing it again, Miss Dinning?"

"Miss Dinning," replied Ruth, echoing the term, with elevated brows: "you have become as formal as a leader of the corps-de-ballette!"

"Not of my own option, I think you will allow," said he.

"True, true; but I must say you have an admirable memory; I had forgotten. You admire the song?"

"Much," answered he.

"Indeed! Well, I think myself it is an indifferent piece, and so thinks also my maid of the chamber. Her evidences of sentiment and emotion are always evinced when I sing it in her hearing. Whether it be that the lines call to the surface of her recollection any little by-gones of the heart, I cannot say. Some Adonis of the stable, mayhap, or Leander of the pine-swamp, may hang upon the skirts of her remembrance. Now, would you believe it, Mr. Henderson, this same song was actually written by the pettifogger of a justice's court, and the music set to it by a blind fiddler, cobbler, and beggar from the gold coast! But, as you have had the benefit of it once to-day, perhaps you will permit me to substitute another in its stead?"

Walter assented; indeed, he was in a state of mind to assent to anything. He was mortified, chagrined, and sorrowful. This unkindness of levity wounded him to the heart's core. The young lady seated herself at the guitar, prepared to gratify the wish of her visitor. He was filled with astonishment as the performer, in those nasal tones, drawing accent, and horrible pronunciation of the English tongue common to the most unlettered country wench, began the song of "Barbary Allen." Drawing an occasional breath of portentous length, he sat regarding the singer as one wholly bereft of reason. It would be too offensive, even in requital of what he considered this ungenerous treatment, abruptly to leave the room. To hear out this old duty faithfully, in point of execution, as it was likely to be accomplished, he could not think of. Without uttering a word, he advanced to Ruth, and, taking her hands from the instrument, stayed farther indic-

tion of a sacrilege she was causing the sentiments of his heart, and the science of music. He held her hands in his, and stood gazing in her face with an air of anxious inquiry, as if to discover whether reason any longer held sway in her mind, or had abdicated its seat to madness and folly. Before he was aware of it, his brother and Colonel Dinning entered the apartment.

The latter bowed with haughty formality, and withdrew. Walter greeted his brother, and saying he had a message to deliver him, and had come over on that account, he made his obeisance to Ruth, and went with his brother into the hall. Placing the parcel his father had intrusted him with in his brother's possession, he shook him affectionately by the hand, and, with a feeling of positive relief, departed from the house.

Not a moment was he alone before he began to ruminate on this revolution of the wheel of his fortune. But a few hours had overturned his hopes, his dreams, and his anticipations of the future; and ere he had begun to fathom the causes which had probably led to these painful results, he was startled from his reveries by the laying hold of some one upon the rein of his bridle. It was Colonel Dinning.

"In a country of footpads, my young friend," said the latter, blandly, "you might find it necessary to be more watchful and less meditative. Both horse and purse might chance to part company with you as suddenly, and I may add, as effectually, as your caution of mind."

"The taker would profit little by the theft," said the youth: "purses are generally of dwarfish growth in these regions, and such specimens of horseflesh as this are by no means a *sine qua non* in any country. Were it Toby, I might hold different language. I esteem myself in slight danger here," he added, with a tone of irony: "if all highwaymen show the same forbearance on the road, they sometimes do courtesy under their roofs."

"I must receive the innuendo touching matters of roadcraft," said Colonel Dinning, "since it's a fish taken by my own troll; but your allusion to courtesy I cannot appropriate to myself. If my young friend looks to past time, he may find some difficulty in discovering reasons for the remark. If the allusion is to incidents of the present morning, he will grant me one allowance, that it is no part of the host's duty to intrude himself on the interviews of the young, even in his own house. This explains to Mr. Henderson, may I hope to his satisfaction, my reason for leaving the apartment as I did."

"I cannot quarrel with the reasons any man may have for the regulation of his own household," said Walter. "In pleasing yourself, therefore, you cannot offend me."

"I hope not, most truly," replied the other: "if your disparagement or injury was my aim, there is little doubt I could gratify the inclination in more ways than one."

"That is possible," returned the young man: "it may also be matter of doubt. We will leave its solution to the future."

"My young friend mistrusts my powers," said Colonel Dinning; "very humble persons may sometimes make their blows felt. The day of small things is not always the day to be scoffed at. On the other hand, my interposition as a friend might, under circumstances, be acceptable to one whose agitation of heart is not of idle moment."

This struck on a tender cord; the young man paused in silence. "Plainness," pursued the other, "though not policy, in the estimation of diplomats, may be so with friends. In conferring with such as have ever been regarded with high favour, we are permitted its use. If you hold differently, I stop on your intimation."

The speaker paused, and the youth at length replied, "The subject matter itself will betray what impropriety there is in its discussion when you come to name it."

"Well, then," said Colonel Dinning, "you will indulge me in a remark touching the interests of one very dear to me. The parent's heart, though cold to other considerations, is ever warm to the welfare and the happiness of the child. I have long since had occasion to know, and witnessed with much emotion, the prospects spreading out in the path of my daughter. Her prepossessions I have never restrained, nor her rights of communication abridged. It is idle for me to pretend that I am ignorant of the direction in which her thoughts are tending. It would be equally idle for my young friend to make the like pretension. But in my hand is held her destiny. I alone can give—alone withhold; and it would be a proud day with me to place the hand of the daughter and the purse of the parent in that of Walter Henderson."

"I can but say, in honesty," answered the young man, "that I am far from feeling displeasure at what you assert."

"I must add," continued the other, "on one condition—one to which the ambition of any youth may well aspire. Wealth, promotion, honour, are consequent upon it. All that is elevated in purpose, the soldier's laurel, the dignity of command, the plaudits of mankind, are its trophies."

"And that condition?" demanded Walter.

"Allegiance to the crown; loyalty to its sword."

"Be the first trodden in the dust, the latter driven through my body," said Walter, "ere I write my name to such a pledge! Colonel Dinning," continued he, after a moment's pause, "I find it in my heart to respect one so long the friend of my family, and, may

I add, myself; but your opinions I cannot respect, nor your proposition tolerate. It would be pleasing to discover some other motive for it than intimated by your words. My sentiments, therefore, relative to your daughter become a subject of superfluous remark when coupled with a condition so abhorrent to my feelings. I therefore depart my way, and leave you to pursue yours."

"One moment," said his companion; "neither of us may be the gainer by so much haste. I am sure one so noble in bearing and proud in spirit can find some motive for espousing the cause of right. Satisfied of error, I well know your generosity of nature will make you an equally bold defender of the sovereign, as you are now an active participator with those who rise up against him."

"I cannot listen," said the other; "my sense of duty forbids me. There is no offer, no argument, no price within your power will buy me."

"Then you will bear in mind," said the elder, "that you are in a country of laws. These are administered in different ways. It is sometimes their policy to reward, at others to punish. Those not reached by the former are sometimes overtaken by the latter method."

"I care not," replied the young man, "after which mode you seek to exert dominion. Punishments hurt not, at least, in the threatening. Whoever attempts, without license, to become their executioner, assumes the office, accompanied with whatever responsibilities may attend it."

"It is an office," said the elder, "whose discharge I am not ambitious of aspiring to. When the engines of punishment are brought to bear upon the bodies of traitors, it is not to be doubted that executioners will be found suited to the rank and deserts of the victims."

"I hold in scorn," returned Walter, "the tenour of an insinuation natural but to the soil of vulgar minds. I hold in equal scorn the advocacy of a cause which humbles itself to temptation and bribes for the enlistment of its supporters."

"You are but a tender plant, young man," said the other; "and these ebullitions of mock valour, like your giddy notions of patriotism, are excusable on grounds of inexperience. Time, that arms your chin with more of beard, will also store your mind, I trust, with a better stock of ideas. I cast you off to follow the bent of your own inclinations; but mark me, my young friend, a day will come when this reckless course of rebellion will hang like a millstone at your neck, and the hand you are now spurning may be the only hand that might snatch you from the impending weight. I repeat, the day will come when this fair valley, swept by the blast of war, shall become as

that the prophet saw, covered by the dry bones of slaughtered rebels!"

"Ay," said Walter, as he moved from the spot; "and your valley of dry bones, like those of the prophet, may rise again in martial ranks, an array whose arms shall bristle round the throne, and purge the land of those who stop not to imbrue their hands in the blood of friend and neighbour."

We go back to Ruth. As soon as her lover had departed, she repaired to her chamber. The part she had acted with much effect had been at the cost of much exertion. When over, the relapse into which her spirits sank was yet more painful. On her couch she did ample penance for the cruelties practised on one whose honourable bearing called for a more suitable response. Dwelling long on the contemplation of the subject, and inwardly stricken with a consciousness of moral guilt, she arose and wrote a letter. As a type of her real feelings, we quote it in full.

"I cannot rest in this state of torture. I feel bound to make you amends for my levity and folly. My heart reproaches me in terms so loud, I cannot endure it longer; I am sure you would pity me, rather than blame, could you be sensible of my agony. But one short day after our happy meeting, and how changed must I have seemed to you!"

"But I am not changed; my love for you is the same it has ever been. And how fondly I have cherished each word of yours, each trifling present you ever gave me, you can never know. How many dreams of you at night, how many hours of thought by day! How happy was I in your return!"

"But the clouds of this dreadful period, cast over the land, seemed to blot out every hope of our connexion, to bar every hope of our happiness in the future. Hence I strove to conquer the love I entertained for you. My efforts were unavailing. I cannot love you less."

"You know not the difficult part I have had to play; if you did, I am sure you would pardon me. So many objections continually thrown in my way, so many cruel epithets cast on your name in my hearing. And my thoughts of making others unhappy; those too, on whom I am dependant, and to whom I owe so much. Alas! how much have I suffered for your sake, how much more I suffer now! For now a new pang is inflicted, the thought of having forfeited all claim to your affection. But though forfeited forever, I must still force on you the profession of my own love, though even not requited. You cannot debar me one consolation, the relief felt in this penitent humiliation, of a still loving heart. I cannot add more to this page; it is already overclouded with my

sorrow. I could not say less. If you have doubted my affection for you, dearest, do not doubt me again. I am still, as I have ever been,

"Your own

"RUTH."

Ere the young lady had closed this picture of her distress, she had difficulty in tracing her pen over its lines, from the glimmering obstructions placed by her tears between them and her eyes. Folding this epistle, so perfect a transcription of her heart, she sat in silence. Opening the letter, she read it carefully through, folded it again, and laid it on her desk. Then for a long time mused at the window of her chamber. Again the epistle was perused—reperused, and pondered over. It was finally sealed and placed in her bosom. Another long interval of absorbing thought, as she reclined on her pillow. The mental trial closed; arising, she took the letter from her bosom, broke the seal, and ran over its contents, then threw it in the flames. With anxious face regarding the progress of its combustion, she stood watching it until the last cinder disappeared.

CHAPTER X.

"Fell Ate's shriek the world alarms!"

Bellona bellows, 'Arms! to arms!'

FESSENDEN.

BEFORE our wo-befallen swain had reached his home, his attention was called from the contemplation of Cupid and his small arms, to Mars, accoutred for service in a far more sanguinary field. Reaching the top of a small eminence, both senses of eye and ear apprized him that the god of slaughter had been busy with men. The tide he had put in motion was rolling towards him. A column of armed men, preceded by music, advanced at what, in military phrase, is called double-quick time. The nearer approach of the phalanx discovered to the wondering youth some faces with which he was familiar. The soldiery were led forward by Barnabas, who, invested with the honour of command, was marching beneath his laurels with the utmost show of military pomp. His sword carried as erectly as possible, his face set forward with a savage expression; he brought his left foot to the ground in time to the music, after such manner as might have been appalling to the eye of an enemy. After him came a sifer and a drummer, the first blowing like a northwester in the hole of his instrument; the latter, belabouring his drum with blows as vigorously applied as if each of them was designed to knock out the brains of every foe to freedom. Their fellow-labourer

was that distinguished son of Orpheus, to whom the reader was introduced at the Buck, Daddy Hokelander. Having rescued his fiddle from the thrall of infamy it had the day past fallen into, it was now aiding in the creation of martial harmony. But with what enhancement of concord or observance of the rules of time, may be considered a little questionable, since, whatever transition from one tune to another was made by the other players, Daddy Hokelander uniformly adhered to his own, that of "Hunt the Squirrel," the only one, indeed, he was capable of executing. And from this he could not have been shaken, had it been necessary, with the others, to play a dead march. The tremendous sweeps and slashes he made over the sounding catgut were, no doubt, greatly to the inspiring of his followers.

The corps of infantry had little, in point of appearance, to afford them rank with troops of the line. A sad discrepancy of arms, where rifles, muskets, shot-guns, and fowling-pieces were mingled; their step, which in the cases of many did violence to the time of the band; their dresses, by no means uniform, some wearing straw hats, and some woollen, some with coats, others without, and many without shoes, constituted, altogether, that whereon a commander of more pride than Barnabas would scarce be like to plume himself.

As this array came up to the young collegian, Barney, though recognising him, had far too much regard of strict discipline to salute him while on march. Therefore, moving his line by an oblique step to the side of the road, he gave the order to halt.

"Plase to stop the clather of the drum a minute; close rank! asey, asey, in the rear; kape time, lads. Howld up that gun straiter there, ye blackguard; where's yer eyes gone to, man! Front face! Gad! do ye call that yer front face, Bill Sites! I've no fancy to see yer rear face, if it's worse nor that; bring your front face round to the rear, and your rear face to the front, ye lubber! Order arms! down with your irons, you there again, Bill Sites! why don't you bring down your owld shot-gun all at once, ye spalpeen! Rest! there, now, kape silence in the ranks. Yer humble sarvent," continued he, bowing to Walter. "It's sorry I am to kape ye waiting so long; but the discipline, you know, must be observed in the sarvice."

"That is true, friend Barney," replied the one addressed; "but what service is this you are on?"

"Sure, but ye've heard the news!" inquired Barney.

"No news to-day," replied Walter.

"Bless yer sowl, is it so indade! Why, the whole matther is settled, sir, like a sum

in the arithmetic; all right and tight as a drumhead. The Congress did it, and it's all over."

"And what is over?" asked the other.

"Why, the government, jist, and the king, bad luck to him. The Congress has put him down at last, and his whole court, the ministers, and the judges, the Parliament-spouters, and the chaps with the wigs and tails. Ye see, the Congress passed a sort of an act of Parliament to give freedom to every man in the world, and called the British enemies in pace, and in war friends, as the paper rades, I believe. So that gives us lave to kill ivery redcoat hereaway, and thin kape him in safe custody till he changes his principles for the better."

"I don't exactly understand you, Barney," said Walter.

"It's the Declaration of Independence," said a man in the ranks.

"Silence, ye hound!" roared the captain; "what do you know about kingdoms and Parliaments! The devil bit more of a tongue should a private have in his head nor a post in the ground. If ye spake again, I'll have the gag-law put in force, and open your mouth wider nor ye fancy."

"And how came this news to hand?" asked Walter.

"Brought post this morning," said Barnabas; "yer father read the paper aloud, and good would it do ye to see how it whips it intil 'em, right and left, oover and under, hip and thigh, like an Irish tay party. So we're on the march to kidnap the rank Tory forment this away up yonder, Colonel Dinning, and his nest of pirates. And happy am I to present my sword till ye, and invest ye wid the command in chafe of the army here."

And hereupon the Irishman advanced to Walter with the hilt of his sword presented in military form. The honour of the elevation to chief command of the expedition was, however, refused. Aside from the lawless purpose of the campaign, the youth entertained some feelings of repugnance at the idea of storming a fortress, one of whose inmates it was not his inclination to encumber with the terrors and dangers of a siege. He therefore attempted to dissuade the party from carrying into effect the object they had in view. It was, however, in vain, and the leader, placing himself again at the head of the line, set forward at the tap of the drum. As the corps passed Walter, he witnessed an exhibition of pomp, before unobserved, in the last of the heroes who closed the column. This was Doctor Jaws, holding the rank of surgeon to the regiment. From the two immense bags slung over his shoulders, one unacquainted with his profession might have mistaken him for the baggage-wagon.

Musing, as he rode forward, on what might probably be the consequences of this mad

enterprise, Walter finally concluded to return, and, if possible, arrest its progress, or, so far as he was able, prevent the extreme mischiefs it might lead to.

Meanwhile, from his window, as the body came into view, the hated object of the expedition beheld its advance. There was no difficulty in divining its purpose. Therefore, closing the entrances to his mansion, and summoning his retainers about him, he put matters in such order for action as the shortness of time allowed. The fire-arms were charged, and holes bored through the window-shutters and doors to permit the use of musketry. The females, whose aid could not be relied on, and whose safety demanded the care of the besieged, were directed to retire into the cellar. A servant was also despatched to the nearest of the neighbours friendly to Colonel Dinning, some of whom came to his relief.

Barney halted his forces when within some two hundred paces of the house, where he designed to leave them until he demanded a surrender. Tying a white handkerchief on the point of his sword as typical of a flag of truce, he stepped forward towards the house in person, unwilling to trust the execution of this delicate bit of diplomacy to those of inexperience. He was, however, detained a moment ere he had gone far by the surgeon of the corps, who hobbled after him to impart an item of precaution.

"Jist tell 'em for me, Barney," he said. "that if things come to the wust in this here business, that they needn't be afeerd of anything very dangerous, as Doctor Jaws is here, well supplied with lint and tourniquets, and all manner of surgery-tools, and a large passel of boneset; and that they needn't be afeerd of gotten cut or stuck, not in the least, Barney, tell 'em so. And give my love to Miss Ruth, Barney, and jist tell her it mayn't be easy for me to prevent any outward scarifications she may git, such as a slit ear, a mashed nose, or a broken jaw, or the like; but she needn't be skeered about anything fatal."

"Get away wid ye," said the other; "what the deuse have we to do wid split ears or broken snouts now?"

"And oh! Barney," persisted the medical man, "if Colonel Dinning axes arter me, tell him I was comin' over this evening, any how. I've got a first-rate mix of fourth-proof, red pepper, and sperrets of turpentine for his gout; or you may take it with you, Barney," said he, beginning to fumble among the contents of one of his sacks.

"To the devil wid yer turpentine and pepper-pods!" said the impatient soldier; "what's the use of your wasting pills and poulters on a man, this identical moment as good as stone dead? I'll give him a dose forment an hour, docthor, that'll stick

in his gullet till the crows pick it out for him;" and he marched forward with strides of ill-assumed dignity beneath his flag of truce. Arrived before the mansion, whose barred doors and closed casements denied him sight of any one within, he pulled off his hat and made a low obeisance.

"In the name of the United States ov all the Américas," began the proclamation, "I, Barnabas Pike, yeoman, or spinster, or whatever ye please to call it, demand the surrender of this same stronghold of Tories, and the inmates of the paple. So, therefore, if Colonel Dinning is within, and manes to defend the place, that's enough, and he needn't say a word in reply. But, on the other hand, if Colonel Dinning is not at home, jist let him come forth and say so, like a man and a Christian. Now ye understand the tarrums. Is Colonel Dinning at home, thiin?"

"It's all fair so far," continued he, after a pause: "as he don't answer, he says he is at home, ov coorse, seeing that if he had not been, the devil a doubt at all but as a brave man he'd ov said so. Well, then," with an elevated tone, "he'll please to see the troops under my command, and surrender at once, or by the powers! I bring iver-y mother's son ov thim to the slaughter ov this building; and all the blading and spilling ov blood that may come ov it be upon yer own obstinate heads, I say, for it is no crime ov my own, seeing that I have nothing to do with it."

"If ye deliver up the keys of the fortress, and let the army within the walls, nothing more do they ask ov ye; and it's the word of a soldier I pledge, that not a sowl ov thim will pass the step-stone of yer doorway; but otherwise, the haper a stone shall be left standing the one top ov another by the setting ov the sun. But if you give up like men, lay down your arms, disband your Tories, quit the counthry, and niver show yer faces here again, you shall all come off clear."

The only answer made this threatening manifesto from the fort was the discharge of a musket, the ball from which struck the ground a few feet before the Irishman, and ploughing up the dust and turf it fell upon, scattered a portion of the same in his face. The ball itself, deadened by the concussion, yet had sufficient momentum, as it rebounded, to inflict a slight wound on the cheek of the herald. Waving his flag a moment in defiance of the leaguered party, he wheeled and marched with the same air of deliberation to his company with which he had advanced. The little stream of blood that, in the mean time, trickled down from his cheek was the first which, in this district, had flown for his adopted country.

Colonel Dinning, with a dozen persons about him, armed in a manner far superior to the assailants, and secured from danger

by the walls of his house, felt himself able to resist an attack, which, though made by a party numbering a hundred strong, were thus placed at signal disadvantage. Stationing his small force in different parts of the mansion, so as to guard every place where it was likely attempt would be made to effect an entrance, he waited the issue. His suspense was of short duration, as the besiegers, having surrounded the building, commenced the assault. The fine shot, therefore, with which many of their pieces were charged, unattended with anything more effective than the harmless clattering they made against the wood-work, now poured upon the fortress. Some of the musket and rifle balls, however, forced their way through the shutters, and lodged half buried in the opposite walls, or rolled harmlessly across the floors. The shouting and hum of voices, in the mean time, mingled with the report of fire-arms; and loudest of these might be distinguished those of the leader, who had possessed his mind with lofty ideas of what he was about to accomplish.

Those within were not idle. Placing the muzzles of their pieces in the apertures made for that purpose, they returned the fire with far better chances of effect. Secured from the lead of Barney's forces, they were enabled to see those without, and make them objects of their aim.

The Whigs for some time fired from a respectful distance, levelling their pieces from behind trees and fences, or such objects as might shield them from the balls of the defenders. But these cautionary measures subsiding, they began to expose themselves more in the open grounds, an indiscretion which resulted in the fall of three or four of their number, badly, though not mortally, wounded. This aroused the Whigs to feelings of high exasperation, who resolved upon taking the post, at all hazards, by storm. The leader took his measures accordingly. The guns were all charged. A movement indicating a retreat was resorted to, and, as expected, when the body moved from the grounds, every gun from the building was discharged after them. The whole force immediately turned about, and, regardless of order, ran with all speed towards the house. Barney headed the tumultuous corps with a large maul in his hand, immediately followed by two more, one with an axe, and the other with a crow-bar. With these it was designed to break an entrance through the door ere the defenders could have leisure to reload their guns. When the assailants were within but a few paces of the portal, the door immediately over it, leading to the portico above, suddenly opened, and Ruth, with her head uncovered, and wearing a white dress, stepped forth to the railing. Crossing her

hands, she stood before them in silence. The besiegers paused in their career; and losing the fierce expressions of their countenances, gave back, as it were, before the rebuke of her sorrowful gaze.

"Who is it you seek to destroy," said the maiden, in calm and plaintive tones, "by means so lawless and so murderous? It cannot be that judge or magistrate, or other minister of justice, has sent you to the commission of this dreadful act. If you have authority of law to commit slaughter of this household, produce your warrant, and I unbar the doors at your bidding. If, unhappily, it is I who has offended any one of you, let him now speak, and his wrong shall be righted. Who of you has ever entered this house needing either food or clothing? Let him answer who left it in hunger or unclad. When was the time that I, or any one of this dwelling, wronged the dependant, defrauded the hireling, oppressed the poor, or turned away the beggar even, without loaf in his pack and a coin in his pocket? If such there be, my memory plays me false."

"And can you name the time, Barney Pike," she continued, with glowing cheeks, "that Ruth Dinning ever wronged you or yours, in word or deed; or that she ever spoke of you, in your own hearing or elsewhere, save in terms of compliment to your goodness of heart, and in praise of your civility? Does it seem likely she would thus have acted to the injury of one whose wife she has visited as a neighbour, and whose children she ever received at this door with the kiss of friendship? nay, who never departed without bearing presents with them home. And when she watched over you, Barney, yon winter's night that sad mischance had stretched you on the bed of agony, and brought wines to revive you, and pillows to soften your couch; was it then in your heart to beset her door with weapons of death, and stain the halls of this tenement with the heart's blood of those who ever bade you welcome within them?"

"Cuss me for a tarnal fool!" ejaculated Bill Sites, who had listened to this address with his mouth wide open: "I always thought I was a fool, any how! There!" continued he, slinging his old shot-gun to the ground with a force that severed stock from barrel. "may I be shot, skinned, and hung up to dry if I ever draw trigger on house or barn, stockade or barrack, if Miss Ruth is within two miles of it! Barney, it won't do—I tell you, it won't do; Loyalist, Tory, rebel, Bunker Hill, or the devil himself, it won't do. You're a heathen Turk, arter Miss Ruth has nussed you like a mother, to cum here like a wild Arab to kill her and her family. She's an angel, I say—a pure, spotless angel. My heart melts down like a snow-

ball to look at her. She's always kind to the poor, and may God bless her for it. I know it, Barney, for she's bin in my cabin many a day when sickness was there. She always came with a gift in her hand and a blessing on her tongue, and left it with a tear in her eye, sweet lady! I love her as I do the angels in heaven; and I hope to die the next minnit that I ever harm a hair of her head," he spoke, while the tears rolled down his cheeks in right good earnest.

"I don't want to make a fool o' myself," he added, half choked with emotion, "but this I'll say, it does me more good to cry for Miss Ruth, now that trouble has come upon her, than if I'd found a thousand pound note. And so long as she stands up there lookin' so sad, I'll fight for her while I've a drop of blood in my body. Kase she never wronged any one in her life, and my heart feels for her in this time of distress."

Bill Sites was not the only one of the party whose eyes were moistened by the appeal of the damsel, for many of them were equally debtors to her charities of the past. The leader himself, scratching his head in the bewildered state of his ideas, felt the power of the harangue, as well as the honest supplement to it, of Sites.

"Hang it," muttered he; "I don't mind their bullets and powther, but it's a brave man any day ov the yare, to stand afoor the like ov a woman's tongue."

"Let me pray you depart, good neighbours," said Ruth; "if it must be that you stay here with arms of death in your hands; or, if you choose to enter as heretofore, in peace, there is nothing in either larder or vault shall be denied your entertainment. No, no," she added, as her eye fell upon one before unobserved, who stood beneath a large tree not far from the spot; "no. It is in vain I counsel you to stay the shedding of our blood. Were you the only actors in the tragedy, I might hope to win my way to your honest hearts, and melt down the spirit of your anger. But others, I perceive, take part behind the curtain, and work with unseen hand this dreadful game of blood. I hope no more. Let the blow fall; coming from that hand," said the maiden, pointing to Walter as she turned to enter the door, "I bow to it without murmur."

The young man sprang forward with eager swiftness to disavow the imputation, but the door had closed. No sooner, however, did he thus appear than a voice resounded within, "Down with the stripling rebel! fire—fire upon him, lads!" The stunning report of half a dozen muskets, simultaneously discharged, answered the order. A volume of dense smoke rolled

away from the door, and spread itself between it and the band of assailants. A loud cry of distress succeeded the volley without; a shriek no less agonized echoed through the chambers within.

"Drag in the rebellious hind!" shouted Colonel Dinning, opening the door: "a hundred pounds for his carcass! Give me that, brave fellows, and your shot may rattle around me until doomsday."

Three or four of the inmates rushing out, soon returned, without any interruption on the part of the assailants, bearing the body of the victim literally covered with gore. Hastily drawing it within, they were ordered to convey it to a vault in the cellar—an order issued by the master of the house as he bolted the door. The command was obeyed; and the burden, deposited, was left under bolt and bar in the utter darkness of the walled apartment.

This single volley aimed at the youthful patriot, besides taking effect as above intimated, seemed destined to be the harbingers of duplicate disaster. Pursuing its errand of mischief even farther, the second infliction gave rise to a clamorous wail, far exceeding that already mentioned. The tenants of the mansion, as well as Barney and his followers, were stunned by the dread notes of misery ringing in their ears. When the lazy mass of smoke cleared away from before the portal, Doctor Jaws was discovered in eager display of professional alacrity, as, rubbing his hands with enthusiasm, he figured about one of the band.

These demonstrations of the doctor bore reference to our musical friend, Daddy Hokelander, who, with pitiful distortion of face, held in his uplifted hand the neck and shattered body of his fiddle. A luckless bullet of this broadside, so prolific of destruction and dismay, had struck the instrument of the artist, and sent its splinters, bridge, sounding-post, and strings flying in the faces of the trio. No other fell swoop could have been so appalling to the owner. The wound of yesterday, as yet scarce healed, was more than broken again by this fatality. It was, however, not without its good effect on others. It melted down the heat and ferocity of the mob, producing some emotions of good humour in the breasts of all, save, perhaps, the physician, baffled, as he felt himself to be, on the very verge of a surgical operation.

After some time spent with the distressed fiddler, who stoutly refused to be comforted, the conversation turned upon the siege. The impressions made on the heart by the appeal of Ruth were, with not a few, strongly impelling them to the advocacy of its abandonment.

CHAPTER XI.

"Entellus, stout as Hob the giant,
Made horrid work, you may rely on't;
Exceeding mightiest verse or prose deed,
Knock'd out two teeth, and made his nose bleed!"
Terrible Tractoration.

At evening, when peace prevailed again in the attacked mansion, a table was spread in the hall, and the owner had summoned the inmates—such, at least, as the statutes of fashion excluded not from the first course—to play their parts severally with knife and fork, as they had so lately done with sword and musket. The table, well laden with wholesome and hardy fare, presented a spectacle attractive to the contemplation of such as brought to it appetites well sharpened by abstinence, or rendered keen by the fumes of gunpowder. A goodly plate of venison, hot and smoking from the embers, was placed before the host at the upper end of the board, another of fried bear's meat near the centre, while ham and beef were not wanting to the entertainment. Various kinds of liquors also were on the table, with glasses proportioned to the number of guests. Tea and coffee were at a side table, subject to the order of any that might prefer them.

On one side of the host sat Charles Henderson, flushed with the excitement of the action; on his other hand was an empty seat, that appropriated to Ruth. Down the sides were those so suddenly summoned from the neighbourhood to defend the house. Ere any one, however, had been permitted, by example of the host, to begin the repast, he inquired of one of the menials for his daughter. The servant replied that Miss Ruth was not well, and had sent her excuses for not appearing at table.

"Pooh!" said Colonel Dinning; "these women are ever more frightened by the report of a pocket pistol than they have either rhyme or reason to show for."

"Begging you pardon, sir," answered one of the company, "I must say for Miss Ruth that she is not so easily frightened by gunpowder, either. I mind her doing duty on the outside of the fort, while the rest of us felt hardly safe on the inside of it."

"True, that," said another; "but for her, we might have had something rougher to deal with than rifle balls. She stopped the war of maul and sledges."

"Go to your mistress," said the gentleman of the house to one of the female domestics, "and say it is my pleasure to see her in our company—that is, if it be possible for her to come."

The servant obeyed, but soon returned with answer that it was impossible. Her mistress was lying down, and much indisposed.

"Charles," said the colonel, "see that

the gentlemen are all helped; do not wait longer. I must go myself to Ruth."

The company lost no time in obeying the direction. The venison, the bear's meat, and other viands disappeared like dew at the rising of the sun. And the glasses having been a few times emptied, a valorous feeling arose, and the defenders of the fortress fought over again the action of the afternoon. One dilated on the excellence of his piece, that, in his hands, had never missed its mark. Another had been a mighty Nimrod, and entertained the company with account, circumstantial and in minute detail, of his last fall's hunt. A third levelled the knife with which he did fatal execution to a dish of bear's meat, and, closing an eye, illustrated the manner of levelling his gun at that rampageous young rebel, Wat Henderson; at the same time offering to bet half a barrel of salt shad that, if they would take the trouble to go down into the vault and examine him, they would find a ball-hole directly under the point of the brisket-bone: that was the spot he drew upon. A fourth feaster swore in good English numbers, and brought down the heft of his table-fork to enforce the remark, that the "colonel's darter was the primest, slickest, and most spunkiest gal he ever knowed;" and he wished himself several times (where he was, indeed, likely some time to be), if he "didn't karculate her one of the de-centest little wimmin to make a wife on in all them clearins."

The entrance of Colonel Dinning at this moment put an end to this encomium on the lady, much to the relief of Charles, who began to feel himself an embarrassed listener. When his host took his seat again, the young man, with a glance of inquiry at the features of his face, sought for the particulars of an interview to himself so interesting. His effort was not favoured with success, as his older companion, with practiced habits of manner, threw off all appearances of disquiet, and addressed himself with urbanity to the entertainment of his company.

"Friend Charles," said he, "let me fill your glass; brave fellows, fill yours. After a great victory, some little cheer is the soldier's undoubted right. Let me offer you a sentiment; now, all ready—The crown and the musket: the latter in the hand of loyalty secures the former on the head of royalty."

"Fast-rate!" ejaculated Luke Tanner, the eulogist of Ruth, whose large goggle eyes were humid with delight as he drained the last drop from his glass, and blurted out the acclamation ere it was fairly down his throat.

"A fact," responded the Nimrod of the party; "muskiits is, arter all, the thing fur the crown; and if the king wants to

keep himself plump and perpendicular in his seat, like a chickeree on a limb, he must rely on muskits: or," added he, pausing a little, "rifles—rifles with the windin' cut—aint slow. Now, my old gun, as I call her, has the twistin' bore, and she teares a hole through a pine board that you mout stuff a cat through. But shot-guns, and Queen Anns, and fowlers, and the like, don't do for the big work. I tried an old Queen Ann on a hunt onst, away over this side of the Wyalusing. I put in a ball, and a handful of buck-shot, and a slug. kase you know they're thunder and all to scatter, and I wanted one bit of lead to make sure on, any how. So I sot out jist at daybreak, with the dog tied to a button-hole. Afore long, scrambliu' up a steep side-hill, I hears 'cluck, cluck, cluck.' 'Be quiet,' says I to the dog; so pecked through the laurel agin—'cluck, cluck, cluck'—looked at the flint: 'All right,' says I. Seein' so much squintin' and peekin' goin' on, the dog begun to git nettlesome. 'Be easy, you villain,' says I. Arter a little I seed the old feller, black as tar, standin' on a log, with his neck put up as strait as a ramrod—the very biggest cock turkey twixt this and the lake country. 'O ho!' says I, takin' down the Queen Ann, 'you're my meat,' so I held out the old iron, and pulled with all vengeance. 'The devil's in the gun,' says I. So I ups with her agin, and pulled till all was blue; no go agin; so I straitened myself onst more, and pulled till the fire begun to fly out of both eyes. Thinks I, this won't do, fur I begun to feel as weak in the knee as a stuck pig. Well, I laid her up alongside of a tree the next time; 'cluck, cluck,' went the old feller agin; 'you're my meat,' says I; so I braced myself, and give a thunderin' jerk of the trigger—'whang!' went the old Queen Ann—down went I backward on the dog; and the hill bein' so mighty steep, over and under the dog and I had it down the slope, rough and tumble, till we brought up agin a big yaller pine."

"You killed the game, I'll warrant it?" said the colonel.

"Don't know how it was," said Nimrod. "I didn't fairly wake up till sundown, and then the dog and I laid course for home. I lost the use of my right shoulder for a fortnight, and the dog was rolled out nearly flat."

"I think Nimrod's story deserves a round," said the host; "fill up again, boys, and we'll hear a toast from Charles."

"The rebels," said Charles, when all were ready for his sentiment; "our Nimrods, armed with British rifles, will soon stop the clucking of all their gobbling flock."

"Fust-rate!" echoed Luke again, whose small pointed nose, and prodigious broad

mouth added much to the eloquence of his great eyes, swimming in a sea of delight.

"A fact!" replied Nimrod, eager again to illustrate the subject matter of the toast by some hunting adventure of his own. He was, however, forestalled in his design by the turning of the conversation into some other channel. By degrees, the party became noisy and clamorous, and the hearts of the feasters waxed bolder. Many desires were expressed that the affair of the day could only be acted over again, and the vainglorious wish, begotten and fostered by artificial stimulus, was hailed by the resounding of a dozen clinched hands that smote the table in response. It was even proposed that the rabble should be forthwith pursued, and shot down without ceremony. But what more fastened itself on the heated minds of the revellers, was a proposition to visit their wrongs, and appease their vengeance on the captive in the dungeon. Springing up, they were about proceeding to its execution. Colonel Dinning, however, called them to order a moment, as one of the domestics now entered with a paper which had just been thrust under the hall door. It was folded in imitation of a letter, sealed with a composition in which turpentine appeared to be a chief component, and was addressed to Colonel Dinning. The party staggered into their seats, and glowered at the colonel as he broke open the paper and ran over its contents. It ran thus:

"To whome this Shall cum.—These troops was withdrawn, but altered There minds, hearing that walter henderson, as Was, is In your house shot on the outside, And is in Irons on the Inside. therefore I have cum back Two demand him safe and unharmed in Boddy, as he understands he Was mortally shot. And you refuse him liberty To pass and Repass; therefore, if he Is not give up In tenn minnets from this date, or suner If convenient, they will Open his batturies On this house as I have Ordered, bein' he is In cheefe cummand, unless He is beefour that Time surrendured to Me. And will Put to deth by the sword and Fammin all the rest and you too, without Bennyfit Of clurgee. so refuse At your peril: given under His hand, fur all of 'um, at My camp, under arms This day, in the night Time.

his

"BARNABAS + PIKE, mark

"Cummanding."

"P.S.—this much Put down from His own lips—this Fur myself. if he bleeds Inside, rap him in A woollen sheet, or A hoss Blankit will doo If you haven't enny Thing else handy, and give him a Hot dose of ginger tee; if he bleeds Outside, raise the hurt part Higher than the Boddy, and pore on

Cold watur till all Gits white, but mind To git the wound highest up, Unless he's hurt in The back or so, and Then it's hard too Be dun, and makes a Bad fix, so i must Cum myself."

The reading of this production aloud produced an electrifying effect on the band of revellers. The host indulged himself in a burst of hearty laughter, which, taken up by the guests, finally ended in a round of boisterous cheers of defiance. Farther to impart emphasis to this reckless impulse, one of the party stepped to one of the holes at the window, and fired his musket into the open air. Soon, however, in the progress of the debauch, all heed of the missive was lost sight of.

In the mean time, while matters were thus progressing at the board, the waiting-maid of Ruth passed silently down the stairway from the chambers, and went into the cellar. Approaching the vault now occupied as a prison, she raised a small trap or lid, covering a sort of aperture in the wall intended for purposes of ventilation, and placed a salver loaded with refreshments, wine, and a lighted lamp within, and then closed down the trap as it was before. This done, she pursued her way back again to the hall, where, with much caution, she undid the fastenings of the back door and passed out.

It was but a few minutes subsequently to this that a series of blows, bestowed on the front door of the hall, aroused the club of bacchanals from their seats, as though a thunderbolt had shattered to atoms the table around which they were placed. Amid this echoing din that shook the whole tenement, the splinters flew inwardly from the shattered door, and covered the floor of the hall on which they fell. The astounded inmates, clutching in their blinded haste whatever came first to hand, rushed with startled and half-demoniac countenances to the spot. Ere reaching it, however, an aperture sufficiently large for the admission of a man's body was made, and two or three of the assailants had already entered. The leaguered party fired at random in the direction of the door, one of whose balls taking effect, a follower of Barney fell insensible at his feet. The fire was returned, and soon the hall was filled with a mass of smoke. The Whigs, meanwhile, poured in through the aperture, and were assailed by the defenders with swords and clubbed muskets. It was not long until numbers decided the fate of the conflict, and two of the colonel's men were bleeding on the floor, while others of them, little able, from their inebriated condition, to oppose physical force to force, were held prostrated on their backs. Colonel Dinning himself, who had not been a deep drinker on the occasion, still resisted the onset with sword in hand.

At length, the butt of a musket fell with descending sweep upon his shoulder, and staggered him backward to the railing of the stair. At the same moment he received a slight sword-wound on the side of the head, which, little more than severing the skin, gave forth a flow of blood down over his face and garments.

"Be it so, base-born dogs!" said he; "you have conquered. But I fall not alone; for, by the hand of Cain! if life be in the body of your dastard leader, I'll quench it in his blood." Saying which, he seized a light, and, followed by a few of his party and the besiegers, rushed into the cellar. But in this movement another had been beforehand with him. A moment before the terrible assault on the front door, the maid of Ruth, accompanied by Doctor Jaws, had entered quietly through that at the rear of the building. The doctor plodded his way to the vault, and, having taken off his sacks, removed the bolts and looked within. On the top of a wine-cask the taper was yet burning, and disclosed to the eyes of the physician the captive prisoner, stretched at full length on the bottom of the cell.

"Dead—dead as a speared fish!" muttered the doctor. Stepping within the door, he found himself immersed to the ankle. Looking down at the body, he perceived that it was almost afloat. The doctor was confounded.

"Is it—is—it—possible!" he murmured to himself; and stooping down, scooped up a handful of the fluid, which he permitted to stream down between his eye and the lighted lamp; "blood, by the hockey spoon! Now, did I ever! why, he had blood enough in him to run a saw mill! Gad! I'll measure it, and write out a report of it; it's the most uncommon case in the books!" Here the medical man put his finger on the wrist of the patient, and found that life was not yet extinct. He raised the body from the fluid it was extended in to a sitting posture, but the head rolled heavily on one side, while a laboured respiration seemed more oppressing than facilitating to the functions of life. At this moment Colonel Dinning, with his drawn sword, closely followed by the crowd at his heels, came rushing to the door of the vault. Giving one glance at the patient of Doctor Jaws, he flung down his weapon, and turning to his pursuers, said, "I surrender." Barnabas and his company holding fast their prisoner of war, gazed in their turn into the cell.

"Bad luck to me!" said the leader; "Jeremiah himself, upon me sow! What the devil, doctor; did all this same blood come oot ov the baste! It's some one's shape yard, the hound has been in, I fancy."

"The most extraordinary bleedin', friend Barnabas, that I've had in the hull o' my

extensive practice. But for bein' an eye-witness, I wouldn't have believed it if my grandfather had sworn to it."

"Ay, faith! or yer grandmother to the boot ov it. I'm thinking," said Barney, "you must have opened the vein wid a handsaw, doctor, to get so much out ov him as this. But mind ye, Doctor Jaws, ye needn't be overly anxious aboot kaping life in his worthless carcass, if there's much difficulty in it. It'll only be saving him for some more disgraceful end nor this."

Leaving the doctor with his charge, Barney returned with his prisoner to the hall. Soon his force departed, the captive bound, and walking between two files. The inmates of the house were otherwise undisturbed. Charles Henderson, upon the colonel's arrest, had stepped out at the back door, and was not taken.

Before we close the chapter, one matter needs explanation. The discharge of musketry intending to take effect on the body of our young friend Walter had failed of its object. Jeremiah, lodged in the forks of an apple-tree, was, from behind a large limb, sufficient, in his estimation, to cover his body, protruding his head and neck to listen to the address of Ruth, and witness the events transpiring. A musket ball from the sudden volley struck the bark of the tree but a few inches before his face, and glanced whizzing past him, without doing more than to send a piece of the bark against his nose. The force of this produced a tremendous torrent of blood, and prodigious affright on his part, as he deemed himself unqualifiedly dead. Therefore, tumbling headlong from the tree, he set up the howl that led to his capture.

We may farther add, that he was wholly indebted to the lamp for an introduction to one of the wine casks; as it happened to be in the wine vault that he was incarcerated. Lying flat on his back, he turned one of the spigots over his mouth, and soon replenished his state of thirst, excited as it was by some little fever. He omitted, though, to turn back the spigot on removing his lips, and in this way the whole contents of the pipe had escaped, and flowed out upon the bottom of the vault.

CHAPTER XII.

"Whence comes this restraint?"
Measure for Measure.

On the following morning Barney had drawn up his motley forces in front of the Buck, and, under his impulse of misguided zeal, was about to put in practice what imperfect notions he had gathered respecting the science of war and its laws, by a court-martial in the case of the prisoner.

It was beforehand understood that his execution would immediately follow, the court, in fact, being resorted to merely *pro forma*. The charges which were to be preferred against the captive we are unacquainted with. He was accordingly led forth from the apartment of the hotel, in which, during the night, he had been strictly guarded, with his arms pinioned, and a face somewhat haggard, an effect in part referable to his potations of the evening prior, and loss of sleep, occasioned by the painful restraint of his bonds. A handkerchief, that had been tied over the wound on his head at the time it was received, yet remained. All this, together with the torn and disordered condition of his apparel, gave him a wo-begone aspect indeed. His bearing was sullen, distant, and unbending. Carefully avoiding the utterance of a single word to those who stood about him, it seemed his aim to meet his fate without either supplication or murmur.

Before the court had entered upon the discharge of its duties, Henderson, in company of his son, rode up to the hotel, and stayed in short time the contemplated procedure. Calling Barney aside, they were some few minutes engaged in conversation. At length they returned to the spot where Colonel Dinning stood, when Henderson, touching his hat, bade his friend good-morning. Walter also made his obeisance, raising his cap from his brow. The prisoner spoke not, but answered the salutations by a slight inclination of the head.

"It is my displeasure to find you in a situation of some embarrassment, sir," began Henderson. "I trust it is owing to no fault of your own."

"Our relative opinions of what is either fault or virtue," replied the other, "are not likely soon to harmonize. It is therefore scarce needful to moot the point. At all events, it is not to any present I am to account for faults, even did it suit me to commit any."

"I have no prescription to play either confessor or judge in this matter," said Henderson; "at the same time, may we hope that no unpleasant recriminations may interrupt our necessary intercourse."

"What intercourse may be between us I know nothing of," answered the other. "I seek none. If any desire of meager triumph over a man in bonds may account for your presence, you seem in likelihood of being gratified. It is, no doubt, a matter of approbation as well as pride, that the father looks on the work of the son," casting an eye on the cords that bound him, and directing the attention of his auditors to his wounds.

"I do not understand this allusion, Colonel Dinning," said Henderson, "and therefore, ere anything farther transpires, we will seek its explanation. If it be owing

to son of mine that this misfortune occurred, in his stead I stand ready to make good the injury to you. I shall also take early time to treat with him. Is it to *this* son your intimation is directed?"

"It is," replied the other. "On him I charge violation of the ordinary rules of civil society, the attack on my house with loaded guns, the slaughter of some of my people, the partial demolition and entering of my mansion by night, and my own forcible abduction from it; and this in open violation of all law, which throws a barrier of defence around even the peasant's hut, over which it is the prerogative of no man to take one step."

"Is this true?" inquired Henderson, turning to his son.

"If Colonel Dinning intimates," replied Walter, "that I, either directly or otherwise, had lot or part in the unfortunate outrage committed on him or his mansion, or gave the same countenance or favour, it is *not* true."

"If what you answer is false," said the parent, "it is the first time from your cradle to this day that I have had occasion to gainsay your word." And he turned in silence to the prisoner, as though to await what farther he might urge. The promptness of the young man's reply seemed rather to puzzle him; though at length he said, "It is no seeking of mine to promote your injury, young man; but when your actions happen to rest at variance with what you assert, I claim the advantage, so far as it is essential to me, of the discrepancy. Can you deny you were present with those who assailed my house?"

"I cannot."

"How!" exclaimed the father; "there, do you say?"

"There, sir," said Walter, "but it was to stay the hands of those who meditated violence. And at what costs I was there is not unknown to Colonel Dinning, at whose order a shower of musket-balls flew past my head, or tore up the soil at my feet. And for the truth of this, and farther, that I used every persuasion to intercept the designs of the party who attacked the house, I must refer to those alone who are familiar with the facts."

"All ov it truer than praching," said Barney, stepping forward; "and if ye've the howly cross convenient, I'll swear to ivery word ov it till I'm black in the face."

Others were called from the ranks, who endorsed the statement.

"Does Colonel Dinning desire anything farther?" asked Walter.

"No; I've done you wrong. I have placed you under the weight of wrongly-formed suspicions. I offer you my hand," and did so as well as the ligaments at his arms allowed. It was accepted. "I find some difficulty in the practice of courtesies," he continued, letting go the youth's hand, "but we must endure what it is not always in our power to prevent."

Henderson, without saying a word, passed behind the prisoner, and cutting the cords from his elbows, threw them to the ground. Then standing before him whom he had thus released, he said, "You are free."

The colonel in silence placed his hand on his heart, and acknowledged the act by a bow very low and eminently graceful.

"Colonel Dinning is no longer under your control," said Henderson to Barney and his company; "no one will hinder his return to his family." Then taking his son by the arm, he walked towards the hotel, while the late captive prepared for his departure to the scene of the past night's violence and ill-timed revelry.

The military chieftain receiving from his senior in wisdom and years a discourse on the tactics of war, the rights of citizenship, and the consequences, in legal view, of unauthorized assaults, forcible entries, riots, routs, tumultuous assemblies, and so forth, disbanded his forces for the time being.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Full oft have letters caused the writers
To curse the day they were inditers."

BUTLER.

ALL social intercourse between the families of Henderson and his neighbour was now closed. A general feeling of bitterness and distrust prevailed among the residents of the valley; and even near neighbours, who had theretofore lived on terms of the closest intimacy, were severed by the adverse interests growing out of the events of the time. The movements of Colonel Dinning became a sort of mystery, beyond the reach of that scrutiny the watchful exerted on the side of the Whigs. Days and weeks was he absent, mostly in company of his young associate, Charles Henderson. Their journeys, it was supposed, were generally accomplished by night. But a few domestics, on these occasions, remained to exercise care and supervision of the house.

The members of the two mansions had, since the events last recorded, a period of three months, met but on one occasion. Mrs. Henderson had encountered Ruth as she was leaving the door of a building appropriated at that day to the worship of God. The young lady was much disconcerted by the accidental meeting, and paused before her elder acquaintance, uncertain of the propriety of greeting her, at the same time regarding her duty to do so as imperative from recollections of former kindness. It was, therefore, grateful to the emotions of her heart when the other

extended her hand, and inquired, with apparent interest, after the state of her health.

On a still and sunny afternoon of autumn, when the spirit of summer with a last effort arrays itself in some portion of its past glory, our young friend Walter, with gun on his shoulder, set out for the hills to hunt. Gaining the top of the first ridge of mountains, he wandered on over the rustling leaves now dislodged from their hold on the branches by the night frosts, occasionally obtaining a shot at a black squirrel or a pheasant, with both of which the woods abounded. His success was good; and in the emotions it always imparts to the heart of the gunner, pursued his way with increased zeal through the thickets and swales, or over the ridges of oak and chestnut, whose ripened fruit now afforded the most plentiful repast for the game he sought. It was past the middle of the afternoon ere he stopped, with a well-filled game-bag, thinking it time to retrace his steps.

He stood on a high ledge of rocks, whose naked pinnacle rose high over the tree-tops, on a knob of the mountain. The prospect beneath him was grand and beautiful in the extreme. Whoever bears in recollection the gaudy colours assumed by the autumn leaves, and has at one sweep of vision overlooked a thousand hills glittering in the rays of the sun, may realize the view he was regarding. The winding Susquehanna, with its clear waters undisturbed by the slightest breeze—its banks lined with trees thus decorated by the pencil of decay—the herds in the meadows far below him—were beautifully attractive. But from these fair objects the eye of the youth turned to another, less romantic to that of the general beholder, but far more so to his. It was the dwelling of Colonel Dinning, whose roof now appeared to view, closed in by the grove surrounding it. He gazed long and listfully at the spectacle, musing on the past, and calling to mind the blissful hours he had passed under that same roof. Was she, who had been the first to welcome him, and the last to leave him at the gate, now within those walls? No; she had left them. Rumour had proclaimed her absent several days before.

Without purpose, drawn, as it were, by the attraction of sympathy, the young man descended from the rock, and, holding by the trees and bushes, half slid and half rolled down the precipitous descent in the direction of the tenement. Wandering through the undulating woodland that spread out from the mountain's base, he came at length to the enclosure. All was still and solitary; no one moved about the grounds. Climbing over the wall, he strolled nearer to the building. Halting under

the tall trees in front of it, he gazed on the familiar objects in view. In a small alcove, covered by a wild grape, the natural growth of the soil, was the circular seat on which he had played so many afternoons of summer. Here were the shrubs and clumps of bushes, behind each one of which he had concealed himself a hundred times in the game of "hide and seek." The grass-plots, too; the green banks and artificial mounds; the gravelled walks; even the post with the broad sun-dial on its top, all—all familiar. Then he looked at the door, so lately broken by violence; a new one of oak, thickly studded with large nails, supplied its place, apparently now defying any effort of assault. The shutters and the outward walls yet bore marks of the siege; the first, punctured with shot and ball, the latter, showing in spots where the mortar was dislodged, and where the lead was flattened by the impenetrable stone. Musing for a time on these sad mementoes, he cast his eye to the upper range of windows. A dizziness flew through his brain, and a momentary darkness overcame his sight. His rifle dropped from his hand, while he felt, for the moment, as though all his strength had left him. He had seen Ruth standing at one of the windows of the chamber, folded in a dark cloak or mantle, with her head arrayed in a kind of hood not dissimilar to a turban. She was looking intently at him, though with an expression of face so mournful that he was wholly overcome by its effect. He instantly moved forward, but the shutter closed upon the lovely but mournful face, which, like an apparition, had so unexpectedly broken upon his view. He knocked at the door, but no one attended the summons. Stepping back, he again looked up at the window, but it opened not. Silence reigned in and about the building. At length, with slow steps and frequently-turned face, he left the spot.

Wherever he was, the same face, so eloquent of sorrow, pursued him. It covered the page he read—it was in the embers of the hearth—hovered over his pillow, and dispelled from his eyes the visitings of balmy sleep. Disquieted and unhappy, he wrote, on the following morning, a long and touching epistle. He apologized for yesterday's intrusion; imputed it to the information he had received, that no one was at the mansion. He touched on the past, disavowed all participation in the assault of the summer, laid out at full expanse a map of his inward torture, and closed the document with a round of tender epithets and heart-warm phrases that did equal honour to his education and his heart.

For the delivery of the missile, he stipulated with Peggy, who, invested with plenipotentiary powers, undertook the discharge of the delicate mission that same afternoon. Walter, impatient of her return, at-

tended at her house some time before her arrival. At length she came. It seemed to him she wasted a long time in taking off her bonnet, putting away her shawl, and disarraying the youthful Pat, who had borne her company; also, in some ill-timed remarks on the state of the road, the weather, and other matters equally important.

"Well!" with a long-drawn breath, throwing herself down into a chair as though giving over to the indulgence of a nap.

"Well!" replied the youth, half mad at her affectation.

"How tired one gets!" sighed Mrs. Pike. "I do declare, I've lost nearly all my breath. I used to vally the matter of a run over to the colonel's no more than a step down to the spring. But now," with a lackadaisical sigh, "it seems to be a real killin' thing, a'most. Patrick, come here and let me smooth down your hair, child; and can't you give the gentleman an account of the little pups you seed at the neighbour's?"

Pat's timidity saved Walter the infliction of a narrative that, doubtless, would have elicited an inward curse upon all the dogs in the universe.

"My! Mister Walter," continued the wife, "how shiny the trees do look. It beats me out to see sich coulers. I really don't think I ever seed anything like it."

"Yes," muttered the provoked auditor, rising; "but I don't know that I have time just now to hear of it."

"What! going? stop, sit down, Mr. Henderson; I've not told you about the letter yet."

"I did not know you intended to do so," said he.

"Oh, yes!" said Mrs. Pike; "but it wouldn't do to begin so long a story without resting one a little. So now you're seated agin, I'll tell you how it wus. You see, Pat and me went to the grounds, and seed no one about, not a livin' soul. Then we went into the yard, under the trees, you know, and walked about as though we was takin' a Sunday stroll. But you mind, I kept one eye on the house all the time. Well, Pat and me potted about, lookin' at this thing and then at another, smellin' posies and so on, till bime-by, out of the corner of one eye, I seed one of the chamber shettters jist open the least bit in the world. You see I know'd all the while which winder to watch."

"And which is her room?" demanded the other, eagerly.

"What! her chamber? did I ever! How can you ax sich a bad question as that? Well, I took no notice on the openin' of the shetter—not I—but potted about among the plants with Pat. Arter a while it opened wider, but I kept fussin' about in the flower-beds. Purty soon I heerd the winder sash go up slow-like, but I didn't

turn round. Then some one—it was Ruth's voice (bless her for a kind-hearted creetur as she is! she was always kind to me, and kissed Patrick every time she saw him; and here she took the corner of her apron and wiped her eyes; "I mean afore this fuss about liberty begun)—I say the voice of Miss Ruth called out, 'Peggy.' But I paid no attention to it, as though I hadn't heerd it. And then she called louder, when I started up in a mighty great surprise, as if I didn't know all the while who it was, or that anybody was there.

"Bless me!" says I, 'Miss Ruth, is that you? How you did skeered me! I didn't know anybody was about. Are you well to-day, and the family?' She sed she was not very well, thankin' me at the same time, as she always does. And then she axed about my health, and Pat's and the baby's, and how Mrs. Henderson was, and the rest of her fam—no, I'm wrong there; she didn't ax about the rest of her family. I think she didn't."

"Are you sure of that?" inquired Walter.

"Yes, I'm sure of it now, she didn't. Well, I told her Mrs. Henderson was enjoyin' good health, and the rest of her family too—there! that's it—I know'd somethin' was sed of the rest of the family—I sed it myself, you see. So I went on to say I was over to Mrs. Henderson's a few days ago, and how they was doin', and so on; that Mr. Henderson was buisey gittin' in his corn, and that Walter, I believed—'Stop a minnit, Mrs. Pike,' says she; 'I'm sure you're tired a walkin' so fur; stop,' says she, 'till I cum down to let you in to rest yourself; besides, I want to have a word, and a kiss frum little Pat.' So down she comes and opens the door, and in we went, and up into her room. Well, we chatted a while about matters and things, and then—"

"But you were telling her something about me, you said a moment ago," interrupted Walter.

"Oh! that was nothin'; I had to say something of you, you mind, since I'd mentioned the rest of your folks. Well, at last says I, 'I believe I've a letter for you, Miss Ruth.' 'From father!' says she; 'no, it's not from him,' says she again, lookin' at the writin'; 'it's not his hand.' 'You can tell who it's frum, I dare say, when you open it,' says I."

"Well, then!" said Walter, swallowing quickly, as Mrs. Pike paused.

"That may be," says Ruth; "but I don't take this hand to be that of any of my respondents, or expoundints, or some sich word."

"Correspondents," suggested Walter, who was becoming all eyes.

"Ay, that's the identical word. 'Well,' says I, 'I don't see any harm in opening your own letter, Miss Ruth.' 'No,' says

"she, squintin' into it with one eye and mashin' it open a little," no. I guess there's some mistake about it, Peggy; it can't be for me," and she handed it back agin."

"How!" said Walter, with his mouth open.

"I can't think there is any mistake," says I; "it is sartinly fur you, Miss Ruth," and I laid it on her lap. So she looked right in my eyes so earnest like, I didn't know what to make on her; and speakin' quick, says she, 'Do you know who writ it?' 'I suppose,' said I, 'Walter Henderson did.' 'What!' says she; 'he writ it! and to me!' And she brushed it off her lap jist like a spider, or anything pizen! 'If he gave it to you, Peggy,' says she, 'take it back to him agin: I don't receive letters from my father's enemies, sartinly not from this one, who would wash his hands in the blood of my kindred.'"

"It's false! false!" exclaimed the young man, springing from his seat, and striding with hurried steps through the apartment.

"It's the truth, as I am a livin', breathin' woman," affirmed Mrs. Pike.

"False as perjury itself!" continued the other, with knit brows.

"The Gospel truth, every word of it," asseverated Peggy; "I'll stand to it till the day of my death."

"What! you inconsiderate maniac!" said Walter, "do you say that I would wash my hands in her blood? A base calumny!"

"Oh!" said Mrs. Pike, beginning to comprehend; "that, I know, is false; but what I've told you is the Bible truth. Well, I mout as well finish my story. Arter a while she cooled down, and as I put the letter in my bosom, 'Let me look at it a minnit,' says she. So I handed it to her, and she sot a good spell lookin' at the writin', and then she turned it over and looked at the seal, and then at one end of it, and then t'other, and then (but she had her handkerchief up so I couldn't see exactly)—but she put it up to her face, and, as near as I could tell (but mind, I don't say so positive), she pressed it to her lips. And then she looked at it agin, as afore, breathin' harder and harder, and gittin' redder and redder, while the veins on her forehead, my stars! but they swelled up nigh on to bustin'. At last, what do you think she did?"

"What was it? what did she do?" gasped the lover.

"Why, she screeched right out a laughin' as hard as she could, for dear life; I didn't know but she'd fly off in a fit of the hysterics. And then I got to laughin' too; and when we got over it, the tears was a streamin' down her cheeks like wild. And the funniest speeches she made about the letter, and about college chaps gittin' in love, and writin' loveletters over the hull

country, that we got to laughin' agin wusa than ever."

"That's all, then, Mrs. Pike?" asked Walter, rising; for it must be confessed this part of the narrative was not very gratifying.

"That's all, as near as I can remember," said Peggy, "except a little more about love matters, and childish boys, and youngsters without beards, and—"

"Well, never mind, Mrs. Pike," interposed the other; "I am very much obliged to you. I suppose it makes no difference if I reimburse you for your trouble by a present to Patrick;" and he put a few pieces of silver in the young Paddy's pocket.

"But stop a moment," said the wife; and fumbling in her bosom, produced the letter and handed it to the author.

"Thank you, Peggy," said he, as he took it from her hand and left the room. It was unopened. His emotions were those of one whose pride had been deeply wounded, whose affections had been chilled by contemptuous levity. He therefore nourished in his bosom the determination of steeling his heart to the shaft, and to return this treatment on the part of the damsel in a manner equally light, morose, and trifling. He therefore tried to occupy his thoughts by turning them upon other subjects.

Winter came. In the mean time, the thunders of war had opened on the shores of the Atlantic. The crow and the vulture had fed on its victims, at Flatbush, White Plains, and at Trenton. The weakened and dispirited state of the army was made the subject of appeal to the lovers of freedom. The beat of the recruiting drum sounded in every town and village. It was heard even in the secluded retreat of Wyoming. Two companies, numbering nearly two hundred strong, responded to the summons. In one of them Walter Henderson was enrolled, with the rank of sergeant; in the same, his young friend Summers was a corporal, a promotion since made famous, as being the first step in the elevation of the Corsican. In the dead of winter, bidding adieu to their fathers, mothers, wives, and sisters, amid the shouts of hundreds assembled at the Buck to witness their departure, and the firing of guns, the waving of flags, caps, and handkerchiefs, the troops marched away to the sound of drum and trumpet. As their line moved over the first hill towards the mountain, and the martial echoes by degrees died away on the air, many were the hearts that beat, and many were the moistened eyes that gazed after the volunteers.

Barney would gladly have gone with them, but he was detailed for a difficult and more dangerous service. He was pro-

moted to a command of importance, captain of the patrol, called the "scout." It became "his duty by night and day to explore the thickets and unfrequented places, in search of such lurking enemy as might come to disturb the peace of the settlement, or spy out the land." Forts had, in the mean time, been built in various sections of the valley, in which regular garrison duty was performed. One of these stockades, principally under the supervision of Henderson, and near his house, was erected at Garrison Hill. The military force appointed to it was under his control.

The two companies of regular troops marched through the wilderness of the Pocono, and joined the commander-in-chief in the State of New-Jersey. A part of the Connecticut levies, they were attached to the Connecticut line in the army. They were called the "independent companies," and acted as a distinct corps, being attached to no regiment or brigade. It was soon their lot to render service in aid of the great cause at Millstone. To the reader we are happy in having it to say that, on this new theatre of action, our two young volunteers obtained the highest praise. Had Ruth Dinning, with spyglass in hand, stood in some adjacent observatory, she must have warmed in heart at perceiving the zeal, the courage, and the impetuosity exhibited by a slight figure, who, on that day, in a closely-fitting blue coat, white trousers, cockade, and badge on one shoulder, was, by both word and example, awakening the heroism of the ranks he fought in.

CHAPTER XIV.

"This was the noblest Roman of them all."
JULIUS CAESAR.

On a fair summer morning in the early part of August, following the date with which the last chapter closes, a messenger, charged with a private despatch from the commander-in-chief, was traversing a woodland path near the waters of the Mohawk. His destination was Fort Stanwix. With an alert step, he glided forward over the undulating surface of the forest, keeping, at the same time, a wary eye on the winding path he trod, and on the occasional thickets he passed: a custom in those days universally observed by the wayfarer, whose career was likely at any moment to be arrested by the lurking foe. A short sword, such as pertained to the rank of non-commissioned officers, hung parallel with his thigh, while a stout hunting-knife, a pair of pistols concealed under his vest, and a knapsack completed his equipments. The sun shone out brightly on the forest,

and his ears were saluted by songs of birds that now revelled in the stillness of the opening day.

It was about nine in the morning when the emissary passed over a causeway of logs extending over a deep and marshy ravine that crossed his path, and reached a small elevated level. Being somewhat fatigued with his morning's tramp, our young friend the sergeant, for it was he, came to a halt. Stepping aside some few rods out of the path, that he might not be discovered by any one chancing to pass, he took his knapsack from his shoulders, and seated himself at the roots of a large tree. Taking out the contents of his portable larder, he commenced an assault on a piece of dried beef. This he accompanied with slices from a small loaf, in whose centre was an excavated hole filled with butter. Having finished his frugal repast, he drew the stopper of his canteen, and took a moderate quaff of spirits. Just at this moment his attention was arrested by the sound or heavy tread of approaching feet. Uncertain of the purpose or character of the advancing numbers, he concealed himself more effectually, and awaited their passing. It was not long ere he heard them on the causeway; and in a moment more the head of the line, marching in files of two abreast, came up the slight ascent, and, at a quick march, gained the elevated level.

The long line, from their dress and equipments proving to be of the continental militia, came pouring along the path to the number of several hundreds, all of them apparently eager in the prosecution of whatever errand they had in view. But no sooner had the greater part of the military division crossed the ravine than, from the rising ground beyond the head of the column, and on all sides of it, there rang out from the coverts of the forest a discharge of fire-arms, accompanied with a volley of terrific whoops and yells, seemingly the effect of magic alone. The unconscious provincials, startled by the suddenness of this murderous fire, were immediately thrown into confused disorder. Those forming the ambuscade had closed their line of circumvallation near the causeway at the same moment they discovered themselves to the foe. Thus the body of militia were wholly surrounded, and upon whom continued to be poured a destructive shower of lead. The Indians, taking speedy advantage of this untoward surprise on the part of the provincials, sprang like tigers from their places of concealment, and with their tomahawks and knives secured the destruction of such as had fallen wounded by their balls.

Not knowing how contiguous to his back some of these warriors of nature might be, our young friend, leaving his knapsack to

the chances of war, advanced to the broken line of the Americans. He was not long in securing for himself a rifle, snatched from the hands of a dying soldier, and set to work in real earnest to promote the welfare of the division.

It was his fortune to make himself useful. In a chaos of confusion, where officer and ranksman become alike the subjects of panic, he whose courage or coolness predominates, by authority or not, is permitted to lay hold of the helm by general consent. Walter was, therefore, of that number who on this occasion, flying from rank to rank, effected, after much exertion, the reorganization of the band. The fight was now maintained by the militia with a spirit of bravery much enhanced by the fact that, hemmed in on all sides, their only safety rested in the use of their arms. At length, by forming themselves into circles, they kept effectually at bay the already contracting line of the ambuscade that, like an enormous serpent, was fast closing around them.

The Loyalists, foiled in this attempt of closing in upon the militia, resorted to a charge of bayonet. Many of them the recent neighbours of the surprised Provincials, were thus brought face to face with their old associates. But war had severed all ties, even those of kindred; and the embittered parties, with guns crossed, satiated their mutual hatred but by the spilling of blood. The rancour of the human heart could in no situation display more terrible and insatiable vengeance.

Just at this time our young sergeant, at the bidding of an officer, passed to another part of the field, in search of the commandant.

"There he is," said a fellow he inquired of, just now levelling his gun against the trunk of a tree, and taking aim at the red scalp of an Indian, an inch or two of which appeared over the surface of a large log.

"Where?" demanded Walter; "I don't see him."

"Wait a minute," said the soldier, "till I put a red night-cap on that yelping devil's head." His gun was discharged, and the Mohawk sank on the ground with a perforated skull.

"There's one more of the copperheads gone where the king will take supper with him some day," said the fellow, taking down his gun. "General Herkimer do you want? There's the old chap, sitting by that tree."

Walter walked on in the direction indicated, and found an old man, who, amid the din of confused warfare, was sitting on a saddle placed at the foot of a large tree. The blood was oozing from his knee, shattered by a musket-ball, while he issued orders to the subordinate officers. The young sergeant approached the ven-

erable soldier, and, taking off his cap, saluted him with the profoundest reverence. "What's your name?" demanded the old general. He was answered by the youth.

"Do you hold commission in our ranks?" Walter replied that he did not, and explained in a word his accidental union with the forces.

"Oh ho! you're the young man who assisted to rally," replied the officer. "I've heard good account of you."

Walter bowed deeply to this complimentary remark. And here the wounded veteran pulled out his tinder-box, and, lighting his pipe with a spark or two, began to smoke.

"What's your will?" inquired the bluff old soldier.

"To ask whether it would be expedient," said the sergeant, "to lead an attack against the enemy's line at the causeway, and cut our way through it."

"And why?" asked the general, sticking the end of his little finger in the pipe-bowl.

"In order to draw off the men through the breach," said he.

"We are doing very well here," remarked the commandant.

"It is not my suggestion, sir," said the sergeant; "I was sent to propose it by one of the officers."

"We'll think of it," coolly responded the senior.

"General," said an officer, coming up, "shall we not remove you to some place less exposed to the firing? This little hillock makes you too fair a mark for the enemy."

"I will face the enemy," said General Herkimer, and knocked the ashes from his pipe on the nail of his thumb.

The voice of tumult and work of death were now interrupted during this remarkably sanguinary battle by the gathering of a dark cloud over the field, which deluged it with a descending torrent of rain. This shower continuing somewhat more than an hour, allowed the combatants to ascertain the condition of their respective forces, and to make preparations for the renewal of the conflict when it should abate.

When the tempest was over and the action renewed, Walter, though not in command, marched in the van of a column projected against the enemy's line, on the opposite side of the field from the causeway. At quick step, and with cocked pieces, the charging line advanced upon the covert of the foe. Their movement was observed, and they were consequently received with a deadly fire that glared from behind every bush and brake. Gaining a knowledge, by these streams of smoke, where the savages were severally con-

cealed, the militia rushed upon them with loaded guns. Some drew the butts of their pieces, having discharged the contents; and in this way the onset was made the occasion of excessive carnage; and but for the accumulation of numbers at this spot, on the part of the Loyalists and Indians, the object of the onslaught seemed likely of accomplishment. As it was, the Provincials at length fell back. Some of their number, albeit, had advanced so far that return was impossible. One of the number was our young sergeant, who, finding it out of his power to reunite with his company, and thus alone in quarters so unsafe, glided forward among the bushes in the adverse direction, in hopes of passing beyond the ambuscade. He was soon stopped by an athletic Mohawk, who rose up before him with a presented rifle. Being useless to engage with the warrior, exhausted as he was, and with arms uncharged, he surrendered. His captor quietly disarmed him of his rifle, his unloaded pistols, and sword, and proceeded to secure his arms at the elbows with a cord. This done, he motioned him to sit down.

It is not our intention to render the full details of the six hours' battle of Oriscany, which had, in point of ferocity and deeds of valour, scarcely a parallel during the revolutionary struggle. It shed lustre on the name of the Provincial arms, though it carried to the Christian's grave, shortly after, the stanch old hero, Herkimer. The retreating cry being at length raised by the Mohawks, they, together with the beaten Loyalists, retired from the field.

The Indian allies of the crown had with much difficulty, it is affirmed by historians, been persuaded to take part in the untoward battle of Oriscany. In fact, it had been represented to them that no necessity would exist for their co-operation in the conflict; and were rather invited to witness the spectacle of routed rebels flying before the regulars in the English service. On the contrary, however, drawn into the hottest part of the action, they were made to suffer severely, and finally obliged to fly, leaving their dead on the field, unattended with the sacred rites of Indian burial. It was natural for them, consequently, in some measure to seek reimbursement of their sufferings by the torture of such victims as fell into their hands.

Fort Stanwix, now under the command of Colonel Gansevoort, assisted by the indomitable and gallant Willet, was closely besieged by General St. Leger. Surrounding the fort in various directions, concealed by the shades of the forest, were encamped the Indian allies, who had marched from Oswego in company with the British forces. The native warriors, on the evening of the fatal day of Oriscany, had kindled up their fires. Sore from the se-

vere handling they had received from Herkimer's militia, uttering dismal howls in recollection of the slain brothers left by them on the field, the scene was pregnant with demonstrations of grief and vengeance. Many of them were congregated near to a cedar swamp, which spot, of itself wild and gloomy, was made still more so by a night dark and lowering. It assumed a yet more startling aspect when the flames arose and shed their beams on the surrounding gloom of night. Some half dozen captives, bound by the feet to the same pole at distances of three or four feet asunder, were spectators of progressing preparations, whose object, well understood by them, chilled their hearts with horror. The last of these prisoners at the end of the pole was Sergeant Henderson.

At length one of them was released from his bonds, and stood upon his feet. His clothing was removed. While being thus denuded, the poor fellow cast his eyes in the direction of the theatre on which he was about to appear. Here were the crowds awaiting him. "Good-by!" said he to his fellows, with a face of anguish, as he was led away. "My poor wife, my poor little babes!" he muttered to himself, as he passed to the ground and was bound to the "scalp-tree." A host stood around him, with features moulded to the expression of scorn, derision, and savage joy. Their glittering knives and tomahawks began to play in fantastic flourishes around his head. The ring widened; one axe after another, hurled with fearful velocity, sank in the bark of the tree, close to and beside it. One tomahawk, more luckless than the rest, clove the ear of the captive, and it dropped to the ground. Guttural notes of disapprobation followed, as a punishment to the player for so unskillful a cast in this game of address. The involuntary movement of a muscle, on the part of the victim, during this severe trial, was hailed with shouts and jeers.

At length one of the chiefs struck his tomahawk with downward sweeps before the face of the prisoner, as if intending to terrify by the nearness with which he struck, but not to hit. The last blow was, however, dictated by a different design. The weapon descended midway on the bridge of the nose, and it dropped, severed from his face. His tongue was then cut out, his teeth broken with an iron, and his eyes torn from their sockets. A small incision was then made in his abdomen, and the end of one of his intestines taken out and fastened to the tree. He was then untied, and driven around it until the winding process brought him final release from misery. Falling on his face with a loud groan, he became alike voiceless and moveless in the repose of death.

A second was now removed, and submit-

ted to a series of modified tortures, in the first part something like that passed through by his predecessor. A third followed—a fourth—and so on until it became the turn of him who was next to Walter. Giving his hand a moment to our young friend, he moved off in silence. Poor fellow, he was well known to his tormentors as a staunch and bold leader of the Whigs of Tryon county. Many an Indian scout had fallen before the aim of his rifle. He knew his passage to the land of spirits would be no flowery path. His family resided on the banks of the Mohawk; he had left them that same morning. Who could describe his thoughts? An hour was he submitted to tortures too horrible for relation. The terrible ordeal closed by the insertion of a thousand splinters of pine in the skin of his limbs and body. These were simultaneously fired, and, amid smoke and flame, the victim sank upon the ground.

During this last sacrifice, Walter turned his eyes away from the fatal spot. He could not witness the shocking rites performed by these priests of unhallowed immolation. He endeavoured to calm his excited feelings, that with becoming submission he might bow to his fate. While thus looking away, he perceived a figure, not far from him, leaning against a tree. A fire near him, to much advantage displayed the form of his person, the materials, and fashion of his dress. He was rather above the medium height, of an erect and somewhat noble bearing, a robust and muscular development of limb, with an open countenance, though of bold or determined expression, and eyes of much fire and brilliancy. He wore leggings of blue cloth, moccasins decorated with wampum, and a coloured shirt. Beneath the scarlet blanket that hung upon his shoulders was seen the hilt of a silver-mounted cutlass, a tomahawk, and knife. His head was richly decorated with plumes, set in a band, which, passing around his forehead, exhibited in front what appeared to be either a brilliant or a polished buckle, and was now gleaming in the reflection of the blaze.

When Walter's eye first discovered this person, he perceived that he was himself the object of the other's scrutiny. Observing for a few moments with admiration the marked character of his face, and the native dignity of his position, he was surprised when the forest warrior, closing his inspection, with slow steps approached him. The Indian stooped down and unfastened the manacles that bound his ankles and wrists, and, taking the youth by the hand, lifted him from the ground. His next movement was to inscribe on the sergeant's forehead a symbolical mark, by which the Indian secures from the violence of his fellows those whom he has thus designated as objects of his protection.

"You have come far," said the Indian, coolly, "to die this hard death on the banks of the Mohawk."

Walter was about to prostrate himself before his deliverer in acknowledgment of the favour done him, but was prevented by the other, who placed the young sergeant at his side on a log, near one of the fires. His heart, overflowing with gratitude, bore evidence of its emotions in every way it was possible for them to be expressed. With all this sudden rush of thought came the hope of again seeing his mother. He forced the avowal of deep indebtedness on the forest chief.

"It matters not," replied he; "I do not hold you at all in my debt."

"Debtor for the greatest of all blessings, that of life," said Walter.

"And yet you were scarcely mindful of my preserving *mine* to-day," said the other, "or of the lives of my friends."

"You were there, then?" interrogated the young man.

"I certainly know some that were," replied the Indian. "But no more just now of what was done at Oriscany; here come those that seek you, and any mention of that affair will be but a poor recommendation to their mercy. Your head would not be worth the wearing in twenty minutes' time." He arose and met the advancing executioners, with whom he held a brief dialogue apart from the captive. At length, waving his hand, they turned back, and Walter was again joined by his unknown intercessor.

"Follow me," said he; "these fellows are tasting rather too much rum. If you stay longer in sight, it may be difficult to keep them under control." He did as commanded, and was led to some distance, where, beneath a rude booth covered with hemlock boughs, and bedded with the same, they sat down. The Indian taking some pieces of dried venison from a sack suspended in a corner of the booth, placed the same on the ground between Walter and himself; remarking that soldiers generally esteemed eating as no idle part of their duties, and invited him to share the meal. The sergeant not having tasted a morsel since morning, addressed himself to the repast with an eagerness that boded destruction to a goodly portion of the dried flesh.

"I have less ceremony at my table," the warrior remarked after a little, "than you have been accustomed to."

"It is all the same to one with so promising an appetite as mine," replied Walter.

"And yet," pursued his friend, "a cold-cut at the foot of a tree now and then, of a clear morning, and with an appetite whet up by exercise to help it off, is not an indifferent meal, even to those whose education has been elsewhere derived than

in the woods." The young man cast a glance of his eye at the speaker, as if to ascertain whether this remark was general or particular. His effort, however, produced him no information.

"I was not aware," said he, renewing the dialogue, and swallowing a piece of the venison, at the same time, with great relish, "that deers' flesh, thus prepared, could be so savoury to the taste. You procure much of it in these woods, I presume?"

"There are deer hereabout," replied the other, regarding the question as a hook thrown after some particulars of his own locale; "what you eat may not be the product of this forest, however."

The two ate on in silence; Walter now and then casting a glance at the expressive features of his host, whose manners, like his conversation, seemed to place him far above the common level of his race. He farther formed a yet higher estimate of him on perceiving beneath his girdle a small volume, wearing outward signs of having been much handled.

"You promise fair to become a good forester," said the Indian, having some time witnessed the execution his guest was doing to the fare.

"In one respect at least," responded Walter. "I hope not to occasion any advance of price in the staple of venison."

"The price never varies," returned the host; "a charge of powder and a ball have been, since my remembrance, the only value paid; taking into account, I may add, a little skill of eye and arm. It is the same price paid by the king's enemies for the occasional massacre of our people, when they chance to meet them in the paths of their own forests. I think the same price of lead for life you bartered for some of our friends at Millstone!" Walter again opened his eyes on the face of the warrior, but read nothing in its inflexible and changeless features.

"Were you there?" he asked, at length.

"Why now, sergeant," pursued the chief; "do you think *that* to be a distance beyond the bounds allowed the foot of the Indian? They once roamed even farther than that, without, at the same time, paying tribute of their wealth or forfeit of life to those who now deny them so much as burial ground in the wide stretch from the sea to the lakes. But," he continued, with a little more fire, "we shall be upon their trail; wherever they do the work of death, either in plain or mountain path, the blood of our slain warriors will cry to us from the ground. Your hand is yet weak; it has few stains upon it; but when it can take a stronger hold of the sword, I know well how and whom it would strike."

"It would not strike except in fair and honourable conflict," said Walter. "It

has, to be sure, been my lot to take part on one side of the great contest; yours, I presume, on the other. We may still be honourable foes."

"Of that those may judge best who have suffered most," returned the savage. "There is little guarantee of honourable warfare, as you term it, in the cold-blooded murder of that clan of the Six Nations, slain like wild beasts by the Paxtang zealots at Lancaster; nor in yon heartless butcheries of Cresap, shedding the blood of every vein in the house of the Mingo chief, though Logan was the white man's friend. Do those of your people, with rifles aimed at our breasts, choose to say it is all in honour that they kill? What farther would they add to injuries already done? I will not speak of midnight violence on dwellings of the king's loyal subjects, and the brutal slaughter of inmates."

This again waked up the curiosity of the young man, and he regarded the speaker with a look of excited inquiry. Could the last allusion be general in its character? or did it refer to incidents of which he had some unpleasant remembrance?

"You do not eat," remarked the Indian, after a few minutes' silence. "I hope the mention of blood has not taken away the appetite of a soldier."

"No," said the other, taking up a slice, "you know the jaws sometimes rest when the attention is at work. Your race have much renown for oratory, and I could not bear testimony to this exhibition of its excellence, first permitted me to enjoy, in any better way than the observance of silence."

Not ill pleased with the compliment, his dusky friend returned him a slight nod, and remarked that his talent at flattery might thrive in a proper soil. "His majesty, now," added he, "could soon find means to reward it."

"I am more likely to stand in awe of his rewards than be much benefited by them," said Walter. "I don't think my course would purchase me much favour."

"And yet you have already laid the crown under great obligations to you," said the other, with a glance at the sergeant's breast.

"Ha!" exclaimed he, placing his hand where his despatches were carried, "gone!"

"Come to hand, sergeant," gravely responded the warrior, filling his mouth; "and contents noted." Walter stopped the work of mastication, as he gradually grew white.

"Help yourself," said the chief, carelessly; "or, perhaps, as you are little used to the Indian's fare, a bit of beef and portion of a wheaten loaf would find more favour in your mouth." And hereupon he pulled Walter's knapsack from a cor-

ner of the booth, and emptied its contents before the astonished owner.

"It is the part of the judicious purveyor," he continued, "to cater for such stores as he may know the particular guest has, in a manner, been accustomed to. You will stand in no dread of a heavy reckoning, sergeant, for this part of the entertainment, at least. And as to the despatches, you will find sufficient apology in the fatigues of the day for not delivering them in person. I shall place Colonel Gansevoort under indebtedness for the service rendered his messenger in doing it myself, though I charge him nothing for forage bestowed," glancing at the sergeant's sack of provisions. "I call on the colonel in the course of a day or two within the walls of Fort Stanwix, and can then present your credentials; a few days' elapse, you know, will make little difference to the force within. It will not be in my power to associate the transmission of the papers with accompanying compliments verbal from your commander-in-chief; their presentation will more probably be at the point of St. Leger's muskets, and the steel edges of knife and tomahawk. Help yourself to the venison, however."

Finishing his repast, the warrior lighted his pipe and began to smoke. Walter declined the offer made him to participate in the luxury. The Indian then took the little volume from under his girdle, and, aided by the light of the fire, read from its pages as he quietly exhaled the smoke from his lips. The sergeant, as he picked his teeth, became immersed in the contemplation of this half savage, half enlightened, or, rather, wholly enlightened being. With curious eyes he surveyed every particular of his dress, his figure, and his face. His conversation had fully denoted the acquirement of education; his manners, that he was no stranger to the fashions of society.

"I must apologize," said he, closing the book after the lapse of fifteen or twenty minutes; "but it is always my habit to read a little after supper, provided more pressing matters do no prevent me. Perhaps you would like to amuse yourself in the same way?"

"I don't think I shall be able to do much with this volume," said Walter, having looked a moment at the strange characters in which it was printed. "It is a language I am not favoured with acquaintance of."

"The collegiate course does not embrace it, I well know," said the chief. "Your father would have thought your time poorly spent indeed, had you thrown aside the fiction of the classics to study the Book of Common Prayer and the Word of God in Mohawk."

"The Bible, is it!" exclaimed the youth: "it is not often a part of the equipage of

martial camps." And he regarded, with looks of increasing interest, this personage, who bore beneath his girdle the Gospel of Peace and implements of death at one and the same time. "The tenets of this book are something at variance with the trade that you and I are pursuing. The principles of Him it speaks of rebuked the unsheathing of the apostle's sword when drawn against enemies that sought his own death upon the cross of Calvary. Have you found in it any warrant for the shedding of Christian blood?"

"I have found in it," said the savage, "nothing that justifies me in breaking allegiance with a sovereign whose protection demands of me, as it does of all his subjects, good faith, obedience, and service on the war-path, if it be his need. But I must go. I leave you here on parole; your sense of honour will not wrong my indulgence in leaving you without guard. A word of advice, should we not meet again. What may in reason be exacted by your guard, yield to without murmur. Run the gauntlet boldly, if you run at all. Observe the bearing of a chivalrous spirit in all emergencies; the red man scorns the coward. Take this; it may stand you in good need hereafter;" and he handed the other a very small packet. "You will not, mind me, open it during your captivity. Keep it safely; its value some time hereafter may remind you of a friend. Wash not out the mark I have put on your brow. When this tempest of war is calmed, we may see a sunnier day. I wish you well. Give me your hand; may it never be red with the blood of my people. In war upon pheasants and squirrels I care not how often or fatally it strikes. Nor," he added, giving the sergeant's fingers an eloquent squeeze, "do I care how many epistles it may trace for love's perusal. So farewell, Sergeant Henderson. Nay, nay, not a word from you about gratitude. I say, as once before, I have not made you debtor in the rescue of your life."

The warrior, with slow steps, buried himself in the shades of the swamp, leaving our young adventurer overwhelmed with wonder, confusion, and thankfulness. One shot, as the Indian spoke, he felt to sweep away the veil drawn over his essay in matters of love, and leave him bare to the shafts of ridicule. But now, on pondering over the subject, what could this wild ranger know either of his adventures with squirrels and pheasants, or his feats at epistolary composition? His name, with which the other seemed familiar, might have been discovered upon some article in his knapsack. But, on overhauling the same, he satisfied himself at once of the fallibility of the suspicion. Did he, then, meet with it in the despatches taken from his possession? Thus distracted

with conjecture, he laid down on the bed of hemlock. It was past midnight ere the savage yells in the surrounding forest, together with the agitation of his mind, permitted him to fall asleep.

CHAPTER XV.

"Look round; joy is not here, nor cheerfulness:
You have pursued misfortune to its dwelling."
CONGREVE.

EARLY on the following morning Walter was awakened by two Indians, who took him in charge; and packing up what few articles they deemed necessary, were soon ready for a departure. They plunged into the woods, following an obscure path, and, after their universal custom, journeying in single file with the prisoner between them. Silence was observed throughout their morning's walk; and about ten they stopped at a spring to partake a cold breakfast of dried flesh, which they shared with the captive; then, drinking at the spring, set forward again, and pursued their way in silence as before. Towards the hour of two in the afternoon, the heat of the still forest became excessive, and the fatigued youth, unaccustomed to so fast and unrelenting a gait on so rough and uneven a path, too, as that they trod, found himself almost unable to proceed farther. His guard, at the same time, evinced not a symptom of weariness, nor any disposition either to slacken their pace or come to a halt. Remembering the advice of his mysterious friend of the preceding night, the young man braced every muscle with determined energy, and laboured in his toilsome progress. Observing the forward Indian occasionally tighten his girdle, he crowded his own handkerchief beneath the waistband of his pantaloons, and derived great advantage from the experiment.

When night drew on, the Indians sought a suitable spot, and building a fire, encamped until morning. Here they ate again in the same manner as before, and then fastening the prisoner between them by attaching the cord with which they pinioned his arms to their own bodies, laid down to sleep. It was not long until the laboured breathing of the savages pronounced them in the enjoyment of sound repose.

Several hours the young man laid wide awake between them. His mind dwelt on the singular fate that had befallen him. His thought went back to the interview with the strange warrior—then to the terrible conflict of Oriscany—Millstone—his march from his adopted valley—his brother. Then he mused long upon his mother, the blessing she gave him when he left, and queried with himself if she was not at this hour thinking of her son, and what her emotions

would be could she know of his present situation.

Then he thought of Ruth, her face at the window, overshadowed by that hue of sadness, and wondered what could have called so melancholy an expression over it. He thought, too, of the letter—her ridicule, and the agony it had cost him. He contrasted the affront he had received with what he thought due to him. But he had been scorned in the proffer of all kindlier impulses of the heart. Overcome by a sudden spasm of excitement, "Out upon her!" he exclaimed, with well-marked emphasis. Up bolted one of his guard upon whose ear this outcry had fallen; and, lifting his hatchet, drew it over the head of the involuntary denouncer, meanwhile glaring down upon him with the eyes of an owl. As suddenly as the thought by which it was dictated, the youth closed his eyes; and, expecting every moment to feel the iron sink into his skull, counterfeited a disturbed slumber. By inarticulate mutterings and a few restless turns, he played the part so well that the savage was satisfied; and, having examined his fastenings and found all right, committed himself again to his snoring.

Morning at length came, and the party proceeded forward over hill and dale. At night they camped out again as before. Whither they were going he could not tell. Only once had he broken the silence of the company. His question was answered by a scowl and that significant grunt of disapprobation peculiar to the American savage. Towards night of the third day they descended a slope of woodland, towards the banks of a stream. After a short time they perceived a column of smoke rising in easy and graceful swells to the clouds. They stopped. One of the Indians, with the caution of his suspicious and wily race, now crept through the brush and underwood in the direction of the column. In a few moments he was lost to their sight. Awaiting him in silence half an hour, he returned, being at the captive's side almost before the latter was aware of his stealthy approach. He had found all right, and then, at a sign from him, they moved forward to the place. On advancing, our young friend discovered one of those stockade forts so common in the revolutionary time and before it. At a signal made by one of the Indians, a voice hailed from within the fortress, "Who dar?"

"Friend," replied he who had made the signal.

"Come up little nearer, den," said he within. The Indian did as ordered, and placed his face before a small aperture in the gate of entrance, so that it was reflected on by the rays of a torch, placed within for that purpose. At the same time the hailing sentinel occupied a post in the

inside, from which he could scan the features thus presented to his inspection without being seen himself.

"Dar—nuff sed—know you like a book," remarked the examiner, having looked at the visage a short time. The heavy bars were now removed and the boltings drawn back. With his broad shoulder placed against the unwieldy gate, it creaked on its hinges as the man pushed it open.

"Walk in, walk in, my red bredren," said he; "you's welcome as pease in June. But one bird, eh? Why, rebels gettin' out ob fashion. Whar de debble you bin so long, and come back wid such a yearlin' as dis only, eh! Last time you fotch leben—bigga ones, too. Gosh a mighty! you not make salt for you brauff, at dis rate."

As he made fast the ponderous gate, Walter had an opportunity of taking the measure of this new acquaintance.

He was a strong-built, broad-shouldered black, who exhibited a bold, impertinent expression of face, over which he sought to cast a gleam of jocularly. He handled the large oaken bars that secured the gate with as much ease as a drummer-boy does his sticks. He was arrayed in a shabby British uniform, and bore himself before the captive as if with much anxiety of displaying a rusted epaulet on his shoulder and the cockade he wore in his hat, doubting not that these emblems of official rank and distinction would greatly enhance him in the consideration of the young stranger.

"Come," said he, having made all fast, and strutting in the lead of the file, "march! I give you de grand escort to quarters. Take care dat log, dar; de cussed rebels habn't split um yet. Rebels dam lazy any how—haul in dis log yesterday, and, cuss me, if dey get um-split fore next week!"

Traversing a part of the open area between the various buildings that occupied the enclosure, they followed their leader within the largest, where Walter was ushered into an apartment with barred windows, looking out upon the centre of the area. Taking his seat on a wooden bench near one of the windows, he was left by his black jailer, who, withdrawing with the light, locked the door after him. The sergeant was now left in darkness. For an hour he sat in this solitude undisturbed in his reflections, which, it may be supposed, were not agreeable in their kind. Overcome by weariness, he at length stretched his body on the bench and fell asleep. He was aroused from his slumber by a sensation of pain. He opened his eyes and beheld the athletic black, who was standing over him with one hand tightly gripped on his arm, and holding his light in the other.

"Up! up!" said he. "The debble! you sleep here like a hog in a gemman's parlour. Whar you study manners, eh? I wouldn't let Gauge de Thud do it."

"I am sorry if I have broken your rules," said Walter; "I was much tired by a long walk, and was not aware that this is your parlour."

"Dar, dar! save your breff, save your breff," interrupted the other; "I'll put you whar you'll have chance to sleep nuff. Come, stump along dis way; I can't stand argufying till mawning 'bout it. You spose I'ze nuffen else to do, cuss me, but listen to you dam Yankee slang!"

Walter, without making answer, followed the stately official along a low vaulted entry-way that seemingly led to the rear of the building, and was at length turned in through a very low door into an apartment cheerless and dark. The ceiling was so low that, ere he was aware, his head came in collision with one of the beams.

"Take care what you 'bout dar," said his keeper, "kase we don't build housen here to be mashed to pieces dat way by your coconut head. If you hab a mine to take a bunt or two in rale earnest, here's a calabash for you. I'ze a little ob de science myself, and I'll take you bunt about for who shall have bofe. But keep your noddle away from de cills, mind, as gemman ob you colar better be little speeful. You bed on dat side—you see um? When you want anyting, ring de bell; I'ze always happy to serve rebel gemman." And closing this exhibition of pleasant irony, the black, with marked reverence, made several low congees to the young man, and fastened the door securely as he retired.

The sobriquet of this coloured dignitary, thus filling the post of commandant on a frontier station of the British lines, was Captain Sunfish. His vigilance, fidelity, and the rigour with which he exercised his functions as superintendent of the fortress, eminently commended him to the confidence and favour of the officers of the crown. The commands received from his superiors, of whatsoever character, were carried by him into effect to the minutest letter of his instructions. He flinched not from the obedience of any mandate, however much in violation of the principles of mercy or humanity, under the view of continuing to himself the enjoyment of his official rank and the munificence of the English purse. The countenance he shared from the sovereign, through the medium of the royal dignitaries, increased in his bosom the sway of those tyrannical and remorseless humours which dictated his oppressive rule over such as fell within his power, and generally over the subordinates of the military post. These considerations are reconcilable with the long-established opinion that no delegated power is ever more rigorously exercised than that committed to individuals of this oppressed and neglected race.

Without food, water, or light, the youth

passed his first night under the protection of Captain Sunfish. It was late in the morning when, but poorly refreshed, he arose from his pallet of straw and sought the small window, more resembling a pipe-hole than anything else, that now admitted the light of day. This airhole, deserving no appellation more extensive, opened on the palisades but three or four feet distant. The utmost limit of his vision, therefore, was restricted to a circle on the side of the enclosure some six or eight feet in diameter. While looking out through the aperture, and making himself acquainted with the various objects embraced in this miniature view, a hand from without placed a stone jug filled with water and a brown loaf within the window. It was his apportioned ration for the day.

Another night succeeded with its tedious hours and unpleasant dreams. Day followed, and the captive, immersed in melancholy musings, sat in the dimness of his cell. Rain came on towards noon, and he watched until evening the descending drops that fell on the margin of his window, and the little streams tracing their way from chip to chip down over the unhewn logs of the palisade. Shivering in the dampness of his dungeon, he stretched himself on his bed, and, closing his eyes, sought to drown his harassing thought in sleep. For three days nothing varied the monotony of his life but the occasional sound of footsteps on the ground floor of the entry without, or the opening and shutting of doors on either side of it. Worn out and overcome by anxiety, on the ninth day he felt his powers of body sinking. The hard and mouldy bread furnished him, grew nauseous to his taste. His tongue became swollen in his mouth, and his brain dizzy. In attempting to walk, his knees gave way beneath him; crawling to his pile of straw, he laid down exhausted and helpless. The room whirled as on a pivot, a feeling of stifling oppression overcame him, and he gasped for breath. At length the spell passed, and, moaning, he sank to sleep.

An endless train of distracting visions rioted in his brain. One horrid dream followed another in quick succession. At one time he thought himself clinging to the loose shingling of a tall steeple, rocked in the wild blasts of a hurricane. Anon, he had fallen to the bottom of a deep chasm, whose mouth was closing over him. Streams of dark water oozed from its sides, forming a pool as they fell that rose higher and higher around his body until it reached his nostrils. Then the chasm suddenly changed to a grave, wide and deep. His father and mother lay within it, wrapped in the ceremonies of death. He thought himself lying between them, each with an icy arm around his neck; yet he was not himself dead, but without

power to move. Many scowling faces looked over the brink, and mocked them as they lay. At length the many seemed merged in one—a fierce savage of the wilderness, whose eyes flamed in their sockets, while his teeth chattered in terrible derision over the dead. By degrees his features changed to those of his brother, who, leaning on his rifle, smiled as he looked down into the grave. Taking a spade in his hands, he began to pile the earth upon their feet. One clod after another rolled down upon them, until his father and mother were covered from his sight; yet, bound in the toils of some enchantment, he could not stir, he could not speak. At length his own body was covered over by the diligence of the sexton. The contents of the spade at last descended upon his own face; but, instead of clay, it seemed now turned to blood, that filled, as it were, his eyes, his mouth, and his nostrils. With a powerful effort, he broke the enchanting spell, and sprang out of the grave.

The violence of emotion awoke the terrified dreamer from the state of imaginary horror. He found himself sitting up—a posture into which the sudden impulse had thrown him. He soon discovered that his terror was but the offspring of a dream; but in vain were his efforts to account for his situation, or to tell where he was. His disordered intellect, like the bark without compass, had lost all clew to its bearings. He opened his eyes on the impenetrable darkness, and strove to remember what he was last doing, where he had been, in what place he was, and how he had come there. He put out his hand and felt the damp floor on which he sat, and then the rough wall on the other side of him. Yielding to his inability of gaining any knowledge of his situation, he sank back on his pallet with a deep groan. It was answered by a rustling noise somewhere near him. He listened some time, and thought he heard something like the sound of a person breathing. Resorting to the same means, though now with a different motive, he uttered another groan.

"Get out, you brute!" uttered a voice, in a sharp and passionate tone.

The invalid waited in the surprise he felt, expecting a continuance of the harangue. Nothing more followed, and for some time he listened to the breathing of the individual, growing more and more sonorous. After a while he ventured to awaken the tones again, in the same manner as before.

"Out, out, I say!" thundered the voice, as the speaker seemed starting up from his couch. "Any more of it, and I break your tarnal jaws for you!"

The young soldier began to feel no little alarm. Forgetful of where he really was, and, consequently, not knowing what sort

of company he had fallen in with, he was not in a situation to estimate the consequences of his temerity. It was, therefore, with inward satisfaction he heard his neighbour repose himself again to his slumbers. Long time he listened to his breathing, and at length fell into a doze himself. Unconsciously, however, it was not long until another moan escaped his lips, which aroused both himself and the other sleeper.

"At it again, you hound!" shouted the latter. "By Heaven, I'll break every bone in your hide!" This assurance was followed up by a movement fully predicting its immediate execution. By the time the last word passed his lips he had groped his way in the darkness to the bedside of the other.

"Hold!" cried Walter, as a muscular hand gripped his leg with the power of a vice.

"The devil!" replied the other, withdrawing his hand; "what are you?"

"But a man, as you perceive," replied the invalid.

"Well, that's better than I expected," said the other, "so here's to bed again. I mistook you for a dog. What sort of a hole is this, any how?" planting himself on his pallet and stretching out his limbs.

"I can't say," returned Walter.

"You can't! why, how long have you been here?"

"I can't tell that either," replied the youth.

"Can't, eh? Then I suppose you can hardly tell what place you're in?" rejoined the other.

"Indeed I cannot," again replied the sergeant in the negative.

"Well, that's pretty fair," said the other. "I should like to know who was your schoolmaster. If you stay here long you'll come out a philosopher. Not very good accommodations in the way of beds," he continued, changing the theme as he rolled upon his couch; "rather short, or else I'm in crosswise. The floor, though, is about as soft as the feathers."

"Are you on feathers?" inquired Walter, with some dim recollections on his mind about uncomfortable couches, and at the same time putting his hand out upon the straw.

"Feathers! let me see; no, I believe not; it feels more like a layer of candle-ends." And the stranger, giving a yawn, composed himself for a nap. Walter was anxious to know something more of his companion, and also to find out, if possible, where he was; and, therefore, after the lapse of several minutes, he renewed the dialogue.

"Have you been here a long time?"

"Yes, you're right—the time," mumbled the other, arrested, apparently, by Walter's

last word: "take up the time, men—in close order, march!" And following up the command by some inarticulate phrases relative to the science of arms, his voice gradually became hushed.

"A soldier, at any rate," said Walter to himself.

Early the following morning the sergeant was awakened by strains of music. Casting his eye in the direction whence it came, he perceived his companion of the night sitting upright on his couch, whistling with great earnestness a martial air. Finishing his tune, he rose up, and, extending his arms, gave himself a regular stretching; and then set to for a few minutes at a double shuffle, which he touched off in the highest style of perfection. These performances he closed by inhaling as much air as his lungs would contain, and then blowing it out again with a loud whistling sound, similar to that made by the wild deer of the woods.

"Good-morning to you, fellow of the mess," said he, approaching the pallet of the sergeant, whose knowledge of his whereabouts had by this time returned to him. The voice, it seemed to Walter, had a familiar sound, and, therefore, heedless of the salutation, he looked at the speaker in silence.

"Not mad about the dog business, that you haven't a word on your tongue this morning?" inquired the other.

The sergeant must certainly know that voice, he thought to himself again. Raising himself in bed, he took the stranger by the arm, and turned him so that the imperfect light from the window fell upon his face.

"Now Heaven be praised, if this isn't Jack Summers!" he exclaimed.

The recognition was mutual; and the only reply made by Summers was, to swing his arm above his head and give a loud "Hurrah for Millstone!" Then taking both of Walter's hands in his own, the corporal shook them with as hearty a good will as ever characterized a greeting of friends before or since. He sat down on the side of the pallet by Walter, and the young men were soon warm in the narration of their respective adventures. Walter closed his own account of himself, brief as he was obliged to make it, from indisposition, by seeking to know that of his fellow.

"I left the army on furlough of a month," said the other, "intending to spend the time in Wyoming. I reached home, spent a day, and the next morning set out for this country."

"Well, that's a very concise relation," remarked Walter.

"Yes, rather so," said the corporal; "we learn brevity in practising the word of command at squad drills. But if you

desire the items, I'll open the account, and have 'em checked off for you."

desire the items, I'll open the account, and have 'em checked off for you." The other gladly acceded to the proposal, and the corporal continued:

"I was glad to look down on the flats again, coming to the top of the mountain and seeing home once more. So, scudding down the descent, I was soon at my mother's door. She was glad to see me, you may depend; for she threw her arms around my neck (and she's got the grip of a bear in the arm), and hugged me till I was about crying out for quarter. To tell the truth, I began to feel a little queer myself, and felt something of a choking up in the throat as the old woman let fall a warm tear or two on my neck. Well, I had hardly time to take my hat off before she slammed me down on a chair and asked me five hundred questions about dad and the army, and how his shirts wore, and his stockings, his flannel wrap-rascal, and the Lord knows what. I told her the old man was hearty as a buck; that he had got new epaulets, and had a new sword presented to him by General Washington's own hand for his bravery at Millstone; that he was beloved by his company, every one of whom would die by him any time. Here I looked up at her, and met her eyes fastened on me, all swimming in water, and her face glowing with the happiest expression you ever saw in your life. When I spoke of the old man this way, and particularly of General Washington presenting the sword, and that he was doing well for his country, and shared the love of his men, it was more than she could stand, and she almost cried with joy."

"How happy she must have been," said Walter. "You've a good mother, Jack."

"Yes," replied Summers, "a decent sort of woman; I believe she has a good heart in her old body. In truth, I always had a kind of liking for her, barring that she's a little on the dragon order when her dander's up. Well, the next morning—for it was just night when I reached home—I went all round to see the folks."

"You were at our house?" interrupted the sergeant.

"That's Garrison Hill, as they call it now—yes, the first place I visited."

"And saw mother?" again interposed Walter.

"Ay, and as friendly and kind as a south wind," said Corporal Summers; "she shook hands with me like a first cousin."

"She was well?" asked the other, raising himself on his elbow.

"Entirely well; so was your father. He was glad to see me, likewise."

"And they asked after me?" inquired the excited sergeant.

"Lord, yes!" replied Summers; "your mother did that before she let go my

hand. 'How's my dear boy?' asked she. 'I can't say, Mrs. Henderson,' I replied. 'What?' says she, 'is he not with his company?' 'No,' said I; and before I could go on to explain the matter she broke in upon me again. 'Tell me,' says she, looking pale as a snow-flake, 'is he slain?' 'Oh, no,' says I; 'he's gone on a private mission, I don't know where, but to bear important despatches, and he was very well when he left the army.' At this she sat down, for she was getting a little weak, I guess, and then inquired all about you."

"You told her of our fighting in ranks at Millstone, Jack?"

"Ay, indeed," said Summers; "and let her know you had gained much credit by it. I told her your name had been mentioned at many a mess, and pledged in many a glass of grog after the battle, as the brave young sergeant from the Pine Swamp. That your name had reached the ears of the officers of the staff also, and through them, those of the commander-in-chief, and that, consequently, you were selected in especial confidence to become bearer of the private despatches."

"And they were pleased to hear it?" the sergeant mumbled out, with stifled tone, as he laid back on his pallet, covering his face with his hand.

"It looked something like it," said Summers; "your mother got up from her seat and went out of the room, and into her chamber, I think, for I heard the rustling of her gown on the stairs."

"And father?"

"Well, he went to the window and tried to whistle to himself as he drummed with his finger nail on the sash," said Summers. "Then he walked a few times across the floor. After a while he took his hat, and asked me if I wouldn't walk out in the open air and take a look at the fort." This conduct of the parents the son well understood to be emblematical of the secret joy with which the corporal's history had inspired them; and he readily contemplated his fond mother, who in her chamber wept over this flattering intelligence of her absent son.

Corporal Summers followed up his narrative with some details of Barney—generalissimo of the local scout—and of his prowess in discharging the important trust; of his spouse, also, and the precocious Patrick. He named Doctor Jaws, likewise, then vociferous in his praises of some newly invented compound medicated plaster of his own, for curing the pole evil in horses. At that particular time he was bestowing his professional attentions on Jeremiah, who but a few days before had encountered a sore calamity. In company with some boys younger than himself, he had gone to swim in a stagnant pool at the edge of the flats, the bottom of

which was a deep stratum of black alluvial mud. In order to astonish the young Leanders he bathed with, Jeremiah mounted on a stump to accomplish a bold feat at diving. The velocity of his descent carried him down through the shallow pool, and head foremost to the middle of his body in the mud beneath. With his heels uppermost, the kicking and floundering made by him was truly prodigious. The other lads fled naked to the nearest house, and when Jeremiah was dragged from the coat of black stucco which incased him, or of the amount of it he had sucked into his mouth and gullet.

"In the evening I called over at another neighbour's, not far off, you know," continued Summers, "to see the family, and—but no matter—you understand me," he said, with a wink at his listener. "Well, the old folks were very gracious, and after supper we had a long talk about the war, for they wouldn't talk of anything else. At last the old man laid away his pipe, pulled off his shoes and set them in the corner, gave a yawn or two, gave a look at the old woman, and then both pattered off to bed. Deb, in the mean time (but I forgot, I don't call any names, mind), was dreadful busy at the cupboard, pretending to be fixing away the dishes. But, as soon as they went out, she shut up the cupboard door, and then came and stood close to where I was sitting. I understood all this like a game of fox and geese, as there was a plenty of other chairs, for the matter of that. But I thought I'd tantalize a little, so I didn't take notice. At last, not being used to such treatment, she began to look a little queer. Thinks I, repenting a little, this is too abominably barbarous, and she don't deserve it, so I just put an arm around her waist and seated her plump on my knee.

"In an hour or two (not saying what happened all this while) there was a rap at the door; whereupon Deb (not mentioning names, though) jumped down and pulled out the nail from over the latch. No sooner was the door opened than in marched four or five of the red-skins, hatchet in hand. Deb (but I don't mention names) screeched out like a painter, and out sprang the old man on the floor over head with a jar that shook the house. 'Sit down, my gentlemen of colour,' says I (supposing it some of the neighbours playing a hoax on our small courting party), 'and I'll fetch a bowl of water to wash the brick-dust off your faces.' Here Deb (names unmentioned) caught me by the arm, and begged I would not insult the gentlemen,

thinking to make a little favour with them by the use of the word. 'Gentlemen, do you call the scalping rascals!' says I; 'never fear; I'll give 'em a little fodder from this pap-spoon;' and, to carry on the joke, snatched down a tin milk-skimmer from a nail and squared off with it like a fencing-master at guard. 'Come on now, you copper-bottomed villains,' says I; but before you could open and shut the pan of a musket, one of their tomahawks came down on the handle of the old skimmer and cut it clean off just above my hand. 'Enough!' shouted I, beginning to understand the game, 'I cave in.' Well, to give the story the short cut, the house was robbed, the old folks turned out half naked, and I am here."

"And Deb?"

"Hold on there!" shouted the corporal; "no names, if you please. Why, she slipped out the back way somehow, and I don't know where she went; but an hour after, as we went up the side of the mountain, a discharge from the alarm gun at the main fort came roaring over the hills and roused up the population of the whole valley."

"You heard nothing in particular of the other residents, then?" inquired Walter, a few moments after the other closed his narrative.

"Nothing particular," said he.

"Anything of Colonel Dinning?"

"Nothing at all," replied Summers, going to the airhole, where he stood looking out several minutes more.

"Nor of his daughter, I suppose?" Walter at length inquired, with an attempt at perfect indifference, which cost him great exertion.

"No, nothing; yes, let me see," responded the other suddenly, as he awakened from a reverie. "I think she's dead."

"Dead!" said the other, bolting up.

"Dead—dead, I believe," pondered Summers, scratching his head meanwhile. "I'm not sure, but it's either dead or married, certain."

"Married!" echoed the invalid, swinging his legs over the bedside.

"I think so, not positive," replied the corporal; "either dead or married, it was told me. Who were you asking after?"

"The colonel's daughter," said the sergeant, faintly.

"Oh! she's there yet, I heard. I mistook you. It is some one else I was thinking of. Yes, Ruth (but perhaps you don't like to have names mentioned) is in the valley."

The sergeant laid down again, and breathed much easier.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Intolerable vanity! your sex
Was never in the right!"

The Orphan.

The indisposition of Sergeant Henderson increased. His companion felt his pulse, laid his hand on his cheek, looked at his tongue, and pronounced it a confirmed case of bilious fever. His ardent temperament led him, at the same time, into much enthusiasm touching his friend's situation. He assured him that no attention should be wanting, and that for his own part he would stand by him to the end of it. Walter paid him with protestations of gratitude.

It became necessary, in the opinion of Summers, that his friend should be removed from this desolate room. He knocked long and loud at the door of the cell. It produced no reply. He called to the one who came with the rations (now duplicate in amount), but received no answer from the individual, who hastily retreated and passed through a door, which was heard to open and close again. He sought in vain for anything on which to write, that he might throw the same, with the statement of his friend's situation, from the window, hoping that some one might pick it up and read it. He called aloud once or twice, but the sick youth could not endure the reverberation it caused in the confined apartment.

Night came on, and the invalid suffered under a burning fever. Fortunately, it abated somewhat, and the night was passed much better than the corporal anticipated. Morning brought on the fever with renewed power, and the sufferer became wild with delirium. Summers repaired to the window, and sat by it like a cat watching for its prey. The hour drew on for the arrival of the purveyor. At length he heard footsteps approaching. His eyes sparkled as the hand entered the hole with the loaf. He seized upon it with the avidity of a tiger, and retaining his hold, the individual without gave full stress of voice in cries of terror. The young soldier drew in the hand, and waited some time the abatement of the storm, that he might make himself heard.

"Shut your fly-trap!" said he, at length, compressing the fingers in his iron grasp. "Silence! or I'll smash your claws to jelly!" The admonition took effect, and the outcry sank down to a whimper.

"Now mind what I tell you," said Summers, in a stern tone, "before I twist your arm off at the elbow. Go at once to that big nigger, Captain Catfish, Codfish, or whatever his name is, that is master of this purgatory, and tell him a prisoner is dying here of the fever. Do you hear?" and he gave the fingers of the hand another squeeze that produced both an an-

swer in the affirmative and a stifled yell of pain.

"And say to him farther, that, if he don't instantly remove him to a better room, it shall not be an hour till the whole building is blown to the devil. Mind now what I tell you; a magazine is under the whole fort, and I'll have it blown up, by G—d! if this sick man lays here an hour longer. Now be off and do my bidding." He dropped the hand, and the owner was not long in moving from the spot.

When the invalid awoke to a state of consciousness, he found himself the occupant of an apartment into which the sun was casting his beams. He was lying on a bed hung with curtains, the sheets and pillows white and clean. Near him was a small stand loaded with vials, glasses, and spoons, the accustomed furniture of an invalid chamber. Within his reach was a little bell with a handle of carved ebony, placed there, as he supposed, for his own particular use. Being thirsty, he reached forth to the stand, hoping that some one of the vessels contained water; they were all filled with preparations and mixtures, not calculated to minister unto thirst. He therefore rang the bell, and in a moment there stood at his bedside a young woman, who had probably reached her eighteenth or twentieth year. Her general appearance might rank her in that class of servants, or, rather, companions, who, though attendant on the calls of superiors, are qualified in many respects to occupy higher ground in society. She was neatly, though plainly dressed; presenting to the eye of the invalid a face of some natural charms, together with an expression of shrewd intelligence. She demanded, in low and respectful tone of voice, what he was pleased to want. He signified his desire, and it was with alacrity performed. Receiving the emptied glass from his hand, she placed it on the stand, and remarked, as she passed from the room, that the call of the bell would at all times be promptly answered.

The young man felt overcome with the loneliness of his situation, and longed for a little conversational intercourse. Without thought, he rang the bell. But in this he had rather overleaped himself, for when the maiden demanded his wish, he had not provided one for the occasion. He therefore fell back on the subterfuge of the water. This the girl flatly denied him, saying, he had drank enough already, and placed the pitcher beyond his reach in the window. He was not displeased with this, since she must necessarily be called in whenever he wished it.

"Are you going so soon?" he asked, as she advanced to the door.

"Unless you need something more," she replied.

they issued from the gate. The prisoner was here transferred to the custody of two Indians; moving away between whom, they were soon in the depths of the forest. It was morning when the party, having at a rapid pace left the fort of Captain Sunfish several miles behind them, halted, and commenced the erection of a booth, made of the green boughs of trees. Here they encamped, in the midst of an entangled thicket, overhung by a precipitous ledge, making their retreat one of the greatest obscurity. Closely watched by one or the other of his guides; they passed four days in this place, subsisting on a very low diet. During this time one of the Indians had been absent a day from the Indian campment. He returned in the evening, and the captive thought he detected in his face what boded little in favour of his own welfare. He became convinced in the conviction that his life was in jeopardy. His suspicion admitted no doubt when the Indian just returned beckoned the other from the spot. For the purpose of a private interview, they retired a few rods within the surrounding thicket. Walter took up the little vessel in which he had been accustomed to bring water, and carelessly humming a tune, walked past the pair, who hushed their dialogue as he went by towards the little creek. When at this, he was both out of their sight and hearing; but he had been in the habit of coming thus far unattended many times each day, and the movement, therefore, created no suspicion. Slipping with all haste beneath the cover of the bushes, he sped his way along the front of the precipice. Fearing that his trail might lead to his capture, he threw his arms around the trunk of a smooth poplar, and ascended it until on a level with the surface of the ledge. Here balancing himself as well as he could upon one of the branches of the tree, he sprang upon its brink. Fortunately, for some distance the rock was bare, over which he passed without leaving any marks as he went. He soon scaled the ridge, and plunged into a thickly-wooded swale beyond it, where he sought the shelter of one of those piles of fallen timber swept down by the hurricane, and by the woodsman denominated wind-falls.

Concealed in this, the young man, who well knew that death would certainly succeed his capture, listened for the approach of his pursuers. Lying on the damp ground, he began to feel the incipient advances of a cold. The delicate tone of his constitution, just arisen as he was from the bed of sickness, forbade him any longer to occupy his present place. As he arose to seek another covert, it was his mischance to step on the dry arm of a log, which broke under him with a sharp report, whose

echoes startled him with terror as they rang through the still forest. It was not long until he received assured evidences that the noise had been heard. Hastening away, he mounted into the thick boughs of a hemlock, where he felt himself in a situation of greater security.

The sagacious son of the forest approached the very spot where he was first concealed. In the twilight he could distinguish his vigilant foeman peering into every nook of the fallen drift. Anon, giving over his search, he stood up on one of the logs, and there, as if changed to one of its dead and motionless branches, he remained a full hour. To the victim of his chase it was a fearful time. Not a leaf was moving, not a sound fell upon his ear. It seemed that the very winds had hushed their breathing, that his own respiration might betray him. The wheels of time had, as it were, ceased turning; minutes had, at least, become hours. As he looked down on the living statue, his vision tormented him with a hundred deceptive vagaries. At one time the Indian's head was apparently turned sideways towards him, as though his ear was catching the very throbs of his heart. Then he was looking directly at him, with a smile on his face, that indicated his joy at the discovery. At another he appeared to grow in stature, until his towering height came creeping upward, so that it seemed possible to lay his hand upon his scalp. On closing his eyes a moment, they would open again, however, on the figure reduced to its natural proportions.

At length, from a distant part of the woods, he heard the plaintive cry of an owl. It came to his ear like the voice of an angel; for it seemed to afford him some relief that he was not wholly alone—that there was even a living bird not far away. It was rather singular that the cry was followed by a corresponding one near him. The distant hail was soon heard again. It was again answered, but now in a louder note. He now comprehended the interchange of salutations. What he had mistaken for the notes of the bird of night were the signals of the savages. To his joy, the red man stepped down from his perch, and withdrew in the direction of the distant hail. When his footsteps were heard no more, Walter descended, and, guided by the polar star, fled through the mazes of the forest.

Between ten and eleven o'clock he perceived in a vale before him the glimmering of a light. Thinking it might proceed from an Indian camp, he approached cautiously. It was not long until he perceived it to issue from the window of a long and low building standing at the side of a well-beaten path. Within it he recognised the clamor of voices. Shielded by

the darkness of night, the wanderer crept to the window, and perceived in the apartment, seated at a table where much convivial glee prevailed, persons, of whom we shall speak in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Let me play the fool."

SHAKESPEARE.

At the convivial board within this apartment, well advanced in the progress of inebriation, were seated two individuals; one of them a man of full, round visage, and figure of portly dimensions, plainly, though at the same time tastefully, dressed in the citizen's garb of the day. He exhibited a jocund expression of face, for which at this moment he may have been partially indebted to the potations he had taken from a table well covered with bottles and glasses. He held a pipe in one hand, that he occasionally raised to his mouth during intervals of perpetual conversation, displaying, as he did so, a jewelled ring on his finger; and his linen, of unsullied whiteness, escaping beyond the cuffs of his coat, was rolled back over them. His hand was of delicate form, and white as the linen above it. Reared back in his chair, with a cleanly-shaven chin and well-trimmed short whiskers, he presented altogether a very captivating appearance. His age might be forty-five or fifty.

His companion, who occupied the other side of the board, indicating a perfect willingness to carry the adventure to any extreme that pleased the other, was Corporal Summers.

On the hearth near them, stretched at full length, were the bodies of several Indians. Either overcome by the somnolency peculiar to their race, or laid away under the influence of liberal draughts from the board, they were unconscious of what was doing about them.

The young sergeant looked for some time at the happy couple, and concluded there could be little harm in trusting himself in quarters where his friend was doing so well; besides, aware of the dangers to which he was exposed without, he resolved to demand admittance. He therefore knocked gently at the door.

"Host, host! where art thou!" called out the elder of the revellers. "Sleeping, I'll warrant him, as fast as the cornerstone of St. Paul's. Host! Hang such a fellow! his ear is only open to a call for a demijohn, or the footing of a long bill. Now, were I to summon him for one of these even in a whisper, he'd be on foot as briskly as a stable-boy when a lord and shilling are about parting company. Host

I say! The tetter on his drowsy head! One of us, my good friend, must play porter to this late walker, for I hear the knocking again. Therefore, for the nonce waiving the goodly maxim of *signiores priores*, may I pray thee attend the door!"

Summers, with a light, proceeded into the entry, and, unbolting the door, held the candle over his head, in order that he might descry the applicant for admittance. Walter, who did not choose to have his name called in a neighbourhood where he was uncertain of the company around him, hastily cautioned silence to his friend as he discovered his identity. This was done but in time, for the corporal was about hailing with full power of lung. As it was, he admitted him *sans* salutation.

"A young night lark," said Summers, ushering him into the room, "late home from some neighbour's daughter, I've no doubt; and rather a pretty bird, too."

"*Salvo pudore*," replied the other at table, "I admit the point without dispute. But a glance of the eye is enough. Its truth would stand trial before any jury of matrons, trust me; the more especially were they unfrozen by the ice of age. Fair sir, be seated. The spring floods of our northern streams flow not more freely to the sea than comes to you our welcome. Be seated, and our young friend will pour out to you such as our scanty board may supply. Again, accept our welcome."

Walter met this full-toned civility with suitable response, and seated himself at the table.

"I am not very thirsty," said he, "but yet, in the acknowledgment of the courtesy, will accept a glass of ale."

"Ale!" said the other; "pardon me, if the clangour of drum and trumpet has in a measure done violence to my nicety of ear, but did I understand you, *ale*?"

"Ale," responded the sergeant.

"Ale," the other repeated. "Then it is ale. Ale, the dishonoured flood that plebeian wood-hewers and water-drawers drench their bowels withal. Save thy palate, fair friend, from the unhallowed pollution! Now," he added, placing his hand on a bottle near him, and filling three glasses to the brim, "here is that which does equal pleasure to the taste, and becoming honour to the guest. The vine from whose veins it flowed grew in the sunlight of the tropics; ocean moistened, and the gales of Morocco fanned its growth. Ay, the product of gentle slopes, turning their faces to the glorious south for the blessings of heat, light, and fertility. The peasant, trust me, young comrades, expressing the delicious juice, thought not (God help his pagan ignorance!) that his labour was laying foundation for so much adoration of heart and lip. Fair youths, or, rather, I should say,

par noblie fratrum, as in the ancient tongue, I pledge you length of life and ease of heart."

The glasses were emptied in response to the sentiment, and the elder of the trio, turning an eye swimming with delight from one to the other of the young men, continued, as he smacked his lips, "Now in what does this fall short of the boasted and time-honoured products of the *Ægean* and the *Ionian Isles*? ay, the *Lesbian* and the *Thasian*, hallowed though in *Grecian* song, and embalmed by history's pen and tradition's tongue. And thou! *Campagna di Roma*! fair garden of the world's fallen mistress, whose sacred juices sparkled in goblets of the orator of *Arpinum*, the bard of *Venusium*, the haughty aristocrat who led the harnessed *Volsci*, and *Julius the Grand*, unhooding the falcons of war on the plains of *Gallia*! I lay down the gage of competition, and crave proof wherein your excellence exceeded this venerable and spicy liquor from the tropic isles."

"Capital, by the light of day!" uttered Summers, pleased more by the euphony of the words and theatrical excellence of the speaker's manner, than overcome by an appreciation of the sentiment or historical allusion; "a rare chap, mind you," he added, aside, to Walter.

"Our comely brother approves the wine!" inquired the elder of the sergeant.

"Yes, indeed," he replied, "I am proud to endorse all you have so well said of it. The superiority of everything pertaining to the ancients, like the choice liquor of your encomium, comes down to us a debtor for much of its celebrity to age alone."

"By the holy cross! well said—bravely said!" exclaimed the other, rubbing together his fair, smooth fingers. "Sir Oracle, thy hand! When wisdom plays hand-maid to youth, silver-haired age admits her within pale of equality." And he grasped the hand of the sergeant with energy. "It warms my heart that, in the graver walks of scholarship, thou hast happily turned some few of those pages, sanctified by the ancient muse to the praises of the jolly god of the wine-press."

"It is true," said Walter, "I have pondered over the like when a student. My taste, however, in such matters is, I must acknowledge, more dependant on classic precept than actual experience."

"Time will be thy helper, doubt it not," said the other; and turning to Summers, "what sayest thou to the liquor?"

"By the Lord, sir, I never put anything into my mouth anywhere like it; not in my life," said the corporal. "To tell the truth and shame the devil, we haven't much of this sort o' thing in my country. A dram of whiskey from the neck of a pint bottle, or a suck of blackstrap from an

earthen pot, is the common run; saving, of course, a quiet tip at a soldier's canteen of a frosty night under canvass, or at the sentinel's post. But this stuff (saving a little twinge of bitterness), may I be shot if it don't melt on the tongue like a butter roll on a slice of broiled venison."

"Sacred light of knowledge enter into thy head!" ejaculated the other, who had listened with a face of wonder to this encomium. "Whiskey and blackstrap, sayest thou! The gods forgive thee this unrighteous assault on the purity, the delicacy, and the refinement of their ears. Knowest thou not this same taste you mention is that delectable *aroma* which, taken away, leaveth the body of the fluid like salt deprived of its savour? A blessing attend the improvement of thy taste, fellow-associate, and to which end I appropriate the practical lesson of a well-filled bumper." Saying which, he again replenished the glasses, and quaffed with infinite relish the portion allotted himself. Summers followed the lead; but Walter, not caring to indulge too far, and despairing of his ability to gain headway with the others, already so far in advance of him, contrived to pour the greater portion of his glass beneath the table.

"Now, my fair *Gemini*," said the oldest of the party, having wiped his lips with a handkerchief of the finest lawn, and placed his pipe in one side of his mouth, "the better to designate between ourselves, through the aid of befitting titles of recognition (seeing that the canons of ceremony set up in this age of turbulence forbid the use of proper names), you will permit me to exercise the priestly office so far as, on this occasion, to accomplish that baptismal rite. And therefore," turning to Walter, "in respect of thy more agile appearance and delicacy of lineament, fair sir, I do, by virtue of my sacerdotal functions, dub thee *Castor*, which may it be thy pleasure to assume. And on thee, my sturdy friend," to Summers, "the more that thy vigour of muscle and prominence of chest betoken some promise of excellence in pugilistic exercise and the science of wrestling, I dub thee *Pollux*."

"What's the word?" quickly demanded the other, bewildered a little by the phraseology, and, at best, a little obscured in brain from inebriety, "what's the word?"

"*Pollux*—*Pollux*; no menial term, my friend. *Prius*, bear thyself under it in the observance of all dignity. And, lastly, for myself"—and here he propped back in his chair with severe brow and haughty port—"for myself, by prescription of years, methinks, with proper humility and hope of no offence, I may assume the paternal rank. Wherefore, dutiful sons, viewing me in the light of a father, who, as, forsooth, is verily the case, deals out to

you with prodigal hand, you will bear in mind (*benigno numine*) to style me *Jupiter*."

"All hail, great monarch!" shouted Walter, getting a little in the spirit of the game, which he followed by bowing himself in the august presence with show of submissive loyalty, that any crowned head would prize from a dutiful subject. Summers sympathized in the act by an imitation so simultaneous, that it seemed original rather than a copy. His majesty received this submission of his subjects with profound dignity. A motion of the imperial hand waved them into their seats. Round followed round in honour of the coronation, and for an hour or more the parties grew heated in ties of mutual affinity. Promotion rewarded fealty, and orders of knight-hood followed. Farther favour from high places constituted *Castor* prime minister of the Olympic realm, and *Pollux* lord high constable and master of the horse. It is difficult to say how far this liberal spirit of promotion might have gone, had not the profuse use of *Madeira* led to some unfortunate dissensions between the sovereign and a member of the ministry. It arose out of the enforcement of an edict pronounced by his majesty respecting the kissing of his great toe; and for the performance of the ceremony he had, with much ado, been able to withdraw his boot and lift his foot on one corner of the table. The master of horse being first called on to evince his loyalty by this rite of submissive reverence, had, as it appeared, even at hazard of place and power, seen fit to demur. He furthermore displayed some deeply-rooted aversions to thrones and sceptres that the confusion of his revel had not wholly eradicated, and inopportunistly indulged the use of certain disrespectful terms regarding crowned heads in general, signally improper in the august presence.

"Down! disloyal caittiff!" shouted the sovereign; "down upon thy craven knees, and cry the mercy of thy king!"

"Damn the king!" roared *Pollux* in a tone equally fierce; "may his toes and knuckles, big and little, his neck and heels, body and soul, hide and tallow, rot in a tan vat before I knuckle to any king!"

"By the thunders of my hand!" returned *Jupiter*, rising, though with some difficulty, from his throne, "and is the god of Olympus thus to be bearded by a groom of the stable! Listen, audacious recreant, ungrateful traitor, and rebellious hind, ere my thunderbolts transfix thy ill-bred carcass! What! are our own royal ears, and the peace of our heavenly realms, to be distracted by the brawling of such scurrile imps as thou?"

"You guzzling, swinish, swilling rascal!" replied the lord high constable, springing up with clinched fist; "I'll knock more

claret out o' your drunken snout than you've got in your—"

"Stop!" interposed the prime minister, seizing his arm; "I stay this folly. I pray your majesty, sit down. The royal hand never administers punishment. When the crown strikes, it strikes *per alium*!"

"Right—right," said the monarch, resuming his seat; "we had forgotten. The throne accepts the rebuke from its dutiful and sapient minister. The hangman's office shall not be separated from the hangman's hand. Inimitable *Castor*! our overheated brow cools before the zephyr of thy timely suggestion: strong hold hast thou taken on our heart; the beams of our countenance shine on thee. The disregard of our royal mandate, and the violence meditated our sacred person by the puissant hand of our intractable subject, at befitting opportunity shall receive our consideration. Not by this course conceding in any wise, albeit, that our superior skill in combat and greater power of arm (aid me, dutiful *Castor*, to draw on this boot) could, if need be, sufficiently chastise his boyish insolence."

"For the matter of strength," replied *Pollux*, "I'll try titles with you any way you like: over the handkerchief or rough-and-tumble, side-hold, back-hold, or hip and shoulder; lifting at a saw-log, throwing a fifty-six, or shouldering a bag o' salt."

"*Sua quisque exempla debet æquo animo pati*," replied *Jupiter*; "I must even take up the glove thrown down by this mortal of the ploughshare, since our own banter hath invoked the challenge. Satellites around our throne!" said he, looking upward, "luminaries which light up the wide realm of our dominions! pardon this weakness. Your celestial potentate descends into the cockpit to strive with this boorish scullion. Now, Sir Braggart, name the terms of this contest. But pause one moment, I pray thee; our bowels grow benignant. If there be any particular game in which, after the custom of thy rude ancestors, thou hast acquired much prowess, choose that. And this, that our royal favour scorns to wreak upon thy clownish hide the better skill we possess in use of honourable arms."

"You bloated puff-ball!" said *Pollux*, in reply; "I don't care the value of a dead dog what game we take; but if you've a mind for a fair tug at a side-hold, I'm ready for you, and in two seconds will sprawl you upon this floor as flat as a toad under a cart-wheel."

"Enough," responded the other, laying his pipe on the table; "we accede to the proposal. Our minister will judge between us, and watch the fair issue of the trial."

"Now," said the master of the horse, as they stood side by side, "I take you by the seat of the trousers with my left hand, thus—"

"Pardon me," interposed *Jupiter*; "call

it vestment, if it suit thee as well. Thy term savours somewhat of vulgarity; I pray thee recall it. Heaven forefend that any garment from the wardrobe of Olympus should thus be scandalized. Jupiter in trousers! recall the word, my young friend, for the reverence due our kingly vestures."

"I call it trousers," persisted Pollux, "as many a better man than either of us has done before to-day. So now you will lay hold of mine with your right hand here, and I grip yours in this way."

"Hold, there!" shouted the sovereign; "*moliter manus impone*, I pray thee. Loose the hold of thy digits slightly, as methinks thy clutch extends deeper than is needful. So; now what next?"

"We join our other two hands," said Pollux, "and are ready for the fall."

"Even so," remarked the other; "I see into the mystery of the game."

"Are you ready?" demanded Pollux.

"Ready."

No sooner had the word passed the lips of the sovereign than he reached the floor with a jar that rattled every glass on the board. He fell, however, on that part of his imperial person least likely to be much damaged by the concussion, or to vacate the kingly office by fatal consequences.

"*Quantum sufficit!*" said the fallen god, rising on his feet; "thy craft in scullion art hath overcome Olympus. Let us invoke the propitious favour of our brother Bæchus; for we presently compete with thee again." The party resumed their seats at the board, and drank in cordial union of feeling the glasses filled to each.

"Now," resumed his majesty, "if we recollect, in the catalogue of thy feats there was mention made of contest over the halibut chef."

"Yes," said the other; "and I would as soon deal you a few dry knocks between the leg and the horn as any other man."

Castor, acting as judge of the ceremonies, tied one end of his handkerchief to a nail at the side of the room, and held the other in his hand. The combatants took their stations on either side of it, prepared for action. The pugilistic strife had proceeded but a few moments, when a blow from the royal fist took the other over the eye with sufficient force to topple him backward headlong upon one of the drunken Indians extended off the hearth.

"Victoria!" shouted Jupiter, "Olympus reigns!"

"Let's see you do that again," said the discomfited party, rising, and coming to the stand with renewed determination of purpose. The contest now assumed something more of earnestness, the one party making his passes and his guards after such fashion as displayed his accomplishment in the science; the other, with blinded zeal, striking here and there, utterly reckless of

all rules. This unskillful eagerness was not, however, without its effect; as, in a short time, the more adroit player, confused by the storm of irregular blows that placed his skill of guard at defiance, received a tremendous lunge in the abdomen that bent him instantly double.

"There's a puke for you!" cried Pollux; "that'll settle your supper as easily as a bit of codfish does a pot of hot coffee."

"*Pax portior bello*," said the other, after a while, regaining his breath with much difficulty, "I sue for peace. Good Castor, pour me a glass of wine," and he reeled into his chair.

"You shall have a cask of it, if you need," said the victor, with much concern for the accident.

"Thanks, gentle Pollux," replied the other, having gulped the liquor; "give me thy hand. Let there be peace between thee and me. Pain often treads on the heels of folly."

"Curse the idle nonsense!" said the youth; "I'll travel all night for a doctor, if you wish it."

"Nay, nay; we hope there is no need," said the other, putting his hand upon his chest, while he gradually turned whiter; "in the mean time, young friends, our play is done. Our royal council is dissolved, our imperial throne abdicated, and our sublime self, to tell the truth, a little disposed to vomit."

The sceptreless Jupiter spoke truly, for never did the stomach of either ruled or unrulèd act with more vigour in ejecting the overloaded weight it bore. The deposed officer of the livery looked with stupefied wonder on the eruption, marvelling where, within one body, could be found storage for so copious a flood.

"You are on parole for the night," said the sick man, as soon as he recovered a little, to Summers: "my word of honour is pledged to these Indians for its faithful observance; as a soldier of honourable feelings, you will act accordingly."

"Fear not," he replied; "your word and my own are safe."

Walter for several hours watched the patient, who, at intervals, was visited by those distressing paroxysms so usual after excessive indulgence at the festive board. Summers, with an eye gradually turning from red to blue, and from blue to black, not long after the downfall of the Olympian dynasty was soundly asleep. Towards morning, his example was followed by Sergeant Henderson. He was awakened about ten the following day by Summers, who, lately arisen from the neighbouring bench, presented himself with a bandage over one eye. But Jupiter had departed.

The sergeant learned from his friend that their companion of the previous evening had entered the room an hour before

with a watch in his hand, which he desired him to hand to Sergeant Henderson (mentioning him thus by name) when he awoke, saying that it had been left at his chamber in the fort of Captain Sunfish. Summers farther said that the gentleman had an overcoat on, and a riding whip in his hand, and after inquiring of their state of health, he had left the room.

"So, so," mused Walter to himself, as he took his watch from the hand of the other, "I've seen the doctor at last."

After breakfast, Summers gave himself into custody of his Indian guard, and Walter, stepping out of the door, felt the weight of a hand on his shoulder. Looking around, he found himself arrested by the two savages from whom he had fled the evening before.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"A dog's obeyed in office."—*King Lear*.

IN the River St. Lawrence, many miles above Montreal, is what was called at that time, and, for aught we know, even yet, Prison Island. Somewhat of an oblong shape, it is situated in the rapids of the river, which, sweeping past it, increases in swiftness of current and roughness of wave some distance below. Not far down the stream, and opposite to the heavy swells of the rapid, was, on the Canadian side, a redoubt, or fort, mounted with several pieces of cannon. This was within hail of the island, and communicated with it by means of telegraphic signals.

This island was appropriated to the uses of a prison for the American soldiery, and was placed, at the period to which our narrative bears reference, under charge of a body of refugees belonging to the second regiment of Sir John Johnson's command. The officer of the guard, a rash and inexperienced youth, who had not reached his twentieth year, was animated with high hopes of meriting the applause of his superiors, besides being not a little overcome by a vain sense of his rank and authority. It may, therefore, be presumed that his power was exercised with equal indiscretion, rashness, and cruelty. His vanity led him to suppose that every taunt and aggravating insult his wayward caprice visited on the rebels under him would lay the crown under greater obligation to himself. A mistaken policy, though, it subsequently proved to him, since it finally led to his trial, his loss of rank, and utter disgrace; many of those who had felt the weight of his intolerant abuse being called to give testimony against him, and then becoming gratified witnesses of his descent from military elevation.

Under the prison arrangements, the island was divided into three portions. The

lower end was set apart for the purposes of a garden, tilled in the summer season by the prisoners. This was not regarded by them as an onerous task, since it furnished their tables with some luxuries to which otherwise they would have been strangers. At the same time, the tillage of this piece of ground, set off to them in severalty, became a matter of agreeable emulation, leading to a sort of competition in relative skill of husbandry.

The middle portion of the island formed the parade ground, and was occupied by the barracks, in which the prisoners ate and were lodged at night. Here was also the station of the main guard. The upper portion contained the residences of the officers, and such private citizens as had made it their abode either temporarily or otherwise. Into this the prisoners were prohibited entrance.

Our last chapter closed with incidents occurring in summer. We resume in the midwinter following. The young commandant of the guard on Prison Island arising, on a cold morning in the month of February, looked from his window on a deep layer of snow that had fallen during the night. Dressing himself, he came, with chattering teeth, into the apartment below, where his breakfast awaited him.

"Diggs, shut that door," said he, sharply, to his servant, after rubbing his hands a while at the fire.

"Yes, sir," replied the other, and shut it.

"Now rake up this fire; comfortable quarters you are likely to have this devilish frosty morning, with the fire down and door open. If you don't keep that door closed, I'll break your stupid calabash; never knew an understrapper yet to shut a door after him."

"I believe you left it open as you came in," said the man.

"Well, we'll dispense with your gab just now, booby; I shall do as I please without reporting to my lackey, or asking his leave."

"Coffee hot this morning?" the young officer began again, after a few moments' moody silence, and glancing at the steaming vessel. "Because, I tell you what, sir, yesterday it was rather cool."

"Sorry for it, captain," said the servant; "hope it is agreeable this time; the fire was rather bad yesterday."

"Yes, yes, no doubt," answered the superior; "of course, it was owing to no fault of yours. It was necessarily the misconduct of the fire, or the coffee-pot, or the coffee-mill; maybe it was in the wrong time of the moon; anything but your own fault."

"It was very good when you were first called," said the menial, with humility; "but you overslept yourself a little."

"Silence!" shouted the officer, turning upon him; "not another word out of your braying throat! The service is cursed by an insolent, villainous set of croakers. Give me a cup of it, you simpleton," he added, taking his seat at the table. The other took up the vessel, and commenced pouring, but was near dropping it from his hand, as the officer, with sudden vehemence, cried out, "Stop."

"Haven't I told you fifty times not to fill above that blue stripe?"

"I thought it was not filled to it yet," replied the poor fellow, grown nervous, as indeed it was not.

"You thought, did you? Who the devil gave you orders to think! Fill it up to the stripe, and not stand there shivering like a dog. Can't you see it's not full?"

"Sugar, sir!" half inquired the servant, having filled the cup, and pushing the bowl towards him.

"Sugar, sir!" replied the youth, mimicking the hesitating tones; "how happened you to know I wanted sugar?"

"You always take it, sir," he replied, timidly.

"I do, do I? And you sometimes take coffee, don't you?" and he threw the scalding contents of his cup at the poor fellow's head, who, dodging to evade the liquid, received, nevertheless, a few drops in his bare neck. Slight as was the quantity, it afforded him much pain, and furnished the petulant young officer a field for ridicule and mock commiseration. Having his dish replenished, he ate some time in silence, taking occasion, at intervals, to greet his servant with a scowl or look of contempt. His breakfast over, the youth called for a cigar. The box was brought him, and, after he had selected one, the servant took a coal from the hearth with the tongs and held it to his master. The cigar happened to be defective, and he threw it away.

"What do you give me such a cursed thing as that for?" he roared out, inspecting the cigar he had selected with his own hand. He tried a second. The servant took up a fresh coal, and the officer, with his face protruded, and eyes half closed, sucked at the cigar some time with his nose quite near to the glowing ember.

"Take away the infernal firebrand!" he burst forth; "do you want to burn me to death, by holding it to my face for an hour together! I didn't tell you to take up the backlog, you jackass; get a smaller coal."

The next attempt was more successful, and the youth enjoyed his cigar while the servant brushed his coat. When done, he put off his morning gown, and held out one arm, and then the other, as the menial put his coat on him, and fitted it to his shoulders. Then, drawing on his boots, he sat down to have his pantaloons drawn over

them. After this he took another cigar, and walked to the window.

"Why has this snow been left at the door," he inquired, sharply, "and no path shovelled to the barracks? Do you suppose the commandant of this station is to flounder through that windfall, and then wade through the drift to the parade ground? I'll have every idle lubber of you flogged before noon. The king is likely to have great justice done him by this vagabond brood I am disgraced by having command of. But for the good of the cause, I'd throw up my commission this very hour. Have you seen the sergeant of the guard?"

"No, sir," replied the other.

"Go down and tell him to order out a party of the prisoners to clear away this drift."

"The sergeant has issued your orders," said Diggs, returned to the room, "and the prisoners refuse to obey."

"The devil they do!" exclaimed the other, taking the tobacco from his mouth; "refused to obey my order! Hand here my cloak; we'll come over a little of the A, B, C of discipline this morning." And throwing the cigar into the fire, he took his way towards the barracks, regardless of the banks he waded through as he mused on castigation.

"Sergeant Corbit," said he, entering the barracks, "have you called the roll?" He replied in the negative.

"Beat to roll-call forthwith," ordered the officer. In a few moments the prisoners, many of them summoned from their unfinished meals, were drawn up in line for roll-call. This duty performed, the commandant ordered the sergeant to detail the first four for the service of removing the snow-drifts.

"Captain," said the man at the head of the line, "the sergeant needn't do it. The order will not be regarded."

"Put that man in irons, and remove him," said the young officer. The order was obeyed.

"Call on the next four," was now the command. These followed the example of the first.

"Iron the beggars also," said the captain. It was done, and the next four refused compliance with the requisition.

"Handcuff the puppies!" again ordered the officer, whose lips began to tremble with rage, "and put them under lock and key for twenty-four hours."

"And you refuse, too, you whelp of the devil!" he roared again, as another disregarded his authority. "Double iron the scoundrel, and put him in the cells two days without food or water. I'll see whether the chief officer of this station is to be mocked by the mulish insolence of such spawn of rebellion."

"There are no more handcuffs, sir," said Sergeant Corbit.

"Tie up the rebel beggar, then, and give him twenty-one lashes," said the officer. The prisoner was stripped, tied up, and the punishment inflicted. The resolute soldier bore it without a murmur, though the blood flowed down his back and dropped upon the ground. After this another was tied up neck and heels, and a rope put round his neck, by which he was several times drawn up to the rafters, and let down again, until, when finally released, he laid a long time insensible from the effects of strangulation.

"Now to the next hound," said the captain. This chanced to be an individual in whom, perhaps, the reader may feel some trifling interest. It was Corporal Summers. He turned to the young officer, and asked of him whether he was not detained as a prisoner of war.

"And if you are," replied the other, "while here you will obey my orders."

"I will certainly do that," answered Summers, "so long as your orders are proper. But have you any authority to demand of me, or any of us, the performance of this drudgery?"

"That I am judge of," said the other, "and shall not submit to be questioned by any of the rebel rubbish under me."

"Well, sir," responded the corporal, while those about him took on faces of alarm or wonder, "I'm no friend to the king, and the king's pets don't seem likely to be very good friends of mine. But this I'll say to you, captain: after shouldering the musket and periling life to put down British oppression, I'm not going to bow to it here, in this petty refugee watch-box, for all the cowhides and handcuffs in Canada."

"I order you to obey instantly!" shouted the officer, grown white with rage.

"Not for a d-d Tory!" replied Summers.

"Down with him! down with the impudent dog!" shouted the furious officer; "cut him down, sergeant. Do you stand like a post when I order? run the rebel Yankee through with your sword, I say."

"Captain," said the sergeant, "without the sentence of a court martial, I do not feel authorized to do so."

"Sergeant Corbit," interposed Summers, sharing largely in the excitement of the scene, and gaining assurance from the disinclination he manifested to execute the unwarranted order, "Sergeant Corbit, you're a gentleman, and deserve rank and station under a better commander. And, while about this business, I've a word or two more for the captain of the guard. I know you well," said he, addressing himself to that individual, "and if King George has a gibbet in any part of his dominions, it has been cheated of its deserts for many

a day past. For the credit of his army, he ought long since to have kicked so despicable a camp-scavenger out of it. And furthermore, I knew your father before you; and the only difference between the two is, that the son is a more kill-dog renegade than his sire. Now you can do with me as you please; but mind this, captain, before this game is played out, I'll make you what your tory father will be ashamed to lick as his own cub."

Somewhat to the surprise of all present, the young commandant recoiled before the fire of this onslaught, delivered as it was with inimitable boldness of tongue, and marked determination of manner. The menacing threat couched in his remarks, from the very uncertainty of purpose and manner of fulfilment, gave alarm to the object it was hurled at. This apprehension of danger was the more increased, as no limit could be fixed to the resolves of one so apparently disregarding of consequences, and so inconceivably bold. Regarding Summers a moment with looks of mingled awe and hatred, the commandant turned on his heel, and, without saying a word in reply, left the barracks.

"Cowed! by the glory of the Yankee nation!" exclaimed the corporal, throwing up his hat. The thrill of joy, though not so openly manifested, was common to all the soldiers, now dismissed from ranks and going to their apartments. One of them, however, seeing that the matter might be carried to extremes, cautioned his friend to bear his laurels with a little more discretion. This was Sergeant Henderson, who stood next his friend in line, and had not been reached by the requisition. Summers had not been many minutes in his apartment when Sergeant Corbit entered, followed by a file of soldiers.

"I regret this duty," said he to Summers; "but you know my obligations to obey commands."

"Not a word about it—no apologies, sergeant," replied the corporal; "you're a fine fellow, and at your request I stick my wrist into this handcuff as freely as I would knife and fork into the mess dish after a hard day in the field."

The punishment inflicted on our young prisoner amounted to nothing more than a couple of days' confinement. The commandant did not seem disposed to awaken his ire by anything more serious.

Winter passed, unattended by farther incidents of moment to the prisoners; and spring opened on the scene. The period of gardening arrived, and the captives engaged with eagerness in the pastime. Nothing had our young friends heard of home or relatives; nor had they been permitted the privilege of communicating their situation to those who were ignorant

of their fate. One Sabbath morning, after the young men had shaved and completed their respective toilets, a soldier of the garrison (Mr. Diggs, late waiter on the commandant, but some time removed from that office, for putting a roasted potato on the table so hot that his master burned his mouth with it) entered, and directing Sergeant Henderson to put on his hat, led him from the apartment. The sergeant followed him out of the barracks, and thence into the inhabited part of the island, now animated by the population in their Sunday attire, moving by common impulse in the same direction. Having walked some distance, they entered the door of a building, and the young man found himself seated in a Catholic chapel, his guide beside him.

This edifice, dedicated to the worship of the Holy Virgin, was nearly filled with the officers and soldiers of the station, and persons who resided on the island, or had passed over to it from the Canadian shore. The foreign emissaries of the Romish Church had long before this period penetrated the wilds of America, and set up the cross in many of its districts. Indeed, the See of Rome could boast a much more numerous body of adherents in the region of the St. Lawrence than any other Christian denomination. And this being the only temple of worship in the neighbourhood, was resorted to for that reason by many who did not profess belief in the doctrines promulgated from its pulpit. The building itself was small, of rough though substantial materials. Its exterior, wholly devoid of that superb architecture and elaborate embellishment which adorn the stately Cathedrals of Europe, necessarily failed of producing on the mind of the beholder any inspiring emotions. Within, it was finished in the same style of economy, owing, no doubt, to the restricted state of the purse, that forbade much excess in those gorgeous decorations which the spirit of Catholicism has ever been wont to indulge. The pulpit was indeed carved and painted, but in a style rather rude and gaudy. A few pictures, descriptive of Bible incidents and the experiences of the saints, were suspended around the walls. Over the pulpit was that of the Redeemer dying upon the cross.

The usual ceremonies of the Catholic ritual were soon commenced. When the officiating priest had finished mass, a small door in the rear of the pulpit opened, and amid the chanting of the choir, arrayed in cap and surplice, stepped forth a second. The sergeant gazed in wonder. At the first glance, he detected in the ecclesiastic, round, rosy, and rubicund as ever, his late sovereign of the Olympian realm, imperial Jupiter. He began his sermon, and Walter listened with pride and edification.

Well composed, and gracefully delivered, it proved his friend an equal proficient in the sacred duties of the desk, as in others of which the sergeant was not forgetful. The young man's mind involuntarily went back to the events of that night in the wilderness, as the eloquent divine enforced on his flock the leading of godly, righteous, and sober lives.

The orator closed his discourse, and retired through the same door that admitted him. Soon after the assembly broke up. In the stream that came pouring down the aisle past him, the sergeant at length perceived the sermonizer, who had now laid aside his clerical robes. His heart bounded in his bosom as the other approached, and he stood with eyes riveted on his face, expecting to receive some look or token of recognition. It is true he caught the eye of the priest, but it was an unmeaning, momentary glance, such as might be bestowed on a stranger whose face is not familiar. As he passed, however, he gave a slight, grave nod to Walter's guide, and went out of the chapel.

"An eloquent man, that," suggested Walter to the soldier, as they passed on their way to the barracks.

"A rouser," replied Diggs.

"Lives on the island?"

"For three or four weeks past," answered the guide.

"Then this is not his regular congregation?" pursued the querist.

"No; that's in Montreal. This is only an outpost—a sort of garrison, you see. He comes the grand rounds now and then to look into the discipline. I believe he passes a part of his summers here—has some land hereaway, I've been told."

"And gives a few sermons while here for pastime," added Walter.

"Ay, to keep his hand in, I s'pose," said Diggs. "A priest is like a musket; he must be fired off now and then, to keep out rust. And then it's no trouble for Father Janaway to preach, as you see. He just opens his mouth, and there's no more fuss about it; kase you mind, he can jist pour it out a hull day as easy as half an hour; there's no eend to his tongue that I ever heered on. And he's dreadful polite, too."

"Ah! well, I should suppose, from his appearance, he was a good-hearted man," said Walter; "no doubt he is much esteemed."

"I guess you might think so," the soldier replied; "there's not a soldier in the barracks, Presbyterian, Baptist, or Catholic, but would fight any hour for Father Janaway. The whole country, men, women, and children, would give their last penny to him."

"And many of their pennies he gets, too, I've no doubt," said the young man, stepping into his room.

"He gets his share, I have little question; the holy fathers look to the like of that as they go along. But," added Diggs, retiring at the door, "Father Janaway is not the worse on that account."

"Nor the better of it," said Walter to himself as the door closed on the other, "at least on the score of courtesy. My face is not so utterly wanting in some sort of character, that the haughty priest could not have saluted me at chapel, or recognised me, as I should say, by at least a nod."

Walter did not fail to communicate the particulars of his adventure to Summers. It formed the theme of their discourse for the remainder of the day; an oasis in the monotony of their life it was. In the evening it was revived, and the two were embarked on the sea of conjecture, when the door was opened, and Diggs again presented himself. The soldier bowed to Walter as he placed in his hand the following document:

"Jupiter Tonans to his worthy subject Castor, sends greeting: We command you that, all excuse and worldly avocation whatever set aside, you be and appear, in *propria persona*, before us forthwith; to do, perform, regard, and keep what may be in equity or by holy canon enjoined by our celestial court. And this you are in no-wise to disregard, under penalty of our high displeasure."

Having several times perused this half legal and half spiritual summons, Walter arose and signified his disposition to obey its requirements. Before leaving the room, however, the soldier produced a cloak and pair of spectacles with dark glasses that he had brought with him, and directed the sergeant to place the one on his nose and the other on his back. Thus arrayed, he followed Diggs from the barracks.

CHAPTER XIX.

"A true son of the church!
Fresh colour'd and well thriving on his trade."
DRYDEN.

The soldier, passing into the inhabited part of the island, led the young sergeant into the door of a large building, thence along the hall of the same to a door opening into a lighted apartment. When ushered within this, he stood before the church dignitary, who was seated in a high-backed chair lined and cushioned with red morocco. He arose from his seat on the entrance of the young man, and greeted him with great cordiality.

"Welcome, my young friend," said he, in bland tones; "it has been some time since I have had the pleasure of your company. I greet your presence with every

sentiment of joy. Suffer me to remove your cloak; I scarcely think the state of the weather demands its use within doors, however much you may have esteemed it essential without."

"I can't say it was by myself thought necessary in either place," said Walter. "It is a part of our tactics to obey orders without question. I took no farther thought about it than to do as my escort commanded."

"True; you say well," replied the other; "now the mandate of this poor unit of the rank and file is, I have no doubt, as much binding on the soldier in bonds as an act of Parliament on the generalissimo; though it is said, *inter nos*, by some of our barrack-masters, to be different with your sturdy friend the corporal. But come, my worthy sir, sit down. And besides, if I remember, at our last meeting you didn't wear glasses."

"Another clause in the orders of the day," said the sergeant, removing the spectacles from his nose as he sat down.

"Upon my word," said the host, "you are a nice observer of discipline. Were you in my service, I should hold this scrupulous regard of orders invaluable. Even as it is, suppose I test my authority by requiring your disposal of a glass of prime Madeira."

"One glass I might certainly obey your reverence's command by accepting," said Walter, with an emphasis on the numeral. "Hazard might lie at the bottom of the next."

"If that is your limit, sergeant," said the priest, offsetting the military phrase against the clerical one he had received, "we will delay it until after supper."

The dialogue was maintained until at length a servant entered the room and arranged the table for the evening's meal. At the intimation of the host, they seated themselves at the board, to partake the entertainment provided. They did not begin, however, until the ecclesiastic had invoked a blessing upon it.

"Now, my young friend," said the host, cheerfully, having placed an overwhelming load on the sergeant's plate, "let me pray you dismiss all ceremony, and eat in true soldier style. I have, as your eye may perceive and appetite deplore, but little in variety to offer; but I trust to make some amends for the scantiness in the merit of hospitable feeling."

"The richest delicacy the guest can ever ask," replied Walter. "But I think neither host nor purveyor chargeable with blame in this instance; unless it be for overloading my dish with what, in point of quantity, would supply a whole squad in camp."

"Tut!" said the other, in the full play of his jaws, "I was of opinion that war

was a whetter of appetite. Why, my dear sergeant, even the dull toil of churchmen furnishes forth the will, nay, the capacity also, with trifling exertion, to put away thrice the contents of your dish. But in camps you are, mayhap, deprived in some measure of an auxiliary that is rarely missing in the cloister. Do you make practice of washing down your viands (pardon the homeliness of the phrase) with the juice of the grape?"

"I am sorry to affirm," said the other, "that therein the service is slightly lame. The distilled essence of the apple and of rye is made but a wretched substitute."

"Possible!" replied the other; "I deplore the state of the army." And seasoning a large slice of broiled flesh with a plentiful coating of Cayenne, he was for some time silent in affording it storage within his body.

"I must not omit, my worthy guest," he said, at length, wiping his emptied mouth, "to see a little after your spiritual condition" (filling it again), "as well as your temporal, your civil, and martial. You occasionally attend public worship, I presume?"

"When stationed near any place of worship, it is always my custom," said the sergeant. "I think the chaplain of our division could scarcely name the time that found me far from his platform. But since here, circumstances have rather closed the door on what desire I may have had to attend such places. To-day I was more fortunate. Allow me to add, the sermon pleased me both as to merit and manner."

The ecclesiastic bowed as he responded, "You do me honour. But another part played by the sermonizer, it may be, pleased you not so well; and, that I think of it, I make amends for it. Through policy, my fair friend, we were, and will be strangers. There are reasons for it. For the nonce, I hope my word will suffice, and satisfy you of the truth I utter. I tender you my apology for what you must have thought a breach of courtesy, in not saluting you this morning at chapel."

"A hint is all we require in the service," said the sergeant. "Excuse me for suffering any apology in the case. I might have guessed there was motive in the thing. You will entertain no fears of my presuming on public salutations hereafter. But there's another circumstance which puzzled me more than all the others; and that was, how I came to procure privilege of attending church at all."

"Verily," said the host, avoiding the query, "that, I have no doubt, you will learn from the soldier who had you in charge. My calling, as you are aware, is wholly disconnected with the affairs of the soldiery. But I have altogether omitted any inquiries after your friend, my worthy Pollux."

"He is well," replied Walter, "and could

in no way be better pleased than to learn you had thus inquired after him."

"Your mention of me to our mutual friend is a matter within your own discretion, sergeant. I count on your prudence. As to the corporal, I hope him no permanent injury from a passage of arms on a certain night you wot of. Any serious indisposition at a distance so great from paternal care is, as no one better knows than yourself, attended with accumulated evil."

"The doctor!" said Walter, to himself, imputing the allusion to his confinement at the stockade. "I believe," aloud, "that you chance to possess some skill in medical practice?"

"Some skill in taking medicine," said the other, "if I remember the drugs and nauseous mixtures put into my mouth when a boy. Of late years, I have touched or tasted little."

"Not the doctor," thought the sergeant.

"Your febrile attack at the fort of Captain Sunfish was aggravated, I believe?"

"I have been told so," replied Walter.

"You know the valiant captain?"

"Indifferently well," said the priest.

"I can't say much in favour of his hospitality, for my own part," pursued the youth. "I have been much better lodged."

"Yet for a part of your tarry at the fort," said the other, "I understand you had very watchful supervision. To be sure, the captain's furniture is not adapted much to the gratification of luxurious ease, nor is it so extensive as that of some other mansions. You were fortunate, at least, in sharing the best in the commandant's power, and occupying his most princely chamber."

"Then the commandant is entitled to more gratitude than I had meted out to him," said the youth. "I could judge only of such apartments in his tenement as I had chance of being in. They were few. Your reverence may have passed more time there, and under circumstances more favourable; consequently, the better judge."

"Half a day and a night; that is all," said the host. "At no other time have I been at the stockade. Your stay there, though longer, had yet a safe termination; every bird that flies into the captain's net comes not off so well. The worthy commandant bends to two talismanic powers—the love of place, and the veneration of guineas. Had it suited the nod of either of these influences, your exit might have been in the attitude horizontal, feet foremost; and I think it was to the latter god of his idolatry you were indebted for your sudden departure, as it was. Besides, your taking refuge under the protecting arm of Jupiter may have saved you from the worst of consequences."

"Your reverence is right," said Walter, having gazed a moment at this man, whose knowledge of his late circumstances was

so critical. "I saw by the movements of the wily savages that my life was endangered. I knew it. The passing breeze whispered it to me. Nothing was more certain to me than that that night had sealed my fate."

"I cannot tell," said the other. "May we hope your life is safe here, where, though abridged of liberty, your risk is less. So keep up your spirits, my young friend; and should sickness overtake you again, contrive to drop a line to Father Janaway. Though not bred to the stalwart growth of one Doctor Jaws, he may still do so much as prescribe a snuff of hartshorn, or bowl of chicken broth."

"And have you the honour of knowing my good friend Doctor Jaws?" inquired the sergeant, more puzzled than ever.

"Fame is a fast traveller, sergeant," said the priest, "whose voice, overcoming distance, speaks to us from afar. Gossip is its faithful handmaid, and brings to us on wings as swift, items less important. While the one blows its trumpet over the resetting of a neck joint or the concoction of a rare vegetable compound, the latter, with equal assiduity, proclaims the fall of a pheasant or a squirrel by the aim of youthful sportsmen."

Walter made no reply to this, other than by a look, half inquiry and half confusion. It appeared to him that every one he chanced to meet with in this strange region was perfectly well read in the history of his home, and what he was now disposed to regard with emotions of inward chagrin, the follies of his essay in love.

"Come, now, sergeant," said the priest, "as the hour of our separation has come, you must redeem your promise regarding the glass of Madeira." They drank to each other's good health.

"May I trouble you to hand me that little bell?" he continued.

Walter took up the bell in his hand, which arrested his attention as he handed it to his friend. If it was not the same, it was certainly a very true counterpart of the one he had used at the chamber of Captain Sunfish.

"An antique," remarked the host, perceiving the eye of the sergeant to rest on it, "besides, an heirloom in our family. I prize it much; it is rarely out of my company." Then he summoned to the apartment by a few tinkles the soldier who had escorted the visiter to the house. And, before the latter departed, the host put into his hand a bundle of cigars, which, with his good wishes, he desired might be presented to Corporal Summers. Passing into the hall, their ears were greeted with the sound of a voice and the tones of an instrument. The distant part of the building occupied by the performer, or the closed door that intercepted the sounds, rendered the tones

of the one and the voice of the other indistinct and unintelligible.

"Stop!" said the priest, laying his hand on Walter's shoulder; "you perceive our temple is not wholly dedicated to Bacchus; our gifted son Orpheus has likewise his apartment in it."

"Upon my word, yes; and I like the playing of the modern better than that of the ancient," said the sergeant. "It surely possesses not the *moving* powers we read of; I feel content to stand still."

"Get along with you," said the other, playfully; "what irreverence is this you heap on the martial peals of drum and trumpet, thus to stand bound by the chords of a cracked jannet, thrummed by the fingers of my unskilled females. And a soldier, too! Along with you, I say." And, pressing Walter's hand, he gave him into custody of the soldier.

As he walked on to the barracks, his mind was occupied in contemplation of what he had seen and heard.

"Fine music that was," said he, as they neared his door.

"Tormented nice," replied Diggs.

"You know the gentleman player?"

"Bless your soul!" answered the soldier, "it was a woman."

"So, so; his wife, I expect," said Walter.

"His daughter, I guess," responded Diggs, as they entered the room. Taking the cloak and spectacles which Walter had worn again on the return, he departed, leaving the young officer to present to his overjoyed companion the bundle of cigars, together with the good wishes of Father Janaway, and the history of his visit.

CHAPTER XX.

"A hundred thousand welcomes!"—*Coriolanus*.

THE week intervening between the sergeant's visit and the next Sabbath was tedious. He counted the days, and, finally, the hours. Nothing had, in the interim, been heard of his clerical friend. But almost daily had Diggs visited the prisoner's room with presents of fruits and table luxuries. Once he had brought a bottle of Madeira. The messenger was questioned a few times as to the donor, but he evaded a direct reply.

At length the Sabbath came, and found the young men early up. Walter displayed as much care at his dressing-glass as though about being presented at the proudest court of Europe. The expected hour arrived, and so also did the guide. Instead of the one only, he, this time, escorted both. Father Janaway came out at the little door, as on the former occasion, and preached an eloquent discourse. Walter had high opinions of its rhetorical merits; and Summers said, afterward, that it was

damned well done. Again he came down the aisle with the same look of indifference. He caught the eyes of the young soldiers, but his face was changeless as marble. He had a lady on his arm, but a veil to her bonnet concealed the features of her face. Walter would gladly have scanned the resemblance they might bear to those of the father.

In the evening both the young men attended at the hospitable board of the churchman. The cheer was excellent; the vivacity of the host heart-warming; the Madeira produced, though sparingly used. He and Summers, the latter in dialect nervous more than it was polished, the former in florid diction, had mutual rallies on the relative merits of the side-hold, and the science pugilistic. At the particular hour, under charge of Diggs, they departed.

Once afterward, during the same week, Walter was summoned to attend alone. The next Sabbath they attended chapel; in the evening they were at the ecclesiastic's. For a month this round of enjoyment continued. Then came a period of two weeks, during which they were not cited from their room, nor had they seen or heard of Father Janaway.

At the end of this period the two youths, as well as the prisoners generally, were engaged at their daily pastime, the cultivation of the ground plots. Our two young friends, whose lots, under proceedings in partition, were laid off side by side, were cheerfully at work with their hoes within reach of each other. It being a warm day, they had taken off as much of their apparel as custom permits to be dispensed with, and, with shirt sleeves rolled up to the elbows, and necks bare, they were in very primitive style of dress indeed. Walter, a little tired in the back from constant stooping or bending down, had raised himself erect to relieve the pain, and wipe from his face the perspiration there gathered in large drops. On happening to cast his eye towards the entrance to the cultivated grounds, it encountered, some forty yards off, what induced him instantly to resume his bending posture again, exclaiming, as he thus turned his face to the ground, "Good God! is it possible?" And forthwith began digging with an energy fatal to many of the tender plants he was pretending to nourish.

"What's possible?" asked Summers, looking up, and observing the destruction his friend was making with his hoe.

"What's possible? the cutting up by the roots, in two minutes, what has been the work of a month!"

"Jack," said the other, in an under tone, and trembling like a young advocate at his first speech, "mind what I tell you; and don't pop up your head as soon as the

word is out of my mouth. I want you to steal a sly glance at the entrance yonder, and tell me what you see."

"If it's anybody very particular," said the corporal, "I'll give 'em a shot from a masked battery." With which view he faced in the opposite direction from the entrance, and bending down low, as if to pull a weed, threw his eyes obliquely under him in the direction required.

"It is possible, as sure as fate!" he exclaimed, with as much emphasis and volume of voice as a whisper could convey.

"Father Janaway, eh?" asked Walter, in a quiver, still dealing death among the vegetables.

"As sure as you are born, and Ruth Dinning (names excepted) on his arm!" said the corporal. "And—who the devil's that young chap she has hold of?"

"Is she looking this way?" demanded the sergeant, ripping up a hill of corn.

"No, not yet," replied Summers.

"Black whiskers and a mustache, eh?" whispered Walter.

"Who? she? bless your soul, no," said the corporal. "Why, what are you thinking about? your wit's not flying off the handle, I hope?"

"Never cooler in my life," replied the other, jerking up a thrifty pumpkin-vine. "No, I don't mean that she wears whiskers, of course; the young man with her."

"Black whiskers, mustache, side-arms, fatigue-cap, green uniform, broad shouldered, and a decent leg," pursued the corporal, taking an inventory of his points.

"Did you ever see him before?" asked Walter.

"Let's take another squint," said Summers, again levelling himself in his posture of observation. After a moment he withdrew his eyes, and fixed them on Walter with a prolonged stare, significant of surprise, sorrow, and astonishment. The other, with a side look, returned the lengthy gaze of his friend.

"It is so, is it not?" he finally inquired.

"It is Charles Henderson, wearing the dress of the enemy, as sure as the sun falls on his face!" said the corporal. "Lord of heaven, Walter, could your father see that?"

"It would break his heart," replied the agitated youth, as a tear gathered in his eye; "don't speak of it, good Jack. The subject is too painful. It's enough that I am here, barred up like a felon by night, and treated as a slave; but this is nothing in comparison with the pain of seeing my only brother barter himself away to the oppressors of our land; and knowing, as I do, how sorely it would pierce the bosoms of those who nurtured both of us with far more tenderness and care than they seem likely to be paid for."

"I do believe they are looking at us

now," said the corporal, taking another glance.

"Do you say so?" the other replied, hastily, assailing a stout thistle with his hoe bottom upward.

"There," pursued Summers, "they are moving off, and I don't think they have seen us."

"I hope not," replied Walter, now venturing to raise his eyes and watch their receding steps, until, passing behind the barracks, they were out of sight.

"Well, there's the end of that chapter," said the corporal.

"Yes, and pretty well over too," replied his companion, relieving his excited feelings by a tremendous heave of the chest, and a sigh that left it a perfect vacuum.

"These are tasteful habiliments for the reception of friends, Jack," he added, and both laughed at the survey of their persons.

Walter let down his sleeves and buttoned his shirt collar, saying, "It's as well to be a little on guard, for who knows when the grand rounds may be looked for again. You think they did not see us?"

"Not they," answered Summers; "I drew as fine a sight on 'em as a rifleman on a red-coat."

"Not that I am ashamed of being seen here in honourable captivity," said Walter; "but, after all, in this kind of garb, I had just as readily be overlooked as not."

"And, not to call names, especially by these visitors," suggested the corporal.

"And then I had other reasons," said Walter.

The young men soon after returned to the barracks. The sergeant stopped a moment before reaching their room, while the other passed on to it. When Walter entered the apartment half an hour afterward, he found himself alone. Sitting some time in silent thought, he was awakened from his reverie by the sudden and hasty opening of the door. Summers entered at a quick pace, threw his hat with some velocity against the side of the room, and then proceeded to haul off his coat, and unbuttoned his collar. Then stepping to the farther end of the room, he faced about, and, taking his position, commenced, with feet and lips, the execution of a regular double shuffle. His friend, beholding these movements, followed up by the terrible clatter his shoes made on the floor, was induced almost to pronounce him mad, without the preliminaries of a jury of inquisition.

"Why, what is the matter?" he inquired at length.

"Stop a minute," said the other; "don't bother me." And, with his head and shoulders thrown back, he continued the dance.

"There, that's taken the wire edge off a

little," he said, finishing his exercise and sitting down by Walter. "Now, the break-down over, I'm ready for business."

"Well, I am glad of it," said his friend; "but I thought your business, from the cutting out, would require finishing in the madhouse. What's the explanation of this riddle?"

"Stop till I take a chew o' tobacco," replied Summers. And then drawing as near as possible to the other, he began: "Now, keep cool and lay low, my boy, for I'm going to put a little matter in your ear that may be good for the earache. When you stopped back there to talk, I came on to the door, and, while walking up the open space, what in the name of Heaven do you think I happened to see coming out of our door?"

"I can't tell," said Walter.

"A petticoat!"

"A petticoat!" echoed the sergeant.

"So help me Moses! a petticoat," affirmed Summers. "It slipped out o' the room like a shadow, and slipped into the door opposite like a ghost. I rather think it (not the petticoat itself, but the wearer) caught a sound of my foot, and then coming out of the room, saw me approaching. Well, I concluded I had as much right to take a squint into anybody else's room as anybody else had to look into mine. And besides, having an eye to the sex a little, as you know, I made up my mind without delay to return the call. Therefore I stepped right up to the door and laid my thumb on the latch; but it was held down on the inside, so I laid a little more weight on it and forced it down. Then came a tussle to open the door. I pushed like vengeance, and the petticoat pushed the other side for life. At last I turned my back to it, and gained an inch at a time, slipping my heels along to hold all the gainings, till I got it about half open; and then, just as I expected, the door gave way, and I backed into the room a little faster than desired. However, gathering up, I looked about to see what had become of the petticoat."

"And you found it?"

"Yes, and what was inside of it too," replied the corporal. "There was a woman, with her face hid among the bed-clothes, thinking, like a partridge, no doubt, when this was done, her whole body was out of sight. I just stepped up and pulled a sheet or two away, although she hung on to them like a monkey to a chestnut; but I hauled away until nothing was left but the pillow, and then I laid violent hand on that. This come pretty tough, worse than drawing teeth, you may depend; but I gained the day, after the pillow was torn half apart. And there stood my prisoner, with her hair frouzled, and face red as the sun in a mist. But before I had time to

take a posture of defence and stand at guard, could you think what she did?"

"What was it?" inquired the sergeant.

"Why, calling me an abominable, meddling, miserable monster, she threw her arms right around my neck."

"To choke you, do you mean?" asked the other.

"I don't know that she meant so bad as that," said the narrator; "but it came next neighbour to it. To tell the truth, it was a tolerable tight squeeze. All I could do was to pay back in the same currency; so we had it as fair on the one side as the other. Finally, she kissed me to let go, and there was the end of it."

"Did you find out who it was?" asked the other.

"Well, now," said the corporal, "to break rules for once, it was (hold your ear a little closer) Deb."

"Deb!" ejaculated the sergeant.

"Stay there, if you please," interposed the other; "there's no use of coming over the word oftener than's necessary. But I've a little more to say of her business. Do you see that dry stump yonder on the bank of the river?" pointing, as he spoke, to the trunk of a tree, either broken or cut off some five or six feet from the ground. "Well, to-morrow night, at twelve precisely, a boat will be rowed to that identical spot, and a bit of fox-fire, the size of your hand, will appear on its top. That will be a sign that all is ready. Diggs, for the last week or more, has stood guard at that hour, over this part of the prison. Just when the signal appears on the dead tree he is to be called aside a moment to take a guzzle at the contents of a canteen. And here," pulling a key from his pocket, "is a little tool that will open that lock just as naturally as the one the guard carries on his ring; and then a light foot and a bold heart will carry two heroes of Millstone to the States."

"And the lady; does she go on board the vessel with us?"

"She leaves the island to-morrow morning," said Summers.

Trusting to the proposed plan, the young men prepared for their escape on the following night. Without having had farther intelligence of their friend, the night came. The prisoners, each with a small bundle, containing the few articles they had resolved on taking with them, were awaiting the signal. When the hour came on, the eyes of both were fastened on the dead tree. At length a small ball of the size of a walnut was seen on the top of the stump, emitting its dull ray. Summers drew his key from his pocket and inserted it in the lock. "Who's there?" hailed a voice in the entry way without, not many yards from their door. The sentinel hailing appeared to have been attracted by the noise

of the key. His voice was not that of Diggs. In a moment he stepped to the door of the room next the young men, and put his hand to the lock: it appeared to be all right; and he passed to that they were standing at. He also put his hand on the lock of this; he then knocked at the door. The prisoners, trembling with excitement, stood silent as possible, without answering the summons. In a short time, the sentinel, deeming them asleep, walked away, and for half an hour they heard his regular tread up and down the open space. In the mean time, a second and larger signal appeared on the tree, as though the first might not have been discovered by those for whom it was designed.

Another voice was soon after heard without, apparently in conversation with the sentinel on duty. The speakers gradually retired from the spot, until their voices ceased to be heard. Summers, waiting a short time, applied his key a second time; he finally turned it, and the bolt flew back. Opening the door, he gazed down the court, and perceived no one stirring. The young men now stepped from the room, but as suddenly stepped into it again, as they heard the sentinel's voice at the most distant end of the court. Summers, holding the door ajar, perceived him issue from a side door, exclaiming, as he did so, "No, no, one glass at a time, my friend: I don't make a fool o' myself the first night of standing guard in this ward of the prison. Let up for the present; when relieved from duty I'll call and have it out with you; but just now I've no mind of going under arrest to the guard-house for neglect of duty." And he continued his walk up the court towards the young prisoners.

It was near morning when, still listening to the ceaseless step of the sentinel as he passed and repassed their door, the disappointed watchers took occasion to re-lock the portal, and giving over the enterprise, betook themselves to their bunks. As the corporal's female friend had informed him of her intended departure from Prison Island the morning before, they had now abandoned all hopes of escape.

CHAPTER XXI.

"To brag of benefits one hath bestowed,
Doth make the best seem less, and most seem none."—Brome.

We conduct the reader, if he shall so far have borne us company, into an apartment in the city of Montreal, where, at a table covered with papers and various manuscript documents, sits Colonel Dinning. Laying down the one he has last perused, he rests his chin on his palm, and muses. The reverie is at length broken by the hasty entrance of Charles Henderson,

whose bearing indicates the greatest excess of joy.

"My dear sir," he shouts to the other, "I am overpowered with exultation. It is the greatest day of my life—a day of miracles! Could I have dreamed out my future, there is scarce a hope anything more dazzling could have fallen on my pillow. Excuse this cataract of joy," continued he, squeezing the colonel's hand; "you will pardon it, surely, when I tell you the cause."

"I pant to know it, Charles," replied the elder, smiling; "pray unburden yourself; joy, as well as grief, finds relief in freedom of vent."

"I almost fear to do so," answered the young man; "you'll laugh at me—think me hoaxed—or deem the crown grown childish or run mad. But the matter is this. I was within the hour waited on by the governor. Somehow my name had reached his ear, and, gilded by the gloss of some flatterer's report of me, had won its way to favour. The governor came to open on my view a new firmament of glory: truly, an unlooked-for heaven of golden hopes. My mind was fired with it, my dear sir; yet the bewildering charm did not even then more affect me than the deep sense of gratitude my heart felt for you. For to you am I indebted for transplantation in this generous soil, this Eldorado of wealth, renown, and shining honours."

"Indeed, I perceive some reason in what you were saying of hoaxing and dreams," said the colonel, while the other was taking breath. "You remind me of a novice for the first time at a play. I must dismount you from this horse of the clouds, before anything like rational prose is likely to be gleaned from your lips."

"So, indeed, it is," replied the other; "a short nap might have cooled me a little, and then I had come to you without wings. But now to the story. Perhaps overrating my knowledge of the region of the Susquehanna, and building, at the same time, too much on my military skill, the governor came to break to me an enterprise, and to load me with undeserved honours. Would you believe it? he talked to me of an order of knighthood!"

"Indeed! and on what terms?"

"A descent upon the Susquehanna, and destruction of the rebel strongholds; the limit of the enterprise to be Wyoming. It was impossible for me, a long while, to believe the man sincere. It is true, I may have been regarded in more favourable light for adopting the cause of the king in voluntary choice; and again, my particular intimacy with the character, condition, and resources of the enemy, together with some geographical knowledge of the country beyond what a stranger might be pre-

sumed in possession of. At all events, the great reward was offered me."

"And your assent given the proposition," suggested Colonel Dinning.

"I am holding it under consideration," replied Charles.

"Most men," said the other, "would waive the ceremony of consideration. The fruit you speak of does not grow on every man's tree. I could have found a hand to pluck it down, without calling on the mind for a reason."

"Then," responded the young man, "I am fixed. I break to you without delay the conclusion as formed. I hope it may not be otherwise than agreeable. I open to you my whole mind. There is one matter, Colonel Dinning," he continued, with hesitating emotion, "I hold far above wealth or honours. If obtained, even by long seeking and weary procrastination, I should prize it a richer God-send than knighthood dropped into my lap unsought; ay, or the broadest domain the sovereign has in his gift." The young man paused.

"I know your meaning, Charles," said the other, relieving him from the avowal; "it is the hand of my daughter."

"Yes. And now I inform you of my purpose. My poor services can never render me worthy of the king's intended favour. If bestowed, I should feel but awkward under its weight. You, with more years and greater experience, of better acquirements and more ability to aid the cause of the crown, might in greater measure compensate the donor, and wear the honour with credit. I lay it at your feet. All I am able to perform in requital, the governor shall command me in."

"Noble, noble-hearted fellow!" exclaimed the other, springing up, and throwing an arm around the young man; "you fill me with wonder. I have scarce a word great enough in your praise. My deep gratitude is too poor for suitable expressions. The unbridled joy you spoke of but now has left your bosom to fill my own. I thought myself arrived at that sober confine of life when these toys cease to move us. Sit down, my dear boy; it is my turn to speak. I trust I may safely commit to your breast," he continued, "a few circumstances that, until now, it has not been my business to communicate to many others. I do it in return for the nobleness of spirit you have shown, and the good faith heretofore observed in all your intercourse with me. Some years have elapsed since I disembarked at this very port, an adventurer from the mother country. An only sister, being with myself the only survivors of deceased parents, came with me. She was a fine girl, Charles, and had stronger hold on my heart than it has ever been the lot of others to gain. The youngest of

our family, she was adored by her parents by all that passion the patriarch of old lavished on his last born. And this was manifested (with the fulness of my approbation) in our parents' will. By this she shared equally with me an estate considerable in amount, even by the standard of English wealth. Her portion was by me invested chiefly in lands, here and in the colonies. Leaving her here under friendly protection, pioneer-like, I wandered into the wilds of Pennsylvania. No means of communication being then established between this and my place of seclusion, I had no intelligence of her for a period of two years. On my return hence (pardon me this idle tear), she was gone. In vain was every search after her; not a trace, not the least clew could be found. From a few slight circumstances, one of which was a habit she had of sleep-walking, it was finally supposed she had wandered to the river, and accidentally fallen into its waters. From that day I have mourned her as no more. It made sombre my gayety of heart—darkened my path of life. I loved her dearly," he stammered, with a handkerchief at his eyes; "and even now, in the happier world, she bears with her all the softness this bosom ever knew. Excuse this extended detail: let us come to other things. As you perceive, I am her heir. Besides the inheritance thus acquired, it has been my fortune to accumulate by my own exertions. I may say, the acres in my name are countless. Those in the colonies, it is true, may now hang on the contingency of war. Mine, if the rightful cause of the crown triumph; on the other hand, they become confiscated if it fail. Be that as it may, all that was my sister's," pointing to the packets on the table, "is now yours. As her heir, I shall this day transfer my right to you. At my decease you will, by virtue of my will, become possessor of all that fortune has thrown in my way. And to all this, my dear boy, I add the hand of Ruth."

The young man grasped the hand of his friend, and held it in his without uttering a word. Unaffected emotion choked his rising thanks, and, for the first time perhaps since childhood, a tear stole from his eye—a tear of grateful joy.

"And now you will see the reason of immediately returning to the governor, and closing the bargain with him," said Colonel Dinning, "substituting myself in your stead. And for my part, it shall be my immediate care to intercede elsewhere in your favour."

The young officer forthwith left the room to proceed in the execution of his errand. Colonel Dinning lost no time in summoning a domestic, whom he despatched with a message to the chamber of his daughter; nor was it long until she appeared in his presence.

"Well, truant," said he, with playful gayety, as he arose and kissed the maiden, "I must tighten your leading-strings a little, or I lose your society altogether. You misses, like gossamer-webs, grow so untangible, that it's a life's labour to come near you. Here have you been spiriting away from place to place the last month or so, like a perfect will-o'-the-wisp. But so it is; we old fellows, grown rusty in years, are soon outshone by the more gaudy butterflies of youth. I make no doubt this steeple chase yesterday from the island with Charles was worth a year passed in my less acceptable company."

"If you speak in jest," replied Ruth, "I subscribe at once to all you say; but if in verity, I must say you do me great wrong. Indeed, there is little enjoyment I have but in your society; and for the matter of age, I should have little aversion in making exchange with you, did it serve your pleasure."

"I cannot say how much you delight me," responded the gratified parent; "your affection lays me under many obligations. And that you advert to some willingness to serve my pleasure, it reminds me that there is a subject on which I have long had much desire of conferring with you. As your own welfare lies at the bottom of it, I hope your pardon in submitting it to your consideration; and of my desire to enhance your happiness, I trust none will doubt."

"Not I, at least," replied Ruth, with a look of affection.

"But, should you not favour my views, I cannot say how much it would grieve me. My heart flatters me you will," and a pause ensued.

It may not be supposed that his young companion, with all the acumen of her sex and the exercise of faculties ripened into fair growth, could mistake the mark at which these intimations were aimed. He, on the other hand, aware of the former sentiments of her heart, could not but anticipate some difficulty in the path of his hopes, overcome, meantime, with an inward consciousness that the subject, when submitted, would perhaps do violence to the young lady's plans and feelings.

"It is," he began, slowly, "a matter that may already have exercised your mind, perhaps been the subject of its full deliberation, perchance decree."

"I cannot tell; it may be; you have not named it."

Colonel Dinning arose and walked several times across the room, as if endeavouring to resume the dialogue. The pause made had, as it were, driven him out of the current. He was, however, relieved by his younger companion.

"What you have to say I will hear with pleasure; I do not doubt your sincerity. You have but to be frank with me on any subject."

"True; I had near omitted it," said he, sitting down; "we will begin at once. I don't know but my mind was wandering to something else. Then we will talk it over freely, beginning where we left off. There is my young friend Charles; I would you could find it in your heart to like him, my child," and looking in her face with anxious inquiry, he paused. Ruth did not return his gaze, but bent her eyes to the floor.

"You do not answer me, my dear; my heart is in the theme; I would beyond all things his affection found response in your breast. Do you know how much he loves you?"

But there was not a word that answered the interrogatory.

"I fear my question has confused you. Come," said he, kindly taking her hand, "may I argue from your manner that I have broken in on any hoarded secret of your bosom? It may be his passion for you is already more than requited. If so, be open with me, my dear child; you could not more safely intrust the secret than with me."

"No, no," said Ruth, "I have no such secret in my keeping."

"You do not love him, then, who so tenderly loves you?"

"I do not," replied the girl; "I cannot."

"You drive a dagger through me," replied the other, letting go her hand. "I am stricken to the heart's core—my hopes crushed to the earth."

"Forgive me; forgive me, my dear benefactor—my more than parent!" exclaimed Ruth, throwing her arms around his neck. "I will do anything, everything for you—all, and more than you ask of me. I cannot see you thus."

"Why, an angel still!" responded he, and returning the embrace, for a moment blessed with an inward prayer her whom it was his purpose to overinfluence.

"But how can I urge upon you," he inquired, "what may be repugnant to your adoption? And yet a little while the bride of my dearest friend, and the bud planted at the altar might bloom at the domestic hearth. The coldness you feel may not be of that icy hardness that gushings from another's heart will not thaw it. Come, now, my dear one, let us speak more of it. I do not, indeed, seek to throw you on the waste ground of any one's regard. I would transfer you to warm and generous soil. He adores you. Any exertion will not be too much for him to bestow in purchase of your happiness. All care and solicitude of friend, protector, parent you will ever find in me. I say nothing of what I have done for you, or will do; more than this, that the past shall not weigh in favour with the time to come. My gratitude will make me your worshipper."

"It is much—much I owe you," said

L

Ruth, "and much indeed you seek me to repay."

"Say nothing of what you owe," quickly interrupted the other, "nothing of that. I demand of you no reckoning, my child. Granting or refusing my prayer makes no change in my love."

"It is, at all events," she continued, "a great step you place before me. There is no other obstacle to my foot that it were not easier to surmount. I find it hard, indeed, to sever at a blow the silken cords by which hope has long been leading me, and to stop here the stream so long flowing around my heart. I do not know, but it seems my day would sink in night; not a sun to rise on the hereafter. The darkest hour of the past would be noonday to it. My heart shudders at the contemplation; the chills of that long winter period reach me even in fancy. Oh! my father!" she exclaimed, with a tearful eye, and look of imploring supplication, "how is it that you urge me to this great step?"

"Never—never, my poor child!" answered the other, melted down by this appeal and aspect of suffering resignation; "I, that have been your protector, will not now lead you to the rock of ruin. Be your hand and heart at your own untrammelled giving. It shall be my aim to fill the first with wealth, the other with peace. Had it been the pleasure of fortune to give your inclinations a different direction, you had made me the happiest of men. Nay, I cannot speak the full measure of my bliss. And then, for another reason I have not named," he added, half musing, "I could have wished it otherwise. But it is lost. Bawble that it was; its playful light was dazzling in the eye, while the extended fingers were closing around it. It is gone. False, beguiling flame, like that of the bog, ever in view, yet flying from the pursuers' hand. The dear pearl of fame, like the treasure love, chance garners in the far-off storehouse; the morass lies between; while the only pass to it is barred to the travellers' feet."

"How is it," he continued to himself, as he arose and paced the room, "that this gaudy trifle had grown so to my heart, that I shame to say, the heart bleeds at tearing it away? Let it pass—let it pass; 'tis like the light of pestilent suns, breeding corruption in the mind it illuminates. I am no schoolboy, to whimper over this gold-bug that has escaped me. At best, I cannot lose what I never possessed."

"But you shall not lose it, whatever it may be," said Ruth, at the close of this soliloquy. "No foolish aversion of mine shall balk your purpose, nor patient endurance of any lot assigned me. I am at your disposal, if it serve your purpose; it is my pleasure to be so."

"You roll a mountain off me, darling!"

exclaimed the delighted man of ambition, turning to her; "yours shall be a journey over flowers. My heart bends up again, like the bough disencumbered of the snow-drift. Your pleasure to do so! There's a blessing in the word. Then, my dear child, your free and voluntary bestowal of your hand alone justifies me in seeking it."

"I hope to say it is so," replied the maiden; "our wills may be curbed, though not directed. It shall be my aim. I trust there is no imparative haste; my answer will be given your proposal, after suitable opportunity of reflection."

"How?" inquired the other, as though the prize were slipping through his fingers.

"I would claim some time for thought," said Ruth. "The suddenness of this measure has, in some degree, unsettled my coolness. My concurrence in a twelvemonth, I hope, would be in time?"

"A twelvemonth!" pondered the other, who readily foresaw that his friend Charles might see proper to stipulate for immediate assurances, in the clinching of their bargain. "And can you name no period less, my child?"

"I am disconcerted," said Ruth, with a glance of mind into the future; "pray excuse me now. I will try to shorten the period. I feel weary and faint; some other time we'll speak of it again—no, never, I hope, again!" she added, to herself. "Do not distrust me, my dear father; your wish shall rule me. The daughter can never err in gratifying the parent's wish. We'll leave it so."

The young lady retired to her chamber.

CHAPTER XXII.

"You had better
Take care what you reply to such a letter."
Don Juan.

THE next morning Ruth wrote the following letter to Father Janaway:

"MY DEAREST FRIEND,
"For some past months having been committed, by my father, to your charge and protection, I am about to confer with you on a subject of, to me, the greatest possible interest. May I hope you will indulge me the freedom, and receive with forbearance the burden I propose to lay on your attention? To none else can I make my plaint; and I make it, my dearest friend, to you, since, heretofore, you have been pleased to manifest much concern in my well-doing.

"When, some time since, I left Wyoming, it was my chance to make, as one halting-post of the journey, the stockade of Captain Sunfish. I had but just gone into my apartment when notes of alarm reached my ear. On raising the window sash, I perceived an individual at a case-

ment, or airhole, obliquely under me, who appeared to be detained by one arm, held by a person within. Thus pinioned, the captive was forcibly made auditor of some message the other had to deliver. I thought I recognised the tones of this voice as those of Corporal Summers. The more was I confirmed in the impression, as, but a few days in advance of me, he had been taken north by a party of Indians, who had captured him.

"I immediately descended, and was near the commandant when the released individual came in to report that a prisoner in one of the cells was seriously ill. The information was received with utter disregard by the black dignitary, who evinced not the slightest design of affording the sufferer relief. I interposed, but with no better success. At length permission was granted me of visiting the cell myself. Being well disguised, I repaired thither. My suspicions, as to the voice, were instantly confirmed; for the corporal met me at the door, and instantly pointed to a sick person, stretched on the most miserable cot of straw, in a state of entire insensibility.

"But one glance at the features of the invalid, my dear friend, and I had well-nigh dropped on the floor of the dungeon. It was a face well stamped on all my recollections of the past—forgive the weakness, dear sir—well stamped on the tablet of my heart. You know well who it was; my parent's foe, the foeman of his cause. We had last parted as even common friends should not; I had held him from me with disdain, which, though forced, he accounted real.

"My purse, a powerful lever on the commandant's heart, procured him instant removal from the detestable den. Placed in a more suitable apartment, I watched him day and night, until reason returned. Even then I stole at times into his chamber, and gazed with eager eyes upon the dear, unconscious sleeper; nay, through the keyhole, even (absolve me from the sin), looked in upon him as he sat up in his couch, or moved with tottering paces through the room.

"I may close this part of the narrative, by confessing to you only, in whom I so much rely, that any emotions with which my young heart had theretofore been filled, burned now with tenfold fire. There, in secret, unknown to him, or to any but myself, I loved him with a passion to which my own heart had previously been a stranger. There, dependant, suffering, and helpless, he was all my own; my hand administered, and the prayerful heart hallowed with its blessing each antidote he received. And when the danger was past, and he grew again to strength, it seemed on me the blessing of Heaven fell, rather

than on him, so much more needing it. And was it possible for this holy sentiment of my heart to change? No, no, my best friend. Every room, and window, and palisade of that old fortress have place in memory. All that he saw or touched of mine I keep in holy trust. The little bell he used (and, that I here think of it, let me remark, that I came away from the island without it); keep it safely, I pray you, until it comes to my hand again; it was often in his. And how many times have my lips rested on the trifling memento, where I fancied yet some trace of his touch was lingering.

"Thus much may be new to you. After his convalescence you arrived yourself, and know what else occurred: his secret and hasty removal; his escape and flight to the house at which we tarried for the night; the Olympian incidents, a part of which I overlooked and witnessed; the services at chapel; visits at your abode, &c.

"From all this I turn you to a leaf of sadder contents. Last night an interview was sought with me by my father. With great hesitation he opened to me a subject which, on many former occasions, by hints and innuendoes, had been but too painfully fastened on my mind. It was my union with Charles Henderson. You cannot, I am sure, be sensible of the dreadful ordeal through which I passed, or of the sleepless night that followed it. His whole heart is in the measure, and, poor man, I pity him almost more than I do myself. What could I do or say? With tearful persuasion, almost, he appealed to me for my assent. And when I ventured the expression of my disinclination, he said I had driven a dagger to his heart. I could not witness this suffering I had wrought, the more so, as all his acts of previous kindness came up to chide my cruelty. Could I close my ear when a parent's prayer knocked there for entrance? I yielded. Was it not well, good friend? So at least I did; assured him the daughter could hazard nothing in granting the parent's wish, and left him, saying I would take farther time for reflection.

"Since such is the lot I have assumed, you may ask me why it is your counsel is sought. Indeed, I scarcely know, save that in some one I felt an uncontrolled desire to pour this history of my affairs; perhaps yet to ask what I should in duty do. With the individual proposed my heart has no affinity. Alas! it rests elsewhere. I am tortured beyond your belief. How great the sacrifice I am called on to make! What a world of midnight the very thought conjures up! Yet, would you believe it? there is still a gleam of joy in the dim horizon; it is the assurance of making my benefactor happy. This, my dear

friend, is a lamp to my feet; the only one shedding a single ray over the gloom.

"To your bosom only I commit these particulars; will you pardon me, and aid me with your honest counsel? Your earliest attention will greatly relieve my aching heart.

"Believe me your dutiful and ever-confiding
RUTH."

"P.S.—My father has this moment been in my chamber. He has seen C. H., and assured him of my assent. I could not go down to see him. He has just left the house; I saw him pass up the street. Would to God I could love him for my father's sake. Am I sinning in the consolation that life, at most, is but as a day? Should I like it less for being brief? If old age, that naught can hasten, be reserved for me, most sadly do I dread its slow advance. May the just Heaven (to which your holy prayers commend me) appease in the great hereafter what evils time, with its untoward march, so fastens on the suffering heart! Adieu, most cherished friend and father, and let me crave your every blessing."

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Where am I now?"—HOWARD.

WE raise the curtain here, and present the reader a picture he has regarded once before. It is the same which, with Sergeant Henderson, he overlooked from the mountain peak, when that individual, with gun on shoulder, waged war on the tenants of the wood. To this spot have arrived our two young friends, at length escaped from the thralldom of prison restraint on the St. Lawrence; and now, well worn with forest travel, tattered in garments, and limping on blistered feet, they overlook the land of home. Fatigued as he was, the sergeant could not forego the gratification of again clambering to the top of the ledge. The other, with less taste for the rural or the romantic, begins the descent, leaving his companion to enjoy the prospect alone. This, having gained the barren peak, he was not disposed to cut short, for, added to what was already familiar to his eye, many changes had taken place in the valley below him during his sojourn away. The dwelling of Colonel Dinning, first to engage his attention, had, however, shared not the finger-touch of mutation. Its white chimneys arose in the same surrounding grove, and the woodlands were there untouched adjacent. But, farther down, the axe had made ravages in many timbered acres, shorn the brow of an eminence, and striped the hillsides with stretches of fallow land.

One edifice was especially new to him.

It was a very large stockade fort, on the immediate brink of the river's bank. To this point, in the last rays of the June sun, the slow pacing herds and toilers from many fields of labour were verging. There were others of smaller dimensions scattered here and there on the long stretch of flats, spread like a huge map before the eye. Peace, with abundance her handmaid, presided over the quiet vale, and a thousand fields of yellow wheat, just ripening for the sickle, attested the industry of her humble sons. The young soldier, resting in his perch of observation, with his back against a fragment of the rock, sat a long time in the enjoyment of what he saw. The soft, mellow hues of evening fell around him, which, together with the gentle murmur of the surrounding pinies, soothed him by degrees into slumber. When he awoke, night had blotted out the fair page beneath him; and, having lost all clew of time, he knew not how long he had slept. He therefore delayed not to descend into the valley. Passing the enclosure of his old friend, Colonel Dinning, he cast an eye on the silent, desolate mansion. More than once his fancy carried him within its familiar apartments, now darkened by the barred doors and closed shutters. Hence he passed on towards the large stockade, pausing now and then as some mansion or field, new to his eye, invited his inspection.

At length, emerging from a grove of oaks, he stood near to the stockade, whose summit appeared drawn against the dim ground of the sky. He slowly approached the silent fortress, whose tenants, it seemed, were wrapped in undisturbed repose. While gazing at the top of the stockade, his eye detected, resting against its side, what he took to be a ladder. He had but reached its foot when a figure, wrapped in a cloak and hood, rose up before him. His first impulse was to step back from this new acquaintance; but, on second thought, he stepped forward and gave the usual salutation of "good-night."

"Hush—she—sh—" hastily responded a low voice, in tones of alarm, while, at the same time, a hand was gently pressed against the sergeant's mouth. "Silence, I pray, for Heaven's sake!" continued the stranger, in the lowest whisper, drawing the hood more effectually, meantime, over a face, into which the sergeant was peering with a gaze of much curious inquiry. The unknown individual next stooped down, and taking up a small twig, broke it in twain with a snap whose echo might reach to the extent of twenty rods. The signal was in a moment answered by the appearance of two persons at the top of the stockade, who began their hasty descent of the ladder.

"I will pass on my way," whispered the

sergeant to his new acquaintance, and forthwith moved from the spot. Leaving the fort behind him, he directed his steps towards the dwelling of his father. He had not progressed but a few hundred paces, however, before the two persons who descended the ladder laid hands on his shoulders.

"Our prisoner," said one of the arresting party in his ear.

"And by what authority?" instantly demanded Walter.

"By authority which you have no power to make us disclose," said the other. "We will show it at our own pleasure."

"Then I hold myself bound to resist you at all hazards," replied the sergeant. "As broad a charter as this you act under may cloak every deed, however averse to the rules of war, the canons of church, or institutions of law. I must esteem that man as no more than the highwayman who shames to give his authority for the arrest of another. And, farthermore, can we not as well discuss this point, freed from physical restraint? It is therefore proper, for the present, that you remove your hands from my person."

"Why, my good friend, you measure out niceties as much by the scruple as an apothecary compounding subtle drugs." Saying which, he withdrew his hand, but placed his person, in the mean time, before the captive, so as to intercept any design of escape. Then he continued: "I might, it is true, define my powers as matter of courtesy, but for its being somewhat superfluous. A very little authority warrants the seizure of a night wanderer, and, I might have added, he who, with prying stealth, comes on the eaves-dropper's errand."

"I am but a stranger here," replied Walter, coolly; "and, for the first time in my life, looked but now on yonder pile. Its purpose I am, of course, allowed to judge of from its method of construction. Of its inward arrangements, its individual occupants, or other particulars, I am ignorant. Of its very construction, until this night, I was wholly uninformed. As it came in my way, curiosity prompted me to give it a passing glance, it then being my purpose to pass on in quiet. After this explanation, you may regard the phrase last in your mouth as inappropriate, and highly offensive. I need not hint the propriety of your recalling it."

"I am too old in the service," said the other, indifferently, "to be misled by any statement, however plausible, from a prisoner under arrest. A soldier, as I am should be no less particular than the bar-rister at the bar; therefore, what you have said might do well supported by proof."

"You have for it the word of a man of

honour, at least," replied the sergeant, in high dudgeon; "but as that does not suffice, I'll prove it on your shoulders, with this bit of evidence, which, if it does not convince the mind, may nevertheless make some impression on your body." Saying this, he raised the stout cane he walked with, and had proceeded without delay to give the promised testimony, but that the companion of his antagonist laid hold of his arm from behind, and thus, after the language of the bench, "overruled the offer." Now overpowered by numbers, and speedily disarmed of his cudgel, the young man soon found himself in such manner pinioned as offered little inducement for farther resistance.

"Now," said his guard, "you will obey my authority, if you do not respect it. It will at least stand good on one ground, that might makes right. Far be it from me, however, to exult over the fallen. And so, my young blood, we will proceed to canvass another matter. There is a condition whose observance buys you instant freedom. In yonder stronghold, under weight of heavy irons, is detained a man of honour. To-morrow, it is said, he will be arraigned and haply condemned as a spy. As you are, perhaps, attached to the colonial ranks, and have therefore right of admission within the fort, it may be within your power to strike off his chains and set him free. I would not propose this measure to you with any hope of your approval, was it the fact that the prisoner deserved in any degree the appellation he is branded with, or was rightfully amenable to the tribunal before which he will be summoned."

"And how came he in custody?" inquired the sergeant.

"He was here, as I learn, on domestic business, unconnected with this war; and, unhappily, crossing the path of a certain sharp-scented, lynx-eyed hound, a thicket prowler, and man-trapping wolf, was taken prisoner."

"And who is this worthy of your encomium?"

"If I recollect the vagabond's name aright," said the other, "it is Spike, or Mike—maybe, *Pike*—there being little doubt he is an animal of prey. So this crab laying claws on the prisoner, he was placed in custody, and will be tried as a spy."

"The name also of the captive," suggested Walter; "you have not yet favoured me with that."

"His name, for aught I know, may be familiar to you; it is Colonel Dinning."

"I think I have heard it before," replied the other. "The spirit of justice aid him in this sad emergency; I do not know that it is in my power to render him assistance."

"And would you not put forth a hand to

rescue the innocent, then?" inquired the stranger. "The Mohawk of the forest does even that; nay, his rude dictate of mercy leads him farther—even to cut short the thread of debilitated age, and give the parent earlier transport to the happy hunting grounds."

"The law will, doubtless, do well by the prisoner," said the sergeant. "At his trial this plea of innocence will stand him in good need. I cannot step between the tribunal and its object."

The party passed on some distance without farther remark. At length, nearing the stockade, they halted.

"I have one other proposition to make," said the guard of the young captive. "I make no doubt you will soon take rank or station as one of the armed force in this stronghold. You are free to go at large on giving one pledge as a man of honour."

"That is a guarantee which but a few minutes past was favoured with slight respect," replied Walter. "Short intercourse with good company must have greatly added to my stock, that you now rely on what was then spurned."

"We will waive that," said the other. "It is sufficient that I now deem your pledge satisfactory. If you disclose not to this garrison anything you have this night witnessed, nor by any information given double the number or vigilance of the night-watch, you are free."

"The proposition is soon answered," responded Walter; "I shall hamper my tongue with no such culpable silence. You may depend on my communicating to the officers of the station all that I have accidentally become acquainted with, and that on the first opportunity offering."

"Then we will advance without farther parley," replied the other. "And as my eyes will answer all purposes required, you will allow me to bind this handkerchief tightly over yours; and in case you promise me to make no use of your vocal organs, it will save me the trouble of stuffing another into your mouth. We prefer a silent march." The prisoner gave his assurance of making no outcry to betray his captors, which saved him the infliction of the last precautionary measure.

Leading the hooded sergeant between them, the two now set forward in profound silence. It was impossible for the sergeant to tell in what direction they conducted him, but the distance was at least considerable. But as to this, owing to his crippled situation, and the fatigue incident to a hard tramp over many leagues of forest, he might probably have been deceived.

When arrived at the end of the walk, he was conducted down a flight of steps, through a door, which was unfastened from within. Farther on he was ushered through another, and, being deposited on what

seemed to him a bench, the bandage was removed from his eyes and the cord from his arms. His conductors then withdrew, bolting the door after them as they went out. In vain the young soldier now strained his eyes in every direction around him, hoping to detect some orifice or window that admitted light; none appeared. After a short lapse of time, he with whom he had held the dialogue returned, and placed a salver of provisions on the seat beside him.

"You will excuse the little ceremony I am using," said he, "and the scarcity of lights. But a soldier, which I presume you to be, is never at a loss in finding passage for the contents of his wallet to his own mouth."

"No, indeed; you say what is strictly true," replied the hungry sergeant, awakening at the smell of the fare; "and, for my own part, of late I have had equal difficulty in finding stores either for mouth or knapsack. In good truth, I have tasted nothing since the sun rose in the morning."

"If that is the case," said the host, "you had better rest your tongue and use your jaws. I advise you to commence at once; here is the bread, the beef, and the mug of water."

"And another matter, too, not named in your bill," returned the sergeant, withdrawing his hand: "the butter, I think; for I have thrust my thumb and forefinger into it the matter of half their length."

"They might happen in a worse place than that," said the other.

"And have; getting accidentally between the jaws of a mousetrap in my mother's pantry long since. However, the present difficulty is soon remedied, as I can lick them free of the encumbrance in short space of time." And the half-famished youth was proceeding to do so, when the other cried out,

"Hold! here is my handkerchief; use it at your pleasure. And now, good sir, I leave you for the present. When done your repast, you will find a couch behind you. I hope, by the morrow, you will have better digested the proposition I have made you respecting Colonel Dinning."

The young man was now left alone. Having gorged himself to full satisfaction, he sought the couch mentioned by his keeper, and was soon soundly sleeping in the dark, damp, solitary apartment.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"How poor an instrument
May do a noble deed! he brings me liberty."
Anthony and Cleopatra.

With the next day's setting sun sank also the fortunes of the accused spy. Du-

ring the afternoon a court-martial had assembled within the fort, each of whose body had taken a solemn oath well and truly to try and determine, according to evidence, the matter depending between the Colony of Pennsylvania and the prisoner on trial. After a full hearing of the testimony, the prisoner had submitted to the court his defence, in which he disclaimed all participation in charges so disgracefully prejudicial to his character and endangering to life. That his appearance in the valley had no reference to the game of war pending between the colonies and the crown, nor in the least abetting either the one side or the other engaged in the sanguinary contest. That, in this matter, he had hope his own word, coming from one in some measure, as they would doubtless admit, a man of honour, would avail him, and turn the scale in his favour on a state of facts, as he humbly conceived, making little against him. That he had already been submitted to the endurance of much infamy, garnered in duress like a common felon, and, without just cause, burdened with heavy weight of irons. Of this, however, he did not so much intend to avail himself, but rested his cause with what he trusted, an impartial and honourable court, those delegated to try him, and now about to pass judgment on proof that, so far as his conscience informed him, weighed slightly indeed against his innocence.

The defence of Colonel Dinning, made with much elegance of manner and apparent coolness, yet came from one fully aware of the precarious platform on which he stood, and the brittle thread by which his life and fortunes hung suspended. The heart was, therefore, ill at ease, while the lips playfully ridiculed the folly of preferring allegations against him so lamely applicable to his real designs, or warned off, by much sophistry, any conclusions which might establish his guilt. His address, likewise, teemed with a few well-applied appeals to the sympathy of his judges, upon whose honour nothing else than the evidence had influence in the making up of the verdict. When this was returned, and read in the prisoner's hearing, it was followed by a sentence of condemnation. He was, at the same time, informed a respite of two days was granted him for preparation to meet that higher tribunal, whose verdict would probably depend on such use as it pleased him to make of this remnant of his days.

It was nightfall, when, with this sentence ringing in his stunned ears, under escort of a small guard, he was removed to his cell. This was a room in one corner of the fortress, made in shape of a triangle, by planting stout logs in the earth, and leaning them against the top of the stockade. Though but a rude construction, it

formed a most secure prison; since the weight of the heavy timbers was abundant security against their removal, while their thickness forbade all hope of cutting through but with much labour and the display of those signs by which, as the adage hath it, the workman might incur the danger of being known by his chips.

It was midnight when the party of the previous evening cautiously approached the stockade again. Listening some time, to satisfy themselves if any were stirring in the fort, the ladder was placed against the wall at that corner where the convict was imprisoned. The captor of the ill-starred sergeant then slowly ascended, until his head protruded over the top of the fortress. All was quiet below him, save a low, indistinct hum of voices that occasionally reached the ear, emanating from the remotest corner of the enclosure, where a light gleamed from a small building. Directly beneath him, seated at the cell door, was a solitary individual, with his rifle resting across his lap. He at the top of the fort remained some time gazing down at the unconscious sentinel, doubting whether or not he slept, for, during the period of inspection, he had not moved the least tittle.

"Bad luck to me!" at length muttered the sentry, rubbing his eyes, extending his arms, and giving a laboured yawn, "if I'm not this same blessed moment fast asleep; on duty, too, as I am! What's the time o' day, I'd like to know?" looking up at the sky, and accidentally in the direction of the projecting head.

"What the devil's that same?" he quickly asked of himself, as the head was hastily drawn back. "That same ould owl agin, most like; but he's off widout bidding good-night till his ould acquaintance. A decent bird he is, and a swate singer; and much I'm obleeged till him for music this long time past. And how is it wid yerself within doors here, darlint? Snoozing like a hog, are ye? Well, well," pursued he, yawning again, "slape is a great blessing, that's God's truth; and enough ye'll have ov it forment the morrow, me lad. You'll be taking a short nap thin will be lasting yer life long. Botheration! but me legs were sounder aslape nor meself," said he, rising to his feet, and shaking one limb after the other. "And the cowlid night air has stopp'd all the blood from carcalation, I'm thinking."

At this moment the sounds of a violin were heard in the distant hut, where the watcher on the walls had seen the light.

"Arrah!" said Barney, the prison guard, "it's yerself that's there, Daddy Hoke-lander! Yer fiddle is the cock ov the foort, jewel; it crows the hour like a bird. Now a bit ov a jig, or a four-handed reel, by meself, to yer Hunt the Squirrel, is jest

the matther to take the frost oot ov me legs. And maybe you've a drop in yer canteen at the same time, Daddy Hoke. So here's turn in a wee moment, and the top ov the morning till ye, daddy."

Barnabas had no sooner moved away than, dropping down a ladder of ropes, the person on the stockade descended to the ground. It was but the work of a moment to remove the fastenings of the temporary prison and enter to the condemned spy.

"Hold! I surrender; take down your gun," muttered the sleeper, whom the stranger was attempting to arouse. Laying hand on him again, he gave him a few more jerks. "Yes, yes, an order; that's it, I close with you; an order, or—" and he relapsed into his state of unconsciousness again, whereupon the other proceeded, with more roughness of manner, to shake him by the collar of his dress. "Ay, ay; well, on with it, then, I am ready; cursed, ignoble cord!" and, drawing in his breath, he ground his teeth together with spasmodic exertion. "Lead on; I follow to the tree!"

When fairly aroused, he opened his heavy eyes on his visiter. "Why is it you disturb me at this time, sentinel?" he demanded, with some severity of tone. The other hastily put his mouth to the prisoner's ear, and whispered. Starting upright from his couch, the latter stared at him a moment, exclaiming, "Is it you? God be praised!"

"Up as soon as possible," replied the other, in a whisper, taking the colonel's arm; "up and away! there is no time to waste; ere we can scale the fortress the sentry may be upon us."

"Alas! you do not know all; feel of this chain."

"As I expected," the other remarked, putting his hand on the iron. "Show me the link next your ankle." Drawing a very small saw from his pocket, he addressed himself to the task, and, every moment expecting the return of the guard, wrought with unwearied perseverance at severing the bond which attached the captive to one of the logs of the prison. At length the link parted asunder.

"There, it is done," said he; "now let us away; the guard will be upon us, and all is lost."

"Faith! close guessing that, for here's the guard sure enough; come to time, ye persave, gentlemen, like a boxer in the ring," and Barnabas poked the muzzle of his gun in at the portal. "Ye'll be a little particular, me harties, how you run forment the mouth ov this instrument I'm howlding in the mane time. So now for the word ov command; and the first bird that opens his bill in yer nest will be afther swallowing something worse nor a worm. You wid the cloak on, advance to the front,

"A thousand rank and file!" inquired the colonel, busy over his dish.

"If you mean men," replied the other, "I can hardly vouch for it. But, when you estimate the kind of recruits they put in ranks here, it may amount to that number, perhaps exceed it; for this seems, from rumour, to be not only a land of Amazons and viragos, but of Samsons in miniature also. A beardless boy ranks higher than a woman here, and all the women are men."

"Well, that is a new state of things, to be sure," answered the colonel, "and must be noted in our course of procedure. This war on urchins and petticoats in open field is wholly a new experiment."

"What I say is naught the less true," resumed the divine, "and my settled opinion is, you may anticipate a resolute resistance indeed, where the rifle is no less fatal in the hands of a cowboy than the musket in those of your trained regulars. And of the tone of public mind you may the better judge, that the girls run rifle-balls for the troops, and wives and mothers actually manufacture gunpowder."

"The devil! you don't say it!" responded Colonel Butler, looking up in surprise. "With some of my brave greens in camp yonder these ladies of valour would make a devilish good cross. But, seriously, are these obscure foresters compounded of the same sort of material you speak of?"

"It is, indeed, most true," affirmed Father Janaway. "It was but yesterday I encountered two venerable matrons leeching the earth for saltpetre, and compounding it with sulphur and charcoal in the manufacture of powder. All efforts of both sexes, old and young, centre in the one exclusive object of local protection and defence. Such a race, as you may well anticipate, colonel, will not yield but with bayonets driven through their bodies."

"I must say you rather surprise me, good father," remarked the officer, rising from his finished meal. "It will require, on our part, the greater circumspection. Our forces must be carefully concealed; it will not do to expose their numbers, at this time, to the enemy. In the mean time, our scouts must traverse the valley, and ascertain, if possible, their strength, position, and means of defence. Captain Henderson, you will see, that a proper guard is mounted, and the men in quarters for the night. At daybreak we march to a fort not far hence, I am told, where a friendly greeting and safer quarters await us. This mansion will give us safe shelter until then. You would apprehend no attack to-night from the rebels, Father Janaway?"

"I cannot say: belike your advance is unknown to them."

"At all events, captain, direct the men

to sleep on their arms; and set a strong picket guard at the outskirts in the enemy's direction. I will see the fatigue of their night duty is reimbursed at daybreak, by a round for all out of the cellar of our host. I have a standing invitation to visit the wine vault of Colonel Dinning, Father Janaway. I do not, as you perceive, forget it, now that the favour is likely to be productive both of pleasure and profit. We will visit his long vaulted cellar at the crowing of the cock; or, as the morning is likely to be one of some calls on our time, suppose we do ourselves that honour now, good host; a glass might be no disturber of repose, eh, good father! lend us a light."

"No, no," interposed Father Janaway, showing some little signs of alarm, and placing his hand on the lamp the other was in the act of taking up; "you must be content, colonel, that I administer hospitalities here after my own manner and time. I am keeper of the keys, you see; so the military must submit to the civil arm in this instance."

"Well, well, good host, as you say, then," replied the other. "So then a cigar, if you please, and then to bed. Meanwhile, the sad condition of Colonel Dinning must engage our deliberations until morning."

It is the hour of midnight, and Walter Henderson, in his place of seclusion, having long listened with attentive ear, in hope of catching some intelligible word in the hum of voices over his head, gives over his design and lies down on his couch. The voices are at length hushed, and no footfall above him disturbs the solemn silence of the hour. The sudden and unusual commotion that had arrested his attention is now the theme of his speculations—their object and their identity who had caused it. An hour passes over, and yet he feels no inclination to sleep. At length he hears a slight noise; it may be but a mouse, busy in his quest of food. Anon come other sounds, which, although slight, are yet perceptible to the ear of the watchful listener. Then a ray of light gleams through a crevice of his prison door—a bolt is slowly removed, and the door opens. With noiseless steps, holding a taper in one hand, a person enters, and the door is closed again. The sergeant sets up on his couch, and, half blinded by the light to which his eyes have for some time past been unaccustomed, gazes at his visitor. It is the same cloak and hood, and drawn over the face in the same manner also, as at the stockade; and, without hailing his former acquaintance of that night, the sergeant continues his gaze.

"You do not know me, Mr. Henderson," and throwing back the hood from her head and face, Ruth Dinning stood before him. The young man made no answer as a whirlwind of thought rushed over his mind,

and his heart beat with sudden convulsion in his breast.

"I should apologize for not being announced," continued Ruth, "or, perhaps, for coming to you at all."

"No—no apology—not in the least—not a bit—I don't ask it," stammered the sergeant, scarce knowing whether his tongue ran or stood still.

"We have not been good friends of late, Mr. Henderson," resumed Ruth, with a downcast look, "and I could hope there were more reasons for it than perhaps exist."

"Yes—so it is—I understand you," he replied, with mind not yet settled down to the measure of rhyme and reason.

"Yet, whatever may have been the cause of quarrel between us," pursued Ruth, "it cannot, I trust, interfere with our conferring on a matter of business. I have therefore paid you this unceremonious visit."

"Ah! that's all; I believe I didn't exactly know what it would be. To be sure, I shall be happy to hear anything you may have to say," rising to his feet, as he regained his wandered wits again. "And shall I, beforehand, have the happiness to shake hands with you? It is some time since we have met." He advanced, and his extended hand was promptly accepted, and when he would have withdrawn it, it was gently detained. The young couple, while their hands were thus united, looked at each other, the one with an air of dejected sadness, the other with one of rather suspicious inquiry. Changing into that of indifference a gaze which, on the part of the maiden, was, it must be confessed, fast ripening into a glow, she dropped the hand of Walter, and who, we feel bound to assert as a veritable chronicler, felt his lips gradually attracted in the direction of hers. The next flash of thought, however, chided the folly, since it brought recollections of their last interview and his rejected letter, curdling in a moment the milky sweetness of the new-sprung sentiment. Inwardly nourishing a sudden contempt of all coquetry, he yet, with air of much politeness, remarked that he would willingly offer a seat, but the apartment he occupied presented a much greater display of pipes and puncheons than of chairs.

"It is of little consequence," said Ruth; "the short time I have to tarry will scarce fatigue me in standing. I have come to ask a great favour of you, Mr. Henderson, and should be happy, indeed, if assured of the success of my plea." The young man courteously bowed.

"I regret," she continued, "that the accounts are such between us as to leave my expectations not uncoupled with doubt; I would have preferred the past making you more my debtor. It would have given

plausibility, at least, to my petition." She paused, and Walter bowed again.

"It is the misfortunes of your enemy I would bring before your mind, Mr. Henderson, and may even the sad reverses of a bitter foe find a soft place in your heart. It is as the advocate of my father I am here, and I hope to receive at your hand the continuance and preservation of his life."

"I do not know that it is placed at my disposal," said the sergeant; "and if it were, the requisitions of honour would direct me in whatever I might do."

"And such I would be far from counselling you to disregard," said the maiden. "He is now in chains, Mr. Henderson, and subjected to the privations and disgrace of prison captivity."

"And for the matter of that, Miss Dinning, I can see little cause for the disquiet you manifest. It is one of the ups and downs of the service. I should be sorry, indeed, was there anything disgraceful linked with the imprisonment of a captive in time of war. Few would suffer more in consequence than myself; for the whole period of the present contest nearly, so far as I am concerned, has been eked out in barracks and dungeons. You may perceive, even yet, that I have some cause of complaint. And not the least of it is that, for the first moment, I begin to fancy myself incarcerated under his roof in whose behalf you are here pleading my intercession."

"But not in any measure through his means, Mr. Henderson. I vouch to you for him that, so far from authorizing your restraint, he is at this moment, I make no doubt, wholly ignorant of the fact."

"I should blame him none the more had I been placed here by his own hand," replied Walter, "provided my arrest were in due exigency of war and its incidents. But what is the danger to which he is exposed? If within my power to aid him in honourable way, though having little cause, of late, to attach me to him, you may freely command my services."

"I thank you from the bottom of my heart," responded Ruth; "he is condemned to death, and on the morrow, I am told, will pay the forfeit with his life."

"Is it possible! Doomed to die, do you say? And what act of his has brought upon him so sad a calamity?"

"He has been convicted as a spy," returned the other, with sorrowful hesitation of manner.

"Then it is improper for me to grant your appeal," said the sergeant. "I do not, however, hear with anything like gratification news so melancholy, even of a sworn foe. He is in the hands of the tribunal which passed between him and the cause against which he has offended; I cannot aid him."

On hearing this, the young woman cast her eyes to the ground, and stood some time in absorbed contemplation. The hope she had apparently built on gave way beneath her.

"Then I can add no more," she uttered, in slow accents, "and yet my heart reproaches me that I have not done enough; that Heaven could give me some charm of solvent persuasion to meet this iron nerve of man's decree. Of what rocky substance is the heart moulded, that pity and sorrow take no hold on it! The savage Carthaginian melted down even the granite walls of the mountain top to free the path on his errand of blood and murder; but woman's tears, unmingled with that vinegar the African invader used, fail of thawing their way through the human bosom, even though it be on missions of holy mercy. And yet I could persuade myself, Walter Henderson," she added, advancing near to him, "that, through you, a way might open for his deliverance. Forgetful of the present, is there nothing in the past which speaks to your heart in his favour? some smiling, fostered bygone, that beckons to you through the mist of years?"

"Indeed, there are many, but I do not see them smiling," he replied to this remembrancer. "With that period I have little to do; it has been my aim to cover the page from sight."

"Those of your sex, I well know, shake hands with youthful predilections," said the maiden, "and cast them away with the other toys of childhood. The greater pursuits of after life overshadow the few feeble rays they emit as the sun at noonday drowns out the gray of morning. Were you in my stead, I have little question some fertile spots on this heath of past time would hail your eye. But I well know these foibles of our character are such as men deem unfitted to the camp or forum."

Walter listened to these remarks with the air of one who, receiving what he esteems an innuendo, is wholly unable to measure it by any known motive of the speaker. He, therefore, found himself too much puzzled to reply.

"Any terms I have to offer, judging by all you have said, will, I am fearful, be of little efficacy," began Ruth. "And yet it may be you can hardly deem this dismal abode so delightful that you would not exchange it for personal freedom?"

"Why, so far as I know, escape by any means whatever has not, at any time, been held objectionable," replied he. "I am assuredly most willing to depart hence."

"And when safely arrived in the fortress of your people, what will it avail my dearest relative?"

"Nothing."

"Then it is in vain I have so far infringed the codes of propriety as to hold

this intercourse with you at this hour and in this place," remarked Ruth. "The work of death must go on. Though I seek not to lure your feet from the path of honour, still, it occurred to me, a fair exchange could be made between the opposing forces, and my father returned to us on surrendering up yourself."

"That is a false hope," replied the sergeant; "our people would scarcely exchange one condemned as a spy, whose death they may look to for the effects of example, for one so inconsiderable in rank or importance as I am."

"I leave you, then," said Ruth, "but, before going, let me make you sensible of one thing, that it is not entirely a selfish or mercenary feeling that actuates me. If you regard my prayer as groundless, and consider your probity involved in granting it, no one appreciates your motives in higher estimation than I. Though receiving not at your hand this, the greatest fulfilment of my desires, I tender you, unasked, what may be to you as great a blessing. The most inveterate of your enemies are now around you; at the dawn of morning they will be in this very vault. You may be ignorant of the high reward set on your head as an escaped prisoner from the English garrison, and that reward offered for it either on or off your body. There is no reason to hope, in the present state of feeling towards you, taking into account the active duties our troops anticipate in the coming engagement, that they would consider it advisable to set a guard over you, thus taking that many from the ranks, where all may be required. There is a way of intrusting these matters to the Indian allies, where a nod from the commander is their sufficient warrant for speedy removing such as are in the way, or afford too much inconvenience. The dead need no watchers. And that argument might be fatal to you. Will you follow?"

Conducting the sergeant from the vault, which, as may be remembered, had, on a former occasion, afforded accommodations for Jeremiah, she led him to one of those nearly horizontal trapdoors by which access is gained from without to cellars of ordinary construction, and, in this case, the same through which he had been inducted. When the fastenings had been removed, Ruth turned to her companion, with these remarks:

"When you leave this door, which you will do with all caution, avoid the rear of the building. There be those in that direction will be more glad to see Sergeant Henderson than he will be to see them. Turn immediately to the river's bank, and your haven of safety, at least for the time present, lies in the valley below. But of that I need not speak; this sable remem-

brancer," she added, pointing to the hood, "informs your recollection that on one occasion, at least, both you and I have stood at its base. And now that you may be sensible that one of our house, at least, has done well by you, I bid you good-night, and God's speed to the stronghold of your cause and kindred. To your kind mother bear the warmest prayers of a heart which yet throbs to the recollection of her kindness to me." She extended her hand to Walter, and, as they stood for a moment in silence, a tear gathered in the full eye that rested on his face. "It seems a sad moment with me, Walter," she said, with much difficulty of articulation; "a tremour creeps over me that chills all my blood. You are going, and some impulse tells me I shall not see you again. I wish you well. In the storm of death-shots, driven by this bitter war over the land, God keep you safe. My tongue runs random in extremes, but I cannot, cannot say less to you. May the remembrance of what we have been plead pardon for the error."

"I must confess myself a little overcome by all this, Miss Dinning; and the more so, since all intercourse had ceased between us, nay, the very word of friendship been blotted from the page. You now embarrass me by a course of conduct strangely inconsistent with the last communications we had."

She replied by a look half sorrowful and half affectionate.

"I fear you trifle with my better sentiments of heart," said Walter, pressing her hand in his own. "The craft once stranded sails warily over the same waters again. Yet now, even now, could I regard this shade of feeling you are pleased to exhibit as sincere, my bosom would forget the deep pang of mortification it long has suffered."

"Did I now hand you over to torture," replied Ruth, "or place you in their hands who would consign you to darker dungeons than this, well might you question my sincerity; but through what mystic reasoning do you measure her motives by the scale of insincerity, who now opens to you this prison door, and warns your feet from the path where they are watching who would destroy you? nay, at sacrifice of propriety and good faith to her father's cause, greets you here with the open hand of friendship, and a secret prayer from her heart?"

"No more; say no more," interposed the sergeant; and, taking her in his arms, pressed her to his bosom.

"All gratitude with which Heaven has filled my heart," added he, "is freely, freely yours. And may I add, all love?"

"Not that; say not that," replied the maiden, gently freeing herself from his embrace. "We must not indulge this

wayward folly; it alarms me that it has gone so far. Pray dismiss from your mind what has been said and done. There was a more suitable time for it, when the tide of our lives set in the same channel; but now, alas! strife has drawn its dividing line between us, and separated our destinies far asunder as the east from the west. Go, and God shield you in to-morrow's gathering storm!"

"And do we part thus?" inquired the other; "no, no; I must repay with my own this world of blessings to my heart, that has distilled from your angel lips." And faithfully to the word did they interchange what the poet has well termed a long, long kiss, a kiss of youth and love.

"There, you must leave me now," murmured Ruth; and, turning away her face, the young man ascended the steps, and bade adieu once more to this quondam theatre of his boyish gambols and his earliest love.

When the dispirited girl reached the hall above, it was her chance to meet the brother of him she had just left, returning from an inspection of the guard.

"You are late up, Miss Ruth," said he; "I supposed you retired some hours since."

"There is little rest anywhere at this fearful time," replied she, leading the way into the parlour; "the couch yields trifling quiet when every hour wakens to the sound of arms, and midnight blazes with the incendiary's torch. I could wish my lot cast in any other spot, howsoever desolate it might be, so that this din of conflict and shedding of blood were strangers to my senses."

"It is very true, we are in a tide of affairs admitting little repose," replied Charles; "nor is it likely, until crushed by the arm of power, the rebels will make our condition less burdensome. However, neither your fate nor mine is as yet comparable with that of Colonel Dinning."

"And can no means be resorted to to effect his escape, Mr. Henderson?"

"Indeed, I cannot say," replied he; "I could hope there might be."

"Then by all considerations possible, if there be such, let me urge it upon you, Charles, to carry them into effect. Nothing on earth is so dear to me, that I would not cheerfully resign it for his liberty."

"All my single arm can do, Miss Ruth, as well on the colonel's account as yours, shall be done." And then added, with an air of modest diffidence, "the more freely, as you are pleased to command my services."

This dialogue, the whole of which we do not pause to narrate, was finally closed in much the same way as that between the young lady and her father; the matter being left under the control of parental

dictation. The young officer had laid hold of the assertion that she was willing to plight all and everything for services in her father's behalf; and, though disavowing all design to barter for her hand, yet in fact stipulated for it ere giving full assurance of his vigilant and active interposition.

In the mean time, Colonel Dinning himself was hurrying, with swift and cautious steps, towards his home, which he reached, indeed, after the young couple had separated, but before his daughter had left the apartment. In the disorder and confusion occasioned at the stockade by news of the invaders' arrival, he had contrived to effect his escape.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"That gentle physis, given in time, had cured me; But now I'm past all comfort here but prayers."
Henry the Eighth.

WHEN Sergeant Henderson emerged from the before-mentioned grove of oaks, on his approaching the fort a second time, he was suddenly stopped by a sentry on duty, who presented his piece, and gave a brisk challenge.

"A friend!" said the young man, in reply.

"Advance, then, and give the countersign," commanded the other.

"I am not possessed of it, my friend," replied Walter. "I am just arrived in the valley, and am more remotely from the American army."

"Stand, then," said the sentry, and he immediately passed word for the sergeant of the guard. When this functionary arrived, he ordered Walter to advance, and, under escort of a brace of soldiers, he conducted him before the officer at the main guard. When Sergeant Henderson was addressed by this latter, he was, at the first word, made aware of the presence into which he had been ushered.

"Plase you now, sir," began his questioner, seated at a watch-fire, "be afther telling where it is ye come from."

"From the British lines," replied Walter.

"A feather in your cap is that same, any way," responded the officer of the guard; "and ye'll be good enough to say in what capacity."

"When there, I was a prisoner; now that I am here, a volunteer in the service of the colonies."

"Faith! well said," ejaculated the guard officer. "I'm plased wid the wag ov yer tongue a'ready. And now we'll trouble ye for the name ye'll answer to at lunch and roll-call."

"That is Walter Henderson," replied he, touching his cap, "and now most happy to

pay his respects to his old friend Barnabas, captain of the local scout, as I am told, and, as also appears, officer of the night-guard."

"Jasus! say no more, jewell; but give us yer hand on it," and, leaping forward, caught the sergeant's hand, which he squeezed in full fervour of Irish enthusiasm. "Good tidings we've heard ov ye, and yer heartily wilcome to yer home once more. Faith! but Corporal Summers has filled our ears wid rare stories of Millstone, and Oriscany, and Prasen Island, and the like, making yerself the haro ov thim all. Yer mother will die ov joy to behould yer face agin, and much good will it do yer father's heart, brave lad as ye are."

"They are in health, I hope, Barney!" "Niver heartier ather heretofore or hereafter," he replied.

"And Peggy, how does she? and, above all, little Patrick? I've thought of the little fellow many a night in the prison cell, and hoped his father's bravery and gallant spirit might some day kindle in his breast—and generous nature too—for I mind many a time past when riding on his shoulders over sloughs and swollen brooks. It will be a long time hence that I shall forget his father's kindness."

"Why, for the matther of Pat," mumbled Barney, wiping a stray tear from his cheek, "he's growing up, yer honour, like a sprout at a chestnut stump. He ates like a wolf, the spalpeen; and there's niver a doubt but he'll be making a sprawl in the world whin his time comes. But in respect ov Peggy (and will ye step aside a wee bit?)—there—it's jist as well to spake it to ourselves—and as to Peggy, betwene yer honour's self and my own, she's turned out rather bad ov late, ye see. But, afther the war's over, I'm calculating to bring her down to a proper compass again, by God's blessing."

"I am much grieved, indeed, at hearing anything to her discredit, Barney, or to your own inconvenience or dishonour."

"Why, here it is now," said Barney; "you'll be knowing this, that public faling, or sentiment, or inthusiism, or the like, is always catching, as I may say ov it; like the itch, for instance, illustrating the idea by a figure ov spache. And no sooner did the war break out, gad! but Peggy broke out too! And the divil a bit do I belave there's a woman with a sharper weapon in her mouth now brathing the breath ov life."

"Possible!" ejaculated the other.

"It's the Lord's truth!" affirmed Barney, with a sigh. "This is it now: she opens the batteries at revilee bate in the morning, and scolds the twinty-four hours through, not bating the haper ov a half minute. But, yer honour, as I was saying but now, I'll stop the wheel whin the war's over, or, by

St. Pathrick and the snakes! I'll dry up the spring."

"Upon my word of honour, friend Barney," said the sergeant, "I regret that so tidy and industrious a spouse should so far forget the respect due herself, and the reverence owing her husband."

"Gad! as to the matther of industry, that's a stock on the rise; her tongue and hands go at the same rate, like a waver's treads. By my faith! she does more work nor a horse. And then there's another circumstance; howld me yer ear, Misther Walter," and he whispered his friend.

"No!" exclaimed the sergeant. "Heaven's truth," asseverated the Irishman.

"What! every twelvemonth regularly?"

"To an hour, as I may say ov it," replied Barnabas.

"And all of them boys, too?"

"The haper a girl in the whole lot, yer honour. To tell the truth, I was rather anxious for a change in the trump card the last time, but the tide set in aginst me, ye'll persave, for it turned out a strapping boy agin in spite ov fate. But come, me lad, let's into the stockade once; some ov yer ould friends are there, and glad will they be to see you, I'm fancying. By daylight yer father, bless his honest soul! will be up from Garrison Hill wid the company. And maybe the least dhrap o' whasky wouldn't hurt ye the haper a morsel this chilly avening."

"And what is the name of this new fort?" inquired the young man, as they neared the gate of entrance.

"It is Forty Fort, yer honour," replied the guard officer, and, making a signal at the same time, they were admitted.

"The hero of Millstone!" shouted a voice in a group standing by a fire, and Summers rushed forward to salute his late companion by a grasp of the hand. "Gentlemen, I present to you Sergeant Henderson, the best young blood of the service." A crowd soon encircled the young officer, and, with heart-warm congratulations, welcomed his unexpected arrival. From Barney's replenished canteen a round was drunk with cordial unanimity in honour of the sergeant, of whom tales so flattering had winged their flight to his home. After a short time Summers took his friend aside for purposes of confidential intercourse. In return for Walter's story of his capture by Father Janaway, and detention in the liquor vault, the other imparted full particulars of their mutual friends, the state of alarm prevalent in the valley on the subject of invasion, and the fact that the fort they were then in had been designated as the place of rendezvous, pursuant to which small parties of armed settlers had been hourly coming in during the night. Fin-

ishing his general narrative, he farther continued:

"Now there is one other matter I must tell you. I shall take part in the thickest of the fight, whenever it comes on, and if I don't come safe out of it, I want to bespeak your services."

"To bury you, I suppose, eh?"

"That, to be sure, if you please and have time," replied the corporal; "but what I want you to do is, not so much to look after the dead as the living. Now, besides executor, I would like to appoint you guardian."

"Guardian! guardian to what, in the name of common sense?" interrogated Walter. "The necessity of the former office there may be some reason for, but how in the world do you need the duties of a guardian?"

"Why, bless your soul!" replied Summers, "do you think I'm made up like a butchering Mohawk, without a heart in my body! On the score of fatherly affection, I count myself as good a man as the best running. By my word of honour, my children are as dear to me as any ones are. And do you suppose me so much of a Turk as to leave them without a guardian, then?"

"Children, Jack!"

"Children! to be sure; why not! Your make as much ado over it as Doctor Jaws would over a new-found root. But maybe I've used too broad a word; perhaps I should have said *child* instead of children."

"Why, you are not married, Jack?" inquired the sergeant.

"Yes indeed," answered the other.

"Then it is rather strange that during all the time we have been together you never told me of it," said Walter.

"Why, how the devil could I, when I was only married last night?" returned Summers.

"Ha! ha! ha!" broke forth the sergeant, in a hearty laugh; "I think, under circumstances, your plural word may have been a little too broad. However, I pledge you my word of honour to stand guardian to all consequences; but I must think you have chosen a strange time for your nuptials."

"That's true enough," responded Summers; "and if I had known the Tories and Red-skins had been so near us, perhaps I might have delayed it a while; but the knot was tied but an hour or two before word came of their passing through the notch of the mountain. And then, as the matter had gone so far, it was scarcely worth while to rue, and so we left it. And yonder, by that fire, stands my wife; come, I'll introduce you. She has just arrived; we lodged in other quarters last night. Don't say anything about the skirmish with the enemy; she's rather ticklish on

the subject. So caution, if you please; I don't want her boil over about it; she's cried her eyes out about it already."

"Deb, I want to introduce a particular friend," said the corporal to his wife. The lady turned her face to Walter, and gave a sudden expression of surprise; it was shared in by the sergeant, who stood turning his eye alternately from the wife to the husband, as though something uncommonly queer had crossed his path; then putting forth his hand to Mrs. Summers, without speaking a word, both indulged a burst of unrestrained mirth.

"Well," said the corporal, who looked on with some surprise, "that's a pretty fair start on an even whippetree, at any rate. For strangers, I think you'll admit it's a fair prospect for intimate acquaintance."

"Your friend looks so much like a gentleman I have seen somewhere before," said the wife, "that you'll excuse me for laughing about it, both of you."

"I shall, most readily," answered Walter; "the more so, as I plead the same excuse. If I am not mistaken, Mrs. Summers, at a certain stockade in the North I was lucky enough to form an acquaintance with a lady very nearly resembling yourself. Do you happen to know one Captain Sunfish?"

"How! what! the devil! you don't say it!" broke in the husband; "Captain Sunfish! Have I been with you these two days, and you never let me into this matter, Deb! But here, I am called away; well, talk the affair over till I come back. The Lord preserve us from these tactics of women," muttered he to himself, walking away to another part of the fortification. "They trap you in ambuscades, slip into your quarters as spies, turn your wings by extended lines, undermine you by trenching, blow you up by secret magazines, and overshoot you with bombs. He told me a thousand times some rosy bit of a blossom attended him at the black captain's, but how should I know it was my own sweet-heart?"

The dialogue between Walter and his late attendant waxed confidential. At much length they dwelt on the incidents of their former intercourse. The conversation finally changed to the subject of the young lady herself. She informed the sergeant that she had first come into the valley during his absence at college; that during his short residence at home, on returning, she had never, as it happened, come within his observation; that, after the volunteers had marched to join the army in New-Jersey, she had gone to render service to Miss Dinning, at the residence of her father.

"Ah!" interposed the other, a little on the alert at her mention of this circum-

stance, "you did, eh? I knew her once quite well. We were children together. And how did you like her, Mrs. Summers?"

"None so well; a kind, warm-hearted girl she was, Mr. Henderson."

"Yes, I have heard so; I've known little about her since childhood," replied the sergeant to this affirmation. "A little of the coquet, however, I think it has been told me?"

"Never, never!" emphatically returned the other. "I screen her from any such injustice, Mr. Henderson. There never was a lady more fixed in her opinions, nor one more unchangeable in her preferences. The utmost candour and fairness were in all she ever did."

"Indeed; then you knew her well, Mrs. Summers?"

"I did, and do so still," replied the young wife; "I may say, farther, that no one knows her more intimately. It is to me a matter of some pride that Miss Dinning intrusted me with everything, even with the secret sentiments of her heart."

"Do you say so, Mrs. Summers? why, you were truly honoured."

"I think you may so estimate, indeed," replied the lady, "since it brought me into familiarity with some names closely associated with honour."

This last remark came attended with so significant a glance of the eye, that it awakened all the other's excited curiosity.

"You cannot possibly have any allusion to myself, Mrs. Summers?" he interrogated, after a moment.

"I don't know that Miss Dinning would thank me for betraying her," responded she, "or otherwise I might fill your ears to overflowing."

The young sergeant had already attained to sufficient experience in life to know that one of the best ways of angling for a woman's secret is to assume indifference at hearing it. He, therefore, replied, "I dare say it would go little way in being gratifying to me. We did not part in such fashion as to call for much remark of an agreeable sort on either hand; but still, I do not know that I ever expressed a word disparaging of the young lady; I don't even think I have said anything of her either way. By not having her name on my tongue, it was the more readily forgotten, perhaps."

"Then I can say your coldness was repaid in very different coin," returned the other; "for your name rang in my ears the matter of a thousand times a day. Whatever you had said was a thousand times repeated in my hearing; the songs that were your favourites sung over and over, till their repetition grew irksome to my ear. Each spot in the garden, or nook in the surrounding grounds, where any inci-

dent, however trifling, had occurred, forced on my attention as often as sight of them gave opportunity; and then a whole cabinet of nosegays, picture-books, letters, &c., the gift of your hand, weekly overhauled, and again as carefully hoarded away."

"And is this so?" the young man abstractedly queried. "But it was long, long ago that it all happened."

"No, indeed, sir," said the other, correcting the error of his soliloquy; "it was up to the very day she left the valley, and that was some time after the fight at Millstone."

"What! all this after our parting!" exclaimed the youth. "Are you deceiving me, Mrs. Summers? for I would not for the world you thus played falsely with my feelings. Truly, then, was it in kindness she spoke of me?"

"Ay, Sergeant Henderson; and in such terms of artless candour, and simple elegance, too, as none other than herself can better use. It always seemed to me her heart was in her mouth; for an angel's purity lived in every word it uttered. It was an easy thing to cry at what Miss Ruth said, and the tears were always sweet ones, too; nothing but of that kind. What a pity, Mr. Henderson, she was not a man, for, in the holy desk, she would melt the heart of a stone. It pains me, even now, to think of the trial she passed through when the troops left here for the army. You would have cried over the deep depression she sank into; and well you may know why, sergeant; for it was not the leaving of the troops so much as one that went with them. Ah! I know how it was with her that morning; but you knew not at whose window she sat to see the companies go by; it was not at her father's, though. One line passed with colours flying and drums beating, but you were not there. Then came up the other, ah! with quick step and upright head, marching strait as a reed; there was the one of them all she looked for. I stood by and heard the heart throb in her bosom. Then she grew pale as death, watching till you passed from view, and sank down murmuring, but I will not say what she uttered. But it was nothing her heart need shame to own, and what your ear might feel honoured at receiving. But different, indeed, was the wild excess of joy when, arriving just in time to rescue you from certain death, she found you at the stockade of Captain Sunfish, where—"

"Stop! stop! you drown me in a sea of wonder! It all is false; must be. You riddle with me for amusement," the sergeant replied to all this. "What! she at the stockade of Captain Sunfish! she? Ruth?"

"Ay, and the purchaser of your deliverance from the detestable dungeon. She

placed you in her own bed, dealt restoratives with her own hand, and watched you with a mother's solicitude, day and night, until recovery came."

"You strike me dumb!" said he; "I do not feel my reason left me. Is it a dream I swim in, and you a phantom, such as whisper falsehood in the sleeper's ear, or do I stand here waking, and listen to a tale of truth?"

"The truth, on my sacred honour, Sergeant Henderson; and now you know who was the doctor." And she tripped away to meet her husband, leaving the confounded youth alone.

"The doctor, now! the doctor!" mused he; "what game of blindfold is this I've stumbled through! and eyes sealed up when the angel she speaks of watched me! The tongue, too, silent to bless, the heart insensibly cold! 'Tis time to tear this fated scale from my vision, and shake from me this brooding stupor. But—but—'tis now too late; this adverse wind has swept me from the port I might have gained. And was it she that ransomed me from that den of misery, nursed me, braced up my sinking body to its wonted strength again? Fool! fool that juggling chance has made me. Why did not I know all this two hours ago? On my knees I then had blessed her, making the prison cell a sanctuary of my worship. But it is over now, and she is lost. War, like a mailed giant, stands between us. This hand, so lately pressing hers, must draw the sword against her; and these lips, so lately—perish the thought! 'twill drive me mad! I'll dream no more about it. Conflict's din shall dull the ear, and shut her name away; I'll think no more of it. So, now for the field! Confusion's voice shall overwhelm this babbling, foolish tongue. Yet, had all been known to-night, she might have been my own. Kneeling, I would have fettered my arms around her feet until her heart surrendered through compassion. But cease. Ho! now for war! here's for the field! Thought shall be drowned in clamour; now for the field! This sounds better. Yet, yet she loved me. Away! dear, fatal, meddling thought. I'll dream no more! Here's for the field!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

"The enemy full-hearted,
Lolling the tongue with slaughtering, having work
More plentiful than tools to do't, struck down
Some mortally, some slightly touch'd."

Cymbeline.

THE meridian sun of July threw his rays upon a joyful carouse. Underneath the green pines, which covered a pebbly plain, the soldiery of the crown, knotted in small parties, were taking their noonday meal.

Much were their appetites aided in this repast by frequent resource to canteens well filled with beverage, something more precious than what usually falls to the portion of the private. It was new-flown from the cellar of their opulent ally, Colonel Dinning. Within the small fort which the main body of the soldiery, Tory and Indian, now surrounded, were the moving spirits of the cause.

This small stockade, built by a settler, who for some time vacillated in his adherence to either party, but had now opened his gates to the reception of the invaders, stood on the brink of a steep bank, some fifteen feet in descent, from the foot of which a tangled morass spread out a few hundred yards to the Susquehannah. Near the bottom of this little declivity streamed out the waters of a large spring, with a cool, clear current as ever blessed the tongue of weary traveller. A covered way led from one corner of the stockade down to this delightful spring, so that the inmates, at no hazard of danger from without, had access to its never-failing supplies. On the north side of the fort was a narrow plain, but a few hundred yards in width, skirted by a marshy thicket or swamp, apparently impenetrable, and denying access to any disposed to traverse it.

The commanding officer of the Royal Greens and Indian allies, seated at the side of Colonel Dinning, and surrounded by his inconsiderable staff, now refreshed themselves at a well-supplied table in the open air, in a state of supposed security. Had, however, their attention been attracted in that direction, in the thick, tufted top of a pine, not more than two hundred yards from where they sat, they might have descried a watchful face busy in circumstantial inspection of this party of revellers. Closing the survey, the scout cautiously slid down from his elevated perch to the ground.

"By me faith, Corporal Summers," said he to his fellow at the foot of the tree, "all right, me lad. The whole devil's party ov them drunk as fiddlers b—s! Now let's back to Colonel Butler and make report. Gad! if we crawl on the blackguards in this bastely debauch, we'll be afther drawing claret ov two kinds out ov the same ball hole." And scudding through the under-brush, the scouts set forth on the return.

It was less than an hour subsequent to this that the feasters were aroused from their spell of dissipation as by a peal of thunder. An officer rushed before them with unexpected intelligence. A couple of Indian scouts had met Barney and his friend, with whom they had exchanged shots, although without effect on either side. The Indians had followed them, undiscovered, after their skirmish, in hopes

of obtaining a second fire, when suddenly their farther pursuit was arrested as their enemy, passing over a small stream, ascended the opposite bank. Here they were received by an officer wearing a plume, with whom they held a brief interview. Then, as if by a signal given, the bushes that lined the creek's bank of a sudden teemed with armed men newly-crept from ambush. At sight of this the two Indians retired, and with all possible despatch had brought the alarm. They had, however, lingered long enough at different points of observation to be enabled to report the enemy in full march upon the fortress.

"Audacious rebel hounds!" exclaimed the Tory leader, rising from his seat, "they're like blacksnakes, chasing when we stand at bay, and flying when we give chase. Marching upon us! well, we'll give them a hot welcome, at any rate. Colonel," said he to one near him, "order the men to arms. Have the sentries called in and sent to their respective companies; we'll have no obstacle in the way of their close march upon our line; the closer the better. When the men are formed by company, I will be ready to disperse the order of action." The officer left the fort to execute the order, while the commander buckled on his sword and set his chapeau on his head.

"I had rather the ill-mannered dogs had not interrupted our meal, Colonel Dinning," he added, as he turned to leave the stockade, "but we cannot always be choosers of our own time. Ere the sun sets, I am thinking some of their disloyal brood will feign lick their lips over the fallen crumbs of this table."

The officer passed out, and proceeded to arrange his troops in order of battle. The line was so formed as to extend over the narrow plain, its right flank covered by the morass already mentioned, while the left rested on the stockade. On the latter wing were drawn up the Royal Greens, destined to the command of Colonel Butler in person; while the other flank, composed of the Indian allies, was given in charge of their leading war-chief. These dispositions hastily made, the commander rode along the flank of the column to inspire his men with a word of encouragement ere the action should commence. It may be said, meanwhile, that no argument or persuasion came with more power from his lips, than, when pointing down the valley, he intimated that soon their swords would reap a richer harvest of spoil than did ever scythe or sickle in hands of the husbandman. Then, riding back to his post, the martial array awaited in deep silence the advance of their foe.

We return some three miles down the valley to the little army of the settlers.

On the bank of the creek where the Indian scouts had descried them, occupying a most favourable position, they had remained in ambush from morning until noon awaiting the invader. His non-appearance had induced the leader to send forward scouts, to ascertain, if possible, the position, and likewise the intentions of the enemy. This plan had proved exceedingly untoward, as, returning, it was their misfortune to fall in with the two Indians, as before mentioned. A council, therefore, hastily assembled, resolved on marching forthwith to attack the enemy's position.

The column now advancing on this errand of death was headed by Colonel Zebulon Butler, a man of education, refinement, and polished manners, and who had gained both experience and renown on many fields of conflict. He was, at this time, an officer of the Continental army; and, being accidentally at home on furlough, his experience in the art of war, and established reputation for bravery, had commended him to the command of this sudden expedition, and which, on the pressing supplication of his neighbours, he had accepted. Compact and well built, strong in body and agile in motion, bearing on his front that air of cool determination characteristic of undaunted valour, this officer now led in the van. He was aided by Colonel Denison, who rode at his side, and Lieutenant-colonel Dorrance, both residents of the district, and deeply sensible of the important stakes for which they played.

When the rear of the line marched down the creek's bank, and were about crossing to the opposite side, Barnabas came, dragging after him an individual destined, it would seem, to figure (though in his own peculiar way) in this event of the nation's history. This was Jeremiah, who, with an old shot-gun, furnished him by his master, had been made a forced volunteer, and ordered to muster with the company from Garrison Hill. It had been a work of much labour to get him even thus far, his being at this date something corpulent of body and short of leg, and, besides, entertaining scruples on the subject of war at any rate. The ambushade of the morning had come nearer his standard of opinion touching the bloody art, and the more so, that it savoured somewhat of personal safety; therefore, not one of the whole force had been more strict in obedience to orders in the matter of concealment, for Jeremiah had burrowed himself so effectually into a muskrat's hole, at the edge of the stream, that little more than the heels of his military boots were left visible. The order to march, therefore, whether reaching his ear or not, was certainly not obeyed; and Barney, after long search for the fugitive, was

indebted at last to the lad's enormous feet for his discovery. Dragging him, in consequence, from his burrow (the young soldier little doubting but a fierce Mohawk had him by the legs), he came hauling him to the rear of the line, the lad, meanwhile, bracing his feet like a sheep overcome by dread of water.

When the settlers came within view of the enemy's line a halt was ordered, and an observation taken of their position. This was soon comprehended by the experienced eye of the American leader, who forthwith displayed his column, and formed in corresponding order with the invader's front. The left wing was committed to the charge of Colonel Denison, while the right was commanded by Colonel Zebulon Butler himself, opposed, as it will be remembered, to the enemy's left, where his Tory namesake, though in no way his relation, bore command. Then, the respective officers being ordered to their several posts in line, urged on by a burst of music, echoing far through the pines, the brave little phalanx stepped forward to the assault. In cool, motionless reserve stood the foe, imperfectly seen through the trees and underbrush, with their arms at a shoulder, awaiting the signal to fire. At the same time, their cat-like allies, crouching behind whatever object served to screen them from view, peeped out, with basilisk eyes, on the near advancing line.

"Now, Doctor Jaws," whispered Barney, alive with enthusiasm, "skin yer eye, man, and look out for the Red-skins; and step a little quicker, doctor; yer getting the last bit behind, I'm fancying."

"I do declare it's eeny a'most onpossible to git along faster through sich a snarl o' brushwood," replied the doctor, who had now laid aside his lancet for an implement of greater dimensions; "and fur the matter of bein' in a hurry, to be candid, now, do you think there is rally much need of it, Barnabas?"

"Jerry! Jerry, ye lubber! where is it ye are now?" called out the Irishman, looking round for his other charge. "Deserted, upon me sowl!" Which, indeed, was the case; for, no sooner did the thick bushes afford him a favourable chance, than the cautious young recruit took advantage of it, and, slipping out of the ranks, disencumbered himself of gun and knapsack, and was at this time seeking safety in a speedy return.

"See yonder, doctor, a red scalp, as I hope to be saved," again commenced the excited Irishman.

"Bless me! is it possible!" replied the man of roots and mixtures, in a shiver; "and do you reckon he has seen us, friend Barnabas? Maybe it mout be as well to keep a little out of the creetur's sight; dreadful!" and the doctor stepped behind

a tree, where, in supposed safety, he ventured an eye in the direction indicated by his friend. "Well now, rally, I can't espy his friend," said the doctor, "but, at my time o' life, the eye fails a trifle, and, besides, I'm not sartin sure but mine are a little mite sore of late. I'm half minded to step back to my sack yonder, and git a little witch-hazel, or mash-rosemary, or red raspberry, or white—"

"Out wid ye! come along, ye ould blathering fool!" responded Barney to this catalogue of cures.

"But in truth, friend Barnabas, they are sartin remedies," persisted the medical practitioner; "and, moreover, I've a very large pewter platter there which I make mixes on; and since the heroes of old times, as I've read, made use of shields, it occurs to me, by slippin' it here, under my jacket, on the brisket-bone, friend Barnabas, it mout preserve me to the savin' of many precious lives hereafter in my profession."

At this moment a peal of musketry from the Royal Greens came roaring over the field, proclaiming, in harsh notes, that the work of death had commenced. The opposing forces were now within forty rods of each other, and the signal, thus forbidding the settlers' farther advance, was followed up by a returning fire that, by degrees, extended along the whole line.

"Astonishin'!" muttered the doctor. "Did you hear that, friend Barnabas? I'm afeerd, if this goes on much furdur, it will make a bad speck o' work."

"There's a scalplock spoiled, by St. Patrick!" said Barney to himself, taking down his gun. "Blaze away once more, doctor."

"Upon my word, as a man and a Christian, I've not a clear idee of this here trade. A gun, friend Barnabas, is a tool I'm not overly used to; believe me, I never shot one off in my hull life."

"Then it's time ye had, ye simple-witted ould loon!" said the other, busy at loading. "Fire it intil 'em, I say. Do ye want the murdering vagabonds to get the better ov us, and haul the very hair off yer ould pate to make fishing lines ov?"

"Truly, I do think I will fire, then, fur that would be awful distressin'! I reckon this here piece is loaded, friend Barnabas?" inquired the doctor, taking it with trembling hands from his shoulder, and peeping suspiciously into the muzzle. "It has a very dreadful smell, truly."

"There's another gone, by the Holy Vargin!" again exclaimed the Irish enthusiast. "The haper a pound more ov venison he'll carry under his girdle agin. I've popp'd him where he carries his dinner, the baste. Give it to him agin, doctor!"

"I was lookin' a mite in the pan here, friend Barnabas, to see if all was right. It wouldn't be safe to shoot without primin',

I reckon. So now I'll try my hand; fur, rally, if I'm not mistaken, I think I can see one of them dreadful Ingins behind that bush." The doctor presented his gun, with both arms extended at full length, and, holding his head well aside, shut his eyes, and fired off the deadly weapon.

"Jasus! ye've peppered him, sure enough," shouted Barney, who ceased loading a moment to witness the feat. "That same dose worked illegantly, doctor, and sarved him like the rest ov yer patients, too, for the matther o' that. Give him another pill from the same box, jewell."

"Patience alive! I do believe the butt end of this here gun has slammed my shoulder-blade clean out of the socket!" muttered the other, regaining his feet and rubbing his arm. "Awful work this fur believin', Christian, soul-bearin' men! I begin to think a'most I shall be the death of some on 'em if I shoot any more;" and, taking his seat at the roots of a tree, moralized on the enormities of war.

While this wing maintained its position on the field, and kept up a ceaseless fire on the Indian forces, the right, urged on by the presence and courage of its leader, had gained ground of the Royal Greens, and, in fact, driven them beyond the stockade. This signal advantage over the best part of the enemy's troops, effected, at the same time, by inferior numbers, less practised in actual service, gave fair augury of assured success. Therefore, flushed with hope, the little band of settlers pressed on with alacrity, expecting each moment to see the line broken, and the vaunted Greens flying in disordered retreat.

On the left, a new feature was overcoming the progress of the combat. Corporal Summers, who was acting on the extreme of the flank, observed a rifle ball to lodge in the bark of a tree near his head, and the more particularly arresting his attention, that it came from the direction opposite to the Indian force. In a moment more another passed through the rim of his hat from behind, and whizzed by him without doing farther mischief.

"I think there is danger behind us, Colonel Denison," said he to that officer, who happened near him; "here have two balls passed me from that direction."

"Step in rear of line, corporal," replied the officer, "and see, if you can, where they come from." The young soldier obeyed, and, after looking narrowly a little space of time at the edge of the swamp a few rods back, perceived a stirring in the thickly-entangled bushes. The next moment an Indian's head peered out, and was expeditiously perforated by a ball from the corporal's gun. Leaping over the fallen trunk of their fellow, a stream of the painted warriors now emerged from the morass, whereupon the young man ran to the offi-

cer in command of the wing, and communicated the intelligence.

"The painted devils have outflanked us, colonel, and are now upon our rear from the thicket."

Colonel Denison immediately issued orders for the company on the extreme left to fall back, and thus, by a change of front, be in a position to repel the savages as they came from the swamp. Amid the clamour of conflict, this order, so proper in its design, being transmitted through the mouths of the inferior officers, was not distinctly comprehended by the men in ranks, and the more so, as, being unaware of the enemy's having turned their flank, no occasion for the manœuvre suggested itself to their minds. Some, therefore, misdoubted the accuracy of the officers in passing the order, and some confusion arose in consequence between them and the officers themselves, who, persevering in the mandate, became clamorous for its execution. A few of the more timorous, whether from a desire to obtain release from farther duty where danger surrounded them, or otherwise, took occasion, in the disordered state of things, to call out, "The colonel orders a retreat!" This cry being taken up, spread from mouth to mouth, until, like a growing stream, its current became wholly unmanageable. It became now absolutely impossible, on the part of the officers, to correct this fatal misconception. Order and discipline were gone.

"To your places in line!" thundered the colonel, riding furiously along the broken flank, in desperate attempt to rally. "Back to your places! are there cowards here, who would fly sooner than fight like men? To your places, I say. I'll run through the body the first man of you that falters!"

It was in vain. Many, already throwing down their guns, rushed past him, shouting, "A retreat! a retreat!"

"Stand up to your work, sir!" roared the same officer, riding almost upon the legs of Doctor Jaws, who still kept his seat at the foot of his tree.

"Sartinly, sartinly, Colonel Denison," said he, scrambling upon his feet, when, at the same moment, a cloud of sulphurous smoke swept over the field, that enveloped the agitated mass in darkness. "Holy hockey spoon! did I ever!" he ejaculated, rubbing his eyes, while instantly a dismal yell from two hundred savage throats, rising and swelling like a vast surge over the field of battle, chilled even the hearts of the boldest there.

"Lord! be merciful to me, Dinny Jaws, a poor sinner in the practice of medicine!" gasped the doctor, in supplicating tones, and, falling down on his hands and knees, was proceeding, like a land-tortoise, to widen the gap between himself and this

theatre of dismay. "I'm an old man, my friend; sixty-nine last June; don't hurt me," said the doctor, to a large log he approached: "I seek no man's life, and have fired off but a single gun this hull livelong day; don't stick me. Good Mr. Mohawk, I'll give you medicine!" The log chanced to be hollow, and the doctor, discovering his error as the smoke cleared away, crept into it.

"The Yankee dogs are off, colonel," said Charles Henderson to his friend, Colonel Dinning, who stood by him, with a face lighted up with joy. "Thank God! a moment more, and these painted hellhounds will mark their trail with blood. The day is ours; the title, colonel, the title!"

"Brave fellow!" responded his friend, "on with the pursuit. Let knife and spear, rifle and tomahawk play out this game of glory!" and, stepping on a fallen log, raised his hat, which, swinging above his head, accompanied the motion with a loud shout of "victory!"

"We are alone, Barney," remarked Corporal Summers at this moment; "let us go."

"Another shot first, me lad," replied the Irishman, loading his gun. Glancing an eye on Colonel Dinning, he continued, "and by the holy cross, it's there ye are, thin! Come out ov yer nest here, and I'll be after sindin ye back till yer owner agin."

He put his hand in his waistcoat pocket, and drawing forth the ball he had plucked from the liberty pole at the Buck some years before, slipped it down the barrel of his gun. Then, levelling on his mark at the moment Colonel Dinning swung his hat exultingly over his head, discharged his piece. The right arm of his adversary dropped at his side, shattered at the elbow by the long-preserved missive.

"Good-by to ye, colonel, and much joy ov yer bullet," shouted Barney, and, turning in flight, was the last to leave the ill-fated field.

With the setting of the sun fell the drop-curtain of this drama. Flying in wild disorder, the broken ranks swept down the plain. With appalling shouts and tiger bounds the merciless tide came on them. Age, hobbling on tottering limbs, soon fell beneath the avenging axe. Youth, with fair locks and rosy cheeks, garnished with gore, breathed life away in fruitless cries for mercy.

"No quarter! no quarter!" shouted Charles Henderson, with eyes flashing fire, who, with rifle in one hand and sword in the other, urged on the pursuers. "Death—death to the rebels!"

"Away! on, on! some to the mountain; some to the river; scent them to their cov-erts. The king! the king forever!"

"Save me, Charles! save me!" implored

an old man, fallen to the ground. "I was your father's tenant, and carried you in these old arms many a time. Mercy, mercy!"

"Seek it in hell!" replied the young officer, and, with a blow, half slashed the old man's head from his body, at the same time severing the blade of his sword from the hilt.

On swept pursuer and pursued, the air filled with discordant yells, the earth vocal with ascending groans. A mile passed over, and weltering bodies strewed the path as with autumn leaves. Neither tree, nor bush, nor thicket afforded shelter from the storm of ruin. Ferret-like, the vigilant Mohawk dove in each lurking place, returning with another scalp at his girdle.

"To the river! to the river!" shouted Charles; "the ragged devils escape to yonder island. In, in and after them. Follow me; come on, my lads; we'll drag them like water-rats from their holes." Rushing down the steep descent, he gained the water's edge as some of the fugitives, with lagging steps, passed out of the ford and ascended the shore of the little island opposite.

"I will hide under this vine; I'm fainting," gasped one who ran at the side of Corporal Summers.

"I'll trust luck farther on," replied the corporal; and, dropping the other's hand, ran on through the low bushes to the foot of the island. Here some drift logs floated in a small eddy. Plunging in the pool, he dove beneath the logs, and came up between two of the largest. There was but scanty space for his mouth and nostrils, as he laid on his back, above the surface. In a minute of time his followers were at the drift. "Poor, poor Deb!" thought he, as a stout Indian, panting for blood, trod over him, and sank his head beneath the surface of the pool. Peering a moment of time down among the drift, the savage turned and stepped to the shore.

"None there, then," he heard Charles Henderson call out, as his head rose again from its temporary emersion. "Let's scour the island; they creep like quails in their coveys."

Scattering in different directions, they began the search. It fell to the lot of the young officer soon to reach the clump of wild vines in which the companion of Summers had concealed himself. Pushing aside the green foliage with the barrel of his gun, the fugitive sat beneath. It was his brother Walter.

"So! it is you, then!" he remarked, with a scowl. "Your disloyal creed has brought you to a fine snare at last."

"It is true, I am here, brother Charles," replied the other, coming from his shelter; "and the life I have been seeking in flight I am now sure of preserving under your protection."

"Then you put great stress on my estimate of a life spent as yours has been," said Charles, with a bitter smile: "as, of all foul spawn of treason, I loathe you from the bottom of my heart."

"My brother, dear brother! hold, I pray you!" hastily supplicated Walter, falling on his knees; "put not your finger thus on the trigger of your gun. I am not fit to die; my sins are unappeased. I need time to fit me for dying. I'll be your slave, good brother Charles, just for an hour, a minute, the least remnant of time to pray in. Oh! do not spill my blood; 'twill cry unto God against you, even from this remote spot of his waste wilderness. Oh! kill me not, kind brother!"

"Treason grows eloquent on rebel lips like yours," the other answered, with his gun poised in his hands. "And shall we slay the scavengers you lead against us like hounds in leashes, and yet suffer their masters, meanwhile, better fare? I stand here to do equal justice, and the sovereign can but honour the hand which smites so damned a rebel."

Without farther parley, the young officer discharged the contents of his gun into the other's breast. He fell backward, with a groan, upon the green foliage of the vine, while the blood oozed out upon the breast of his coat, and trickled upon the dry sand that drank it up. The other, putting the rifle on his shoulder, walked moodily away.

"So—he has crossed my path for the last time," mused the fratricide. "The blundering savages, with whom I sent him from the stockade of the negro, might have done it as well. It was their orders. The way now opens to my foot; haunting fears and jealous hours will prey upon my heart no more. Flirting is over; moonlight rambling and cellar assignations now are done with. I go to press my claims anew, and, freed from this troublesome disputer of my rights, there's nothing to obstruct me. Slain on this indiscriminate field, who will be questioned of the deed? 'Tis like to be the act of any one, and any one had right. Let it pass; 'tis over. I'm sure any of honourable mind and true hater of rebellion would have done as much. I'll return to camp," and, with a quail thrilling his bosom, added, "I think I've done enough."

With his rifle on his shoulder (the same presented him, some years before, by Colonel Dinning), he walked on. At length his eye fell on the device carved on the breech, and which, as may be remembered, was a well-executed death-scene.

"Strange, strange coincidence!" he murmured; "the devil stood at that man's elbow who carved it. Two persons, about the same distance apart, same kind of weapon, and shot in the same place! Why this is fate! here's warrant for what's done. My hand is but the instrument; this thing

was ordered by some foreordaining power. Yet, how like! had the artist traced these figures but now, taking actual occurrence for his copy, it had not been more so. Brothers! I query if these, too, be brothers. I don't like to look at it!" He shifted the rifle, putting the breech behind him, with the muzzle in front. As he passed over the ford, he turned his eyes backward to look behind him, and they again encountered the device. "Out o' my sight!" said he, in tones of pettish displeasure, and threw the gun from him into the stream.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"An ocean of flame!"—NAPOLEON.

JOHN HENDERSON, the father of the two brothers, had been left, the evening preceding the battle, in charge of the fort at Garrison Hill. In this, as was the case also at the various stockades in the valley, was collected the most valuable of the settlers' property, the fortress being large, from the nature of its construction, which was as follows: Some seventy or eighty tenements of logs faced each other from opposite sides of an open space, perhaps twenty-five to forty yards over, while stockades were securely set in the ground at each end of this avenue, or street, and each end furnished with a large wicket gate. Here were also collected, at this time, the old and sick, the women and children.

As the house of Henderson was located near by, he had not as yet removed his family to the fort, as, indeed, was the case with some others, his near neighbours, upon whose minds the general alarm had not taken so deep a hold. Of the intention of the forces gathered within Forty Fort, to march out and attack the invader, Henderson had no notice; and, therefore, suffering under an attack of headache, he had, the evening of the conflict, retired somewhat early to bed. It might have been ten in the evening when his wife was aroused from slumber by a noise in the lower part of the house. Awakening her husband, it was with some cause of alarm they listened, since, on a moment's reflection, they became aware that their defenceless situation rendered an attack on the mansion, at that day, an occurrence of frequent experience, one of exceeding peril. However, the gentleman, slipping on a part of his dress, armed himself with a stout walking-staff, and proceeded below. He had deemed it advisable to descend without a light, and, pausing at the foot of the staircase for a few moments, attentively listened. The sounds that had alarmed the lady of the dwelling were distinctly apparent, and seemed to proceed from a small window in the rear of the building, on the ground

floor, that served to light the pantry. Stealing softly to the door, he opened it, and demanded, in stern tone of voice, "Who is here?"

To this hail no other reply was made than a loud crash upon the floor, as though the whole stock of crockery the larder was supplied with had been shattered at once. At the same time a person rushed out, and, in passing, received a tremendous blow on the side of the head from the cudgel of Henderson, which dropped him to the floor like a log. The conqueror, standing with one foot on his fallen victim, called loudly to his wife for a light. This was expeditiously furnished, when, lo! with protruding eyeballs, and mouth crammed with pie, and a pie in his hand, there lay the mortal remains of Jeremiah! Provoked at the needless alarm occasioned by this famished cormorant, who, stealing in through the little window, had waged war far more effectually on the supplies of the larder than on the enemy's camp, he was ordered forthwith to denude himself of his military trappings and get to bed. In the haste of this measure, Mr. Henderson lost opportunity of gleaning from the young coward such particulars of the fate of the day as might have stood him in good need.

Scarcely had the pair regained their couch when an alarm, boding something more serious than the former, roused them up a second time. This was a hideous yell, rising in front of the mansion. It was but the work of a moment for the gentleman to draw on his pantaloons and repair to the hall door below, which was now made the scene of attacking violence. Here he was soon followed by his wife. It was now they recollected, with sentiments of terror, that there was not a gun in the whole house. Therefore, with his bludgeon, the same that had done execution so effectually on Jeremiah, the owner took post in his hall, awaiting the entrance of those who, with heavy blows, were attempting to force their way through the door. It is said, in times of sudden peril, men are less favoured with presence of mind than those of the other sex. It may have been so at this moment; for the lady, stepping into the kitchen, returned with an implement far worthier of a soldier's grasp than the staff her husband held; it was a very large cleaver, scarce inferior in length, and much exceeding in weight, the far-famed sword of Rob Roy McGregor.

It was not long until, a panel of the door being broken away, one of the besiegers attempted to creep in. When half his person extended through the aperture, Henderson gave him a tremendous blow on the back of his bare neck with his cleaver, which, being something sharp, produced an almost total decapitation; then, jerk-

ter than roaming this slaughter-yard of death."

The sergeant's intimate acquaintance of the mansion finally enabled the pair to effect an entrance, partly forcible, into the kitchen. The doctor, being provided with tinder and flint, soon struck a light, and proceeded to build a fire. This done, the upper apartments were ransacked for provisions, but without success. In the cellar, however, he was more fortunate, for it was not long until he returned with a large piece of pickled pork, and a loaf of rather mouldy bread. With much alacrity preparations were made for cooking. The search after knives, forks, and frying-pans was waived to avoid loss of time; with a couple of long sharpened sticks the cook, consequently, set to work in discharge of his culinary task. Two broad slices of the pork were soon over the embers. The doctor's eye glistened as the frying process went forward. The savour that occasionally greeted his nose was exceedingly refreshing, and as the oozing fat dropped on the red embers below, he cast now and then a glance at his young friend, who united with him in pleasant anticipations of the coming feast. When done, the cook handed one of the sticks, answering well the substitute of a fork, to the sergeant, retaining the other himself. A bite of the stale loaf, followed by a cautious nibble, with the very points of the teeth, as it were, from the glowing hot bacon, now cheered the famished pair.

"Upon my word of veracity, doctor, this is most excellent fare," said the sergeant, highly relishing his meal; "and excellently well cooked. I would hesitate not in giving you my certificate, under hand and seal, proclaiming your merits as cook, even to the first hotel of the French capital."

"I've had hand in a kitchen mess afore to-night, Mister Walter; I kept bachelor's hall, you'll recollect. But I never knowed the vally of mouldy bread afore, that's sartin. I always despised it till now; but, indeed, I find its enemies have said more against it than it deserves."

"Indeed, that's true," replied the other, filling his mouth with the hard and unsavoury material; "and there is much worse fodder in many a poor fellow's sack this moment. But this pork has a twang to it that my palate has heretofore been unacquainted with."

"Yes," replied the doctor, "and yet a hog is like one of your targets at a shooten match—every feller fires off a cuss at him. Fur the matter of abuse, I'd rather be a university doctor at once, than a hog. But mind me, a word, Mister Walter; I'm an older man than yourself, and have some experience in the healin' art. I give you a friendly caution against goin' too deep

into the dish, especially as you've bin fast-in', and, as I heard, lost much blood."

"And how did you hear that?" inquired Walter.

"I reckon it was from your brother Charles," replied the other, "or maybe from Colonel Dinning; it mout have been Miss Ruth; I don't remember. They were all together."

"Did you! and where was that, doctor?"

"Why, you must know that in the awful scrimmage I tuck to a holler log," said the doctor. "Not till the fight was done though, mind; not I. My sarvices were my country's, you see; and I stood to it knee deep in blood, until, as I mout say, the last horn blowed. And next morning, kase I was in no hurry to creep out and be skulped, a hull passel passed right over the very log I was in. And it was then I heerd Charles (yes, it was Charles sed it) tell Miss Ruth and the colonel that you were killed, as he had heard say. The colonel sed he was glad of it; but the gal gin a kind of a screech, and sot down, or fell down on the log, and sed nothin'."

"Is it possible, as you say! And did my brother inform them how I was killed, Doctor Jaws?"

"By the cursed Ingins, of course, for who else would do it? He told them a couple of the Mohawks had informed him of your fate. And, in returnin' back to camp, he had gone with them to the spot, and sure enough, just as they sed, there you laid, dead as a holler tooth."

"And they did not discover you, then?" interrogated the sergeant.

"Not they," replied the doctor; "I was there under guard. I had a protector all the time, who kept me as safe as a pill in a box."

"I don't understand you," said Walter; "how had you a guard unless of the enemy?"

"That's the singularity of the thing," replied Doctor Jaws; "and to prove the circumstance, I brought him along with me." And he pulled a small vial from his pocket, which he placed on the other's knee. "Take care now, Mister Walter; don't pull out the plug—he'll escape. Don't you see him? there in the bottom. I'd not take fifty pound fur him this identical minute. It tuck me half an hour, at the least calculation, to catch him and box him."

"Upon my word, Doctor Jaws, this is very queer. Here you talk of a guard and a protector of your person, and hand me this little vessel as though it contained an equipped soldier of the Royal Greens. Why, my good sir, all I can see in it is nothing more than a bug or a fly."

"No such useless vermin, Mister Walter. Now I'll show you; give me the

vial. See there! Ah! ha! mind, as I stir him up a little. There's a leg for you, my man. A bug, indeed! a bug's a fool to him."

"It's a spider!" said the youth, again looking at the doctor's alleged benefactor.

"To be sure he is," said the other; "but he's had a Christian edekashun, though. He's none of your low bred's, but a blessin' to the human race. Why, a goose saved Rome. Now I'll tell you. I'd not bin in the log ten minutes till a full dozen of the Mohawks came running up. 'Look in that log,' sed one of the terrible creeturs. There! there! thinks I, my old skulp's off to the Canadas! 'Shoot into it,' sed another. Massy alive! tick went the cock of the gun, plain as the snappin' of a broken jint. My time's come, thinks I agin, and was just going to holler out for mercy, when one of the awful wretches called out, 'You needn't shoot, there's nobody there; see, there's a spider web over the hole.' And would you believe it, this little chap in the glass had actually spun a web over the eend of the log arter I'd crept into it. So the Ingins went away."

At the close of this narrative came a rap at the door of the kitchen.

"Massiful patience!" exclaimed the doctor, with tones of alarm, almost stifled; however, by the large supply of stale bread he had taken into his mouth. "We're dead men, by the hockey-spoon!" as he dropped his slice of pork to the floor.

"There it goes agin!" he whispered his young companion, and, slipping to a small pantry, used as a repository of pots and kettles, shut himself in. The sergeant arose from his seat and repaired to the door, which, on being opened, presented him the sight of a man and small boy at its threshold.

"And is it yerself, or yer dead ghost, Mister Walter?" inquired the man, peering into his face. "For ye see I'm not afther turning my back on the living; but in regard ov the dead, I'm a thrifle ticklish."

"Why, Barney, is it you! I am glad to see you. And little Pat! But he's grown since I saw him last; if, indeed, this is he. Come in, come in; I'm not dead, Barney, though I've run my chance with many others who fared not quite so well. Come in and get something to eat, as I know you must be hungry. Famine has followed the wake of war in this district."

"That I will, upon me faith," said Barney, "for, barring the matter of blackberries and winter-green, the haper have we eaten since sun-up in the morning. Here's for ye, Pat; put tooth to it widout waste ov time, jewel," added the father, picking up the fallen slice of the doctor's. The boy eagerly seized upon the bacon, while Barney, at the intimation of his friend, slash-

ed off not less than a full pound of the pork, and placed it over the embers for himself."

"What the devil's that?" said the Irishman, looking round, as an iron pot, accidentally dislodged from its place on the shelf by the doctor, fell, with clattering din, to the floor of the little pantry. "Any ov the incemy in here? for little pace may a fellow expect at his supper if there's work to be done on a Red-skin." And, opening the door, he stood, with rifle in hand, before it. "Spake, or die, now!"

"It's but a friend of ours, Barney," said Walter. "Let him come out, and, my word for it, you'll consider him the last man in the world to harm you."

"Gad! that's thrue enough, unless in the way ov his trade," responded the other, as Doctor Jaws stepped forth, with face white as lawn.

"Trade! trade indeed!" uttered the practitioner, shielding his exhibition of cowardice under the pretext offered him to repel this wound occasioned his professional pride. "I reckon the healin' art deserves a higher word than that. And if you are disposed to ridicule my callin', Mr. Barnabas, maybe you mout as well pay up my bill for a year's docterin' past, and see if you can find a better physician. Trade!"

"Well, doctor," interposed Barney, "we'll be argufying the point some time forment the present. I'm rather in the cooking line, ye see, and have more nade ov something to put intil me bread-basket than the understanding. We've had a hard day's tramp ov it, Pat and meself; and a bit of a battle-royal to start upon."

"And suppose you give us an account of it, Barney," suggested the sergeant.

"There were some five of the Mohawks had Pat, meself, and another under escort," began he, while engaged at his roast, "and were making tracks for the Canadas. I didn't mind, for me own part, so much paying me respects to the pape ov that counthry, but for a bit ov a trick the red devils were playing me. For instance, now, one ov thim had a red coat wid him—stolen, I fancy—and what would he be doing wid it, but putting the div'lish rid garment on my shoulders, in the place of me own. Gad! but this same roast smells illegant! Well, I understood all this like a knife, and was knowing bravely the chating rascals would be passing me off as a desarter, and claiming the reward. So it was time to be laying plans for escape. The second night we stopped on the banks of the Meshoppen. The red coat was getting intil me mind, ye see; and while the red villains made the fire, and cooked their venison on long sticks, like this same, I was putting Pat a little through the catechism. I was bound to a tree on one side ov the fire, and me comrade on the opposite. The ould chief, God

bless him! fed Pat wid his own hand, but the devil a morsel fell to me own share.

"Whin supper was over (by me faith! but all the best ov this fat is running into the fire!) the Mohawks smoked their pipes, piled on more wood for the night-fire, wrapped their blankets around them, and, wid their feet to the fire, soon grunted thimselves aslape. The ould chief had taken Pat in his arrums whin he layed down, and wrapped his blanket around thim both. But slape loosened the ould chap's howld a mite, and thin Pat, as I had towld him, crept out from under the blanket, stole the ould devil's knife, and cut the withes that were around me body, and thin crept back to his nest agin. Jasus! how I'm loosing the gravy! Well, it was some time till, with hard rubbing, I got the use ov me legs agin; it samed the very breath ov life was out ov thim. Then I slipped round the fire and cut loose me comrade, and it took jist as long to rub him to life as it did meself. Then the rifles and tomahawks, which had been stacked against a tree, were removed and consaled. So we each selected our man—meself the ould chafe. Stooping down, I unfolded the blanket; Pat, the little devil, was laying there, while his eyes sparkled agin. Just then down tumbles a brand ov the fire. The ould rascal, roused up wid a grunt, tightened his howld of Pat, while I stepped back a moment. When all grew still agin, I parted the blanket agin, while me companion did the same ov another. Pat moved his head away from that of the grim warrior, and, at the same moment, two ov thim, widout a groan, were treading the pathway to the happy hunting-grounds.

"The next moment I dispatched a second; but me companion did his work slovenly-like, and, in the scuffle, the fifth woke up; but, as he sprang away through the brush, I sent me hatchet into his shoulder. There, I'm thinking, a better broiled steak nor this iver blessed a man's tongue. Here, Pat, ye've gnawed that ould bone long enough; try yer jaws on a bit ov this same, me darlint."

CHAPTER XXX.

"Read o'er this;
And after, this; and then to breakfast, with
What appetite you have."—Henry VIII.

OVER the trenches at Yorktown fell the drop-curtain of the revolutionary drama. The spirit of liberty, alighting on that arena of concluding strife, substituted with her cap and staff the sword and bugle of war. The victorious leader disbanded his forces, who, pennyless, and in tattered apparel, returned again to those mansions and wood cabins left at the outbreak of hostilities, and, in many instances, now visited for the

first time in six or seven years. The companies drawn from Wyoming, having served in the colonial army to the last, sought once more the peaceful seclusion of its shades. They found at every step desolating footprints of the northern destroyer, and where, on the shes of consumed tenements, had subsequently arisen humble sheds and cabins for temporary shelter. A small hovel of slabs, something like the canal shanty of this day, stood near the late residence at Garrison Hill. Not more than sixteen feet square, with a loft approached by a ladder, it became the temporary abode of the family until one more commodious occupied the site of that which had been wasted by the torch of savage vengeance.

"News! news, Mrs. Henderson!" said Barnabas, entering this indifferent edifice of his patron. "News from Paggy, ma'am, and the childer. Hearty and fat all ov thim, too, I'm hearing. Word has come down from the Canadas that I must be coming on there to bring them away. And I've a letter here for the sergeant, ma'am, brought by the same hand. Maybe it contains some news ov Paggy, and he'll plase be looking intil it whin he comes in. I'm here asking a favour ov ye, Mrs. Henderson. There's little Pat, ye'll mind, ma'am; he's not overly well off in the way ov garments jist now, and I was thinking, perhaps, ye could furnish him wid a coat, or the like, until Paggy come back. He'll sarve ye faithful, ma'am; for he's a well-disposed lad, and takes till yer ladyship, as I may say, and to the sergeant. He thinks there's niver a man like Sergeant Walter, ma'am; and, for the matther o' that, there's many more like him, I may add."

"You touch my poor heart, Barney, by your flattering mention of my dear boy," said the lady. "I am perhaps but too willing to hear anything in his praise. I hope, however, you do not take advantage of my foible, and abuse me with insincere flattery."

"The devil the haper, begging yer pardon for the word, ma'am; it's truth I say."

"I believe your honest enthusiasm, Barney," returned the other; "and, even if I did not, Patrick shall have one of the sergeant's coats. He has some he will scarce need again, and, with a little altering, I think I can soon fit one of them to the form of little Pat. He is welcome to stay with us until his mother returns, and longer if you choose, Barney, as our doors are never shut either to him or his father."

"Bliss yer sowl, ma'am, yer very good," said the Irishman, executing his best bow. "And I'll be tilling the boy to remimber you in his prayers, ma'am, for, ye persave, he is in the way ov a Christian ilducation; and not that ye made thim, understand, but to show his good brading jist."

The lady ascended the ladder in search of the coat.

"The top ov the morning till ye, sergeant," continued Barney, bowing to Walter, who now entered the shanty. "I'm off to Canada on the morrow. If ye've a message to any ov yer ould friends there, spake the word."

"None that I know of," said Walter, "save my compliments to the barrack officer at Prison Island, if you see him. If he don't chance to remember me, tell him I was present at the celebrated snow shovelling."

"Here's a coat, Barney," said the lady, descending the ladder. "I guess I can make it answer. I am about to pass off your first revolutionary coat, Walter. I suppose you will need it no more; besides, you have several better ones left."

"The very thing, ma'am," said Barney, receiving it, as the sergeant nodded his head in assent. "Clipping off a little at the cuffs, and bating a little at the tail, it will jist serve the turn. But here's something in the breast pocket, I belave."

"Let me see," quickly rejoined the sergeant, reaching for the parcel. "It is to this I am indebted for present life. I had forgotten I had it. Here passed a rifle ball through it; see what a hole it made. The force of the bullet was broken, and, besides, was turned by the package in a different direction; otherwise it had passed through my heart. As it was, but a flesh wound in the side, and the fracture of a rib, were the consequences. I'll open it for the first time."

The document within was protected by an envelope of buckskin, and many layers of stout paper. When unfolded, it proved to be a marriage certificate; but the ball from Captain Henderson's rifle had passed through it in such a manner as to destroy those parts of its contents apparently of the most consequence. We give a copy, indicating, by the blanks, such portions as had been carried away by the ball.

"THESE ARE TO CERTIFY,

"That on the fifth day of April, in the twenty-ninth year of the reign of our sovereign lord, George the Second, king of Great Britain, *fidei defensor*, A.D. 17

solemn form, Stephen (no lawful hinderance appearing), was joined, in the bands of holy matrimony, by me, unto _____, ng, and, accordingly, pronounced man and wife, at my dwelling at Niagara. Witness my hand,

"SAMUEL S. GALLATIN,
Minister of the Gospel."

"Well, I can scarcely comprehend the importance connected with this document," said the young man, something puzzled by the riddle, and handing it to his mother, "unless the destruction of names may have taken all meaning from it."

"Here's another, sergeant," said Barnabas; "mayhap ye'll rade it asier nor the shapskin."

The letter which he handed the young man, written in a plain, rather good hand, though evincing some evidence of want of constant practice on the part of the writer, ran thus:

"DEAR FRIEND,

"You are wanted. Lose no time in setting foot in the path. I will see you before you reach Father Janaway. Despatch! despatch! Your obliged friend of old,

"THE HANGER."

"Mother, I shall obey the mandate this letter contains," said the sergeant, handing it to her; "it is from an old and well-remembered friend, and, I have confidence in believing, a true one. Whatever may be the object he has in view, it shall receive my attention. Barney, I am with you in the morning; we'll for the Canadas at daybreak."

"You must do as you deem best, my son," said the mother, having glanced over the epistle; "I do not pretend to decipher the import of this, but must think, as you do, that the writer can scarcely mean you harm or deception. If you decide on going, I will at once put your things in order for the journey."

"I go, mother," replied the son, walking, with alert step, backward and forward through the room; "now, friend Barney, all things ready, and then to horse!"

CHAPTER XXXI.

"You're wrong: he was the mildest mannered man
That ever scuttled ship or cut a throat."

BYRON.

IT is evening when our two travellers arrive at a small village, some ten miles distant from a town on the eastern shores of Lake Ontario, to which their destination is tending. Their jaded horses, severely pushed by whip and spur for several days past, can carry them no farther. In the utmost anxiety to push forward, the steeds are left at a hotel, and, slipping into a covered wagon chartered for the purpose, the sergeant and Barnabas set out in the darkness of night.

"Certainly, captain, certainly," says the driver, after they had gone a few miles, and answering some interrogation put to him by a footman, whom they had overtaken; "there is plenty of room for you; jump in. On the front seat, captain, if you please; the back one is occupied."

"I hope not to incommode you, gentlemen," said the stranger, as the wagon started on again; "but I find walking rather irksome over this bad road, and in the dark."

plied the sergeant, taking a chair. "And I am here with you on a rather singular errand."

"And I may ask what it is, I presume?"

"I cannot tell myself," replied Walter.

"I received a summons to leave home without delay, and I left. But whither I was to go, or what would be the limit of my journey, or, indeed, purpose of my embassy, was not communicated."

"And who issued the command, my good friend?" inquired the other.

"One whom, perhaps, you do not claim acquaintance with," said the sergeant; "nor do I at this time, for I have never seen him since early youth. We called him then the Hanger."

"It is a new soubriquet with me," said the ecclesiastic. "And how far do you intend extending this wild goose chase, if there be nothing irreverent in the term?"

"As far as Montreal, if I keep my present resolve. Though, in truth," added the sergeant, half to himself, calling suddenly to mind the communications made by his unknown fellow-passenger respecting certain marriage ceremonials in progress, "it may be matter of some doubt. I have a slip of parchment here that, to me, is wholly cabalistical. I have deemed it proper, on my way hither, to submit it to your inspection, should I chance to fall in with you; and that I have done at a post much sooner in my route than I anticipated."

"And something, too, that would not have chanced you had you arrived twelve hours later. I am but here on an errand, and in the morning will bear you company on the road to Montreal. Let me look at your riddle." Ere he had adjusted his spectacles, and fairly began the perusal of the document handed to him by Walter, and which was that found in the sergeant's coat pocket, given to him, as the reader may remember, by the Indian chief before Fort Stanwix; the sergeant himself had wellnigh read through the paper put into his hand by the stranger in the wagon half an hour before. It would be difficult to say upon which of the twain the greater degree of surprise and wonder seemed to fasten. Taking their eyes simultaneously from the two pieces of manuscript, they bent them on each other in mute astonishment. Not a word passed. To a third person this mutual stare would have betokened, on the part of the two friends, the sudden deprivation of reason.

"You have overcome me with wonder," at length muttered the minister.

"Have I?" demanded the young man; "it was unwittingly done, then; for, upon my word of honour, I know not wherefore."

"Have you read this?"

"What there is of it," said the sergeant; "but the most particular parts of the instrument, as you perceive, are missing."

"I read it, though, notwithstanding; 'tis but a duplicate; I have seen its fellow. And you have another, then, I perceive."

"Yes; I doubt, at the same time, if it be proper for me to show it," said Walter; "and yet it may be questionable whether I am at all concerned in its contents. In case I should be, I have some grounds of hope that my interests would not suffer in your keeping."

"Believe me they would not," said Father Janaway, receiving the offered paper. The sergeant watched him as he read, but was unprepared to witness the singular exhibition of emotions it produced. As the divine ran through the first line, indeed, the very handwriting of the piece opened his eyes with every demonstration of wonder. His parted lips and heaving breast gave overwhelming evidence that here was opened before him a mine of exciting information. He could in vain sit still until he had concluded the perusal. Pressing the document to his lips a moment, he sprang from his chair, and, striding through the room like a madman, shouted, as he swung his arms in the air, "To horse! to horse! to horse! Away! away! Hurrah! my lad! Come, let's on, on, on! Now for it; a light foot and a light heart, sergeant, and ho! for a scamper by moonlight. Come, I'll deal you a tale by the way, lad; let's to horse! to horse!"

"But I have a friend with me below whom I cannot leave behind," said Walter; "it is your old acquaintance of Forty Fort, the sentry, Barnabas; you may remember him?"

"Bravely, indeed; but he shall be mounted too. No, no! we'll not leave Barnabas. So come on, sergeant, and we'll to the road. 'A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!' eh, sergeant? Come along, you jolly young dog; and now for a merry ride of it by the light of our fair lady the moon." Half an hour after the trio were traversing, with such speed as their chargers were capable of, a road threading the mazes of a dense forest.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"After this alliance,
Let tigers match with hinds, and wolves with sheep."
—DRYDEN.

As our riders are pressing forward from the starting-post, let us enter the chamber of a large and fashionable dwelling in the city of Montreal. It is the chamber of suffering and distress: on that curtained couch we perceive a helpless invalid. Long agony has imparted a wild and restless motion to his eye, and made haggard every line and feature of his face: there is no change of position offering him repose, though his inquiet body is ever seeking

it. Medical skill has found no balm to soothe his torment, or arrest its cause. At his bedside sits one whose alliance no breeze of changing fortune has severed. It is Charles Henderson; and the wasted form he watches is that of his friend and patron, Colonel Dinning. An operation some time since performed on his elbow to remove the ball lodged there by Barnabas, and which has never ceased to interfere with his use of the limb, has been succeeded by fever. At this particular time, it is feared that symptoms of mortification are developing. Under that alarming consciousness himself, many sources of anxiety crowd upon his mind.

"And you have conferred with her this afternoon?" inquired the young man, with excited diffidence.

"Yes, a short time," said the sick man; "it is a matter I almost dread to press. Some unconquerable aversion of hers it is almost impossible to uproot. I much misdoubt there is a lingering hope entertained by her that your brother lives."

"How can it be possible?" returned the other; "I was hopeful she had been possessed of assurances sufficient to have dispelled an illusion so groundless. I told her myself that I had visited the spot where the savages had overtaken him—saw him dead indeed; what farther evidence could be required? The nature and place of the wound itself augured certain dissolution; had he survived, rumour would have brought hither tidings of it long ere this."

"The argument is satisfactory to me, Charles," said the invalid, "and I have but to hope you can make it so to Ruth. As it is, however, I scarce deem it necessary that you should despair. By to-morrow morning we shall know: if all things work for the best, as I have reason to believe they will, you will be united to-morrow evening. It is matter of uncertainty if this disease I am cursed with can be arrested, and I have, in consequence, the greater desire to see this object soon accomplished; and I have fixed this room, since I am in no situation to be removed from it to another, as the place for the performance of the ceremony."

"You are very kind," replied Charles, "and I owe you much gratitude. I will set about preparations for the event, since you incline to think it probable no obstacle will interpose."

"I have ordered a priest at all hazards, my dear boy; if the wind sets in against us when the time comes, we can but return to port again, you know, and wait for a more auspicious day: leave it to me. This last narcotic I have taken, I believe, will procure me slumber. God grant it may: sleep is of late a stranger to me. Pray draw this curtain, and leave me for the present; I feel drowsy." His young friend

obeyed the mandate, but reopened the curtain a moment ere he left the apartment, and announced to the dozing sufferer that a vessel from London had arrived at Quebec.

"How!" exclaimed he, straining open his heavy eyes; "then it's come at last! Let me but shake off this crushing weight that holds me down," said he, changing his position in bed, "and life shall be worth the wearing yet. So the ship has cast anchor, say you? and I query if the title forms part of her most valuable freight. Why, this gem shall glitter like a star, even in the dim twilight of my age. We'll have a bright day of it yet. Debility lays its hand on my mouth just now, or I could freely wake up the echoes of this chamber by a grand huzza. But I am reminded of my last; but for it, perhaps, I had been a target less inviting to him whose bullet stretches me on this bed. See what farther you can hear of the vessel, and give orders to the servants to see my daughter. I would like her here when my nap is through."

"I will attend to your desires," said Charles, and left the room.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"Boatman! do not tarry,
And I'll give thee a thousand pounds
To row me o'er the ferry."—CAMPBELL.

"And the name and tribe of this gallant chief you were not able to obtain, then?" inquired Father Janaway, as they rode together on steeds wellnigh spent, of the sergeant.

"Not the slightest particular of either," said the other; "though I am well persuaded I should know him instantly upon a second sight. A fine fellow he was, indeed."

"And he gave you no intimation of how, when, or where he became possessed of this certificate?"

"Not a word," replied the sergeant; "his only intimation concerning it was that, in some way or other, it would eventuate to my own advantage. But, since he became the preserver of my life at Fort Stanwix, I have had no account of him."

"And this night traveller, whom you picked up on your route hither," continued the priest, "you know as little of as of the Indian?"

"Not an iota more," said Walter. "But I think we are approaching water."

"Yes, the glorious St. Lawrence," returned Father Janaway; "and far away yonder, though nearly obscured by that rising cloud, you may distinguish a few spires, looking now scarce larger than this riding whip. You see them, then? well, they mark the limit of our journey. The sun is near setting, and we must make all

despatch in crossing the wide stream. In this house before us resides the Charon of the passage. See that you speak to him fair, my friend, for he is not overly much distinguished for sweetness of temper."

The horsemen, followed at short distance behind by Barnabas, now approached the margin of the St. Lawrence. The sun was gradually setting behind a mass of black clouds, which, rolling up in the western horizon, cast a deep gloom over the waters of the broad river, whose waves were already answering, by their agitation, the advance breeze that came playfully heralding the distant storm. A low mutter at times boomed over the watery expanse, whose tardy approach was outrun by the fleet lightning, now kindling, by brief illuminations, the dark chambers of the cloud. Hurrying forward, lest the lateness of their arrival might debar them passage over the stream—the more probable under the present aspect of the heavens—the travellers rode up before the door of the ferryman, and, leaping from their steeds, without delay knocked for permission to enter.

"Come in," slowly uttered the grum voice of the tenant, after suffering them to make one or two appeals in vain. They obeyed the direction, and found the man of the ferry sitting alone, who received them without nod or word of salutation. With spectacles on his broad, flat nose, he was bending his dark, swarthy face, his chin armed with a beard of a week's growth, over a lapstone.

"We would like to be ferried over, sir," remarked the priest.

"You would?" responded the other, without raising his surly face.

"And as soon as possible," added the divine, "as we are in haste."

"Wait till your haste is over, then," responded the man, as he hammered on the lapstone.

"But we have urgent business, my good man," pleaded the minister, "and must be on the opposite side to-night."

"And I have business that must be done to-night on this side," returned the other, and a moment's pause ensued.

"You greatly disappoint us, my friend," remarked Father Janaway, sitting down on a stool.

"Take care, there!" quickly broke forth the croaking voice of the ill-natured Crispin; "don't you see there's a wax end on that seat? Cuss me! if some people have any more eyes than breeding."

"I beg your pardon," replied the other, springing up, "I did not observe it."

"The devil a pardon would I be afther begging in the case," interposed Barnabas, whose Irish blood began to simmer a little. "And in regard ov brading that the clown is spaking ov, by me faith! the lit-

tle he's got ov it himself, I'm fancying, was picked up in a hogsty. If I was his masther, now, and the owner ov this river forment the door, I'd have a more dacent blackguard nor this to row gentlemen over it."

"What do you say?" answered the man, turning up his smutty face to the Irishman.

"None ov yer bastely airs, now, my man ov wax," said Barney, ruffling his crest, "or I'll be giving yer rough hide a worse drubbing nor yer giving the lapstone on yer knee. I've seen betther men, by St. Pathrick! in many a state prison forment this, where ye learned to cobble shoes, most like."

The rude ferryman struck his colours to this broadside, and, relapsing into a state of cowed and sullen reserve, deigned no response to any remark put to him. Tired of farther intercession, and despairing of being taken across, they finally stepped out in front of the house.

"The cloud grows blacker," remarked Father Janaway; "it must of necessity be upon us soon. Was there ever such a disappointment! Our hard ride must be in vain, unless some way can be found to reach the heart of this churl."

"And that may be done asily," said Barnabas; "I fancy ye've not been using the right sort ov bait for such a land-shark as this same. Did it occur to yer honour to put a bit ov silver on the hook?"

"Here is my purse, Barney," quickly replied the ecclesiastic; "try your experiment. But haste, or the storm will make us too late."

"If we fail to cross," added he to the sergeant, as Barnabas again entered the house, "it may all be over."

"Come now, daddy," said Barnabas, clapping the cobbler on the shoulder, who dodged down his shaggy pate as though the hand of the Irishman had been an avalanche, "let's settle this quarrel; for, upon me sowl, I've no ill-will to ye. We want to pass to the other side, jist; and if you can't take us over, be good enough to be handing me the kay ov yer craft, and I'll save ye the trouble."

"Can't do it," said the other, pursuing his task. "Here's Captain Brant, now in 'tother room, that wanted to go over an hour ago. He's as good a man as any livin', if he is an Ingin; and, for the matter of that, I reckon him as much of a gentleman as—"

"Take care now; asey, asey mind; for I don't allow comparisons and distinctions," broke in the other; "so ye'll kape a bit ov a curb on yer tongue whin ye come to spake ov any one alongside ov Father Janaway and my friend, the sargent."

"Father Janaway, did you say it was?" asked the ferryman, looking up.

"Sure it is," said Barnabas.

"I mind him some twenty year sen; heerd him preach, and a fust-chop sarmon, too. It was my wife's funeral sarmon. I've not heerd one sen, but I've notched it down in my mind, that it was the slickest, meltingest yarn I ever listened too in my life."

"And, maybe, ye niver heard one afore, ather," suggested Barney, with a leer. "But come, now, ye'll set us over!"

"A boat will stand little chance out yonder when that rain and wind comes on," said the man, looking from the case-ment at the growing tempest. "I'd like to accommodate the good man, but it's rather too much of a risk; I'd rather not."

"Why, now, a pretty wather fowl ye are, living here on the strame like a shell-drake, and be afraid to trust yerself where the rest ov us would be drowning wid ye, if anything happened," said Barney, slipping a Spanish dollar in his hand. "And a praste aboard, too?"

"But I refused Captain Brant," pondered the other, pocketing the silver, "and as much of a gentleman, I mout say—"

"And niver be minding yer Captain Brants, or Captain Ducks ather," interfered Barnabas, putting another coin in the old ferryman's fingers. "As to that same, I was captain meself, on a time; captain ov the scout, ye'll bear in mind. But Father Janaway is waiting."

"It looks ugly," said the man, looking out again.

"And ye're afraid, then?"

"Not for myself so much," replied the old waterman; "but there's the boat."

"Niver fear the boat, man," said the Irishman, resorting to the purse again; "she's but a poor craft if she can't take care ov herself in the event ov a shipwreck."

"I'd like to accommodate; but it looks black yonder; and white caps appearin', too."

"But it's a pressing emergancy with Father Janaway," suggested Barnabas, putting his fingers in the magic depository once again, and shoving the silver piece to the waterman.

"A boat, it's true, mout live out yonder," said the other, pausing in hesitation, "and then it moutent. Let's see; a good half hour to scud across, five minutes to git under way, and afore that the storm comes on; and how are we to gain shore safe on 'tother side? I don't know," he continued, shaking his head. "Bill Brierbottom went under a for'night sen, in jist such a time as this; a bad mess o' business; and left a wife on hand, and a cabbins full o' young ones; but mine's dead, howsomever, so there's no danger on that score. There's some awful thunder and lightning! But still, as the case is one of a pinch, I think I mout set you over," and he cast a mean-

ing glance at the purse of his petitioner. "And I will," he added, as Barney, this time, dropped a piece of gold into his huge paw.

In a few moments the party were at the river's shore, burning with desire to be launched on its bosom, now heaving to the breath of the gale. It took but brief time to fit matters for the passage.

"Your ferriage money, if you please, gentlemen; we always take the pay afore we leave shore," said the waterman, in no apparent haste to push off.

"That, my friend, whenever you please to demand it," said Father Janaway, drawing forth the purse Barney had restored him, and which had already groaned under the taxation laid upon it. "I do not pause to scruple with you concerning your exact price, but hope this will compensate you for the safely transporting your present freight to the opposite shore." And he handed the Charon of the barge another piece of gold, not aware, we may presume, to what extent his Irish friend had made disbursement of that precious metal already.

"Stop! stop! stop!" said the ferryman, about to commit his bark to the bubbling surge; "here's the captain. I may as well kill the two birds with one stone. Hurry on, Captain Brant; jump aboard, if you please; there's a seat for you. We'll settle the fare after we get over."

"Why, captain," said the ecclesiastic, extending his hand as this distinguished personage, who had become so conspicuous in the annals of the Revolution and incidents of border warfare, jumped on board; "I am glad of your company. We are about to launch on a precarious tide, I fear me, and one of your experience becomes a valuable acquisition in way of fellow-passenger."

The noted chieftain, though now habited in common citizen's dress, having on his person no apparent badge of his Indian rank or mode of life, returned this cordial salutation, and took his seat. Walter fixed his intent gaze on the face of the new passenger, of whom rumour had so frequently spoken, in tales commemorative of his acquirements in learning, his fleetness on the war-path, his gallantry and bravery in battle; and queried in his mind, while he thus gazed, whose face it was in which he had known so strong a resemblance existing to that of the great Thayendanegea of the Mohawks now before him.

The boat left the shore, and, beneath the dark canopy of the overshadowing cloud, went dancing away upon the surging waves. A spectator, standing on the bank they were leaving behind, could not have seen the little body of mariners two hundred yards in the distance, save as recurring flashes of lightning, that gleamed from

out the black and cavernous sky, in unison with every roll of jarring thunder, disclosed them momentarily to view.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"Tend me to-night two hours—I ask no more."
SHAKESPEARE.

THE abode of long suffering has measurably assumed the aspect of revelry and joy. Colonel Dinning's mansion is invested with active preparations for some unusual event. The servants, decorated in holiday attire, pass smilingly from one apartment to another in prosecution of whatever domestic duties demand their attention. The main hall glows with a flood of light, imparting additional brilliancy to polished furniture, and costly mirrors with gilded frames, that adorn the walls of the apartment. On the sideboard and tables, various articles of plate, highly burnished, and enriched with embossed designs, radiate the beams thrown upon them from lamps of silver.

The sick chamber resembles more the boudoir where fashion panders to the morbid appetite of luxury and Fortune's pleasurable rounds, than that where disease tunes its wailing moan and breathes its fetid breath. Even gaunt misery for a period withdraws its impress from the face of the invalid, and a half-cheerful look, like an unskilful rider, mounts awkwardly those haggard features. Some of the bridal party have already arrived, and are seated about the apartment, or talk with the sufferer on the couch. One of these, assiduous in attentions on his patron, and dressed in rich, though somewhat gaudy suit, is the groom. It may be that etiquette had properly interposed against entry so soon, and alone, by him to the altar chamber; yet we see him there. Meantime the affianced bride, on whom partly are these preparations dependant, has not, as yet, graced with her presence the decorated room.

An attendant enters to say that Father Janaway cannot come—he is absent from his house. Of his return, those at his mansion could give no definite information. Subsequent to this the clock strikes the hour of eight, and then is ushered in a reverend pastor of the Church of England. The clerical functionary, having greeted the afflicted host, is directed to a seat placed near the foot of the couch. In a short time are assembled the few who have been invited as guests, and nothing intervenes the nuptial ceremonies save the absence of the bride. A messenger is despatched to her chamber to request her attendance, and, until she comes, the assembled party sit in profound silence. A side door at length opens, and she enters. She is leaning on the arm of one rigged out in borrowed

finery, it may be presumed, and called to officiate on this occasion as bridesmaid—the late abducted Mrs. Peggy Pike.

But the eager gaze of such as looked to this moment for exhibition of anything like marriage display, in personal adornment at least, met with unlooked-for and effectual disappointment. Ruth was habited in deep black. Her dress, hanging low to the floor, which it slightly swept, was of silk bombazine, the most costly in price and finest of texture. It fitted closely to her handsomely-developed person, and was furnished with sleeves to the elbow, from which depended ruffles of plain lace, and of the same solemn colour as the dress. The maiden's hair, put smoothly back from her forehead, and floating in a few loose ringlets, was confined only by a narrow band of black velvet, from which a veil of the same fabric and colour as the ruffles, fastened by her mother's brooch, and thrown back, descended almost to her feet. The sable hue of this gauzy covering, thus screening her neck and shoulders, otherwise bare, happily contrasted with the purely white skin beneath it, and gave softness and grace to her whole figure. The only ornaments relieving by their rays the sombre twilight of this costume, were the brooch before alluded to, and the chain and bracelets, which, coupled with a parent's dying prayer, formed that parent's sole bequest. Arrayed in this singular attire, better suiting the solemn obsequies of the grave than calculated to grace the marriage festival, she slowly crossed the apartment, with downcast eyes and fingers locked together, to the bed of Colonel Dinning. Here, bending down her face, she drew his attenuated hand to her lips. Little anticipating this manœuvre, he whose hand willingly rested against the soft cushions to which affection drew it, was not otherwise than somewhat disconcerted.

"You surprise me, my child," he at length began, "as well by this evidence of an affection I have never misdoubted, as the eccentric dress you are pleased to appear in."

To this the lady made no response.

"Could you not have found apparel," continued he, "which had saved our minds the gloom that this overclouds them with?"

"I may have dressed with too much reference to myself," said Ruth, in low tones; "the garb adds no additional shadows to the wearer's mind."

"I regret your speaking thus, my dear child," said the perplexed parent; "I have looked to this as an hour of joy. It might, under other circumstances, have tinted with a few pencils of gladness the end of my days. In the presence of these witnesses, it was my hope to make your heart also the recipient of happiness."

"Then it was a vain hope, I fear me," said Ruth, "though none may stand more in the need of it than I."

"Alas! alas!" exclaimed the parent, "this occasion, this only, I have lived for until now. The delusive thread of expectation breaks here, and I fall. I've no more to do with time;" and he turned away his face on the pillow to indulge the real agony that oppressed his heart.

"I hope not to add bitterness to your cup, my dear parent," said Ruth; "but even I, if I read rightly the inward page of the soul, have as little to do with time as they who may sooner be rid of its burdens. I could fain close with yours the allotment measured to me by the hand of Him who draws out in sorrow or in joy the threads of our lives. Time—time—time!" half-mused the maiden, "in its slow march of days and nights, months and years—turgid as the unwholesome pool, and as motionless. Dread period! no birds to sing—suns to shine—faces to smile. None to love—none—none. Father, brother, sister—none. And—whom these eyes have seen not; whose angel whisper has breathed never its matins to this ear—my mother!"

"Ruth! my child!" exclaimed the parent, turning an excited face to hers, "you wander. See to her, some of you; she runs wild in disordered fancies!"

"Stop me not—stop me not," said Ruth, waving her hand to those who had risen from their seats; "be still; I must talk with my mother." And, heedless of interference, she sank to her knees beside the couch, and elevating her eyes of sorrow, with low, musical voice that a seraph might have envied, proceeded: "My heaven-ascended mother! look on your orphan child. Tell me in what star thou dwellest, and thither will I send my prayer. I lift this heart of anguish up to thine—or wilt thou come to me from out this void of nature, and warm it with thy blessing! Does thy holy essence now surround me—dost thou hear me, my mother? Shed but a smile of love on my path, and by its brightness will I walk. Why like a neglected seed was I cast in Nature's garden, to grow among ungenial plants—trained by stranger hands? On me has fallen not the rapt word of child or daughter; and yet, methinks, as bending at this couch that death sits over, thy tongue is calling to me from the spirit-realm. Oh! is it so? my heart bounds to it—the soul lifts her hand to thine, even from this dreary fold of time. My mother! I come on the wings of vision; open to me, then, the sainted chamber of thy bosom. I call to thee with trembling accents—I look to thee through tears—I pray to thee with sorrowing heart."

"And now, in this hard extremity, guide me to the path of duty. And, thou hallowed essence of a holier sphere, measure in

gentleness this bitter tide to thy wandered child, as He tempers the winds to the shorn lamb of the fold, who holdeth every blast within his hand." Then slowly recalling the upward gaze of her eyes, she fixed them with an expression of almost supernatural composure on the parent's face. It was a look whose plaintive appeal overcame for a moment the spirit of ambition with which his heart was filled. Rising to her feet again, she placed her hand in that of Colonel Dinning, and said, with unflinching tone, "It is yours, my father; do with it as you list."

The parent was overwhelmed, and silence and hesitation augured the dissipation of his long-nurtured resolve. He shrank from a sacrifice that pity alone withheld his hand from performance of.

"I relieve you of the duty, my dearest benefactor," said the maiden, and, turning to the clergyman, added, "I demand of you to proceed with this ceremony."

"I am doubtful of the part befitting me to act," said the divine; "I await the pleasure of Colonel Dinning. I cannot go on if his purpose be changed." The confused stupor and silence of the invalid may have been looked to by the ecclesiastic as an answer to the query, since, after the form of the Church of England, he immediately began the rite as contained in the ritual. Going through the first part of the ceremony, as the pair stood up before him, he at length came to ask as follows: "Wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance, in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour, and keep her, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her so long as—" At this juncture, the groom, crying out, in a shuddering under tone, "Great God!—there!—there!—take it away!" reeled backward across the room, waving his hand, and exhibiting a face of terror, until he sank on the lap of one sitting at the other side of the apartment. A thrill of alarm or wonder went through the breast of every one present. For a while the youth kept his dilated eyes on a large mirror resting against the wall near the head of the sick man's couch. His parted lips, meanwhile, murmured forth an unintelligible jargon beyond the comprehension of those who looked on in breathless silence.

"It's gone! and God be praised!" he added, after a moment, rising on his trembling limbs.

"Are you sick, my dear sir?" inquired the divine.

"Yes, gone again!" pursued the young man, unheeding the question, and looking narrowly at the glass; "back, back to the tomb, I hope. I breathe now. Yet what cowardice, that I act in this way. My

friends, excuse me; I am entirely well. I shaine to expose myself thus to your ridicule. There are some here who can vouch for my courage, where death mowed down whole ranks about me. This was but a bugbear of the brain; with a front more horrid, though, than substantial danger. I beg your pardons; and permit me, miss, once more to take your hand."

The glass spoken of maintained that position on the wall, that an object at the door of entrance falling on its surface would be, by the angle of reflection, carried to the spot where the groom was standing; and, happening to cast his eye in that direction during the ceremony, he had seen delineated in the mirror the face and person of his brother, whom he supposed dead. A bolt from the tempest cloud, now hanging over the city, and jarring, with its thunders, the deepest foundation stone of the building, could not have paralyzed his body with more effect than did this untimely apparition his lacerated conscience. But the confusion within induced him, who stood near the opened door of the chamber, to step back a moment until it should subside, thus effacing his picture from the glass, and allowing the guilt-stricken heart of the other once more release from the subduing spell. When, therefore, the divine had repeated the part thus interrupted, the groom responded, in accordance with the form, "I will."

"Wilt thou," pursued the priest, "have this man to thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance, in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou obey him, and serve him, love, honour, and keep him, in sickness and in health: and, forsaking all others, keep thee only unto him so long as ye both shall live?" No audible word passed the lips of the bride, but by a gentle, though slight inclination of body, she made her affirmative response.

"I thank God!" murmured the sick man, raising his humid eyes, and pressing his hands together, "she has said it."

"Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?" continued the pastor, turning his face to Colonel Dinning as he finished the sentence.

"I—I," quickly responded he, and, taking the hand of Ruth for the purpose, with much effort raised himself slightly on the couch, and was passing the same to that of the groom.

"Hold! a moment hold!" uttered a voice at the door, and Father Janaway, drenched with rain, which yet dripped down from his hat and garments, crossed the room with hasty steps, and, with much lack of ceremony, caught the hand of the maiden in his own.

"What means this brutal interruption?" demanded Colonel Dinning: "am I to be the object of irreverent insult in my

own house! And by you, too, a foster-plant of my hospitality and protection in times past? Give back that hand to me?"

"I cannot obey; the hand is not yours," said the other.

"Sainted ingrate!" exclaimed the invalid, clinching together his attenuated fingers; "and do you beard me here, that my arm is wasted in sinew, and cannot scourge the insulting bravado! These fires of Heaven, that wreak their vengeance on senseless trunks of the grove, blast you where you stand. That hand again!" The other shook his head. "Where are you all! dolts and stocks! do you see a fallen man robbed before your very eyes! Who carries a weapon here, and brought neither heart nor hand to use it in my need?"

"I've one, colonel," said Charles, drawing a dagger from his breast, "and—"

"Shame! shame! on a man unarmed! one, too, of God's holy anointed!" interposed Ruth, laying hold of his hand that held the weapon.

"Strike, then!" shouted the enraged invalid; "clear the room of the base catiff! Down with him! so long as God spares me breath, I'll order the affairs of my own castle."

"I must leave you," said the priest of the interrupted ceremony; "this scene of brawl works discredit to a minister of the sacred desk, and a follower of the peaceful Lamb. My countenance of it wounds the sacred character of my calling."

"Stay but a moment; I have a word for you: do not go yet," said Father Janaway.

"Silence your braying tongue!" cried Colonel Dinning, raising himself in bed, "or I'll tear it from your throat! Your words sting my ear like an adder's fang."

"But a minute of time, my former friend," said Father Janaway, "and I may allay this tide of unmerited gall."

"I'll not hear you!" shouted the other, with as much power of voice as his emaciated condition permitted him use of.

"Colonel Dinning," remarked the clergyman of the nuptials, "may I presume to advise you in the use of measures more temperate? This paroxysm is inimical to your shattered condition; besides, what this holy father may have to say, at most, will interrupt but short space of time, I trust, the completion of the rite. Allow him opportunity of excusing, therefore, this distraction he has occasioned, if excuse he have, and farther to explain to us why it is he takes possession of the lady's hand."

"As you will, then," said the other, lying back on his pillow, exhausted by excitement and over-exertion; "I'm but a wreck; a child rules me. The tempest without, and man's machinations here, combine against me."

"You misjudge me, Colonel Dinning,"

said Father Janaway; "I design no such end as you impute to me. The right you have innocently claimed of bestowing the hand of this young lady does not pertain to you. I request your perusal of this paper;" and he laid on the bedside that put into the hands of Walter by his fellow-traveller of the wagon.

"Read it," said Colonel Dinning to the officiating churchman; "my head swims, and sight is unsteady."

"Aloud?" asked the other, taking the paper.

"As you please; 'tis no odds to me. Untoward fortune can do little more than is done already. Read aloud."

The other unfolded the document, and read thus:

"MY DEAREST BROTHER,

"I am dying among savages. A zenith of dusky faces is over me while I write. Sickness bows me down to death, but not shame or guilt. My spirit, soon to be released from these trammels of sorrow and of earth, goes up to the bosom of the Maker; may yours meet it there. This being the last word I send you, let it commend to you the fulness of a sister's gratitude and love. I make, through it, large tribute of my thanks, remembering your affection and kindness to the last."

"By the bearer of this note comes also to you a little child. Grant it a place in your heart. Such is the mother's prayer; the little one is mine. The papers attending it will explain all to you. Call it by my name; and, when your lips greet the little stranger, think that the mother, your ever-loving sister, lives again. Adieu! adieu! The chill creeps on me; I am passing, dear brother. An hour, and my soul will to the skies. My child! I endow it with but a kiss, and my blessing; will my brother bestow on it his protection and love? Now dying, as in life, your ever affectionate

RUTH."

The letter was endorsed, "To Colonel James Dinning."

"What senseless rigmarole is this!" exclaimed the colonel, when the perusal closed, and to the reading of which he had paid the strictest attention. "And do you come to humbug me with so wretched a mockery?"

"I but submit the paper," said he who had produced it; "it is for you to judge its contents."

"Better is it deserving the attention of another judge," said Colonel Dinning; "one whose administration of legal justice might lay the rope on his neck who forged the pitiful balderdash."

"You give me full scope of saying," replied Father Janaway, in spite of himself piqued by this offensive insinuation, "that I find nothing offensive in the events transpi-

ring, or in the nearness of your transit from life to eternity, that can justify this unbecoming rudeness. All I can say of the paper is, that it has not been in my keeping the sum of forty eight hours past."

"It would require less time than that to make a dozen like it," replied the other. "If not of your fabrication, how came you by it?"

"It was handed me by another," replied Father Janaway.

"Paltry subterfuge!" returned the colonel, with contemptuous scorn; "the practical swindler had brought this third person to vouch for him. Lo! where you stand condemned, nay, entangled in the meshes of your own device, I, even I, the one whom this net was cast to ensnare, pity the ridicule your exposure invokes."

"I call the witness, then," replied the other; and, looking towards the door of the apartment, his signal brought within the room him whom rumour's bulletin had chronicled as dead—Walter Henderson. The unexpected visitor, now standing mute at the portal, was greeted with various emotions of wonder, surprise, and superstitious awe. A denizen of the grave—Lazarus in his cerements even had less appalled one individual present, who glowered at him in stupified horror. It turned, as it were, the nuptial chamber into the great hall of judgment, where, before the eternal court, this homicidal witness should arise from his bed of gore, and, baring his mutilated bosom, crush down the brother's soul under weight of testimony so awful. The guilty perpetrator of an intended fratricide fled! fled as the self-accusing transgressors of Eden when the Maker's voice broke on the seclusion of their hiding-place. But the group of gazers were too intensely absorbed to witness the stealthy flight. Unobserved, therefore, the groom passed, with averted face, through a side-door of the room, thus eluding farther accusation of the other's eye. Ruth sank on a seat near her, overwhelmed with a flood of emotions defying our power to analyze. Colonel Dinning was the first to break the spell.

"How is this!" said he; "has my sight died in advance of my body? or, by some trick of wizard skill, do you rob the grave for witnesses? We that live honest lives may well despair, when juggling sorcery lays hand on the beam of the scale, or gropes in charnal depositories for weights to press down the descending balance. Speak! if you be a living man; if spirit, I bid you back to air!"

"I am in life," said Walter, "though once near losing what report, it seems, has deprived me of; and when I am allowed opportunity of answering that for which you have summoned me, I am most willing to go hence!"

"I called you not," replied the other; "but that you are here—and second sight of you I desire not—say on. From whom got you this false manuscript?"

"I cannot tell, sir," replied the young man; "I neither know the giver, his name, nor place of abode."

"As I thought—as I thought!" quickly returned the colonel, in tones of triumph; "the devil's web hath a flaw in it. Here's a hole in the net, say I again, good holy father, most meek and Christian sir," addressing Father Janaway; "and the fish escape you. A fine subject for the pencil is that face of confusion now. Away! off! off from my sight, I command you; and you, too, who would aid this treachery with a tongue of flesh, or pander to the guilt of mortals with unsubstantial organs."

"Stay! stay!" cried Ruth, holding to the hand of the divine, as he turned to leave the room in obedience to the mandate.

"Part them on the instant!" fiercely shouted the enraged invalid, "and hurl him from the room."

"Then we go together," replied the maiden, firmly.

"Never!" said the parent; "I order it otherwise. If need exist, I command those here to detain you by force. I've enough of this folly. Authority shall lift the sceptre now."

The scene likely to ensue was marred by the entrance of another person. Removing his cap of plumes from his head as he came in, he advanced on the group with the air of him who is accustomed to command. We remark upon this individual but to say, that the eye of Walter detected in him, at first glance, the Indian warrior and preserver of his life at Fort Stanwix, now arrayed in the same forest dress as then. A second glance at his face disclosed to him the features he had so much scrutinized on board the boat an hour or two before—those of the vaunted Thayendanegea.

"I have a word, with your leave, Colonel Dinning," said the great chief of the Mohawks, "on the subject of this difficulty. I gave the paper to Sergeant Henderson within two days past." Here the sergeant's mind reverted, by a sudden flight, to the dialogue with his fellow-passenger of the wagon, in which he had himself been so flatteringly spoken of. "And if you will please to look at it, colonel," pursued the warrior, "and have any recollection left of your sister's handwriting, you may recognise it to be hers."

The colonel glanced at the paper with changing countenance. When satisfied with the scrutiny, he asked of the chief, in subdued tone of voice, "What more of this?"

"I had it," said the Mohawk captain, woman belonging to a tribe now

residing on the waters of the Ohio. Some few years past, I was at her side in death, and what she charged me under solemn persuasions to perform, I will state. It had been many years prior to the time I have mentioned that a man (I am narrating but what she told me) came to the village where her tribe then dwelt (not more than two days' journey from here), with a young woman. My informant knew neither of them, since their names were withheld. The reason assigned by them for seeking this old squaw was, that she had much renown as a doctress. In the hut of this Indian woman, beyond all communication with the white people, the young woman remained some months. Every two weeks, however, the gentleman, who represented himself to be her husband, appeared, remaining a day or two, showing the greatest possible affection and concern for his alleged wife. At length the young woman became the mother of a child. After this, the visits of the father, as he styled himself, were oftener repeated. But when the infant was some two months old, a hostile tribe from the West made a night attack on that to which the old nurse belonged, and many of the warriors being away elsewhere on the war-path, quite half of the tribe were slain, and the remainder taken prisoners. Among the latter, and esteemed the greater prize, were the young mother and her babe.

"They were taken West; but, in the delicate condition of the young woman, the journey, made, as it was, in haste, proved too much for her, and her state of exhaustion exposing her the more to the ravages of a fever then prevailing, she died the second day after her arrival at the new home; but before she died, she wrote this letter, and left it, with some other matters, in charge of the old squaw, who engaged, on receiving the contents of the mother's purse, to convey them and the child immediately to her brother on the Susquehannah. This promise was not, however, punctually fulfilled, since the little girl had become a great favourite with the tribe, and it was found a difficult matter with the old woman to steal her away. A few years after, though, when she was grown large enough to walk pretty well, and the warriors were away at the hunting-grounds, she was brought to the Susquehannah; but some of the articles intended by the mother to accompany the little girl were, by this time, mislaid, and this letter was one of them. I believe this to be, in substance at least, as I received it," added the renowned captain of the Six Nations, closing the narrative.

"No doubt," responded Colonel Dinning; "I have known you too long, captain, to question your veracity; but in what way do you couple this child you speak of with any one I have interest in?"

"She told of certain trinkets she delivered with the child," said the chief, "and among them was a gold ring, which the mother said had her own name on the inside of it, but none of the tribe were able to read what it was."

"I mind my own sister's ring well," said Colonel Dinning; "I gave it to her myself when we came over from England. Produce me that, and the matter is solved."

"I believe it was lost," returned the Indian warrior.

"Why, law suz!" broke forth Peggy, whom the mention of this trinket had for some time kept wriggling in a state of agitation. "no sich thing. The ring was never lost at all, for I've taken precious good care of it," pulling it from her little finger with some difficulty, "ever sen we got it. And here is the very identical thing, and just as hull and sound, and an onmassiful sight brighter and sparklinger (kase I'd not let a morsel o' dirt or rust git on it), than it was when the old squaw fetched it to the colonel's. See, colonel, it's clean as a snowdrop this very minnit;" and she handed it to him.

"I am satisfied," said he, after the examination; "captain, your tale is true. And here, my poor girl," added he to Ruth, "is record both of your birth and shame. And my poor sister (Heaven heal thy broken heart!) destroyed by a villain! I would he were before me!"

Ruth, covering her face with her handkerchief, arose from her seat and left the room.

"Something from me is due, Colonel Dinning, to yourself; to this company, before whom a development of circumstances has been made prejudicial to the sentiments of as good a girl as lives; and to myself, unjustly made, as I think, the target of much vituperative remark," said Father Janaway. "Your last wish, my dear sir, is granted. The villain, as you style him, is before you. Within two days past have I made this discovery. I am the father of Ruth."

"Then, by that heavenly hand that measures out justice and avenges wrong—" began Colonel Dinning, erecting himself in bed.

"And was the lawfully wedded husband of your sister," cried Father Janaway, forcing on him the interruption.

"Think you by this trick of speech to appease me, villain—restore virtue to the mother, take infamy from the child?"

"My vouchers," said the other, throwing him the marriage certificate so long in Walter's possession, and the duplicate he had of his own: "read them." He did so. As he finished he put forth his trembling hand, and taking that of his old friend, held it some time in silence.

"I recall," said he, lying down, "all, all

I have said. My best friend, forgive me. You again take your place in my heart. It was indeed yours to bestow the hand of your own child."

"A word, my friends," said Father Janaway, as the clergyman and company arose to depart; "I trust, in this unlucky history of past events, you will, on reflection, find little, after all, to blame me for. It was my chance to love. But this affection it was the policy of the church in whose holy service I wrought to encourage by no license of connubial consummation. A secret espousal was the consequence. But when you call to mind that circumstances drove the blessed partner of my bosom to the shelter of seclusion, and that finally she was wrested from me forever, without my knowledge of her fate or that of my child, you may judge that my error and my infraction of the rules of Holy Church have been dearly required. And now I go to embrace with the father's arms, and hallow with the father's kiss, my long-lost but restored offspring."

"And now, Sergeant Henderson," said the Mohawk chieftain, as they entered together the hall below, "I wish to introduce to your better acquaintance a friend of yours, who has for some years past overlooked your path from more heights of observation than you know of—from rocks and thickets, through casements and key-holes, and from a certain chamber window (you may remember it), when you returned from a great squirrel slaughter, and strayed into a neighbour's yard—a friend who did you some little service at Fort Stanwix, a trifle at the stockade of Captain Sunfish, an item in your escape from Prison Island, and the least bit in this last emergency. You once knew him," said he, putting forth his hand to the sergeant, "by the name of the Hanger; since then, some little fame has published him to the world by a different. Under either, he has honestly paid you for his life."

"Forget not, when you see them," said the chief, when the hearty congratulation was over, "to remember me to your father—an honest man; and to your good mother—she treated me almost as a son."

Before this, Father Janaway had hurried to the chamber of his daughter. The happy meeting we pause not to sketch. There was, about the same moment, another interview beneath the same roof, if not as tender, certainly characterized by as much physical energy. Mrs. Peggy happening to go into the kitchen, suddenly found herself, something to the rumpling of her wedding-robe, in the arms of her loving liege lord, Barnabas.

After a half-hour's interview with his daughter, the father conducted her into the hall below, where he gave her a formal introduction to Sergeant Henderson, late

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