

The Lost Hunter eBook

The Lost Hunter

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Title: The Lost Hunter A Tale of Early Times

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*** Start of this project gutenber EBOOK the lost hunter ***

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The lost hunter.

A Tale of Early Times.

"And still her grey rocks tower above the sea
That murmurs at their feet, a conquered wave;
'Tis a rough land of earth, and stone, and tree,
Where breathes no castled lord or cabined slave;
Where thoughts, and tongues, and hands, are bold and free,
And friends will find a welcome, foes a grave;
And where none kneel, save when to heaven they pray,
Nor even then, unless in their own way."

Halleck

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APOLOGY

As one might justly be considered a clown, or, at least, not well bred, who, without tapping at the door, or making a bow, or saying "By your leave," or some other token of respect, should burst in upon a company of persons unknown to him, and instead of a welcome would deserve an unceremonious invitation to betake himself elsewhere forthwith; so, I suppose, in presenting myself before you, my honored Public, it is no more than civil to say something by way of introduction. At least, I have observed from my obscure retreat in the quiet village of Addlebrains, that the fashion in this respect, which has prevailed, certainly, since the time of St. Luke, who commences his Gospel with a preface to Theophilus, has come down to the present day, differing therein from other fashions, which, for the most part, are as transitory as the flowers of the field, and commending itself thereby to the thoughtful consideration of the judicious; for it cannot be deemed there is no value in that which has received the sanction of centuries. Influenced by reflections of this description and the like, I sat down one day in the little retreat, which the indulgent partiality of my friends is accustomed to dignify with the title of my "study," to endeavor to write a preface, and introduce myself in a becoming manner to my readers. I was the more anxious to do this properly, because, although

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a mere countryman, a sort of cowhide shoe, as I may say, and therefore lacking that gloss, which, like the polish on a well-brushed boot, distinguishes and illustrates the denizens of our metropolis in an eminent degree, as I know from personal experience, having been twice in New York, and, as I am told, also, the citizens of Boston and Philadelphia, and other provincial towns, with a milder lustre, I would not like to be supposed entirely destitute of refinement. It would be strange if I were, inasmuch as I enjoyed in my youth, the privilege of two terms and a half instruction in the dancing school of that incomparable professor of the Terpsichorean science, the accomplished Monsieur St. Leger Pied. It is in consequence of this early training, perhaps, that I am always pained when there is any deflection or turning aside from, or neglect of, the graceful, the becoming, and the proper.

It will be observed that my last quarter was cut short in the middle; which untoward event arose from no arrogance or supercilious conceit on my part, as though I had perfected myself in the mysteries of pigeon-wing and balancez, but from the abrupt departure of the professor himself, who, true to the name indicative of his constitutional levity, found it convenient to disappear betwixt two days, with the advance pay of my whole term in his pocket, and without stopping to make even one of his uncommonly genteel bows. The circumstance was peculiarly disagreeable to me, in consequence of the school being assembled when our loss was discovered, and of my having succeeded in engaging, for the greater part of the evening, the hand of a young lady, whose charms had made a deep (though, as subsequent events proved, not a durable) impression on my susceptible heart. Monsieur was our only musician, and, of course, with his violin went the dancing. The cause of his evasion or flight was variously accounted for, some ascribing it to a debt he had contracted for kid gloves and pumps, and others to dread of the wrath of a young gentleman, whose sister he had been so imprudent as to kiss in the presence of another girl, not remarkable for personal attractions, to whom he had never paid the same compliment. As was to be expected, she was scandalized at the impropriety and want of taste, and immediately made it known, in spite of the entreaties of the blushing beauty and the “pardons” of Monsieur. As Virgilius has it,

“Manet alta mente i epostum,
Judicium Paridis spretaeque injuria formae.”

In my opinion, it was the kiss that cost poor Monsieur Pied his school, and me a dollar and a half, three dollars being the price for a term’s instruction. Not, I beg to be understood, that I care anything about the money, but in relating an event I like to be circumstantial and strictly accurate. But I find that, wiled away by the painfully pleasing reminiscences of my youth, I am wandering from my undertaking, which is, not to narrate the misadventures of a dancing-master, but to compose a preface.

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I had seated myself, as I was saying, in my little den or confugium, where, as in a haven of rest, I love to hide myself from the distractions of the world, and concentrate my thoughts, and which has been to me the scene of many sad as well as pleasant hours, and dipped my goose quill (anathema maranatha on steel pens, which I cannot help fancying, impart a portion of their own rigidity to style, for if the stylus be made of steel is it not natural that the style by derivation and propinquity should be hard?) into the ink-stand, after first casting my eyes on the busts of Shakespeare and Milton, which, cast in plaster, adorn my retirement, half imploring them to assist in so important an enterprise, when the door opened, and who should enter but my dear friend, the Rev. Increase Grace? But here let me remark parenthetically, the habit of dealing in parentheses being one I especially dislike, only necessity compelling me thereto, and before I proceed further, that the word "confugium," which, both on account of its terse expressiveness, as well as its *curiosa felicitas* in the present application, I have chosen in order to define my den, has not, I hope, escaped the notice of the discriminating scholar. Moreover, I trust that I shall not incur the imputation of vanity if I take to myself some little credit for the selection. It will be observed that it is a compound term, the latter part, "fugium" (from fuga, flight), characterizing the purpose to which my secluded nook is applied as a refuge, whither I fly from the unmeaning noise and vanity of the world; and the prefix, "con" (equivalent to cum, with), conveying the idea of its social designation. For I should be loth to have it thought that, like Charles Lamb's rat, who, by good luck, happening to find a Cheshire cheese, kept the discovery a profound secret from the rest of the rats, in order to monopolize the delicious dainty, pretending all the while that his long and frequent absences at a certain hole were purely for purposes of heavenly contemplation, his mind having of late become seriously impressed, and, therefore, he could not bear interruption, I am in the habit of ensconcing myself with a selfish exclusion therein. Far from it: the door is never barred against admission, and my confugium rather means (though the dictionaries with their usual vagueness so much to be lamented, have not succeeded in eviscerating its full signification) a common place of retirement for myself and intimate friends. Hence it was not as an intrusion, but, on the contrary, as an acceptable call, that I greeted the arrival of Increase. There must have been an unusual degree of gravity in my countenance corresponding with the importance of the work I was about to undertake, for the reverend gentleman had hardly taken a seat before he observed it, and inquired into its cause. We are upon that footing of intimacy, that there was no impropriety in the question, and I unhesitatingly acquainted him with my purpose.

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"I should as soon think," said the Rev. Increase, "of building a verandah before a wood-house, or putting mahogany doors into my old toppling down church."

The remark was not very complimentary, but great freedom of speech prevails between us, and I took no offence; especially as I knew that the Rev. gentleman was smarting under a disappointment in the sale of a volume of sermons, whence he had expected great things, from the publication of which I had vainly endeavored to dissuade him, and whose meagre proceeds fully justified my forebodings. The mention of my work naturally recalled this afflictive dispensation, and *hinc illae lacrimae*. Reading his mind, I answered, therefore, as gently as a slight tremor in my voice would allow, that there was no accounting for tastes, and that as trifling a thing as a song had been known to outlive a sermon.

I declare I meant no harm, but his reverence (one of the best men in the world, but who, in every sense of the word, belongs to the "church militant,") instantly blazed up—

"I dare say," he said, bitterly, "that you understand the frippery taste of this trivial age better than I. A capability to appreciate solid reading, reading that cultivates the understanding while it amends the heart, seems to be with the forgotten learning before the flood. They who pander to this diseased appetite have much to answer for; not," he was pleased to add—his indignation cooling off like a steam-boiler which has found vent, "that the trifle on which for the last few months you have been wasting your time has not a certain kind of merit, but it seems a pity, that one, capable of better things, should so miserably misapply his powers."

These sentiments were not entirely new to me, else I might have become a little excited; for, during the whole time while I was engaged in the composition of the work, my friend, who is, also, in the habit of communicating his literary enterprises to me, would insist upon my reading him the chapters, as fast as they came along, manifesting no little curiosity in the manner in which I should disengage myself from difficulties in which he supposed me from time to time involved, and exuberant delight at the ingenious contrivances, as, in a complimentary mood, he once said, by which I eluded them. It is true, all this betrayal of interest was accompanied by various pishes and pshaws, and lamentations over the trifling character of my pursuits; but, like too many others, both in his cloth and out of it, his conduct contradicted his language, and I was encouraged by the former, while I only smiled at the latter.

"If such be your opinion," said I, suddenly seizing the manuscript, which lay before me, and making a motion to throw it into the fire; "if such be your candid opinion, I had better destroy the nonsense at once."

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"Hold!" cried the Rev. Increase, arresting my hand, "you are shockingly touchy and precipitate; how often have I cautioned you against this trait of your character. Because your workling does not deserve to be mentioned in the same category with works of solid and acknowledged merit, like, for instance, Rollin's Ancient History or Prideaux' Connexion, and can, at best, enjoy but an ephemeral existence, does it deserve to have no existence at all? On your principle, we should have no butterflies, because their careless lives last but a day."

"Well, Increase," said I, "if, like the butterfly, whose short and erratic presence imparts another beauty to green fields and blue skies, and blossoms, and songs of birds, my little book shall be able to seduce a smile to the lips, or cheat away a pain from the bosom of one of those whom you are so fond of calling 'pilgrims through a dreary wilderness,' I shall feel amply compensated for the waste of my time."

"If your expectations are so moderate, I see no harm in your indulging them," said my friend; "but I cannot help wishing you had oftener taken my advice in its composition."

"I have great respect for your opinion," I answered, "but I find it impossible to pass the ideas of another through the crucible of my mind and do them justice. Somehow or other, when I am expecting a stream of gold, it turns out a *caput mortuum* of lead. No, my better course is to coin my copper in my own way. But, tell me frankly, what offends you."

My Rev. friend had, by this time, forgotten his unfortunate volume of sermons, and resumed his good nature.

"Offends me? my dear friend, and half-parishoner (for I notice a bad habit you have got into, of late, of attending church only in the morning—pray reform it), you use a very harsh term. There is nothing in the book that offends me; although," he added, cautiously, "I do not mean to say that I sanction entirely either your religious, philosophical, or political speculations. I am no flatterer, and claim the privilege of a friend to speak my mind."

"My dear Increase," said I, pressing his hand, "I love you all the more for your sincerity; but why do you call them my speculations? I have expressed no opinions. They are the opinions of the characters, and not mine. I wish you and all the world distinctly to understand that."

"And yet the world will hold you to account for them. If a man fires a gun into a crowd, is he not responsible for any mischief that may be the consequence?"

"I do not expect to make so loud a report," said I, smiling; "but I protest against your doctrine. Why, according to that, an author is accountable for all the opinions of his *dramatis personae*, however absurd and contradictory they may be."

“I do not go so far as that. I hold that the author is only responsible for the effect produced: if that effect be favorable to virtue, he deserves praise; if the contrary, censure.”

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"I admit the justice of the view you take, with that limitation; and I trust it is with a sense of such accountability I have written," said I. "May I, then, flatter myself with the hope that you will grant me your imprimatur?"

"You have it," said he; "and may no critic regard your book with less indulgent eyes than mine. But what name do you give the bantling?"

"Oh," said I, "I have not concluded, I fancy that one name is nearly as good as another."

"I don't know about that," said the Rev. Increase. "A couple who brought their child lately to me to be baptized did not think so, at any rate. I inquired what was the name chosen, when, to my astonishment, I heard sounds which resembled very much one of the titles bestowed upon the arch enemy of mankind. Supposing that my ears deceived me, I inquired again, when the same word, to my horror, was more distinctly repeated. 'Lucifer!' said I, to myself, 'impossible! I cannot baptize a child by such a name.' I bent over once more, and a third time asked the question. The answer was the same, and repeated louder and with an emphasis, as if the parents were determined to have that name or none. By this time my situation had become embarrassing, for there was I, in the presence of the whole waiting congregation, standing up with the baby in my arms, which, to add to my consternation, set up a squall as if to convince me that he was entitled to the name. My bachelor modesty could stand the scene no longer; so, hastily dipping my fingers in the font, and resolving he should have a good name, as opposite as possible to the diabolical one so strangely selected, I baptized the infant George Washington. I thought the parents looked queerly at the time, but the rite was performed, the baby had got an excellent name, and I was relieved. But conceive, if you can, my confusion, when, after service, the father and mother came into the vestry, and the latter bursting into tears, exclaimed: 'Oh, thir, what have you done? Ith a girl, ith a girl! and you've called her George Wathington! My poor little Luthy, my dear little Luthy!' Alas! the mother lisped, and when I asked for the name, meaning to be very polite, and to say, Lucy, sir, in reply to my question, she had said, 'Luthy, thir,' which I mistook for Lucifer. What was to be done? I consoled the afflicted parents as well as I was able, and promised to enter the name in the parish registry and town records as Lucy, which I did; but for all that, the girl's genuine, orthodox name is George Washington!"

"I see," said I, paying him for his joke with the expected laugh, "there is something in a name, and we must be cautious in its choice." The result was, that I followed my friend's advice in adopting the one which was finally selected. Soon after the Rev. gentleman took his hat and left me to my meditations. Thereupon I resumed my pen, and vainly endeavored to write a preface. At last, in despair, I could hit upon no better expedient

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than to explain to you, my dear Public, the circumstances which prevent my doing it now. You will sympathize with my mortification, and forgive my failure for the sake of the honest effort, and no more think of condemning me, than you would the aforesaid rustic, alluded to in the beginning of this my apology, should he, instead of boisterously rushing in upon the company, endeavor (his sense of the becoming overcoming his bashfulness) to twist his body into the likeness of a bow, thereby only illustrating and confirming the profound wisdom of the maxim, *non omnia possumus omnes*. Should our awkward attempts be classed together, I shall nevertheless indulge the hope, that better acquaintance with you will increase my facility of saying nothing with grace, and improve my manners, even as I doubt not that under the tuition of Monsieur Pied, the aforesaid countryman might, in time, be taught to make a passable bow.

For ever, *vive*, my dear Public, and, until we meet again (which, whether we ever do, will depend upon how we are pleased with each other), *vale*.

The author.

CHAPTER I.

At last the golden orientall gate
Of greatest heaven gan to open fayre,
And Phoebus fresh as brydegrome to his mate,
Came dauncing forth, shaking his deawie hayre,
And hurld his glistening beams through gloomy ayre.

SPENSER'S faery QUEENE.

It was a lovely morning in the autumn of the year of grace 18—. The beams of the sun had not yet fallen upon the light veil of mist that hovered over the tranquil bosom of the river Severn, and rose and gathered itself into folds, as if preparing for departure at the approach of an enemy it were in vain to resist. With a murmur, so soft it was almost imperceptible, glided the stream, blue as the heaven it mirrored, between banks now green and gently shelving away, crowned with a growth of oak, hickory, pine, hemlock and savin, now rising into irregular masses of grey rocks, overgrown with moss, with here and there a stunted bush struggling out of a fissure, and seeming to derive a starved existence from the rock itself; and now, in strong contrast, presenting almost perpendicular elevations of barren sand. Occasionally the sharp cry of a king-fisher, from a withered bough near the margin, or the fluttering of the wings of a wild duck, skimming over the surface, might be heard, but besides these there were no sounds, and *they* served only to make the silence deeper. It is at this hour, and upon an island in the river that our story commences.



The island itself is of an irregular shape and very small, being hardly an acre in extent, and its shore covered with pebbles and boulders of granite. Near the centre, and fronting the east, stands an unpainted wood cabin of the humblest appearance, the shape and size of which is an oblong of some thirty by fifteen feet. One rude door furnishes the only means of entrance, and light is admitted through two small windows, one on the east and the other on the west side. Straggling patches of grass, a few neglected currant-bushes behind the hut, and a tall holly-hock or two by the door are all the signs of vegetation that meet the eye.

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At the door of this cabin, and at the time we are describing, stood a solitary figure. He was a gaunt, thin man, whose stature rather exceeded than fell below six feet. The object about his person which first arrested attention was a dark grizzled beard, that fell half-way down his breast, in strong contrast with a high white forehead, beneath which glowed large dreamy eyes. The hair of his head, like his beard, was long, and fell loosely over his shoulders. His dress was of the coarsest description, consisting of a cloth of a dusky grey color, the upper garment being a loose sort of surtout, falling almost to the knees, and secured round the waist by a dark woollen sash. His age it was difficult to determine. It might have been anywhere between forty-five and fifty-five years.

The attitude and appearance of the man, were that of devotion and expectancy. His body was bent forward, his hands clasped, and his eyes intently fastened on the eastern sky, along the horizon of which layers of clouds, a moment before of a leaden hue were now assuming deeper and deeper crimson tints. As the clouds flushed up into brighter colors his countenance kindled with excitement. His form seemed to dilate, his eyes to flash, his hands unclasped themselves, and he stretched out his arms, as if to welcome a long expected friend. But presently the rays of the sun began to stream over the swelling upland and light up the surface of the river, and fainter and fainter shone the clouds, until they gradually melted into the blue depth away. It was then a shade of disappointment, as it seemed, passed over the face of the man. Its rapt expression faded, he cast a look almost of reproach to heaven, and his feelings found vent in words.

“Hast Thou not said, ‘Behold, I come quickly?’ Why then delay the wheels of Thy chariot? O, Lord, I have waited for Thy salvation. In the night-watches, at midnight, at cock-crowing, and in the morning, have I been mindful of Thee. But chiefly at the dawn hath my soul gone forth to meet Thee, for then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, and they shall see him coming in the clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory. And he shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from one end of Heaven to the other.”

His eyes glared wildly round, then fell and fastened on the ground, and for a few moments he remained immovable as a statue, after which, with an air of dejection, he turned as if about to enter the hut. At that moment the report of a gun from the shore close by was heard, and looking, up he saw a man fall from the sloping bank upon the beach.

If there had been any appearance of weakness or infirmity before in the Recluse, it now vanished. Nothing could exceed the promptitude and energy of his movements. To rush to the water, to throw himself into a boat, to unfasten it from the stake to which it was tied, and with a vigorous push to send it half-way across the channel, was the work of but an instant. A few dextrous and strong strokes of the paddle soon sent it grating on the pebbled shore, and with a bound he was by the side of the prostrate man. He

lay with his face to the ground, with one arm stretched out, and the other cramped up beneath his body. Near him the leaves and grass were stained with drops of blood, and at a short distance a gun was lying.

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The old man passed his arm around the stranger, to raise him from his recumbent position. The motion must have occasioned pain, for a low groan was heard. But it, at least, attested the presence of life, and there was consolation in even those sad sounds. With all the tenderness of a mother he raised the wounded man in his arms, and endeavored to discover the place and character of the wound, in order to staunch, if possible, the bleeding. But it was soon apparent that all such attempts would be useless, and only tend to aggravate the pain without leading to any desirable result, so long as the clothing was allowed to remain on. The better course seemed to be to remove him immediately to the hut. As gently, therefore, as possible, the old man bore him to the boat, and deposited him upon its bottom. A few strokes of the paddle sent it back again to the island, and soon the wounded stranger was lying on a rude, but welcome bed. Here the first thing to be done was to divest him of his coat and such other clothing as hid the wound. Having performed this duty, which was done by cutting off the coat and tearing the under garments, the next care of the old man was, in the best manner in his power, to apply bandages to stop the blood, which trickled from the right side and shoulder. This was done with no little skill, as by one who did not then see a gun-shot wound for the first time. The process was accompanied by an occasional groan, when the bandages pressed the wounded parts too closely, which the sufferer seemed to try to suppress, appearing, at the same time, to endeavor to express his thanks, by a smile and the soft glances of his eyes. Any attempt at exertion was instantly repressed by his kind nurse, who never failed, when it occurred, to enjoin quiet.

“Thou art weak from loss of blood, young man,” he said, “but I am mistaken if there is much danger. Yet, a narrow escape hast thou had. Be thankful to that Providence, by whom the hairs of thy head are all numbered, and who permitteth not a sparrow to fall without notice to the ground, for so directing the shot that they only tore the outer flesh, without reaching a vital part. And so, hereafter, when the evils of life shall assail thee, may they penetrate no deeper than the surface, nor affect thy immortal soul.”

Here the young man made a motion, as if about to speak, but he was interrupted by the other.

“Nay,” said the Recluse, “thou must obey me for thy own good, and I have forbid all speech. It will start the blood, and weaken thee still more. Compose thyself, now, while I leave thee but for an instant, to discover, if I can, a boat going to Hillsdale.”

We will avail ourselves of the absence of the Recluse to describe the interior of the hut and its occupant. And to begin with the latter—he was a dark-haired youth, of twenty-one or two years of age, the natural paleness of whose complexion was enhanced as well by the raven color of his hair as by the loss of blood. His features were quite regular, and surmounted by a brow rather high than broad. The eyes were the most remarkable, and commanded instant attention. They were large, black and flashing, and, in spite of the injunctions of the old man, wide open and roving round the

apartment. By the manner in which he had been addressed, it was evident he was unknown.

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The chamber itself was a square of about fifteen feet, or one-half of the hut, with a fire-place made of large stones and bricks, and lighted by one window, and was lathed and plastered. Its furniture consisted of the bed above mentioned, lying on a low pine frame, originally painted red, but now somewhat defaced and worn; of a couple of basket-bottomed chairs; a stone jar, to contain water; a rifle and powder-horn, supported by two nails driven into the wall; a pine table, and a set of shelves filled with books. This was the back-room, and opened into another of the same size, differing from the former in having no fire-place and being not lathed. This latter room was destitute of furniture, unless a work-bench, on which were a few tools; a chopping-block, made of the segment of the body of a large tree; a cooper's horse; a couple of oyster rakes and some fishing-rods, could be called such. In two of the corners stood bundles of hickory poles, and on the floor were scattered a quantity of withes, designed, apparently, for basket-making. These articles had, probably, some connection with the pursuits of the tenant of the hut. On the walls, on pegs, hung a number of baskets, of different sizes—some finished, and some in an unfinished condition.

The Recluse, upon leaving his guest, proceeded to the west side of the little island, and cast a searching glance in every direction, to ascertain if any one were in sight. No boat was visible, and he immediately retraced his steps.

Noiselessly he stole back to the couch of his guest, whom he found apparently asleep, though, in truth, the slumber was simulated out of deference to the anxieties of the old man. Several times he passed backwards and forwards from the chamber to the door before he had the satisfaction to find the object of his search. At length, a canoe was discovered coming up the river, containing two persons, who, on nearer approach, were seen to be Indians, a man and a woman, belonging to the remnant of a tribe, lingering about their ancient hunting-grounds along the banks of the river. The game, indeed, that once abounded in the woods, had disappeared, and the blue stream and swelling hills, and green plains, and intrusive industry and increasing villages of the whites, but reminded them of present weakness and former power. But, the sensibility to degradation was blunted. They had, gradually, become assimilated to their condition; the river abounded in shell and other fish; they could maintain existence, scanty and mean though it was, and they preferred this certainty to the nobler, but more precarious life of the Western tribes. As the canoe approached, the Recluse beckoned with his hand, and the bow was turned towards the islet.

"Welcome, Esther," he said, "goest thou to the town?"

A silent nod of the head was the reply.

"Wilt thou carry me a message?"

A nod of acquiescence answered as before.

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"Go, then, quickly, and tell John Elmer, that a man, wounded by a gun, is lying in my hut, and I desire him to come instantly."

The squaw again nodded, and, without making an inquiry, with the natural apathy of her race, she said—

"What Father Holden say, I do."

The Indian, who, until now, had been silent, here addressed her in his own tongue.

"Can the Partridge," he said, "use her wings to no better purpose than to fly upon the errands of her white master?"

"Ohquamehud," said the squaw, "is a wise warrior, and his eyes are sharp, but they see not into the heart of a woman. If the sunshine and the rain fall upon the ground, shall it bring forth no fruit?"

"It is well," said the Indian, in a sarcastic tone; "Peena is well named; and the Partridge, though the daughter of a Sachem, shall flutter through the air to do the bidding of the white man."

The eyes of Peena, or the Partridge, flashed, and she was about to return an angry reply, when she was prevented by the man whom she had called Father Holden.

"Hasten!" he said, in the same language, forgetting himself, in the excitement of the moment, and unconsciously using the same figurative diction, "or the fountain of the red stream may be dried up before the medicine-man comes. Hasten! It is noble to do good, and the Great Spirit shall bless the deed."

Great was the astonishment of the Indians at discovering they had been understood, and hearing themselves addressed in their own tongue. But only an expressive hugh! and an involuntary stroke of the paddle, which sent the canoe dancing over the water, betrayed their surprise. Holden stood for a moment gazing after them, then turning, directed his steps towards the hut. We will not follow him, but pursue the departing Indians.

For five minutes, perhaps, they paddled on in silence, each apparently unwilling to betray any curiosity about a circumstance that engrossed the thoughts of both. At last the woman spoke.

"The Great Spirit has taught the words of the wigwam to the man with the Long Beard."

A shrug of the shoulders and another hugh! were the only notice taken by her companion of the observation. Again a silence followed, which was broken this time by the man. As if to express his dissent from the conjecture of the squaw, he said,

“The Long Beard has drunk of the streams that run towards the setting sun, and there he learned the speech of warriors. Did he charm the ears of Peena with their sounds when he taught her to run his errands?”

The blood crimsoned deeper into the cheeks of the woman, but with an effort she subdued the rising feeling of resentment, while she answered,

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“Let Ohquamehud listen, and the darkness shall depart from his path. The sun has eaten the snows of fifteen winters, and fifteen times the song of the summer birds have been silent since the Long Beard came to the river of the Pequots. And the pale faces desired his companionship, but he turned away his steps from theirs, and built his wigwam on the Salmon Isle, for the heart of the Long Beard was lonely. There he speaks to the Great Spirit in the morning clouds. The young cub that sprung from the loins of Huttamoiden had already put on his moccasins for the Spirit land, and the tears of Peena were falling fast when the Long Beard came to her wigwam. And he stretched his arms over the boy and asked of the Great Spirit that he might stay to lead his mother by the hand when she should be old and blind, and to pluck the thorns from her feet. And the Great Spirit listened, for he loves the Long Beard, and unloosed the moccasins from the feet of the boy, and the fire in his breath went out, and he slept, and was well. Therefore is Peena a bird to fly with the messages of the Long Beard. But this is the first time she has heard from white lips the language of the red man.”

The Indian could now comprehend the conduct of the woman. It was natural she should be grateful to the savior of her child's life, and ready to show the feeling by the little means in her power. Could he have looked into her heart, he would have seen that there was more than mere gratitude there. Holden's conduct, so different from that of other white men; the disinterested nature of his character showing itself in acts of kindness to all; his seclusion; his gravity, which seldom admitted of a smile; his imposing appearance, and his mysterious communings with some unseen power—for she had often seen him as he stood to watch for the rising sun, and heard his wild bursts of devotion—had made a deep impression on the squaw, and invested him with the attributes of a superior being; a feeling which was participated in by many of the Indians.

But if Ohquamehud could have seen all this, it would have served only to aggravate the suspicions he begun to entertain about the Long Beard, as he and the woman called Holden. As an Indian, he was suspicious of even the kindness of the white man, lest some evil design might lurk beneath. What wonder, when we consider the relation of one to the other? How much of our history is that of the wolf, who charged the lamb, who drank below him, with muddying the stream?

Ohquamehud, a Pequot by birth, was a stranger who, but a few days before, had come from a Western tribe, into which he had been adopted, either to visit the graves of his fathers, or for some of those thousand causes of relationship, or friendship, or policy, which will induce the North American Indian to journey hundreds of miles, and saw the Recluse, for the first time, that morning. If the gratitude of the squaw was explained, which, he doubted not, was undeserved, the

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Long Beard's knowledge of the Indian tongue was not. How it was that he should be thus familiar with and speak it with a grace and fluency beyond the power of the few scattered members of the tribe in the neighborhood, the most of whom had almost lost all remembrance of it, was to him an interesting mystery. He mused in silence over his thoughts, occasionally stopping the paddle and passing his hand over his brow, as if to recall some circumstance or idea that constantly eluded his grasp. In this manner they proceeded until, on turning a high point of land, the little village of Hillsdale appeared in sight.

Those who see now that handsome town, for the first time, can have but little idea of its appearance then. But, though the large brick stores that line its wharves, and the costly mansions of modern times, clustering one above the other on the hill-sides, and its fine churches of granite and Portland stone, were not to be seen, yet, it was even then a place that could not fail to attract attention.

The situation is one of exceeding beauty. Two bright streams—the Wootupocut, whose name indicates its character, its meaning being “clear water,” and the Yaupaae, or “margin of a river,” which, why it should be so called it is not as easy to explain, unite their waters to form the noble Severn. It is a pity that the good taste which preserved the original names of the two first, had not also retained the title of the last—the Sakimau, or Sachem, or chief, by which it was known to the Indians. It is possible the first settlers in the country thought, that allowing two rivers to retain their aboriginal appellations was a sufficient tribute to good taste, while they made the change of name of the third an offering to affection, many of them having drawn their first breath on the pleasant banks of the English river Severn. It was on the tongue of land, or promontory, formed by the confluence of the two rivers that composed the Severn, that the principal part of the town was situated.

On the promontory facing the south, and rising boldly from the water, the white-painted village ascended half-way up its sides, its two principal streets sweeping away, in curving lines, round the base, upward to a piece of level land, into which the north side of the hill gently declined. At the most northern part of this level, the two streets united, at a distance of a mile from the wharves, into one which thence winded a devious course two or three miles further along the Yaupaae. Above the highest roofs and steeples, towered the green summit of the hill, whose thick-growing evergreens presented, at all seasons, a coronal of verdure. One who stood on the top could see come rushing in from the east, through a narrow throat, and between banks that rose in height as they approached the town, the swift Wootupocut, soon to lose both its hurry and its name in the deeper and more tranquil Severn, of which it is the principal tributary, while on the west he beheld, gliding like

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a silver snake through green meadows, the gentle Yaupaae, lingering, as if it loved the fields through which it wandered, until suddenly quickening its pace, with a roar as of angry vexation, it precipitated itself in eddies of boiling foam, whose mist rose high into the air, down a deep gorge, between overhanging rocks, through which it had forced a passage. Thence the stream, subsiding into sudden tranquillity, expanded into a cove dotted with two or three little islands, and flowing round the base of the hill which declined gradually towards the west, united itself with the Wootupput. Far beneath his feet he saw the roofs of the houses, and steeples of churches, and masts of sloops, employed in the coasting business, and of brigs engaged in the West India trade, and noticed a communication, partly bridge and partly causey, thrown over the mouth of the Yaupaae and uniting the opposite banks; for, on the western side, along the margin and up the hill, houses were thickly scattered.

The canoe soon glided alongside of one of the wharves, and the Indians disappeared in the streets.

CHAPTER II.

With us there was a Doctor of Physic:
In all this world ne was there none him like,
To speak of physic and of surgery.

* * * * *

He knew the cause of every malady,
Were it of cold, or hot, or moist, or dry,
And where engendered, and of what humor:
He was a very perfect practiser.
The cause y know, and of his harm the root,
Anon he gave to the sick man his boot.

Chaucer.

The first care of the faithful Peena or Esther, was to seek the doctor. She found him at home, and was instantly admitted to his presence.

“Queen Esther,” he exclaimed, the moment he saw her, “is it thou? Welcome, descendant of a line of kings. Would’st like some cider?” He spoke the word “cider” like the Indians, with a rising inflection on the last syllable. It was an offer no Indian could resist, and the squaw answered simply in the affirmative. From a pitcher of the grateful beverage, which shortly before had been brought into the room, and which, indeed,

suggested the offer, the doctor filled a foaming glass, and the squaw was not long in draining its contents, after which she delivered herself of her errand.

“Esther,” exclaimed the doctor, rising and hastening to collect his instruments and medicine pouch, “thou hast circumvented me. Why did you not tell me before? Here have I been pouring cider into your royal gullet, when I should have hastened to take a bullet out of some plebeian carcass. Can you tell me the name of the wounded man?”

The squaw shook her head, and only said, “Esther not know.”

By this time his preparations were completed, which he had not allowed the conversation to interrupt, and closely followed by the woman, he hastened to the wharf. Here casting an eye to the flags that waved from the masts of some of the vessels, and observing the wind was fair, he rejected her offer to take him in the canoe, and throwing himself into a little sail-boat, was soon busily engaged in untying the sails. While thus employed a voice saluted his ears:

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"Why, doctor, what is in the wind now?"

The person who thus addressed him was a young man of probably not more than twenty-five years of age. His dress indicated that he belonged to the wealthier class of citizens, and there was something pleasing in his manners and address.

"Glad to see you, William," said the doctor. "I want a crew; come, ship for a cruise."

"But where away, doctor?"

"To Holden's island, to visit a wounded man. Jump aboard, and tend jib-sheets."

By this time the sails were hoisted, and, the young man complying with the invitation, the little craft was soon under weigh, and rapidly proceeding down the river. The distance was only three or four miles, and quickly passed over. They were met on the beach by Holden, to whom the gentlemen were both known, but he was unable to inform them of the name of the wounded man. As soon as the doctor beheld him, however, he exclaimed:

"It is Mr. Pownal. God forbid the hurt should be serious."

The countenance of the doctor's companion, and the few words he uttered, denoted also recognition of the stranger.

"So, my poor fellow," said the doctor, as the sufferer extended a hand, and expressed in a few words his pleasure at the coming of the two, "that is enough, I claim a monopoly of the talking."

He proceeded at once to examine the wound, which he did with great care and in silence. He found, as Holden had said, that the charge had only grazed the surface, tearing the flesh from the side up to the shoulder, pretty deeply, indeed, but making an ugly, rather than a dangerous wound. After the task was completed, and lint and fresh bandages were applied, the doctor sunk with a sigh, as of relief, upon a chair, and assured the young man that he only needed rest for the present, and in a day or two might return to his friends.

"I would rather lose six ordinary patients than you, Tom Pownal," he said. "Why you are my beau ideal of a merchant, the Ionic capital of the pillar of trade. Now, let not your mind be

'Tossing on the ocean;
There, where your argosies with portly sail,
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood;
Or, as it were the pageants of the sea,
Do overpower the petty traffickers.'

Quiet, my dear boy, both of mind and body, are your indispensables. I want you to understand that:

‘I tell thee what, Antonio—
love thee, and It is my love that speaks.’”

Pownal promised to be very obedient, in consideration whereof the doctor guaranteed he should receive great satisfaction from his wound. “You shall see for yourself,” he said, “how beautifully it will heal. To a scientific eye, and under my instruction you shall get one, there is something delightful in witnessing the granulations. We may say of Nature, as Dr. Watts sings of the honey-bee:

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'How skillfully she builds her cell,
How neat she stores the wax!'

I consider you a fortunate fellow."

The young men were obliged to smile at the doctor's way of viewing the subject; but he paid little attention to their mirth.

"And I will remain, meanwhile, with you," said William Bernard, which was the name of the gentleman who had accompanied the physician, addressing himself to Pownal, "if our good friend,"—and here he looked at Holden—"has no objection."

The Recluse signified his assent; and Pownal, thanking his friend, the doctor gave his sanction to the arrangement.

"It will do you no harm, William," he said, "to rough it for a night or two, and you will prove yourself thereby of a different stamp from Timon's friends." And here the doctor, who loved to quote poetry, especially Shakspeare's, better than to administer medicine, indulged again in his favorite habit:

"As we do turn our backs
From our companion thrown into his grave,
So his familiars, to his buried fortunes,
Slink all away; leave their false vows with him,
Like empty purses picked, and his poor self
A dedicated beggar to the air.'

But, Mr. Holden, lend me thy ears a moment, and thy tongue, too, if you please, for you must tell me how this happened. I do not care to disturb Pownal with the inquiry."

So saying, he walked out of the chamber, followed by the Recluse.

"Tell me first," said Holden, as they stood in the open air, "what thou thinkest of the wound."

"Ha!" cried the doctor, "'tis not so deep as a well nor so wide as a church door; but 'tis enough—'twill serve."

"What!" exclaimed the Recluse, "hast thou been deceiving the boy! But no, thou art incapable of that; and, besides, I have seen too many wounds to apprehend danger from this."

"I see, friend, you have read Shakspeare to some purpose," cried the doctor; "but know that I spoke not in the sense in which Mercutio speaks of the wound that Tybalt gave him. My mirth is not so grave as poor Mercutio's. Look you, now, I told you but the



simple truth, and what your own eyes have seen. The wound *is not* so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door. If it were—admitting the physical possibility—Pownal would be a monster to look at, and no dressings of mine would be of any use. And it is enough, too. You would not have it more. Besides, 'twill serve; that is, to keep him a day or two in your cabin. And herein consists one of the innumerable excellences of Shakspeare. Every sentence is as full of matter as my saddle-bags of medicine. Why, I will engage to pick out as many meanings in each as there are plums in a pudding. But, friend, I am sure you must have a copy. Let me see it."

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"I know little of these vanities," replied Holden. "In my giddy youth, I drank such follies, even as the ass sucketh up the east wind. But it pleased the Lord to open mine eyes. In thoughts from the visions of the night," he continued—and his eyes shone brighter, and his stature seemed to increase—"when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a vision passed before me, and the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes—there was silence, and then I heard a voice saying, 'Behold, I come quickly; watch and pray, for thou knowest not the day nor the hour!' I was not disobedient to the heavenly warning, and thenceforth the pomps and vanities of the world have been as the dust beneath my feet."

This was not the first time that the doctor heard the Recluse speak of his peculiar opinions; but, although always ready to avow and dilate upon them when others were willing to listen, he had uniformly manifested an unwillingness to allude to himself or the incidents of his life. Whenever, heretofore, as sometimes happened, the curiosity of his auditors led the conversation in that direction, he had invariably evaded all hints and repulsed every inquiry. But his mood seemed different to-day. Elmer was a friend whom Holden highly prized, and he could therefore speak the more freely in his presence; but this is not sufficient to account for the dropping of his reserve. We know no other explanation than that there are times when the heart of every one is opened, and longs to unburden itself, and this was one of them that unsealed the lips of the Solitary.

"Is it long since the revelation?" inquired the doctor.

"Too long," said Holden, "did I wander in the paths of sin, and in forgetfulness of my God, and my youth was wasted in that which satisfieth not, neither doth it profit. My heart was very hard, and it rose up in rebellion against the Lord. Then it pleased Him (blessed be His holy name) to bray me in the mortar of affliction, and to crush me between the upper and the nether millstone. Yet I heeded not; and, like Nebuchadnezzar, my mind was hardened in pride, continually. Then, as the King of Babylon was driven forth from the sons of men, and his heart made like the beasts', and his dwelling was with the wild asses, and they fed him with grass, like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, even so did the Spirit drive me forth into the tabernacles of the wild men of the forest and the prairie, and I sojourned with them many days. But He doth not always chide, neither keepeth He His anger for ever. In His own good time, He snatched me from the fiery furnace, and bade me here wait for His salvation; and here, years, long years, have I looked for His promise. O, Lord, how long!"

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The doctor's question was unanswered, either because Holden forgot it, in his excitement, or that he was incapable of giving any accurate account of the passage of time. But thus much the doctor could gather from his incoherent account, that, at some period of his life, he had suffered a great calamity, which had affected his reason. In this condition, he had probably joined the Indians, and passed several years among them, and afterwards, upon a partial restoration of intellect, adopted the wild notions he professed. What had passed during those years, was a secret known only to himself, if, indeed, the events had not disappeared from his memory.

"You have suffered bitterly," said the doctor.

"Talk not of suffering," exclaimed Holden. "I reckon all that man can endure as not to be compared with the crown of glory that awaits him who shall gain entrance into the Kingdom. What is this speck we call life? Mark," he continued, taking up a pebble and dropping it into the water, "it is like the bubble that rises to burst, or the sound of my voice that dies as soon away. Thereon waste I not a thought, except to prepare me for the coming of my Lord."

"You think, then, this solitary life the best preparation you can make for the next?"

"Yes," said Holden; "I work not my own will. Can the clay say to the potter, what doest thou? Behold, I am in the hand of One wiser and mightier than I. Nor hath he left me without duties to perform. I am one crying in the wilderness, and though the people heed not, yet must the faithful witness cry. I have a work to perform, and how is my soul straitened until it be done? Canst thou not thyself see, by what hath happened to-day, some reason why the solitary is upon his lonely island? Had he loved the crowded haunts of men, a fellow-being had, perhaps, perished."

The allusion to the occurrence of the morning recalled the doctor's attention to the purpose for which he had left the chamber, and which he had forgotten, in listening to the talk of the enthusiast. He now directed the conversation to the subject of the wound, and heard Holden's account. He became convinced, both from his statement, and from a few words Pownal himself had dropped, as well as from the sight of the gun which Holden had picked up, and found just discharged, that the wounding was accidental, and occasioned by the young man's own fowling-piece. Having satisfied himself on this point, the doctor, with his companion, re-entered the hut. It was only to give a few parting directions to Bernard, to enjoin quiet upon his patient, and to take leave of him, which he did, in the words of his favorite—

"Fare thee well!

The elements be kind to thee, and make

Thy spirits all of comfort."

CHAPTER III.

Ici il fallut que j'en divinasse plus qu'on ne m'en disoit.
MEMOIRES de Sully.

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A week after the events narrated in the preceding chapters, a small company was collected in a parlor of one of the houses of Hillsdale. It consisted of a gentleman, of some fifty years of age; his wife, a fine-looking matron, some years his junior; their daughter, a bright blue-eyed flaxen-haired girl, rounding into the most graceful form of womanhood, and a young man, who is not entirely a stranger to us.

The judgment of the doctor, respecting the wound of Pownal—for it is he—had proved to be correct, and, on the second day after the hurt, he had returned to the village, with his friend William Bernard, in the house of whose father he was, for the present, domiciliated. The young men had been acquainted before, and the accident seemed to have established a sort of intimacy between them. It was, therefore, with no feeling of reluctance, that Pownal accepted an invitation to desert his boarding-house for a while, for the hospitality of his friend. Perhaps, his decision was a little influenced by the remembrance of the blue eyes of Miss Bernard, and of the pleasant effect which, from their first acquaintance, they had exerted upon him. However that may be, it is certain, that, although somewhat paler than usual, he appeared to be quite contented with his condition.

It was evening, and candles were lighted, and Mr. Bernard, or as he was more commonly, or, indeed, almost universally, called, Judge Bernard, from having been one of the judges of the Superior Court, was sitting in an arm-chair, reading a newspaper; Mrs. Bernard was busy with her knitting; the young lady employed upon one of those pieces of needle-work, which, in those days, were seldom out of female hands, and Pownal looking at her all he dared, and listening to an occasional paragraph read by the Judge from his newspaper.

“You are the cause of quite a sensation in our little community, Thomas,” said the Judge, laying down his spectacles and newspaper at the same time. “Mr. Editor Peters and the gossips ought to be infinitely obliged to you for wounding yourself, and affording him an opportunity to display his inventive genius and the brilliancy of his imagination, and giving them something to talk about. Here, Anne, read the article aloud for our edification.”

The young lady ran her eye hastily down the column, and could not restrain her laughter.

“Excuse me, papa,” she said, “it is too much for my poor nerves. Only think of it; Mr. Peters loads Mr. Pownal’s gun with sixteen buck-shot, topples him off a precipice twenty feet high, breaks three of his ribs, and makes a considerable incision in his skull. Never was there such a wonderful escape. It is too horrible.”

“How the newspapers are given to big stories!” said Mrs. Bernard.

“I dare say,” cried Anne, “the editor has authority for what he says, for now that my attention is drawn to it, I think there must be something in the incision. Have you not remarked, mamma, that Mr. Pownal is at times light-headed?”

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"Anne!" exclaimed her mother, smiling, "I am ashamed to hear a young girl rattle on so."

"I am not aware of being more light-headed than usual," said Pownal, "but I am certain no one can be in Miss Bernard's company, and not be light-hearted."

"Very prettily spoken! Mr. Thomas Pownal is practising his wit upon a country maiden, in order to be in training when he returns to open the campaign among the New York ladies."

"I am too happy here," said Pownal, in a low tone, "to wish to return to the city."

An almost imperceptible blush suffused the cheeks of Miss Bernard. She looked up from the newspaper, but her eyes encountering those of the young man, instantly fell.

"What fine speeches are you making to one another?" broke in the Judge. "My dear, do not hold down your head. It throws the blood into your face."

"Papa," cried his daughter, desirous to divert attention from herself, "can you find nothing instructing in the paper to read to us? Is there no report of any speech?"

"Speeches, indeed! Thank Heaven, there is no speech in this paper. The session of Congress has not commenced, and the deluge of words, in comparison with which Noah's flood was a summer's shower, therefore, not begun. Why, my dear little daughter, do you remind me of the national calamity?"

"To atone for the offence, papa, let me tell you that Mr. Armstrong and Faith promised to come to see us this evening, and from the sound of the opening of the front gate, I suspect they are close at hand."

Anne's conjecture proved true, for shortly after the expected visitors were announced, and the usual greetings having passed, they were all soon seated.

But before proceeding further, it may not be amiss to give some description of persons destined to play a not unimportant part in our story.

Mr. Armstrong was of middle age, of the ordinary stature, and with a face which still possessed great beauty. A noble brow, hair originally black, but prematurely grey, large dark eyes, a straight nose, and a well-formed mouth, over which played an expression of benevolence, made an exterior of exceeding attractiveness, and it would have been an unmixed pleasure to gaze upon his gracious presence, but for an air of dejection amounting to suffering, which had of late been increasing upon him. He seldom smiled, and when he did the smile was often succeeded by a dark shadow, as if he felt compunction for trespassing on the precincts of gaiety.

Faith strongly resembled her father, as well in externals as in the character of her mind. Her figure was slender, approaching even to delicacy, though without any appearance of sickliness. Her face, pale and thoughtful usually, was sometimes lighted up with an enthusiasm more angelic than human. Her mother having died when she was too young to appreciate the loss, she had concentrated upon her father all that love which is generally divided between two parents. Nor was it with a feeling of love only she regarded him. With it was mixed a sentiment of reverence amounting almost to idolatry. No opinion, no thought, no word, no look of his but had for her a value. And richly was the affection of the child returned by the father, and proud was he of her, notwithstanding his struggles against the feeling as something sinful.

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It was the first time since the accident to Pownal that Mr. Armstrong or his daughter had seen him, and the conversation naturally turned upon the danger he had incurred.

"It was a providential escape," said Mr. Armstrong. "It is astonishing how many dangers we run into, and our escapes may be considered as so many daily miracles to prove the interposition of a controlling Providence. There are few persons who cannot look back upon several such in the course of their lives."

"You are right, my friend," said the Judge. "I can recall half a dozen in my own experience; and if some have had fewer, some, doubtless, have had more."

"These accidents are, I suspect, the consequences of our own carelessness in nine cases out of ten," said Pownal. "At any rate, I am sure it was my carelessness that occasioned mine."

"You speak as if it could have been avoided," said Mr. Armstrong.

"Certainly. Do you not think so?"

"I am not sure of it," said Mr. Armstrong. "There appears to be a chain which links events together in an inevitable union. The very carelessness of which you accuse yourself may be the means purposely used to bring about important events."

"It has brought about very agreeable events for me," said Pownal. "I am only afraid, from the care lavished upon me, I shall be tempted to think too much of myself."

"It has scattered pleasure all around, then," said Mrs. Bernard, kindly.

"Yes," said the Judge; "any attention we can render is more than repaid by the pleasure Mr. Pownal's presence imparts. If he should ever think more highly of himself than we do, he will be a very vain person."

The young man could only bow, and with a gratified countenance return his thanks for their kindness.

"Your adventure was also the means," said Mr. Armstrong, "of making you acquainted with our anchorite. Did you not find him an interesting person?"

"More than interesting," replied Pownal. "From the moment he took me into his arms as if I had been a child, and with all the tenderness of a mother, I felt strangely attracted to him. I shall always remember with pleasure the two days I spent in his cabin, and mean to cultivate his acquaintance if he will permit me."

"He is evidently a man of refinement and education," said Armstrong, "who, for reasons of his own, has adopted his peculiar mode of life. It was a long time before I could be

said to be acquainted with him, but the more I know him, the better I like him. He and Faith are great friends.”

“I value his friendship highly and am glad he made so favorable an impression on you, Mr. Pownal,” said Faith.

“I do believe,” cried Anne, “Faith could not reverence him more if he were one of the old prophets.”

“If not a prophet,” said Faith, “he is at least a noble and good man, and that is the highest title to respect. He takes an interest in you, too, Mr. Pownal, for Anne tells me he has been to see you.”

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"My preserver has been here several times to make inquiries after my health," answered Pownal. "He was here this morning."

"And preaching about the kingdom," said Judge Bernard. "What a strange infatuation to look for the end of the world each day."

"He errs in the interpretation of the prophecies," said Mr. Armstrong, "when he finds in them prognostics of the speedy destruction of the world, but does he mistake the personal application? Who knows when he may be called to face his judge? Youth, and health, and strength, furnish no immunity against death."

"But what a gloom this daily expectation of an event which the wisest and stoutest hearted are unable to contemplate without trepidation, casts over life," said the Judge.

"Not in his case," replied Armstrong. "On the contrary, I am satisfied he would hail it with a song of thanksgiving, and I think I have observed he is sometimes impatient of the delay."

"It is well his notions are only crazy fancies as absurd as his beard. His appearance is very heathenish," said Mrs. Bernard.

"Taste, my dear," exclaimed the Judge, "all taste. Why, I have a great mind to wear a beard myself. It would be a prodigious comfort to dispense with the razor in cold winter mornings, to say nothing of the ornament. And now that I think of it, it is just the season to begin."

"You would look like a bear, Mr. Bernard," said his wife.

"It would be too near an imitation of the old Puritans for you, Judge," said Faith.

"You, at least, my little Puritan," cried the Judge, "would not object. But do not fancy that in avoiding Scylla I *must* run upon Charybdis. Be sure I would not imitate the trim moustaches and peaked chins of those old dandies, Winthrop and Endicott. I prefer the full flowing style of Wykliffe and Cranmer."

"We should then have two Holdens," exclaimed Mrs. Bernard, "and that would be more than our little village could live through."

"Fancy papa running an opposition beard against Mr. Holden!" said Anne.

The idea was sufficiently ludicrous to occasion a general laugh, and even Armstrong smiled.

"I am a happy man," said the Judge; "not only mirthful, myself, but the cause of mirth in others. What a beam of light is a smile, what a glory like a sunrise is a laugh!"

“That will do, Judge Bernard, that will do,” said his wife; “do not try again, for you cannot jump so high twice.”

“Tut, tut, Mary; what do you know about the higher poetics? I defy you to find such sublimities either in Milton or Dante.”

“I can easily believe it,” said Mrs. Bernard.

At this moment some other visitors entering the room, the conversation took another turn; and Mr. Armstrong and his daughter having remained a short time longer, took leave and returned home. Let us follow the departing visitors.

Upon his return, Mr. Armstrong sank upon a seat with an air of weariness.

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"Come, Faith," he said, "and sit by me and hold my hand. I have been thinking this evening of the insensibility of the world to their condition. How few perceive the precipice on the edge of which they stand!"

His daughter, who was accustomed to these sombre reflections, bent over, and bringing his hand to her lips, kissed it without saying anything, knowing that he would soon explain himself more perfectly.

"Which," continued Armstrong, "is wiser, the thoughtless frivolity of Judge Bernard, or the sad watchfulness of Holden?"

"I am not competent to judge, dear father; but if they both act according to their convictions of right, are they not doing their duty?"

"You ask a difficult question. To be sure men must act according to their ideas of right, but let them beware how they get them, and what they are. Yet, can one choose his ideas? These things puzzle me?"

"What else can we do," inquired his daughter, "than live by the light we have? Surely I cannot be responsible for my involuntary ignorance."

"How far we may be the cause of the ignorance we call involuntary, it is impossible to determine. A wrong act, an improper thought, belonging to years ago and even repented of since, may project its dark shadow into the present, and pervert the judgment. We are fearfully made."

"Why pain yourself, dearest father, with speculations of this character? Our Maker knows our weakness and will pardon our infirmities."

"I am an illustration of the subject of our conversation," continued Armstrong, after a pause of a few minutes, during which he had remained meditating, with his head resting on his hand. "I know I would not, willingly, harshly judge another—for who authorized me to pass sentence? Yet these ideas would force themselves into my mind; and how have I spoken of our kind and excellent neighbor! There is something wrong in myself which I must struggle to correct."

We communicate only enough of the conversation to give an idea of the state of Mr. Armstrong's mind at the time. At the usual family devotions that night he prayed fervently for forgiveness of his error, repeatedly upbraiding himself with presumption and uncharitableness, and entreating that he might not be left to his own vain imaginations.



CHAPTER IV.

O! I could whisper thee a tale,
That surely would thy pity move,
But what would idle words avail,
Unless the heart might speak its love?

To tell that tale my pen were weak,
My tongue its office, too, denies,
Then mark it on my varying cheek,
And read it in my languid eyes.
Anonymous.

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After the expiration of a fortnight, Pownal could find no excuses to satisfy even himself with remaining longer at Judge Bernard's. The visit had been, indeed, one of great enjoyment, and gladly would he have availed himself of the pressing invitation of his host to prolong it, could he have conjured up any reason for doing so. Lightly would he have esteemed and cheerfully welcomed another wound like that from which he was recovering, could the pleasure have been thus purchased. The truth is that within a few days he had been conscious of a feeling of which he had never before suspected himself, and it was this feeling that made him so reluctant to depart. And yet, when, in the silence of his chamber, and away from the blue eyes of Anne Bernard, he reflected upon his position, he was obliged to confess, with a sigh, that prudence required he should leave a society as dangerous as it was sweet. To be in the same house with her, to breathe the same air, to read the same books, to hear her voice was a luxury it was hard to forego, but in proportion to the difficulty was the necessity. Besides he could not avoid fancying that young Bernard, though not cold, was hardly as cordial as formerly, and that he would regard with satisfaction a separation from his sister. Nor had he reason to suppose that she looked upon him with feelings other than those which she entertained for any other acquaintance standing to her in the same relation as himself. Beyond the ordinary compliments and little attentions which the manners of the day permitted, nothing had passed between them, and though satisfied he was not an object of aversion, he knew as well that she had never betrayed any partiality for him. Meanwhile, his own feelings were becoming interested, beyond, perhaps, the power of control, the sooner, therefore, he weaned himself from the delightful fascination, the better for his peace of mind.

Thomas Pownal was comparatively a stranger in the neighborhood, only two or three months having elapsed since he had been sent by the mercantile firm of Bloodgood, Pownal, & Co., of New York, to take charge of a branch of their business at Hillsdale. Even in that short space of time, by his affable manners and attention to business he had won his way to the respect and esteem of the good people of the town, and was looked upon as one likely to succeed in the lottery of life. No one was more welcome, by reason of his amiable character, to those of his own age, while his steadiness recommended him to his elders. But his family was unknown, though he was supposed to be a distant relation of the second member of the firm, nor had he any visible means of subsistence except the very respectable salary, which, as a confidential clerk, he received from his employers, on whom his prospects of success depended. The chasm, therefore, betwixt the only daughter of the wealthy Mr. Bernard and himself, was wide—wide enough to check even an overweening confidence. But such it was not in the nature of Pownal to feel. He was sensible of the full force of the difficulties he had to encounter; to his modesty they seemed insuperable, and he determined to drive from his heart a sentiment that, in his despondency, he blamed himself for allowing to find a place there.

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It took him some days to form the resolution, and after it was formed, it was not easy to carry it into effect. More than once he had been on the point of returning thanks for the kindness he had received, and avowing his intention to depart, but it seemed as if the veriest trifle were sufficient to divert him from his purpose. If Mr. Bernard spoke of the satisfaction he derived from his company, if Mrs. Bernard declared she should miss him when he left; or if Anne's radiant face looked thanks for his reading aloud, they were all so many solicitations to delay his departure. The treacherous heart readily listened to the seduction, however much the judgment might disapprove. But, as we have seen, a time had come when the voice of prudence could no longer be silenced, and, however unwillingly, must be obeyed. He, therefore, took occasion, one morning, at the breakfast table, to announce his intended departure.

"Had I been a son," he said, in conclusion, "you could not have lavished more kindness upon me, and I shall never forget it."

"What! what!" cried the Judge, "I am not sure that the shooting one's self is aailable offence, and I shall be obliged to examine the authorities, before I discharge you from custody, Master Thomas."

"To think," said Mrs. Bernard, "it does not seem a week since you came, and we have all been so happy. I declare, Mr. Pownal, I shall not know how to do without you."

"The dearest friends must part—but we shall always be glad to see you, Tom," said William Bernard.

"I do not see the necessity for your going," said the Judge. "Our house is large enough for all; your attacks at table are not yet very formidable; and I have not taught you whist perfectly. Would it not be better to substitute a *curia vult avisare* in place of a decision? But, Anne, have you nothing to say? Is this your gratitude for all Thomas's martyrdoms of readings of I know not what unimaginable nonsense; and holdings of skeins of silk, more difficult to unwind than the labyrinth through which Ariadne's thread conducted Theseus; and pickings up of whatever your feminine carelessness chose to drop on the carpet; and endurance of all the legions of annoyances with which young ladies delight to harass young gentlemen? Have you no backing for your mother and me? One word from you ought to be worth a thousand from us old folks."

"Mr. Pownal owes me some gratitude, too, father," said Anne, "for the patience and accomplishments I have taught him. But he surely knows how much pleasure his presence confers on all in this house. We shall miss him very much, shall we not, Beau?"—addressing a little spaniel that, upon being spoken to, sat up on his hind legs to beg for breakfast.

"I have several times endeavored to say this before," said Pownal, somewhat piqued, and feeling a strong desire to kick the innocent cur out of the room, "but have never

been able to muster sufficient courage. And now, if my thanks appear cold, as I am afraid they do to Miss Bernard, I assure her it is not the fault of my heart, but of my tongue."

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"Hearts and tongues!" exclaimed the Judge. "The former belong to the ladies' department; the latter to mine. Yet, I fancy I know something about hearts, too; and yours, Thomas, I am sure, is adequate security for your words."

"You are very good, sir," said Pownal, "and I can only wish that all participated in your undeserved partiality."

Anne was vexed with herself for having spoken in so trifling a manner. The frigid politeness of her brother's speech, too, had not escaped her notice. It seemed to her now, that she had been wantonly rude. She hastened, therefore, to repair the fault.

"Mr. Pownal mistakes," she said, "if he thinks me unmindful of the pleasant hours his unfortunate accident procured us. And I am sure I should be a monster of ingratitude," she added smiling, and relapsing, in spite of herself, into the very trifling she had condemned, "if I did not remember, with lively emotions, his skill at holding silk and yarn."

"Well, whenever you want a reel, send for me," said Pownal, "and I shall only be too happy to come."

"Take care, my good fellow," said the Judge, "she does not wind you up, too."

"I should be too happy—" began Pownal.

"For shame, father," cried Anne, laughing, and rising from the table. "The young men have quite spoiled you, of late. Good-bye; you have finished your last cup of coffee, and have no longer need of me." So saying, she hastened out of the room.

It was with mutual regret that the parting took place, and not without many promises required of the young man that he would frequently visit the family. His landlady, Mrs. Brown, was, as usual, all smiles, and welcomes, and congratulations on his return; notwithstanding which, it was with a sense of loneliness, amounting almost to desolation, that her lodger found himself installed again in his apartments. It seemed like passing out of the golden sunshine into a gloomy cavern. Was it possible that two short weeks could have produced so great a change in him? When he thought upon the cause, the conscious blush revealed its nature. "No," said he, aloud, as he paced backwards and forwards in the room, "this is folly and madness. For me, a humble clerk, to connect myself, even in imagination, with *her*! What have I to offer her? Or what even in prospect? I have been sailing in the clouds, and my tattered balloon is precipitated to the earth—I have been dreaming. How delicious was the dream! But I am now awake, and will never expose myself to the mortification of ——. I have been foolish. No, not so; for, who could come within the range of such fascinations, and not be charmed? But what, after all, are they to me? I will resist this weakness, and learn to regard her as only any other valued acquaintance; for, alas! she can never be more."

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In such incoherent expressions, poor Pownal gave vent to the emotions that agitated him. It would have been some consolation, could he have known what was said at the Bernards', when the family gathered around the table in the evening. Mrs. Bernard alluded more than once to the gap his absence made in their little circle; and the Judge, in his jesting way, wished that somebody would shoot him again, if it might be the means to bring him back. Even Anne expressed regret at his loss, since his company had been such a pleasure to her parents.

CHAPTER V.

"Groves freshened, as he looked, and flowers
Showed bright on rocky bank,
And fountains welled beneath the bowers,
Where deer and pheasant drank;
He saw the glittering streams, he heard
The rustling bough and twittering bird."

BRYANT.

The mind of Ohquamehud dwelt upon his meeting with Holden. Sleeping or waking, the image of the latter pursued him. But it was not always in the shape of the Recluse that the vision appeared. More often it assumed the form of a young man, in the garb of a western hunter, with a rifle in his hand. Then rose up, in connection with him, boundless forests, through which the deer stole noiselessly, and the screech of the catamount was heard. And then again he hunted, and as he approached the game he had shot, Holden approached and claimed it as his; or he was on a war-path, and stumbled against a log, and fell; and as he strove to rise, the log was changed into Holden, who grappled him in a death-struggle—wherever he was, and whithersoever he turned his eyes, there was the young man, seeming to be, and yet not to be Holden, and haunting him like a shadow. As these imaginations possessed themselves more and more of the Indian's mind, he began to fancy himself the victim of some incantation, with which he naturally connected the Recluse as the cause; and, finally, by continual brooding on the subject, both his appetite and sleep deserted him. His moodiness at length attracted the attention of Peena. Ohquamehud was lying on the floor of her hut, his head resting on his hand, and he had been for some time gazing in the fire. The simple noon-day meal had barely been tasted, and that in silence.

"Have the hands of Peena," she said, "forgot how to prepare his food, that the eyes of my brother turn away from it with displeasure?"

"The hands of my sister have not lost their skill, but Ohquamehud is not hungry."



“Ohquamehud is a warrior, and Peena is but a weak woman, and he will not be angry,” she added, hesitatingly.

The Indian waved his hand, with dignity, as if inviting her to proceed.

“Ohquamehud sees the heart of his sister, and he knows that it loves him, for he is the brother of Huttamoiden. Why does he cover up his face from her, and hide his grief? Is she unworthy,” she added, laying her hand on his shoulder, and looking affectionately in his face, “to listen to his voice?”

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He turned towards her, and paused before he said—

“The stone in the path of Ohquamehud is very small, and will not hurt his feet.”

“Peena, then, will try to remove it. She has strength to move small stones.”

She ceased, and continued looking at him, without adding a word, as if she had said enough, and awaited a reply.

“Why should Ohquamehud speak?” he said, at last; “the breath of the Long Beard will blow away his words.”

A look of vacancy overspread the face of the squaw, as if she failed to apprehend his meaning.

“My brother’s words are dark,” she said.

“Has not the powawing of the Long Beard brought back the spirit of Huttamoiden’s cub from the happy hunting-grounds, and does not, therefore, the face of Peena turn to him as the sun-flower to the sun?”

“The Great Spirit loves the Long Beard, and the Long Beard loves his red brethren.”

“What! a Yenghese love an Indian? Yes, as a wild-cat loves the deer when he sucks his blood, as the water loves the fire it extinguishes. The lips of Peena speak foolishness.”

“If Peena feel grateful to the Long Beard, why should that anger her brother? Could he look into her heart, he would see his face as in a clear stream.”

It was not in human nature to withstand the soft voice and pleading looks of the woman. The momentary fierceness passed away from the countenance of the Indian, a milder expression assumed its place, and, in a gentle tone, he said—

“Peena shall hear. She is like a stone which, when spoken to, repeats not what is said, and not like a brook that sings an idle song. My words shall enter her ears, but they will not descend to her tongue. Listen! the Manitou has troubled my thoughts, and sent a bird to tell me, that the hands of the Long Beard are red with the blood of my brothers.”

“It was a lying bird,” she exclaimed vehemently; “it was an owl that hooted untruth from the dark. When lifted the Long Beard a hatchet against my tribe?”

“The voice was as the voice of the waterfall,” he continued. “It spoke indistinctly, and I understood but half.”

“Why should not Ohquamehud talk with the Long Beard? The words of each shall be sweet to the other, and they will learn to have one heart.”

“It is well,” said the Indian, “Peena is a wise woman, and Ohquamehud will speak with the white man.”

It needed only the suggestion of the squaw to carry into effect a resolution already more than half adopted.

The Indian rose, and proceeding to the river, which was but a dozen rods distant from the hut, unloosed a canoe, and directing its course up the stream, was lost, in a few moments, from her view.

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The appearance of Ohquamehud indicated no hostility when he presented himself before the Recluse, whom he found weaving baskets in front of his cabin, nor did his visit seem to surprise the latter. For an instant the Indian looked with disdain upon an employment which his wild education had taught him was fit only for women; but suppressing the expression of a sentiment that might have interfered with his purpose, with a quiet dignity, and, as if in answer to a wave of Holden's hand, he seated himself on a large stone by his side. For a time he was silent, as if either out of deference to the superior years of the other, or because he wished to collect his thoughts before he began the conversation. Finding, however, he could obtain from the Solitary no further sign of recognition, he spoke in his own language.

"My brother has a big heart. He is making gifts for the beautiful women of his nation."

"Indian," replied Holden, "think not to deceive me. At this moment thou considerest this an occupation unfit for a man."

"My brother has very long eyes. They can see the woodpecker on the rotten tree across the river, but they reach not here," laying his hand upon his breast. "The Holder of the Heavens loves not to see things alike. He therefore made the leaf of the oak to differ from that of the hickory, and the pine from both, and also the white race from the red. And, for the same reason, he taught the white man to make big lodges of wood, and brick and stone, and to swim over the waters in large canoes with wings: while to the red man he gave the forests and prairies, with the deer, and bear, and buffalo, and caused him to dwell in very small wigwams made of bark. And so, also, he taught my white brother to weave beautiful baskets, but denied the skill to my father's son."

The Indian must have supposed he had seriously offended his new acquaintance, to induce him thus elaborately to attempt to avert his suspicions. However that might be, the Solitary resumed the conversation as though he felt no resentment.

"There is wisdom in thy speech. The Great Spirit loves variety, and it is he that maketh men to differ. But there was once a time many moons ago, when thy ancestors builded great houses and dwelt in cities, and sailed over the seas in winged-canoes."

The Indian cast a quick, sharp glance at the Solitary, as if he wished to read his very soul. For a moment he looked as though he doubted the evidence of his senses. But recovering his composure, he said:

"The thoughts of my brother are very high, and his voice like the sound of a great wind."

"Thou comprehendest me not. Know then, Indian, that innumerable years ago, there lived far towards the rising sun, twelve tribes, called the 'Children of Israel,' whom the Master of Life greatly loved. And they had wise and brave Sachems, who led them to battle, and their feet were red with the blood of their enemies. But they became wicked,

and would not hearken unto the words of the Great Spirit, and He turned his face away from them. So their enemies came upon them, and despoiled them, and drove them from the land. Two of the tribes still linger near the rising sun, but ten wandered far away into distant countries, and they are thy fathers.”

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The Indian listened with great attention, and upon the other pausing, said:

“Has the Manitou told all these things to my brother?”

“No, Indian; the Great Spirit speaks not now to his people as he did when the world was young. But,” he added, as if struck with the folly of continuing a conversation of this character, “the path is long that led me to this truth, and it would weary thy feet to travel it.”

“My brother is wise, and cannot lie, and I am a child. My ears drink in his words. The legs of my brother are long, and he has been a great traveller. Was it near the rising sun he learned the language of the red man?”

“Indian, I have never been nearer the rising sun than thou. But tell me the object of thy visit. Why dost thou seek me now, when but a few days since thou didst chide the squaw for her willingness to oblige me?”

“The lips of Ohquamehud spoke folly. He did not then know that this brother had talked to the Master of Life, who granted to him the life of Huttamoiden’s child. The blood of Huttamoiden runs in these veins.”

The explanation was perfectly natural, and whatever suspicion had arisen in Holden’s mind vanished. It seemed not surprising that the Indian, who also, by uttering his name, had proclaimed himself a Pequot, should be willing to form the acquaintance of one who had proved himself a friend to his tribe, and probably was invested in his imagination with the qualities of a “great medicine.” But, though to Holden’s high-wrought fancies, the recovery of the boy had seemed miraculous, and he could not avoid connecting his prayers with it, yet he shrank from directly claiming so great a power as the Indian ascribed to him.

“The issues of life and death are with the Great Spirit,” he said. “At his pleasure he breathes into our nostrils, and we live; or he turns away his face, and we die. Let not my brother give too much credit to a worm.”

The wily Indian, from the other’s altered tone and manner, perceived his advantage, and was not slow to use it.

“Because my white brother loved his red brethren, he sought them in their lodges, and there they taught him their language. So when the boy was departing for the happy hunting grounds, my brother remembered their kindness, and held the child by the hand, and would not let him go.”

The face of the Solitary worked with emotion while the other was speaking.



“Would that I could explain,” he said. “But thou art unable to understand. How canst thou know a Christian heart?”

“The heart of Ohquamehud is a man’s.”

“Aye; but a savage knows not, and despises forgiveness. I was a stately pine, whose branches mingled with the clouds, and the birds came and lodged therein. And a storm arose, and thunders rolled, and the lightning struck it, and its pride and glory tumbled to the ground. And it was burnt up, all save this blasted trunk.” He uttered this with a wild frenzy, and as if hardly conscious of the presence of another.

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"Doth the lightning fall from a clear sky?" said the Indian, after a pause. "It is long since a black cloud burst over the ancient hunting-grounds of the Pequots."

"Where the streams run toward the setting sun, the thunderbolt struck. Why was it not me instead of those dearer to me than life?"

"A bird hath sung to Ohquamehud that the land is pleasant, and the hunter only extends his hand to find something to savor his broth and to cover his feet."

"It is a land of streams, and mountains, and forests, and the deer and the bear still are plenty. When the Creator made it, he smiled and pronounced it good; and there, as in your fabled hunting-grounds, might men be blessed but for their passions."

"The red man loves his friend, and hates his enemy."

"To hate is a devilish feeling. It comes not from the Good Spirit."

Ohquamehud rose and stood before Holden. It seemed to his bold and ferocious temper, that he could not, without cowardice, hear assailed and not vindicate, a principle that had been inculcated upon him from youth, and formed a sacred portion of his creed. As he stood up, the blanket fell in graceful folds from his shoulders, around his person, and he stretched out a hand to solicit attention.

"Listen," he said; "the tongue of Ohquamehud is one: it will speak the truth. Because the Great Spirit loved his children, he made them to love and to hate, and both are pleasant. The south wind is sweet when it comes in spring to tell that winter is past and the starved Indian need no longer shiver over the fire; and sweet are the kisses of Wullogana to Ohquamehud, and dear are the voices of his little ones when they meet him from the chase, but sweeter than the sighs of the wind of spring, or the caresses of Wullogana, or the laughter of his children, is it to strike an enemy. His flesh is good, for it strengthens a red heart. The wolf will never become a lamb, and the wolf is the totem of my clan. Ohquamehud has said."

It would be impossible to describe the conflicting emotions of Holden during this savage speech. Whatever might have been the wild incidents of his youth, or whatever his wrongs and sufferings, the time was long past, and he had supposed all stormy passion subdued, and his heart chastised to resignation and submission. He listened at first with unmixed horror to the Indian's declaration, but as the savage went on, the words became more and more indistinct, till they lost all meaning or were converted into other sounds, and, as in a dream, made the aliment of his thoughts. The whole conversation, and the very language in which they spoke, contributed to produce this state of mind. Lost to all around, his soul was far away. He saw a cabin beside a mountain torrent, overshadowed by immense trees. It was summer, and the birds were singing among the branches. The door of the cabin opened, and a young and beautiful white woman



stepped out, holding a child by the hand. Suddenly it was night, and the cabin on fire, and he heard the yells of savages, and saw them like so many demons dancing round the flames; then hush, all again was still, and darkness brooded over the spot, lighted only by a flickering brand.

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The bosom of Holden heaved convulsively, and his brain reeled.

The Indian watched his changing countenance with an eager look as if he revelled in his agony. Not a hard drawn breath, not a single expression escaped his notice. He saw the eyes of the Solitary flash, then settle into a dreamy gaze as if looking into a dim, unfathomable distance, then shut, as if he tried to exclude some horrid sight. Suddenly, with a shudder, Holden sprang to his feet.

“Accursed Shawnees,” he cried; “they have done this deed. But for every drop of blood they shed a river shall flow. Dog!” and he seized the Indian with a strength to which madness lent additional force, and dashed him to the ground, “thou art first delivered into my hand.”

He staggered toward the fallen man—stopped—glared at him a moment and with a wild cry rushed into the hut.

The Indian, who had immediately risen from the fall, and stood with folded arms regarding his motions, slowly gathered up his disordered blanket about him and stalked towards the canoe. A gleam of ferocity shot over his face as he resumed the paddle, and softly breathing the single word “Onontio,” pushed from the shore.

CHAPTER VI.

I will pursue to death this spiteful knight:
Not earth’s low centre, nor sea’s deepest part,
Nor heaven, nor hell, can shield him from my might:
I will o’ertake him, take him, cleave his heart.
FAIRFAX’ TASSO.

The suspicions of the Indian were confirmed beyond a doubt. It was, perhaps, the voice and accent of the Solitary in his native tongue that at first attracted his attention and induced him to try the experiment which resulted as we have seen. He must have had or fancied that he had a cause of deadly hatred of long standing against Holden. It is impossible otherwise to explain his conduct. But no length of time can erase the recollection of an injury from the mind of a North American Indian. He cherishes it as something never to be parted with, and would feel degraded in his own estimation were he to forgive. Revenge is the central sun round which his spirit revolves; and to gratify the feeling no hardships are too severe. For such a purpose he will traverse, with an unerring instinct, pathless forests for hundreds of miles, swim wide rivers, climb lofty mountains, sleep, unrepining, on the bare ground, exposed to all vicissitudes of heat and cold, supporting himself by the chase and fishing, and sustained throughout by his vindictive passion and the glory he connects with its gratification. The kindness shown by Holden to his sister and her son, and the reverence with which she regarded him, it



might be expected would have influenced Ohquamehud; but they had no such effect. To the kindness he ascribed a sinister motive; and of course, Peena's gratitude was misplaced. It was therefore with a fiendish joy unalloyed by misgivings, that he brooded over the means to accomplish his purpose.

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He dared not communicate it to Peena. He understood her gentle nature too well to suppose that, under any circumstances, she could sympathize with him, even though she felt no sense of obligation to Holden; and, besides, he distrusted her as one who had abandoned the faith of her fathers. For, although no Christian in the proper import of the word, the sweet and purifying influences of Christianity had not been wholly thrown away upon Peena. She had many friends in the neighboring village who had been attracted by her gentle temper and modesty, conspicuous among whom was Faith Armstrong. Hence, when she came to the village, as not unfrequently was the case, in order to sell the berries she had gathered in the fields, or pretty baskets stained with such lively colors as the simple skill of the Indians knew how to extract from roots and the bark of trees, it seldom happened that she returned without having made Faith a visit. On such occasions the enthusiastic girl would strive to inform her on points of religion which, to her own mind, were of the highest importance. Peena would listen, and never contradict, though, it is probable, she understood but little of what to Faith's apprehension was clear.

It was impossible, however, not to derive benefit from such meetings. None could be in the presence of Faith without being influenced by the atmosphere of goodness in which she moved. And, indeed, that she herself derived pleasure from the presence of Peena, was evidence of the gentle worth of the latter.

No wonder then that Ohquamehud determined to conceal his fell purpose in his own heart. When, therefore, with the quiet step peculiar to his race, he glided into her hut, just before the setting of the sun, he had chased the traces of passion from his brow, and met her with a calm and satisfied mien. So perfect was the dissimulation that even one less guileless than the woman would have been deceived. In the present case, the preoccupation of her mind in Holden's favor made it easier.

"My brother," she said, with a pleased expression, as she caught sight of his altered appearance, "is like the sky in summer when not a cloud is to be seen."

"The cloud has left the sky of Ohquamehud."

This was said with a natural and easy air, as if all suspicion were banished from his mind; nor was the subject further adverted to.

The time at which the children of nature retire to rest, is not that observed by the artificially-cultivated man. For them, the hours of light and darkness mark out the periods for action and repose. It was then still early in the evening, when a heavy breathing in the hut of Peena indicated the sleep of its inmates. Ohquamehud had listened for it, and having waited until the breathing became deep and full to assure him of the profoundness of the slumber, he sat up on his couch and looked cautiously around. The brands were smouldering in the ashes with a dim flickering light, but sufficient to direct and give certainty to his movements. With a step so noiseless that

the acutest ear would not have detected it, he crossed the floor, took his rifle from the corner where it had been placed, with equal caution opened the door, and stood in the open air.

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It was a clear star-lit night, and on the placid bosom of the water shone one star larger and brighter than the rest, as if to light him on his way. But it was all unobserved by the Indian. He had no eyes, no ears, no senses, except for the crime he was about to commit. To him, no crime, but a heroic act. Slowly, and measuring each step as though a thousand ears were listening, he proceeded in the direction of the canoe, untied it, and softly pushed it into the stream. As he took his seat the dip of his paddle made no sound, and thus, stern as an iron statue, and almost as still, he paddled on.

And now Ohquamehud approached the island. He stopped his paddle and held his breath, and listened. Not a living sound was to be heard, not even the cry of a night bird; nothing save the soft flowing of the water against the shore. Like an eagle circling round and round before he pounces on his quarry, the Indian cautiously paddled around the island. From one of the windows, before concealed, he saw a light. Keeping at a distance, so that the rays should not fall upon him, he stole around until he had interposed the hut between himself and its beams. Then, apparently satisfied there was nothing to be feared, he directed the canoe towards the island, and slowly advanced until its bottom touched the sand, when he sat still and listened again. Hearing nothing, he left the canoe, and crouching down, crept towards the cabin. Having reached it, he applied his ear to the side and listened, and again advanced. Thus slowly proceeding, some little time elapsed before he found himself at the window whence streamed the light. Without venturing to touch the wooden boards, as if fearful they might communicate a knowledge of his presence, he raised himself almost imperceptibly at the edge of the window, until he obtained a view of the interior. Holden was sitting at a distance of not more than six feet, near a small table, on which a single candle was burning, and in his lap lay a large opened book, on which his folded hands were resting. He seemed lost in meditation, gazing into the wood-fire before him, towards which his crossed legs were extended at full length.

The Indian slid his hand down to the lock of the gun, and drew back the trigger. Cautiously as it was done, he could not prevent a slight clicking sound, which, perhaps, struck the ear of the Solitary, for he turned his head and moved in the chair. The Indian slunk to the edge of the window, so as to conceal his person from any one within the room, and remained motionless. Presently he advanced his head, and took another view. The Solitary had resumed his former position, and was buried in profound thought. The Indian stepped back a couple of steps, so as to allow the necessary distance between himself and the window, and raised the rifle to his shoulder.

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At that instant and just as he was about to discharge the deadly weapon, a large rattlesnake, attracted by the warmth, or for some other reason, glided from the opposite side of the hut towards the outstretched limbs of Holden, over which it crawled, and resting its body upon them, with upraised head seemed to fasten its eyes, glittering in the fire-light, full upon the face of the startled Indian. The effect was instantaneous. The rifle nearly dropped from his uplifted hands, a cold sweat burst from every pore, his knees shook, and his eyes, fixed on the snake by a fascination that controlled his will, felt bursting from their sockets. After preserving its attitude for a short time, the snake, as if taking Holden under its protection, coiled itself around his feet, and lay with its head resting on his shoe, looking into the fire. As the snake turned away its bright eyes the spell that bound the Indian was dissolved. An expression of the deepest awe overspread his countenance, his lips moved, but emitted no sound, and cautiously as he had advanced he returned to the canoe, and was soon swallowed up in the darkness.

The abstraction of Holden must have been deep and long, for upon recovering from his reverie, the reptile was gone. Without his consciousness it had come, and without his consciousness departed; and when he laid the Bible, in which he had been reading, upon the table, he knew not either the danger he had escaped, or the means by which it had been averted.

Nor let the conduct of Ohquamehud excite surprise. An American Indian, he was susceptible to the influence of the legends and traditions of his race. Among them are some inculcating a superstitious reverence for certain animals. The bear, for instance, is regarded by some tribes as a sort of relation, and when the necessity of hunger compels them to kill him, they apologize, and beg him not to be angry. The rattlesnake again is an object of great respect. Supplied with a deadly venom that makes him the most formidable of enemies, he never attacks unless first injured, and then, if he can reach his foe, his vengeance is sure. On his trail he disdains concealment, but with the rattles nature has provided to announce his approach, apprises all, that they may remove themselves out of his way. Indeed, he comprehends within himself those qualities most valued by the Indians, and is the type of a brave warrior. When, therefore, at such an hour and such a place, the reptile made its appearance, and first darting its fiery glances at the Pequot, quietly and, as if scorning and defying the danger, laid itself caressingly on the limbs of Holden, it seemed to the astonished Indian that the snake knew his purpose, and angrily ordered him to desist. Vain, he thought, would it be to assail one so protected, nor was he willing to incur the mysterious enmity of the snake. How its power might be displayed, whether in striking him dead on the spot, or in laming his limbs, or defeating his success in hunting, or what other dreadful manner, he knew not, but he was convinced that some awful punishment would follow disobedience. He thought it, therefore, more prudent to yield for the present, and wait till he had propitiated the snake, or it had withdrawn its protection. As long as that lasted Onontio was beyond his power. Not that vengeance was forborne; it was only postponed.

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Of such a character were the thoughts that darted through the mind of the Pequot when frightened from his purpose, and in less time than it has taken to record them, as with drooping head he pursued his lonely way. Even what he considered the interposition of a supernatural power, had not shaken the determination of his spirit. The desire for revenge had been too long cherished to be given up at a single warning, however awful, or however strongly appealing to the deepest implanted superstitions.

CHAPTER VII.

"Arma, virumque cano qui Primus."
VIRGIL

The season had now advanced to within a few days of that joyous period of the year, when the Governors of the several New England States are wont to call the people to a public acknowledgment of the favors of Divine Providence. At the time of which we write, their Excellencies required the citizens to be thankful "according to law," and "all servile labor and vain recreation," on said day, were "by law forbidden," and not, as at present, invited them to assemble in their respective churches, to unite in an expression of gratitude to their Heavenly Benefactor. Whether the change from a command to an invitation, or permission to engage in the sports which were before forbidden, has been attended with any evil consequences, we leave to the individual judgment of our readers to determine. But whether commanded or invited, the people always welcomed the season of festivity with preaching and praying, and an indiscriminate slaughter of all the fat turkeys and chickens on which they could lay their hands.

The yellow and crimson maple leaf had faded on the trees into more sombre colors, or, falling to the ground, been whirled by the wind among heaps of other leaves, where its splendor no more attracted attention. Of the gaiety of autumn, only the red bunches of the sumach were left as a parting present to welcome winter in. The querulous note of the quail had long been heard calling to his truant mate, and reproaching her for wandering from his jealous side; the robins had either sought a milder climate or were collected in the savin-bushes, in whose evergreen branches they found shelter, and on whose berries they love to feed; and little schoolboys were prowling about, busy collecting barrels for Thanksgiving bonfires.

It was a beautiful clear morning in Thanksgiving-week, when a side gate, that admitted to the yard or inclosure in front of Mr. Armstrong's house, opened, and a negro, with a round good-natured face, and rather foppishly dressed, stepped out upon the walk. But, before paying our respects to Mr. Felix Qui, it may not be altogether amiss to give some description of the house of Mr. Armstrong, as representing the better class of dwelling-houses in our villages, at the time.

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It was a large, two-story wood building, painted white, with green blinds, and consisted of a main body nearly fifty feet square, in which, were the apartments for the family, and of an L, as it was called, from the shape it gave the building, running back, and devoted to the kitchen and sleeping chambers of the servants. The height of the stories in this L was somewhat less than in the front part of the house, indicating thereby, perhaps, the more humble relation in which it stood to the latter. Three large chimneys rose above the roof, two from the principal building and one from the kitchen. A wide hall in the centre, swept through the whole length without interference from the rear building, which might be considered as a continuation of somewhat less than one-half of the part in front. The wood-house stood on the same side as the kitchen, some twenty feet distant; and still further back, a large barn, also of wood, and painted a light lead color, with the exception of the cornice and trimmings about the doors and windows, which were white. The house itself stood some fifty feet back from the high road, and was surrounded by enormous elms, those glories of the cultivated American landscape, some measuring four and five feet in diameter, and throwing their gracefully drooping branches far and high over the roof, to which, in the heat of summer, they furnished an acceptable shade. The prospect in front, and looking between two rows of maples that lined the road, comprehended the Yaupaae, expanded into a lake, green fields and apple orchards running down to the water's edge, and hills, clothed to the top with verdure, rolling away like gigantic waves into the distance. Behind the house was a garden and orchard of, perhaps, two acres, terminating in a small evergreen wood of hemlocks and savins, interspersed with a few noble oaks. Mr. Armstrong had laid out several winding paths through this little wood, and placed here and there a rustic seat; and the taste of his daughter had embellished it with a few flowers. Here Faith had taught the moss pink to throw its millions of starry blossoms in early spring over the moist ground, after the modest trailing arbutus, from its retreat beneath the hemlocks, had exhausted its sweet breath; here, later in the season, the wild columbine wondered at the neighborhood of the damask rose; here, in the warm days of summer, or in the delicious moonlight evenings, she loved to wander, either alone or with her father, in its cool paths.

Still more beautiful than the prospect from the front door, were the views from this charming spot. Rising to a considerable elevation above the river to which it descended with a rapid slope, it commanded not only the former view to the south, though more extended, but also one to the northwest. Beneath, at a depression of eighty feet, lay the lake-like river with its green islets dotting the surface, while, at a short distance, the Fall of the Yaupaae precipitated

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itself over a rocky declivity, mingling, in the genial season of the year, a noble bass with the songs of birds and the sighing of the wind, and adding to and deepening in the rougher months, the roar of the tempest. A small stream diverted from the river, turned the wheel of a moss-grown grist-mill, which was nestled under large willows at the foot of the rocks, and conveyed the idea of the presence of man, without detracting from the wild beauty of the scenery.

Now, alas, how is all changed! *Heu! quantum mutatus ab illo Hectore!* The grist-mill has disappeared! A row of willows which skirted the road that winding by the margin of the cove, led to it, has been cut down; and huge brick and stone factories of paper and cotton goods, gloomy and stern-like evil genii, brood over the scene, and all through the day and into the night, with grinding cylinders, and buzzing spindles and rattling looms, strive to drown, with harsh discords, the music of the waterfall. One of the little islands has been joined to the main land with gravel carted into the river, and a bleach-house or some other abomination erected upon it. The place is disenchanted. The sad Genius of Romance who once loved to stretch his limbs upon the mossy rocks, and catch inspiration from watching the foam and listening to the roar, has departed with a shriek, never to return.

Felix, when he found himself outside of the gate, gazed up and down the street, as if uncertain in which direction to proceed. After a momentary hesitation, and drawing a pair of gloves over his hands, he seemed to have made up his mind, and at a lounging pace, directed his course up, that is towards the north. He had not gone far when he saw coming towards him a person of his own color, who until then had been hid by a turn in the road. No one else was in sight, the spot being the piece of table-land mentioned in a previous chapter, about a half mile from the thickly settled part of the town, which was at the bottom of the hill near the confluence of the rivers. Here were no shops or public buildings, but only private residences from thirty to fifty rods apart, and inhabited by a few families a little wealthier, perhaps, for the most part, than the others.

It was a man, still hale and hearty, though what his age was it might be difficult to say. He might have been sixty or even seventy. The African race does not betray the secret of age as readily as the white. Probably the man did not know himself, nor is it of importance. He moved with a jerk, and upon a nearer approach it appeared that the lower part of one of his legs was made of wood. He must have been, however, long accustomed to it, for as he moved rather sedately along, it seemed to occasion him but little inconvenience. When sufficiently near, Felix, touching his cap with great politeness, bade him good morning, by the title of General. But who our new acquaintance is, we may as well tell here as anywhere else.

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The old negro, then approaching, was one of those, the number of whom, although small compared with that of the white troops engaged in the war of the Revolution, was still considerable enough not to be entirely overlooked. His name was Primus Ransome, and at an early period he had enlisted into the army, and served until disabled by the loss of a leg, when he found himself in rags, with an excellent character for bravery and general good conduct, minus the member left at Yorktown, and a candidate for any such bounty as the exhausted means of the country and the liberality of Congress might grant. He contrived somehow to return to the town of Hillsdale, where, in a checkered life, he had happened to pass two or three of his happiest years, and there prepared to enjoy that liberty he had helped to achieve. His good character, cheerful temper, and the services he had performed made him a general favorite. Yet, notwithstanding, he found it at first hard to get along. His military habits had incapacitated him for long continued industry, and an invitation to a social glass or an opportunity to tell one of his campaigning stories, was at any time temptation sufficient to wile him away from labor. There was no gentleman's kitchen where Primus was not treated with kindness, and where he did not receive all he asked but he had some pride, and was unwilling to abuse the offered hospitality. Thus, working a little at digging in gardens and cutting wood and such other odd jobs as he could obtain, and making calls at the kitchens, and telling long stories about Monmouth, and Trenton, and the siege of Yorktown, what with the money he got, and the presents made him at Thanksgiving and Christmas, and other odd times, Primus roughed it along, after a fashion, until Congress found itself in a condition to give him a pension. It came late to be sure, and was small, but then so were his wants. It was regularly paid and certain, and joined to the advantages he already possessed, constituted an ample fortune. Before he got his pension, poor Primus would sometimes cast a rueful glance at his wooden leg, and think to himself he had paid a pretty dear price for independence; and at such times, it must be confessed, his patriotism ran to a low ebb. He knew no Latin, and therefore could not say, "*sic vos non vobis*," &c., yet he thought it. But after he obtained his little annuity, the love of country of the Horatii or Curiatii was frigid to his. He was never weary of boasting of its freedom, of its greatness, and of General Washington. It was observed that as he grew older his stories became longer and more incredible, and his patriotism hotter. His own personal exploits too, occupied a wider space in his narratives. To believe him, the number of British and Hessians conquered by his single arm would have composed a regiment; and, indeed, it was difficult to conceive how the struggle could have been brought to a successful issue without his assistance.

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"Good morning, General," said Felix, politely touching his cap.

"Good warning, Missa Qui I hope I see you well dis pleasant marning. How Miss Rosa?" inquired Primus, at the same time making a military salute with the back of his hand.

"Miss Rosa is well, thank you, sir. As for this genlman, he is always well," said Felix, laying his hand on his breast.

"Fine day for walking, sir. Sorry you going de oder way, Missa Qui. Suppose you hab business."

"I walk out for the exercise. I have not take exercise enough lately for the health."

At this moment the eye of Primus caught sight of a white piece of paper sticking out of a corner of Felix's pocket, and he suspected the errand on which the latter was sent, so he added:

"You celumbrate Tanksgiving in de usual style at your house dis year, I presume."

"Some witch tell you, General. Haw, haw!"

"De ole chimbly smoke extrorninary at dis season. De chickens and de turkies know dat chimbly well."

"Guess they do," said Felix. "General Ransome, can you keep a secret?"

"I is close as Missa Pint pocket, dat button all round," said the old negro.

"Then I have no objections to tell you, General, that I give out some invite this morning to ladies and genlmen to take dinner at my house, Thanksgiving Day."

"Hab you one for me?"

"Look for yourself, sir," said Felix, pulling out two or three billets from the left pocket of his waistcoat, and presenting them to the other. "You sociate with General Washington and all the great men, and read writing, sure."

Primus took the billets into his hands, and ran his eye over the superscriptions, with an air of the most perfect confidence, then, shaking his head, returned them to Felix, observing:

"Dere is none here for me."

“Perhaps there is one for you in this pocket,” continued Felix, fumbling on the other side, and producing another billet. Primus looked, but shook his head as before. “Have the extreme goodness,” said Felix, who began to be considerably mystified by the serious air of the other, and half-disposed to believe that he might have some knowledge of the mystic characters, “to tell me who this little note is intend for.”

Primus knew very well the intimate relations existing between the families of the Armstrongs and Bernards, and that the former often took their Christmas dinner with the latter, while again the Armstrongs reciprocated the civility by inviting the Bernards, who were Episcopalians, to the feast of Thanksgiving. Moreover, he had met Felix going in a direction towards the house of Mr. Bernard, which was close by. Putting these circumstances together, the old soldier thought that he might venture a guess, which, if it succeeded, would redound greatly to the credit of his learning, and, which, if it failed, could entail on him no other harm than the laugh of Felix. Assuming, therefore, a knowing look, he said:

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"Dat is berry easy to read. Any man wid any larning at all, can see de billet is intend for Missa Judge Bernard." He saw by the distended eyes of Mr. Qui that his guess had struck the mark, and fearful of being requested to decipher the other superscriptions, hastily added:

"But what for I stop here, wasting my precious time, and keeping you from doing you master's arrant? I hab de honor to wish you good marning, Missa Qui." So saying, Primus turned round and stumped off half a dozen steps, before the bewildered Felix recovered his faculties.

"Stop, General," at last exclaimed Felix, as soon as he regained his speech, running after him and taking hold of his arm, "allow me, a word with you"

"I is berry busy dis marning," cried Primus, struggling to get free; "Missa Pownal want my services; de doctor is anxious to insult wid me; and de 'Piscopal minister hab someting 'portant to communicate."

"I inspect he want you to write the Thanksgiving sermon," said Felix, grinning. "But, General, I have really an invite for you. I forgot to write the note before I leave home, and so you must, 'scuse the want of style. I have the honor to ask you, General, to take your dinner, on that glorious day, with Miss Rosa and I."

"Dat alter de case intirely," said Primus, losing his dread of reading billets, and forgetting his hurry in the pleasure received from the invitation; "dat alter de case entirely. You is a genlman, and berry polite, Missa Qui, and Miss Rosa is beyond 'spression. Dere is few ob de fair sec equal Miss Rosa. Let me see," he continued, with a thoughtful air, and looking on the ground, "whedder I not disappoint some genlman. When I come round de corner I see Missa Tracy boy going toward my house. Now, probably he bring invite for me. But you invite is de fust, Missa Qui, and it is hard to desist de attraction ob Miss Rosa and youself, and I will do myself de honor to wait on you. Sorry, howebber to disappoint Missa Tracy." Primus had now embarked on the full tide of his garrulity, and casting out of mind his regret for not being able to accept the imaginary invitation to Mr. Tracy's, went on:

"'Pears to me a great 'vantage, Missa Qui, dat some folks is 'Piscopalians, and some Presbyterians."

Felix looked as if he failed to apprehend the meaning of his friend.

"'Cause," said Primus, "dat make two grand dinner, and you and me is dere to eat 'em."

Felix had now fairly caught the other's meaning, and the two exploded in bursts of laughter.

"You have right to say so, General, and the observation do you great honor. And that is the reason I inspect that you are 'Peskeypalian."

"I surprise to hear you say so ob your ole friend," said Primus, drawing himself up with an air of offended dignity. "No, sar, dat is not de reason. De reason I is 'Piscopalian is, 'cause I belong to de regulars."

"I never hear tell the 'Peskeypalian is more regulars than other folks," said Felix.

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“You is a young man (the difference in their ages might be half a dozen years), and cannot be ’spected to know ebbery ting. If you gib me your ’tention, I make it all plain as de road Ginerol Washington show de British out ob de country. You see when I was in de army in de glorious war ob de Resolution, we say prayers sometime as well as you folks who stay at home, and don’t do none ob de fightin. And so when de drum beat, ebbery man must be at his post. Den come de chaplain all in his regimental, and put de book on de big drum, and kneel down, and Ginerol Washington he kneel down, too, and de chaplain say some prayer dat sound like de roll ob de drum itself. O, it was so beautiful, and I always feel better arter-wards. Dere nebber was much uniform in de army, but what dere was, de regulars is entitle to it. I nebber tink de soger look just de ting widout de regimental. Now, look at de ’Piscopal minister in de pulpit, in de lily-white and de black gown. De fust is for white folks, and de oder out of respec’ for us colored pussons. Dey is his regimental. He look like a regular soger ob de Lord. But see de Presbyterian. He hab no uniform at all. He ony milishy officer.”

Felix, who, as in duty bound, was as zealous a Presbyterian (as the Congregationalists in New England were generally called) as Primus was an Episcopalian, was scandalized at such language. He half regretted having given the invitation to the dinner, and it is highly probable that, if he had heard General Ransome’s speech before, that gentleman would have so far talked himself out of his good graces (a misfortune that sometimes happens to extraordinary eloquence), as to have lost the object of his anxiety, and, like the nightingale in Cowper’s fable, have “sought his dinner somewhere else.” But Primus saw the gathering storm and hastened to avert its discharge.

“I hab great respec’,” he said, “for the milishy. Dey is excellent for skirmishing, and where ebbery man hab to fight on his own hook, but when it come to de hard fightin’ de regulars is de men to be depend on. And den,” added he, “dere is odder reasons: I like de exercise in de church better. I like dere taste, too, when dey ornaments de church wid greens at Christmas. It make de winter look kind o’ young and happy.”

Felix was easily propitiated. He might be offended with his comrade, but his anger could not last. It had passed away, before Primus had concluded his conciliatory remarks. In fact, the two cronies were too necessary to each other’s happiness to allow of a long quarrel, and for all Felix’s reverence for his master’s “meeting,” he was as placable as zealous, nor would the famous festival have been a genuine Thanksgiving without his old friend to help him to discuss its luxuries. They shook hands at parting, and Mr. Qui promised to present the complemens of the General to Miss Rosa.

As Felix pursued his way alone, having no one else to talk to, he gave himself the benefit of his conversation.

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"That General," he said, aloud, "is a wonderful man. I never respected him before of knowing how to read writin'. I don't believe, after all, he does know how. But when he took the billets in his hand, he sort o' give 'em a squint as if he knew all about it Who learned him? Perhaps he does and perhaps he doesn't. I wonder, too, how he missed all the bullets he preaches about sometimes, with losing only one leg. I heard him say, fifty times, they come like an April shower. Now, if he had a hundred legs, it seems to me they ought all to be smashed. I 'spect, as I heard the doctor say once, he draws on the fact for his 'magination. But what can you 'spect, Felix, from a 'Peskeypalian? They think so much of gitting up and setting down, as if there was religion in moving the legs. But let me see about the billets. Miss Faith told me to put the Bernards' in this pocket, and the minister's in this, and the doctor's in this other one. Ah, all right! The doctor is a very curus person. I wonder what makes him talk so much about a man he calls Shakspeare. I heard him say he lived a great many years ago, I guess with Joshua and David, when there was so much fighting going on, and when they hadn't no guns. Perhaps he was Goliah's brother, who come out with shield and spear. Well, there is no sogers with spears now-a-days. It's my opinion, give old Prime a loaded musket with a baggonet, and he'd do more work than Goliah and Shakspeare together, with their spears. But, here, I am near the Judge's. Now, sir, mind your eye, and see that you maintain the spectability of the family". Saying this, Felix drew himself up, adjusted his neckerchief, and strutted somewhat pompously into the yard of the Judge, whence he soon found his way into the kitchen. The invitations to the Bernards were in due form delivered, as were the others, and accepted.

CHAPTER VIII.

Lorenzo.—Go in, Sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner. *Launcelot*.—That is done, sir; they have all stomachs. *Lorenzo*.—Goodly lord, what a wit-snapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner. *Launcelot*.—That is done too, sir.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

The high square, pews of the little Congregational church, or (as in those days the descendants of the Puritans, in order to manifest their abhorrence for popery, and all that in their judgment sounded papistical, loved to call their places for public worship) the "meeting-house," were tolerably well filled by an attentive congregation on Thanksgiving morning. We say only tolerably, some seats being vacant, which seldom of a Sunday missed of occupants. The rights of hospitality were allowed on this occasion to trench upon the duties of public worship, and many a good wife with the servants, whom no common storm or slight indisposition would have kept away, remained at home to spread the board for expected guests. If there

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were some whose stern principles condemned the practice as a carnality, they were a small minority. Those whose fleshly appetites were to be gratified by it took a different view of the subject very generally; and as this was the condition of pretty much the whole community, whose members figured now as hosts and now as guests, the verdict was nearly unanimous in its favor. In truth, the due observance of the day seemed to consist of two parts, worship and feasting; each was necessary to the other to form a complement, and without both it would have been jejune and unsatisfactory. Besides, this was the annual period for the reunion of friends and relatives, parted for the rest of the year, and in some instances considerable journeys were undertaken in order once more to unite the severed circle and gather again around the beloved board. Fathers and mothers, with smiles of welcome, kissed their returned children; brothers and sisters joined cordial hands and rushed into each other's embraces, and the placid grandparents danced the little ones on their knees, and traced resemblances to others. It would have been a cold and inhospitable greeting, to be invited, after listening to a two hours' sermon, to sit around a dinner not beyond the common. Not to such a feast did stout-hearted and hard-headed Jonathan invite his friends. He rightly understood that there was a carnal and a spiritual man, nor was he disposed to neglect the claims of either. The earth was given to the saints "with the fullness thereof," and he meant to have his portion. Therefore it was that while one part of the family went to "meeting" to pray, the other remained at home to—cook. Thus, by a judicious division of duties the honored day was celebrated with befitting rites and ceremonies.

After waiting for a reasonable time, until all who were expected to attend were supposed to be in the house, the minister rose from his seat, in the high, wine-glass shaped pulpit, over which hung, like the sword of Damocles, by a cord, an immense sounding-board, considered indispensable, duly to scatter round that each might have his appropriate portion, the crumbs of salvation he dispensed, and "gave out" an appropriate hymn, in which the Supreme Being was acknowledged as the Ruler of the Seasons. This was sung, it must be confessed, by a sadly shrunken choir, stoutly supported, however, by the congregation in the body of the meeting-house, without the sound of tabret, or harp, or other musical instruments; for in those days not even the flute or grave bass-viol, those pioneers of the organ, were permitted in the Sanctuary. To the hymn succeeded a long and fervent prayer, in which Mr. Robinson, the minister (the term Reverend had then a slight papistical twang), after bewailing with ingenious particularity the sins and back-slidings of himself and people, and the ingratitude of the whole land, and recounting the innumerable blessings that had crowned their basket and their store, entreated

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that notwithstanding their manifold sins, iniquities and transgressions, the divine favor might not be withdrawn from a land where the Lord had planted his own vine, and where the precious seeds of heavenly grace deposited in the soil and nurtured and cultured by men "of whom the world was not worthy," had sprung up and borne the inestimable fruit of civil and religious freedom. Upon the conclusion of the prayer followed another hymn, and after these "exercises," the sermon.

The text was the ninth verse of the twenty-sixth chapter of Deuteronomy, "And He hath brought us into this place and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey." The Thanksgiving sermon was formerly one on which more than common labor was expended, and was intended to be a celebrity of the year. On this occasion the preacher laid out a wide field for his eloquence. He commenced by comparing the condition of the first colonists to that of the children of Israel when they fled from the house of bondage. He painted the Pilgrim fathers landing on Plymouth Rock, snow, and ice, and desolation around, but the fire of faith in their hearts. He contrasted the feebleness of the beginning with the grandeur of the result, whence he deduced the inference that the Lord had led his people with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; he alluded to the changed appearance of the country, converted from a heathen wilderness into a Christian garden, whence the perfume of Christian devotion perpetually arose; he portrayed the horrors of the war of the Revolution, and exhorted his hearers to cherish the memory of the men who had consecrated their lives and fortunes to Liberty, and sealed that consecration with their blood. Warming with his subject, his eyes shone with a brighter lustre and seemed gazing into a far future, as in prophetic tones he proclaimed the advent of the latter days, when the beacon fires of Freedom kindled on the mountain tops of the new Canaan should send their streaming rays across the seas, and the kingdoms of this world should become the heritage of God and of His Christ. "Seeing these things are so, brethren," he concluded, "seeing that God hath chosen you unto himself for a peculiar people, the weak things of the world to confound the strong, the rejected, the cast away and despised, to be held up as an example to the wondering and admiring nations, what manner of men ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"

Such is an imperfect sketch of the remarks of Mr. Robinson. With such language sought the ministers in times past to keep alive the flame of patriotism, and to inspire with humility, yet animate with a just pride. Nor are such discourses thrown away. They do much towards the formation of a national character.

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Long as was the sermon—and of not a moment of its orthodox length was it defrauded—it was listened to with the deepest attention, by the older members, especially, of the congregation. The grave decorum of a place of public worship forbade any open exhibition of approval, but more than one knit brow and lighted eye, betrayed the emotions excited by the allusions. Let it be remembered, it was nearer the times that tried men's souls; the later events were fresh in their memory; some of the hearers, perhaps, had borne a personal part in them, and all were animated by the generous fire of '76—sparks of which, we trust, still glimmer in the bosoms of their descendants. What to us, in these colder and as some say more worldly days, might have seemed extravagant, if not vain-glorious, was to them sober truth; and if there were any who, perverting into poison what was meant for wholesome nutriment, thanked God that they were not as other men, there were others who, without losing their humility, felt an impulse given to the nobler feelings.

At the conclusion of the services, there was the usual grasping of hands, and congratulations of the season, and inquiries after healths, and encomiums on the sermon, when the assembly dispersed to their homes, to attend, in another form, to the duties of the day. Mr. Armstrong and Faith waited for the minister, and the three walked home together. They were overtaken and joined by Doctor Elmer, who expressed regret at having been detained from the services by professional duties.

"But," added he, looking at Mr. Robinson, and bowing courteously, "if I have been so unfortunate as to miss of one feast, I do not mean to be deprived of another. I may say of myself, as Shakspeare says of somebody, 'Marry, sir, sometimes he is a kind of Puritan.'"

"I hope your Puritan principles do not consist merely in eating Thanksgiving dinners," said Mr. Robinson, with a smile.

"And remember, doctor," observed Faith, "what your own Shakspeare says again—

"dainty bits
Make rich the ribs, but bankerout quite the wits."

"My dear," interposed Mr. Armstrong, "is not this conversation of too light a character?"

But he could not immediately check the doctor.

"Ha, Miss Faith," he cried, "'wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit, in an instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning.' But

'The tongues of mocking wenches are as keen
As is the razor's edge invisible,
Cutting a smaller hair than may be seen.'

Come,” he added, observing that Mr. Armstrong looked grave, “take my arm, and we will discuss some serious subject, together.” So saying, he offered his arm to Faith, which she took, and they followed, at a few steps distance, after Mr. Armstrong and the minister.

“I am afraid,” said the doctor, slackening his pace, so as to allow the others to get out of hearing, “you would prefer a certain young gentleman’s arm to that of an old bachelor. It is rather hard that the rogues, whose principal recommendation, I flatter myself, is that they are twenty years younger, should steal away all my sweethearts.”

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Faith laughed, as she replied:

“Why, dear doctor, what would you have us do? You never will propose; so you must not complain if you drive us poor girls to desperation.”

“You wicked little baggage, is this the way you laugh at the most constant of your admirers? How many long years have I spent in your service, from the time I began with rocking your cradle, occasionally giving you, to sweeten your humors, a teaspoon of castor oil, or a half-dozen drops of elixir salutis, up to the present time, and thus you reward my devotion! I begin to feel desperate, and have half a mind to transfer my affections to Anne Bernard.”

“Do not treat me so cruelly. I assure you, my love increases every day. Besides, you might find your perfidy punished by meeting a too formidable rival.”

“Ah, ha! I understand. Yet, I feel my chivalry a little roused at the idea of opposition. But, on the whole, Faith, I will accept your pledge of affection, and stick to my colors like a man and a doctor. And, to exhibit my confidence, you may, meanwhile, flirt in moderation with William Bernard. You will get tired of it when the novelty wears off; so I shall escape, and it is better that you should tease him now than me hereafter. But, dear me, here we are at your door.”

Mr. Armstrong and the minister had waited for them on the step, and the four entered together. Shortly after Pownal arrived, and somewhat later the family of the Bernards.

We should deceive our readers if we left them to infer from the jesting talk of the doctor that any mutual attachment existed between Miss Armstrong and William Bernard. It was because his suspicions were so vaguely expressed, and herself so unconscious of any feelings of the kind, that Faith had not thought it worth while to notice them. She and young Bernard had known each other from infancy; they had attended the same school; the intimacy betwixt Faith and Anne, and the friendly relations of the two families equals in wealth and station, had brought them frequently together, but nothing could be further from the fact than that any engagement existed between them. They treated one another, indeed, like brother and sister; but if any warmer emotion was felt, it was not by Faith. Her engrossing affection for her father seemed to exclude all rivalry. The meeting exactly expressed the footing on which the families stood. Mr. Armstrong shook hands cordially with all, and in a few words uttered his pleasure at welcoming them; Mrs Bernard kissed the cheek of Faith, with almost the feeling of a mother; the greeting of the girls' was like that of sisters, and Faith extended her hand to William Bernard, with a smile, but without a blush.

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Though utterly unlike, it would be difficult to conceive of two more beautiful creatures than Faith Armstrong and Anne Bernard. The dark hair of Faith, the large black eyes, the nose slightly aquiline, an expression of countenance ordinarily composed, though not sad, but which could be lighted up into enthusiasm, and a graceful dignity that marked every action, while it seemed only a necessary part of herself, forcibly reminded one sometimes of the heroines of the ancient Scriptures. So in her youthful years, before her eyes were fully opened to the vision, and before to the sound of the clanging timbrel her voice responded to the triumph song of the children of Israel, might have looked the prophetess, Miriam.

No contrast could be stronger than that presented by sweet Anne Bernard. Light colored hair fell in graceful curls around an oval and perfectly regular face, of the most delicate complexion. So thin, so almost transparent was the skin, that the veins seemed hardly hidden, and a very slight emotion was sufficient to suffuse it with a tint that needed to fear no rivalry with the rose. No heaven could be bluer than the soft eyes that seemed "to love whate'er they looked upon," and whether dimmed with the tear of pity, or flashing with mirth, revealed a pure, but not a timid spirit. But among features which all were beautiful, if one could be called more beautiful than another, it was the mouth, and white as snow were the regular and perfectly formed teeth which the crimson lips concealed. Her figure was rather below than above the ordinary height, and its roundness indicated the most perfect health. Let not this description be deemed a picture of romance. Those acquainted with the beautiful daughters of New England will acknowledge its truth, or, at least, confess, it errs not on the side of exaggeration.

The intermediate time between the arrival of the company and the serving up of dinner, was spent by them in such conversation as usually takes place on occasions of the kind. Somebody has said, that two Americans cannot meet without talking politics, but we can vouch for the fact, that although Mr. Armstrong, the doctor, and divine were federalists, and the Judge a democrat, having spent several of his early years in France, where he was supposed to have imbibed his sentiments, not a word on the subject was uttered. A reference or two was made to the minister's discourse; the flourishing condition of the country and its prospects adverted to; and some items of domestic news and village anecdotes narrated. Such was the conversation of the elders: as for what passed between the young people, we know there was some laughing, but have forgot what they talked about. We regret this irreparable loss, and promise to be more attentive for the future.

At length, the ebony disc of Felix's face, rising pleasantly above a snow-bank of neck-cloth, appeared at the door, and announced dinner, when Mr. Armstrong offering his arm to Mrs. Bernard, preceded his friends into the dining-room. Faith accepted the Judge's escort, and Pownal tried to wait on Anne, but somehow or other (and we suspect her of complicity in the affair), the divine secured the prize.

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Before the company sat down, which was in an order having reference to their supposed tastes and attractions, at a request from the host, an appropriate grace was said by the minister, which happily avoided the extremes of too much brevity on the one hand, and of too great prolixity on the other; or, in other words, it was neither irreverently short, nor impertinently long.

The dinner was of that kind which still graces the hospitable boards of old Connecticut. At one end of the table a roasted turkey, which had been stuffed a couple of days before, in order that the spices, composing a part of the ingredients, might penetrate and flavor the flesh of the noble bird, turned up his round full breast to the carving-knife; at the other end, another turkey, somewhat smaller, boiled and served with oyster sauce, kept company with her mate, while near the centre, which was occupied by bleached celery in a crystal vase, a mighty ham balanced a chicken pie of equal size. Besides these principal dishes there were roasted and boiled fowls, and ducks, and tongues, flanked by cranberry and apple sauces, and mashed turnips and potatoes. On the sideboard (for be it remembered, it was "when this old cap was new," and a practice which now is considered, at least, questionable, was then held in all honor, and its neglect was never dreamed of, and would have drawn down an imputation of niggardliness and want of breeding) stood bottles of wine, and flagons containing still stronger liquors, together with a large pitcher of delicious cider. Upon the removal of the first course followed various kinds of puddings, and pies, and custards, and tarts, and sillabubs, and they, in their turn, were succeeded by apples and different sorts of nuts, with raisins and figs, with which the repast was concluded. Such was an old Thanksgiving dinner. The present preliminary soup was unusual or unknown. It was an array capable of supplying the wants of a much larger company, and but a small part could be consumed, but it was the fashion, and it still continues. They were celebrating the bounty of Providence, and it was meet that the liberality of man should be in harmony with it. Felix, grave and decorous, as became the importance of the occasion, and his assistant, multiplied themselves into a thousand waiters, sedulous to anticipate the wants of the host and his guests.

The conversation, which at first ran in several distinct rills being confined to each one's immediate neighborhood mostly, and interrupted by the serious business of dinner, seemed gradually, after a time, to unite its various streams into one common current. The attention of the doctor was first attracted from an unsuccessful attempt to quote to Mrs. Bernard Shakspeare's famous recipe for cooking a beef-steak by an observation of Mr. Robinson to Mr. Armstrong, at whose left hand he sat, the seat at the right being occupied by Mrs. Bernard, next to whom sat the doctor.

"The results," said the minister, "furnish, I fear, little encouragement for the future. Unless divine grace shall manifest itself in a more signal manner than has heretofore been vouchsafed, they seemed destined to die in their sins."

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"Is there, then, no escape from a doom so horrible?" inquired the low voice of Mr. Armstrong. "After being hunted from their ancient possessions, and denied even the graves of their fathers, must they perish everlastingly?"

"Can the clay say to the potter, 'What doest thou?'" said Mr. Robinson. "He maketh one vessel to honor and another to dishonor. Repeated attempts have been made to civilize and Christianize them, but in vain. Whom He will He hardeneth."

Mr. Armstrong sighed, and another sigh, so low it was unheard, stole from the bosom of his daughter.

"You are speaking of the Indians?" inquired the doctor.

"Yes," said Mr. Robinson, "and of the failure of all attempts by Christians to ameliorate their condition."

"And are you surprised it should be so?" inquired the doctor.

"The ways of Providence are inscrutable," replied Mr. Robinson. "I pretend not to explain the reasons why they are deaf to the pleadings of the Gospel."

"What," cried the doctor, slightly altering his favorite author, "hath not an Indian eyes? Hath not an Indian hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is? If an Indian wrong a Christian, what is his humility? revenge; if a Christian wrong an Indian, what should his sufferance be, by Christian example? why, revenge.' There, you have the whole in a nut-shell."

"In addition to the difficulty growing out of their treatment by the whites, suggested by the doctor," said the Judge, "there is another, which I consider insuperable, arising out of a difference of race."

"I do not quite understand you," observed Mr. Robinson.

"It is said by naturalists," answered the Judge, "that man comprehends, within himself, the peculiarities of all inferior animals. Now, there are some capable of domestication, while others are irreclaimable. You may tame the horse, but not the tiger. The wild element controls the one, and is controllable in the other. In my opinion, this wild element so predominates in the Indian as to make him incapable of civilization. He is the tiger."

"But some have been civilized," remarked Mr. Armstrong.

"A *quasi* civilization, I grant," said the Judge; "and were I to concede more, the exceptions are so few as only to confirm the rule."

"Your theory opens a wide field for speculation," said Mr. Robinson, "and I could bring many objections to it. In the first place"——

"No doubt, no doubt," cried the Judge, hastily, and desirous to avoid the arising collision, "and I shall be happy to examine the subject, at some future time, with you. I throw out these ideas only as hints. But there is another rule operative, if, indeed, it is not the same differently expressed—the inferior must always give place to the superior race"

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"That is not clear, either," said the divine. "What race ever existed superior to the Jews? Yet, observe their condition."

"I am not understood. Why, the Jews prove my theory. If they had not been a superior race, they would long ago have been extinct. But their number now is probably as great as it ever was. The Indians, however, are vanishing."

"And, really, Mr. Bernard," said his wife, "on your own principles, they will be no loss, if they do vanish. If a superior race succeeds, all the better."

"Right, right, my dear," cried her husband, "*rem acu*—pshaw! I was going to quote Latin. They have had their day, and fulfilled their design."

"It seems to me a deplorable necessity," said Mr. Armstrong.

"There are many laws and purposes at work in the rise and fall of nations," said the minister, "beyond our view. A peculiar mystery hangs over the devoted tribes; and, assign what reasons we please for their decay, there is only one satisfactory reason into which all the others are resolvable, viz: the determination of Providence. That determination is obvious. As the inhabitants of Canaan, were swept away for their iniquities, so is the red race destined to be extinguished; and it may be for a like reason—they will not abandon their abominations."

"They are as moral as the whites, generally, I believe," said William Bernard.

"Alas, that word morality!" exclaimed the divine. "It is an *ignis fatuus* to mislead—a broken reed to lean on."

"But," inquired Faith, anxiously, "do you think, sir, that nothing can be done for those who are left?"

"I see but little prospect of it," said Mr. Robinson.

"There are some good people among them," said the doctor, warmly. "I wish I was as sure of my own salvation as I am of poor Esther's."

This discussion scarcely disturbed the conversation between Anne Bernard and Pownal, who, much to his delight, found himself seated by her side. Nor did the contiguity seem displeasing to the lovely girl. What is the charm that gives boldness to the timid, and eloquence to the hesitating; which kindles the eye with a brighter lustre, and imparts a softer tone to the voice: which colors the cheek with frequent blushes, and fills the heart with unwonted flutterings? Sweet maiden, can you tell? Yet, what could they have so much to say to one another? They who are young, and they who have not forgotten the feelings of youth will readily find an answer.

“My heart warms to the Indians,” said Pownal, in a low tone, “whenever I hear them spoken of. It appears to me, sometimes,” continued he, smiling, “as if I were a sort of relation. Were I a believer in the transmigration of souls, I should think I had been, in some previous existence, an Indian myself.”

“Probably a Sachem, with your hair nicely shaved, except a little which was caught up into a knot like a cock’s comb, on top to hold an eagle’s feather,” said the laughing Anne. “How elegantly you must have looked after having made your toilette, preparatory to wooing some Indian Princess, with your face beautifully painted in all the colors of the rainbow, only handsomer. How I should have liked to see you. Hard-hearted must have been the fair who could resist such charms.”

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"You have reason to laugh at me; it is very ridiculous, but"—

"And then to think of the sad change that has befallen you! To subside from an eagle-feathered Sachem, eating succatash with an Indian Princess, into a tame civilized gentleman, in a swallow-tailed coat, handing apples to a poor little Yankee girl! I do not wonder you were melancholy and tried to shoot yourself."

"It was the most fortunate shot I ever made, since"—

"I am not sure of that. Perhaps if you had succeeded you might have been transmigrated back into the wigwam, and resumed your addresses to the Princess."

"Your fancy outstrips mine. I find it hard, by the side of a real Princess, to think of an imaginary one."

"Faithless, like all your fickle sex. Ah me, poor princess!"

Here Mrs. Bernard made a motion to rise, which was followed by the other ladies, and as Anne turned away she said:—

"You who have set me an example of desertion can not be surprised at my leaving you, which please to consider a punishment for the Princess' wrongs."

"And a severe one," said Pownal.

But a short time elapsed before the ladies were rejoined by the gentlemen in the withdrawing room, where we will leave them to look after some other friends of ours.

Upon the conclusion of his duties, Felix had opportunity to extend the rights of hospitality to General Ransome, who, true to his promise, had not failed to make his appearance in due time in the kitchen. There the worthy warrior had been received with all customary forms of politeness by Miss Rosa, and, installed in a high-back chair, awaited his share of the entertainment. And when the time arrived, seated between his friends, and opposite two other servants, there were few, if any, lighter and more careless hearts that day than the General's. And of the whole company it may be said, that if they were not refined, they were at least merry.

"Ladies and genlmn," said the General, soon after the repast had commenced, and seeming to think the toasts could not begin too soon, "do me de satisfacshum to fill you glasses. Wid you leave I'm going to gib a toast."

On this day it was customary to extend an unusual degree of license to the servants, and hence there was no lack of generous liquors on the board, of the same descriptions as those drank by their superiors. And to do them justice, it was seldom the privilege was abused.

The glasses were quickly filled, and the General proposed “de healt’ ob de fair sec.” This was drunk with acclamation, and a gentleman observed, “dat de whole world acknowledge de superur beauty ob de ’Merican ladies.” This toast was followed by “De day we celumbrate;” and it was admitted on all sides that Thanksgiving was one of the most important institutions of the country. Felix, then, looking at his friend gave, “the heroes of the ’Merican Revolution;” whereupon, the old soldier considering it incumbent upon him to return thanks for the array, requested permission to make some remarks. Of course leave was readily granted, and the orator, gracefully rising and steadying himself on the sound leg, with the other a little drawn back, extended his right hand, and bowing all round began.

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"Dere is noting," he said, "so sweet as liberty. 'Tis dis dat make de eagle fedder light, and de bob-o-link sich a good singer. See de grand bird how he wheel right about face up to de sun, and hear de moosic ob de merry little fellow!

"Liberty, liberty,
Berry nice to be free!
Bob-o-link where he please,
Fly in de apple trees,
O, 'tis de Freedom note
Guggle sweet in him troat!
Jink-a-jink, jink-a-jink,
Winky wink, winky wink,
Ony tink, ony tink,
How happy, Bob-o-link!
Sweet! Sweet!

"King George, he want to make de Yankees drink tea instead ob coffee. Now dere is no comparishum 'atween de two, and who is dere would drink de little tea leaves dat look as dey been all chew and den roll up, when he can git good coffee? Now King George he hab a great lot ob dis tea on hand, and it sell berry slow, and he want to git rid ob it, so he send it to dis country wid orders dat ebery man, woman, and child shall drink at least four cup a day, and no coffee. So Broder Jonatan he rise like a cat back, and he say (begging you pardon, ladies), 'dam if I drink de tea.' And a great many ob dem dress demselves up like Injuns, and one dark night dey heab all de tea oberboard in Bosson harbor, and all de fish get sick, dey say for a week. Now King George when he hear ob all dis he git mad and jerk his old wig on de ground, an stamp on it, and kick it in de fire, and say he make de 'Mericans pay for de tea. And after dat he send a big army to dis country, but it was no use. De 'Mericans whip dem orfully at Bunker Hill, and dat was de beginning ob de famous Resolution. And dey continues to drink de coffee; and I nebber drink no better dan Miss Rosa make in dis house (bowing to her). And for my 'sploits in de glorious Resolution you is welcome wid all my heart, ladies and genlmn; and for de complemen to de officers and sogers I gib dere best knowledgmn on dis 'casion."

The General sat down amid a storm of applause. Miss Rosa after the excitement caused by his eloquence had subsided, observing that no toast had been given by any lady, offered to make up the deficiency herself, which proposal being eagerly accepted, she gave "Miss Faith; and when she marry may she be happy as the angels." The toast was drank with right good will, though with somewhat more decorum than the others. Faith was greatly beloved by the servants, to that degree indeed, that the affectionate creatures doubted whether there was any man in the world fit to be her husband. But, enough of toasts and fine speeches. As the General very judiciously observed when Miss Rosa, who seemed to think he could not have too many delicacies, nor too much

of them, offered to add to his already overfilled plate, “dere is ’bundance of cranberry saace for dis turkey.”

According to custom, as soon as it began to be dark, the bonfires were lighted, and flashing from various eminences made luminous the night, while joyous shouts of boys answered each other across the rivers and ravines.

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At nine o'clock the bell rang out its usual warning, and before the clock struck the next hour, the inhabitants of Hillsdale had courted the repose of their pillows.

CHAPTER IX.

He was a man

Whom no one could have passed without remark,
Active and nervous was his gait; his limbs
And his whole figure breathed intelligence.
Time had compressed the freshness of his cheek
Into a narrow circle of deep red,
But had not tamed his eye; that under brows,
Shaggy and grey, had meanings which it brought
From years of youth.

WORDSWORTH'S EXCURSION.

There were certain seasons of the year when the malady of the Solitary assumed a more serious character than at others. From what circumstance this proceeded was unknown. It might arise from an association of ideas, connected in some manner with the events of his life, the particulars of which, although curious persons had, at various times, endeavored to draw them from him, he had never revealed more plainly than in the conversations with Ohquamehud and the doctor. The imagination was left to wander, therefore, among whatever speculations respecting him it chose to indulge in, and, accordingly, there was no hypothesis that could be started, however absurd, that did not find advocates.

By some, he was supposed to be a murderer, whom remorse had driven from the haunts of men, and who was endeavoring to expiate his crimes by self-denial and suffering; others, asserted that he was the Wandering Jew, though his long residence at the island militated a little with the idea: however, that was balanced by his marked reverence for the New Testament, and frequent references to the coming of the Son of Man; while others insisted he was a pirate, who had buried treasure on the lonely island, and there watched over its security. This last opinion was received with especial favor by the gaping vulgar, and further confirmed by the fact that the Solitary never asked alms or was destitute of money, of which, indeed, he gave away to those whom he considered poorer than himself. But whatever was the truth, or however anxious the good people of Hillsdale might be to discover the secret, no one ventured to meddle with him, though more than one old woman had hinted that it was a shame he should be allowed to run about with so long a beard, and a resolute fellow even once suggested the expediency of arresting him on suspicion. As, however, his life was perfectly harmless, and he had never been, nor seemed likely to become, a burden to the town,



nor had committed any act of violence, such counsels were considered too harsh, especially as the attempt to execute them might involve the town in expense and other unpleasant consequences. Besides, it was known he had strong friends in influential families, who would not permit him to be wronged or quietly see the least of his rights invaded. The curiosity of the place, therefore, was obliged to content itself with surmises, and to wait until some more favorable period for its gratification.

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The time of the year had now arrived when Holden was wont to show himself more than usually restless and excitable. He had been wandering one day since early in the morning, shooting partridges and squirrels, until late in the afternoon he found himself at the Falls of the Yaupaae. This was for him a favorite place of resort, and here, stretched on the ground, he would lie for hours, with his eyes fastened on the foaming water, listening to the cataract's roar, as if it soothed his humor. Holden threw himself on the moss that exuberantly covers the rocks, and essayed the spell. But this time, in vain. He lay but a moment, when, starting up, he seized the rifle he had laid aside, and making a considerable detour, in order to reach a small bridge higher up the stream, he crossed it, and pursued his way to the village.

Holden, notwithstanding he had lived so long in the vicinity and had often been in the village, never made his appearance without attracting attention. The little boys and girls, and even their elders, seldom passed him without turning to look again. The singularity of his dress, and fine tall person, as straight as his rifle, and a beard, that waved like a prophet's, on his breast, would have commanded observation anywhere. Joined to this was an air of dignity and gravity that, in spite of the coarseness of his apparel, insured respect. However much the rude and vulgar might feel disposed to insult, they were too much awed by his presence to attempt it. They might speak disrespectfully, indeed, of him in his absence, but before him they were cowed and mute. The mystery, besides, with which their imaginations surrounded him, invested him with a power the greater, perhaps, on account of its indefiniteness. They forgot in gazing at him, that his only means of living they were acquainted with was derived from the sale of the oysters and fish he caught in the river, and of the large baskets he made with his own hands. The meanness of the occupation was lost sight of when they saw his majestic appearance and heard the grand tones of his deep voice.

Holden proceeded down the street, hardly recognizing—though such was not his wont—the friendly greetings with which he was sainted by many that passed, until he arrived opposite the house of Mr. Armstrong. Here his progress was arrested by a tap on a window, and looking up he saw the bright face of Miss Armstrong, who was beckoning to him. He stopped; the face disappeared to re-appear at the door, and Faith invited him to come in. He hesitated, but the irresolution was only momentary, for instantly he turned and entered the house.

"I doubted," he said, "whether it were right to inflict the gloom of an old man on one so young. What have age and despondency in common with youth and happiness?"

"But you do not doubt my sympathy? Is there anything I would not do to make you happy, Father Holden?"

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"No. I trust in thee as a parent in his child. Thou art as incapable of deception as the heavens of a stain. I have known thee, Faith, since thou wast a child, and thou hast always had an influence over me. As the notes of the youthful harper of Israel scared away the demons from the bosom of Saul, so do the tones of thy voice thrill me like a melody from the past. So tell me of thyself and of all that concerns thee, so far, at least, as thou canst impart thy thoughts and feelings to one like me."

"The subjects that engage the attention of a young woman can have little interest for you, father."

"Believe it not. Though my heart be sore, it has not lost all its earlier feelings."

"I cannot speak of myself," said Faith. "My life has been too destitute of incident to deserve mention, and it is already known to you."

"What callest thou life? Is it," he continued, fixing his eyes on the carpet, and speaking in a low tone, "the few gasps that agitate the bosom here? If that were all, it were of but little more consequence than any other sigh. But this is only the beginning. It is the lighting of the spark that shall blaze a glorious star, or burn a lurid conflagration for ever." He stopped; he raised his eyes to the face of Faith, whose own were fastened on him, and gazed fondly on her; his features assumed a softened expression; and, as if a new train of thought had driven out the old, he added, "blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Apparently, these exclamations affected Faith with no surprise. She had probably listened to similar conversations, and simply replied:

"Who shall say his heart is pure?"

"If not thou, then none. Sad thought, that the poisoned tongue of the snake in Eden, should taint even a being so fair as thou."

"Father," said Faith, who was desirous of changing a conversation which began to be embarrassing, for to such ejaculations it was impossible to return reasonable answers, "do you love the loneliness, of your island as much as ever? Would it not be more prudent to pass the winter months in the village?"

"Thou art not the only one whose kindness hath asked the question. But, in my youth I learned to love solitude, though it was forced on me in the beginning. The dungeon and the chain introduced me to its acquaintance; yet, such is the kindness of Providence, that, what at first I hated, I afterwards learned to love. Know, too, that I have lived in the boundless forest, until an inhabited street cramps my breast and stifles my breath; nor am I ever less alone than when alone with God. Ask me not, then, though thy intentions be kind, to renounce a mode of life which habit hath made a second nature."

“Tell me of your adventures.”

“Hold! Wouldst thou hear of a youth blasted by unkindness; of prostrate hopes, and scenes of revenge and horror? Nay, thou knowest not what thou askest.”

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"It was not through mere curiosity I made the request. Those who love you would willingly know more, that they may be the better able to promote your welfare."

"The motive," said Holden, taking her hand, and holding it an instant, "is kind, my child; but what purpose would it serve? The time will come when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed: then let the story of my crimes and wrongs be blazoned to the world."

Faith attached little credence to confessions of crimes which Holden intimated he had committed. Had she done so, she might have felt alarm at being thus alone with him. But his presence, so far from inspiring her with terror, had something unaccountable of attraction. His self-accusation she considered exaggerations of a morbid fancy that converted common errors into unpardonable sins. Hers was a charity that could think no evil, and in her imagination she had long since formed a theory that, to her pure mind, made him an object of deep interest. In Holden she saw a man of superior endowments and breeding—his manners and language so far above those of most around her, proved both; who, by undeserved misfortunes had partially lost his reason, and, like the stricken deer, left the herd to die alone. Sometimes she would fill up the picture with scenes from his supposed life, at one time of one character, and at another time of another; but they were merely sports of the Imagination, changing figures of a kaleidoscope which employed without satisfying the mind. Of the truth of her general hypothesis she was quite convinced, nor without hope that her old friend would be restored to society and the position which she considered his due. As children instinctively know those who love them, so must Holden have originally had some idea of the feelings of Faith, and by it been drawn closer to her. Certainly, there was no one in whose society he took more pleasure, or whom he was more desirous to please.

At this stage of the conversation, the door opened, and Mr. Armstrong entered. He advanced to Holden, whose hand he took, and welcomed with much cordiality. It was no new thing for him to see the Recluse in his parlor. His daughter's partiality he well knew, of course; and although, in his opinion, it was somewhat extraordinary that a young lady should be attracted by Holden, he accounted for the circumstance by ascribing it to the romance in her nature, of which she had no common share.

The contrast was strong betwixt the appearance of the two men. On the one hand, in perfect harmony with the adornment of the handsome parlor, stood the delicate person of Mr. Armstrong, with cropped hair and close-shaven face, in a suit of fine black cloth and muslin cravat of spotless white, representing a refined, perhaps enervated phase of civilization; on the other, the stately and vigorous form of Holden, in a clean but coarse gray frock, girt around the waist with a sash, with long hair falling on his neck, and unshorn beard, looking like one better acquainted with the northern blast than with the comforts of curtains and carpets.

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"It is not often, brother Holden," said Mr. Armstrong, addressing him by an epithet sometimes applied to him, "that I am so fortunate as to meet you in my house."

"Dost thou speak from the heart, James Armstrong," replied Holden, "or art thou flattering me with empty conventionalities?"

The melancholy face of Mr. Armstrong looked distressed, but, remembering the wayward humor of the other, he gently answered:

"I am sorry the form of expression displeases you; but I assure you I am glad to see you."

"Nay," said Holden, "let me rather beg pardon for my rudeness; and that I fully believe thee, be my presence here the proof. I owe thee many obligations through thy daughter, and there are times when it does me good to be with her. It is then I fancy I hear in her voice the tones of the long lost, and they come not with a wail of sorrow, but like a welcome and an invitation."

"The lost!" softly said Armstrong, falling insensibly, and as by some mesmeric process, into a corresponding train of feeling, "the lost! how soon drop away from our sides those who made the morning of life so pleasant!"

"Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward," said Holden. "He cometh from the womb of darkness, and returneth thither again."

The two men drew their chairs nearer each other. It seemed as if a new community of thought and feeling had been established between them.

"You have suffered," said Armstrong, "perhaps lost all your dear ones, and, in that, more miserable than I; for, have I not left my Faith? But the hand that inflicted the wound can heal, and I trust the balm has been poured in."

The countenance of Holden was agitated; his lips trembled, and, in a broken voice, he replied:

"The nearest and dearest are gone. Yet hath God left me some comfort in my affliction. I am not entirely bereft."

"In the promises of the Holy Scriptures you find consolation. Happy the soul that draws comfort from their sacred pages!"

"I meant not entirely so. But it avails not now to explain. Yet art thou right. I do find in the precious Book my dearest hope. Without it, I were miserable indeed."

"And it sustains you under every trial and temptation?"

“Assuredly. For that very purpose was it given, that man might not sink under the mystery of existence; that in its pages he should find hope.”

“And you find in it the warrant of your salvation?”

“I strive to work out my salvation, with fear and trembling.”

“There are many who strive to enter, who shall not be able. How may one be assured of safety?”

“There is a justification by faith. Hast thou never tasted of its sweetness?”

“Alas! no,” exclaimed Armstrong. “I have prayed for it, and longed for it in vain. The threatenings of the Gospel and not its promises are mine.”

“Father, dear father, how can you speak so wildly?” cried his daughter, throwing her arms around his neck and kissing his pale cheek.

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He looked at her a moment, then putting her away, gently, again addressed Holden:

“Have you no word of comfort for me?”

“Faint not; neither be tired of well-doing,” answered Holden, “and I doubt not that the cloud which now concealeth the divine countenance will depart, and thou shalt attain the peace that passeth understanding.”

“Have you attained it? Do you know what it is to be justified by faith?”

“I have that blessed experience,” cried the enthusiast. “Those whom He called He justified. I am a brand plucked from the burning—a monument of abounding mercy.”

“Tell me, then,” exclaimed Armstrong, “what are the signs by which it may be known?” He said this eagerly, and with an air of the intensest interest.

“I feel it,” cried Holden, rising and standing before him, “in the hatred that I bear towards all that conflicts with His will; in the love with which I read His word; in the willingness to suffer all things for the glory of His name, and to be damned for ever, if such be His purpose; I feel it in that, through His grace, I can trample the world under foot, and bear whatever cross His decree imposes; in the struggle and the aspiration to be more like Him, and in that His sovereign grace hath chosen me to reveal unto me His salvation and the knowledge of His speedy coming.”

It is impossible to convey an adequate idea of the manner in which this was spoken. Words cannot describe the voice, or paint the wild gleams of enthusiasm that, like lightning-flashes, coursed each other over the features of Holden, as, without a gesture, and immovable as a rock, an image of undoubting confidence, he delivered himself of this extraordinary speech. Nor, carried away by its impassioned utterance, were either Armstrong or his daughter aware of its full fanaticism. But the impression made upon the two was somewhat diverse, and marked how differently the chords of their minds were tuned. With all her reverence for the Enthusiast, Faith could not hear his wild avowal without pain, notwithstanding it was stamped with all the honesty of conviction, and her own creed taught that such a degree of spiritual elevation might be attained; while her father listened with a sad admiration, not unmixed with self-abasement and almost envy.

After a pause, Armstrong said: “If such are the evidences of justification and a saving faith, then have I had them, too; but why bring they to me no confidence or holy joy? Why is my soul cast down, and why do I feel like one who stumbles towards a pit? Alas! my flesh quivers and my heart trembles at the thought of falling into His hands.”

“It is prayer that opens heaven,” said Holden. “If thou wilt, we will unite our hearts in supplication. Peradventure the Lord may send a blessing.”

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A mute assent was the reply from Armstrong; the three knelt down together, and Holden poured out a prayer, into which he concentrated his glowing feelings. He described themselves as covered all over with crimes, like a leprosy; as willful and determined rebels; as not only unworthy of the least of God's mercies, of the warm sun and refreshing rain, but deserving of the torments of the bottomless pit; but entreated that, devoid of all merit, as they were, and justly exposed to His wrath, their aggravated offences might be pardoned for the sake of One who had taken their burden upon Himself, and that they might be of the number of the elect, whom the foreordination of God had predestined to salvation. He concluded with beseeching that the balm of peace might be poured into his afflicted brother's heart, that his ears might be opened to hear the truth, and his eyes to see how near was the great and terrible day of the Lord, and that, as in ancient days chosen women were raised up to do mighty works, even so Faith might be made an instrument to proclaim His power abroad.

As the three rose from their knees, a change seemed, during the prayer, to have passed over the little circle. Holden was invested with an authority not felt before. Neither his speech nor dress was as strange as formerly. He had become a teacher to be honored. It was the influence of a mind originally powerful, and which, though shattered, exercised the control of a strong will, guided by an earnest fanaticism.

CHAPTER X.

Thus as he spake, his visage waxed pale,
And chaunge of hew great passion did bewray,
Yett still he strove to cloke his inward bale,
And hide the smoke that did his fire display.

SPENSER'S FAERY QUEENE.

The request of Mr. Armstrong, supported by the pleadings of his daughter, prevailed upon Holden to remain to tea, and afterwards to accompany them to the "conference," as a meeting for religious purposes held usually on some particular evening of the week, was called. Upon the conclusion of the service he was to return with them and pass the night at the house of his host. It was not without difficulty he allowed his objections to be overruled, nor was he ever known before to have accepted such an invitation. But it had seemed of late that as his influence with Miss Armstrong increased, so did hers over him, until he became unable to deny her slightest wish. Perhaps, too, the events of the afternoon, by bringing him more intimately into communion with sufferings like those through which he had passed, had softened his sternness and disposed him more for human companionship.

The little building where the "conference" met was of the humblest pretensions. It was a weather-stained, unpainted wooden edifice of one story, standing at no great distance

from the meeting-house, and capable of containing comfortably, probably a hundred people. The interior was almost as rude and unattractive as the exterior, the walls being coarsely plastered and dingy with smoke that had escaped from a cast-iron stove which stood in the centre of the room. Benches with backs were placed parallel to one another, and facing a sort of rostrum or reading-desk, to which a passage betwixt the benches led. The inside work was equally innocent of paint as the outside.

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On the arrival of Mr. Armstrong with his companions, they found the room only partly occupied, nor had the exercises commenced. According to a custom which would have struck a stranger as singular, but which, doubtless, was founded in a knowledge of the nature of young men and young women, the males were seated on one side of the passage, and the females on the other. The separation, as might be expected, only partly answered the purpose, being unable to arrest the glances which, with quite as much of earth as of heaven in them, crossed the intervening space. These, however, were stolen, and managed in such a quiet way as not materially to affect the devotions of the elders. In compliance with an usage, a breach of which would have violated propriety, Faith, withdrawing her arm from her father's, glided into a seat among her own sex on the right, while Mr. Armstrong and Holden sought places on the left.

The appearance of the Solitary entering the little place of worship, striding up the passage with his usual air of dignity and composure, and taking a seat among the principal members of the church, occasioned great surprise. Although differing little, probably, in religious sentiments (except in one point) from those around him, he had never united with them in religious worship. He was, therefore, notwithstanding his frequent allusions to the Scriptures, considered generally more in the light of a heathen than of a Christian man, and the apparition of Plato or Socrates would hardly have excited more observation. Many, in consequence, were the looks bent on him by those present, and those who afterwards came in.

But of them, or of any sensation caused by his presence, he seemed utterly unconscious. With arms folded and head drooped upon his chest, he shut his eyes and abandoned himself to meditation.

"Massy on us," whispered Miss Green, the mantua-maker, to her next neighbor, Miss Thompson, the tailoress, "if here ain't old Holden. I wonder what fetches him here."

"And did you see!" said Miss Thompson, whispering in like manner, "he came in with the Armstrongs. I always did admire what they could see in him to like."

"I guess," said Miss Green, "he feels kind o' awkward. Look how he's folded his arms. It's so long since he's been to meeting or conference, if he was ever in such a place before; he don't know how to behave."

"There's no sort o' set about his clothes," observed Miss Thompson. "They look as if he made them himself."

"Perhaps he did, but they're good enough to go with Faith Armstrong's cloak" (which had been made by a rival artiste), responded Miss Green. "What dark colors she wears, no variety, and how dreadful old they make her look!"

"Hush!" said Miss Thompson, "the deacon's going to open."

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During the colloquy of the two spinsters a grave, respectable-looking man, somewhat advanced in years, had taken a seat behind the reading-desk, and opening the large Bible that lay upon it, selected a chapter, and now invited the attention of the audience to its contents. Upon its conclusion he gave out a hymn, the tune of which was announced by another person, who immediately on naming it pulled out a pitch-pipe from his pocket and making a slight sound, furnished the starting note. The singing proceeded principally from a certain part of the room, as if by some understanding the singers had been collected together, although scattered sounds also, of either rumbling bass or shrill treble whose trembling modulations betrayed the advanced age of the performers, were here and there heard. Some of these guerrilla passages were sadly out of time and tune, and according to the humor of the hearer might either provoke a smile or start a tear. The gay and thoughtless might, indeed, laugh at the wavering and undecided notes, but to the reflecting mind there was something profoundly pathetic in the feeble tribute to the praise of their Maker, of those whose voices in the ordinary course of nature must soon be silent in the grave.

After the singing was ended, the person who had hitherto officiated invited Deacon Baldwin, calling him by name, to make a prayer. Hereupon the deacon rose, and folding his hands complied with the request, while most of the congregation respectfully bent forward, or covered their faces with their handkerchiefs. The prayer evidently came from a sincere and earnest heart, but contained nothing that requires it should be recorded. Another hymn was then sung, upon the conclusion of which followed the sermon.

The person who came forward to perform this office was a short, thick-set man, of middle age, with a bull neck. His features were harsh and severe, and stamped with an expression of mortification, though the gross animality of the mouth and chin too plainly revealed how many and desperate were the conflicts it must have cost him to become a saint. As he passed to the reading-desk his clothes brushed Holden, who shrunk from the touch. The Solitary looked up, but as if what he saw was displeasing, he averted his face and shut his eyes.

The first thing done by Davenport on reaching the desk, and casting a furtive glance around, was to draw an East India silk handkerchief out of his pocket, and having noticed a spittoon by his side, to blow his nose sonorously. He then cleared his throat two or three times, and commenced reading.

It happened, singularly enough, that the subject was prophecy, considered as evidence of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. The writer, after referring to the fulfillment of many prophecies contained in the Old Testament, came to those in the New, and amongst others he spoke of that in which Christ alludes to the destruction of Jerusalem. He said that even in the times of the Apostles, there were persons who, by putting too literal a construction upon the words, were misled into believing that the end

of the world was at hand, and that there had never been a time when there were not victims to the same delusion.

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It was impossible, with reference to the condition of Holden's mind, to have selected either a topic or reader more unsuitable. The aversion he had manifested at first increased every moment. It was one of those antipathies as unquestionable as they are unaccountable. It at first exhibited itself in restlessness, and an inability to remain quiet, and afterwards in half-suppressed groans and sighs. If he opened his eyes and looked at the reader, he saw a devilish figure, with a malignant leer glaring at him; if he shut them to exclude the disagreeable image it was converted into a thousand smaller figures, dancing up and down like motes in a distempered vision, all wearing that intolerable grin, while the whole time a hissing sound, as if it came from a snake, whispered in his ears temptations to some deadly sin. It was a trial the shattered nerves of the enthusiast were ill qualified to bear, and, finally, a torture beyond his powers of endurance. The very force of the reasons urged by the writer distressed him more and more. They seemed to his disordered imagination the subtle enticements of an evil spirit to lure him from the truth, and Davenport an emissary of Satan, if not the arch-deceiver himself. No adequate answers to doctrines which he was persuaded were false presented themselves to his mind, and this he ascribed to some hellish spell, which fettered his reason, and must soon be broken, or he was lost. Mentally, then, first ejaculating a prayer, he suddenly sprung to his feet, and in a loud voice bade the reader to stop.

"Forbear," he cried, "man of sin, to seduce the people with these soul-damning and abominable lies. I conjure thee, Satan, to leave the body of this man, and depart. Ha! thou wouldst lull them into security that they may slumber and have no oil in their lamps when the Bridegroom cometh, when He cometh in the clouds of heaven. My soul have not thou thy portion with the unbelievers."

The words were uttered with wonderful vehemence and rapidity, and upon their conclusion, he strode with long strides down the passage towards the door. Not an exclamation was heard, not a hand raised to stay his departure, so stupefied were all with astonishment. Upon leaving the room he rushed into the street, and, forgetful of his promise to Mr. Armstrong, took his way to his own hut. The tything man, awakening from his lethargy, and a few others recovering their presence of mind, went at last to the door, and gazed up and down the street, but the disturber of the meeting was not in sight, nor, sooth to say, were any of the number sorry, or wished to meet him that night. Contenting themselves, therefore, with this slight demonstration of zeal, they returned to the Conference-room. There, great as was the scandal occasioned by the interruption, all things soon settled down into their usual course, and the meeting was regularly concluded and dismissed.

CHAPTER XI.

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Angelo.—We must not make a scarecrow of the law,
Setting it up to fear the birds of prey,
And let it keep one shape, till custom make it
Their perch, and not their terror.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

The events of the preceding evening caused quite a sensation in the village. We shall better understand the various opinions and feelings of the inhabitants by stepping, at about eleven o'clock the following morning, into the shop, or, as it was called in those days, and would generally be called now, the "store" of Truman and Jenkins. This was an establishment at the foot of the hill, where it hung out its sign, in company with several others of the same character, which professed to supply all the wants of the community. Here everything was to be had from a gallon of molasses to a skein of thread, or a quintal of codfish, to a pound of nails. On one side, as you entered, were ranges of shelves, protected by a counter, on which were exposed rolls of flannels of divers colors, and calico and broadcloth, and other "dry goods," while a showcase on the counter contained combs, and tooth-brushes, and soaps, and perfumery, and a variety of other small articles. The back of the store was used as a receptacle for hogsheads of molasses, and puncheons of rum and wine, and barrels of whisky and sugar. Overhead and on the posts were hung pails, and rakes, and iron chains, and a thousand things necessary to the complete enjoyment of civilization. On the other side was a small counting-room partitioned off, with a door, the upper part of which was glass, for the convenience of looking into the shop, in order to be ready to attend to the wants of such customers as might come in. This little room, scarcely eight feet square, contained a small close stove, around which were gathered some half a dozen persons.

"I say, squire," exclaimed Tom Gladding, a tall, awkward, good-natured looking fellow, with legs sprawling out, and heels on the top of the stove, addressing himself to a man in a black suit, rather better dressed than the others, "what do you think of this here rusty old Father Holden cut up last night at Conference?"

Squire Miller, as one in authority, and who might be called to adjudicate upon the case, and for other reasons of his own, was not disposed to commit himself, he, therefore, cautiously replied, *more Novo Anglicano*, by asking another question, "Were you there, Mr. Gladding?"

"No," said Tom, laughing; "the old folks used to make me go so regular, when I was a boy, I guess I've done my part. So after a while I give it up."

"It is a pity you ever gave it up," said the squire. "You might get a great deal of good from it."

“There’s two opinions about that,” said Tom. “You see, squire, as long as mother was alive, I always went with her regular, ‘cause it kind o’ comforted her, though somehow or other I never took to it. So when she died I sort o’ slacked off ‘till now it’s ‘een amost two year since I been in.”

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"They say," observed Mr. Jenkins, "they've took the old man up."

"I'm sorry for that," cried Tom. "To go to take up a kind o' half-crazy man for speaking in meetin'!"

"Why," inquired the squire, "would you allow the man to go about disturbing the neighbors as he pleased?"

"I never heard tell of his disturbing nobody," said Tom. "Just take him off his notions about the ten vargins and their lamps, and the judgment day, and I don't know a likelier man than old Holden. In my opinion, he's a cleverer fellow than Davenport, by a long shot."

"I don't believe he's been caught," said a man in a pee-jacket, who, from his appearance, was a fisherman. "I passed his island this morning about sunrise, with a boatload of oysters, and I see the old man at his door."

"Well," observed Mr. Jenkins, "I hope he isn't. It's enough to make a body puke up his boots to hear Davenport, and I don't much blame Holden for cutting him short."

"I heard somebody say," said Gladding, "that the old man shook his fist right in old Davenport's face, and told him up and down he was a good for nothing liar. I want to know if he can sue him, squire?"

"Why, as to that," answered Miller, who being appealed to on a question of law, conceived it necessary to show his learning, "if a man strikes at me within striking distance, I can sue him for assault, though he shouldn't touch me. That I call one of the nice pints of the law. I decided so myself in the case of Samuel Pond *versus* Ezekiel Backus. You see Pond and Backus had a little quarrel about some potatoes Pond sold him, and Pond got mad, and told Backus he lied. Backus is rather hasty, and doubled up his fist, and put it near Pond's nose, and insinuated that if he said that again he would knock him down." Here the squire paused, and looked round to see what impression he was making on his audience, and the momentary silence was taken advantage of by Gladding to observe:

"That Pond's a mean cuss."

The justice took no further notice of honest Tom's not very complimentary remark than to cast at him a look of angry surprise, which the other endured with complete indifference.

"So," continued Squire Miller, "Pond went to Lawyer Tippit, and he brought the suit before me. Backus pleaded his own case, but he had a fool for a client; the law was all against him, and I had to fine him a dollar and cost."

“That’s considerable to pay,” exclaimed Tom, “just for skinning such a fellow’s nose as Sam Pond’s (I’ve heard of the case afore), but you ain’t said nothing, squire, about calling a man a liar.”

“Well,” said Squire Miller, “that’s what we call a mute point. I heard the affirmative and negative argued once by Lawyer Ketchum and Lawyer Tippet. Lawyer Tippet was the affirmative, and Lawyer Ketchum the negative. Lawyer Tippet’s principle was in *medio pessimus ibis*, while Lawyer Ketchum held *qui facit per alien facit per se*. They, therefore, couldn’t agree, they were so wide apart, you see. So they separated without either giving up, though I think Lawyer Tippet had a little the best of the argument.”

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"Lawyer Tippet knows a thing or two," said the fisherman, in a low tone.

Here Squire Miller handed to Mr. Jenkins twelve and a half cents, for the four glasses of Jamaica he had drank, a portion of which some way or other seemed to have got into his last speech, and took his leave.

He had hardly left the store when who should come in but Constable Basset, bearing in his hand a black staff, "having a head with the arms of the State thereon," the badge of his office, as provided by law, and which he was required to carry "upon proper occasions." Some such occasion had, in the judgment of the constable, evidently arisen, else it would not now be forthcoming.

He was a bullet-headed, carrot-haired little fellow, with a snub nose and eyes so diminutive and deeply sunken, that but for the sparks of light they emitted, they would have been undiscernible. The expression of his face was like that of a wiry terrier, being derived partly from his occupation, which, in his opinion, required him to be as vigilant in spying out offenders as the aforesaid peppery animal, in scenting vermin, and being partly the gift of nature. But though the person of Basset was small, such was not his opinion of himself. That was in an inverse ratio to his size, and at once the source of his highest joys, and, sooth to say, of an occasional mortification. But the former greatly preponderated, and, on the whole, it was a pleasure to a benevolent mind to look at him, if for no other reason than to consider how much enjoyment there may be in ignorance.

As soon as Gladding set his eyes on the constable, he hailed him:

"Here, Basset," he cried, "what are you going to do this morning with that are stick?"

The constable did not much relish hearing the badge of an office which he esteemed one of the most important in the State thus lightly spoken of and degraded to a common stick; he, therefore, replied somewhat shortly—

"I guess, Mr. Gladding, you don't see the head of my staff, do ye?"

"Don't I?" said Gladding. "I know old Authority-by-the-State-of-Connecticut a mile off, without seeing his head, I rather think. But what are you up to now?"

Basset, who, though no Solomon, had too much wit to admit every one into his confidence, answered:

"O, nothing; I was only looking for Squire Miller."

"Why," said Gladding, "he only left the store a minute ago. I say Basset, you got a warrant agin old Holden?"

“Why,” said Basset, “what makes you ask?”

“Because,” replied Gladding, mischievously, who strongly suspecting an intention to arrest Holden, and knowing the constable’s cowardice, was determined to play upon his fears, “I shouldn’t like to be in your skin when you go for to take him.”

“I’d like to see the man what would dare to resist when I showed him my authority,” said the constable. “I guess I’d make him cry copeevy in less than no time.”

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"Well," said Gladding, who all this while had been leisurely whittling a bit of white pine, "well, Basset, you know your own business best, and I'm not a man to interfere. My principle is, let every man skin his own skunks. You haint no wife nor children, have you?"

"No," said Basset. "What makes you ask?"

"Well, I'm glad to hear it. I always think it judgmatical, you see, to choose a man for constable who haint got no family; 'cause, if any accident should happen, 'twouldn't be of so much consequence."

"I don't catch your meaning clear," said Basset.

"You'll catch it clear enough, I guess," answered Gladding, "if Holden gits hold o' ye."

"Now, Tom Gladding, you needn't think you're going to frighten *me*," cried Basset, on whom the charm was beginning to work.

"I never had sich an idea," said Tom. "But folks does say he's a desperate fighting character. Did you never hear tell of Kidd the pirate, and his treasures, ever so much gold and silver, and rings and watches, and all sorts o' trinkets and notions, buried somewhere along shore, or perhaps on the old fellow's island? Folks does say that when it was kivered, two men was murdered on the spot, so that their sperits should watch it, and hender other folks from gitting on't. But them may be all lies. I heard tell, too," he added, bending down towards the constable, and speaking in a low, confidential tone, as if he wished to be overheard by no one, "that Holden's Kidd himself; but I don't believe a word on't. I tell you this as a friend of your'n, and I advise you to be prudent."

Poor Basset left the shop, with a much less confident air than that with which he had entered it. The truth is, he had in his pocket, all the while, a warrant issued by Squire Miller to arrest Holden, which he now most heartily wished he had never burnt his fingers with. He had heard before, the strange stories in circulation about the Solitary, but had listened to them with only a vague feeling of curiosity, without any personal interest therein, so that no impression of any consequence had been made upon his mind. But now the case was different. The matter was brought home to his own bosom. Here was he, Constable Basset, required and commanded, "by authority of the State of Connecticut," to arrest a man of the most violent character, "for," said Basset to himself, "he must be a dangerous fellow, else how would he venture to insult a whole conference? Tom Gladding's more'n half right, and I must look sharp." Gladly would he have abandoned the whole business, notwithstanding his cupidity was not a little excited by the fees, but he doubted whether the sheriff, his deputy, or any other constable would execute the warrant in his stead; nor did any plausible excuse present itself to account for transferring it to other hands. Thus musing, with fear and avarice

contending in his breast, he walked up the street. But it may be necessary to tell how Basset got into the dilemma, and, in order to do so, we must retrace our steps.

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The interruption at the conference had not a little offended Davenport. A pompous and conceited man, any slight to himself, any failure to accord a deference he considered his due, he felt sensibly as an injury; much more, then, an open defiance and direct attack. That Holden or any one should have the hardihood, before an assemblage of his friends and acquaintances, to interrupt him and load him with reproaches, wounded his self love to the quick, and he fancied it would affect his reputation and influence in the community were the offence to be passed over without notice. He therefore resolved that something should be done to punish the offender, though unwilling to appear himself in the matter, as that might expose his motives; and all the way home, his mind was engrossed with schemes to accomplish his purpose. It was little attention, then, he bestowed upon the “good gracious” and “massy on us” of his better half, as, with indignation becoming the provocation, she kept herself warm, and shortened the way. But, notwithstanding, he was forced to hear them, and they affected him like so many little stings to urge him to revenge. So excited were his feelings, that it was some time before he fell asleep that night, long after notes other than those of music had announced the passage of Mrs. Davenport to a land of forgetfulness, though not before her husband had matured a plan for the morrow.

Accordingly, after breakfast, Davenport walked round to the office of Mr. Ketchum. Ketchum was a young man, who, but a short time before, had, in the fortunate town of Hillsdale, hung out his professional sign, or shingle, as people generally called it, whereon, in gilt letters, were emblazoned his name and the titles of “Attorney and Counsellor at Law,” whereby the public were given to understand that the owner of the aforesaid name and titles was prepared with pen or tongue, or both, to vindicate, *a entrance*, the rights of all who were able and willing to pay three dollars for an argument before a Justice Court, and in proportion before the higher tribunals. He was a stirring, pushing fellow, whose business, however, was as yet quite limited, and to whom, for that reason, a new case was a *bonne bouche* on which he sprung with the avidity of a trout.

This gentleman Davenport found apparently lost in the study of a russet sheep-skin covered book. A few other books, bound in like manner, were lying on the table, with pens and loose paper and an ink-stand, among which were mingled files of papers purporting to be writs and deeds. Against the walls were two or three shelves containing some dingy-looking books having a family likeness to the former.

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After the usual compliments, Davenport made known his business. "A scandal," he said, "had been occasioned by the conduct of Holden, and a great injury inflicted on the cause of religion. It was for that reason," he intimated, "and not from any private feeling he wanted him brought to justice. Some people think him a little touched," he said, "though I don't believe it, and if it was only my own case I should overlook his insults, for it is the part of a Christian to suffer wrong without complaining, but there's others to be thought of, and I'd sooner cut off my right hand than not do my duty. So, squire," he concluded, "we must see if we can't learn him reason, and stop his disturbing the worship of God."

"There is no difficulty about that, Squire Davenport," said Ketchum, who was acquainted with the particulars of the occurrence of the night previous, before the arrival of his client, having heard them discussed over breakfast at his boarding-house. "You have the plainest case in the world. We'll soon put him through a course of sprouts."

"How do you think we had better proceed?" said Davenport.

"Why," replied the other, opening the Statute Book, "you have at least two causes of action; you can bring a civil action for the slander, and also proceed against him on the part of the State for the interruption of the meeting."

"I don't care about suing him on my own account," said the client, who, perhaps, not reposing unlimited confidence in the young man's knowledge of law, and doubting the success of a civil action, had visions of possible costs he might be obliged to pay floating before his imagination. Besides, Davenport was a shrewd fellow who had been "in the law" before; and experience taught him how to make allowance for the natural anxiety of a new practitioner to obtain business. "No, I have no feeling about it myself," said Davenport, "and it is my opinion we had better take him on the part of the State."

"It is just as well," said the attorney; "one suit will not interfere with the other. We can first proceed against him criminally, and afterwards bring an action for damages."

"Well, well," said Davenport, "now about the prosecution."

"Then," said Ketchum, opening the Statute Book at the title "Meetings," after first running through the index; "we can take him under the Act on the 492d page, entitled, 'An Act for preserving due order in town meetings, society meetings, and in the meetings of other communities, and for preventing tumults therein,'" and he read the act aloud.

"I don't exactly like that," observed Davenport, "The fine, in the first place, is only eighty-four cents, except the case is aggravated, when it is a binding over, and then the County Court cannot go over thirty-four dollars fine. There's no imprisonment and Tom

Pownal or Armstrong would go bail, and pay the fine too, if it comes to that; so there would be nothing gained by the operation."

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"Let us see if we cannot find something else," said Ketchum, "to suit your taste better I think (for he now perfectly understood the temper of his client, and read the vindictive purpose of his soul, and, alas! was willing to descend to the meanness of ministering to its gratification,)—I think it would be a reproach to the law if such a high-handed outrage should be permitted to pass unpunished." He again referred to the index and apparently finding what he wanted turned the leaves till he came to the title, "Workhouses." "Here," cried he, "at the 688th page, in the seventh section, we have got him;" and he read from the Statutes a provision, authorising and empowering an associate or Justice of the Peace to send "'all rogues, vagabonds, sturdy beggars, and other lewd, idle, dissolute, profane and disorderly persons that have no settlement in this State, to such workhouses, and order them to be kept to hard labor' &c.; and here on the next page, 'also such as are guilty of reviling and profane speaking.'"

"That last will do, if the law will hold him," said Davenport.

"Leave that to me," said Ketchum. "That section will hold water or nothing will. Give me the names of your witnesses, and we will set the mill a grinding. I suppose," he added, carelessly, "you have no objection to bringing the case before Squire Miller?"

"Oh, none in the world," answered the other, who knew perfectly well the influence he exercised over the Justice. "But you haven't said a word about the Grand Juror to make the complaint."

"That will be all straight," replied Ketchum. "Two Grand Jurors I know were at the meeting, either of whom will answer our purpose. Trust that to me, and I will attend to it."

Hereupon, Davenport mentioned the names of the witnesses he wished subpoenaed. "And now, Squire," he added, "that this matter is concluded between us, how comes on my case with Fanning?"

Ketchum felt some surprise at the question, although his countenance expressed none, for it was only a short time since he had gone over the whole subject with his client, and the plan of operations had been agreed on between them. He understood, however, the character of Davenport too well not to know that he had a reason of his own for asking, and not doubting it would come out in the course of the conversation, he replied very composedly that it would probably be reached the next term.

Davenport went on for awhile, talking of his case, Ketchum all the time wondering at his drift, until, having concluded what it pleased him to say, he rose to take leave. After bidding good morning by way of farewell, he walked to the door, when suddenly turning, as if the thought had just struck him, he observed—"By the way, if anybody should happen to notice that I had called on you, I have no objections to your saying I had a talk with you about that case of Fanning's."

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As soon as the door was closed, Ketchum leaned back in his chair and indulged in a low sarcastic laugh. "The old sinner," he said, aloud; "he is a cute one; sharp as a pin, but needles are sharper. What a knack he has of whipping the devil round the stump! To look at that man you would suppose he was too good for preaching. And he flatters himself he is imposing on me! He must get up earlier for that. It is my opinion his only chance when his turn comes will be in cheating his Satanic Majesty. Well, practice makes perfect, and he has enough of it. I do declare," he added, after a pause, as if scruples of conscience were arising in his mind, "I am almost sorry I undertook this business. But all trades must live."

Consoling himself with this reflection, Ketchum started to hunt up the grand juror. He found no difficulty in inducing him to make complaint to Justice Miller, having first satisfied him that an offence had been committed which the law compelled him to notice officially.

Squire Miller, however, seemed disposed, at first, to take a different view of the subject. He said he had known Holden a good many years, and never heard harm of him except that he was a little flighty sometimes; but if the grand juror insisted, of course he would issue the warrant.

The minister of the law must have been inexorable, for the complaint was made, and the warrant signed in due form and delivered to Basset to be executed.

CHAPTER XII.

Esculus.—Come hither to me, master Elbow, come hither, master constable. How long have you been in this place of constable?

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

We have seen that when the constable left the shop he felt some anxiety about the proper course to be pursued. On the one hand were his duty and avarice, on the other his fears. After some meditation he finally effected a compromise between them, by adopting the resolution to wait until the formidable Holden should make his appearance again in the village, where, he thought he would be less likely, in open day, and surrounded by others, to resist, or, if he did, the assistance of the bystanders might be commanded.

Two or three days passed in this manner, none, excepting the five persons above-mentioned, having any knowledge of the issuing of the warrant. The excitement had died away, and the little community supposed no notice would be taken of the occurrence, and, for the most part, were disposed that none should be. Meanwhile,

Basset, like a spider in the centre of his web, watched for his victim, ready to pounce upon him, as soon as the propitious moment should arrive. It is curious how the desire to capture Holden increased with delay. At first, and in the prospect of immediate danger, the business was far from being relished, but as time slipped along, and his mind became familiarized to its contemplation, it began to assume something of even a tempting character. He began to fancy that if he could secure the Recluse, he should achieve for himself a reputation for courage, which he was far, at present, from possessing. Yet, still he desired to discharge his commission in the most prudent manner.

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But Holden did not appear. Was it possible he could have obtained information of the threatened danger, and was keeping himself concealed? At the thought, Basset stood two inches higher; his courage mounted rapidly, and the terrible pirate dwindled into a submissive culprit.

Ketchum, meanwhile, began to be importunate. He had become impatient at waiting, and demanded of the constable the reason of the delay. The latter, unwilling to confess the true cause, put him off with such excuses as his ingenuity suggested, until he had exhausted his stock, and was obliged to apply himself to the discharge of his duty. He, therefore, made up his mind to face the danger, but not to monopolize the glory of the achievement. He dared not go alone, and accordingly looked round for somebody to assist him in the perilous enterprise. Now, the veteran Primus, by virtue of his exploits in the Revolutionary War, and the loss of one of his legs on the field of battle, enjoyed a high reputation for bravery. Backed by the old warrior, or rather led by him, for Basset meant to yield him the post of honor, the constable thought he should stand a much greater chance of success. He determined, therefore, to apply to Primus, secure his services, and take counsel with him on the best mode to apprehend Holden. With this view, he betook himself to the bachelor quarters of the black—a hovel on the outskirts of the village, where we find him at this present moment.

“I hab some interjection, Missa Basset,” said Primus, evidently in reply to a proposition of the constable. “Suppose you come to ketch me, how I like to hab somebody help you?”

“No danger of that, Prime,” said Basset; “you are too clever a fellow for me to go with a warrant after; and if it was your case, I should more likely give you a squint of what was going on, than be plotting how to git hold on ye. You don’t know your friends, Prime.”

“Dey say ’tis a wise child dat know his own fader,” answered Primus. “Now, if a child dat see his fader ebery day, and been brung up in de same house, not know him, how is it possible dat I know you, Missa Basset, who neber before do me de honor ob a visit?”

“Why,” said the constable, who hardly knew what reply to make, “you never come to see me, Prime.”

“Dat is de trute,” said Primus, “and dat look as do you and me is no great friends, arter all. But,” added he, observing the other’s embarrassment, “dat is needer here nor dere. I always suspect you bery much, sar, and is willing to do anything to obleege you. Tell us, now, ’xactly, what you want me to do.”

“Why, you see, I want somebody to go along with me to be there when I take him, that’s all. The island’s three or four miles off, and I shall want you to help row the boat.”

“O, if dat is all, I is 'greeable,” exclaimed Primus. “When you tink of going, Missa Basset?”

“I ain’t just made up my mind on that pint, and that’s one thing I want to talk about. When will he be most likely to be at home? What do you think? Had we better go in the morning, or wait till afternoon.”

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"Dat inquire some deflexum. Let me see: I don't know about de day, at all. If he see you coming, he make off, probumbly, and den de job is lost, and de fire is in de fat. De night is de best time, I guess, to ketch dis kind ob fish."

But this opinion did not suit the notions of the constable.

"It won't be half so pleasant," he said. "It's plaguy cold at night; and if it keeps on at this rate, the river will soon freeze up. I expect we can git him easier, too, in the day-time than at night."

For some reason Primus seemed to entertain a decidedly contrary opinion.

"You suspec'," cried he, "de ole man let you put you hand an him as easy as Frisky wink (looking at a little mongrel, that at the mention of his name jumped into his master's lap). Ketch a weasel asleep! De old man beard too long for dat."

"Why, I can't see," said Basset, "what objections you can have if I take the risk. You can't deny it's a great deal pleasanter in the day time than to go along shivering at night, and, perhaps, catch a tarnation cold. So, Prime, what say to going down to-morrow in the forenoon or afternoon, I don't care much which? It's all one to me."

"It's all no use," persisted Primus. "You just hab to pay for de boat and my sarvices, and git noting. Dat is what I call a berry bad spec, Missa Basset."

"Well, what's that to you, I tell you? If I choose to run the risk, that's enough, and you ought to be satisfied. You git your pay, and what more do you want?"

"Dere is someting more I want," exclaimed the General, "I want de satisfacshum ob victory. I want de satisfacshum here," he repeated, laying his hand on his breast. "Do you tink, sar, dat a genlmn, dat fight in de Revolutionary war, and gib one leg, dat you may stand on two free leg, hab no feeling ob honor? Beside, dis old soger don't want no bread he don't arn."

"Well, I'll make a bargain with you, that if we don't catch Holden, you shan't have anything. That horse is soon curried."

"Ah, dat won't do. My time is precious, and de hire is wordy ob de laborer. No, Missa Basset, if you want to go in de day time, you can go. Dere is nobody will hender you. But dis child you will please 'scuse. Beside, dere is a good reason I say noting about 'cause I don't want to hurt you feelings."

"What's that?" said Basset. "Don't be afeared, spit it out."

"Well, seeing as how you is so pressing you see I tink someting ob my 'spectability."

“Your what?” exclaimed the constable, utterly at a loss to imagine the meaning of the other.

“My 'spectability,” repeated Primus, gravely. “You see, when I was a young man I sociate wid da best company in de country. I members de time when General Wayne (dey called him Mad Antony cause he fight so like de dibble) say afore de whole army dat haansome fellow—meaning me—look like anoder Anibal (Anibal I guess was a French General). Ah,” sighed Primus, “dey made more 'count ob colored pussons den, dan dey does now.”

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"What has all this to do with your respectability?" inquired Basset who began to be a little impatient.

"I come to dat at de end ob de roll call," responded Primus. "Do you tink it bery 'spectable now, for a man who, in his younger day, fight for liberty, to go for to take it away in his old age from anoder man?"

"But just consider," said Basset, whose cue was flattery and conciliation, "Holden went agin the very laws you made."

"I make de law, Missa Basset?" roared Primus, "haw! haw! haw! I make de law, haw! haw! haw! does you want to kill me! O dear!"

"Yes," said Basset stoutly, "and I can prove it. Now say, if the Americans didn't make their own laws, wouldn't the British make 'em for 'em? And who was it drove the British out and give us a chance to make our own laws eh?"

"Pity you isn't a lawyer," said Primus, suddenly abandoning his mirth at the other's explanation, "dere is a great deal in what you say—de white men owes a big debt to us colored pussons. Dat is a fust rate reason why I should want to see de law execute but not for me to go myself in particular, when, perhaps de ole man point his rifle at me, and tell me to clear out."

"Why, you don't think he'll resist?" cried the constable somewhat startled, feeling the apprehensions revive which Tom Gladding had occasioned, but which the passage of a few days had almost lulled asleep.

"'Tis bery hard to tell what a man do when he git in a corner," said Primus, shaking his head, and fastening his eyes on the constable's face, "but, if you want to know my 'pinion, it is just dis—if Missa Holden know what you up to, he make day light shine trough you, in less dan no time, rader dan be took."

"Poh?" exclaimed Basset, affecting a courage he was far from feeling, "you're skeary, Prime. So, in your judgment, it's safer to go by night, is it?"

"My 'pinion is made up on all de pints," said Primus, resolutely, and bringing all his batteries to bear. "Dis case hab two hinge, de fust is de 'spectability, and de second de safety. Now, if any man suspect me to go on work ob dis a kind in de day time, when ebery body see me in you company, he as much mistake as when he kiss his granny for a gal. De night is de proper time for sich a dark business, and it suit me better if I 'scuse altogeder from it. But I wish to 'bleege you, Missa Basset. Now, de second hinge is de safety, and it 'stonish me dat an onderstanding man, and a man ob experunce and larning like you, Missa Basset, should dream o' going in de daytime. Dere stand old Holden probumbly wid his rifle in de window and all he hab to do, he see



so plan, is to pull de trigger and den where is you, Missa Basset? Or perhaps," he added laughing, "stead ob shooting at you, he shoot at me, and dat would be bery onpleasant. In de day-time, a colored pusson make a better mark dan a white man; but in de night we has de advantage. Haw! Haw!"

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This was a view of things that did not please the constable at all, and the mirth of the negro appealed excessively ill-timed. He, therefore, said:

"Don't talk so, Prime; it's dreadful to hear you. Well, if you're afraid, say so, and done with—"

"Me, 'fraid," exclaimed Primus, "me dat is as 'customed to de bullets as de roof to de rain! No, sar, you is better 'quainted wid de genlmen dat is 'fraid dan dis child."

"Don't git mad though," said Basset, in whose mind one apprehension drove out another, and who began to fear he might lose altogether his new ally. "Everybody knows you're as brave as Julius Caesar, Prime."

"Please, sar, not to repair me to no Caesar," exclaimed the indignant General. "De Caesars ob my 'qaintance was nebber no great shakes. I hab a better name dan dat. My name is Primus—dat mean, in Latin, fust—so I hear genlmn say, and Ransome, and de meaning ob dat is, dat in de glorious Resolution I run some arter de British (dough de foolish doctor abuse me and say dey give me de name 'cause I run away), and putting bote togedder dey makes a name any genlmn may be proud ob. But, Missa Basset, what you going to gib me for dis job?"

"Why, a quarter'll be good wages, I guess."

"A quarter ob a dollar! Do you s'pose I dispose myself to ketch cold on de ribber, and die afore my time, and arter dat to be shoot at, like a duck, for a quarter? I don't 'list on no such tarms."

"We'll say a half. I'm inclined to be liberal, but I shall expect you to be lively, Prime."

"Dat is too little;" grumbled Primus. "And who else you got to help you?"

"Why, hain't two enough? I might as well give up the job at once, and done with it, if I'm to pay out all the fees."

"One more will make all sure," said Primus, who, prudent general that he was, thought no odds could be too great against an enemy. "S'pose I speak to Missa Gladding to insist?"

"Tom Gladding be hung. I won't give him a cent."

"But," said Primus, who seemed determined to have his own way in everything, "you no interjection, I guess, if it don't cost you noting."

"No," replied Basset, who was glad enough of another auxiliary, provided his own packet was not affected. "But, mind ye, I don't pay him a red cent."

"I pay him myself, out ob my own pass. De danger won't be so much, and de work will be done up right, sartin. So, atween genlmn, de business is settle."

They parted with the understanding that the General was to see Gladding and induce him to take part in the enterprise, and that the three would meet at a certain place in the evening, the constable being careful to repeat that he couldn't afford more than fifty cents for any assistance that might be rendered. Primus accordingly called upon Gladding, and the arrangement must have been satisfactory, for the three were all at the place of rendezvous at the appointed hour.

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CHAPTER XIII.

"All these tales told in that dreamy undertone with which men talk in the dark, the countenances of the listeners only now and then receiving a casual gleam from the glare of a pipe, sunk deep in the mind of Ichabod."

Legend of Sleepy Hollow

It was on the village wharf that the coadjutors met. Basset, as he contemplated the martial bearing of the General and the burly form of Gladding, felt comforted. The clouds that all day long had lowered above his mental horizon parted, and patches of blue sky began to appear. It was a cause of special gratulation to him, which he realized more sensibly in the darkness than by day, that assistance so important as Gladding's had been secured, and that without additional expense. He was confident now of an easy victory. The associates jumped into the boat, the painter was cast off, the constable, as principal, took the steersman's seat, and Tom and Primus disposed themselves to row.

The night was neither clear nor dark, or rather was both by fits and starts. Light fleecy clouds were constantly passing over the heavens, now gathering densely together and completely hiding the stars, and now breaking up and revealing between the rifts then shining points. A low wind softly moaned through the leafless trees on the banks of the Severn, sadly chiming in with the murmur of the tide, which rose quite up to the Falls of the Yaupaae. In the indistinct light, just enough to stimulate and keep in active play the imagination, softening away all those harshnesses which the garish brilliancy of day discloses, and inviting the mind to supply with its own creations what is vague and deficient, the village presented an appearance more attractive, if possible, than by day. Along the margin of the river, and up the hill-sides, the lights scattered in every direction, and rising irregularly one above another, contended successfully with the struggling stars to light the way of the adventurers; while a low sound, the faint indication of life, hardly distinguishable from other noises, rose from the village, for it was yet early in the night, and imparted a sense of security by the consciousness of human propinquity. But gradually, under the skillful strokes of the oars, the sounds became fainter and fainter, and one light after another disappeared till, at a turn in the stream, the bold promontory of Okommakemisit hid the town from view.

A feeling of loneliness now, in spite of the presence of his two friends, began to creep over the constable. So long as the lights had been visible, he felt a strength derived from the vicinity of the habitations of his fellow-beings, as if, were anything untoward to happen, assistance was close at hand and ready to be proffered, but now he might die a thousand deaths, and none be the wiser for his wretched end. As these and other thoughts equally dismal chased each other through his mind, the silence became more and more oppressive (for it was only now and then, hitherto, a word had been uttered),

and it was with an emotion of thankfulness and relief he heard it broken by the voice of Gladding.

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"I say, Primus," he said, "do you know where you are?"

"I guess I does," answered the black, speaking from between his shut teeth, which the necessity of retaining the stump of a pipe he was smoking compelled him to keep tight together, "I is on de river 'joying a row wid two white genlmn."

"Any fool knows that," said Tom, "though for the matter of the enjoyment, there might be two words about that. Some jugs has two handles."

"Well, if dat doesn't please you, I all in a shiver wid de cold. My wood toe is almost freeze."

"That's a plaguy curus thing," said Tom. "You know Jim Hardy. Well I hearn him say he can feel the fingers in his hand that was ground off in the mill, just an much as in tother. I expect your experience is pretty much the same."

"Dat's a fact," said Primus. "I can feel de foot and de toes just as much as ebber, only de leg is a sort o' kind o' shorter. Now, Missa Gladding, you is a man ob gumption, can you splain dat?"

"Sartin," said Tom, who didn't wish to appear ignorant to the presence of the negro; "there's no great difficulty about that, though I rather think it takes more larning than you've got to onderstand the thing. You see," he added, recollecting as well as he could some Latin words he had heard used by the doctor, "the narves of the rigdum flagdum in circumnavigating through the humorous rusticus, deflastigated by the horrentibus oribus sort o' twist the aures arrectos into asinos, and that you see, to a man of larning makes the whole thing as clear as one of elder Sillyway's sarmons."

Primus fairly caught his breath at Tom's display of learning, who rose considerably higher also in Basset's estimation. After somewhat recovering from his astonishment, and as if he had been reflecting on the subject, the General said—

"Larning is a great ting, and perhaps you is right and perhaps you isn't, but I hear anoder way to 'count for it."

"Out with it then," cried Tom.

"White folks," said Primus, "hab one way to 'count for tings, and colored pussons hab anoder way. Now I hear a colored pussun, who come all de way from Africa, where dey onderstands dese tings, say it was de jumbee."

"The jumbee! What in natur's that!" inquired Basset, who had not before mingled in the conversation.

"Now, none of your tricks, Prime," cried Tom, suspecting the negro of an intention to mystify them with a jargon like that he had palmed off; "jumbee ain't Latin."

"Nobody say it was," returned Primus, "I guess de old fellow nebber hab much chance to study Latin. He better 'quainted wid de shovel and de hoe. Dat mean in de Congo language, sperit."

"Colored people are curus folks," ejaculated Basset

"I don't see fairly what you're driving at yet," said Gladding. "Suppose jumbee does mean sperit, what then?"

"I mean dat de hand turn into a sperit. Don't you see, Missa Basset," exclaimed Primus, suddenly poking his wooden leg at the constable, "de sperit ob my leg?"

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"Don't, don't, Prime," cried the startled constable, drawing back and nearly falling in his fright into the water. "What's the use of talking about sperits now? Come let us talk about something else."

"Well," grinned Primus, "if you don't see de sperit, I feel him."

"Don't talk so; you're spoiling all the pleasure of the sail by such kind o' nonsense," urged Basset.

"Don't you believe in sperits?" inquired the persevering General.

"I tell ye I don't like to talk about such things now," responded Basset.

"Why I can give you chapter and varse for 'em," said Tom. "You remember, Basset, all about Samuel and the witch o' Endor, and that's authority, I guess."

"Well, if I do I don't care to be chattering all the time about 'em, though there's some says, they don't appear now as they used to in old times."

This was an unfortunate remark for the badgered Basset. His two friends, as if it were of the extremest consequence to convert him from an opinion so heretical, opened for his benefit a whole budget of ghost stories. In spite of most unwilling ears he was obliged to listen with a fascinated reluctance to tales of supernatural wonders, in most of which the narrators had themselves been actors, or derived their information from persons, whose veracity it would be a sin to doubt. Among them was a legend told by Gladding, of a murdered fisherman, whose ghost he had seen himself, and which was said still to haunt the banks of the Severn, and never was seen without bringing ill-luck. It is the only one with which we will trouble our renders, and we relate it as a sort of specimen of the others:

"You see," said Tom, "it was the spring o' the year, and the shad begun to swim up stream, when I joined Sam Olmstead's company, and took a share in his fishing. Well, things went on pretty well for a while, it was fisherman's luck, fish one day, and none the next, and we was, on the whole, tolerable satisfied, seeing there was no use to be anything else, though towards the end, it's a fact, there wasn't many schools come along. We had built a sort o' hut of boards by the side of the river where we kept the nets, and where some on us slept to look after the property. Well, my turn came to stay at the shanty, and I recollect the night just as well! It was coolish, not so cool as this, though something like it, for there was some clouds floating around, but it was a good deal lighter, 'cause the moon was in her third quarter. I felt sort o' lonesome there, all alone with the nets and the fish, and I don't know what I should have done but for some of the 'O be joyful' I had in a jug. I tried my best to fortify my stomach, and keep up my sperits agin the damp, but I didn't seem to succeed. Finally, thinks I to myself, I'll go

and take a snuff of the night air, perhaps it will set me up So I sort o' strolled down
towards the shore, and then I walked up a piece, and then I

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walked back agin, and once in a while I'd step into the shanty and take a pull at old Rye. Well, seeing as how it agreed with me, and I begun to feel better, I kept making my walks longer and longer till I strolled to a considerable distance. It was in one of them turns I see the ghost. I supposed afore that ghosts always appeared in white, but this one didn't. He was dressed just like any other fisherman, in a dark grey jacket and trowsers and a tarpaulin. It seemed to me at first he wanted to git out of the way, but I made tracks for him, for I didn't then a bit mistrust about its being a sperit, and halloed out, 'Who's that?' The sperit, as soon as he heard me, came straight up, and then I noticed he had two fish dangling down by a string, and says he, in a sort o' hoarse voice, as if he'd caught cold lying in the ground, 'It's me; it's the ghost of Jimmy Lanfear.' Well, when I heard him speak so, my flesh began to kind o' crawl, though I didn't know but it might be some fellow who had stole the shad out of the shanty, for I never heard of ghosts carrying fish afore. So says I, 'What are you doing with them fish?' Then, says he, 'Them ain't any real fish; see if you can touch 'em.' And then he swung 'em round and round in the moonlight, and I did my best to catch 'em, but I might just as well have snatched at the moonshine, for my hands went right through 'em agin and agin, till I stubbed my toe, and fell somehow, and when I got up, the sperit was gone. Then I knew it was Jim Lanfear's sperit, who was murdered years ago right opposite the spot where I asked you, Prime, if you knew where you was; and I was sartin the luck was all up for that season, and sure enough it was, for we didn't make more'n two or three hauls more of any consequence."

"I am sure dere was one sperit dere," said Primus, in a musing way, and shaking his head.

"Now, Prime, what do you mean by bobbing up and down your wool? Do you intend to signify, you unbelieving old scamp, you doubt my word? I tell you I was no more corned than I am now. Why, if you want to, you can see Jim almost any dark night. Perhaps he's walking along shore now."

"What dat?" cried Primus, pretending to see something on the land.

Basset started, and strained his eyes through the darkness in the direction indicated, but could discover nothing. The vision of Primus and Gladding was better.

"Don't ye see someting," said the former, lowering his voice, "right under de bank. I can't just see de shape, but it seem as if it swim in de air widout legs. You eyes is younger, Missa Gladding; guess dey see funder dan mine."

"I can make him out now," whispered Gladding. "It's a man, sure as rates Golly!" he exclaimed, suddenly, "if it ain't Jim—look, Basset, look."

The constable had listened in an agony of terror to the colloquy, and at the exclamation of Primus, availing himself of his post as steersman, turned the bow of the boat towards the opposite shore, to place as great an interval as possible between himself and the spectre. The action had not passed unnoticed, though neither of his companions made any remark upon it. Repeatedly his head had flown round over his shoulder, to catch a glimpse of what he dreaded to see, but, notwithstanding the excitement of his imagination, he could behold nothing.

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"O, Tom! O, Prime!" exclaimed the poor fellow, "let us go home. I wish we was fairly out of this scrape."

"Why," said Tom, "we're 'most there now. We should be laughed at if we was to give it up so. Who's afraid o' sperits? They're nothing but moonshine. I vow," he cried, pointing over the opposite side of the boat, "if he ain't there agin! Look, Basset."

But Basset was too busy with his paddle to look. With a twist of his wrist he had whirled the bow of the boat in the direction of the bank they had just left, and was paddling away for dear life. This time he appeared to arrive at the condition that the middle of the stream would be the safest position, and having attained that, he kept, as nearly as he could judge, at equal distances from the banks. A short space only now remained to be passed over, and in a few moments they were abreast of the island. Here the two men rested on their oars, and a whispered consultation was held, at the conclusion of which the boat was quietly pulled towards the goal. This was not done, however, without another attempt on the part of the constable to postpone the capture for that night, but the proposal was overruled by his associates, who scouted at his fears, and declared there was no danger.

Basset's nerves were in a shocking condition. The doleful stories croaked into his ears the whole passage down; the darkness of the hour; Holden's terrible character; and the remoteness from any assistance other than that of Gladding and Primus, in whom his confidence diminished every moment, conspired to throw him into the abjectest trepidation. But there was no retreat; Gladding was as obstinate as a mule, and as for the General, true to his military reputation, he insisted on advancing, and the unfortunate officer of the law, who was as much afflicted, with spiritual as with material fears, found himself in a dilemma, the solution of which was taken away from him. No alternative remained. He must, be the consequences what they might, see the adventure through. Borrowing, therefore, courage from despair, with a timid step and palpitating heart, he left the boat and closely followed his companions.

No light was visible, and the constable began to hope that Holden was away from home, and made the suggestion that since such was undoubtedly the fact, they had better return and come another time. But Gladding, pointing to a canoe not before observed, convinced Basset of the contrary, and it was then agreed that they should first according to the plan arranged approach the cabin and reconnoitre through the window. This being the post of danger was offered to Basset who however could be prevailed on by no entreaties to accept it which finally forced Gladding to volunteer. They all stood now on a side of the hut where there was neither door nor window, being, indeed, the side they had been careful to approach in the boat. Gladding was to steal to one of the windows and after examining the interior (if possible) to return and apprise them of his discoveries. Accordingly he started off.

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He had been gone but a few minutes when Primus began to be uneasy and proposed to change their position to one nearer the hut their figures being too much exposed where they were, in consequence of standing in relief against the sky and water. The constable would gladly have stuck by the boat, as furnishing a means of retreat, but dared not remain alone. Reluctantly therefore, and cursing the obstinacy of the provoking black he crouched his body towards the ground, and followed in the rear of the General, that brave officer seeming disposed to talk louder and make more noise generally than pleased his companion who, from time to time, earnestly remonstrated with him on the imprudence.

“What dat!” suddenly exclaimed Primus recoiling on the other and pointing with his hand directly in front.

“Where? where?” whispered Basset, with his heart in his mouth raising himself, and catching bold of Primus’ arm.

“Hush!” said the General, “is dat a groan?”

At that instant a tremendous blow was applied to the shoulders of the constable which sent him flat upon his face, dragging the General who caught a part of the application after him. As Basset fell his hat dropped off and a paper flew out which Primus picked up and immediately pocketed, hastening then as fast as his wooden leg would permit towards the boat which lay only four or five rods distant. There he found Gladding preparing to push off, and scrambling in, they had just succeeded in getting her afloat, when Basset, without his hat flung himself, in the extremity of his terror, headlong in, pitching Primus down upon the bottom, breaking his wooden leg, and capsizing Tom into the water. It was so shoal that he found no difficulty in getting in again, escaping with only a thorough ducking. It was now *saue que peut*, and the three addressed themselves, so far as their bewildered faculties would permit, to the business of escape.

Thus closed the adventures of that disastrous night. All the way home, Primus kept groaning over the loss of his leg, the only consolation he could extract out of the calamity, being that it was easier to mend than one of flesh, and cheaper, and upbraiding Basset with his haste and carelessness. Gladding insisted on being landed in order to prevent, by exercise, taking cold, threatening in his turn the constable, that if his clothes were spoiled he should come upon him for the damage. Poor Basset, quite confounded by these harrowing events, had not a word to answer, and replied only by shrugging and twisting his shoulders with pain. The departure of Tom made it necessary for him to assist the negro in rowing back the boat, which he did with a handkerchief tied about his head, which Primus lent him and wincing with the soreness of his bones, the negro interspersed his moans with expressions of sorrow over their ill luck and of wonder whether it was Holden or the ghost of the fisherman that assaulted the constable vowing he would “hab satisfacshum for de loss ob de leg.”

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CHAPTER XIV.

Celia.—Here comes Monsieur Le Beau,
Rosalind.—With his mouth full of news.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

“You strike dreadful hard, Missa Gladding. If you can’t write, I guess you can make you mark,” said the General, rubbing his shoulders.

“I was larned to do one, and t’other come natural,” said Tom, laughing; “but I didn’t lay it on a bit too hard. You see I had to bring him a pretty good polt, so as to lay him flat, else he might ha’ found it all out, the good-for-nothing son-of-a-gun, to go to sarve a warrant on an old man, just for speaking his mind in meeting. I go in for liberty. And then to insult you and me, Prime, by asking us to help him! But I didn’t mean to strike you, except in the way of friendship.”

“You friendship too smart for me, Missa Gladding, and s’pose I break my neck in de fall, what you friendship good for den?”

“But you hain’t broke nothing but your leg, and I see you’ve got another rigged, and the half dollar Basset give you will more’n pay for that; though, if I was you, I’d come down upon him in damages for the loss—’twas in his sarvice—and then his digging his head right into your stomach, when he come thundering into the boat, I call a regular assault and battery.”

“How you like you cold duck wid sea-weed saace, Missa Gladding?” retorted Primus; and here the two united in peals of laughter.

“Cunning fellow, dat Basset,” said Primus. “He kill two bird wid one stone—knock me into de bottom ob de boat, and chuck you oberboard, all at once.” And the merriment was renewed.

“Do you think he has any suspicions, Prime!” said Tom.

“Dat question acquire some reflexum,” answered the General. “Whedder it was old Holden or de fisherman ghost dat gib him de strike on de back?”

“No, I don’t mean that. I mean whether he thought you or me had anything to do with it.”

“I guess not,” said the General, doubtingly. “If sich an idee git into his head, somebody will put it dere.”

“Well, what did he say coming home?”

“Not much; dere he set in front, wid his back to me, rowing, and his head all tie up wid my bandanna, and he seem sort o’ snarl up, as if he want a night’s rest to take de kinks out ob him. He was not much ’cline to ‘greeable conversashum. I feel kind o’ sorry when I see him so mellanchollikly like.”

“You needn’t be so liberal with your sorry. The scamp desarves it all and more, too. The cretur’s cheated us out of half our fun.” How I should ha’ liked to leave him, as we intended, alone with old Holden on the island! The chicken-hearted booby would ha’ half died o’ fright, and then ‘twould ha’ been worth nuts to see how he looked when the old man caught him in the morning, and asked after his business.”

“He nebber stay till dat time. He would hab swum ’cross de channel, and run home.”

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"Well, he'd found out, then, how a fellow likes to be soused in the water, as the blundering blunderbus did me, darn him."

"O, nebber bear no malice. I 'scuse Basset 'cause he don't know no better, and you must forgib him."

"As to that, you needn't fret your gizzard. But how did you git home, Prime, with your broken leg?"

"Dat is a secret atween me and Basset; but I didn't walk."

"Then, I vow," said Tom, bursting into a laugh, "he either trundled you along in a wheelbarrow, like a load o' pumpkins, or else carried you on his back."

"Nobody roll me in a wheelbarrow," said the General, drawing himself up, and affecting to be offended.

"I would ha' given all my old shirts to see a darkey riding Basset," said Tom, whose merriment increased the more he dwelt on the idea.

"A colored pusson as light complexum as a white man in de dark," exclaimed Primus, grinning.

"Well, old Prime, you're the cleverest nigger I ever did see," said Tom, slapping him on the back, and still laughing; "but take care you don't feel too proud after your ride. Put a nigger on horseback, and you know where he goes. But what have you got there?" he inquired, seeing the General draw a paper out of his pocket.

"Dis paper fall out ob Missa Basset hat when de ghost strike him last night, and I pick him up."

"Golly! if it ain't the warrant. Prime, you're the ace o' clubs. I'm gladder of this than if I found a good dinner."

"Well, what shall I do wid him?"

"Why, man, burn it up; it's the constable's sword and gun, and baggonit and cartridge-box; he can't do nothing without it; why, without the warrant, he's just like a cat without claws. He daresn't touch a man without a warrant."

"If Missa Basset trow de paper away, I 'spose he don't want him, and he ain't good for noting, and nobody can find fault wid me for burning up a little piece ob waste paper, just to kindle de fire," said Primus, throwing the warrant into the flames, where it was immediately consumed.

“There, we’ve drawn Basset’s eye-teeth now,” said Gladding. “Holden’s as safe as you or me. And, Prime,” he added, rising, and, as he took leave, making a peculiar gesture with the thumb of his right hand touching the end of his nose, and his fingers twinkling in the air, “you’re too old a fox to need teaching, but it will do no harm to say I advise you to keep as dark as your skin.”

Such was the conversation that, on the morning after the adventure of the island, took place at the cabin of Primus, and the reader will now perfectly understand (if, indeed, he has not before discovered it) the relation which the associates bore to the constable. Yet, there was some difference in the feelings of the two: Gladding felt only unmitigated contempt for Basset, while the good-nature of the negro (proverbial of the race) infused some pity into the sentiment.

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"Tom Gladding hab no manners," said Primus to himself, after the departure of his friend. "It is bery onpleasant to hear sich pussonal inflections. But, probumbly, arter he keep company wid me a little longer, he larn better."

How it got out, nobody could tell. Tom and the General both declared they had said nothing about it, and Basset was equally positive he had not opened his mouth. It is, therefore, singular that, before twelve o'clock the next day, rumors of the adventure had reached the ears of more than one-half the inhabitants of Hillsdale. True, none were very accurate, nor did any two agree; for, as is apt to happen, in such cases, each one who told the story took care, most conscientiously, it should lose nothing in the repetition. Hence, before noon, it was, like most of our modern literature, "splendidly embellished."

It was not strange, then, that the doctor, in his morning round among his patients and friends, should get some inkling of it. Divested of ornaments, enough remained to satisfy him that an attempt to arrest Holden had been made. For the cause, he was at first at a loss; for, though he had heard of the disturbance at the conference, he hardly supposed that an offence which he regarded as so venial, would have drawn along such serious consequences. But when he heard that generally assigned as the reason, having no words of his own to express his astonishment, he was obliged to resort to his unfailing treasury—

"Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer cloud,
Without our special wonder?"

The quotation did not seem fully to answer the purpose, and he added, "Foolery, sir, does walk about the orb like the sun: it shines everywhere." This gave him relief. It acted more soothingly than his own anodyne drops; and, having thus recovered his equanimity, he determined to ascertain if the Armstrongs had heard the news.

He found Miss Armstrong at home, but not her father.

"You have heard the news, Faith, this morning. I suppose?" said the doctor.

"No; we are not much like the Athenians. Neither my father nor myself are accustomed to get the first edition. What is it, doctor?"

But the doctor did not relish being called, by the remotest implication, an Athenian. As inquisitive as the most prying Yankee is said to be, he stoutly repelled the imputation of inquisitiveness, as applied to himself or to his countrymen. "It was," he was in the habit of saying, "a slander invented by your porter-guzzling Englishmen and smoking Dutchmen. What can you expect of people who are involved in a perpetual cloud either of their own raising or of the making of Providence? They are adapted to

circumstances. It never was intended they should have more than one idea a week; it would be too much for their constitution; and therefore they ask no questions. No wonder, then, they feel uncomfortable when they get into a clear climate, where they can see the sun, and hear ideas buzzing about their ears like a swarm of bees."

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The doctor appeared to have forgotten his own question, and not to have heard Miss Armstrong's.

"You are looking remarkably well," he said. "You ought to be ashamed to meet me: if everybody else were like you, I should starve."

"All your own fault, dear doctor. Your presence brings cheerfulness and health."

"To say nothing of the medicine. Of that (in confidence between us), the less the better. If I should ever become crazy enough to prescribe any other than bread pills, be sure to throw them out of the window. There, you have the secret of medical success; though if I pursue the system much longer, I think I shall be obliged to adopt the Emperor of China's plan, and require a salary for your health, on condition it shall stop when you are sick."

"I admire the Emperor's plan, so let it be understood that is the arrangement between us. I have the best of the bargain, for I shall secure a greater number of visits."

"You provoking creature! smothering me with compliments, and pretending you are not dying with curiosity. This is always the way with your tormenting sex:

'Let Hercules do what he may,
The cat will mew'"—

"And girls will have their way," interrupted Faith, laughing, and finishing the quotation to suit herself. "But, doctor, you have conquered, and please now 'unmuzzle your wisdom.'"

"Methinks," cried the doctor, "'sometimes I have no more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man; but I am a great eater of beef, and I believe that does harm to my wit,' else I should not allow you to tease me. But," added he, in a more serious tone, "there is a report in the village that an attempt has been made to arrest Holden."

"To arrest whom?" exclaimed Faith, turning pale, "father Holden! For what?"

"He is not taken yet, and, were one to believe all the stories one hears, not likely to be. According to them, his enchanted castle on Salmon Island is protected, not only by his own stalwart arm, but by legions of ghosts and hobgoblins; and, since that is the case, he may safely defy the *posse comitatus* itself, with the sheriff at its head. But, for the cause—

"It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul,
Let me not name it to you, ye chaste stars,
It is the cause'—

Why, because he made the most interesting speech at conference the other evening.”

Miss Armstrong, whom the jesting manner of the doctor somewhat re-assured, begged him to give her all the information he had obtained; but, throwing aside what he considered the embellishments of fancy, it was no more than what he had already imparted.

“What would be the punishment for such an offence?” inquired Faith.

“I am more learned in pills than in points of law; but I suppose some trifling fine.”

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"It would be of no great consequence, were it any one else," said Faith; "but it would grieve me to have Mr. Holden subjected to an indignity he would feel sensibly. It was through my father's and my entreaties he attended the meeting, and if censure is to fall anywhere, it ought to alight on us, and not on him, who certainly supposed he was performing a duty, however much he might be mistaken. Dear doctor, I shall trust in you to watch that no harm befalls him. I should forever reproach myself as the cause, if any did."

"You may rely on me, my dear. It is not so much on account of the old fellow, who richly deserves to be fined and shut up a week for running about the country and frightening the children with his long beard—why my horse started at it the other day—but because you take an interest in him, and I am above all jealousy; therefore, command me,

'Be't to fly,
To swim, to dive into the fire, to ride
On the curled clouds; to thy strong bidding task
Ariel and all his quality."

"My commands will not be so difficult to perform, I trust," said Faith, smiling.

"Understand me metaphorically, parabolically, poetically," cried he, taking leave.

After he was gone Miss Armstrong sat musing over what she had heard. The idea that any annoyance should happen to the Solitary, growing out of a circumstance with which she was in some manner connected, distressed her exceedingly, and, dissatisfied with the meagre statement of the doctor, she determined to go over to Judge Bernard's, to try to procure more satisfactory information.

"He will, at least," she said, "be better acquainted with the law than Doctor Elmer, and there is no favor he will refuse me."

But the Judge was unable to add anything of importance. He had heard the same rumors, but could not vouch for their truth. With regard to the issuing of a warrant for such a cause, he could not say but that persons might be found malignant enough to get one out, and justices of the peace foolish and ignorant enough to be made their instruments, but if it came to the worst, the penalty could only be a fine, which he would gladly pay himself.

"He cannot be imprisoned then?" inquired Miss Armstrong.

"No; they would not dare," he said, to himself in a tone so low that Faith could catch only a word or two here and there, "send him—disorderly—no settlement—no, no—too bad—might be done. No, Faith," he said, "you need anticipate no serious trouble about your *protege*."

“Cannot we prevent his being arrested? It would mortify him exceedingly.”

“For that, perhaps, there is no remedy, but we will see. We are all equally amenable to the laws. But after all, the thing may not be noticed. These may be only rumors put out by some mischievous person to keep Holden away from the village.”

“They can have no such effect.”

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"No: and yet the rogue who invents them may think they will."

"I should not be at all anxious, Faith," said Anne. "Here are my father, and yours, and my chivalrous brother, and—"

"And Mr. Thomas Pownal," said Faith, smiling, observing she hesitated.

"Yes, and Mr. Pownal; I am sure they would all be happy to spend a great deal of breath and a little money in your service. They will protect Father Holden. What are the gentlemen good for, if they cannot grace a fair lady thus far?"

"And Mistress Anne, should they fail, would, like another Don Quixote, with lance in rest, charge the enemy, and release the captive knight, herself," said her father, pinching her cheek.

"Like Amadis de Gaul, father, and then would I present the captive of my sword and lance to you, Faith, though what you would do with him I do not know."

"Do not let us hear of swords and lances from you, Anne," said her mother. "Thimbles and needles become you better."

"If I had been a man," exclaimed Anne, "and lived in the olden time, how I would have gloried in such an adventure! You, Faith, should have been the distressed damsel, I the valorous knight, and Father Holden a captured seneschal. How would I have slashed around me, and how would you have blushed, and hung about my neck, and kissed me, when I appeared leading by the hand your venerable servitor!"

"What! what!" cried her father, "before the seneschal?"

"He would be so old he could not see, or, if he was not, tears of joy would fill his eyes so that they would blind him," said Anne.

"An excellent idea, my dear," said Mrs. Bernard: "hand me my knitting-work."

"What! a knight hand knitting-work?"

"Certainly," said her father. "It is a knight's business and delight, to be employed in the service of the fair."

"Here is your knitting, mamma. I am an enchanted knight, changed by some horrible incantation into a girl," said Anne, resuming her needle.

"Worth twice all the preux chevaliers from Bayard down," said the Judge, kissing her blooming cheek.

“Who is in great danger of being spoiled by the flattery of her fond father,” said Mrs. Bernard, smiling.

“Dear mother, how can you speak so of an enchanted knight?”

“I will crave your aid in the hour of peril, Sir Knight,” said Faith, rising. “Meantime, accept this kiss as guerdon for your good will.”

“Or retainer,” said the Judge.

Faith left her friends in better spirits than she had met them. The assurances of Judge Bernard had relieved her mind of a weight of anxiety. It was evident, she thought, from the manner in which the subject was treated by the family, that they felt no apprehensions. The gaiety of Anne, too, had not failed of its design. It was, indeed, scarcely possible to be in the presence of this sweet girl without feeling the charm which, like the sun, radiated light and happiness about her. It was the overflow of an innocent and happy heart, and as natural to her as light to the sun, or fragrance to the rose.

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Faith found her father in the house on her return. She communicated to him what she had heard, and asked his opinion. He knew, he said, that while there were some—probably the majority—who, regarding Holden's conduct as only an impropriety, would be disposed to overlook it; there were others who would desire to have him punished, in order to prevent a repetition of such scenes. "Such," said he, "are the feelings of the world, but they are not mine. So far from deserving censure, Holden is entitled to all honor and praise, for he spoke from the inspiration of conviction. Nor, whatever may be the attempts to injure him, will they succeed. As St. Paul shook the deadly viper from his hand, so will this man rid himself of his enemies. There are more with him than against him, and the shining ones are the stronger."

The confidence of her father harmonized so well with the hopes of Faith, that it was easy to participate in it, nor in the excitement which she felt, did his language seem other than proper for the occasion.

CHAPTER XV.

See winter comes to rule the varied year,
Sullen and sad with all his rising train
Vapors and clouds and storms.
THOMSON'S SEASONS.

The charming poet depicted truthfully, doubtless, as well as poetically, the English winter, but such is not the character of the season in New England. Clouds and storms, indeed, herald his advent and attend his march; capricious too his humor; but he is neither "sullen" nor "sad." No brighter skies than his, whether the sun with rays of mitigated warmth but of intenser light, sparkles o'er boundless fields of snow, or whether the moon, a faded sun, leading her festal train of stars, listens to the merry sleigh-bells and the laugh of girls and boys, ever glorified a land. What though sometimes his trumpet sounds tremendous and frowns o'erspread his face! Transient is his anger, and even then from his white beard he shakes a blessing, to protect with fleecy covering the little seeds in hope entrusted to the earth, and to contribute to the mirth and sports of man.

A few days have passed since the occurrences last detailed. The weather had gradually become colder; the ground was as hard as a stone; there had been a heavy fall of snow, and the streets were musical with bells. The snow had fallen before the intense cold commenced, so that the glassy surface of the ice that bridged the rivers and lakes was undimmed, and presented unusual attractions to the skaters.

It was on the afternoon of a fine day that the smooth Severn, hardened into diamond, was covered, just where the Yaupae and the Wootupocut unite, to give it form and an independent being, with a gay throng of the people of the village of both sexes. They

were mostly young persons, consisting principally of boys from school (for it was Saturday afternoon) with their sisters. Besides these were some young men and women, with here and there one more advanced in years.

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It was a scene of gaiety and exuberant enjoyment. The children let loose from school, where they had been confined all the week, put no bounds to the loud and hilarious expression of their delight, which the seniors showed no disposition to check—remembering they once were children—and the banks of the stream rung with shouts and answering cries and laughter. Here, flying round in graceful curves, a dexterous skater cut his name in the ice; there, bands of noisy boys were playing tag, and on the ringing steel pursuing the chase; while every once in a while down would tumble some lubberly urchin, or unskillful performer, or new beginner, coming into harder contact with the frozen element than was pleasant, and seeing stars in the daytime, while bursts of laughter and ironical invitations to try it again, greeted his misfortune. In another place were girls on small sleighs or sleds, capable of holding two or three, whirled along by half-a-dozen skaters with great rapidity; while, holding on to handkerchiefs, were others drawn upon their feet at less hazardous speed. Dispersed among the crowd were little boys with flat, tin boxes suspended by a strap from their necks, containing molasses candy, whose brittle sweetness appeared to possess great attraction. All was fun and jest, and laugh and merriment.

Among others, allured by the beauty of the day, which though clear was not so cold as to be uncomfortable, to witness the sports, were Faith Armstrong and Anne Bernard, escorted by Pownal and young Bernard. The cheeks of the ladies were crimsoned by the wholesome cold, and their eyes shone with a brighter lustre than usual, and many were the looks of envy or of admiration cast upon them as they passed, greeting their acquaintances and joining in the revel.

At the time when the little party arrived there happened to be a circle gathered around one of the most accomplished performers to witness an exhibition of his skill, and surely nothing could be more graceful. Without sensible effort, and as if by mere volition, he seemed to glide over the glossy surface, now forwards, now backwards, now sideways, now swiftly, now slowly, whirling like an eagle in rapid or dilatory curves, describing all the lines that Euclid ever drew or imagined, and cutting such initials of the names of the spectators as were desired. The performance, though hailed with very general expressions of admiration, did not seem to give universal satisfaction.

“He does pretty well,” said an elderly man, with a woollen scarf or muffler about his neck and a fox-skin cap on his head, “He does it pretty well; but, Captain, did you ever see Sam Allen?”

“You mean,” answered the person addressed, who was a man of about the same number of years, “Allen who married old Peter’s daughter, and afterwards run away. Yes; it didn’t go with him as slick with her as on the ice.”

“Well, she didn’t break her heart about it. She got married agin as soon as the law allowed. I was in court when Judge Trumbull granted the divorce. ’Twas for three years willful desartion and total neglect of duty.”

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"No, I guess she didn't. She was published the very next Lord's Day, and got married in the evening. She was a mighty pretty cretur. Well, I never see such a skater as Sam. This fellow is nothing at all to him. He don't kind o' turn his letters so nice. Now, there's that v, you might mistake it for a w. I like to see a man perfect in his business."

"I've hearn tell," said the Captain, "though I never see it myself, that Sam could write Jarman text as well as Roman."

"I never see it," said the Fox-skin cap, "but guess it's so. There wasn't nothing Sam couldn't do on skates."

"Do you recollect whether he used smooth irons or hollow?" inquired the Captain.

"Oh, smooth; they ain't so easy for beginners, but when a fellow gits the knack of 'em they're a great deal better."

Very different from the remarks of these *laudatores temporis acti*, were those of the rising generation.

"How beautiful!" exclaimed Anne. "What wonderful skill! Can anything be more graceful?"

"It is, indeed, graceful," said Faith; "and it must require considerable boldness as well as skill to venture on some of those evolutions. The least mistake would cause a violent fall."

"Dear Faith, why did you mention it?" said Anne. "I was not thinking of the possibility of falls."

"Have no fear," said Pownal; "he is too completely master of the science to hurt himself."

"In Holland the ladies are said to skate as well as the gentlemen," said Bernard.

"That is a poor compliment, William," said Anne. "If I cannot skate better without practice, than half of this awkward squad, I will never bind skates on my feet a second time."

"I know of nothing you cannot do," said her brother.

"Come here, Andrew," cried Pownal, to a boy standing opposite in the circle, and holding a pair of skates in his hand. "Come here and lend me your skates. Here, Miss Bernard," said he, presenting them to her, "here is a fine pair. Allow me to buckle them on. And then like a winged Mercury to fly."

"Please to compare me to no heathen gods, Mr. Pownal, or you may make these old Puritans burn me for a witch. Let me see if they fit. No, they are too large, I could never do myself justice on them. Here, my little fellow is a ninepence for you; away with you."

The boy took the little piece of silver with a grin, tied the rejected skates upon his feet, and was soon lost among his companions.

"I say," said an urchin, who was looking on with admiring eyes, "I say, Bill, that beats all natur. Did you ever see such shindys?"

"They ain't so bad," returned Bill; "but I guess I can do some of 'em myself."

"Which ones?" inquired the other.

"Why," answered Bill, "when he throws himself right about face, and then goes sculling backwards."

"I'll bet you can't do it the first time."

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"What will you bet?" cried Bill.

"I don't care; say a stick o' candy."

"Agreed!" cried Bill. "You see I've done it afore."

"You ought to told us that," said his companion.

"A bet's a bet," said Bill. "You don't want to back out, do ye?"

"Go ahead," cried the other, with some spirit. "I'll risk it. Let's see what you can do."

Thus exhorted and defied, Bill commenced preparations. He first stooped down on one knee and then on the other, and tightened the straps of the skates; next he took a handkerchief from his pocket, and fastened it tightly around his waist, and lastly, moved slowly about as if to determine whether all things were as they should be.

The spectators who had overheard the conversation between the boys, and were ready for any kind of fun, now began to express interest in the trial, and various were the words of encouragement addressed to Bill, as well as the mutterings of doubt over the result. The skater who, until now, had attracted the most attention, ceased his diagrams and approached Bill, in order to give him instructions, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his companion, who loudly vociferated it wasn't fair.

"Hold your yaup," cried another boy, standing by; "if you don't like your bet, Hen Billings, I'll take it off your hands."

But little Billings seemed to think he had made a good bet, and although loth to concede to Bill any advantage that did not of strict right belong to him, was far from being disposed to relinquish it. "Go your length, Bill," he said, "I ain't afeard of the expense."

The space being now cleared, Bill began to circle round preparatory to the trial. It was evident he was not very skillful, and the opinion of the bystanders, who amused themselves with criticising his preliminary performances, was about equally divided respecting his ability to perform the undertaking. After a few turns Bill cried out:

"Now, Hen, look out." With that he darted forward, until he supposed he had attained the required momentum, when suddenly making a twisting motion with his feet, he threw himself round. But unfortunately he had made some miscalculation or slip, for instead of alighting square upon the skates, his heels flew up, and with a tremendous thump, down came poor Bill upon his back.

"Hurrah!" cried Hen Billings; "there you go, candy and all. I hope you ain't hurt you," he said, good naturedly. "I'd rather lose my bet than have you hurt."

“No,” whined Bill, squirming round his body, and rubbing the back of his head, “not much. What are you grinning at, you monkey? Did you never see a man fall before?” cried he, shaking his fist at another boy, whose face it seems did not wear an expression of condolence to suit him. “I vow if I don’t try that again,” he added, after having recovered a little from the effects of his fall.

Thereupon space being again allowed, Bill, with genuine pluck, tried the experiment once more, and this time with better fortune. His success was greeted with shouts of congratulation, and with expressions of “true grit,” “stuffy little fellow,” &c., and he presently disappeared with his friend, Hen, in search of the candy-merchant.

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Faith and Anne, with the two young men, had witnessed the whole scene with some interest, and the different manner in which the girls were affected was characteristic. Faith betrayed a lively sensibility when the boy fell, and was hardly restrained from condoling with him; while Anne took but little notice of it, but exhibited exquisite delight at his courage and final success. But something else now attracted their attention. A shout was raised, and exclamations were heard of "There comes the ice-boat; there comes Grant's ice-boat."

Turning round, they beheld what had the appearance of a boat under sail, flying round the promontory of Okommakemisit. A slight breeze was drawing up the stream, and before its favoring breath, the little vessel, or whatever else it might be called, advanced with great rapidity. In a few moments it had reached them, and with a sharp grating sound as of iron cutting into ice, came suddenly to a stop, and the persons gathering round had an opportunity to examine it. It was the work of a village genius, and consisted of some boards, cut in an elliptical form (as, perhaps, the most convenient), supported by two pieces of iron, parallel to each other, to which the boards were fastened, and running the whole length from bow to stern. In the forward part was rigged a mast, to which was attached a sail, like the mainsail of a sloop, and the whole was controlled by a piece of sharp iron, fixed on the stern in such a manner as to turn like a rudder, and to cut with any required degree of pressure, by means of a lever, into the ice. With this simple regulator it was made perfectly safe, being stopped as readily, and on the same principle, as a skater arrests his course.

Grant, to whom Pownal and Bernard were both known, invited the little party to take a sail with him, assuring them there was no danger. The invitation was at once accepted by Miss Bernard, though the more timid Faith hesitated, and the four took their seats. The group of persons, as before observed, were at the head of the Severn, and the wind was drawing up the river, it was, therefore, necessary, to beat against the wind at starting. To the surprise, in particular of the ladies, this was done with the most perfect ease, the vessel, on her sharp runners, making but little lee-way, and obeying her helm more readily than any boat in water. Indeed, obedience was instantaneous. She whirled round as quickly as one could turn one's hand, requiring promptness and presence of mind in the steersman. Thus, like a bird, with smooth and equable motion, she flew with her delighted passengers, in many a zig-zag, down the Severn, until they had gone as far as desired, when round she spun, and before the breeze, houses, and men, and trees, gliding by as in a race, dashed up to the starting point.

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Upon leaving the ice-boat, the eyes of Pownal discovered the tall form of Holden, in the midst of a group of persons whom he appeared to be addressing; and upon his mentioning the circumstance to the others, it was proposed to join him. Accordingly, they added themselves to his audience. Several large baskets were lying near him on the ice, and so engaged was he in his subject that he took no notice of the approach of his four young friends. The address was not without a burst or two of eloquence, springing out of the intense conviction of the speaker, and was listened to respectfully enough. Not that a convert was made; not that there was a person present who did not regard his notions as the hallucinations of a disturbed intellect, but a part of the bystanders esteemed and respected him as a man of noble and generous disposition, lavish of his small means towards those whom he considered poorer than himself, and never faltering in any act of kindness on account of hardship or privation; while the rest, as already intimated, felt a sort of awe in his presence from the mystery that surrounded him. Among the spectators was our old friend, Tom Gladding, leisurely engaged in whittling out a chain from a pine block, some twelve inches in length, from which he had succeeded in obtaining three or four links that dangled at its end, and listening with a comical expression, as if he were anticipating some fun.

The Enthusiast had hardly concluded his exhortation before Basset, who stood on the outside of the ring during its delivery, stepped forward, and placing his hand on Holden's shoulder, informed him he was his prisoner. Holden made no resistance, but drawing himself up to his full height, and fastening his eyes sternly on the constable, he demanded:

"What art thou?"

"My name is Barnabas Basset," answered the constable, a little embarrassed.

"I care not for thy name," said Holden, "but by what authority darest thou to lay thy hand on a free man?"

"By authority of the State of Connecticut," replied the constable, recovering from his momentary confusion, and feeling quite safe in the crowd. "It's true, I hain't got my staff, but everybody's bound, according to law, to know the constable."

"And, therefore, is an innocent man to be treated as a malefactor?"

"I don't know about the innocence," said Basset, "and it's none of my business. You must talk to the justice about that. All I've got to do is to execute my warrant according to law."

"It is written, resist not evil," said Holden, musingly. "Behold, I am in thy hands; do with me what thou wilt."

But some of the spectators appeared indisposed to be so passive. Pownal and Bernard walked up to the constable, and demanded to know the meaning of the outrage.

“You may just call it what you please, Mr. Pownal,” answered Basset, indignant at being interfered with, as he called it, in the discharge of his duty, “and I advise you not to git your fingers caught in the law; but if you must know, the justice, I guess, will tell you.”

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"Keep your advice until it is asked for," said Pownal; "but before what justice are you taking him?"

"If you come with us, you'll find out," answered Basset, whose ill nature seemed to increase.

"That I certainly will. I must leave you," said Pownal, turning to the ladies, "to see that this brutal fellow behaves himself."

"Do," cried Faith; "do not let them insult him."

"Let us go with him," said the impulsive Anne.

"You would make a fine appearance in a justice court," said her brother "No, I will see you home, and afterwards join Pownal."

But an occurrence now happened which made any such arrangement unnecessary. Tom Gladding, who all this while had been quietly whittling out his chain and listening to the conversation, here interposed:

"Basset," he said, "you hain't showed your warrant."

"It's all safe enough," cried the constable, striking his hand on his pocket.

"Well, if that's the case you're safe enough, too," said Tom, as if not disposed to press an inquiry.

But the hint had answered its purpose, and several voices demanded the exhibition of the warrant, to which the constable replied, that it was none of their business; he knew what he was about.

Contrary, however, to what might have been expected from his former submission, the prisoner required to see the written authority by which he was to be consigned to bonds, and refused to move until it had been shown, in which determination he was sustained by the bystanders. Thus unexpectedly resisted, the constable had no alternative but to release Holden or produce the instrument. He, therefore, put his hand into his pocket, and pulling out a number of papers, sought for the document. It was in vain; no warrant was to be found; and, after repeatedly shuffling the papers, he exclaimed: "I declare I must have lost it."

Whether he discovered the loss then for the first time, or what is far more probable, did not anticipate its demand from one so flighty as Holden, and meant to procure one afterwards, is not certainly known, but the fact is certain, he had no written authority to arrest.

“You never had one. Is this the way you treat a free American? You deserve a ducking; you had better make tracks,” exclaimed several indignant voices from the crowd, with whom a constable cannot be a popular character.

“It’s my opinion,” said the man in the fox skin cap, “Basset has made himself liable for assault and battery. What do you think, Captain?”

“I ain’t clear on that point,” returned his cautious companion, “but free trade and sailors’ rights, I say, and I’ve no notion of a man’s being took without law. I’m clear so far.”

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The discomfited constable not venturing to proceed, and, indeed, unable to conceive how, without Holden's assent, he could take him before the justice, now relinquished his prey, and endeavored to make his way out of the circle. Hereupon an agitation arose, none could say how, the persons composing it began to be swayed backwards and forwards in a strange manner, and somehow or other poor Basset's heels got tripped up, and before he could rise, several men and boys fell over him and crushed him with their weight, so that when he became visible in the heap, he presented a most pitiable appearance. His coat was torn, his neckerchief twisted so tight about his neck, that he was half choked, and his hat jammed out of all shape. It is doubtful whether he would have escaped so cheaply, had it not been for Gladding, who, after he thought Basset had suffered sufficiently, came to his assistance.

"I always stand by the law," said Tom, helping him to his feet, "but I admire your imprudence, Basset, in trying to take up a man without a warrant."

Basset's faculties were too confused to enter into a discussion of the subject then, and with many threats of taking the law against his tormentors, and, attended by Tom, he limped off the ice.

Loud and boisterous were the congratulations with which the crowd had greeted Holden on his escape from the clutches of the constable, but he waved them off with a dignity which repressed their advances, and gave some offence.

"If I'd known the old fellow was so proud," said one, "I guess Basset might have taken him for all I cared."

"I sort o' sprained my wrist in that last jam agin the constable," said another, laughing, "and it's een about as good as thrown away."

"Perhaps," cried a third, "when he's took agin, I'll be there to help, and perhaps I won't."

While these various speeches were being made, the young men with the ladies, had gathered around Holden, and were expressing their mortification at the annoyance he had experienced, and their pleasure at his escape.

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" cried the enthusiast. "Surely their devices shall be brought to naught, and their counsels to no effect. He that sitteth on the circle of the heavens shall laugh them to scorn, and spurn them in His displeasure. Because for Thy sake, I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children."

He waited for no remark; he looked at no one; but taking up the pile of baskets which were tied together, threw them upon his back, and stalked over the ice in the direction of his cabin.

On their way home the young people discussed the events of the afternoon, dwelling on the meeting with Holden as on that which most occupied their minds.

“It is with a painful interest,” said Pownal, “that I meet the old man, nor can I think of him without a feeling of more than common regard. I am sure it is not merely because he was lately of so great service to me, that I cannot listen to the tones of his voice without emotion. There is in them a wild melancholy, like the sighing of the wind through pine trees, that affects me more than I can describe.”

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"I know the feeling," said Faith. "There is to me also a strange pathos in his voice that brings the tears sometimes into my eyes before I am aware. What is the cause, I do not know. I never heard it spoken of till now, and did not suppose there was another affected like myself."

"You are a couple of romantic, silly things," cried Anne. "I flatter myself there is some poetry in me, but it takes a different shape. Now, when I see Father Holden, I begin to think of Jeremiah and Zachariah, and all the old prophets, but with no disposition to cry."

"Tears were never meant to dim those blue eyes, dear Anne," said Faith.

CHAPTER XVI.

Dogberry.—You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore, bear you the lantern. This is your charge; you shall comprehend all vagrom men.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

It may well be supposed that the misadventures on the ice were ill calculated to soothe the excited mind of the constable. He bore a grudge towards the Solitary before, for his failure and the beating he had received at the island, and now to be made the object of such abuse in the presence of his townsmen, and that on account of a person whom he looked down upon as a sort of vagrant, was more than his philosophy could bear. For Basset, with that kind of logic which is so common with a certain class of people, could not avoid regarding the Recluse as the culpable cause of his misfortune in both instances. "If he hadn't gone agin the law," he said to himself, "I shouldn't have tried to take him; and if I hadn't tried to take him, I shouldn't have been treated so." Whatever Hedge or Mills may think of such logic, it was satisfactory to Basset.

His lucubrations, moreover, were very different in the daytime from those in the solemn shades of night. As ghosts are said to disappear when they scent the morning air, so the constable's apprehensions of them fled at the rising of the sun. When in the dark at the island he received the blow that prostrated him on the earth, he was unable to determine in his confusion, whether it had been inflicted by the fisherman's ghost or by Holden. It never crossed his mind that it might have come from any one else. On this subject he had mused during the whole time of his return from his nocturnal disaster, without being able to arrive at any conclusion. If in those witching hours, when the stars gleamed mysteriously through the drifting clouds, and the wind moaned among the bare branches, he was inclined to one opinion rather than to another, it was to that which would attribute the blow to the ghost. But with the light of returning day the current of his thoughts changed. Things assumed an altered aspect. Fears of inhabitants of an unseen world vanished, and Basset was angry at himself for entertaining such silly

imaginations. It was now evident that Holden by some means had obtained a knowledge of the design to capture him, or had suspected it, or had noticed the approach of the boat and laid in wait to take a most unjustifiable revenge. "I wish I could prove it," thought Basset; "if I wouldn't make him smart for striking an officer!"

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We shall not be surprised to find that the constable feeling thus, provided himself with another warrant. Smarting under a sense of injury, both as a man and a baffled administrator of the law, he had immediately sought the Justice, revealed the loss of the instrument, and procured another. Upon returning to the river, where he hoped to triumph in the presence of those who had witnessed his disgrace, over one whom he now regarded as an enemy, he found to his infinite mortification that the bird had flown. He dared not follow alone, and meditating vengeance, he kept the fatal document safely deposited in his pocket-book, where "in grim repose" it waited for a favorable opportunity and its prey.

On the following Monday morning, the constable met Gladding in the street, whom he had not seen since the latter assisted him on the ice.

"How are you?" cried Tom, seizing him by the hand, and affecting the greatest pleasure at the meeting; "how do you feel after your row, friend Basset?"

"Oh, pretty well," answered the constable; "how is it with you?"

"Alive and kicking," said Tom. "But, Basset, you hain't got the dents out o' your hat, I see."

"No, and I don't expect they ever will come out. It's good as two dollars damage to me," he added, taking off the hat and looking at it with a woeful face. "You're a little to blame for it, too, Tom."

"Me! You ongrateful critter," exclaimed Gladding, indignantly. "You want me to give you a new hat, don't ye?"

"What made you ask if I'd got the warrant?"

"I never said no such a thing. I only said sort o' promiscuously, you hadn't showed your document."

"Well, what was the use o' that? If you'd kept still there wouldn't been no fuss."

"Who'd ha' thought you'd ha' gone to take a man without being able to show your authority? Now I call that plaguy green, Basset. But who stood by you when everybody else deserted you, and got you out from under them rough boys, and helped you clean out o' the scrape? Darn it all, Basset, you're the ongratefulest varmint I ever did see, when, in a manner, I saved your life. Really, I did think, instead o' blowing a fellow up in this way, you'd a stood treat."

"So I will," said Basset, who began to fancy he had found too much fault, and was unwilling to lose his ally; "so come along into Jenkins', and we'll take it on the spot. But you must give in, Tom, your observation was unfortunate"

“Unfortunate for you,” returned Tom; “but I guess Holden thought ’twasn’t unfortunate for him. Howsomever, you’ll let the old fellow slip now, won’t you?”

“Let him slip!” almost screamed the exasperated Basset, whom Tom’s manner of treating the subject was not calculated to mollify. “Let him slip, you say. I’ll see him, I’ll see him”—but in vain he sought words to express the direful purpose; language broke down under the effort.

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"Poh, poh," said Tom, "don't take on so, man—forget and forgive—luck's been on his side, that's all."

"I tell you what," said Basset, "who do you think struck me the other night?"

"Why, what could it be but Lanfear's ghost?"

"Don't talk to me about sperits; whose afraid o' them? But tell us one thing, did you see Holden when you looked into the window!"

"What makes you ask?" said the cautious Tom, "supposing I did, or supposing I didn't?"

"'Cause I know you didn't. Now it's my opinion," said Basset, lowering his voice and looking round suspiciously as if he were afraid of an action for slander should he be overheard, "that Holden himself made the assault."

"That ain't possible," said Gladding, confidently. "You and Prime stood by the door and would ha' seen him if he'd come out there, and I know he didn't jump out o' the window, for I should ha' seen him."

"But, perhaps he wasn't in the house at all," persisted Basset; "it was plaguy dark, and perhaps he heard us coming and hid himself outside on purpose to play the trick and take an unfair advantage on us."

"You'll never make me believe that story," said Gladding, shaking his head. "I'd as soon believe it was me as the old man. Prime and me are of the same opinion, and we should both be witnesses agin you."

The two, at this stage of the conversation, reached the door of the grocer's shop, into which we will not follow them, but turn our attention elsewhere.

Meanwhile, the cause of all this excitement was quietly pursuing the ordinary tenor of his life. It will have been observed that when Basset attempted to arrest him, Holden did not even inquire with what offence he was charged, unless demanding the production of the warrant may be considered so, and that upon the constable relinquishing his purpose, he turned away without giving any attention to the observations addressed to him. It is not probable that his design was to avoid the service of process, all unconscious as he was of any violation of the laws of the State; and certain it is he made not the slightest difference in his habits. As before, he pursued his occupation of basket-making at his hut and his recreations of fishing and strolling through the woods, as though no such formidable character as Basset was in existence. If he did not appear in the village it was an accidental circumstance, it being only at irregular intervals that he ever made his appearance there. Thus, then, passed a week longer; the petulant constable on the watch, and the steady malignity of

Davenport gradually becoming impatient for gratification. But the little drama had a course of its own to run.

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One morning Primus saw the tall figure of Holden passing his cabin. The veteran was at the window smoking his pipe when the Recluse first came in sight. A secret must have been very closely kept, indeed, in the village, not to come to his ears, and the warlike equipment and intentions of Basset were well known to him. "Dere he come," said the negro to himself, "jist like a fly flying into de spider-web. I guess I gib him warning." With this benevolent intention, Primus went to the door, and as Holden approached, addressed him with the salutation of the morning. It was courteously acknowledged, and the General commenced as if he wished to engage in a conversation.

"Beautiful wedder dis marning, Missa Holden."

"Old man, thy days are too short to be wasted in chattering about the weather," said Holden. "Speak, if thou hast aught to say."

The General's attempt at familiarity was effectually checked, and he felt somewhat chagrined at the reply; but for all that he would not give up his friendly purpose.

"Dey say," he said, with military precision, "dat de Constable Basset hab a warrant agin Missa Holden."

"Thanks, Primus," said Holden, resuming his walk, "but I fear the face of no man."

"De obstinate pusson!" exclaimed the negro. "And den to talk about my short day! Dat is bery onpleasaut. Short day, Missa Holden, eh? Not as you knows on. I can tell you dis child born somewhere about de twenty ob June (at any rate de wedder was warm), and mean to lib accordingly. Oh, you git out, Missa Holden! Poor parwarse pusson! What a pity he hab no suspect for de voice ob de charmer! I always hear," he added, chuckling, in that curious, mirth-inspiring way so peculiar to the blacks, "dat de black snake know how to charm best, but all sign fail in dry wedder, and de pan flash in de powder dis time."

Holden paid not the least regard to the information. According to his system of fatalism he would have considered it beyond his power to alter the predetermined course of things, but it is not probable that his mind dwelt upon the thought of personal security. He went straight forward to the village, calling at places where he thought he would most likely find customers for his wares, and in no respect avoiding public observation. He had sold his baskets, and was on his return to the river, over whose frozen surface lay his road home, when he beheld a scene that solicited his attention and arrested his steps.

It was an Indian burial. Holden in his round had strolled as far as the piece of table land, of which mention was made in the first chapter, to a distance of nearly a mile from the head of the Severn, and was at the moment opposite a spot reserved by the tribe, of

which a small number were lingering in the neighborhood, as the revered resting-place of the bones of their ancestors, whence they themselves hoped to start for the happy hunting grounds. It was a place of singular beauty, selected apparently with a delicate appreciation of the loveliness of the scenery, for nowhere else in the vicinity was there so attractive a combination of hill and dale, and wood and water, to compose a landscape.

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The little burying-ground, shorn of its original dimensions by the encroachments of the fatal race that came from the rising sun, contained less than half an acre, and was situated at the top of a ravine, running down from the level land, on which the gravestones were erected, to the Yaupaae, where that river expands itself into a lake. The sides of the ravine, along its whole sweep upwards, was covered quite to the top with immense oaks and chestnuts, the growth of centuries, interspersed with ash trees, while in the colder and moister part in the centre, the smooth-barked birch threw out its gnarled branches. There was no undergrowth, and under and between the limbs of the trees, the eye caught a view towards the south of the widened Yaupaae and of the islands that dotted its surface, with hills sweeping round in a curve, and presenting an irregular outline like that made by the backs of a school of porpoises. Towards the three other quarters of the compass, a level plain extended for a short distance, and then was broken up into an undulating surface which rose into eminences covered with woods that hemmed in the whole. The falls of the Yaupaae were at a distance of only a few rods, but invisible, being hidden by the plain that occupied the intervening space, at an elevation of some forty feet higher than the point where the river, rushing down its rocky bed, made its presence known by a ceaseless roar, and seemed to chant a dirge over the vanished greatness of the tribe.

Here were assembled some sixty or seventy Indians to perform the rights of sepulture to one of their number. No vestige of their original wildness was to be traced among them. They were clothed in the garments of civilization, but of a coarse and mean quality, and appeared broken down and dispirited. One half, at least, were women, and at the moment of which we are speaking they were collecting together from among the blue slate gravestones, where they had been dispersed, around a newly dug grave. The rites were of a Christian character, and performed by an elder of one of the neighboring churches, who offered up a prayer, on the conclusion of which he retired. The grave was immediately filled, and then commenced a ceremony of a singular character.

At a given signal the assembled company began with slow and measured steps, and in silence, to encircle the grave. It must have been a custom peculiar to the tribe, at least we do not recollect seeing it alluded to by any traveller or describer of Indian manners, and consisted in walking one after the other around the grave, in the manner called Indian file, and recounting the good qualities of the departed; nor was it considered permissible to leave until something had been said in his praise. The Indians walked round and round in unbroken silence, each one modestly waiting, as it seemed at first, for another to speak. But no one began, and it soon became evident that some other cause than modesty restrained their speech.

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Thus, with downcast eyes, or casting side long glances at each other, as in expectation of the wished-for eulogy, and with the deepest gravity, they followed round and round, but still with sealed lips. The defunct must have been a strange being to deserve no commendation. Could it be? Did he possess no one good quality by which he could be remembered? Had he never done a kind act? Could he not hunt, or fish, or make baskets, or plant corn, or beans, or potatoes? Surely he must have been able to do something. Had it never happened that he did some good by mistake? Perhaps that would answer the purpose. Or had he been the mere shape and appearance of a man, and nothing more? He had vanished like a shadow; was he as unsubstantial? Were they not mistaken in supposing he had lived among them! Had he been a dream?

Confused thoughts like these passed through the simple minds of the rude race, as with tired steps they followed one another in that weary round. But was there to be no cessation of those perpetual gyrations? Yet no gesture, no devious step betrayed impatience. On they went, as if destined to move thus for ever. Looks long and earnest began now to be cast upon the new-made hillock, as if striving to draw inspiration thence, or reproaching its tenant with his unworthiness. No inspiration came, and gradually the steps became slower and more languid, yet still the measured tread went on. A darker and darker cloud settled on their weary faces, but they could not stop; the duty was too sacred to remain unfulfilled. They could not leave without a word to cheer their friend upon his way, and yet the word came not. When would some one speak? Who would relieve them from the difficulty? At length the countenance of an old squaw lighted up, and in low tones she said, "He was a very good smoker." The welcome words were instantly caught up by all, and with renewed strength each one moved on, and rejoicing at the solution of the dilemma, exclaimed, "He was a very good smoker." The charm had taken effect; the word of affectionate remembrance was spoken; the duty performed; and each with an approving conscience could now return home.

What thin partitions divide the mirthful from the mournful, the sublime from the ridiculous! At the wedding we weep, and at the funeral we can smile.

Holden who had been standing with folded arms leaning against the rail fence that enclosed the yard, and contemplating the ceremonies till the last Indian departed, now turned to leave, when the constable with a paper in one hand approached, and touching Holden with the other, told him he was his prisoner. The Solitary asked no questions, but waving his hand to the constable to advance, followed him in silence.

CHAPTER XVII.

“If it please your honor, I am the poor duke’s constable, and my name is Elbow. I do lean upon justice, sir, and do bring in here before your good honor two notorious benefactors.”

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MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

The efforts of the Solitary's friends to ward off the blow were unavailing, and the perseverance of the constable was crowned with success. Of course it was impossible for Holden to walk through the streets of Hillsdale with such a companion without attracting observation. Long before he reached the office, where he was to have his trial, a crowd of idle boys was gathered at his heels, attending in a sort of triumphal procession, and wondering what was to be done with the prisoner. Basset had need of all his natural dignity, and more than he could assume besides, to keep the little mob in tolerable order. It is true the conduct of Holden, who, to the great astonishment of the constable, followed him like a lamb to the slaughter, made the task less difficult.

The place to which he was taken was no other than the office of Ketchum, it not being usual for justices to have offices of their own, the amount of business not warranting such an expense. On occasions like the present it was customary for the lawyer who took charge of the case to supply the court-room, and this, of course, was his own office, as the most convenient place where law books and other necessary instruments were at hand. Here, then, Holden was left by the constable with Ketchum, the officer of the law meanwhile proceeding to hunt up Squire Miller. During his absence, Ketchum addressed some remarks to the prisoner, and endeavored to engage him in conversation, but without success, Holden receiving his advances with coldness, and evidently averse to establish the relation of even speaking acquaintanceship. Ketchum finding all efforts vain, at last desisted, and Holden sat in silence, brooding over his own thoughts.

Upon Basset's return, he was accompanied not only by the justice, but also by Pownal, who had accidentally heard of the arrest, and by two or three other persons attracted by curiosity. Pownal immediately walked up to his friend, and, grasping his hand, expressed his interest, and tendered his services.

"I know not," said Holden, in reply to his expressions of sympathy, "why I am to be made a gazing-stock for curious eyes; but the Lord's will be done."

Pownal requested to see the warrant, and for the first time learned the nature of the accusation; he then sent a messenger after Mr. Tippet, and that gentleman, in compliance with the summons, soon made his appearance. Him Pownal engaged to defend the prisoner. By this time the little office was filled with an inquisitive crowd, eager to hear the eloquence of the counsel, and to watch the vibrations of the scales of justice, among whom Judge Bernard might be seen seated by the side of the prisoner. Any person entered and departed as he pleased, the room being, for the time of the trial, converted into a public place; and while preparations were being made preliminary to the opening of the court, the spectators amused themselves with making observations to each other.

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"What have they took Holden up for?" said a man to Mr. Davenport, who, of course, was present.

"I hear it is for profane speaking and reviling," answered Davenport.

"If everybody was to have his desarts," said our friend, Tom Gladding, squirting a stream of tobacco juice over the floor, "I guess, some others would be worse off," and he looked sharply at Davenport.

"It is time such things should be punished," said Davenport. "People begin to act as if there was no law in the country."

"Don't you be quite so hard on a fellow," said Tom. "I recollect the time before you were converted, squire, when you swore like a trooper."

The face of Davenport faded into a dusky grey with anger, and he looked as if he would have liked to annihilate the audacious Tom, but, by a violent effort, controlling his passion, he said:

"I trust the Lord has forgiven me the sin."

"I hope he has," said Tom, "and seems to me it would be a good thing for Squire Miller to follow his example."

"Suppose you tell him so," said Davenport, sarcastically.

"Well, seeing as how you're so pressing," said Gladding "I don't care if I do. Squire," he cried, addressing the Justice, and drawing the attention of all to himself, "here's Squire Davenport says, he expects the Lord's forgive his cussing and swearing, and thinks you'd better do as well by Father Holden, and let him run."

A general shout of laughter greeted this speech of Gladding's, and there were exclamations of "Well said, Tom," and "He had him, there," and "Who would have thought that of Davenport?"

The unfortunate victim glared, with fury in his eyes, at Tom, who, interpreting his looks to suit himself, cried—

"He's coming, Squire, to speak for himself."

Davenport here protested, he had said no such thing, and that it was a shame he should be abused by a scurrilous fellow, in such a manner.

“What’s that you say?” said Gladding, stepping up to Davenport; “I’m no more squirrilous, than you are yourself; though, for that matter, there ain’t a squirrel on a walnut tree, but would be ashamed to be seen in your company,—squirrilous fellow, eh!”

“Silence!” cried the Justice. “Mister Gladding, I must say, I think such language very improper; and I hope, if you expect to remain here, you will stop it.”

“Squire,” said Gladding, “he begun it; I’ll leave it to the company, if he didn’t first call me a squirrel.”

“Silence!” reiterated the Justice; “we must have order; and, if you don’t choose to observe order, you must leave the room.”

“You hain’t opened court yet,” persisted the pertinacious Tom. “I guess we know our rights.”

Here Basset came up to Tom, and, taking him by the arm, whispered a few words into his ear. They seemed to be of a sedative character, for the latter, contenting himself with an occasional glance of mischievous fun at his late opponent, abstained from further remark.

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By this time, the subpoena for the witnesses had been returned, and the persons summoned made their appearance. The overt act was so notorious, that it had not been considered necessary to summon many, and the few needed were soon hunted up. Hereupon, Mr. Ketchum having intimated a readiness, on the part of the State, to proceed, Mr. Tippet, after some conversation with Judge Bernard and Pownal, Holden refusing to hold any intercourse with him also, entered the plea of “not guilty,” for his client.

The hour of noon had now arrived, and that being the dinner-time of most present, Justice Miller yielded to the request of Mr. Tippet, and the pleadings of his own stomach, to adjourn the sitting of the court till two o'clock in the afternoon, in order, not only to gratify the demands of appetite, but, also, that the counsel might have an opportunity to confer with his client and prepare his defence. Ketchum remonstrated against the delay as unreasonable, but the Justice, who felt no disposition to hurry himself, and was, at bottom, not an unamiable man, told him, there would be time enough to finish the case in the afternoon, provided he and Mr. Tippet did not talk too long. Meanwhile, upon the promise of Judge Bernard to be responsible for the safety of the prisoner, Holden was allowed to depart with him, and Pownal, who had been invited to dinner with the Judge, accompanied them to his house.

Here they found Faith, in a state of high excitement. “I,”—she said, seizing the old man's hands, while the tears streamed down her cheeks; “I am to blame for this persecution. O, Father Holden, if I had not begged, and almost forced you to go with us that evening, this would not have happened.”

“Dear child!” said Holden, “afflict not thyself. Thou and I are but as flying dust on the eternal wheels of destiny. Fear not, nor let thy heart be troubled. Even yet, the Lord will make bare his arm and I shall escape, even as a bird from the snare of the fowler.”

But Faith partook not of the enthusiast's confidence. To her alarmed imagination, the deliverance of Holden seemed as improbable as that of Daniel from the den of lions, and the impending doom almost as dreadful as that destined for the prophet. She knew what the consequences would be were Holden found guilty; for, soon after the reading of the warrant by Pownal, its contents had been communicated to her, and she had been informed respecting the punishment. To her delicate and sensitive mind, the charge itself—that of profane speaking and reviling, was inexpressibly revolting. She knew that the condition of mind such language implies, was entirely wanting, and that it was in the performance of what he considered a duty, the old man had spoken. Father Holden capable of profane speaking! He, whose heart was the seat of all noble emotions; he, who had renounced the world, and trampled its temptations and vanities under foot; he, who living in the world, was not of the

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world! That such an one, so harmless, so guileless, so innocent, should be paraded through the streets like a wild beast which it was unsafe to have at large, that he should be exposed to the prying looks of coarse and unfeeling men, and compelled to hear their vile ribaldry, and, finally, compelled to an ignominious punishment, among the vicious, in a workhouse! The disgrace was more than she could bear. It seemed her heart would break. Overcome by her emotions, she left the room, followed by Anne, who partook of her grief and indignation.

All participated in the feelings of the young ladies, and, as might be supposed, the young men most. To Pownal, a wish of Anne's was a command; nor was there a danger, scarcely, he would have refused to encounter to gratify her. He had never, indeed, breathed a word of love, but he had flattered himself of late that she understood his feelings, and that the knowledge gave her no displeasure; and, in spite of the disparity in their conditions, hope nestled at the bottom of his heart. Besides, Faith was with him a favorite, and it distressed him to witness her excitement.

Nor could William Bernard behold unmoved the tears of Faith, or the agitation of his sister. Never, indeed, before had the divine eyes of Faith Armstrong so affected him as now, when suffused with tears; nor had her beauty ever shone so resplendent. Upon the withdrawal of the girls, he put his arm into that of Pownal, and drawing him into a recess, the young men took counsel together respecting what should be done.

At the appointed hour, all parties were again present in the little office of the lawyer, and the examination commenced. It is unnecessary to recapitulate in full the testimony. In spite of the ingenuity of Mr. Tippet, who closely cross-examined the witnesses for the prosecution, and thereby only made them rather strengthen than weaken the force of their testimony, the facts were fully proved. Indeed, the whole occurrence was too recent and public to make the proof a task of any difficulty. The only differences in the statements of the witnesses were, that some thought Holden was standing at the side of the reading-desk, when he addressed Davenport, while others were as sure he was in front, a circumstance considered by Ketchum and the Court as of no consequence, while Tippet regarded it as of the greatest importance, as a test of the accuracy of the memory, if not of the veracity of the witnesses; and, again, what came out in the persevering cross-examination by Tippet, *viz.*: that in the opinion of some witnesses, Holden, instead of saying "soul-damning and abominable lies," said "damned, abominable lies". The eyes of Ketchum fairly danced when the efforts of his opponent succeeded in eliciting from the badgered and provoked witness this most *mal-a-propos* testimony which his own ingenuity had been unable to draw forth, and he took care, in the rest of the examination, to get the same statement if possible

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from the remainder of the witnesses. In this he was partially successful, each one intending most sincerely to tell the truth, and yet artfully led on by the lawyer, often falsely coloring and distorting the facts. On the conclusion of the testimony on the part of the State, Mr. Tippit produced witnesses to prove the words spoken, who, after all, did not alter the complexion of things, and also the good character of the prisoner, but this latter proposal was stoutly opposed by Ketchum, as irrelevant to the issue.

"What have we to do," said he, "with the character of the prisoner? His character is not at issue. That may be as good as the Court's, for instance (and I desire no higher), and yet the offence charged may have been committed. If brother Tippit is allowed to run into all these side issues, we shall never be done with the examination, and therefore I object to the testimony."

Tippit, in reply, expressed great surprise at the conduct of his brother, Ketchum; "but," said he, "I do not wonder at the anxiety of the gentleman to keep out testimony of so vast importance for my client. Here is a discrepancy. Some witnesses state the language said to have been used by my client in one way, some in another. Now, although a man of good character might use the words 'soul damning and abominable,' which we are constantly hearing in sermons and prayers, and if they are proper there, one might suppose them proper in common discourse, he would be less likely to use the other phrase; though, if he did, I hope I shall be able to convince the court there's no great harm in that."

Here Ketchum's face expressed unutterable astonishment, and the Justice, as if scandalized at the proposition, interrupted the counsel, and told him he hoped he did not mean to justify profane language.

"Far from it, please your honor," answered Tippit, "but I say we have been guilty of no profanity which, at the proper time, I expect to satisfy the court of. We offer the testimony now for two purposes: first, to assist the judgment of the court in coming to a conclusion, whether the words were spoken or not, because if we prove the prisoner's good character, it is less likely they were uttered by him; and secondly, if your honor should be of opinion that the words were used, in mitigation of punishment, if, indeed, the court should be disposed to take notice at all of the trifle of which the prisoner stands accused."

Ketchum reiterated his objections, denying that the testimony was admissible for either purpose. He did not think, he said, that his brother Tippit was able to assist the judgment of the court a great deal; as for judgment, the article was so scarce with a certain gentleman, he advised him to keep the modicum he had for his own use. So far as mitigation of punishment was concerned, he thought the greater the respectability of the offender, the greater should be the punishment, both because his education and



opportunities should have taught him better, and by way of example to others, in like case to offend. The doctrine of the gentleman, he added, might do well enough where kings and aristocrats ground the people to powder, but he hoped never to see the day, when, in our own free country, a man might do what he pleased because he was respectable.

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This sentiment, notwithstanding the feelings of almost all present were in favor of Holden, was so decidedly patriotic, that it met the most favorable reception, and there was a general whispering and rustling among the audience. After the sensation had subsided, Justice Miller, with some hesitation, decided to receive the testimony for the present. "It is different," he said, "from allowing evidence to go to a jury. I am both court and jury, and will think it over, and reject it, if I think it should be." With this decision the counsel were obliged to acquiesce, and Tippit proceeded with his testimony.

It was easier to prove the good character of Holden than the exact occurrence at the meeting. Judge Bernard, Mr. Armstrong, who came into the court in the afternoon, Pownal, and many others, testified to his irreproachable reputation, and were certain that his conduct proceeded from no evil intent.

After the testimony had all been taken, followed the speeches of the counsel. Ketchum, who, as prosecutor, was entitled to the opening and closing arguments, rose and stated that, as the days were short, and it was growing late, he would waive his right of opening, and reserve what he had to say to the time when his brother Tippit had concluded. To this arrangement Tippit strenuously objected, insisting that the State had made out so poor a case, that he hardly knew what to reply to, and that in all fairness the counsel for the State ought to enlighten him. The court, however, decided, that although it was a strange thing for a lawyer to desire to be excused from making a speech, yet it was a course he felt much obliged to Mr. Ketchum for adopting, and hoped that he would not revenge himself for the abstinence by putting two speeches into one, at the conclusion.

Smiles and applauding whispers among the audience rewarded the Justice for this brilliant display of wit.

Hereupon Mr. Tippit rose and addressed the court. He begun by hinting at the embarrassment he felt in not having the advantage, to use his own language, of what his brother Ketchum intended to say. For his own part, he had carefully considered the law and evidence, and could not find the shadow of a pretext for detaining the prisoner. He then went on to speak of the prisoner himself, his age, his harmless life, and the excellent character he sustained. All this, he argued, went to show the improbability of his having uttered the language considered most objectionable. He contended that although he would most cheerfully admit that the prisoner had said something in the conference-room, it was impossible to determine accurately what that something was; that if in this state of things the court not be satisfied what the words were exactly, it was as if no words at all had been uttered, and there were none to be passed upon. But what were the words? Here the learned counsel minutely examined the evidence, and arrived at the conclusion, that it was impossible to ascertain them.

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Hence, he said, the *corpus delicti* is wanting. But suppose the words were as testified by some, though they are contradicted by others, “damned abominable,” what then? Was that reviling or profane speaking? The words were two. Now, no one would pretend that “abominable” was profane language. “The idea is abominable,” said Tippit, “and I hope brother Ketchum won’t take me up for saying that. What does the other word mean?” Hereupon the counsel referred to a dictionary, to which also we refer our readers. “There you see,” said he, “there is no harm in it. At most, the word can in its present application, be considered only as an intensitive, or the like. The fact is, may it please the court, it is but a strong form of expression, and means no more nor less than *very*, and I should be willing to leave it to the good sense of those who hear me, as to a jury, to say if my construction is not correct.”

Here Tom Gladding nodded his head at Tippit.

“Mr. Gladding,” continued Tippit, “nods his head, and I honor his judgment, and venture to say there is not a man here better qualified to speak on the subject.”

Here there was a general laugh at Tom’s expense, in which the court itself joined. Tom, appearing to regard the joke very little, and only saying, “The squire’s got it right by chance this time, I guess.” Presently, the court commanded silence, and Mr. Tippit proceeded.

“I flatter myself,” he added, “that I have satisfied your honor there is no profane language in the case; and that ought to be sufficient for my purpose, even though the court should be of opinion that the prisoner was guilty of reviling; because the words of the statute are in the conjunctive, providing punishment only where profane speaking and reviling are united, being levelled, not at one alone, but at both as one act. It should also be borne in mind, that the statute is penal, and for that reason must be construed, strictly, in favor of liberty. But I will now proceed to inquire whether there has been any reviling in the sense of the statute. Who was intended to be protected against injurious language? Reasonable beings only, certainly. Assuredly not the delicate feelings of horses, or cows, or pigs, and if so, much less those of an inanimate object, like a book. Now, it will be recollected that the language uttered characterized the contents of a book, not Mr. Davenport. The words were consistent with the supposition that the prisoner cherished the highest respect for him, whatever his opinion might be of the sermon. It was then absurd to pursue a man criminally for criticising a book, and requesting another not to read it, which was all that had been done.”

Here Ketchum inquired how his brother Tippit would get over the words, “man of sin,” which it was testified had been applied by the prisoner to Davenport.

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Mr. Tippit treated the inquiry with great contempt. "Does the gentleman," he asked, in turn, "claim for Mr. Davenport a superhuman degree of piety? Would he have us understand that Mr. Davenport is not a sinful man, and is the expression made use of by Mr. Holden more than tantamount to that? I do not think the words worthy of notice," he said, "nor am I disposed to waste time on them." Mr. Tippit concluded by saying, that if a man, in the honest expression of his opinions about a book, was to be dealt with criminally, free speech, free action, the noble inheritance of our ancestors, were gone, and the liberties of the country no more. Collecting himself for a last effort, he represented the Goddess of Liberty, like Niobe, all tears, weeping over the fate of her children, should the iniquity, contemplated by Ketchum, be consummated.

The impression made by the lawyer's speech was favorable, as was evident from the looks of the audience, and the approving hum that filled the room, and prepossessed as they were in favor of Holden, they would undoubtedly have acquitted him, but, alas! they were not the tribunal to decide his fate. We have already dilated on the proceedings of the little court of *pied poudre*, beyond our original intention, and for that reason shall endeavor, without designing, "with malice prepense," to slight the eloquence of Ketchum, to compress his remarks into as small a compass as possible. He has since risen to the dignity of a County Court Judge, and, therefore, needs no celebrity, which a work so unpretending as the present, can confer.

Mr. Ketchum then began by saying, that to be sure his experience in courts was not very great, but he had some, and, so far as it went, he never knew a case plainer than the one on trial. The gentleman (bowing to Tippit), with all his ingenuity, and he was not going to deny him his due, which was greater than his knowledge of the law, had been unable to affect his own mind, or, as he believed, the mind of his honor, or of any one present. He felt, therefore, that the task before him, though an unpleasant one, was lightened by the inability of his brother Tippit to make out even a plausible defence. Peeling this, he should, if he consulted only his own inclinations, be disposed to leave the case where it was, without comment, but he supposed it was expected he should say something, and in the discharge of his duty, he would comply with the expectation. As for the character of the prisoner, he had nothing to say about it. He would neither admit that it was good, nor claim that it was bad; whatever it might be, it had nothing to do with the case. The question was, what was done at the meeting? All the witnesses agreed that the prisoner interrupted the proceedings. True, they disagreed in respect to the exact words, but take the testimony of any, and sufficient was made out to support the prosecution. Here he dwelt upon a criticism of the words, coming to conclusions

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precisely the opposite of Tippit's, and contending they were both profane and reviling. "It was preposterous," he claimed, "to say that Holden meant merely to criticise the book. The language was not addressed to the book, but to Davenport: the book was not called, 'man of sin,' but Davenport. The words, 'man of sin' had a peculiar meaning. They were designed in the Scriptures to express condemnation, and horror, and wickedness. They were not synonymous with 'sinful man,' though even these words might be considered words of reviling, had they been used in the same circumstances. The contempt affected by his brother Tippit was so much powder and shot thrown away. Nobody believed he really felt it. It was like the grimaces of a culprit, trying to hide his apprehensions by forced smiles." He concluded by apologizing for not being a poet, like his brother Tippit, nor as familiar with goddesses. He knew that his friend was a gallant young man, and fond of the ladies, and he would confess to the weakness himself, but as for goddesses, they were a touch above him, &c.

The court had listened with patience to both testimony and speech, and was now to pass sentence, acting up to the advice of a shrewd English lawyer, to one who without much legal learning had been appointed to a judgeship in a colony, never to give his reasons when he pronounced judgment, for although the judgment had an equal chance to be right or wrong, the reasons were almost certain to be incorrect, Justice Miller contented himself with finding the prisoner guilty, and sentenced him to a week's confinement in the town workhouse.

It was not without some surprise that the friends of Holden heard the decision. Although contemplating its possibility, they had indulged a hope that the Justice would be unwilling to subject one so harmless, and whom they considered innocent of all intention to violate the law, to any punishment; but with that reverence for law which characterizes New England, and without which there can be no security for free institutions, they submitted, although not without some murmurs. It was in vain, they knew, to ask for any mitigation; Justice Miller having once pronounced sentence, being as inexorable as the Supreme Court. The room was soon nearly emptied of the spectators, none remaining except the particular friends of the prisoner. Nothing remained but to carry the sentence into execution. Holden's friends also at last took a sorrowful leave, and the mittimus being made out, it was handed to Basset, to remove the prisoner to the place of destination.

For the sake of greater security, Basset now produced a pair of handcuffs, which he put on the condemned man's hands, who offered no objection, but calmly submitted to his fate.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Armado.—By my sweet soul, I mean setting thee at liberty,
enfreesing thy person: thou wert immured, captivated, bound.

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Costard.—True, true, and now you will be my purgation, and let me loose.

Armado.—I give thee thy liberty, set thee free from durance; and in lieu thereof impose on thee nothing but this.

LOVE'S LABOR LOST.

By the time the court had concluded its session it was eight o'clock in the evening. It was quite dark, and the snow was falling heavily. When, therefore, the constable stepped into the street, holding his prisoner by the arm, it is not surprising that he encountered but few passengers. Those whom he did meet had their hats or caps slouched over their brows, which were bending down upon their breasts to protect the face from the driving snow. It was impossible, so thick were the flakes, to see more than a few feet before one. It was a fortunate circumstance, inasmuch, at least, as it saved the Recluse from the humiliation of being seen by his townsmen.

The workhouse was situated at the distance of nearly a mile from the centre of the village, on a little farm of some twenty acres, and stood several rods apart from any inhabited house. It was the half of a large unpainted wooden building divided into two sections, the other half of which was used as an alms-house, and might be considered as a sort of auxiliary or ally of the county jail, to receive those minor offenders whom the dignity of the latter rejected.

The road Basset had to travel passed over the lower bridge of the Yaupaae, next went up a hill, and then suddenly turning, skirted the lake-like expanse of water, on which the building was situated. In order, however, to reach the house, it was necessary to leave the main road and pass down a lane of some twenty rods in length.

Together the pair proceeded through the driving snow, Basset keeping hold of Holden, who walked meekly by his side. The fatalism of the latter seemed to have taken entire possession of his mind, and he probably regarded his sufferings as a necessary part of the designs of Providence, which it would be as wicked as vain to resist. The constable had repeatedly endeavored to engage his companion in conversation, striving to comfort him with the opinion, that the keeper of the quasi jail was a "clever man," and that people did not find it as bad as they expected, and a week would quickly pass away. "In winter," said Basset, "when it's hard to get work, I've known many a likely young fellow do some trick on purpose to be put into the workhouse till spring; so it can't be the worst place in the world." Basset stretched the truth a little. He might have known or heard of persons, who, in order to obtain warmth, and food, and shelter during that inclement season, had committed petty crimes, but such instances were exceedingly rare, and the offenders were anything but "likely fellows." But Basset must be excused his leasing, for he felt lonely, and longed to hear the sound of a human voice, and failing that of another, was fain to put up with his own as better than none.

But Holden steadily resisted all the advances of the constable, refusing to reply to any question, or to take notice of anything he might say, until the latter, either wearied out by the pertinacity of his captive, or vexed by what he considered sullenness or arrogance, himself relapsed into silence.

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They had crossed the bridge, passed up the hill, and traversed the road along the margin of the Yaupaae, and were now just entering the lane that runs down to the house. The storm was raging with unabated fury, and the constable, with clenched teeth, and bent head, and half-shut eyes, was breasting the driving flakes, and congratulating himself with the idea that his exposure would soon be over, and he by the side of a warm stove in one of the stores, the hero of the evening, recounting the adventures of the day and comfortably taking his cheerful glass, when suddenly, without having seen a person, his cap was violently pulled over his eyes, a thick coffee-bag slipped over his head, and a hand applied to his throat to stifle any cries, should he be disposed to make them. But the poor fellow was too much frightened to emit a sound, had he been never so much inclined to scream.

“Make no noise,” said a stern but disguised voice, “and you are safe. No injury is designed. I will lead you. Follow quietly.”

The man grasped his arm, and led him, as it seemed, out of the travelled path into an adjoining field, for he was directed to lift his feet at a particular spot, and in doing so, struck them against what were evidently wooden bars, such as are everywhere to be found in New England, at the entrances to the stone wall encircled lots. They were followed by Holden, and, as the constable judged, from the slight sounds he succeeded in occasionally catching, by another person. When his captor seemed to think he was in a place where he would be unlikely to be disturbed by a casual passer, he stopped and demanded the key to the handcuffs. Every movement of the constable must have been narrowly watched during the evening, for, as he hesitated, either confused by the unexpected capture, and forgetful of where he had placed the key, or desirous to gain time in the hope that help might arrive—whatever might have been the motive, no time was granted, the same stern voice instantly adding,

“The key is in the right pocket of your pantaloons: give it to me at once.”

With a trembling hand, the constable produced the key from his pocket, and was confirmed, by what followed, in the belief that his captor must have a coadjutor, for he still kept his hold, and uttered the single word “here,” as if addressing another, and handing him the key. Presently, the handcuffs were thrown down at his feet, and he thought he could detect the sound of receding footsteps. His captor then demanded the mittimus, which he tore into small pieces, and scattered around. In this condition muffled so that he could hardly breathe, with a desperado, or he knew not how many at his side, who, at the least attempt to make an outcry, might do him some bodily injury or perhaps murder him, the next quarter of an hour seemed a whole dismal night to the unfortunate Basset. At the expiration of that time, his guard addressed him again, and in the same carefully feigned voice:

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"You are in my power, and who would know it were I to leave your corpse to stiffen on the snow? But I bear you no ill will, and have no intention to hurt you. I would not harm a hair of your head. I will not subject you even to the inconvenience of having these fetters on your wrists, though you were unfeeling enough to place them on a man, the latchet of whose shoes you are unworthy to unloose. Be thankful for the forbearance, and show that you know how to appreciate it. Mark what I say. Remain where you are, nor venture to remove the covering for half an hour. It will keep you warm. Return then to your home, nor seek to discover either Holden or who rescued him, and be assured he was not privy to the intention to release him. Remember, remember. Eyes will be upon you. Good night!" So saying, the unknown departed and left the stupefied constable like a statue, rooted to the spot.

There he remained, not daring to stir or to remove the uncomfortable head-dress—for by what unseen dangers he was surrounded he knew not—until, as he supposed, the half hour was more than passed. Then Basset cautiously and slowly raised his hand to his head, as if to intimate that if any one were watching and wanted him to desist, he was ready to do so, and hearing no sound, proceeded to divest himself of the hood. He looked around but could see nothing; the falling snow effectually shut out all objects from sight. He tried to move, but stiff with cold his limbs refused their office, and he nearly fell down. He took a step forward and his feet struck against the handcuffs. He stooped down and picked them up, comforting himself with the reflection, that bad as was his case, it might have been worse had they been transferred to his wrists. He strove to peer into the fallen snow, to discover, if possible, any tracks, but except his own just made none were distinguishable. The snow had already obliterated them. Faint and weary, and frozen, and vexed and frightened, the melancholy Basset turned his face to the village, not among his cronies with bold brow and loud voice to boast of his achievements, and by the aid of John Barleycorn to screw his courage up to a fabulous pitch, but with drooping crest and dejected spirits to slink to his bachelor's bed, and dream of banditti all the night.

A sadder, if not a wiser man

"He rose the morrow morn."

Not a word spoke he the next day of his misadventure, until it having been ascertained that Holden had not been at the workhouse, inquiry was made respecting his non-appearance. The constable was then obliged to confess the truth, which his captors, as if defying discovery, had not enjoined him to conceal. Faithful to his instructions, he exculpated Holden from all blame, praising him for his submissiveness to the law, expressing his conviction that the old man knew nothing of the intentions of his captors, nor whether they were friends or foes. Notwithstanding the reluctance of the constable, the indignant Justice, in the first ebullition of his anger, made out another mittimus, which he almost forced into the other's unwilling hands, and commanded him to arrest

the fugitive, wherever he might find him, by night or by day, on the Lord's Day or on any other day, were the place the Sanctuary itself.

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But the rescue had diverted public attention from the Solitary into another channel, and the community had not a stock of indignation sufficient, like the Justice, to expend on Holden as well as on his rescuers. It appeared, even to the few who were originally in favor of his arrest, that he had suffered enough, satisfied as they were, as well from his behavior they had witnessed as from the report of the constable, that he had in no respect contributed to his freedom, but was rather compelled to accept it, and therefore attaching no blame to him for the escape. The resentment of the citizens was now transferred to the daring offenders, who, with a strong hand, had interposed between the sentence and the execution of the law, and this last offence, as being of so much greater magnitude than Holden's, cast it quite into the shade. Who were they? Who would have the audacity, in the midst of a law-loving and law-abiding people, to trample on the laws and defy the State? The constable could give no information. He had not even seen a person. He had only heard a voice he never heard before. Ought not some persons to be arrested on suspicion? Who should they be? Who were obnoxious to suspicion? The friends of the Solitary were among the most respectable people in the place. Would it be safe to proceed against them? There would be some hazard in the experiment. They would be sure to defend themselves to the uttermost, and if successful as they probably would be, would make the movers in the matter rue their officiousness.

Of such a nature were the various questions discussed around the hearths, and in the bank and shops of the little town of Hillsdale. The excitement was a perfect god-send to stir the sluggish blood of winter. Above all it was attractive for the mystery that invested it. But we will leave the village gossips to beat the air with their idle speculations.

CHAPTER XIX.

I could endure
Chains nowhere patiently: and chains at home
Where I am free by birthright, not at all.

COWPER.

Bright and beautiful broke the morning after that night of storm. The weather had cleared up towards midnight, and when the rejoicing sun surveyed the scene, his golden glances fell on a wide expanse of pure, unsullied white. A slight breeze had arisen, which, gently agitating the bent and laden boughs of the evergreens, shook off the fleecy adornment that fell like blossoms from the trees. The air was soft and almost balmy, as is not unfrequently the case even in "the dead of winter" in our variable climate, lovelier and dearer for its very variableness, like a capricious beauty, whose smile is the more prized for the pout that precedes it. It was a day to seduce the old man into the sunshine in the stoop on the south side of the house, and to bring out the

girls and young men, and swift trotting horses and pungs and jingling bells in gay confusion in the streets.

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In the course of the forenoon, a bright crimson sleigh, the bottom filled with clean straw, and the seats covered with bear and buffalo robes, the horse ornamented around the neck and back with strings of bells that jangled sweet music every step he took, drove up to the door of Judge Bernard. A young man stepped out, whom we recognize as Pownal. He entered the house, and in a few minutes returned with Anne Bernard, muffled in cloak and boa, and carrying a muff upon her arm. Health glowed in her cheek and happiness lighted up her eyes. Pownal assisted her into the sleigh, and carefully disposing the robes about her, took his seat by her side and drove off.

They drove at first into the older part of the town, as yet undescribed by us, nor do we now intend a description, save that the road was wide, and a considerable part of the way bordered by elms and maples, glorious with beauty in summer, but now standing like mourners shivering in the wintry air, and as they passed hailed with special looks and expressions of admiration those two fraternal elms, towering over all, like patriarchs of the vegetable world, which, once seen, none will forget.

“Huge trunks, and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwined fibres, serpentine,
Upcoiling, and inveterately convolved—
Nor uninformed with Phantasy and looks
That threaten the profane.”

Thence, following the street that winds around the village green, and greeted by the joyous shouts of acquaintances in passing sleighs, and joining, now and then, in friendly races, they crossed the upper bridge of the Yaupaae, and leaving the shouts and merriment behind, struck into a more secluded road.

Whatever charms the conversation that passed between the young people might have for them, it would not interest the reader, and we therefore pass it over. It was such as might be expected between two youthful beings, one of whom knew he was in love, and the other began to suspect, from emotions never felt before, the commencement of a partiality that was as sweet as it was strange. To two hearts thus attached, and tuned to vibrate in harmony, all nature ministers with a more gracious service. The sun is brighter, the sky bluer, the flower more fragrant, the chime of the brook has a deeper meaning, and a richer music swells the throat of the bird. Things unobserved before, and as unconnected with the new emotion, indifferent, now assume importance. A look, a tone of the voice, a pressure of the hand, are events to dream about and feast upon. In the presence of the beloved object all things else are either unheeded or dwindle into comparative insignificance.

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It will occasion no surprise, then, that Anne, engrossed with her own happiness, should hardly have observed the road taken by Pownal, or been conscious of how far they had driven, until some remark of his attracted her attention to the scenery. She then perceived that they were in the midst of the Indian settlement on the Severn, and to a playful question of Pownal, inquiring how she would like to leave her card with Queen Esther, she replied by expressing her delight at the proposition. Esther's cabin stood some little distance off from the main road, towards which a long and narrow winding track led, seldom travelled by any other vehicles than ox carts and sleds. Over the yet unbroken snow, Pownal directed the horse, the light pung plunging with every motion of the animal, and threatening to upset, causing merriment, however, rather than alarm to the occupants of the conveyance. In this manner, straining through the snow-drifts, they finally reached the dwelling of Esther. She herself, attracted by the sound of the bells, came to the door, and welcomed them with great cordiality.

"Mr. Pownal and I," cried the lively Anne, "are come to make a New-Year's call, Esther. I have not your presents with me, but the next time you are at our house, you shall have them."

"Miss Anne more'n all present," replied the pleased Esther. "She cold; she must come to the fire."

"No," said Anne, as she was being ushered by the squaw into the cabin, "I am not cold. Why, what a nice"—but the sentence was not concluded. Her eyes had fallen on the stately form of Holden, who sat on a bench near to the fire.

"O, father Holden!" exclaimed the lovely girl, running up to him, throwing her arms round his neck, and kissing his forehead, "is it you? How glad I am you escaped from those abominable men. Tell me all about it. How was it? Did they do you any harm?"

At this moment, Pownal entered, and advancing, grasped the old man's hand, and congratulated him on his escape.

"My God," said Holden, in his wild way, "hath sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths that they have not hurt me. He raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the mire."

"But," urged Anne, with feminine curiosity, "we are anxious to hear how you escaped."

The Recluse did not seem to consider it necessary to make any secret—at least to those present—of the events of the past night, and, with the frankness that characterized him, spoke of them without hesitation.

After stating what we already know, he said he was led away rapidly by a man dressed in a sailor's suit, whose face he did not see, and who accompanied him until they had

passed the last house on the street. They met no one, and, on parting, the man forced a purse into his hand, and entreated him to make his way to the cabin of Esther, where he would be safe and welcome, and there to remain until his friends should be apprised of his retreat.

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"To me," concluded the Solitary, "a dungeon or a palace ought to be alike indifferent; but I will not thwart the minds of those who love me, however vain their desires. The Lord hath brought this light affliction upon me for His own good purpose, and I await the revelation of His will."

"I do not doubt we shall be able soon to release you from your confinement," said Pownal; "meanwhile, tell us what we can do to make your condition tolerable."

"I lack nothing," said Holden. "These hands have ever supplied my necessities, and I am a stranger to luxury. Nor liveth man by bread alone, but on sweet tones, and kind looks, and gracious deeds, and I am encompassed by them. I am rich above gold, and silver, and precious stones."

"If there is anything you desire, you will let me know? Command me in all things; there is nothing I am not ready to do for you," said Pownal.

"The blessing of one who is ready to depart be upon thee, for thy kind words and loving intentions; and should real trouble arise, I will call upon thee for aid. I know not now," he continued, "why I should hide like a wounded beast. I fear 'tis but for a visionary point of honor. Why should not a gentleman,"—this he said sarcastically—"occupy the workhouse as well as a boor. In the eyes of One, we are all equal. Ah, it might do this hard heart good."

"You have promised to respect the prejudices of your friends," said Pownal, "whatever you may think of their weakness."

"You shall never endure the disgrace," said Anne, with kindling cheeks. "See how Providence itself interposes to protect you!"

"Your suggestions, my children, find an echo, alas! too truly in my own heart to be rejected," said Holden, dejectedly. "I repeat, I will obey you."

The young people remained for an hour or more at the hut, conversing with the Solitary, to whom their presence appeared to give great pleasure; and, before parting, Pownal exchanged some words apart with Esther, having for their object the promotion of her guest's and her own comfort. The kind heart of the squaw needed no incentives to conceal and protect Holden, but Pownal felt he had no right to encroach upon her slender means, and such arrangements were made as would more than compensate her.

As the sleigh started from the door, Anne said to Pownal, with some tenderness in the tone of her voice:

“You need not tell me, Mr. Pownal, the name of one of the strange Paladins last night. How will Faith thank and admire you. But, O, let me beg you to be prudent, lest you fall into the power of these bad men.”

It would have better suited the feelings of Pownal, had Anne uttered her own thanks more directly. His inexperience and distrust of himself did not comprehend that it was in reality the way in which the modest girl expressed the admiration that swelled her heart.

CHAPTER XX.

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Impelled with steps unceasing to pursue
Some fleeting good that mocks me with the view;
That, like the circle, bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, and, as I follow, flies.

GOLDSMITH.

Whenever Tom Gladding and Primus put their heads together, it was pretty certain that there was some mischief afoot, and a few words of the conversation, which we overhear, as they walk down the street in company, leave no doubt on the subject.

"You see, Prime," said Gladding, "the foolish fellow ain't cured yet."

"Let us insult ober his case," said Primus.

"I thought he'd got enough; but, he's as parvarse as the nine lives of a cat. Why, there was the whack at the island, and, then, the jam on the ice, and, last, the scare in the snowstorm; a fellow's unreasonable to want more, and, yet, the darn'd crittur's holding out his platter."

"What you want to put in, Missa Gladding?"

"Some of the same mess. I don't care about hurting him; but, I should like to cure him of his parsecuting ways."

"Well, you is a good cook. What you up to dis time?" said the General, grinning at the idea of more tricks.

"Colored people is celebrated for their contrivances; so, scratch your wool, and give us the benefit of your genius."

"De sheep hab no gumption," said Primus, looking grave at this allusion to his hair.

"I tell you what I want you to do," said Tom, taking no notice of Primus' gravity, and certain that the old fellow was unable to resist the temptation to a frolic; "but, don't let's stand here all day talking. Folks may suspicion something; so, push along, and I'll give you my idees."

They must have pleased the General, for, soon, his face began to brighten, and his eyes to glisten; and he parted from his companion, apparently, with the best understanding, and in the highest good humor possible.

In accordance with the arrangement between them, the negro hunted up Basset, and soon learned from him, that he had a mittimus to commit Holden. The cunning fellow, at first, pretended to dissuade him from making use of it, taking care, at the same time, to



drop a few words, from which, it might be inferred, there was no difficulty in apprehending the fugitive. He, at last, let out the fact, rather unwillingly, as it seemed, that the Recluse was in the habit of passing his hut, in the evening, on visits—as the General supposed—to his friends in the village. The constable caught at the bait, and, having lost all fear of any resistance, on the part of the Solitary, persuaded Primus, with some difficulty, to allow him to watch at his cabin, for his prey; engaging his assistance, at the same time, should it become necessary. It was, accordingly, agreed, that the same night should be devoted to enforce the demands of justice.

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Just before the shades of evening shut in, Basset—agreeably to the preconcerted plan, presented himself at the hut of the General, and took his station at the window that commanded, for quite a distance, a view of the road. The moon was shining, and her beams, reflected from the snow, made it easy to distinguish objects. The constable sighed, as he took his seat, and declared that, in all his experience, he never had so much difficulty in his legal business. It was the General's cue to encourage his visitor, and keep up his resolution. He, therefore, said, in a cheerful tone—

"Folks say, dere is nebber no lane but hab one turn. Now, dis is de turn. See, how de road twist round my house. Dat is a good sign."

"If I don't git him this time," said Basset, "I guess I might as well give it up, and the State of Connecticut may just be reckoned beat."

"Don't ground you arms yet, Missa Basset. In de long run, de raal grit allers carry de day."

"When I think it all over," said the constable, musing, "it seems kind o' queer. I'm sort o' bewitched, and, if the days of witches wasn't gone by, I shouldn't wonder if some of them hadn't got me in tow. But, I ain't going to give it up yet. I don't forget the old chap's knocking me down in the dark behind my back, as though I'd been no better than a woodchuck or a skunk."

"How it feel, Missa Basset?" inquired Primus, with a grin. "Did de old man strike wid de soft side or de hard side ob de cudgel?"

"You needn't show your ivory," said the constable, whom the remembrance of his misfortune irritated; "I wish to conscience you'd felt it yourself; you'd have known, then, without the need of asking questions."

"Golly! Missa Basset," exclaimed Primus. "You tink nobody hab feeling but yousef. You gib my arm sich a winch when de ole man kick you behind, or knock you ober (I nebber know which) dat I feel him now."

"He didn't kick me," said Basset, indignantly. "'Twas a regular assault with a club, I tell you."

"Well, I shouldn't like sich salt on my shoulder, aldo dey say, salt bery good to keep de wound from catching cold."

"I tell you what, darkey," cried the constable, losing patience at the other's sneers. "You talk like an old fool. If you hain't got anything pleasanter to say, you might as well shut up."



"Yes, I be an old fool," said Primus, as if speaking to himself, "and dis is all de tank I git from dis white man. I depose my life on de ribber. I git a'most murdered when de ghost kick him behind; he break my leg made out ob a good piece ob ash; I invite him to my house, like a gen'leman, and de civilest word I get, is—darkey and old fool. Yes, Primus, you complexion is dark, and you be a big fool."

"Don't take on so, Prime," said Basset; "I spoke rash, and I ask your pardon. But, what's the use of aggravating a man in that way!"

"I tink you must 'scuse my keeping company wid you, arter to-night," continued Primus, looking steadily into the fire, and knitting his brows; "I nebber get noting but bad luck in his sarvice. Next time, I git my neck broke, and den 'tis all done wid dis poor niggur. De carpenter find hard work to make one to fit."

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"Now, Prime," said Basset, "you're rather too hard. I asked your pardon, and that's all a man can do. I'm sure I didn't mean to set you agoing at this rate."

"It bery easy, Massa Basset, to say I ask you pardon, and bery polite for a white man to say it to a colored pusson, but does dat pay for de breaking ob a leg or de setting ob my neck?"

"What did it cost to mend your leg?"

"I gib Fannin, de carpenter, a halb dollar for a new one dat wasn't half so good as de ole one."

"Well, I vow, that's considerable for an old stick, 'cause I know there wasn't no new iron work about it, for you had the old ferule left; but seeing as how I broke it, I'll split the difference with you, so there's a quarter. But why didn't you speak of it afore?"

"'Cause," said Primus, taking the money with eyes brightening at the sight, "'tween gen'lemen, de trifle was too small."

"Well, you're a curious chap. Now most folks would have dunned me right off for the damage. There's Tom Gladding', if he had a wooden leg, and I broke it, don't you suppose he'd make me settle before sunset next day? Besides the law was all on your side."

"I guess, Massa Gladding 'tend to business in his own way," said the now good-humored General, "but you, Squire, is an old 'quaintance, and you disappointment so great, I didn't like to mention de leg."

As soon as Primus uttered the word "Squire," Basset knew that the reconciliation between them was complete. The General never used the word in reference to his companion, except when pleased and desirous to pay a compliment, and was fully aware of the effect it produced. The constable, born and bred among a people fond of titles, and fond of giving them, was not exempt from the common weakness. He, however, thought it incumbent on him to disclaim the dignity, to which Primus answered, that if he were not a Squire he ought to be, and would be next year.

A tall figure, which, from the gait and dress, appeared to be that of Holden, was now seen approaching deliberately in the moonlight, and the constable addressed himself to the performance of his duty. It was thought best to allow the fugitive to pass the cabin, so that in the event of an attempt at evasion, which was not anticipated indeed, but which the prudent General thought ought to be guarded against, the difficulty of escape might be greater. As the man advanced, the constable was certain it was Holden. There was the long beard falling on his breast, and the grey frock girt with a sash; and

had not the cap been pulled down low over his forehead, even the features might have been distinguishable.

After the person had passed, Basset cautiously opened the door and quietly stole after him, but, in spite of every precaution, it was impossible to move without making a sound on the crisp snow, easily heard in the still night. The person heard it, and turning his head, beheld the constable two or three rods in the rear. Basset observing him look round, quickened his pace, and advanced confidently to make the capture; but in the same proportion the figure hastened his steps. Thereupon the constable increased his speed, in which he was imitated by the other, until both pursuer and pursued were in a run.

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It was now who should run the fastest. The race had hitherto been in the road, and Basset was evidently gaining on the fugitive, when, turning short, the latter jumped over some bars which had been left down, and directed his course across a field. The constable's blood was up, and without hesitation, he followed, every moment lessening the distance between himself and the chase. He could not help, as he ran, wondering at the agility of Holden, from whom, on account of his seeming age, he had not anticipated such activity, and ascribed it now to his greater length of limb, and habit of constant exercise and exposure. And now he was within a few feet of him, and extending his arm to place his hand on the captive's shoulder, when suddenly the ground gave way under his feet, and he was precipitated to an unknown depth, while the snow came tumbling down upon his head, blinding and covering him up, so as to leave him at first in total darkness. The astonished and confused constable, by dint of struggling and floundering about, succeeded at length in disencumbering himself of the superincumbent load of snow and cornstalks, and was able to form an idea of his situation. He found himself in a large hole, at a depth of six or seven feet below the surface of the ground, to escape from which every effort proved fruitless. In vain the entrapped Basset sprung up the sides again and again, and grasped at the snow, in hope to catch hold of some object on which to retain a hold; it yielded to his hands, and every time he fell back more and more exhausted. He endeavored to attract assistance by shouting, but it seemed as if his voice mounted no higher than to the top of the hole. He looked up. Nothing was to be seen but the moon gazing sadly upon him, and the stars winking at him their glittering eyes. Frightened and vexed, he threw himself upon the bottom of the hole, then got up, and dashing down his cap, stamped upon it in ungovernable rage, vowing vengeance against the traitor, Primus, who, he did not doubt, had led him into the snare. At first the violent exercise, and next vexation and resentment, kept him warm; but gradually the effect of the first passed off, and then the latter, without its aid, was found ineffectual to ward off the cold. The teeth of poor Basset began to chatter, and tears of anger and apprehension fell from his eyes. He started up, and again tried the walls of his prison, but they were too steep, and too slippery, to permit exit, and at last, with desperate calmness, he resigned himself to his fate, and awaited such result as Providence might send. The thought of starvation and freezing to death passed through his mind, but he was too fully convinced of the complicity of the black to believe he was ignorant of his condition, and satisfied that, however tricky, he intended no serious harm. There was comfort in the thought, and as these reflections prevailed he became more composed, while a sense of shame succeeded to that of despair. Shrugging himself together to keep warm, and lifting up his voice from time to time in a shout, if, perchance, some casual wayfarer might catch the sound, the constable waited for deliverance.

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Meanwhile, Gladding, for it was no other, who personated the Solitary, and the General were cozily seated by the fire in the hut of the latter, discussing the events of the evening. The false beard was lying on a chair, and a large stone pitcher, containing cider, was placed near the centre of a table, on which the elbow of Tom was leaning, who, from time to time, replenished a mug with the liquor, which made frequent journeys to his mouth. The old General, with his pipe, was seated on the other side of the table, and appeared as fervent in his devotions to the pitcher as his guest.

"I tell you what, Prime," said Tom, "I come plaguy nigh tumbling in myself. I thought I marked the spot exactly, but somehow or other the snow light sort o' blinded me, and I stepped right on the edge, and had to spring for't like all natur'."

"Dat would a been fust rate, to catch two fox in one trap," said the General, the whites of whose eyes gleamed plainer than ever in the fire light at the thought.

"Fun for you, but not for me by a long chalk. Basset would have the best on't, too, for he'd have come right top on me. How the crittur would have crowed!"

"I hear him crow two or tree time already," said Primus, who had been to the door several times, and could detect faint sounds whenever the imprisoned Basset shouted.

"Let him try his lungs a little longer. It will clear his voice for singing school. I guess I must go to meeting next Sabbath, if for nothing else, to hear him perform."

"But I 'fraid de poor man freeze," said the compassionate General.

"Never fear, 'twon't hurt him. It will do him good to freeze some of the ugliness out of him. Besides it's best to wait awhile. Perhaps, somebody coming along will help him out, and that will save you the trouble."

"Me! Missa Gladding! what hab I to do wid it? You put him dere, and you is de one to pull him out."

"Don't be onreasonable, Prime, now. You see, if I should go, he'd know, of course, all about it. Why, he'd recollect the clothes, and next thing I should be took up for assault and battery."

"And who save me from being took up?"

"O, there ain't no danger of that. They can't git no hold on ye. You can say you hearn crying for help, and didn't know but what Holden had turned on him, and so come to assist."

Primus shook his head dubiously. He hardly knew what to reply, yet was evidently disinclined to the adventure. For that reason, perhaps, he allowed Basset to remain in

duration longer than his own good-nature prompted, in the hope that relief might arrive from some other quarter.

"I vow," at last exclaimed Gladding, "if I don't believe you're afraid Basset will give you a licking."

"Basset, nor no oder man, ebber see de day nor night to make me 'fraid," said the valorous General, whose natural courage was a little stimulated by the cider he had been drinking, starting up and preparing for his expedition. "But, Missa Gladding, you promise to stand by me if dis scrape go any further."

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"Sartainly," answered Tom, "I never left a friend in the lurch, I tell you."

"Gib us you hand on dat."

Tom extended a great sledge-hammer fist, and the two shook hands in sign of inviolable fidelity.

"Now," said Tom, "I guess, I'll make myself scarce. I wouldn't have him see me in this rig for all the cider I drank to-night. There's some left in the old pitcher, so fetch him along, and comfort the critter's heart with a few swigs."

With these words, Tom took his leave, first altering somewhat the disposition of his garments, divesting himself of the sash, placing the cap higher on his brows, and depositing the false beard in his pocket, while Primus, lighting a fresh pipe, sallied forth on his errand of benevolence.

As he approached he could hear plainer the halloo which Basset occasionally emitted from his trap. The ears of the latter sharpened by expectation, caught the sound of the advancing steps, while as yet the deliverer was at too great a distance to see the hole, and his cries for assistance were redoubled.

"Help!" he cried, "help! They want to murder me. This way—here, in the old well—this way—O, Lord!"

Such were the cries that saluted the ears of Primus, as soon as he was near enough to distinguish articulate sounds.

"Who dere?" cried the General.

"O, Prime, help us out of this tarnation hole," groaned Basset.

"Onpossible! can dis be you, Missa Basset?" inquired Primus, peering over the edge of the pit. "How come you dere?"

"Don't ask no questions, now, though, I guess, you know as well as me."

"His head turn wid de scare, probumbly," soliloquized Primus, loud enough to be heard by the captive. "I curus to larn how you fall in. Ebberybody know dis hole, Missa Basset."

"Haul me out, and I'll let you know."

There was something in the tone of voice that did not at all please the General, so looking around, and observing no one in sight, for it was a lonely place, and having all

the advantage on his side, he resolved to parley, and secure satisfactory terms before he delivered the prisoner.

"I bery sorry for you, Missa Basset," he said, "and if you wait awhile, I go to de village to git a rope to haul you out."

But this proposition was far from suiting the constable. Now that assistance was near at hand, he dreaded to lose it out of sight or hearing. He knew there was no necessity for procuring any rope, and feared that if Primus put his threatened plan into execution, he would bring along with him a rabble of men and boys, to jeer at and ridicule his sufferings. This now seemed worse than all he had already endured; he was, therefore, willing to make any compromise to avert the disaster.

"Don't go, don't go, Prime," begged the constable. "Just give us your hand, and pull us out of this infarnal place. There's no need of any rope."

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"But suppose you pull me in arter you, what we do den? De fire would be all in de fat. Beside, you talk as if you respect me. No, I tink I be safer if oder folks be here, too."

"O, Prime," whined Basset, "you hain't no better friend in the world than me, and no more bowels of marcy than a stump. I tell ye, I don't suspect you. Lend us a hand, and I'll never forget it, the longest day I have to live."

"Well," said the General, "you must make us a promise, fust."

"What promise? I'll make any promise you please, only do help us out. I'm 'most dead with cold."

"You must promise nebber to say any ting about dis night. Dere's 'spicious folks round, like de doctor, and when dey hear you git catch like a rat in a trap, dey is likely to say, 'Ah, dat is dat old niggur Primus's work,' and so I lose my good character. De innocent man must be like de weasel dat is nebber catch asleep."

It went hard against the grain, for the constable to make the promise, but there was no alternative except remaining there, he knew not how long, finally to be extricated by a laughing crowd. With a very ill grace, therefore, he promised all that Primus required, and would have bound himself to ten times more, if necessary; but the General was generous, and asked only security for the future, having no indemnity to demand for the past. Planting his sound foot firmly in the snow, the General extended his hand, which being grasped by Basset, he was soon delivered from thralldom.

"What's to hender me now, you infernal darkey," exclaimed the exasperated constable, as soon as he found himself in the upper air, "from throwing you into the well, and letting you rot there!"

"What to hender, Missa Basset?" returned the General, stepping back. "You own feelings, Missa Basset. But you can try it if you please," he added, letting fall his arms by his sides, which, at the threatening tone of the constable, he had raised instinctively in self-defence.

But the other seemed more disposed to allow his anger to explode in words than to resort to violence.

"To be chucked into a hole like a dead cat, by a cunning old wool head, was more'n mortal man could bear," he said, "and he didn't know why he shouldn't knock out his black brains, on the spot."

"You can try de 'speriment, if you please," said Primus, coolly, "and when dey is knock out, I advise you to gadder dem up for you own use."

“You’re a saacy nigger,” said Basset, “and if I sarved you right, I’d clap you into the workhouse.”

“Missa Basset, you bery mad; and when a man is mad, he always onreasonable. But fire away—it keep you warm, and stop you catching cold.”

“Onreasonable! when a fellow’s been sprawling about in snow and cornstalks, for more’n two hours, and got more’n half froze! How would you like it?”

“If Missa Basset chase Missa Holden, in de moonlight, and fall into a hole, is I to blame?”

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"I don't believe it was Holden. I believe it was all a plan between you and some other fellow to git me into the scrape. Come, now, Prime," he said, moderating his voice into a less ill-natured tone, "tell us, and I'll let you off this time."

"O, Lord!" exclaimed Primus, lifting up his hands, with open palms, and rolling up his eyes towards the moon, "de man is crazy wid de fright, and he see Missa Holden, too, widin two tree feet."

He turned now on his way home, as if disdaining longer converse with one who refused to listen to reason. The constable followed at his side, growling the whole way, and reproaching the General with his perfidy, the latter protesting it was Basset's own fault, "when he knew dere was a hole dere," and that he would have nothing to do with him, or with the cunning old man, for the future. Upon arriving at the bars, Primus, notwithstanding his indignation at the suspicion cast on his honor, courteously invited Basset to take a drink with him, but the latter, suspecting, perhaps, another snare, was in no humor to accept the invitation; and, turning away without even noticing the black's good-night, directed hasty steps towards the lights of the town.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Who called you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns, called you forth,
Down those precipitous black-jagged rocks,
For ever shattered, and the same for ever?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?"

COLERIDGE.

William Bernard had, of late, been more than usually attracted to the society of Faith. In habits of familiar intercourse with the family of the Armstrongs, from his childhood, and admitted to almost the same degree of intimacy which exists between brothers and sisters with the little black-eyed girl whom, in winter, he drew on his sled, with Anne, to school, and, to fill whose apron, he shook chestnuts and walnuts from the trees, in autumn, he and Faith had never had, during the earlier period of their acquaintance, feelings other than those attaching one to another, members of the same household. The fact that Faith had no brother, taken in connection with her love for Anne, had caused her to lean more on William, and be willing to call upon him for a thousand little services, which he was as ready to grant as she to ask. These, in the years of childhood, were rewarded by a kiss, or permission to ride on her rocking-horse, or to make calls, with Anne and herself, on their dolls, and so forth; but as years rolled on, and vague feelings and shadowy intimations assumed definiteness, a delicate veil of

reserve imperceptibly interposed itself, as effectual to bar the former familiarity as if a Chinese wall had been built between them. Yet, for years, no warmer sentiment succeeded; and, though William Bernard felt pleasure in the society of his beautiful neighbor, he experienced no uneasiness in her absence.

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But a change was destined to take place which, indeed, it is surprising had not sooner occurred. William found himself, he hardly knew how, more frequently in the company of his sister's lovely friend, notwithstanding it was with a more timid step he sought the dwelling of Mr. Armstrong. For it seemed to him as if the little community were beginning to suspect the existence of those feelings which, like the morning glory, shrink from the rays of the sun. They were too delicate for inspection. They were like the wing of the butterfly or the plumage of the humming-bird, which cannot be handled without being tarnished. Hence, though longing to enter the house as in his school-boy days, were it only to catch for a moment the sounds of Faith's voice or a glimpse of her face, he would content himself with merely passing by, deriving a satisfaction from the consciousness of being nearer to her, and of gazing on the house beautified by her presence. Besides, as his feelings became more interested, his distrust of himself increased. The heart of the bold, young man, which real danger had never disturbed, fluttered like a caught bird at the voice of Faith, more and more, and he hesitated to make an avowal which might, indeed, crown his hopes, but which might, also, dash them to the ground. For he could not conceal from himself that Faith, so far from giving him encouragement as a lover, had never even appeared to suspect his feelings. Her conduct had always been the same, the same unreserved confidence, the same frank, unconstrained deportment. She spoke to him as freely as ever of her hopes and fears; she took his arm as readily, nor did a blush welcome his coming or a tremor of the voice signalize his departure.

Young ladies are usually sharp-sighted enough in detecting admiration, and fathoming the heart of a lover, and some may think her want of penetration strange. If so, I must entreat indulgence for my simple Faith. Be the circumstances remembered in which she was placed and had grown up; her child-like innocence and purity, unacquainted with the world, her seclusion from society, the intimacy that had always existed between her and young Bernard, which continued to make many attentions that would have been marked in another, natural and expected from him, and the want of all preoccupation in his favor, and the surprise of the keen-sighted will diminish. Is not an inexperienced and modest girl slow to suspect in another, emotions towards herself of a kind which she has never felt?

William Bernard, then, had never told his love, nor did Miss Armstrong dream of its existence. To her he was the dear friend of her childhood, and nothing more. His mother and sister suspected the condition of his heart, and it was with calm satisfaction in the former, and a glow of delight in the latter, that they looked forward to the time when the attentions and amiable qualities of the son and brother should ripen the friendship of the unimpassioned beauty into love. Of this result, with a pardonable partiality they did not doubt. With this explanation of the feelings of the two young people towards each other at this time, we will accompany them on a morning walk to the Falls of the Yaupaae.

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It was one of those bright, glorious days which the poet Herrick calls the “bridal of the earth and sky.” From a heaven intensely blue, the sun, without a cloud, “looked like a God” over his dominions. Some rain had fallen in the night, and the weather suddenly clearing up towards morning, had hardened the moisture into ice. Every bush, every tree, the fences, were covered with a shining mail, from which and from the crisped surface of the snow, the rays of the sun were reflected, and filled the air with a sparkling light. Transmuted, as by a magician’s wand, the bare trees were no longer ordinary trees. They were miracles of vegetable silver and crystal. Mingled among them, the evergreens glittered like masses of emerald hung with diamonds. Aladdin, in the enchanted cavern, saw not so brilliant a spectacle.

The narrow road which led to the Falls descended a declivity, where it left the main street until it came to within a few feet of the surface of the river, then curving round the base of the hill, it skirted the winding margin of the stream until it ascended another hill, on the top of which, from a platform of level rock, one of the finest views was commanded. The path was slippery with ice, and in descending the declivity the arm of Bernard was necessary to support the uncertain steps of his companion. It was with a sort of tremor he offered it, of which Faith was all unconscious. She took it without hesitation, and stepping cautiously over the glazed surface, and laughing at each other’s slips, the young couple pursued their walk. On their right was a steep hill, rising in some places to a height of one hundred feet above their heads, covered over, for a considerable distance along the road, with the perennial beauty of the graceful hemlock and savin, now resplendent in jewels; and on the left the Yaupae, its frozen level hid in snow, out of which the trees and shrubs on the little islands raised their silver armor glittering in the sun. In the distance, and visible from the greater part of the road, the river, in a narrow chasm, dashed down the rocks. An unusual quantity of snow had lately fallen, which, having been succeeded by heavy rains, had swollen the stream to more than double its ordinary size. It was evident that, what in the language of the country is called a freshet was commencing. Such is the name given to those swellings of the water, the most formidable of which commonly occur in the month of February, or early in the Spring, when the overcharged rivers, bursting their boundaries and overflowing the neighboring lowlands, sometimes occasion great damage to property, sweeping away bridges, and mills, and dams, with irresistible violence.

The roaring of the Falls had been long distinguishable, but, it was not until the first curve in the road had been turned, that they came into sight.”

“Look! Faith,” cried Bernard, as they burst into view; “did you ever see them more magnificent?”

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The attention of the young lady had been, hitherto, too much engrossed by the necessity of watching her footsteps down the descent, to give much heed to surrounding objects; but, now, she looked up, having reached the comparatively level spot, which extended as far as the second hill or rising ground above mentioned, and felt all the admiration expressed by her companion.

"They are grand," she replied. "I have beheld this view a thousand times, and never weary of its beauty. I do not know whether I love it more in summer or in winter."

"How would you express the difference of your feelings, then and now?"

"I am afraid I have not the skill to put the feeling into words. But, the impression, on a day like this, is of a magnificence and splendor unusual to the earth. In summer, the beauty though less astonishing, is of a softer character."

"You would rather listen to the song of the robin, and of our northern mocking-bird, than to the roaring of the angry river?"

"There is no anger in the sound, William," she replied, looking up into his face; "It is the shout of praise to its Creator, and the dashing of the torrents over the rocks are the clapping of its hands."

"You are right, Faith. How much better you are tuned to the meanings of nature than I?"

"You do yourself injustice. It was your love of all this beauty that induced you to invite me to this walk. Without you I should have missed it, nor known what I had lost."

William Bernard sighed. She has not, he thought, the least suspicion that I love her. She does not know, and would not care if she did, that, by her side, the only prospect I behold is herself, and the invitation to this stroll but a pretext to approach her.

"Your presence, dear Faith," said he, "imparts a double charm to the scenery."

"It is sweet," she answered, leaning, as it seemed to him, at the moment, more affectionately on his arm, "to have one to whom we can say, how lovely is all this loveliness."

"The sentiment of the Poet never seemed so true before," said Bernard, looking at her with admiration.

She made no reply, for her whole soul was absorbed by the view before her.

They had arrived at the platform, which, somewhat higher than the Fall, commands a prospect of the river and surrounding country. Below them foamed and thundered the torrent, which, first, making a leap some twenty feet down, over large, irregularly-



shaped boulders of granite, that strove to oppose its passage, rushed in a steep descent over a bed of solid stone, irregularly worn by the action of the water; and, then, contracting itself between its adamantine walls, burst in distracted fury, like a maniac, from the narrow throat. Against the opposing rocks, which, perhaps, had fallen into the Yaupaae, when the fierce convulsion of nature opened the chasm, and bade the river pour down the gorge—the water lashed with ceaseless

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rage, throwing the spray high into the air. This, freezing as it fell, encrusted the rough sides of the beetling crags with icy layers, covering them all over with plates like silver, and hanging them with stalactites. Right in front, and separated only by the narrow pass from the ledge on which they stood, still higher than which it rose, towered a huge rock, perpendicularly, to a height of ninety or one hundred feet above the cataract. Its foam-beaten base, just above the water, was encased in icy incrustations, higher up, gray moss overspread its flat side, and tufts of cedar struggled through the fissures, whilst its top was canopied with hemlocks and savins, and white oaks. Looking towards the left, the eye swept over the green hill-side, along which they had walked, and, glancing over the islands in the Yaupae, followed the winding course of the river, catching here and there on ground, that sloped to the stream, the sight of white buildings, with green blinds, till the surrounding hills shut in the view.

They both stood silent, as they looked, she, unwilling, by an exclamation, to break the charm; and he, with his mind full of the lovely creature before him. Surely, never so angelic a being gazed upon that scene! As, with kindling countenance and suspended breath, her dark eyes flashing with enthusiasm, her soul drank in the sublimity and sparkling radiance that enveloped her, she seemed no being of mortal mould, but some celestial visitant. The rapt expression of her face gradually settled into awe, and she softly murmured these lines, of the Russian poet, Derzhavin—

“God! thus to Thee my lowly thoughts can soar,
Thus seek thy presence, Being wise and good,
’Midst Thy vast works, admire, obey, adore;
And when the tongue is eloquent no more,
The soul shall speak in tears of gratitude.”

The tears were indeed standing in her eyes, as she turned and placed her hand in that of Bernard.

“You must think it strange,” she said, “that I, to whom all this is no novelty should be thus affected. It is a weakness from which I shall never recover.”

“Not weakness, dear Faith,” said Bernard, “but the impressibility of a poetical temperament. Only an insensible heart could be unmoved.”

“If these rocks could speak, what legends they might tell of vanished races,” said Faith. “There is something inexpressibly sad in the fate of those who once were the masters of these woods and fields, and streams.

“They but submit to the common fate, which compels the inferior to make way for the superior race, as my father says.”

“How beautiful,” she continued, “must this goodly land have seemed to the Indian hunter, when, after the day’s chase, he dropped the deer upon the ground, and, from this high point, looked over the green forests and shining stream. I should not wonder, if now, in the voice of the cataract, he fancies he hears the groans of his ancestors, and the screams of demons.”

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"There are traditions connected with this place," said Bernard, "but they are fast fading away, and promise soon to be forgotten."

"Are you acquainted with any?"

"A friend of mine has endeavored to rescue one from oblivion, but I doubt if it would interest you."

"I am interested in everything that relates to this people. Tell me the story now. What more fitting place for romance!"

"A fitting place certainly, but no fitting time. Romance would hardly mitigate the keenness of the air, or diminish the probability of taking cold, were you to stand here listening to Indian legends. Besides, the tale is in manuscript, and I should not be able, relying on memory, to do it justice."

"You shall read it to me this evening, where you cannot make such excuses," she replied, taking again his arm, and resuming their walk, "by the light of candles, and near the parlor fire, where we may hear, and not feel the wind."

"But where would be the accompaniments of the tale? The framing I fear would spoil the picture."

"You will have the benefit of contrast, which every great painter desires."

"I am only too happy to please you," he said, with a sigh.

"My almost brother, William, I knew you would not refuse me the favor."

Conversing in this manner, they had reached a turn in the road, which led back to the village by a route different from that they had come, when they saw Esther approaching, with her son. The boy walked in advance of his mother, who seemed to tread in his steps, while that unfailing companion of the semi-civilized red man, a dog, lounged by his side.

Quadaquina was a handsome child, of thirteen or fourteen years of age, with a perfectly oval face, and eyes deep set and keen, that glittered like a snake's, resembling his mother, from whom he inherited his beauty. His dress differed not from that of white boys, except that there was thrown round his shoulders a piece of coarse blue broadcloth, disposed like a shawl. Esther had on her head a dark colored felt hat, such as is worn by laborers, from beneath which long black hair fell down upon her shoulders. A shawl, like the boy's, was thrown over her, a skirt, of the same material, extended half way down between the knee and ankle, and crimson leggings completed the dress.

As they came up, Faith and Bernard stopped to speak to them, and inquire after Holden. She had been apprised of his escape, and of the visit of Pownal and Anne, but had refrained from going to his retreat in consequence of its being thought advisable to attract as little attention to it as possible. To her inquiries Esther returned the most satisfactory answers. Holden appeared quite contented, and was engaged in preaching to the Indians, and teaching them the principles of the Christian faith.

“Do the Indians listen to what he says?” inquired Bernard.

“They listen; Indian always listen,” said Esther, “and the wind blow the words through the ears.”

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"I suppose so," said the young man, laughing. "Holden may now truly call himself the voice of one crying in the wilderness, and a wilderness it is likely to remain."

There was something both in the manner and language that jarred the feelings of Faith, and she said:

"I will never give up the hope that these poor people may be Christianized. Do you not think, Esther, that there has been an improvement in the habits of the tribe within a few years?"

Esther hung down her head, and only answered, "Indian will be Indian."

"I will not despair," said Faith. "Be sure, Esther, you come to the house before you return. I have something for you, and a message for Father Holden."

"I can conceive of no character," said Faith, after they had parted from Esther, "more noble than that of the Christian missionary. He is the true redresser of wrongs, the only real knight that ever lived. You smile," she said, looking at Bernard. "Do you not think so?"

"I think with you," he replied. "There can be no nobler man than he who submits to privation, and exposes his life to danger through love to his fellow man. It is God-like. But I smiled at the association of ideas, and not at the sentiment. Think of Holden as a knight."

"To me there is nothing ludicrous in the thought. When I look at him, I see not the coarse unusual dress, but the heroic soul, that would have battled valiantly by the side of Godfrey for the holy sepulchre."

"I am afraid he will meet with only disappointment in his efforts to reform the Indians."

"We cannot know the result of any labor. We will do our duty, and leave the rest to God."

"They have not the degree of cultivation necessary to the reception of a religion so refined and spiritual as the Christian. They must first be educated up to it."

"But you would not, meanwhile, neglect the very thing for which they are educated. Religious instruction must be a part of the education, and it brings refinement with it."

"Certainly, if it can be received; but therein consists the difficulty. I am afraid it is as reasonable to expect a savage to apprehend the exalted truths of Christianity, as one unacquainted with geometry, the forty-ninth proposition of the first book of Euclid."

“The comparison is not just. Science demands pure intellect; but religion, both intellect and feeling, perhaps most of the latter. The mind is susceptible of high cultivation, the heart feels instinctively, and that of a peasant may throb with purer feeling than a philosopher’s and for that reason be more ready to receive religious truth. And who may limit the grace of God?”

“You have thought deeper on this subject than I, Faith. But how hard must it be for the rays of divine truth to pierce through the blackness of that degradation which civilization has entailed on them! The conversion of the North American Indian was easier at the landing of the Pilgrims than now.”

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"The greater our duty," exclaimed Faith, clasping her hands, "to atone for the wrongs we have inflicted. But, William, some good has been done. Look at my dear, good Esther."

"Esther deserves your praise, I am sure, because you say it. But it is you that have made her good. She could not be with you, without being benefited."

"You are very kind, but no merit attaches to me. They were the precepts of Christianity that softened her heart, though she was always gentle."

"It was the sweetness of religion she heard in your voice, its kindness she read in your eyes, and its loveliness illustrated in your life, that attracted and improved Esther"

"Were I to admit what you say, the credit would, after all, belong to religion."

The sun had nearly reached his meridian, as the young couple approached the house of Mr. Armstrong. What a change had been produced in a few hours! The warm sunshine, while it glorified the landscape had robbed it of its sparkling beauty. The trees no longer wore their silver armor; the branches, relieved of the unusual weight, had lost the graceful curves and resumed their original positions; white blossoms no longer bedecked the evergreens; and all around, large drops were falling, as if lamenting the passing away of the short-lived magnificence.

On parting from Bernard, at her father's door, Faith reminded him of his promise, and invited him and Anne to tea with her in the evening. Bernard accepted the invitation for himself, and conditionally for his sister.

CHAPTER XXII.

"O nymph, with loosely flowing hair,
With buskined leg, and bosom bare,
Thy waist with myrtle girdle bound,
Thy brow with Indian feathers crowned,
Waving in thy snowy hand
An all-commanding magic wand
Of power, to bid fresh gardens blow,
Mid cheerless Lapland's barren snow!"

JOSEPH WARTON.

Bernard and his sister, on their arrival, found only Mr. Armstrong and his daughter, but were joined, in the course of the evening, by Pownal, at whose arrival all expressed pleasure. The whole company united with Miss Armstrong in requesting Bernard to read the legend, who, at last, produced the manuscript from his pocket.

"I must entreat your indulgence," he said, "for the defects of which the piece is full. The author is an inexperienced writer, and unable, like an accomplished hand, to atone by elegance of style for improbability or poverty of incident. You will expect no more than that he should observe the proprieties of his subject, nor require him to introduce into a tale of the children of Nature the refinement of language or delicacy of sentiment, to be met with in the modern romance. The stories of an uncivilized people must be rude, even approaching in simplicity tales designed for children."

"The writer could not have an audience more ready to be pleased," said Mr. Armstrong; "and are we not all children of various growths?"

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"I do not believe any excuses are necessary," said Faith, "and am expecting a great deal of pleasure."

"The more extravagant, the better," cried Anne. "What can equal the Arabian Nights Entertainment?"

"We are all attention," said Pownal; "so whistle your apprehensions, Bernard, to the wind."

Thus encouraged, the young man opened his manuscript, and commenced reading.

THE LEGEND OF MAGISAUNIKWA AND LEELINAU.

Where the clear Sakimau mingles its waters with the great salt lake, which would be too salt, but for the innumerable rivers that pour themselves into its bosom, the mighty Aishkwagon-ai-bee, whose name, rendered into the language of the pale faces, is the 'Feather of Honor,' had erected his lodge. He was the war-chief of a tribe whose name is lost in the mists of antiquity. He boasted his descent from the great Ojeeg, of whom it is related that he opened a hole in the blue sky and let out the soft, warm air of Paradise, so that it poured down upon the earth, and bestowed summer upon a region before condemned to perpetual cold. He also liberated the singing-birds from the mocucks, or basket-cages, where they were confined, which, descending through the aperture, have since enlivened the woods and fields with their melodies. He was unable to return to this world, and may still be seen in the heavens, being changed into the stars called Ojeeg Annung, known to the wise men among the pale faces as the Constellation of the Plough.

Nor was Aishkwagon-ai-bee unworthy of his noble descent. The grandeur of his thoughts and the boldness of his achievements proved the purity of his blood. A skillful hunter, a successful warrior, equally renowned for wisdom in council and bravery in action, he enjoyed the highest consideration, not only in his own tribe, but as far as the great lakes to the North, and the river Delaware to the South. When he pointed to the beautiful scalps that adorned the sides of his wigwam, he could with truth say, there was not one of them but had graced the head of a warrior.

The Sachem had several children, sons and daughters, and among the latter, the lovely Leelinau was the darling of his heart. The maiden had attained the age of eighteen, and was the admiration of the youth for many days' journey round. Her cheeks were the color of the wild honey-suckle, her lips like strawberries, and the juice of the milk-weed was not whiter than her teeth. Her form was lith as the willow, her eyes sparkled like the morning star, her step was that of a bounding fawn, and her fingers were skilful in weaving the quills of the porcupine. What wonder if hearts both young and old beat quicker at her approach?

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Many, it may well be supposed, were the offers of marriage made to the beautiful Leelinau. Innumerable were the legs of venison, and choice pieces of bear's meat, which the mothers of the young hunters presented for acceptance at her lodge, being careful to mention whose skill in the chase procured them, but in vain did they look for the bowl of succatash or embroidered moccasins—the products of woman's labor—in token that their gifts were pleasing to the coy beauty. In vain, when the shades of evening fell, the softly breathed flute lamented in melancholy tones her cruelty. In vain, with tasteful hand, the sighing lover painted his face and person to heighten his attractions and draw attention. The insensible Leelinau relished not the venison or bear's meat, nor would she listen to the flute, or look often at the painted suitors.

Among her admirers none was more deeply smitten by the power of her charms nor cherished a truer love than Magisaunikwa or Wampum-hair, so called from the gentleness of his disposition and love of peace. He was only a few years the senior of the maiden, and of an obscure family compared with that of the famous Aishkwagon-ai-bee. But love levels all distinctions, and, impelled by an influence he could not withstand, he dared to aspire to the hand of Leelinau. Besides, there was one superiority he enjoyed which made the claim less presumptuous. Young as he was no hunter of the tribe could be compared with him in skill or daring. Other lodges might be destitute, but there was always abundance of meat in that of Magisaunikwa and those of his friends. Happy, thought most of the girls, would she be who should lie in the bosom of the young hunter, and cook his food.

But notwithstanding his devotion, Leelinau would not accept his gifts. Still he fancied he had made some impression. She would listen to his conversation by the light of the evening star, though whenever he hinted at his passion, she would hastily retire; and twice or thrice he had caught her eyes fixed on him, when she thought herself unobserved. Hope lives on scanty aliment, and the young man did not despair.

Aishkwagon-ai-bee had noticed the liking of Magisaunikwa for his daughter, and was not displeased. The noble youth had found favor in his eyes, and he did not disdain his alliance. There was only a single cause of hesitation in his mind. Wampum-hair had never been on a war-path, and had always shown a disinclination to shed human blood. Yet his courage was undoubted. None encountered with more audacity the panther and the bear, and several were the lives he had saved at the hazard of his own. A successful war expedition only was necessary to complete his claims to the highest honors. Save the bloody scalp, no ornament was lacking in his wigwam.

“Magisaunikwa,” said the Sachem, “the fire of your eyes melts not the snow around the heart of Leelinau, and it is because she looks upon your hands and sees they were never painted with the blood of an enemy.”

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"Can Leelinau be happier." asked the young hunter, "because another is made miserable? Were I to kill a warrior for her sake, would not her dreams be disturbed by the groans of his mother?"

The eyes of the Sachem flashed when he heard such language.

"Go," he said, "if thou art a dove, seek not to mate with the hawk."

But the resolution of Wampum-hair was not to be shaken by threats or reproaches, nor weakened by the seductions of love. In the long and final fast which revealed to him his guardian spirit, twelve days with unshaken fortitude, to the wonder of the tribe, had he remained without food before the vision came. He then beheld a child white as the water-lily leading a little animal unknown to the country. It was the size of the beaver, and covered all over with long white hair that curled closely to its body. Its eyes were mild and sweet, and the expression of its face gentler than anything ever seen on earth. The child laid his hand on the heart of the fainting youth, and an influence soft as the breath of the south wind streamed through his frame, and he was strengthened, and stood upon his feet and partook of food. Since then the war-song had been hateful to the ears of Wampum-hair, and he loathed the vauntings of the braves. He preached peace to his people, and endeavored to convince them of the folly of killing their fellow men. But prejudices old as the mountains were not to be removed by the exhortations or arguments of an obscure youth; and although the old men listened, and some few approved, yet the young men scoffed and burned to distinguish themselves after the manner of their ancestors. It was fortunate for the young man that opportunities had occurred to test his courage, and that he had never hesitated when others flinched. His tribe therefore ascribed his conduct to no want of bravery, but to a delusion sent by his guardian genius. Hence, though his influence was impaired, it was not entirely destroyed.

Thus things continued for some time, till one day the Sachem again addressed Wampum-hair.

"Does the heart of Magisaunikwa still beat softly, like the heart of a deer!"

"It beats like a man's," said the young hunter, "and not like that of a vile wild beast. The Indian should imitate the Good Spirit in his actions, and not destroy his brothers and sisters"

"Yes," said the Sachem, "his heart is a man's, though it is soft. Does Wampum-hair still love Leelinau?"

"The breath of Thequan is not more welcome to the wood-flower which it wakes up to life, or the song of the bird dearer to its mate, than the sight of Leelinau to Magisaunikwa."

“What would Wampum-hair do to obtain her love?”

“He would climb the sky, or dive to the bottom of the salt lake; all that the Great Spirit could ask would he do.”

“A chief cannot compel the affection of his daughter, but he can give his own consent, and the young bird listens to the voice of its parent.”

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“Let the great chief say what he would have, and the arm of Wampum-hair shall be strong to do his will. For the sake of Leelinau he would please her father.”

The Sachem paused, and gazed with pleasure on the kindling features of the young man. He was a wise chief, and desired the good of his people. In those days the panthers, driven from the north by a severe winter, infested the country in great numbers, and threatened to destroy the game, on which the Indians depended for subsistence. Although many had been killed, there still remained enough to ravage the land and do serious injury; and they had become so cunning by being frequently hunted that they almost uniformly succeeded in eluding the chase. It would be a public service, though a difficult undertaking, to exterminate the ravenous animals. He therefore said:

“Let Magisaunikwa bring me a conaus made of the scalps of panthers, and another for Leelinau, and he shall have the strong word of a chief to whisper commendations of the hunter in the ears of the maiden.”

“It is well. The words of the great chief are pleasant, and my ears drink them up as the thirsty sand the drops of rain. The feet of Wampum-hair are swift; his arrows are true, and they shall pierce the screaming panther.”

That same day, so eager was the young hunter to commence the chase, he started for those parts of the forest where the game was most likely to be found. Many were the beasts destroyed by him, so that a little child might wander in security ten days' journey, in every direction, from the lodge of the Sachem, and narrow were the escapes from death of the intrepid hunter, and yet scarcely scalps enough were obtained to make a conaus or wrapper for the sloping shoulders of Leelinau. In vain, the enamored youth extended his hunt still further, even twenty days' journey from his starting point. Only at long intervals was a beast discovered, but, finally, not one was to be found, and the youth awoke to the conviction that he had been made a dupe to the cunning of the Sachem.

After a fruitless chase he was musing one day sorrowfully over his disappointed hopes, ashamed to go back to his village, to which he had never returned without success before, when, suddenly, a man of majestic presence stood before him. His nose was like the beak of an eagle, and his eyes resembled fires in a dark night. Strange feathers, of brilliant colors, were woven into his scalp-lock; a magnificent robe of skins depended from his shoulders; and in his hand he held a long spear, tipped with a pointed stone.

“My brother is sad,” he said. “Let my brother give me the half of his grief to bear.”

Thus exhorted, Magisaunikwa disclosed the cause of his dejection to his sympathizing friend.

“Is that all?” said the stranger. “Return, and thou shalt find the conaus in thy lodge, and when thou beholdest them, remember they are the gift of Manabozho. I am Manabozho.”

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He spoke, and before the astonished hunter had time to thank him, vanished from his sight. Then the young man knew that he had conversed with the capricious Manito, and with full faith and light heart, he directed his steps homeward.

He found the two conaus in his wigwam, according to the promise of the Manito. One he presented to the chief, and the other he offered to the maiden, but she refused to accept the tribute of his devotion.

The astonishment of Aishkwagon-ai-bee, and of the whole tribe, is not to be conceived, and the fame of Wampum-hair mounted to the stars. The truthful chief spoke earnestly to his daughter, of the merits of her lover, and proposed him for her husband, but Leelinau showed the strongest aversion to the union. The haughty maiden inherited the fierce temper of her father, without his wisdom, and she looked with contempt on all not distinguished by high descent or bloody deeds, nor in her soaring pride was there one of the young men of the tribe worthy of her hand. Not that there were not youthful warriors who could point to the evidences of their prowess, and whose names were familiar to the song, but in every instance the difficult beauty had found some objection, and turned away her head. The truth is, the west wind, that entices the flowers from the ground in spring, and leads the bird to its mate, had never breathed upon the heart of Leelinau.

But the time finally came when the maiden was constrained to make a choice. Her family had become impatient of delay, and Leelinau yielded to their remonstrances. It was only in appearance, however, that she acquiesced in the wishes of her relatives. She determined to propose, as the price of her hand, some enterprise too difficult to be accomplished. She represented to her father that lightly won, was lightly prized, and that the daughter of a great chief like him, was not to be wooed like other maidens, and obtained from him, to whom her voice was sweeter than the notes of the mocking-bird, his consent to her scheme.

The conditions on which Leelinau consented to follow a husband to his lodge were soon known. Only him would she acknowledge for her lord, who should guide his canoe in safety from the head of the Falls of the Yaupaae to the little islands below. The old men shook their heads when they heard the terms, and the squaws said, her heart must be made of stone, but the young men felt warm, and thought of trying their fortunes.

The enterprise was more difficult than any Manabozho had undertaken. When the river was low, it poured almost perpendicularly down, a height of twenty feet, on rocks, thrusting sharp points into the air, then bounded in sinuous windings through rifts and basins, made by the constant beating of the water, and the attrition of stones, whirled round in the cavities, to dash over a declivity of yet other rocks, before it reached its calm welcome below. When swollen by rains the rocks were all hidden, the perpendicular

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fall disappeared, it was as if the Great Salt Lake were pouring down the side of the mountain, and from top to bottom was all one vast mass of foam, lashing the huge rock at the throat, around which the torrent turned with a sudden bend. No canoe could live on such a cataract. It must be overturned and engulfed long before reaching the bottom, or if those perils were, by any wonderful chance, escaped, inevitable destruction awaited the presumptuous adventurer, dashed against the rock at the bottom.

The lovers of Leelinau gazed at the Fall, but the more they considered the less inclination they felt to encounter the danger. In a low stage of the water the canoe would be overturned, and pierced by the sharp rocks, while mangled limbs certainly, if not death, must be the doom of the rash aspirant, and who would dare to brave the terrors of the swollen river?

The eyes of Leelinau were bright, and her smile sweet, but there were other maidens with bright eyes and sweet smiles, and less difficult to please.

But not thus felt Magisaunikwa. The absorbing passion swallowed up all considerations of prudence, and he resolved to undertake the adventure. If he perished, the Great Spirit would be pleased with his courage, and what was life without Leelinau? While thoughts like these passed through his mind, he remembered Manabozho. He had assisted him once, although in vain, why not a second time? He sought once more the recesses of the forest, where he had met him, and called upon his name, but no answer was returned. He kindled a fire and threw upon it the fragrant tobacco, and called again, "Ho! Manabozho!" and the majestic figure stood before him, but there was anger on his brow. To his stern demand the hunter made known what had happened, and begged his assistance. But the Manito showed no disposition to grant it. In fact, the task was beyond his powers, but he was unwilling that it should be known.

"Fool!" he said, "is a scornful squaw worth the hazard of death and the shame that attends defeat? Seek thy lodge and blow away these thoughts as the wind disperses the winged seeds of the stinging nettle." It was evident Manabozho had never been in love, for then he would not have thrown away his advice. He stayed not for a reply, but with a gesture of disdain disappeared.

Wampum-hair sought his wigwam, melancholy but not discouraged. It was, indeed, impossible to follow the counsel of the friendly Manito. Sleeping or waking the image of Leelinau swam before his eyes, and sometimes smiled as if to incite him to the enterprise.

He resolved to undertake a solemn fast. He therefore sought a retired place and built a pointed lodge.



Six days and nights he fasted, lying on the ground, and on the seventh day, at the rising of the sun, his guardian spirit, the child with the white beaver, slowly descended from the sky. His face was kind and gentle as at the first, but not as before did he lay his hand on the heart of Wampum-hair. Now he pressed his palm upon the forehead of the hunter, and strange thoughts and determinations, like rising storms, passed through his mind: slowly, then, up through the pointed roof, which opened for his passage, mounted the child till he disappeared in the blue field.

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Magisaunikwa arose from the ground, and a frown was upon his brow. He ate and was refreshed, and returned to his lodge.

It was the last month of snows, and great rains had fallen, and the torrents were shouting from the mountains, and the Yaupaae pouring out a mightier flood than had ever been seen rushing through between the cleft rocks. It was then Wampum-hair announced his intention to undertake the adventure of the Falls, and invited the tribe to gather together to witness its performance. It is said that the heart of Leelinau, touched by so much constancy, was inclined to relent and excuse her lover the terrible ordeal, but this is probably the dream of some soft-hearted girl, and only indicates what she would have done in like circumstances.

On the day selected, the tribe was collected at the outpouring of the waters, to witness the achievement of Magisaunikwa, and lament his death. In great numbers they lined the banks of the stream, seeking those positions from which the best views could be obtained, while his friends watched at the foot of the cataract in canoes to rescue the body should it be thrown up by the raging water. Leelinau, too, was there, unyielding, yet proud of a devotion unheard of in the annals of her nation. She looked haughtily as on a spectacle devised in her honor, of which she should be celebrated as the heroine, long after her feet should have travelled the path that leads to the Spirit-land. No regret for the destruction to which her lover was doomed appeared to touch her heart, nor did pity moisten her eyes as she looked upon the preparations for the sacrifice.

At length Magisaunikwa appeared, and never before had he attracted such admiration. He moved like one returning from victory. No war paint, such as warriors are accustomed to use when upon the war-path in order to strike terror into the foe, or when commencing an enterprise of great peril, stained his person. His dress was the conaus of panther scalps, and he walked amid a company of young men of his own age, above the tallest of whom he rose by a head.

Before commencing the adventure, he performed the customary ceremony to propitiate the Great Spirit, pointing to the heavens, the earth, and the four winds, and invoking with a loud voice the Master of Life to smile upon the undertaking. This being done, he cast his eyes over the assembled crowd, till they fell upon Leelinau. Long he gazed, as if he desired to carry her image with him to the Spirit-land, nor after that last look did he allow his glance to rest upon another human being. Then, at a little distance above the head of the cataract, he entered the canoe and grasped the paddle.

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The motion of the frail bark was at first gentle, but only for a short time: every moment its speed became accelerated, until, even before it reached the plunge, it seemed to fly like the swallow. Calmly guiding its fearful course sat the young man, his eyes fixed upon the narrow opening between the rocks. And now the canoe is at the brink of the Falls—it leaps like the salmon when he journeys up the stream—it is gone!—the raging waters have devoured it—no, I see it again—the arm of Magisaunikwa is strong, and the paddle unbroken. Help, Manito! he is dashed against the rock at the throat—no, the canoe is whirled round and darts away, and I behold it gliding with the youth over the quiet water. The Great Spirit hath protected him.

A shout, rivalling the roar of the Falls, went up from the assembled multitude, and they rose with songs such as welcome returned warriors to greet the successful hero.

But Wampum-hair received their congratulations and their praises with indifference. With eyes fixed on the ground, he suffered himself to be borne in triumph to the spot, where, on a platform of rock, stood the beautiful Leelinau. What were the thoughts that passed through her mind? Was she proud of being the object of a love so true and daring, or did she lament the necessity of accepting a lord? Wampum-hair approached, and before his calm, sorrowing eyes, her own sunk to the ground. Searching was his look, as if to descry the secrets of her soul, and at last he spoke.

“Leelinau,” he said, “the Great Spirit created thee loveliest among the daughters of women; wherefore gave he thee not a heart?”

“Leelinau, Wampum-hair will sigh no more for thee. Henceforth, thou art to him only a flower or a painted bird.

“Leelinau, the waters of the Yaupaae have extinguished the fire that burned here,” and he laid his hand on his heart. He turned upon his heel and left the assemblage.

Astonishment at the address of Magisaunikwa at first held all mute, but presently a cry for revenge arose among the kinsmen of the slighted maiden. But the commanding voice of the wise Aishkwagon-ai-bee stilled the tumult.

“The blood of the mighty Ojeeg,” he said, “cannot mingle with water. The Great Spirit hath taken this way to release Leelinau from a promise which He is displeased that she made.”

Whatever might have been the vindictive feelings of the relations of Leelinau, their resentment was never visited on the head of the young hunter. Once, it is said, two brothers of the rejected maiden lay in ambush to take his life; but as he passed unconsciously near them, and the fatal arrows were drawn to the head against his bosom, Manabozho appeared and forbade the deed.

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Magisaunikwa continued to cherish through a long life his love of peace. He obtained a great influence over his own and the neighboring tribes, and succeeded in spreading widely his pacific views. At the time of his death, which happened at an advanced age, the calumet of peace was everywhere smoked among the northern tribes, and their numbers had greatly increased. Wampum-hair was universally honored, and regarded as the cause of this felicity. But no wife ever cooked the venison in his lodge. With the dream of his youth vanished all predilection for the softer sex. He had loved and been disappointed. Where he expected to meet gentleness he had found pride. He looked for the yielding willow, and behold the inflexible oak!

But in Leelinau also a revolution had been effected. Her whole being was transformed. What devoted love that anticipated every wish was incapable of accomplishing, indifference achieved. Her soul from that moment flew on the wings of desire after Magisaunikwa. At first she thought his conduct caused by some temporary pique or resentment, and trusted to the power of her fascinations to restore him to her nets. As time, however, wore on, her hopes became fainter, until the terrible conviction settled like a night upon her soul, that she had trifled with the noblest heart of her nation and driven it for ever away. Then it was she felt the desolation no language can express. A settled melancholy took possession of her. Her eyes lost their fire, her lip its smile, and her voice the song. She would wander alone, far away into the recesses of the forest, speaking to herself in low tones, and weeping at the remembrance of happy days. Her health declined rapidly until she became too weak to leave without assistance the couch, where day after day reclined her fading form. One soft summer morning she begged two of her mates to support her to the rock, whence she beheld the exploit of Wampum-hair. She sank down, and removing, with her wasted hand, the long hair that had fallen over her eyes, gazed sadly on the foaming river. With a wistful look she followed the course of the cataract from top to bottom, probably recalling at the moment her lover's danger for her sake and her own repented scorn, then heavily sighed, and leaning her head on the bosom of one of her companions, expired.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Wide o'er the brim with many a torrent swelled,
And the mixed ruin of its banks o'erspread,
At last the roused up river pours along:
Resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes
From the rude mountain and the mossy wild.

THOMSON'S SEASONS.

The company expressed their acknowledgments to Bernard for the entertainment he had furnished, although they all seemed to consider the conduct of Wampum-hair inconsistent with his amiable character, and to pity the fate of Leelinau.

“The writer must have had some suspicion of the inconsistency himself,” said Bernard, “to judge from his attempt to obviate the difficulty, by ascribing a magic change in his hero, to the application of the child’s hand to the head, instead of as before, to the heart. This part of the tale is slightly and unskillfully developed.”

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"I cannot agree with you," said Faith, "and think you do your friend injustice. The idea is, that the guardian genius exercised a controlling influence over the destiny of the young man; and I see no reason why if we concede the power to the genius to soften his nature, we may not grant also the ability to harden it."

"Especially," observed Pownal, "as the object of the protecting spirit would have been frustrated, had the lovers been united."

All looked inquiringly towards him for an explanation.

"I mean," said he, "that with such a fierce little squaw for a wife, the gentleman with the unpronounceable name, would not have continued a man of peace long. There certainly would have been war within the wigwam, however dense the puffs of smoke from the calumet of peace outside."

All laughed at the sally, but Anne intimated that she would have preferred a different termination.

"At least," said Mr. Armstrong, who had listened in silence to the criticisms of the young people, "it teaches a profitable lesson to you girls."

"What is that, Mr. Armstrong?" inquired Anne.

"That young ladies should know their own minds."

"A most unreasonable expectation!" exclaimed Anne. "We should become as stupid—as stupid as reasonable people."

"Besides," said Faith, coming to her friend's assistance, "the story was intended for the benefit of Indian girls, and not for those who read Shakspeare."

"I suspect," said Bernard, "that the writer was better acquainted with the Shakspearean ladies, than with Indian girls."

"Why do you think so?" asked Faith.

"Do you not observe," answered Bernard, "that he confines himself to generalities? Not a word does he venture to say about the toilette of the beauty. A description of the dress of the heroine, has always been considered indispensable in every tale."

"Poh, William!" said Anne, "what a savage critic you are. But, probably, there was so little to describe, the author did not think it worth his while."

“And,” said Pownal, “is anything admissible in a picture which distracts the attention and withdraws it from the principal figure? Good taste excludes ear-rings and gold chains from portraits.”

“Well,” said Bernard, “I dare say you are right. It may be, too, that the dress was indescribable.”

“Who is this Manabozho, who comes in so opportunely, yet, without effecting much after all?” inquired Anne. “I am charmed with his appearance; particularly, his big eyes.”

“He is a sort of Indian Hercules,” replied Bernard, “who plays a conspicuous part in many legends. He is a compound of wisdom and folly, of benevolence and mischief, of strength and weakness, partly Manitou and partly man, and is privileged to do anything, however absurd and impossible, at one moment, while, at the next, he may be shorn of his power, so as to be incapable of taking care of himself.”

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"A very convenient person indeed," said Anne.

"Loosing the knot of a difficulty by the intervention of such a Power, shows but little ingenuity, I confess," said Bernard.

"There is classical authority for it, though," said Mr. Armstrong. "Homer, himself, condescends to introduce a God, when he cannot extricate himself from embarrassment without his help."

"Aye," said Bernard, "but the rule of Horace must not be forgotten, nec Deus," &c.

"True," said Mr. Armstrong; "but how would you have accomplished the feat, like one of the labors of Hercules, without some such means?"

"I do not pretend to be able to do it," answered Bernard, modestly; "but, doubtless, one possessed of more imagination could have accomplished it."

"You are but a cold advocate for your friend," said Faith. "You do not allow him half the merit he deserves"

"He would not complain were he to hear me," said Bernard. "No one can be more sensible than himself, of the defects of his work."

"And I say," said Anne, "that I like his story exceedingly; only, he knows nothing about our sex. It may be all very well for a man to praise that hard-hearted Wampum-head, and make poor Leelinau pine away for his precious sake, but, I do not believe she was so silly as to care much about him."

"If the truth were known," said Pownal, "I have no doubt that the girl rejected him, because she liked some one else better."

"And her ungallant beau," said Anne, "made up the story, to cover his confusion."

"I am satisfied with it as it is," said Faith. "We pity and love Leelinau, now; her haughtiness and pride are forgotten in her misfortunes, and we remember her as one faithful unto death."

"Your tale reminds me," said Pownal, addressing Bernard, "that there is a tremendous freshet in the Wootupput, and that the waters are increasing. Suppose, if the ladies consent, we make up a party, to view it, to-morrow?"

The proposition was received with approbation by all, and it was agreed, that they would meet at the house of Mr. Armstrong, as the starting-point, on the afternoon of the next day. The evening being now considerably advanced, Faith's friends took their leave.

The nine o'clock bell was ringing, as the young people passed through the quiet streets. The custom of ringing a bell, at that hour, is one which has fallen into desuetude, although, once, almost universal in New England, and may be said to bear some relation to the vesper-bell, in Roman Catholic countries. Its avowed object, indeed, was not, as in the case of the latter, to call the people to prayers, but, its effect, perhaps, was the same; for, it marked the hour at which the population of the village were in the habit of retiring to rest; and, in those days of simple faith, many were the families whose members united together, before seeking their pillows, to return thanks for the blessings of the day, and ask for protection during the defenceless hours of the night. Luxury and dissipation have since crept in, and parties assemble, now, at an hour when they formerly broke up. We call ourselves more refined, but, it may admit of a doubt, whether all our show and parade are not purchased at too dear a rate, at the price of substantial comfort and happiness.

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The shore was lined with spectators, when the little party approached the scene of the freshet. We do not know that we have succeeded in conveying a clear idea of the river we have attempted to describe. It may be recollected, that it was spoken of as one of the tributaries of the Severn, coming in from the East, and sweeping round that side of the town. The banks, on the side opposite, were high and precipitous; but, on the hither side—with the exception of the narrow passage through which the river poured itself into the Severn, and for a short distance above—the ground rose gently from the stream before it reached the foot of the hill, interposing a piece of comparatively level land. The road that ran on this flat spot, and connected the eastern portion (which, from the extempore character of its buildings, as well as from other causes we do not choose to mention, was called Hasty-Pudding), with the rest of the town, was, usually, in very high floods, overflowed. Such was the fact in the present instance, and boats were busily engaged in transporting persons over the submerged road. As you stood near the mouth of the river, and looked up the current, a scene of considerable interest, and, even grandeur, presented itself. At that time, the innumerable dams higher up the stream, that have been since constructed, had not been built, nor had the rocks, at the throat, been blasted to make a wider egress. The ice, which then rushed down, as it were by agreement, simultaneously and in huge blocks—but, now-a-days, at intervals, and broken up by falling over the dams—unable to escape in the eager rivalry of the cakes to pass each other, was jammed in the throat, and piled up high in the air, looking like ice-bergs that had floated from the North Pole. You saw the stream, at all times, rapid, and now, swollen vastly beyond its ordinary proportions, rushing with ten-fold force, and hurrying, in its channel, with hoarse sounds, the ice-cakes, which, in the emulous race, grated against, and, sometimes, mutually destroyed one another, to drive some under the icy barrier, thence to glide away to the ocean, and to toss others high above the foaming torrent on the collected masses, more gradually to find their way to the same bourne. Looking away from the channel, one saw the cakes caught in the eddies, whirled up against the banks, and, in some instances, forced into smoother and shoaler water, where they grounded, or were floated into little creeks and bays formed by the irregularities of the shores. These quiet places were, of course, on the side nearest the town, the opposite bank being too abrupt and the water too deep, for there was the channel, and there the water tore along with the greatest violence.

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In one of these placid bays a party of school-boys were amusing themselves with getting upon the loose blocks and pushing them about like boats. The amusement appeared to be unattended with danger, the place being so far from the current, and the water but two or three feet deep. The children, therefore, were but little noticed, especially as they were at quite a distance from where the multitude of spectators was assembled, being considerably higher up and near the flat-land, bearing the undignified name which only historical accuracy compels us to introduce. After a time a cake, on which one of the boys was standing, began slowly to slip away from the shore. So gradually was this done that it was unobserved by the boys themselves until it had quite separated itself from the neighborhood of the other cakes, so that no assistance could be rendered, when one of his companions cried out to the little fellow upon it, to push for the shore. This he had already been attempting to do, but in spite of all exertions he was unable to come nearer. On the contrary, it was evident he was receding. The water had now become so deep that his pole could no longer reach the bottom. The current had drawn in the cake, and was sweeping it with its precious freight to destruction. The children set up a cry of alarm, which was heard by the spectators below, and first attracted their attention.

A thrill of horror ran through the crowd. Men drew in their breath hard, and women shrieked, unable to turn away their eyes, fastened by a terrible fascination on the peril. Horrid apprehensions invaded the mind of many a parent. The doomed boy might be his own son. Despairing glances were cast around in every direction for help. In vain: none could be given. There was time for nothing: with every second the child was swept more rapidly to destruction.

Meanwhile the brave little fellow, planted firmly on the centre of the cake, was balancing himself with the pole, and intrepidly confronting the danger he could not avoid. Not a cry escaped, nor did his self-possession desert him. As the vexed and whirling water raised up the one side or the other of his frail bark, he would incline his body in this or that direction to preserve the equilibrium, now standing upright and now cowering close to the surface of the uncertain footing. And now the block approached the throat, where the torrent ran the swiftest and was most turbulent. The child seemed to have escaped thus far by miracle, but now it appeared impossible he would be able to maintain his place. His head must become dizzy, his courage fail in the awful confusion of so many threatening dangers; the tormented waves must upset the block, or another must strike against it and cast the boy into the water. And now the cake has reached the icy barrier stretched across the stream. It strikes; it is sucked in below and disappears.

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The spell-bound spectators, their eyes fastened upon the danger of the boy, had not noticed the figure of a man, who, descending the opposite bank, and clambering at considerable risk over the masses of heaped up ice, stood waiting for the approach of the child. So truly had he judged the sweep of the current, that he had planted himself upon the edge of the ice at the precise spot where the block struck. Reaching out his arm at the moment when it slipped beneath, he seized the boy by the collar of his jacket and drew him to the place on which he stood. As soon as the crowd caught sight of the man, they saw that it was Holden.

The position of the two was still one of danger. A false step, the separating of the ice, the yielding of a cake might precipitate both into the torrent. But the heart of the man had never felt the emotion of fear. He cast his eyes deliberately round, and with a prompt decision took his course. Raising the rescued child in his arms, he started in the direction of the wharf, built just below the narrow opening. Springing with great agility and strength over the blocks, selecting for footing those cakes which seemed thickest and fastened in firmest, he made his way over the barrier and bounded safely on the land. The spectators, seeing the direction he was taking, had run down, many of them, to the place, and were waiting to receive them.

"I vow," said our friend, Tom Gladding, who was among the first to welcome Holden, "if it ain't little Jim Davenport. Why, Jim, you come pretty nigh gitting a ducking."

"Yes," said the boy, carelessly, as if he had been engaged in a frolic, "I wet my shoes some, and the lower part of my trousers."

Here a man came hastening through the crowd, for whom all made way. It was Mr. Davenport. He had been, like the rest, a witness of the danger and the rescue, but knew not that it was his own son who had made the perilous passage. But a report, running as if by magic from one to another, had reached his ears, and he was now hurrying to discover its truth. It was, indeed, his son, and Holden was his preserver. He advanced to the boy, and examined him from head to foot, as if to assure himself of his safety before he spoke a word. Shaking with agitation, he then turned to Holden, and grasping his hand, wrung it convulsively.

"May God forget me, Mr. Holden," he stammered, in a broken voice, "if I forget this service," and taking the boy by the hand he led him home.

"Well," said Gladding, who had been looking on, "Jim don't mind it much, but I guess it'll do old Davenport good."

Holden, according to his custom, seemed indisposed to enter into conversation with those around him, or to accept the civilities tendered, and started off as soon as possible, upon his solitary way. As he emerged from the crowd, he caught sight of the advancing figures of Faith and of her companions, who had more leisurely approached,

and stopped to greet them. From them he seemed to receive with pleasure the congratulations showered upon him, though he disclaimed all merit for himself.

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"Be the praise," he said, devoutly, "given to Him who, according to the purpose of his own will, maketh and destroyeth. The insensible block of ice and I were only instruments in His hands." He turned away, and walking rapidly was soon out of sight.

Constable Basset, who was present, had just sense enough to understand that this was no occasion for his interference, and although he followed the retreating figure of the Solitary with longing eyes, while his hands clutched at the writ, ventured on no attempt to exercise his authority.

CHAPTER XXIV.

We talk of love and pleasure—but 'tis all
A tale of falsehood. Life's made up of gloom:
The fairest scenes are clad in ruin's pall,
The loveliest pathway leads but to the tomb.

PERCIVAL.

After the event just recorded, it may well be supposed that all further legal proceedings against the Recluse were abandoned. They had been commenced only to gratify the wounded pride of Davenport, and since the preservation of the life of his son by Holden, the community would have cried shame on him had the matter been pursued further. But no such public sentiment was needed in order to induce Davenport to give the justice and Basset a hint to do nothing more. He was really grateful, though feeling no compunction for his conduct, easily persuading himself that it had been prompted by a love of justice, and a desire to protect the interests of religion.

Holden could, therefore, without fear of the consequences, resume openly his usual visits to the village. Of late they had been more than usually frequent at the house of Mr. Armstrong, by whom he seemed almost as much attracted as by Faith. With the former the conversation usually turned upon points of theology that every day appeared to assume with Armstrong deeper importance, with the latter on the effects produced by the teachings of Holden among the Indians. For since his exile at the Patmos of the Indian village, a new subject had engaged the attention of the Solitary, to which with characteristic energy he had devoted the powers of his soul—the conversion of the poor wretches who had kindly harbored and protected him. To his sanguine expectations, expressed in the impassioned language of Scripture he loved to use, the enthusiastic girl would listen, with the warmest interest. Accustomed to assign every event to an overruling Providence, she thought she now saw clearly the hand of a superior Power in the occurrences which had compelled Holden, in the first instance, to take up his temporary residence among them. Temporary residence, we say, because the Solitary had since returned to his hut, which was at the distance of only two or three miles from the cabins of his former protectors. Solitude he found was necessary in order to enable

him the better to perform his new duties, and the distance was too slight to interpose any serious obstacle, or even inconvenience.

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Such was the state of things, when some weeks after the freshet, Mr. Armstrong acquainted his daughter, at the breakfast-table, with his intention to visit Holden that day.

"It is a long time," he said (four days had elapsed), "since we have seen him, and there are things upon my mind I would gladly speak about."

A few months before, such a declaration from her father would have surprised Faith, but now she regarded it as quite natural. The intimacy between the family and the Recluse had become such, and the commanding character of the latter had acquired so great an influence over both its members, that neither of them saw anything strange in the deference paid him. She, therefore, acquiesced with some common-place remark in the proposal, begging to be remembered to the old man.

Accordingly, after breakfast, Mr. Armstrong walked down to the wharf, thinking it probable he might find some boat going down the river, by which he might be left at the island, intending, should he not find the Solitary there, to go to the Indian settlement. Nor was he disappointed. He found a fisherman making preparations to cast off his boat, who cheerfully consented to convey him to the place of destination. Mr. Armstrong jumped into the boat, and, the wind favoring, they rapidly scudded down the stream.

The fisherman, a fine, frank fellow, of some thirty years of age, to whom Mr. Armstrong was well known, at least, by reputation, although the recognition was not mutual, endeavored to engage him in conversation, but without effect. Although answering politely any questions, he made no remarks in return, and the conversation soon languished for want of material to support it. Poor Josiah Sill, finding his social qualities not appreciated, soon himself relapsed into silence, wondering what could induce his companion to seek Holden, and connecting his reserve in some mysterious way with the visit. Finding the silence not altogether agreeable, Josiah finally burst out with "Yankee Doodle," which he amused himself with whistling together with some other favorite tunes, until they reached the island. As they approached they caught a glimpse of Holden entering the house, and Josiah landed his passenger, promising to call for him on his return in the afternoon, though Armstrong expressed a doubt whether he should remain so long.

"If you ain't here, there won't be no harm done," said the good-natured fellow, "and it won't take a minute to stop."

Mr. Armstrong having thanked him and wished him success, advanced to the cabin.

He found Holden in the outer room, engaged in his usual employment, when at home, of weaving baskets. A large quantity of prepared saplings, split very thin, lay scattered around him, while bundles of walnut poles, the crude material of his manufacture, were piled up in the corners ready for use. With a quick and dexterous hand the Solitary

wove in the ribbon-like pieces, showing great familiarity with the work. Without desisting from his labor, he expressed pleasure at the visit of his friend, and requested him to be seated.

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"I am honored," he said, "this day. To what shall I ascribe the notice of the wealthy Mr. Armstrong?"

There was a slight tone of irony in the words. It probably was observed by Mr. Armstrong, for, with some feeling, he replied:

"Speak to me not so coldly. And yet," he added, dejectedly, "I deserve that all the world should reject me. Neither the happy nor the miserable feel sympathy for me."

The wayward humor of Holden was evidently softened by the sadness of the sweet, low voice.

"Each heart," he said, "knoweth best its own bitterness, and I repent me of my rudeness. But when I saw thee here I could not but remember that I had dwelt long years in this dwelling, and"—he hesitated, and Armstrong finished the sentence:

"And you would say this is the first time I have darkened your door. Well may it be called darkness where my unhappy shadow falls. But forgive me: it is only lately that I learned to know you."

"Thou errest, James Armstrong," returned Holden, "if thou thinkest thou knowest me, or will ever know me. Yet, after all," he added in a gentler manner, "thou art right. Yes, know me as a fellow sinner, journeying with thee to eternity."

"As my friend," replied Armstrong; "as the guide whose deeper experience in heavenly things shall teach me the way to heaven, unless by some inscrutable decree I am excluded."

"How has my heart been open, how has it longed for years to meet thine! How gladly would I have poured out my grief into thy bosom as into that of a brother!" cried Holden, his voice choked with emotion.

The countenance of Mr. Armstrong betrayed astonishment. "How is this?" he said. "I never knew it. You have always been to me as a common acquaintance."

A shade fell on the face of Holden. He misunderstood the meaning of the other. He supposed the phrase applicable to the feelings of Armstrong towards himself, and not as descriptive of his own conduct to Armstrong. "For the sake of the little Faith," he said coldly, "who is now a lovely woman, have I highly regarded thee."

"It is even so," said Armstrong, in a melancholy tone. "There are none left to love me for my own sake. Yet why should I quarrel with my own daughter? Let me rather be grateful that she has been the means of attracting one being towards me. How can I show my friendship? How can I make you my friend?"

"I *am* thy friend," cried Holden, grasping his hand with another revulsion of feeling. "Put me to any proof. I will not fail."

"If money could avail with a man like you," continued Armstrong, "it should not be wanting. If ease or luxury could tempt—but you have trampled them under foot, and what are they to one whose conversation is in heaven?"

Holden, while he was speaking, had risen from his seat and strode twice or thrice across the room. When Armstrong had finished speaking he again approached him.

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"It is not for naught," he exclaimed, "that the Lord hath conducted thee this day unto me. Speak what he shall put into thy mouth to say."

"I would have your confidence," said Armstrong. "As the sick beast or the hurt bird knows by an infallible instinct what herb or plant will best promote its cure, so it seems to me does Providence direct me to you. Repulse me not, but be my kind physician."

"How can the physician prescribe, if he knoweth not the complaint."

"You shall know if you have patience to listen. But I must go back years to make myself intelligible."

"Speak, my brother," said Holden, gently, "not a word shall fall in vain."

"Then listen," said Armstrong, "and learn what sorrows the outward shows of prosperity may gild."

Holden resumed his seat, and Armstrong began his relation.

"My parents," he said, "had but two children, myself and my brother, who was younger by two years. The tenderest affection existed between us, and we were never separated until I went to college, where, after a couple of years, I was joined by him, and where we remained together until the close of my collegiate course. I then returned home, in order to take my place in the mercantile business, in which our father was engaged. My brother George was destined for one of the professions. During the last year of his stay at college, his letters to me were full of the praises of a young lady whose acquaintance he had made, and in vacations he was never weary of talking of her beauty and amiable qualities. I was present when he took his degree, and at a party, given during my stay, in the town, he introduced me to her. Alas! that introduction was the cause of the happiness and the wretchedness of my life. It found me a wife, and lost me a brother. I cannot describe the impression which the first sight of Frances made upon me. Nor did she seem averse to my attentions. I offered myself, and was accepted."

"And didst thou nothing to alienate her affections from thy brother?" inquired Holden, in a hoarse voice.

"She never regarded him with more than a passing liking," returned Armstrong, "nor do I believe she had an idea of the fervor of his affection. God be my witness, I never spoke a word in his disparagement. We were married, and shortly after George began to exhibit indications of insanity. By the advice of physicians he was taken to an asylum for the insane, where it was hoped, under proper treatment, his reason might be restored. May God pardon me, who am the cause of the horrid tragedy, but, by some negligence of his keeper, he was permitted to escape—his body was found, after some

days, in a neighboring pond.” Here Armstrong paused and covered his face with both hands.

“The body was recognized as thy brother’s?” inquired Holden.

“It had been in the water too long to be perfectly recognized, but the height, and age, and color of the hair, and what there was left to make it distinguishable, were sufficient to identify it as George’s.”

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"There is no certainty then. Thy brother may be yet alive."

"There can be no doubt of his death. Thirty years have elapsed, and were he in existence he must have been heard of. Twelve years afterwards my Frances died, leaving me two children, a son and infant daughter. God saw fit, in his providence, to take my boy, but left me Faith, to lay my grey hairs in the grave. It will not be long before she will do me that service."

Mr. Armstrong ceased speaking, and silence succeeded, which was at last broken by the Solitary. He bent his brows with a keen, searching glance upon his guest, and said:

"Thou wert false to thy brother."

"Yes, and his blood cries against me. Whither shall I turn to hide my guilt?"

"Thou dost repent, then, of thy treachery?" inquired Holden, who seemed determined to probe the wound to the bottom.

"Alas! restore to me the morning of life; place me in the same circumstances, and I should fall again. I should be irresistibly attracted by a heart that seemed made for mine."

"In *her* arms thou didst forget the brother, whom thy cruelty had doomed to the maniac's cell and chain?" said Holden.

"Never! his image is graven on my heart. I have never ceased to think of him."

"Thou wouldst know him should he stand before thee?"

"Know him! aye, amidst ten thousand. No years could make such changes as to hide him from me. But he is in his grave, while his murderer lives."

"Thou didst find compensation for lamentation over the dead, in the caresses of the living?"

"True, too true. While Frances lived, she was my heaven. It was necessary that this idol should be torn from me. My son, too. Oh, James, my son! my son!"

Holden, during the conversation, had been unable to keep his seat, but with the restlessness of his nature had been walking across the room, stopping occasionally before Armstrong. The last expression of feeling evidently affected him. The rapidity of his steps diminished; his motions became less abrupt; and presently he laid his hand upon the shoulder of Mr. Armstrong.

“Thy tale,” he said, “is one of sorrow and suffering. Thou didst violate thy duty, and art punished. No wrong shall escape the avenger. As it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.’ But it is also written, ‘He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.’ Thou art after all but an instrument in the hand of One mighty to do. Even out of crime He works out the purposes of his will. Thou knowest not from what sin and sorrow an early death may be the refuge. Commit thyself to the hands of the Lord, nor grieve as one without hope. Thy brother liveth, and thou shalt yet behold him.”

“I know he lives, and at the Judgment shall I behold him,” said Armstrong, shuddering, “to upbraid me with his murder.”

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“Not to upbraid, but to forgive, and to imprint upon thy brow the seal of reconciliation, as I now, by this token, vow to thee an everlasting love.” So saying, Holden bent down, and his lips touched the forehead of Armstrong.

We do not know that we ought to be surprised at anything in the conduct of this extraordinary man. The principles by which he regulated himself, if he had any that were fixed and determinate, and was not impelled to his actions by the impulse of the moment, were so different from those of other men, that it is difficult to reduce them to the same standard, or, indeed, to assign them to any standard. Be it as it may, so accustomed was Mr. Armstrong to his ways, that so singular a thing did not impress him as strange. He only looked up with eyes dimmed with tears, and, in broken accents, thanked the Solitary.

The rest of the time spent by Armstrong on the island, was passed in conversation of very much the same description. It would seem from his self-reproaches and confessions, that during the lives of his wife and son, the melancholy death of his brother had made no great impression upon him. Happy in a woman he adored, and who returned his affection; with a blooming family around him; immersed in thoughts of business; and in the enjoyment of a large fortune, there seemed nothing wanting to complete his felicity. He remembered, too, that there had been an instance of insanity in his family, some years before the birth of himself, which had terminated fatally, the cause of which could not be traced, and felt disposed, therefore, with the natural tendency to self-exculpation of the happy, to find the reason for the tragical end of his brother in hereditary infirmity, rather than attach any serious blame to himself for securing the affections of a lady, whom he was assured had never loved another. But when after a few years of unclouded bliss, first his wife, and then his son, was taken away, all things assumed an altered aspect. He found himself the last male of his family, his name about to become extinct and forgotten, with only one other being in the world in whose veins ran his blood, and for whose life his paternal solicitude almost daily trembled. His mind brooded day by day more and more over his misfortunes, which gradually began to wear the form of judgments, the object and result of which must be to erase his hated name from the earth. As Faith grew up, his anxieties on her account diminished, but that only left him the wider scope to dwell upon wild imaginations and make himself more the subject of his thoughts. Of a grave and reflective cast of mind, he had even from his early years respected the duties of religion, and now he turned to it for consolation. But the very sources whence he should have derived comfort and peace were fountains of disquiet. His diseased mind seemed incapable of appropriating to itself the gentle promises of pardon and acceptance, but trembled at the denunciations of punishment.

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The universal Father came not to him with open arms, as to welcome a returned prodigal, but frowned with the severity of a Judge about to pronounce sentence. Whithersoever the unhappy man turned, he saw no ray of light to gild the darkness, and he himself sometimes feared lest reason should desert her throne. But his friends felt no apprehensions of the kind. In their presence, though grave, he was always reasonable and on his guard—for he shrunk with the sensitiveness of a delicate mind from exposing its wounds—nor with the exception of the minister, and now Holden, was there one who suspected his condition, and they probably did not realize it fully. These remarks may serve to abate, if not to remove entirely the reader's surprise, that one with the education, and in the position of Armstrong, should have sought counsel from Holden. But it may be, that the condition of mind to which Armstrong was approaching—similar in some respects to that of the Solitary—established a sort of relation or elective affinity between them, operating like the influence of the magnet, to attract one to the other. We have seen how fond Holden was of visiting the house of Mr. Armstrong. Could it be that this mysterious influence, all unconsciously to himself, led his steps thither, and that afar off he dimly espied the talisman that should establish a full community between them? Or was not this community already established? How else account for the visit of Armstrong, the strange conversation, the confessions, concluded by an act, tender, and perhaps graceful, but only such as was to be expected from a deranged man?

Josiah Sill, true to his promise, arrived while the two men were still talking, heedless of the passage of time. Mr. Armstrong stepped on board, and the boat resumed her course. The wind was drawing down the river, remaining nearly in the same point from which it had blown in the morning, and they were obliged in consequence to pursue a zig-zag course, tackling from one shore to the other. It blew fresh, and the little vessel, gunwale down, with the water sometimes pouring over the lee side, flew like a bird. They had run two-thirds of the distance, nor was the sun yet set, when the wind, which, till then, had blown pretty steadily, began to intermit and come in flaws or puffs, now driving the small craft with great rapidity, and now urging her gently on. At an instant, when she was about to tack, having hardly head-way sufficient to prevent missing stays, a sudden and violent puff, from a gorge in the hills, struck the sail. Had it come at any other moment, the catastrophe that followed could not have happened; but the boat lying almost motionless, received all the force of the wind, and instantly upset. Mr. Armstrong, unable to swim, and encumbered by his clothes, sank, but was caught by the strong arm of Sill, and pulled upon the keel. In a state of great discomfort, though of safety, there both remained for some time, waiting for assistance.

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None arriving, Sill, at last, became impatient, and as he was an excellent swimmer, proposed to throw off the heavier part of his clothing, and swim to land to hasten succor. As Mr. Armstrong made no objection, and the danger appeared less than what was likely to proceed from a long continuance on the boat, exposed in their wet clothes to the wind, the shore being but a few rods distant, Sill, after divesting himself of a part of his clothes, plunged into the water, and with vigorous strokes swam towards the land. He had proceeded but a short way when, either in consequence of becoming benumbed by the coldness of the water after being chilled by exposure to the wind, or from being seized by cramp, or from what other cause, the unfortunate man suddenly turning his face towards Armstrong, and uttering a cry of alarm, sank and disappeared from sight. Once more only was anything seen of him, when brought near the surface, perhaps, by an eddy in the stream, a hand emerged, and for an instant the fingers quivered in the air.

With a sort of desperate horror Armstrong gazed upon the appalling spectacle. The expression of anguish on the face of the drowning fisherman, as his distended eyes met his own, froze his blood, and left a memory behind to last to his dying day. Fascinated, his eyes dwelt on the spot where the fisherman sunk, and for a moment a terrible temptation was whispered into his ear quietly, to drop into the river, and accompany the spirit of the drowned man. But it lasted only a moment, and the instinct of life resumed its power.

It was not long ere his condition was discovered from the shore, when chilled and shivering he was taken off by a boat that put out to his rescue. On arriving at his home, Faith, excessively alarmed, immediately dispatched the faithful Felix for the doctor.

CHAPTER XXV.

How sweetly could I lay my head
Within the cold grave's silent breast,
Where sorrow's tears no more are shed,
No more the ills of life molest.

MOORE

Mr. Armstrong escaped, to all appearance, with a cold, from the accident. But although this seemed the only effect produced upon his bodily health, his mind had suffered a severe shock which was not equally obvious. Fancies, each gloomier than the preceding, took, henceforth, more and more possession of his imagination. He seemed the harbinger of misfortune to all connected with him. Frequently rose up the image of his dead brother, mingling with his dreams and obtruding itself even into his waking

thoughts, at one time dripping with water as when taken from the pond—ghastly pale—livid—with scarcely distinguishable lineaments; at another wrapped in the dress of the tomb, and pointing with bony finger to a new-made grave. Then his wife would appear, holding their little son by the hand, and standing on the opposite side of a river that rolled between,

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beckoning him to cross. But whenever he made the attempt the waves would close over his head, and he awoke with a sense of suffocation and gasping for breath. At another time the scene of the drowning fisherman would be repeated, but with innumerable variations. Sometimes, in some way or other, Holden would be mixed up with it, sometimes Faith, and sometimes, most horrible of all, he himself would be desperately struggling to hold Sill under water, till finally the yielding body sunk, sunk into depths no eye could fathom. But never till the face turned and transfixed him with the despairing glare of those dreadful eyes.

But we are anticipating and rather describing the condition into which his mind gradually fell, than its state immediately after his interview with the Solitary. It took some time longer before the idea that by an inexorable decree he was doomed to entail destruction on all connected with him, became fixed. For awhile it floated uncertainly and impalpably before him, and only slowly, like an approaching spectre, took upon itself shape and presence. A conversation between himself and his daughter on the second day after the accident, and his conduct immediately thereafter, may give us some apprehension of the current of his thoughts and feelings then.

"My dearest father," said Faith, throwing her arms around his neck, and repeating what she had said more than once before, "oh, how thankful ought I to be for the saving of your precious life!"

"We are often thankful in our ignorance," said her father, "for the greatest misfortunes."

"Do you call it a misfortune to me," she cried, "that I am not left alone in the world? Oh, father, what should I do without you?" And in spite of her exertions to suppress them, the tears burst from her eyes.

"Come to me, my child," said Armstrong, and he took the weeping girl into his arms, and leaned her head gently upon his bosom. "Compose yourself. Believe me, there are trials harder to be borne than the loss of parents."

"None, none to me," sobbed Faith. "If it were right I would pray that I might die the same moment with you."

"It is well for one like me to think often of death," said her father, "nor should the young forget they are mortal. But many happy days, I trust, are reserved for my darling."

"Happy, if you are to share them with me, father. But why do I weep," she said, raising up her head and smiling through her tears, "at thinking of the possibility of a misfortune to myself, when my heart is swelling with thankfulness for your preservation?" She

arose from her father's lap, drew a chair to his side, and as her custom was, took one of his hands in both of hers.

"Such are the dispensations of Providence," said Armstrong. "The old man, with white hair and bent body, creeps to his grave, while the infant that has just learned to smile in its mother's face, is hurried from her arms. Why was it that Sill, so strong, so happy, so young, with a wife and children dependant on him for support, should be taken and I left?"

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"Why should we curiously inquire?" replied Faith. "If we could look behind the curtain, no doubt we should see sufficient reasons for the choice."

"When I look back upon my life," continued Armstrong, more distinctly revealing the thought lurking in his mind, "it seems as if I were born to be the cause of misfortune to others. Had any one else been in the boat, the accident would not have happened, or certainly not terminated fatally."

"Do not say so, dear father. Can you regulate the winds and waves?"

"No, Faith. Yet unmanly as it is, let me lament the fate that makes me the instrument to execute the decrees of Heaven. I am a rod to attract the fires that consume, while itself rises unscathed amid the destruction."

It seemed to Faith natural that her father should be affected by the death of the fisherman, who, after saving his life, had perished in the attempt to bring rescue, although she thought his expressions exaggerated. She felt pained at his self-reproaches, but doubted not that soon the keenness of regret would lose its edge. In order the sooner, therefore, to produce this result, she attempted to divert his thoughts into another channel.

"You are unjust to yourself, father," she said. "How many are there to bless you for charities known only to themselves and you?"

"Mention them not, Faith, crumbs from my superfluity, like those that fell from the other rich man's table. Besides, of what avail will any charities, as you call them, of mine be? They will serve only to convey the curse that attaches itself to me. I tremble to think you are my daughter."

"And I," said Faith, "can never be thankful enough for having such a father. Ah, how happy we might be, if you would only banish these fancies from your mind!"

"Thus it is," said Armstrong. "Did I not say right? Like an evil spirit I scatter only gloom around one. I will remove a presence that blasts whatever it meets."

So saying he rose, and in spite of the tearful entreaties of his daughter, walked into the hall, and taking his great coat from the hook that held it, put it on and passed into the street.

Faith, upon his departure, sunk into a chair, and allowed free course to her tears. They brought relief, and after a few moments she recovered composure. "This is very foolish," she said to herself, "to cry like a child. My dear father is nervous, and I do not wonder, that shocking accident agitates him. I am glad he is gone, for it is better he should seek the society of his friends, than sit here making himself melancholy with me."

I must be cheerful to receive him when he returns. At least, he shall see no trace of tears."

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Meanwhile, Mr. Armstrong walked down the street, but shunning the sight of others, he turned at the first opportunity into an unfrequented road. It led towards the Severn, and hardly knowing how it happened, he crossed a bridge, and soon found himself in the woods that skirt the left bank of that river. Unconsciously, and as if attracted by some spell, he was directing his course towards the scene of the late disaster. The walk and the solemn silence of the woods, in which no sound was heard except the cawing of a watchful crow, some sentinel placed to give notice of approaching danger to his companions, gradually subdued the excitement of his feelings. His pace, at first rapid, relaxed, the light began to play upon the clouds that brooded on his spirits, and he wondered at his fancies and his conduct.

“How could I,” thought he, “be so cruel to my own Faith! Her life ought to be all sunshine and gladness, and would be but for me, and I must sadden and darken it with the baleful imaginings of a distempered mind. I must struggle harder and pray oftener and more fervently to be preserved from myself. And now my soul feels the need of communing with the Infinite Spirit. What fitter place for adoration than the stillness of these old woods? Here worldly interruptions cannot come, and the veil between Him and His creature is withdrawn.”

He stopped. He looked up into the sky, and watched the clouds floating in the blue. He glanced at the sun flaming in golden magnificence. His eyes fell on the hoary stems of the giants of the forest. He saw the trailing arbutus, the delicious herald of warmer suns and softer winds, creeping to his feet, and raised his hands to heaven and repeated the lines of Milton—

These are thy glorious works, Parent of Good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair; Thyself how wondrous then!
Unspeakable, who sitt'st above the heavens,
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works: yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought and power divine.

He stooped down and picked a few bunches of the arbutus, and put them in his bosom. “Faith loves flowers,” he said, “and the sweetness and whiteness of these are types of herself.”

He was now quite calm, and realized fully where he was. It is strange, he thought, how I came hither. I am like Philip, whom the Spirit caught away.

He continued his walk, striving to drive away the gloomy ideas, which, in spite of his resistance, threatened again to master him. With his eyes bent upon the ground, he proceeded some distance, when a slight noise attracted his attention. He raised his eyes, and discovered the cause. Five or six men were approaching, bearing, between

them, something on some boards. Mr. Armstrong stopped, and, as they came near, perceived, it was the body of the drowned fisherman.

“Fate,” he murmured between his teeth, “has driven me here. It was meet that the murderer should be confronted by his victim.”

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The men, when they had surmounted the steep river bank, tired with the weight, put down the corpse near where Armstrong stood. He walked up to it, and gazed upon the face. The men, solemnized by the mournful task, and respecting the feelings of Armstrong, whom they all knew, preserved silence.

There was no expression of pain upon the features. They wore the calm, impassive look of marble. The eyes and mouth were wide open—efforts to close them had been in vain—but, there was no speculation in the former, and the soul played no more around the latter. The long brown hair, from which the water dripped, hung in disorder over the forehead and down the neck. Armstrong knelt on the withered leaves, by the side of the corpse, and parted the hair with his fingers.

“The agony,” he said, as if addressing the drowned man, “is over. The curtain is lifted. The terrible secret is disclosed. You have heard the summons we must all hear. You have trod the path we must all tread. You know your doom. Poor fellow! how gladly would I give my life for yours.”

The bystanders were moved. Thus to behold the rich and prosperous Mr. Armstrong, whose reserve was mistaken by some for haughtiness, kneeling on the ground and lamenting over the obscure fisherman, was something they had not expected.

“Sill was a good fellow and a ginorous,” said Tom Gladding, wiping away a tear, with the rough sleeve of his coat.

“He was a clever fellow, was Sill,” added another.

“I’ve known him more than once,” said Tom, “give half his fish away to a poor family. Josiah tried to make everybody comfortable.”

“When I was sick, a year ago,” said one of the men, “and the neighbors thought I was going to die, Josiah set up many a night with me, when he had to work all the next day for his wife and children. I had no notion, then, he’d have to go afore me.”

“It’s true what the primer says,” said another—

“Xerxes the great must die,
And so must you and I.”

“It don’t need the primer or Xerxes either to tell us that,” said Tom. “Now, it looks kind o’ hard to have a young man like Josiah go; but, seeing as how he must die, sometime or other, I guess it don’t much consarn him whether it’s to-day or to-morrow, when you think of etarnity. Howsoever, it’s no use standing here sniveling; so, let’s get on. Miss Sill will be glad the body’s found, though it will ’most kill her to see it.”

Thereupon, Tom and his friends took up the corpse, and pursued their way to the village.

Armstrong stood still, and looked after them till they were out of sight. He then turned, descended the bank, and sat upon a rock on the edge of the water.

He reviewed the events of the day before the yesterday. He had repeatedly endeavored to divert his mind from such thoughts; but, in spite of his wishes, they would force themselves back. Finding all resistance vain, he had, finally, abandoned himself to their control.

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They passed confusedly through his mind. It was difficult to arrange them in the order of their succession. He began to be uncertain whether his visit to Holden was made before or after the drowning of Sill. He tried to recollect the purpose of his visit to the Solitary, but could fix upon nothing definite. He seemed to remember that he had made a confession of some sort, and that Holden had charged him with the murder of his brother; and, at the same time, commended him for removing George from the evil to come. His thoughts then reverted to the upsetting of the boat. He knew that Sill had saved his life; but why, when in safety on the boat, had he left it? He had a notion of some conversation between them, and strove, till his brain burned, to remember it. Had he not urged the unfortunate man to swim ashore? Was it not most probable he had done so? Was not that most consistent with his usual treatment of others? Was not that the means adopted by the stern angel of fate, to accomplish the decree?

Such was the nature of the thoughts of the unhappy Armstrong. Do what he might, he could not exclude them. They would give place to no others. They were at home. They had a right to rule and to torture. They were a foretaste of a never-ending punishment. His will did not consent; but, a mightier will commanded, and the weaker must obey. The sport of an irresistible necessity—with no power of choice—the blind, unwilling instrument of a controlling force, he was, notwithstanding, justly chargeable with every misfortune, and, like a malefactor, must endure the consequences.

Long he sat thus absorbed in these wretched reflections. He stared upon the water, but saw nothing: the tide rose and wet his feet, but he felt it not; the wind blew chill, but he was not cold. He got up at last from his seat, and was recalled to life. He felt stiff from having been in one posture so long. He took out his watch, and found it was twelve o'clock. He looked at the sun, and perceived it did not contradict the watch, and turned his steps homeward.

The crow from the topmost bough of a withered tree eyed him as he passed along quite near, and croaked once, but did not leave his perch. Armstrong heard him not. Nor did he heed the blue-bird singing in the noonday sun to the arbutus blossoms crushed by his unwitting feet, or notice the petulant squirrel flinging down the shells of his nuts, as if in mockery at the passing stranger. He was met by Primus in the village street, who took off his cap, but to the salutation of the negro he paid no regard. The General stopped as he passed, and turned round, with a sorrowful surprise, to look after him, and shook his head. It was the first time Mr. Armstrong had passed him without notice and a kind word. The negroes are very superstitious, and great observers of signs. He remarked that Mr. Armstrong's hat was pulled over his eyes, in the same manner he wore it at the funeral of his wife, and augured some impending calamity.

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Mr. Armstrong entered his house, and threw himself into a seat, but he sat only a moment. Something seemed to be wanting. A restless impatience possessed him. He took up the tongs and begun to alter the disposition of the sticks of wood. He could not suit himself, and finally abandoned the fire to itself, after having filled the room with smoke. He went to the bookcase, and took down a book, and commenced reading. But presently his eyes wandered off, and fastened themselves on the rug. He threw down the book, and rung the bell violently. Felix instantly answered the summons.

"It seems to me you are very negligent in attending to the bell this morning," said he. "It is unpleasant to be obliged to ring so often."

"You ring only once, Mr. Armstrong," said Felix, opening his eyes wide with astonishment. "I in the kitchen at the time, and come immediuntly. The tongue still jingle."

"You may well say your tongue jingles," said Mr. Armstrong, sharply. "Let me trouble you not to contradict me. Where is Miss Faith?"

"Miss Faith went out an hour ago. I guess she is calling on some ladies."

"Go, and find her, and request her to come home."

Felix retreated hastily into the kitchen, and seized his cap. But before going out he thought it necessary to speak to Rosa.

"O, Rosa!" he said, "take care o' the boss while I'm gone. Something dreadful is happened to him, and I'm 'fraid of the consequence. If you hear the bell, Rosa, run for your life."

"How can I leave the dinner? It all spoil, Felix," said Rosa. "I send Katy."

"Never mind two dinners," cried Felix. "Better burn the roast beef than make *him* feel worse. I never know him cross afore."

Felix was not obliged to go far. He had hardly got outside of the gate, when he saw his young mistress coming down the street. Walking rapidly, he soon met her, and communicated his errand. Faith quickened her steps, and in a few moments stood by the side of her father.

She found him contemplating the sprigs of arbutus he had picked for her. The sight and scent of the lovely flowers had carried him back to the moment when he plucked them, and restored, in a measure, the tone of mind that prevailed then. It was, therefore, with his usual sweetness he addressed her, though there was something in his voice that made the words drop like so many tears upon her heart.

“I have brought you some flowers, my darling,” he said. “They are the first nurslings of spring. Beautiful things! looking up all night and day, with their starry eyes, to heaven, and drinking the dew of God’s grace. Happy things! they know no sin nor sorrow, and are remembered only for their perfume and beauty. Take them, Faith. Sweets to the sweet. Like these flowers, your soul exhales an atmosphere of fragrance, and they belong to you.”

The mutations of Mr. Armstrong’s mind were like the changes of an April day. The softer mood was now prevailing, and as Faith kissed the flowers, before she put them in her bosom, she felt less unhappy than in the morning.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

Whose part in all the pomp that fills,
The circuit of the summer hills.
Is that his grave is green.
And deeply would their hearts rejoice,
To hear again his living voice.

BRYANT.

The funeral, with the usual celerity with which such things are done in our country, was to take place on the next day. Too often the haste appears indecent, and it may be that in some instances the body has been buried before life deserted it. It would seem that the family felt constrained by the presence of the corpse, and compelled to exercise an irksome self-control, and, therefore, desired to hurry it under ground, as if it would be less likely there to know how soon it was forgotten.

But in the present case there was no reason why the body should be longer kept. There could be no doubt that life was extinct. It had lain too long in the water to admit a ray of hope to the contrary. The sooner it was placed in its final earthly home the better for poor Jane Sill, the widow. Her grief would the sooner be mitigated, by withdrawing her thoughts from the dead to fix them on the necessity of providing for the living. Until the burial the sympathizing neighbors took upon themselves to perform the usual work of the household, such as cooking the necessary food, &c., and one or another came in at times to look after the children, to see that nothing was neglected for their comfort, and to console the lone woman in her affliction. But this could not last long. It was better it should not, but that things should, as quickly as possible, resume their usual and natural course.

When the hour for the ceremony arrived, Mr. Armstrong sent round his carriage to convey the mourning family in the melancholy procession, while he and Faith, as the distance was short, proceeded on foot to the house. It was situated on a sandy beach, near the Wootuppocut, and a considerable company had collected together before their arrival. Poor Josiah's generosity and good-nature had made him a general favorite, and his acquaintances had pretty generally turned out to render to him the last testimony of affection it would ever be in their power to pay. The house was too small to hold all present, so that besides the relations, very few except females were admitted. Faith entered, but her father, though courteously invited in, and in consequence of his connection with the accident that caused the death, considered in some wise a mourner, preferred to remain on the outside. Meanwhile, during the preparations in the house, groups without were scattered round, engaged, in low voices, in various conversation. In some, expressions of condolence and pity were let fall for the condition of the widow and her family; others descanted on the good qualities of the deceased;

others debated on what might be the feelings of Armstrong, and wondered what he would give the widow. They

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were all acquainted with his generosity, and doubted not of his desire to repair, so far as he was able, the misfortune with which the more ignorant would insist upon connecting him as in some sort, a cause. For this reason, some of them stole sly glances, from time to time, at his face, wishing not to be observed, as if they expected to read therein his purposes. But Armstrong, his eyes fastened on the ground, and absorbed in his own reflections, was unconscious of the attention he attracted. So lost was he, indeed, in his own thoughts, as not to observe many of the nods and greetings directed to him.

Presently low tones, as of one speaking, were heard issuing from the house, and those standing outside gathered round the open door, to listen to the prayer of the minister. It seems to be taken for granted that on such occasions the prayer must occupy some considerable time, whether because a short one would be irreverent to the Being to whom it is addressed, or disrespectful to the sorrowing friends, or because the mind cannot sooner be impressed with due solemnity. Hence it follows that as these prayers are extempore, and the abilities and taste of those who offer them of different degrees, they are of various shades of merit. Seldom is one made in which the canons of good taste are not violated, and some are not compelled to smile who ought to weep. The reverend gentleman who conducted the services, was not insensible to what was expected from him, and determined "to improve" the mournful event to the benefit of the living. After alluding to the gratitude his hearers ought to feel at not being thus hurried, like poor Sill, without time for preparation, before the bar of Judgment, who, however, he hoped, was prepared, and in order to heighten the feeling of thankfulness, contrasting the light and liberty of life with the darkness of the grave (as if the spirit were confined there), he ran through the usual common places, speaking with an assured conviction, as if the country beyond the grave were as familiar to him as the streets of the town. With a tedious particularity he then entreated the divine blessing upon the members of the bereaved family, mentioning them by name, beginning with the widow, to whom succeeded the children, two boys, one of four, and the other of two years of age, followed by fathers, and mothers, and brothers, and sisters to an indefinite extent, until the compliment was duly paid to all who were supposed to have any claim to it. The prayer was closed very much as it began, with a reference to the suddenness of the death, which was treated as a warning sent for their benefit, and a hope that it might be laid to heart, and induce sinners to fly from the wrath to come. The usual time being now consumed, the minister who had labored hard, and not without sundry hesitations and coughings to accomplish his task, brought it to a conclusion, and announced an appropriate hymn. There was something sadly sweet and touching in the homely words and simple tune, sung in low and suppressed tones, as if they were afraid of disturbing the slumbers of the dead.

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Upon the conclusion of the hymn, the person who acted as master of the ceremonies went to the door, and, addressing those gathered round, said that all who desired might now have an opportunity to see the corpse. Several accepted the invitation, and among others, Mr. Armstrong.

The coffin was placed upon a table in the centre of the room, with a part of the lid turned back on hinges, so as to leave the face exposed. The former friends and acquaintances of the dead man, giving place and succeeding to one another, came, looked, and passed out again, moving lightly on tip-toe solemnized and subdued by the awful mystery of death. As they came in and left the house, they could see through an open door in an adjoining room the weeping widow in full mourning, with her little boys on either side, and the relations seated round in chairs.

All having gazed upon the corpse who wished, preparations now commenced for screwing down the lid of the coffin. The sobs and sounds of grief which had proceeded from the room where the mourners were collected, and which had been, as by an effort, suppressed during the prayer and hymn, now broke forth afresh.

"O, do not hinder me," poor Mrs. Sill was heard to say; "it's the only chance I shall have in this world."

"I guess you'd better not," said a voice, trying to dissuade her. "It's no use; and, then, before all them strangers."

"I will see Josiah," she exclaimed, rising from her seat, and putting aside the well-meaning hand that strove to detain her. "Who has a better right to take the last look than me?"

With these words, her crape veil thrown in disorder back upon her shoulders, her eyes red and swollen with crying, and tears streaming down her cheeks, she advanced towards the body, all respectfully making room for her as she approached.

We are not a very demonstrative people. The inhabitants of New England are taught, from an early age, the lesson of self-control. They do not wear in their bosoms windows into which any eyes may look. It is considered unmanly for men to exhibit excessive feeling, and perhaps the sentiment has an influence even on the softer sex. The conduct of Mrs. Sill was unusual, and excited surprise; but it is difficult to stem strong passion and it had its way.

She moved quickly up to the table, and threw her arms around the coffin, resting her cheek on that of her husband, while the hot tears ran in large drops down its marble surface. One who thought he had a right to interfere, whispered in her ear, and took hold of an arm to draw her away, but she turned fiercely upon him.

“Who are you,” she said, “to separate me from my husband? Go—I will keep him as long as I please.”

The person, seeing her determination, desisted; and all looked on in mournful silence.

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“O, Josiah,” she sobbed, “who’d have thought it! The best, the kindest husband a woman ever had. O! how sorry I am for every hard word I ever spoke to you. And you so good—never to find fault when I scolded. I was wicked—and yet all the time I loved you so. Did you know it, Josiah? If you were back again, how different I would treat you! The fire should always be burning bright, and the hearth clean, when you came back cold from fishing, and you should never, never ask me a second time for anything. But you don’t hear me. What’s the use of crying and lamenting? Here,” she said, raising herself up, and addressing those next her, “take him, and put him in his grave.”

She staggered and fainted, and would have fallen, had she not been caught in the arms of sympathizing friends, who removed her into the adjoining chamber, and applied the usual restoratives. This caused some little delay, but, after a time, the person who had assumed upon himself the arrangements of the funeral, entered, preceding the four bearers, whose hats he took into his own hands, to restore them to the owners when the coffin should be placed in the hearse—a plain black wagon, with black cloth curtains—waiting at the door. The coffin was taken up by them, and deposited accordingly; after which, they took their places in front of the hearse, while the four pall-bearers ranged themselves on each side. At a signal from the director of the ceremony, the whole moved forward, leaving space for the carriages to approach the door. Mr. Armstrong’s carriage was driven up, and the widow and children, with two or three females, were assisted in. Then followed a few other vehicles, with the nearest relatives, after whom came others, as they pleased to join. A large number of persons had previously formed themselves into a procession before the hearse, headed by the minister, who would have been accompanied by a physician, had one assisted in making poor Sill’s passage to the other world easier.

The mournful cortege wound slowly up a hill to the burying-ground—a piece of broken land on the top. At the time of which we write, the resting-place of the departed of Hillsdale presented a different appearance from what it does now. Wild, neglected, overgrown with briars, it looked repulsive to the living, and unworthy of the dead. The tender sentiment which associates beauty with the memory of our friends, and loves to plant the evergreen and rose around their graves, seemed then not to have touched the bosoms of our people. A pleasing change has succeeded. The briars have been removed, trees planted, and when necessary to be laid out, new burial-ground spots have been selected remarkable for attractiveness and susceptibility of improvement. The brook has been led in and conducted in tortuous paths, as if to lull with a soft hymn the tired sleepers, and then expanded into a fairy lake, around which the weeping willow lets fall its graceful pendants.

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The white pine, the various species of firs, the rhododendron, mixed with the maple, the elm, and the tulip tree, have found their way into the sacred enclosure. The reproach of Puritanic insensibility is wiped out. Europe may boast of prouder monuments, but she has no burial-places so beautiful as some of ours. Pere la Chaise is splendid in marble and iron, but the loveliness of nature is wanting. Sweet Auburn, and Greenwood, and Laurel Hill are peerless in their mournful charms.

The coffin was lowered into the grave in silence. No solemn voice pronounced the farewell "ashes to ashes, dust to dust." The ceremonies were concluded. The minister took off his hat, and addressing the bystanders, some of whom, respectfully imitating his example, raised the coverings from their heads, thanked them in the name of the afflicted family for this last tribute of regard. The procession was formed again, and slowly returned to the house, leaving the grave-digger to shovel in the gravel and complete his task.

As Mr. Armstrong and Faith walked home together, but few words were exchanged between them. Each was absorbed in reflection upon the scene just witnessed. In Faith's mind it was solemn, but devoid of gloom. With the hopefulness of health and youth, gleams of sunshine played over the grave. She looked beyond, and hoped and trusted.

But with her father it was different. Had it not been for him Sill might have been alive and well. He had made the wife a widow and her children orphans. He had introduced weeping and wailing into a happy home. But this was a slight calamity, and hardly worthy of a thought in comparison with another. The words of the minister, that the victim had been hurried to his sentence without time for preparation recurred with a feeling of horror. It was he through whose instrumentality Sill had been thrust into tormenting but undestroying flames. Better that he had never been born. Better that he had been strangled in the hour of his birth.

With thoughts like these, this unhappy man, whose heart was the seat of all the virtues, tormented himself. It seemed sometimes strange that people did not point their fingers at him: that he was not arrested for the murder: that he was permitted to walk abroad in the sunshine. His mind, unknown to those about him, unknown to himself, was hovering on the confines of insanity. Only a spark, perhaps, was necessary to light a conflagration. Alas! that one so good, so noble, should be a victim of destiny. But we forbear to intrude further into reflections alike miserable and insane.

Mr. Armstrong felt more composed the next day, and in the afternoon, accompanied by Faith, went to the dwelling of the widow. They found her engaged in ordinary family affairs. The duties to the living must be respected. To neither rich nor poor does sorrow furnish an excuse for their neglect. Let the mind find something to occupy it, the hand

something to do. Thus do we become sooner reconciled to those dispensations of Providence at which our weakness, and ignorance, and presumption rebel.

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The poor woman received them kindly, and offered chairs. Faith took into her lap the younger child from the floor on which it was sitting, gnawing a crust of brown bread, and began to talk to him. The round eyes of the boy expressed his astonishment, but as he looked into the loving face and heard more of the sweet voice, the alarm he at first felt at the approach of the stranger subsided, and he smiled with the confiding innocence which children return to the caresses of those who are fond of them.

"Jimmy doesn't know what a loss he's had," said Mrs. Sill.

"Jimmy will grow up to take care of his mother bye and bye, and repay her for some of her trouble, won't he?" said Faith, addressing the boy.

"O, Josiah and Jimmy are my only comfort," said the widow—"now that he's gone. I don't know what I should do without them, I'm sure."

Mr. Armstrong had called the elder boy, Josiah, to his side, and the little fellow had quickly become familiar enough to play with his gold watch-chain. Seeing it pleased the child, he took the watch and held it to his ear, at which the countenance of the boy became radiant with delight. "O, Jimmy," he cried, "it talks."

Mr. Armstrong released the watch into the hands of Josiah, who ran with it to his brother.

"He will drop it," exclaimed Mrs. Sill, starting forward, taking the watch from the hands of the disappointed boy, and offering it to Mr. Armstrong.

"Keep it," he said, "for Josiah, to associate me, when he grows up, with his father's death."

"You don't mean to give away your gold watch?" said Mrs. Sill, still holding it out towards him.

"Yes, Mrs. Sill," said Mr. Armstrong, "I intended it for him: I would give him all I have if I could thereby restore his father to life."

This observation renewed in full force the sorrow of the poor woman. She sank back into a chair, and covering her face with her apron, sobbed and wept bitterly.

Faith looked at her father with an expression which seemed to say—do not refer to the cause of her grief. Armstrong understood the appeal, but he had that in his mind which was unknown to his daughter, and after a pause he proceeded.

"I have more property than I deserve, and what better use can I put it to than give it to the deserving? You will find in that," he continued, handing a paper to the widow, "what

will entitle you to a little income during your life. I hope it will enable you to take better care of your children.”

Mrs. Sill took the paper mechanically, and gazed upon without opening it or imagining the extent of the gift. She kept turning it round and round in her fingers, as if not knowing what to do with it.

“Everybody knows you’re a kind man, and as generous as you’re rich, Mr. Armstrong;” at last she said, “But I guess I shant want anything long in this world.”

“I hope you may live long yet,” said Mr. Armstrong, “for the sake of the little boys.”

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This allusion recalled her more to herself, and without looking at the paper she put it into her bosom. "I'm sure I thank you with all my heart, and shall always try to do my duty by them," she said.

Here Mr. Armstrong rose, and Faith, putting down the child, that seemed loth to leave her, spoke in a low tone some parting words of consolation.

"I'm sure you're very good; I'm sure I'm very much obleeged to you," was all Mrs. Sill could say.

On their way home Faith spoke of the promising appearance of the children, and of what the hopes of the mother must be on their account.

"It is true they are all that are left to her," said Mr. Armstrong, "and what hopes she has of earthly happiness must be built on them. But who can look into to-morrow? A few days ago, never dreaming of misfortune, she exulted in the enjoyment of her husband and little boys. The first is taken away, and none know how soon the latter may be. So joys and sorrows are mingled together. At this moment she is more miserable for having been happy, and so great is the misery, it outweighs all the happiness of former years. Such is the nature of pain and pleasure. A pang of the former, an instant's acute agony, may be equivalent to hours of what is called enjoyment. We are so made. We may hope for happiness: we are certain of sorrow. We must seek after the one: the other is sure to find us. When I look round, what evidences of wretchedness do I see! Alas, it is indeed a fallen world, and the ground is cursed for man's sake."

"You take a gloomy view, father," said Faith. "Look beyond. Are we not promised a happier time when the bliss of Eden shall be renewed?"

"Yes, and the time will come. Not only prophets and apostles have had it revealed to them, but grand souls among the heathen have dimly descryed its dawning from afar. But what unimaginable scenes of horror must first be? What doleful *misereres* must first ascend to cloud the brightness of the heavens and dim the joy of the blest! Long, long before then, your and my remembrance, Faith, will have perished from the earth. You will be then a seraph, and I—. If there be ever an interval of pain, it will be when I think of your blessedness, and you, if angels sometimes weep, will drop a tear to the memory of your father, and it shall cool his torment."

What could the grieved and alarmed daughter say? She spoke in gentle and loving tones. She combated by every possible argument these miserable fancies. She entreated him for her sake as well as his own, to cast them off. He listened to her without impatience, and as if he loved to hear the sound of her voice. But he shook his head with a mournful sadness, and his melancholy remained. As may well be supposed, the dark cloud that had settled down upon his mind was not thus to be dissipated. Faith, though troubled, did not despair. She trusted the impression of the

late calamity, to which she attributed much of his unhappiness, would in time wear off. Meanwhile, she commended him to the kind protection of that Gracious Being who is loving to all his works.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

I cannot think of sorrow now: and doubt
If e'er I felt it—'tis so dazzled from
My memory by this oblivious transport.

BYRON

"Here come that strange old man," said Felix, the next morning, looking out of the kitchen window, which commanded a view of the road. "I do believe he's bewitched the boss."

Rosa, to whom the remark was addressed, ran to the window, and saw the Recluse coming up the street.

"I'm 'stonished," she said, "that Mr. Armstrong and Miss Faith give so much encouragement to these low pussons. They always take so much liberty."

"Give 'em an inch and they take two feet," said Felix. "I wish his two feet take him away from this house for the last time," he added, laughing.

"Ha, ha, ha, you so 'musing Felix," said Rosa. "There is something too very genteel in your laugh."

"You do me proud, sweet Rosa," answered Felix, bowing with his hand upon his breast.

Holden was no favorite of the black. The well-dressed and well-fed servant of a wealthy family, with the feeling common to all who judge from outside appearances, had at first been disposed to look down upon the coarsely-dressed anchorite, who supported himself by so mean a labor as the manufacture of baskets, and to consider him as little better than a beggar-man. No sooner, however, did Holden detect the feeling, and it was instantly, than he corrected it, so that it never made its appearance again in his presence. In fact, a feeling of fear superseded the impertinence of the negro. There was something in the burning glare of Holden's eyes, and the deep tones of his voice, that exerted an inexplicable power over Felix. Much he turned it over in his mind, why, in spite of himself, he was obliged to be as civil to Holden as to white gentlemen, and at last concluded, the Solitary possessed some magic art, by which he controlled others. He the more readily adopted the opinion because he considered his master and young mistress under the spell of the same glamourie to which he himself had succumbed.

When, therefore, Holden struck with the knocker on the door, the obsequious Felix was at hand to open it, and show him into the parlor.

"Tell your master I am here," said Holden, entering.

“How does he know Mr. Armstrong is at home?” said Felix, to himself. “But I’m a free man, and it is very onpolite to talk about my master.”

“The Lord hath raised up a mighty salvation for us,” was the address of Holden, as Mr. Armstrong entered the room. “I come to bid thee farewell for a time.”

“Farewell!” repeated Mr. Armstrong, without comprehending the meaning of the other.

“Sit thee down, dear friend, and listen to what will give thee joy for my sake now, and thine own hereafter. My son, who was dead, is alive again.”.

Armstrong was at a loss to divine the meaning of his visitor. He took it for some figurative form of expression, and, without making any reply, passed his hand over his forehead, as if trying to recall some idea.

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Holden read his thoughts. "Thou dost not understand," he said. "Know then that the child perished not with the mother."

"My friend," said Armstrong, who had now complete command of himself, "you do not reflect that I cannot understand your allusions. Explain to me, that I may participate in your joy."

"The child of my youth, he whom I lost, whom I mourned for so many years as dead, is alive," exclaimed Holden, in tones of irrepressible emotion.

"I give you joy," said Armstrong, grasping his hand. "But you never mentioned you had a son. How have you lost, and how found him?"

"It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes," said Holden. "Not long since thou didst tell of an unhappy man, round whom afflictions had gathered. Now will I tell thee of another not less wretched, the clouds of whose sorrow the setting sun is gilding. Be it unto thee for a lesson of hope, for I tell thee, James, that assuredly thou shalt be comforted."

We will endeavor to compress into a few words the more diffuse narrative of the Recluse, confining ourselves to the substance.

It will be recollected that before Holden's constrained retirement among the Indians, he had attached to him the squaw, Esther, by the ties of both gratitude and respect. But it was only at a distance she looked up to him whom she regarded as a sort of superior being. She would not have ventured to speak to him of herself, for how could he take an interest in so insignificant a creature? The nearer relations, however, into which they were thrown, while he was an inmate of her cabin, without diminishing her affection, abated her awe. The teachings of Holden, and the strong interest he manifested for herself and tribe so affected her, that one day she made to him a confession of the events of her life. It is only necessary to recount those which have a connection with this story. Some twenty years previous she had accompanied her husband on a visit to a tribe in Kentucky, into which some of her own relatives had been received. While there an expedition had been undertaken by the Indians, which her husband joined, against the white settlements, then inconsiderable, and exposed. After a few days the warriors returned in triumph, bringing with them many scalps, but no prisoner, except a little boy, saved by her husband, Huttamoiden. He delivered the child to her, and having none herself, she soon learned to love it as her own. Huttamoiden described to her with that particularity which marks the description of natural objects by an Indian, whose habits of life in the forest compel him to a close observation, the situation of the log-hut from which the child was taken, the hut itself before which leaped a mountain stream, the appearance of the unfortunate woman who was murdered, and the desperate resistance of the master of the cabin, who, at the time, was supposed to have perished in the flames, but was afterwards known by the name

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of Onontio—as the scourge and terror of the tribe which had destroyed his family. She had shortly afterwards started with her husband, taking with them the little boy, for the east, but they found the innumerable questions and suspicions occasioned by the possession of the white child so annoying, and dreaded so the inquiries and investigation that would be made upon their return home, that they determined to get rid of him upon the first opportunity. As their route lay through New York, the streets of a populous city furnished the very chance they desired. It was with great reluctance Esther felt herself compelled to this course, and she was unwilling the child should fall into unkind hands. While reflecting upon what was to be done, she remembered a family which had come from that part of the country whence she came, and whom she had known as worthy people, and determined to entrust to them the boy. She dared not to do this openly. So one night she placed the child on their door-step, enjoining him not to stir until some one took him into the house, while she herself watched close by, until she saw him taken in. Since then, not daring to make inquiries, for fear of bringing on herself some unknown punishment, she had not heard of the boy. She remembered the name of the people with whom he was left, and also the street, and the number, and gave them to Holden.

Upon this foundation it was the Recluse built up the hope that his son was yet alive.

“I am Onontio,” he said. “The Being who touched the heart of the ferocious savage to spare the life of the child, hath preserved him. Mine eyes shall yet behold him.”

Armstrong was deeply touched, and in the contemplation of the brightening prospects of his friend, he forgot the clouds that hung around his own horizon. Perhaps he was not so sanguine of success as Holden, whose eagle eyes seemed penetrating the future, but he respected too deeply the high raised hopes and sacred feelings of the father, to drop a word of doubt or discouragement.

“Myself, my purse,” he said, “are at your service.”

“Thomas Pownal goeth to the city to-morrow,” replied Holden. “I will speak unto him, and accompany him. Nor do I refuse thy assistance, but freely as it is offered as freely do I accept it. They who are worthy to be called my friends, regard gold and silver only as it ministers to their own and others’ wants.”

He took the proffered bank-bills with quite as much an air of one conferring, as one of receiving a favor, and, without even looking at the amount, put them in his pocket.

It was so long since Holden had been in the great world, or mingled in the ordinary pursuits of men—and his appearance and mode of speech were so different from those of others—that Armstrong had some fears respecting his researches. It was, perhaps,



this latent apprehension of his fitness to appear in the world—an apprehension, however, only dimly cognizable by himself—that induced Holden to seek the companionship of Pownal. With these feelings, and believing he might be of advantage to this strange man, for whom this new development awakened additional interest in his mind, Armstrong offered to be his companion, in the search for his son; but, to his surprise, his offer was hastily rejected.

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"No," said Holden; "it befitteth not. Stay, to take care of Faith. Stay, to welcome me when I shall return with a crown of rejoicing upon my head."

Armstrong shrunk within himself at the repulse. He would not have regarded or hardly noticed it once, but, his mind had become morbidly sensitive. A word, a look, a tone had now power to inflict a wound. He was like the Sybarite whose repose was disturbed by a wrinkled rose-leaf; with this difference, that they were spiritual, not material hurts he felt. Did the forecast of Holden penetrate the future? Did he, as in a vision, behold the spectres of misfortune that dogged Armstrong's steps? Was he afraid of a companionship that might drag him down and entangle him in the meshes of a predestined wretchedness? He is right, thought Armstrong. He sees the whirlpool into which, if once drawn, there is no escape from destruction.

Holden succeeded better in communicating a portion of his confidence to Pownal. In the morning of life, before experience has dimmed our sky with clouds, we readily perceive the sun of joy. The bright eyes of youth catch his rays on the mountain tops, before the drooping lids of age are raised from the ground. The ardent temperament of the young man entered with delight into the hopes of his elder. He even anticipated the request Holden intended to make, and asked permission to accompany him. With a very natural feeling he endeavored to effect some change in the costume of the Recluse, but here he met with decided opposition.

"I have nothing to do with the world or its follies," said Holden. "Let it pass on its way as I will on mine. It will reck but little of the garments of an unknown man."

It was more for the sake of his friend than himself that Pownal proposed the change. Perceiving the feelings of the other, he forbore to press a proposal further, which, after all, was of but little consequence. A sloop was to sail the next day—the wind favoring—from Hillsdale, and it was agreed between the two to take passage together.

We may judge of the feelings of Pownal at this time, from the fact that the last evening he spent at Hillsdale, before he left for New York, where, indeed, he expected to remain but a short time, found him at the house of Judge Bernard. He was fortunate, whether beyond his expectations or not we cannot say, in finding Miss Bernard alone. At least it was a fortunate coincidence with his wishes, and might we judge, from the raised color of the cheeks, and the smiles that played round the lips of the beautiful girl, not displeasing to her. It is wonderful, when we look back, how frequently these charming accidents of youth occur.

It was unnecessary that Pownal should speak of his intended trip to the commercial capital. He seemed to assume that Anne was already acquainted with his purpose, but of Holden's discovery she had not been informed.

“Beautiful!” cried Anne, clapping her hands. “We shall have a *denouement* fit for a novel yet. Oh, I do hope he may find his son. And,” added she, with a warm quick feeling, “I can see now reason for the strange habits of our poor dear prophet. Oh, to think of the long years of lonesome misery he must have passed!”

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"He seems to have no doubt," said Pownal, "of discovering his lost son. I confess that when I heard him in his animated way tell his story, with eyes raised in thankfulness to heaven, I was swept along by his enthusiasm, and felt no more doubt than himself of his success; but when I reflect more calmly on the circumstances the prospect is not so brilliant."

"Do not doubt: the prospect *is* brilliant: Jeremiah shall cease his lamentations: our prophet shall be made happy. Ah, why anticipate anything but good!"

"I accept the omen, dear Miss Bernard," said Pownal, looking with admiration upon her beaming countenance, "Men arrive at conclusions, how often false, by a fallible process of reasoning, while truth comes to your more fortunate sex by a happy inspiration."

"And I accept the compliment, since you accept the inspiration. I hope it is with more than the ordinary sincerity of those in the habit of making compliments."

"I wish you could see into my heart."

"You would wish the window closed immediately. What do you suppose I should see there?"

"Yourself."

"Then it is a looking-glass," said Anne, blushing. "A valuable piece of furniture certainly, in which any lady may view her face!"

"No! a portrait more true to life than Stuart's, and which I prize above everything."

"You must be mistaken in fancying it mine. Only old pictures are prized. The moderns have no reputation."

"You will always jest. I assure you I am serious," said Pownal, who, however, was obliged to smile.

"I see you are very serious. Oh, I hate seriousness ever since I was frightened by the long face of Deacon Bigelow, when he discovered my ignorance of the catechism. It was as long," she added, looking round for something to compare it to, "as the tongs."

"Or as your lessons of a June day, when the sunshine and birds, and flowers were inviting you to join them."

"Or as the time when I do not see Faith for twenty-four hours."

"Or as my absence will be to me in New York."



"I wonder how you," said Anne, "who are accustomed to the bustle and excitement of a large city, can be contented with the quiet monotony of a country town."

"I found something here not to be found in all country towns," said Pownal. "Besides, the noise and confusion of a large place never were agreeable to me, and when I return to them they lie like a weight upon my spirits. Instead of a city I ought to have been born in a boundless forest."

"You know I have said, I thought there was a wildness about you," replied Anne, laughing.

"Do you not consider the wild animal tamed?"

"Not entirely. It belongs to a species almost irreclaimable."

"He will never be tamed a second time."

"Then he must not be suffered to escape."

The words flew from the lips of the gay impulsive girl before she was aware. The eloquent blood crimsoned her cheeks, and clapping both her hands upon her face to conceal the blushes, she burst into a laugh as musical as the song of the canary bird. Pownal's eyes sparkled with delight, but before he could utter a word, she had sprung upon her feet.

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"It is too bad," she cried, "to compare you to a wild animal. Forgive and forget my impertinence. I have been reading a novel," and as, she said so she took a book from the table, "by an American author, which interests me greatly. Have you seen it?"

Pownal took the book into his hands. It was one of Charles Brockden Brown's.

"I read it some years ago," he said; "and I remember it made a great impression upon me at the time. It appears to me to be written with wonderful power of enchaining the attention. I could not lay it down until it was finished."

"Exactly as I was affected," said Anne.

"Yet I wonder that one so lively and merry as Miss Bernard should be pleased with such a book. The subjects of Brown's novels are all gloomy. His imagination seems at home only in sombre scenes. His is the fascination of horror."

"I wonder at it myself. But it shows the ability of the writer, in being able to affect as thoughtless a person as I am."

"Not thoughtless. No one would say that of you but yourself. It is, perhaps, because of your gaiety—on account of the contrast. The sunshine loves to light up dark places."

"Very prettily expressed. Really, if you go on improving, we must have you appointed valentine-manufacturer-general for the town of Hillsdale."

"I suspect the valentines would all be addressed to one person."

"Then I shall oppose your appointment. But let that pass for the present. You were telling me why I liked Brown's novels."

"I am not so presumptuous. I was only guessing. It is the Yankee's privilege. The world concedes it to us. I suggest then that your mind wanders through those dark scenes with an interest like that with which a traveller contemplates a strange country. And may they ever remain a strange region to you. May you ever continue to be what you are now, a bright being, at whose approach sorrow and sadness fly away."

The conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of the Judge and Mrs. Bernard, on their return from some neighborly call. Anne received the bonnet and shawl from her mother, who was evidently accustomed to such attentions, nor had the young lady ever appeared more beautiful in the eyes of the young man, than when he saw her rendering those little services of filial respect and affection. "She deserves," he said to himself, "the richest gifts of Providence. One so bright, so pure, so innocent, must be a favorite of the angels."

These were lover's thoughts, and our readers at the remembrance of youthful dreams and fancies will pardon their extravagance. They come at only one period of life, and oh, how quickly do they fly, leaving behind a trail of light which may, indeed, be obscured, but never quite extinguished.

Pownal informed the Judge of his intended departure, and, as usual, received from him and Mrs. Bernard some commissions to execute on their account. That of the former was for some books, while his wife's, we are compelled to say, however undignified it may sound, was for nothing more important than the last fashionable French bonnet. But let us add that she took not more pleasure in wearing a becoming head-dress (and what new fashion is not becoming?) than he in seeing her handsome face in its adornment.

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"My husband," she said, "Mr. Pownal, tries to Frenchify me a little, sometimes, and I am obliged to indulge him, he is generally so good; but he will never succeed in making anything else out of me than a plain Yankee woman."

"Plain or beautiful, the highest title to my affection," said the Judge, gallantly. "I have been a traveller, Thomas, and have seen the Old World. This is a progressive world; and, believe me, the productions of the New are not, to say the least, inferior to those of the Old."

"I can well believe it," said Pownal, bowing to the ladies.

"A pleasant voyage, Thomas," said the Judge, as he bade his young friend good-bye, "along the sandy shores of Long Island, and through the perils of Hell Gate."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Then lock thee fast
Alone within thy chamber, there fall down
On both thy knees, and grovel on the ground:
Cry to thy heart: wash every word thou utter'st
In tears (and if't be possible) of blood:
Beg Heaven to cleanse the leprosy."

FORD'S PLAYS.

Armstrong, upon the departure of Holden, sat moodily pondering what had been told him. Were his emotions those of pleasure or of pain? At first, the former. The natural goodness of his disposition made him instinctively rejoice in the happiness of his friend. For a few moments, he forgot himself, and, as long as the forgetfulness lasted, was happy in the participation of the other's hopes. But this frame of mind was only momentary. We have seen how an answer of Holden was sufficient to restore his gloom. Thoughts chased each other in wild confusion, over which he had no control, which he reproached himself for admitting—which he would have excluded, if he could. The connection between him and the Solitary was one of mutual misfortune. Sorrow was the ligament that united them. For years had he known Holden, but it was only within a short time, namely, since an awakened conscience (so he judged, himself) had revealed to him his own hideousness, that he had been attracted to the Solitary. Should Holden recover his son, should his heart expand once more to admit worldly joys, would it not be closed to him? As he once felt indifference towards Holden, so would not Holden, by a change of circumstances, by the awakening of new desires and new hopes, by the occupancy of emotions the more delightful because fresh and for so long unexperienced, stand to him in other and colder relations? These reflections were not

clear, distinct, sharply defined. They drove through his mind, ragged and torn, like storm-clouds chased by the tempest.

There were two beings struggling with one another in him—the one striving to encourage the noble feelings of his nature, and drive away whatever was inconsistent with truth and reason—the other whispering doubt, and selfishness, and despair. He rose and paced, with rapid steps, the room.

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“Has it come to this?” he said to himself, as if wondering at his condition. “Am I become incapable of participating in the happiness of others? Am I a festering mass of selfishness? O! once it was not so. I will resist these thoughts which come from the bottomless pit. They shall not master me. They are the temptations of the Evil One. But can I resist them? Have I not grieved away the spirit? Is there place for repentance? Am I not like Esau, who sought it in vain with many tears? If he was refused the grace of God, why not I? Why not I, that I may go to my own place? Already I feel and know my destiny. I feel it in the terrible looking for of judgment. I feel it in that I do not love my neighbor. If I did, would I not sympathize in his happiness? Would this wretched self for ever interpose? I never knew myself before. I now know the unutterable vileness of my heart. I would hide it from Thee, my God. I would hide it from Thy holy angels—from myself.”

That day, Mr. Armstrong stirred not from the house, as long as the sun remained above the horizon. The golden sunshine deepened his mental gloom. Nor to his eyes was it golden. It was a coppery, unnatural light. It looked poisonous. It seemed as if the young leaves of spring ought to wither in its glare.

He heard the laugh of a man in the street, and started as if he had been stung. It sounded like the mockery of a fiend. Was the laugh directed at him? He started, and ran to the window, with a feeling of anger, to see who it was that was triumphing over his misery. He looked up and down the street, but could see no one. The disappointment still further irritated him. Was he to be refused the poor satisfaction of knowing who had wounded him? Was the assassin to be permitted to stab him in the back? Was he not to be allowed to defend himself? He returned and resumed his seat, trembling all over. Faith’s canary bird was singing, at the top of its voice. Armstrong turned and looked at it. The little thing, with fluttering wings and elevated head, and moving a foot, as if beating time, poured out a torrent of melody. The sounds, its actions, grated on his feelings. He rose and removed it into another room.

He folded his arms, his head fell upon his chest, and he shut his eyes to exclude the light. “I am out of harmony with all creation,” he said. “I am fit for a place where no bird ever sings. This is the evidence of my doom. Only the blessed can be in harmony with God’s works. Heaven is harmony—the music of his laws. Evil is discord—myself am discord.”

Faith had still some influence over him, though even at her entrance he started “like a guilty thing surprised.” Her presence was a charm to abate the violence of the hurricane. He could not resist the gentle tones of her voice, and at the spell his calmed spirit trembled into comparative repose. Armstrong acknowledged it to himself as an augury of good.

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I cannot be wholly evil, he thought, if the approach of a pure angel gives me pleasure. The touch of Ithuriel's spear reveals deformity where it exists; in me it discloses beauty.

With her he could talk over the ordinary affairs of the day with calmness, though it is singular, considering the perfect confidence between them, that he never adverted to the communication of Holden, notwithstanding he knew it would possess the highest interest for her. It betrays, perhaps, the weakened and diseased condition of a mind, wincing like an inflamed limb at the apprehension of a touch.

As the father listened and looked at his child, he felt transported into a region whither the demons could not come. They could not endure her purity; they could not abide her brightness. Her influence was a barrier mightier than the wall that encircled Paradise, and over which no evil thing could leap. He therefore kept her by him as much as possible. He manifested uneasiness when she was away. His consolation and hope was Faith. As the Roman prisoner drank life from the pure fountains to which he had given life, so Armstrong drew strength from the angelic spirit his own had kindled.

Yet was his daughter unconscious of the whole influence she exerted, nor had she even a distant apprehension of the chaos of his mind. How would she have been startled could she have beheld the seething cauldron! But into that, only the Eye that surveys all things could look.

Thus several days passed by. An ordinary observer would have noticed no change in Armstrong, except that his appetite diminished, and he seemed restless. Doctor Elmer and Faith both remarked these symptoms, but they did not alarm the former, though they grieved the latter. Accustomed to repose unlimited confidence in the medical skill of the physician, and too modest to have an opinion adverse to that of another older than herself, and in a department wherewith he was familiar, and she had no knowledge except what was colored by filial fears and affection, and, perhaps, distorted by them out of its reasonable proportions, Faith went on from day to day, hoping that a favorable change would take place, and that she should have the happiness of seeing her dear father restored to his former cheerfulness.

It is painful to follow the sad moods of a noble mind, conscious of its aberrations, and yet unable to control them. We have not the power of analysis capable of tracing it through all its windings, and exhibiting it naked to the view, and if we had, might shrink from the task, as from one inflicting unnecessary pain, both on the writer and the reader. It is our object only so far to sketch the state of Armstrong's mind, as to make his conduct intelligible.

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His restlessness has been alluded to. He found himself unable to sleep as formerly. Long after retiring to rest he would lie wide awake, vainly courting the gentle influence that seemed to shun him the more it was wooed. The rays of the morning sun would sometimes stream into the window before sleep had visited his eyelids, and he would rise haggard, and weary, and desponding. And if he did sink into slumber, it was not always into forgetfulness, but into a confused mist of dreams, more harassing than even his waking thoughts. The difficulty of obtaining sleep had lately induced a habit of reading late into the night, and not unfrequently even into the morning hours. Long after his daughter had sought her chamber, and when she supposed he was in bed, he was seated in his solitary room, trying to fasten his attention on a book, and to produce the condition favorable to repose. The darkness of his mind sought congenial gloom. If he opened the sacred volume, he turned not to the gracious promises of reconciliation and pardon, and the softened theology of the New Testament, or to those visions of a future state of beatitude, which occasionally light up the sombre pages of the Old, as if the gates of Paradise were for a moment opened, to let out a radiance on a darkness that would else be too disheartening and distracting; but to the wailings of the prophets and denunciations of punishment. These he fastened on with a fatal tenacity, and by a perverted ingenuity, in some way or other connected with himself, and made applicable to his own circumstances. Naught could pass through his imagination or memory, but, by some diabolical alchemy, was stripped of its sanative and healthful properties, and converted into harm.

“Young’s Night Thoughts” was a book that possessed peculiar attractions. For hours would he hang over its distressful pages, and many were the leaves blotted by his tears. Yet those tears relieved him not. Still, from time to time, would he recur to the book, as if tempted by a fascination he could not resist, striving to find, if possible, in the wretchedness of another, a lower deep than his own. Especially in the solemn hours of the night, when the silence was so profound, he could fancy he heard the flickering of the candles, he read the book. Then hanging upon image after image of those deploring strains, and appropriating all their melancholy, intensified through the lens of his own dark imagination, he would sink from one depth of wretchedness to another, till he seemed lost away, where no ray of light could ever penetrate, or plummet sound.

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He had been reading one night late, until as if unable to endure the images of woe it conjured up, he pushed the book away from him. The night was dark and stormy, and the rain pouring in torrents. He walked to the window and looked out. He could see nothing, except as the landscape was revealed for an instant by a flash of lightning. He could hear nothing, except the peals of thunder rolling through the valleys. He took a candle, and walked cautiously to the door of Faith's chamber, to see if she were asleep. The door was ajar, for the purpose of ventilation, and, shading the light with his hand, Armstrong could see the face of his sleeping daughter without waking her. She lay in the profound slumber of health and youth, undisturbed by the noise of the thunder, as one conscious of a protecting Providence. Her left hand was under her cheek, the black hair combed back, and collected under the snowy cap. Her breathing was scarcely perceptible, but soft and quiet as an infant's. An expression of happiness rested on her features, and the color was a little kindled in her cheek, looking brighter in contrast with the linen sheet.

"She sleeps," he thought, "as if there were no sin and misery in the world. And why should she not? What has she to do with them? Were my spiritual eyes opened, I should see the protecting angels in shining garments around her bed, unless my approach has driven them away. Heaven takes care of its own. So I could sleep once. Will the time come when she, too, shall be so guilty she cannot sleep? Almighty God forbid! Better she were in her grave. They are fortunate who die young. They are taken from the evil to come. The heart ceases to beat before it becomes so hard it cannot repent. Were she to die to-night her salvation would be assured. What infinite gain! The murderer could inflict no injury, but would confer a benefit."

Why did he start? Why did he shudder all over? Why did he hastily turn round, and shut the door, and hasten to his own room, locking it after him? Why was it he took something from his pocket, and, opening the window, threw it violently into the dark? But a moment Armstrong remained in his room. Blowing out the candles, and noiselessly descending the stairs, he as quietly opened and shut the front door, and stood in the open air.

The storm was at its height. The rain poured with such violence that in the flashes of lightning he could see the large drops leap from the ground. But he felt not that he was wet to the skin. He minded not that he had left the house without a hat, and that the water was running in streams from his head to the earth. With a rapid pace, approaching running, he fled through the streets, until he reached the grave-yard. Without a ray to guide him, through a darkness that might be felt, he found his way to a grave, it was his wife's. He threw himself prostrate on his face, and lay motionless.

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When Armstrong raised himself from the ground the storm had ceased, the clouds had left the sky, and the stars were shining brilliantly. He gazed around, then looked up into the blue vault. What were those innumerable shining points? Were they worlds, as the learned have said? Were they inhabited by beings like himself, doomed to sin and suffer? Did they suffer, more or less? Could the errors of a few years be expiated by sufferings of ages, as countless as the grains of sand on the seashore? He struck the palm of his hand violently on his forehead; he threw out his arm, as if in defiance, toward heaven, and groaned aloud. It seemed as though from every heaped-up grave that groan was echoed, and called to him like an invitation to join the hosts of darkness. He started, and looked again at the gruel sky. But no voice of comfort was breathed thence. The silver stars were now sparks of an universal conflagration. With a gesture of despair, he left the city of the dead.

Silence and darkness still shrouded the house of Mr. Armstrong on his return. He closed the door quietly after him, and, cautiously as he had descended, ascended the stairs, which, in spite of all his precaution, creaked under his feet. The sounds sent a thrill of alarm through him as though he feared discovery. It was as if he were returning from some guilty enterprise. Without striking a light, he threw off his soaked garments, and got into bed. Strange, perhaps, to say, he soon fell into a sleep, deeper and more refreshing than any he had for a long time enjoyed. It may be that the excitement of his system was worked off by rapid motion, and exposure to the night air and rain, or that nature, unable longer to endure it, sunk beneath the tension. It was not until a late hour he awoke, when he found breakfast awaiting him. After the usual greetings, Faith said:

“Here is your penknife, father, which Felix found lying on the path this morning. You must have lost it from your pocket.”

Mr. Armstrong took the knife, without reply, and, when unobserved, dropped it into the fire.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Cities humming with a restless crowd
Sordid as active, ignorant as loud,
Whose highest praise is that they live in vain,
The dupes of pleasure, or the slaves of gain.

COWPER.

We have a little anticipated the order of events for the purpose of presenting more clearly the details of the story, it being after the departure of the Solitary and Pownal that some of them occurred. The favorable wind for which the packet Calypso had

waited for two or three days at last came, and with a flowing sheet the good sloop sped over the waters of the Severn.

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The means of communication between Hillsdale and the commercial capital were very different in those days from the present. Instead of the fine steamboats and railroad cars, which now connect the two places, the mode of travelling was by sailing vessels and stage coaches. The latter were the surer—but not the more popular. In the wintry months, when the navigation of the river was unimpeded by ice, the condition of the roads was such that, in spite of the dreariness of water transit, at that season, the packets were able to maintain a fair rivalry with the coaches, while, in the summer, the latter stood but little chance in the competition, but were almost entirely deserted. To this result the comfortable cabins of the coasters, designed for passengers (spacious and satisfactory for those times, however the refined effeminacy of the present generation might sneer at them), and the good fare they furnished, not a little contributed. The Calypso was one of the finest of the line of packets to which she belonged, and provided with every convenience that could be desired. She was a sloop of some ninety or one hundred tons, with a tall mast, that, to the timid eye of a landsman, seemed fitter for a vessel of twice her size, and when her enormous mainsail was raised and usual sail set, she looked more like one of those birds whose wings bear such a disproportion to the body, that in the contemplation we forget to what they are attached, than like a safe and sea-worthy craft. But the shipwright who laid her keel and shaped her ribs, knew what he was about, and the Calypso was as staunch and stiff as she was handsome. Her cabin extended full one-half the length of the vessel, and by means of a raised quarter deck, was conveniently high between joints, so that even the tallest man ran no risk of striking his head. True, it was not embellished with gilding, and mahogany, and satinwood, but the paint was virgin white, the state-rooms commodious, the berths wide, and the bedding and linen scrupulously clean. Captain Standish prided himself upon the comfort and propriety of his craft, and the good reputation he enjoyed and deserved. The length of the passage varied according to the state of the winds and tides. It might, under the most favorable circumstances, be made in less than twenty-four hours, and it might last a week. It was at a period of the world's existence, before steam and electricity had imparted a feverish impatience to the community, and men did not hurry as if they had not time enough to live.

But let it not be thought, that it is as one who peevishly resents the improvements made in mechanical and other departments of knowledge, we dwell upon these particulars. We are quite awake to the fact that the world turns round, and although the consequence is an alternation of light and darkness, are satisfied with the change. With the philosopher Pangloss we would rather believe, “*dans ce meilleur des mondes possible*,”

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than to entertain any less cheerful opinion. No. It is rather to perpetuate the remembrance of what has been, or to qualify more truthfully and modestly the expression, to save it for a moment longer from oblivion. It is with a melancholy pleasure that one who has reached that stage of the journey of life, from which henceforth his progress can only be one of continued descent towards the valley whereon broods the cloud not untouched with rays of divine light, reverts to whatever, even though they may seem trifles, characterized the beginning of his career. Ah! it was the breaking of the morning. For a time the sky glowed with a deepening glory, to fade at last into the "light of common day." We never can, we never would forget that lovely dawning.

Holden, nothing doubting, was confident that the voyage would terminate for him in the restoration to his arms, of the son whom he had mourned as one dead. Nor did he seem to have a doubt of the worthiness of the long lost treasure. A hope, brilliant and beautiful, that glorified whatever it touched, had taken absolute possession of him. It would admit no fear, no uncertainty, no despondency. The new feeling penetrated all departments of his mind, and mixed itself up with and colored even his religious speculations. He began to connect, in some way, the realization of his awakened hopes with the millennium, of which it was to be a forerunner. This appeared especially on the second day of the voyage, which lasted three days.

It was a warm, bright afternoon in the latter part of the month of May, just before the setting of the sun, and Holden and Pownal had walked to the bow of the vessel, as if to be nearer the golden luminary when he should sink from sight. A gentle breeze filled the sails of the Calypso, the soft murmur from under whose cutwater seemed to testify to the delight with which she moved on her liquid way. For some time Holden had stood with folded arms, watching the sun, as by slow degrees he sunk into the waves. Pownal, himself, was thrillingly alive to the magnificence of earth, and sky, and ocean, and all fair forms and hues of nature, and noticing the exalted and rapt expression of his elder friend's face, and sympathizing in the influence that produced it, was in no mood to break the silence.

"Type of the Infinite," at last Pownal heard him say, "how have I loved to watch thy coming and departure! Chariot of fire, whose burning wheels support the throne of judgment, thy course is onward until the fullness of the time is come. Of man's impatience thou reckest not. With thee a thousand years are as a day."

He ceased speaking, and a total silence for some time succeeded. His eyes continued fixed upon the spot where the sun had disappeared, but they saw nothing. An interior struggle was going on which engrossed the faculties, and left no opportunity for the observation of external objects. Repeatedly he passed his hand over his eyes and

forehead, pressing the palm forcibly, as if to concentrate the attention, and at length he addressed Pownal.

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"The scoffers have long sat in the gate, and lolled out the tongue and cried aha! but of a surety the time draweth nigh. Because He delayeth, where, say they, is the promise of His coming? But doth a sparrow fall to the ground without His knowledge, and are not ye of more value than many sparrows, oh, ye of little faith? Shall not the sorrows of fathers move the heart of the universal Father?"

It is scarcely to be expected that the young man entirely understood the rhapsody of Holden, though familiar with his moods. He saw, however, it had some connection with the one idea that had mastered all others, leaving them, notwithstanding, at perfect liberty, except so far as they interfered with itself. For it cannot have escaped observation, that on all subjects but one Holden exercised an ordinary degree of judgment, a circumstance by no means singular in the case of persons affected with monomania. Pownal, therefore, did as he was accustomed, avoiding all contradiction, and falling in with the other's thoughts.

"That," said Pownal, "it seems to me, is the worthiest name that can be given to the Supreme Being."

"It is the worthiest and the dearest. Thou, young man, canst know nothing of the emotions of a father's heart. Couldst thou look into its abysses of tenderness a new world would be revealed to thee, of which now thou only dreamest. Not a drop of blood that wandereth through its channels, but would coin itself into a joy for the beloved. But what is human love to His, the Creator of love? A breath, a bubble, a sigh. One great heart comprehendeth in its embrace all hearts. Look around thee," he added, throwing up his arms, "and behold the evidence: yon blue vault filled with bright worlds, bright because they are happy; this vast ocean teeming with strange life; the green earth whence, as from an altar, the perfume of grateful flowers and chants of praising birds do ceaselessly arise. Young man, be thankful and adore."

Holden stopped, as if he expected a reply, and Pownal therefore said:

"I am not, I fear, sufficiently thankful for the favors of Providence."

"Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," pursued the old man. "How many evils had I escaped had I heeded the advice I give! But it is the old tale of human folly. The aged with his experience is counted for nothing. My son," he added impressively, laying his hand on Pownal, "behold these furrows on a withered face. They are the traces of unrestrained passion. I forgot my Creator in the days of my youth."

He turned and walked away, but presently retraced his steps and took up the train of thought he seemed to have dropped.

"But he forgot not me. His mercies are over all his works. Even when I was a great way off my Father saw me, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on my neck, and kissed

me. And now will he put the best robe upon me, and a ring upon my finger, and shoes upon my feet.”

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Such was the excited and hoping condition of Holden's mind as the vessel approached the port of New York, which it reached the next morning. Although then a place of great trade, and giving indubitable promise of what it has since become, New York was far, very far from approaching its present splendor and magnificence, which entitle it to vie with the most brilliant capitals of the world. Even then the ships of all nations were to be found at its wharfs, but the taper masts rising into the sky, formed not a cordon so immense as that which now, like a forest stripped of its leaves, girts it round. Nor from even its most fashionable portions, the residence and resort of the wealthy and the gay, had all the humbler buildings, which belonged to its origin, disappeared. Alongside of the modern brick, or occasionally stone mansion of four stories, that style of architecture, dear yet to the heart of a genuine Knickerbocker of which Holland boasts, if not the invention, at least the perfecting, reared its pointed gable, and rose like Jacob's ladder with parapeted roof into the sky. But slightly injured by weather in a climate singularly clear and pure, under a sky untarnished by the dismal clouds from bituminous coal fires, which enshroud less favored lands, the brave little Dutch bricks held their own with a sturdiness becoming their ancestry. Those monuments of a simpler age have almost disappeared, and the ingenuity they exhibited, and the taste of which they were the specimens, are likely soon to be remembered only as steps in the world's pupillage.

But, however the fashions of man may change, the grand features of nature remain eternal. Beautifully bright then as now sparkled in the light of the May morning sun, the waves of that glorious bay, unrivalled but by one, while little boats and pinnacles darting about in all direction like sea-birds, gave animation to a scene, which without the accompaniment would have possessed peculiar interest to one who, like Holden, had lived so long in seclusion. As the vessel turned around Castle Garden to seek her berth in the North River, and his eyes ran over the islands and Jersey shore, and up the noble stream, and one by one he recognized the objects he had seen in his youth, it seemed as if feelings, supposed dead, were coming to life, and nature re-assuming the gala garb which she once wore.

But, independent of the causes that made the scene peculiarly attractive to our traveller, it is impossible to approach a large city after a long absence without excitement. The aggregation of a mass of human beings full of life, and instinct with its hopes, and fears, and joys, and sorrows, and passions, acts like a stimulus. Nature is beautiful, and art glorious, but the object of deepest interest to man is man himself. In his fellow beings he sees reflected his own interior world, a world of mystery and marvel, whence any news is welcome that will impart information respecting its light and shade, its harmonies and discords. He cannot stand outside, a looker-on, separate and apart, having no portion therein: he is in it and of it, an integral atom, a something which cannot be isolated if it would.

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The packet, after some delay, occasioned by the occupation of her berth by a casual trader, was finally able, by advancing one vessel, and pushing another back, and shoving a third on one side, to approach the wharf at the foot of Courtlandt street, and land her passengers. A coach was presently procured, and Holden, who had been invited by Pownal, accompanied his young friend. The distance up Courtlandt street, and down Broadway to the house of the elder Pownal, which was near the Battery, was short, and therefore even had the carriage proceeded more leisurely, and the Recluse been disposed to observation, he could have seen but little, and that in an unsatisfactory manner. Pownal felt some curiosity respecting the impression which would be made by the turmoil of a large city upon one who for so many years had excluded himself from the crowded haunts of men, and therefore watched his companion with no little interest; but Holden, as if he divined his thoughts, and was displeased at the discovery, or for some other unknown reason, betrayed no change of feeling, or conduct, but was as impassive and indifferent to all passing around him as if he were in his own hut. So far from showing any emotion, he threw himself into a corner of the carriage, and shut his eyes as if desirous to exclude objects of which he was regardless, or which only annoyed him. The young man knew not exactly how to interpret the other's conduct, but was too much accustomed to his habits to feel surprise, and respected him too greatly to desire to intrude into anything he wished to conceal.

The carriage stopped before a fine, large brick mansion, worthy of a merchant prince, fronting the Battery, and, of course, commanding a view through the trees which shaded the greensward of that beautiful spot, of the blue water, and islands, and the Jersey shore sweeping away in the distance. Fashion, always capricious in her movements, has deserted the lower part of Broadway and the Battery, by far the most charming quarter of the city, to emigrate to a part of the island on which New York is built, more remote from the marts of trade. Immense warehouses occupy the sites where once stood the abodes of elegance and hospitality, and the chaffer of traffic has succeeded to social welcomes and greetings of conviviality.

The black servant who came to the door at the ringing of the bell, stared with astonishment at the unusual figure of Pownal's companion, but if disposed, as is the habit of his class, to be deficient in respect to one not bearing the conventional stamp, a glance of the young man's eye, and his marked deference toward the stranger, to say nothing of the latter's natural air of authority, soon restored his courtesy and usual obsequious attention. It was, therefore, with a gracious expression of countenance and polite bow, that Mr. Johnson ushered the two gentlemen into the parlor.

"Where is Mr. Pownal, Johnson?" inquired the young man.

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"He is out of town, sir, with the whole family. I believe he went to Albany, sir."

"Is Mrs. Corning in the house?"

"Mrs. Corning is just come back from market, sir. I heard her voice only a minute ago."

"Say, I would like to speak to her."

In a few moments, Mrs. Corning, the housekeeper, a respectable-looking woman, of some forty-five years of age, made her appearance, and testified a hearty pleasure at seeing the young man, whom she kissed with great affection, and by whom she was received with every mark of regard.

The family, she said, in reply to the questions of Pownal, had been absent, at Albany, where they were, on a visit to some relatives, for three weeks, but were daily expected home. She was so sorry they were absent. They were all well, and would be so glad to see him looking so well. She thought she had never seen him looking better. There was nothing like country air to paint the cheeks.

Pownal thought this a good opportunity to commend his friend to the favorable consideration of the housekeeper, and said—

"That I am well, I probably owe to the kindness of this gentleman, who will remain with us during my stay in town," at the same time, introducing Holden to the lady.

"Your friends, Mr. Thomas," said Mrs. Corning, courtesying to Holden, "will always be welcome in this house. But, tell me, have you been sick?—I'm sure, you don't look so—or some accident, or"——

"I will tell you all about it, by-and-by. At present, a cup of coffee."

"My! what a thoughtless creature I am!" exclaimed Mrs. Corning. "The pleasure of seeing you again, put all idea of breakfast out of my mind. I never thought of asking, if you had had any. But, it shan't be long before that mistake shall be remedied."

So saying, good Mrs. Corning bustled out of the room, on hospitable thoughts intent, and, in a short time, the substantial comforts of an American breakfast were smoking on the board. Pownal partook of it with the liberal appetite of high health and youth sharpened by his little voyage, while Holden himself, though in far greater moderation, was not unmindful of the viands before him. His achievements, however, did not seem to satisfy the housekeeper, who vainly pressed her delicacies upon him, and who, subsequently, after a more thorough observation of his character at meals, expressed her wonder, to Pownal, whether the effect of a long beard was not to diminish the appetite!

CHAPTER XXX.

I met with scoffs, I met with scorns
From youth, and babe, and hoary hairs,
They called me in the public squares,
The fool that wears a crown of thorns.

TENNYSON'S "IN MEMORIAM."

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It was without delay that Holden applied himself to the purpose of his visit to New York, in which he was seconded, to the best of his ability, by Pownal. All the time the young man could spare from his own business he devoted to his friend, though fearful that there was little probability of succeeding in the search. But who, however, convinced of the futility of the inquiries, could refuse his assistance to one engaged in an investigation of so deep and sacred an interest, and who believed with an implicit faith in ultimate success? And such is the nature of enthusiasm, or a high-wrought faith, that Pownal himself could not refrain from entering with some degree of spirit into an inquiry, which he felt would probably be in vain.

Together they sought out, in the first place, the street indicated by Esther. Formerly an obscure part of the city, it had now become, by those mutations which are constantly occurring, and nowhere with such rapidity as in this country, a considerable rendezvous of trade. By rare good luck, the name of the street had been preserved, and by luck still rarer, the house itself, corresponding in all respects to the description by Esther. It was one of those ancient Dutch houses, of which mention has been made, built of a yellowish brick, and standing with its gable-end toward the street, its steep-pointed roof, constituting at least one-half of the building, rising with an air of command, dominating the whole, and seeming, indeed, to be that portion to which all the other parts were only subsidiary, and constructed for its honor and glory. Neither Holden nor Pownal had, for an instant, doubted the honesty and truth of Esther, and yet it must be confessed, that the discovery of a building, so exactly corresponding with her description, added fresh fuel to the hopes of the former, and was not without influence on the latter. And yet, at a moment when, as it seemed to himself, he was about to realize his dear hopes—for the imagination of the Solitary leaped over all intervening difficulties, and, in the confusion of his mind, it almost appeared as if when the door opened, he should see and recognize his son—Holden laid his hand on Pownal's arm, and arrested his steps.

"Stay," he said, "let me pause a moment, and recover my wandering thoughts. There is a sound as of a tempest in my brain, and a confused noise, as of a trampling of men and horses."

He sat down on the stone step, as if unable to support himself, and rested his head on his hand.

"Here," he said, speaking to himself, with a trembling voice, "the merciful savage whose heart the Lord touched, left my child. Here his little feet trod, and against this wall his head rested. Would that these inanimate things could know my gratitude! But thou knowest it, O, all Merciful, my goodness, and my fortress, my high tower, and my deliverer, my shield, and he in whom I trust. Lord, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him!"

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or the son of man, that thou makest account of him! Didst thou not, in the olden time, hear the voice of the perishing child, Ishmael, and say, by thine angel, unto his weeping mother, Fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand, for I will make him a great nation? Even so now hast thou done unto me and remembered me in my low estate, for thy mercy endureth for ever."

Thus the father poured out his heart, alike unconscious of the gathering crowd, which his unusual appearance and strange language had collected around him, and of the observations they made.

"I say, Haxall," said a stout boy, whose dirty and ragged clothing, and vicious expression of face, proclaimed him one of those predestined candidates for the State Prison and gallows, bred to their fate by the criminal neglect of the State, "I say," he said, addressing his companion, as wicked looking as himself, "isn't it a rum old covey."

"Why the old cuss is a crying," answered Haxall, "or, perhaps, it's the whisky leaking out he took for his morning bitters."

"Whisky be d——d," said the other. "He never got as far as that. It's nothing but sour cider. I can smell it."

Here there was a brutal laugh, in which some of the bystanders, equally degraded, joined.

"For shame, young men," said a respectable-looking person, whose broad-brimmed hat, and formal and amply cut clothing, proclaimed him a Quaker; "is an old man, in tears, a proper subject for ribaldry? It were better ye were engaged in some honest employment, than idling away your time, and disgracing yourselves by the use of profane language."

"Smoke the old quiz, Haxall," cried the boy who had first spoken. "He opens rich. Let's see what's in the prig."

"Smoke him, smoke him," cried several voices.

Thus exhorted, Haxall jerking his cap jauntily on one side of his head, throwing an additional quantity of impudence into his face, and placing his hands on the hips, so that the elbows stuck out on each side, approached the Quaker.

"So you set yourself up for a preacher of righteousness," he said; "do ye? Well, you may preach away without asking my leave, or I'll give it to ye gratis, for nothing. That's cheap enough, I guess. Most of your sort, though, don't like to preach for nothing. So

here's my contribution to set you a going." So saying, he held out a cent. "There's value received," he added, "and, mind ye, ye give us a preachment equal to the consideration. But first, beloved brother, I've a question to ask. Up to the tip top of your judgment, now do you think your regimentals is just the right thing, and no mistake? Did Saint Paul and Saint, Saint, d——n the fellows, I forget their names"——

"Saint Tammany," suggested his companion.

"I owe you a drink for that, Bill," said Haxall. "Yes, Saint Tammany. Now, do you think them gentlemen, who I've heard, was real respectable men, though it was rather a comedown to take to preaching, ever sported such an infernal broadbrim as that, or turned out a tail as broad as yours?"

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The Quaker gentleman, who, at the commencement of the young scamp's speech, as if frightened at the prospect of a colloquy he had provoked, had betrayed a desire to escape from the crowd, seemed, as the other proceeded, to have changed his mind, and listened to him with the utmost calmness and imperturbable good humor. When the boy had got through with his impertinences, which he ran over with great volubility, garnishing them with many epithets we have omitted, and, at the close, had received the applause of those like him, who stood around, and, now, seemed waiting for a reply, the Quaker, with great sweetness, answered—

“My young friend, it would ill become me to return a harsh word for thy rather rude address, nor will my feelings towards thee and all in thy unhappy condition, permit me to speak to thee, except in pity and in sorrow.”

“Go to h——I with your pity. Nobody asks you for it,” exclaimed Haxall, fiercely.

“Gently, boy, gently, and do not profane thy lips with such language. Alas! thou hast been allowed to grow up like a wild animal, and canst not be expected to know there are those who regard thee with affection. But, surely, goodness can never be quite extinguished in one who has the form of humanity. I see thou dost not know me?”

“Never set eyes on ye before, old square toes, and be d——d to you.”

“Yet, I know thee, and, perhaps, the guilt is partly mine that thou art even now what thou art. Thou hast, then, forgotten the man who, only a year ago, jumped off Coenties Slip, and, by the kindness of Providence, rescued a boy from drowning?”

“Have I forgot!” exclaimed Haxall, with a sudden revulsion of feeling. “No, d——d me, not altogether. I thought there was something devilish queer in your voice. So you was the man, and I am the b’hoy. Oh, what a cussed beast I am to insult you! Give us your hand. I ask your pardon, sir. I ask your pardon. And,” he added, looking fiercely round, “if there’s a man here who crooks his thumb at ye, I swear I’ll whip him within an inch of his life.”

“Swear not at all,” said the mild Quaker, “nor talk of fighting, as if thou wert a dog. I see, notwithstanding thy coarseness and vile language, thou art not all evil, and, if thou wilt come with me, I will endeavor to repair my former neglect, by putting thee in a situation where thou mayst become an useful man.”

The boy hesitated. Two impulses seemed to be drawing him in opposite directions. He was afraid of the ridicule of his companion, and of the sneer which he saw on his face, and who, now, was urging him to leave with him. Yet, there was something peculiarly attractive about the Quaker that was difficult to resist.

The good Quaker read the indecision of his mind, and understood the cause. "Come," he said, "be a man, and choose for thyself like a man. Thou shalt remain with me only so long as thou wilt, and shalt be free to leave at thy pleasure."

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"That's fair," said Haxall. "I'll go with you, sir. Goodbye, Bill," he exclaimed, turning to his companion, and extending his hand. But Bill, thrusting both his hands into his pockets, refused the hand, and answered contemptuously—

"If you've turned sniveller, go and snivel with Broadbrim. I've nothing to say to such a mean-spirited devil."

"You're a mean devil yourself," retorted Haxall, all his fiery passions kindling at the other's taunt.

"Come, my young friend," said the gentleman, drawing him away gently, "return not railing for railing. I trust the time may yet come, when reproach, instead of exciting anger, will only be an incentive to examine thy bosom more closely, to see if thou dost not deserve it."

Long before the conclusion of this conversation, the original cause of it had entered the house with Pownal, and, upon his departure, the little crowd had gradually dispersed, so that, when the benevolent Quaker left, with the boy whom he hoped should be a brand plucked from the burning, very few persons remained. Bill followed his departing companion with a scornful laugh, but the latter—as if his good angel stood by his side to strengthen him—had resolution enough to disregard it.

When Holden and Pownal entered the house, the front part of which was used as a shop, they were received with great civility by a woman who was officiating at the counter, and, upon their desire to speak with her husband, were shown by her into a back room, used as a parlor, and requested to be seated. Her husband, she said, had stepped out a short time since, though, already, gone longer than she expected, and would certainly be back in a few moments. Her prophecy was correct, for, sure enough, they were hardly seated before he made his appearance.

He appeared to be an intelligent person, and answered without suspicion or hesitation to the best of his ability, all the questions addressed to him, so soon as he understood their object. But his information was exceedingly limited. He knew nothing at all about a person who had occupied the house more than twenty years before—nor was it, indeed, reasonable to suppose he should. In all probability the number of tenants was almost as great as of the years that had since elapsed: the name mentioned to him was a very common one: many such were to be found in the Directory, and the chances were that the house itself had repeatedly changed owners in a community so changeable and speculating. If the gentlemen would allow him to suggest, the best course would be to examine the records in the Register's office, and trace the title down to the time desired. In this way the name of the owner could, without difficulty, be discovered, and if he were alive he might, perhaps, be able to inform them what had become of the person who was his tenant at the time, although that was hardly probable.

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The suggestion was plainly sensible, and had, indeed, occurred to Pownal from the beginning, and he had accompanied Holden that morning more for the purpose of determining whether the house described by Esther, still existed, than with the expectation of making any further discovery. His anticipations had been more than realized; a favorable beginning had been made; there was every inducement to prosecute the search. When, therefore, Holden and Pownal thanked the obliging shopkeeper for his politeness, and took their leave, both felt that their morning had not been thrown away, though the condition of their minds was somewhat different, the former being confident of success, the latter hoping for it.

"I will call at the Register's office," said the young man, "and direct an examination to be made of the records. We shall be able to obtain the result to-morrow, and until then you must endeavor to amuse yourself, my dear friend, as well as possible. You know I sympathize with your impatience, and shall expedite our search with all diligence, and heaven grant it a happy termination."

Pownal saw that the search was made at the office of the Register, and the title traced through several persons to the period when the house was occupied by the man named by Esther. Upon further inquiry it was ascertained that the proprietor at that time was still alive, and one of the principal citizens of the place. Holden lost no time in calling upon him, but was doomed to disappointment. He was received, indeed, with great urbanity by the gentleman, one of the old school, who proffered every aid in his power, and made an examination of his papers to discover the name of his tenant. He was successful in the search, and found that the name was the same given by Esther, but what had become of the man he was unable to say.

Holden now determined to make the inquiry of every one of the same name as that of the person sought. The search he pursued with all the ardor of a vehement nature, stimulated by the importance of an object that lay so near his heart. There was no street, or alley, or lane, where there was the slightest chance of success, unvisited by his unwearied feet. And varied was the treatment he received in that persevering search: by some met with contempt and insult as a crazy old fool, whose fittest place was the lunatic asylum, and who ought not to be allowed to prowl about the streets, entering people's houses at unseasonable hours and plaguing them with foolish questions: by others with a careless indifference, and an obvious desire to be rid of him as soon as possible, but to the honor of human nature, be it said, by most with sympathy and kindness. It was, moreover, usually among the poorer, that when it was necessary to mention the reason of his inquiry, he was treated with the most gentleness and consideration. Whether it is that suffering had taught them feeling for others' woes, while prosperity and worldly greed had hardened

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the hearts of the richer, let the reader determine. And, again, it was upon the women his tale made the tenderest impression. Whatever maybe the condition of woman, however sad her experience in life, however deplorable her lot, however low she may be sunk in degradation, it is hard to find one of her sex in whom sensibility is extinguished. With her, kindness is an instinct. The heart throbs of necessity to a story of sorrow, and the eye overflows with pity.

But the diligence of Holden was in vain, and, at last, he was obliged to confess that he knew not what further to do, unless he took his staff in hand and wandered over the world in prosecution of his search.

“And that will I do, Thomas,” he said, as one day he returned from his inquiry, “if naught else can be done. My trust is in the Lord, and He doth not mock. He despiseth not the sighing of the heart, nor hath He made the revelation and put this confidence into my mind in vain. I know in whom I have trusted, and that He is faithful and true.”

Whatever might have been the opinion of Pownal, he was incapable of uttering a word to discourage Holden, or of inflicting unnecessary pain. “Why should I,” he said, “dampen his enthusiasm? Small, as seems to me, the chance of ever discovering his son, it is, after all, mere opinion. Things more wonderful than such a discovery have happened. By me, at least, he shall be sustained and encouraged. Disappointment, if it comes, will come soon enough. I will not be its ill-omened herald.” He, therefore, said, in reply—

“Esther’s story is certainly true. Our researches corroborate its truth. We have found the house, and a person of the name she gave, did live in it at the time she mentioned.”

“They satisfy thee, Thomas; but I have a more convincing proof—an internal evidence—even as the sure word of prophecy. It speaks to me like a sweet voice, at mine uprising and lying down, and bids me be strong and of good cheer, for the day of deliverance draweth nigh. Doubt not, but believe that, in His good time, the rough places shall be made smooth, and the darkness light. And yet, shall I confess it unto thee, that, sometimes, a sinful impatience mastereth me? I forget, that the little seed must lie for a time in the earth, and night succeed day and day night, and the dew descend and the rain fall, and the bright sun shine, and his persuasive heat creep into the bosom of the germ before its concealed beauty can disclose itself, and the lovely plant—the delight of every eye—push up its coronal of glory. But, it is a transitory cloud, and I cry, Away! and it departeth, and I say unto my heart, Peace, be still, and know that I am God!”

“It would seem,” said Pownal, “that there is often a connection between the presentiments of the mind and an approaching event. How frequently does it happen,

for instance, that one, without knowing why, begins to think of a person, and that, almost immediately, the person will present himself.



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"It is the shadow of approaching destiny, and men have moulded the fact into a proverb. There is a world of truth in proverbs. They enclose, within a small space, even as a nut its kernel, a sum of human experience. In the case thou citest, may it not be that the man doth project a sphere of himself, or subtle influence, cognizable by spirit, albeit, the man be himself thereof unconscious? But know that it is no vague and uncertain emotion that I feel. I tell thee young man, I have heard the voice as I hear thee, and seen the vision clearer than in dreams. Naught may stay the wheel of destiny. An Almighty arm hath whirled it on its axis, and it shall revolve until He bids it stop."

Thus, unfaltering in his confidence, secure of the result, believing that to himself a revelation had been made, the Solitary expressed himself. As the blood mounted into his ordinarily pale cheeks, his lips quivered and his eyes were lighted up with a wild enthusiasm, Pownal could not but admire and acknowledge the omnipotence of that faith which regards no task as arduous, and can say unto the mountains, Be ye cast into the sea! and it is done.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Oh my soul's joy!

If after every tempest come such calms,
May the winds blow till they have wakened death!
And let the laboring bark climb hills of seas
Olympus-high, and duck again as low
As hell's from heaven.

OTHELLO.

In accordance with the determination he had expressed, Holden began soon to talk about putting his wild plan of roaming through the world into execution, and was withheld from it only by the entreaties of Pownal, that he would at least postpone it until after the arrival of his uncle, who was daily expected, and until they had taken his advice.

"I consent," said Holden, "both out of love to thee, and because I would not willingly leave a roof that hath protected me, without giving thanks to its owner."

A few days afterwards, Mr. Pownal returned with his family, by all of whom the young man was welcomed with every evidence of the warmest regard. Holden, too, as the friend of the younger Pownal, came in for a share of attention. The family consisted of

the father and mother, and two children, a boy and girl, the former of whom could not be more than ten years of age, while the latter was probably two years younger.

Mr. Pownal himself was a fine, frank, hearty gentleman of some sixty years, whose appearance indicated that the world had gone well with him, and that he was satisfied with the world. The ordinary expression of his face was that of quiet contentment, though at times it betrayed a keen sagacity and shrewdness, partly the revelation of nature, and partly the product of an intimate intercourse with that world with which

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his business brought him, in various ways, in contact. It was however apparent, that however much the associations and experiences of trade had sharpened his intellect, they had not tarnished the natural goodness of his heart. That spoke in the frank tones of his manly voice and shone in the light of his clear blue eyes. One could hardly look at him without a conviction that he was a man to be trusted, and a desire to grasp his hand in friendship. Holden felt the influence at the introduction, and no mean judge of character himself, was glad to make the acquaintance.

Mrs. Pownal was by several years the junior of her husband, and in all respects different from him. Her hair and eyes were raven-black, her complexion dark and saturnine, and she wore an expression of care inconsistent with enjoyment. She had been for many years a childless wife, and it may be that early disappointment, occasioned by the want of children, uniting with a melancholy temperament, had imparted an appearance of dejection which the subsequent birth of a boy and girl after she had given up the expectation of offspring, was unable to remove. She seldom smiled, and when she did, the smile played over her countenance like the sickly gleam of a wintry clay through clouds, and seemed rather to chill than to warm what before was cold. It was a formal tribute to the customs of society, not the spontaneous outburst of joy. She presented the tips of her fingers with all the grace of an accomplished lady, to Holden, and meant that her reception of him should be kind, but the hand was cold, and apparently as unfeeling as marble, and the Solitary dropped it as soon as touched. And yet Mrs. Pownal had feeling.

The first few days after the return of the Pownals was spent by them in gathering up those threads of relationship by which people are connected with society. Even a short absence from home induces sometimes the necessity of paying and receiving many visits, proportioned to the extent of the circle in which the parties move. The visiting circle of the Pownals was large, and hence the longer time was required. Besides, the business pursuits of the merchant engrossed some hours each day, though as the head of a large house in which there were several younger partners, he claimed and enjoyed all the leisure he desired. For these reasons young Pownal had found no fitting opportunity to speak in the presence of Holden of the purpose which brought the Solitary to the city, and besides, he did not wish to do so, until the time should arrive for his own return to Hillsdale, when he hoped, with the assistance of his uncle, to persuade him to return home. But the business of the young man was at last completed, and he was ready to retrace his steps.

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It was then one evening when both Mr. and Mrs. Pownal were present, and immediately preceding the day when he had announced his intention to depart, that Holden, at the solicitation of young Pownal, supported by the courteous entreaties of his uncle, narrated the events of his life, which are already known to the reader, and avowed with that unshaken trust in Providence, which in all circumstances sustained him, his resolution to beg his way through the world on his sacred search. His hosts had become, by this time, so accustomed to the fiery enthusiasm and antique diction of his discourse, that they no longer excited their surprise, but as he proceeded with his tale, the attention of both seemed arrested by a strange fascination. Even the figure of Mrs. Pownal lost its listlessness. Her black eyes became riveted on the speaker. She bent forward, with parted lips, as if unwilling to lose a word, while from time to time glances of intelligence passed between the husband and wife, which neither Pownal nor Holden were able to understand.

“Thus far,” said the enthusiast, in conclusion, “the Lord hath led me on. By flood and fire, and in battle He hath preserved a life, that long was wearisome to me. But in these latter days, He hath awakened a new hope, and given me an assurance thereof which I can better feel than tell. He hath not prolonged my life for naught. Behold, I know assuredly, that the child liveth, and that in my flesh, I shall see His salvation. Therefore, in obedience to the inner voice, will I gird up my loins, and after thanking you my friends, for the bread we have broken together, and the roof that hath sheltered the wanderer’s head, will I proceed upon my way.”

He rose and strode across the room, as if to put his design into instant execution, but the voice of the elder Pownal arrested him.

“Stay,” he said, “and listen. Your steps have indeed, been wonderfully directed. I can give you, perhaps, some information, about this John Johnson, with whom the boy was left.”

Holden stopped but made no motion to return. He seemed to hear and understand the words, but to be uncertain whence they proceeded. His eyes were cast up and fixed on vacancy. At last he said, still gazing in the air. “Speak Lord for thy servant heareth.”

Mr. Pownal approached, and taking Holden by an arm, led him gently to the sofa, and took a seat by his side. Mrs. Pownal said not a word, but threw her arms round young Pownal’s neck, and sobbed upon his bosom.

The young man, unable to divine a reason for such unusual emotion, could only silently return the caress and wait for an explanation.

“I knew a person of the name,” said Mr. Pownal, “but he has been dead many years.”

“But the child, but the child,” exclaimed Holden, “he is yet alive!”

“I do not doubt he is alive, I am confident we shall be able to discover him. Your trust in Providence is not misplaced.”

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"Tell me," cried Holden, a little sternly, "what thou knowest of the boy. My soul travaileth sore, and hope and doubt rend me in twain."

"Hold fast your hope my friend," said Mr. Pownal, "for all will yet be well. Prepare yourself to hear what, without preparation, might overcome your strength."

"Fear not," said Holden. "Yet alas! who knoweth his own heart? But a moment ago, I thought myself as an iron mountain, and now am I weaker than the untimely birth."

"Eliza," said Mr. Pownal turning to his wife, "bring the token you preserved."

During the absence of his wife, Mr. Pownal endeavored to prepare the mind of the Solitary for the joyful discovery he was about to make. It was now, too, that Holden perceived, from the agitation of his feelings, that he was weak, like other men, and that with whatever hope and confidence and calmness he might contemplate the prospect of distant happiness, its near approach shook him like a reed. Mrs. Pownal presently returned, with a coral necklace in her hand, and presented it to Holden.

"Do you recognize it?" she said.

He took it into his hands, and as if overcome by the violence of his emotions, was unable to speak a word. He gazed steadily at it, his lips moved but made no sound, and tears began to fall upon the faded coral. At last, with broken utterance, he said:

"The last time my eyes beheld these beads they were upon the neck of my dear child. They were the gift of his mother, and she hung them around his neck. Examine the clasp and you will find S.B., the initials of her maiden name, engraved upon it. My tears blind my sight."

"They are, indeed, upon the clasp," said Mrs. Pownal, who appeared to have a greater control over herself than her husband over his feelings: "we have often seen them, but little did we expect they would ever contribute to the discovery of the parentage of our dear"——

She turned to young Pownal, and threw her arms again about his neck.

"Come hither, Thomas," said Mr. Pownal, "the necklace was taken from your neck. This is your father. Mr. Holden, embrace your son."

The young man rushed to his father, and threw himself at his feet. Holden extended his hands, but the sudden revulsion of high wrought feeling was more than he could bear. The color fled face and lips, and he fell forward insensible into the arms of his long lost son.

“I feared it would be so,” said Mr. Pownal; “but joy seldom kills. See,” he added, after Mrs. Pownal had sprinkled some water in the face of the gasping man, “he is recovering. He will soon be himself again.”

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Restored to consciousness, Holden clasped his recovered son to his bosom, and kissed his cheeks, while the young man returned with warmth his demonstrations of affection. Pownal, we have seen, had been from the first attracted to the Solitary, either by the noble qualities he discovered in him, or from the interest he felt in his romantic mode of life, or from that mysterious sympathy of consanguinity, the existence of which is asserted by some, and denied by others. He was, therefore, prepared to receive with pleasure the relationship. Besides, it was a satisfaction to find his father in one, who, however poor his worldly circumstances, and whatever his eccentricities, was evidently a man of education and noble mind. For the young man was himself a nobleman of nature, who had inherited some of the romance of his father, and, indeed, in whom were slumbering, unconsciously to himself, many traits of character like those of the father, and which needed only opportunity to be developed.

The first words Holden uttered, after recovering from his emotion sufficiently to speak, were:

“Lord! now let thou thy servant depart, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.”

“Do not talk of departing,” said Mr. Pownal. “It seems to me now is the very time to stay. Many years of happiness are in store for you.”

“But,” said Holden, “tell me, thou who hast conferred an obligation that can never be repaid, and restored as it were the dead to life, how didst thou become the preserver of my child?”

But a few words are necessary to answer Holden’s questions. As the happy father sat with his arm over his son’s neck, Mr. Pownal related the following particulars.

“The John Johnson, of whom Esther the squaw told you,” said Mr. Pownal, “was some nineteen or twenty years ago a porter in the employ of our house. He was an honest, industrious man, who remained in our service until his death, which happened two or three years after the event I am about to relate, and enjoyed our confidence to the last. It was in the Spring—the month I do not recollect—when he came to the counting-room and desired to speak with me in private. He told me that on the previous evening he had found a child, dressed in rags, asleep upon the steps of his house, and that to preserve it from perishing he had taken it in. His own family was large, and he was a poor man, else he would willingly keep it. He knew not exactly what to do, and as he was in the habit of consulting me when in any difficulty, he thought he had better do so now. It was a pretty lively little boy, but so young that though beginning to speak it was unable to give any account of itself.

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“While Johnson was speaking a plan came into my mind, which I had thought of before, and it seemed as if the child were providentially sent in order to enable me to accomplish it. The truth is, that I had been married for several years, and the merry voice of no child of my own had gladdened my home and I had given up the expectation of children. Loving them dearly, it occurred to me to adopt some child, and rear it as my own. The feelings of Mrs. Pownal were the same as mine, and we had often talked over the subject together, but one circumstance and another, I can hardly tell what they were, had postponed the execution of our purpose from day to day. I therefore said to Johnson that I would attend him home and see the child, after which I should be better able to give him advice. Accordingly we went together to his house, which I recollect was the very one you described as having visited in your search in William street. There I found the little waif, a bright eyed boy of some three or four years of age, though his cheeks were pale and thin, as if he had already known some suffering. He wore around his neck the coral beads you have in your hand, which seemed to me at the time to have been left in order to facilitate a recognition. The appealing look and sweet smile with which he gazed into my eyes, as if demanding protection, was, in the condition of my feelings, more than I could withstand, and I took him home and gave him to my wife. She seemed equally pleased with myself, and for a time we reared him as a child of our own. Richly has he repaid our love, and you may well be proud of such a son. But some ten years afterwards, to our surprise, for we had given up all hope of such a blessing, Heaven gave us a son, and two years after that a daughter. The birth of the children altered, in some respects, our calculations, and I thought it necessary to communicate to Thomas the fact that he was not my son, but promising that he should ever be to me as one, and leaving it to be inferred from the identity of name, for I had given him my own, that he was a relative. He has more than once endeavored to penetrate the mystery, but I have always shrunk from revealing it, although determined that at some time or another he should be made acquainted with it, and with that view, to guard against the contingencies of sudden death, prepared a narrative of the events I am relating, which is at this moment in my desk addressed to him. Mr. Holden,” concluded Mr. Pownal, and his voice choked for an instant, “I can wish you no higher good fortune than that the youth, who, if not the offspring of my loins, is the son of my affection, may be to you a source of as much happiness as he has been to me.”

Moved to tears the young man threw himself into the arms of his benefactor, and in broken words murmured his gratitude.

“Ah!” cried he, “you were always so indulgent and so kind, dear sir! Had it not been for, you, what should I have been to day?”

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"Nay, Thomas," said Mr. Pownal, "you have conferred a benefit greater than you received. You filled a void in hearts that were aching for an object of parental love, and for years were the solitary beam of sunshine in a household that would else have been desolate and dark. And had I not interposed, other means would have been found to restore you to your proper sphere. There is that in you, my son—let me still call you by the dear name—that under any circumstances would have forced its way, and elevated you from darkness into light, from obscurity into distinction."

Young Pownal cast his eyes upon the carpet, and blushed like a girl at the recital of his praises. No words came to his assistance, but the deep voice of his father relieved him from his embarrassment.

"It may be true what thou sayest, angel of the Lord," he said, addressing Mr. Pownal, "thou who hast been even as a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, to guide the lad through the wilderness of the world, but not the less are our thanks and eternal gratitude due to thee as the chosen instrument to accomplish His will. May the blessing of the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, of Him who called unto Moses out of the burning bush, of Him who is the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning Star, rest and abide with thee and thy house for ever. And thou, madam," he added, approaching Mrs. Pownal with a dignity and grace that caused his singular appearance to be quite overlooked, "how shall he, who is an outcast no longer, thank thee?" He pressed his hand upon his heart, as if to restrain its beating, then bending over and taking her hand into his own, kissed it with the devotion of a devotee. "Blessed be thou above women. The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble, and fulfill all thy desire. Thou didst pity and shalt be pitied: thou wast merciful and shalt receive mercy. 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these little ones, ye did it unto me,' saith Christ."

"We are abundantly compensated, Mr. Holden," observed Mrs. Pownal, feeling it incumbent to say something, and yet at a loss what to say. "Mr. Pownal has expressed my feelings better than I can myself. But, Thomas, you shall still be our son, for all these disclosures."

"Mother! mother!" cried Pownal, kneeling by her side, and kissing the lips she offered to his, "you shall always be my dear mother, as long as you permit me to call you so. Oh, how little have I known how much I was indebted to you, and my second father. I have dreamed and wondered, but the imagination still fell short of the truth."

"Thou hast received an obligation, my son," said Holden, "which all thy love and devotedness can never repay, and the claims of thy parents by kindness are stronger than mine. To me thou owest life, to them its preservation and honorable station. Thou wilt give me the love thou hast to spare, but to them belongs the greater portion."

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"We will be content with equal parts," said Mr. Pownal, smiling. "In this partnership of affection none must claim a superior share."

"Strange!" exclaimed Holden, fastening his eyes on his son, and speaking, as was his wont sometimes, as to himself, "that the full truth broke not on me before. The heart yearned to him, he was as a bright star to me; his voice was the music of the forest to my ears; his eyes were as a sweet dream, a vanished happiness, but I understood not. It is plain now. It was the voice of my Sarah I heard: they were her eyes that looked into my heart through his. And was it not thy prompting, mysterious Nature, that inclined him to me? Was there not a dim revelation, that I was more to him than other men? Else why delighted he in the society of a lone, wayward man like me? Lord God Almighty, no man knoweth the ordinances of heaven, nor can he set the dominion thereof upon the earth!"

CHAPTER XXXII.

Welcome pure thoughts, welcome ye silent groves.
These guests, these courts my soul most dearly loves:
Now the winged people of the sky shall sing
My cheerful anthems to the gladsome spring.

QUOTED BY IZAAK WALTON, AS BY SIR HARRY WOTTON.

No reason seemed now to exist for Holden's impatience to depart, yet he longed for the quiet of his hut on the island. The excitement of his feelings, which, while it acted as a stimulus, sustained him, had passed away, and the ordinary consequences of overtaking nature followed. Besides, he had lived so long in solitude, that any other mode of life was to him unnatural, and especially the roar and tumult of a populous place, disturbed him. The loudest sounds to which he had been accustomed were the rippling of the tide on the beach, or the sigh of the wind, and the songs of birds; and the difference between them and the noises he now heard, formed a contrast equally harsh and discordant. But by no word did he betray his wish. Both Mr. and Mrs. Pownal were desirous to delay the departure of himself and son, and it seemed to him ingratitude to act in any respect in opposition to the inclinations of persons to whom he was so greatly indebted. Several days, therefore, passed after the happening of the events recapitulated in the last chapter, and yet he remained in New York. But his feelings could not escape the observation of his son. Better acquainted than their host and hostess with the peculiarities of his father, he seized an opportunity to speak of the necessity of a speedy farewell.

"You are right, I do not doubt, Thomas," said Mr. Pownal, in reply to the observation of the young man, "and yet I never felt so loth to let you go. While with me you seem still in some wise to belong to me, and I feel a reluctance to lose you out of my sight."

“Do you think it possible,” exclaimed young Pownal—whom his father, out of a sentiment of delicacy towards his friends, had insisted should be called by the name of his preserver, he had so long borne, for which reason we shall continue to use it—“do you think it possible I can ever forget how deeply I am indebted, that I shall ever cease to love you with all the affection of a son, on whom you have lavished every possible kindness?”

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"No; I have no fear of that. It is only the pain of parting from which I shrink. As we grow older we cling with the greater tenacity, and, perhaps, selfishness, to the enjoyments that are left. But this will never do. I must think more of you, and less of myself. I have some questions to ask, and something besides to say before you leave for Hillsdale, and this is as good an opportunity, probably, as we shall have, so take a seat by me, and we will enter upon business."

Pownal, who hitherto had remained standing, now took a seat by the side of his benefactor, and waited for him to continue the conversation.

"Are you satisfied," inquired Mr. Pownal, "with your situation at Hillsdale?"

"Perfectly," replied the young man. "My time has passed very happily there."

"I meant it," continued Mr. Pownal, "only as an interlude. I sent you thither for the purpose of making you better acquainted with the branches of our business, intending to leave it to your choice either to remain or return to the city, and resume your place in the counting-house. I confess, the latter would suit me better, because you would be nearer to me; but consult your inclinations, and I shall be satisfied."

"My dear sir," said Pownal, with some little hesitation, "you are always kind, and since you leave it to my choice, I hope it will not offend you if I say, that for the present I should prefer to remain at Hillsdale."

"It is not at all surprising that you should wish to be with your father, whom, in so wonderful a manner, you have discovered," answered Mr. Pownal. "I am delighted with him, and his noble qualities must be restored to the world. We must find means to induce him to conquer his repugnance to society and its habits."

"I hope for such a result," said the young man, "but he is evidently now uneasy and pining for solitude."

"'Time and I against any two,' says the Spanish proverb. I'll be bound we will metamorphose him yet. Do you think the business at Hillsdale is capable of much extension?"

"I am sure of it. It may easily be doubled, and safely. I will give you my reasons for the opinion now, if you wish."

"Never mind for the present. It after all can make no difference in what I am about to say. I have been looking at your balance-sheet, and must say that, for a first year's business, you have done remarkably well. You have made very few bad debts, the sales are large, and profits satisfactory. You have the merchant in you, Thomas, and I must try to secure you for us beyond the power of loss. How would you like to become a member of the firm?"

“Sir,” said Pownal, “your goodness overpowers me. No father could be more generous. You will do with me as you please. But what say your partners?”

“I have consulted with them, and they are of the same opinion as myself, and desire your admission. I have drawn up the terms, which, I hope, will please you, on this slip of paper, and that you may start to a little better advantage, have directed a small sum to be carried to your credit on the books, which you will also find jotted down on the paper.”

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"How can I thank you, sir?" said Pownal, receiving the paper, and preparing, without examining it, to place it in his pocket.

"But that is not like a merchant," exclaimed Mr. Pownal smiling, "to accept of a contract without looking at it. Read it, Thomas, and see if you wish to suggest any change."

"I am willing to trust my interests, my life, to you, sir, and it is unnecessary. But it is your command and I obey you."

We must allow, that the thought of becoming at some time a member of the firm, wherein he had received his mercantile education, had passed before through the mind of Pownal, but the conditions upon which he was now admitted were favorable beyond his most sanguine expectations. The sum of money, too, carried to the credit of his account as a capital, on which to commence, deserved a better name than that of a small sum, which the opulent merchant had called it. Pownal saw himself now at once elevated into a condition, not only to supply the wants of his father and himself, but to warrant him to cherish hopes for the success of other plans that lay very near his heart. As the thought of Anne Bernard occurred to him, and he reflected upon the goodness of his generous benefactor, it seemed, to his ingenuous mind, as if he were half guilty of a wrong in withholding any part of his confidence from Mr. Pownal, and he felt strongly tempted to admit him into the inner sanctuary of his soul. But a feeling natural in such cases, and the consideration that he was not perfectly sure his affection was returned by Anne, restrained him, and he contented himself with repeating his thanks for a generosity so much exceeding his hopes.

"Nay," said the merchant, "I must be the judge of these things. This may do to begin with. When you are married I will double it."

The tell-tale cheeks of Pownal excited the suspicions of the old gentleman, whose eyes were fastened on him as he spoke.

"Ah, ha!" cried he, laughing, "have I found you out, Thomas? I do not believe, on the whole, the bribe will be necessary. I understand now your enthusiasm about the beauties of Hillsdale. But never blush. There's no harm in possessing good taste. I was in love twenty times before I was your age. When shall the wedding be, eh?"

"My dear sir," said Pownal smiling, "it will be time enough years hence, to think of these things. In a matter of this kind, I know of no better example to follow, than your own."

"No, no, no, Thomas, do not imitate me there; I postponed my happiness too long, and were I to commence life again, I should not crawl with such a snail's pace towards it as formerly. But I have no fear of you or that my joints will be too stiff to dance on the joyful occasion."

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The parting was such as might be expected between persons brought together under circumstances so singular, where on the one side there was a sense of obligation, it was a pleasure to cherish, and on the other, the yet higher gratification of conferring happiness. As Holden wrung the hand of Mr. Pownal who accompanied them to the vessel, that was to take them home, he invoked, in his enthusiastic way, a blessing upon his head. "The Almighty bless thee," he exclaimed, "with blessings of Heaven above, and blessings of the deep that lieth under. May thy bow abide in strength, and the arms of thy hands be made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."

Knowing how little his father prized the things of this world. Pownal had not communicated to him before their departure the liberal conduct of the noble merchant they had just left, but now, in a conversation one day, in which they reviewed the past, and, notwithstanding the Solitary's faith in the speedy coming of a mighty change, speculated on the future, he disclosed the last evidence of the affection of his preserver. Holden listened with a gratified air, for how could he be otherwise than pleased that the worth and amiable qualities of his son, had awakened so deep an interest in the heart of another, but replied,

"It was well meant, but unnecessary. Thou hast no need of the gold and silver of others."

The young man, supposing his father had reference to his peculiar religious notions, was silent, for it was a subject which could not be adverted to without great delicacy, and danger of vehement bursts of enthusiasm.

"Thou comprehendest me not," said Holden. "I say thou art in no want of the dross with which men buy, to their grief and shame, the deluding vanities of the world."

"If it is your wish, father, I will return the gift," said Pownal, "though I know it will hurt the generous heart of the giver."

"I interpose not. No voice calleth me thereto. But my meaning is still dark, and I know not whether it is best to admit thee fully to my counsels. Yet, thus much mayest thou now know, and more shalt thou know hereafter, that thy father is no pauper, to crave the wealth of others, and that his poverty is voluntary. The body is kept poor, that divine grace may the more readily enrich the soul."

"Believe me, sir, I do not wish to intrude into anything which it is your desire to keep secret."

"There is nothing secret that shall not be revealed," exclaimed Holden, catching at the last word, "but everything in its own order. Let it satisfy thee, therefore, my son, to know for the present that thy father hath but to stretch forth his hand and it shall be filled, but to knock and it shall be opened. But this is not the day, nor for my own sake, should the



clock of time ever strike the hour, when that which was thrown away shall be taken again, that which was despised shall be valued. Yet because of thee may I not lawfully withhold the hand, and as I gaze upon thy fair young face, thou seemest one whose spirit is so balanced that what men call prosperity will not hurt thee. But affection is blind, and my heart may deceive me, and therefore will I wait until He speaks who cannot lead astray or deceive."

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It was partly to himself, and partly to his son, that the Solitary spoke, nor was Pownal at all certain that he comprehended his meaning. He had at first fancied, his father was offended at his acceptance of the rich merchant's bounty, but he soon saw that Holden regarded money too little to consider the mere giving or receiving of it as of much consequence. Upon further reflection, and a consideration of the manner in which his father had lived for so many years, the idea which yet seemed shadowed forth by his language, that he was possessed of property, appeared utterly chimerical. He was therefore disposed to attach to his father's words some mystical sense, or to suppose that he imagined himself in possession of a secret, by means of which he could command the wealth he scorned. Of course the young man considered such anticipations as visionary as the immediate coming of that millenium for which the longing eyes of the enthusiast daily looked forth.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

From yon blue heavens, above us bent,
The gard'ner Adam and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent:
Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good;
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

TENNYSON.

The news of the discovery of the relationship between Holden and Pownal had reached Hillsdale before their arrival, and the friends and acquaintances of both, comprising pretty much the whole village, hastened to present their congratulations. Many supposed now they had obtained a clue to the singularities of the Solitary, and expected that since he had recovered his son, he would resume the habits of ordinary life. But nothing seemed further from Holden's intention. In spite of the entreaties of his son, and the remonstrances of those few who ventured to speak to him on the subject, he returned on the very day of their arrival to his cabin. It was, however, with no harshness, but with gentle and even exculpatory language, he refused their request.

"Think not hard of me, my son, nor you, kind friends," he said, "if my ears are deaf to your solicitations. The old man is weary and seeketh rest. The trembling nerves still quiver to the cries of the horsemen and the rattling of chariots, nor may the tumult pass away till old sights and sounds stealing in with soft ministry compose the excited yet not unpleased spirit. I would gladly in solitude lay my tired head on the bosom of the Father, and thank Him in the silence of His works for mercies exceeding thought."

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Holden, however, could not refuse to allow his son to accompany him, and to provide such little necessities, as were esteemed essential to his comfort. But he permitted the young man to remain only a short time. "Go," he said, "the world is bright before thee; enjoy its transient sunshine. The time may come when even thou, with hope and confidence in thy heart, and heaven in thine eyes, shalt say, 'I have no pleasure therein.'" Pownal therefore returned to Hillsdale, without reluctance it may be supposed, when we add, that the same evening found him at the house of Mr. Bernard. It will be recollected he had commissions to execute for both the Judge and his wife, but if the reader thinks that not a sufficient reason why he should call upon them so soon, we have no objection to his adopting any other conjecture, even to the extravagant supposition, that there was some magnet to attract the young man's wandering feet.

It was a happy evening Pownal spent at the Judge's house. All seemed glad to see him again, and expressed their delight and wonder at the discovery of his parent. And yet the young man could not help fancying there was a greater difference between his reception by the members of the family, than he had been accustomed to. Mr. and Mrs. Bernard, indeed, were equally cordial as of old, but Anne, though she tendered him her hand with her usual frankness, and allowed it to linger in his, appeared graver, and less disposed to indulge an exuberance of spirits, while William Bernard was evidently more distant, and formal. There was, however, no want of politeness on his part, for he mingled with his usual grace and intelligence in the conversation, and the change was perceptible rather in the omission of old terms of familiarity, than in any manifestation of coldness. He seemed to pay the same attention, and evince a like interest with the rest, in the particulars of the adventures of Pownal, which, at the request of Mrs. Bernard, he narrated. Had a stranger, or one who saw the two young men together for the first time, been present, he would have noticed nothing inconsistent with ordinary friendship, but Pownal compared the present with the past, and his jealous sensitiveness detected a something wanting. But for all that, his enjoyment, though it might be lessened, was not, as we have intimated, destroyed. He half suspected the cause, and his proud spirit rose with resentment. But so long as he enjoyed the esteem of the parents, and was a welcome visitor at their house, and Miss Bernard treated him with unabated regard, he could well afford, he thought, to pass by without notice humors, which, in his changed condition, he considered equally unreasonable and absurd. For, he was no longer a mere clerk, without position in society, but the member of a long-established and wealthy firm, and a favorite of its head, who seemed to have taken the fortunes of his young partner into his own hands, with a determination to secure their success.

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True, he was the son of a poor and eccentric man, but no dishonor was attached to his father's name, and so far as education and genuine refinement were concerned, he was the equal of any, and the superior of most, by whom he was surrounded. With far different feelings, therefore, from those in the earlier period of his acquaintance with Miss Bernard, when he discovered she was becoming dearer to him than prudence permitted, did he now approach her. He dared to look forward to the time when it would be no presumption to avow his feelings.

The cause of William Bernard's coldness will be better understood by a reference to a conversation between him and his sister, shortly before the return of Pownal to Hillsdale. Rumor, with her thousand tongues, had been busy, and, as is not unusual on such occasions, embellished the story with innumerable fanciful ornaments. The brother and sister had both heard the reports, and they were the subject of their discussion.

"Why, Anne!" said William, "this is more wonderful than Robinson Crusoe, or the Children of the Abbey. How do you think Pownal, or Mr. Holden, as I suppose we must call him now, relishes the relationship?"

"How, William, can he be otherwise than glad to find a father?" replied his sister.

"A vast deal depends upon who the father is."

"What! is it you who speak so?" cried Anne, with sparkling eyes. "What is there in the father unworthy of the son?"

"Were I now in Pownal's place, I should have preferred to discover a parent in some one else than in a half crazy man, who supports himself by basket-making."

"And can you not," said his sister, indignantly, "under the mask which circumstances have imposed upon him, detect the noble-hearted gentleman? This is not at all like you, William, and I think his very misfortunes ought to be a passport to your kindness."

"So they should be, and so they are, but the facts, which I will not repeat, because it offends you, remain. Think you, it can be very pleasant, for a young man, to have precisely—precisely such a connection?"

"I should despise Thomas Pownal, if he felt anything but pride in his father. I am the daughter of a republican, and care little for the distinctions which the tailor makes. The noblest hearts are not always those which beat under the finest broadcloth."

"The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that."



"Well, Anne," said her brother, "I never expected to take a lesson, in democracy, from you, nor fancied you were a politician before; but, it seems to me you have become lately very sharp-sighted, to detect Holden's merits. What is it that has so improved your vision?"

"You are trying to tease me, now, but I will not be angry. You know, as well as I do, that from the first I took a liking to Mr. Holden. So far from being frightened at him, when I was a child, nothing pleased me better than when he took Faith and me into his arms, and told us stories out of the Bible. I do believe I had then a presentiment he was something different from what he seemed."

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"But you have shown an extraordinary interest in him lately. Even now, your voice trembles, and your color is raised beyond the requirements of the occasion."

"How is it possible to avoid being excited, when my brother speaks disparagingly of one who has every title to compassion and respect? Is it not enough to soften your heart, to think of the wretchedness he suffered so many years, and which shattered his fine understanding? And now, that his—Oh, William!" she cried, bursting into tears, "I did not think you were so hard-hearted."

"My dear Anne! my dear sister!" exclaimed her brother, putting his arm around her and drawing her towards him, "forgive me. I never meant to hurt your feelings, though I am sorry they are so much interested."

"I will not affect to misunderstand you, brother," she said, recovering herself; "but you are mistaken, if you suppose that Mr. Pownal has ever—has ever—spoken to me in a manner different from the way in which he is in the habit of conversing with other ladies."

"Heaven be praised for that," said her brother. "But I ought to have known you never would permit it."

"You ought to have known that, had he done so, I should not have kept it a secret. My father and mother, and you, would have been made acquainted with it."

"And, now, dear Annie, since things are as they are, I hope you will not give Pownal any encouragement. Whatever may be your present feelings, he cannot disguise the fact, that he loves dearly to visit here."

"Encouragement!" cried Anne, her natural vivacity flashing up at the imputation. "What do you take me for, William Bernard, that you venture to use such a word? Am I one of those old maids whom some wicked wag has described as crying out in despair, 'Who will have me?' or a cherry, at which any bird can pick?"

"There spoke the spirit of my sister. I hear, now, Anne Bernard. You will not forget the position of our family in society, and that upon you and myself are centered the hopes of our parents."

"I trust I shall never forget my love and duty, or have any secrets from them. They have a right to be acquainted with every emotion of my heart, nor am I ashamed they should be seen."

"The accomplishments of Pownal entitle him to move in the first society, I cannot deny that," continued young Bernard, "but, in my judgment, something more is necessary in order to warrant his boldness in aspiring to connect himself with one of the first families in the country."

“You will continue to harp on that string, William, but my opinion differs from yours. In our country there should be no distinctions but such as are created by goodness and intelligence.”

“It all sounds very well in theory, but the application of the rule is impossible. The dreamers of Utopian schemes may amuse themselves with such hallucinations, but practical people can only smile at them.”

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"Class me among the dreamers. Nor will I believe that whatever is true and just is impracticable. Does redder blood flow in the veins of the child cradled under a silken canopy, than in those of one rocked in a kneading-trough?"

"You have profited to some purpose by the French lessons of our father," said Bernard, bitterly. "Principles like these may yet produce as much confusion in our family on a small scale, as they did in France on a mighty theatre."

"You are losing yourself in the clouds, dear brother. But there can be no danger in following the guidance of one so wise and experienced as our father, nor does it become you to speak slightly of any opinion he may adopt."

"I did not mean to do so. I should be the last one to do so, though I cannot always agree with him. But you take an unfair advantage of the little excitement I feel, to put me in the wrong. Do you think I can look on without being painfully interested, when I see my only sister about to throw herself away upon this obscure stranger, for you cannot conceal it from me that you love him?"

"Throw myself away! Obscure stranger! You are unkind William. Love him! it will be time enough to grant my love when it is asked for. It does not become me, perhaps, to say it, but Mr. Pownal is not here to answer for himself, and for that reason I will defend him. There lives not the woman who might not be proud of the love of so noble and pure a heart. But you are not in a humor to hear reason," she added, rising, "and I will leave you until your returning good sense shall have driven away suspicions equally unfounded and unjust."

"Stay, Anne, stop, sister," cried Bernard, as with a heightened color she hastened out of the room. "She is too much offended," he said to himself, "to heed me, and I must wait for a more favorable opportunity to renew the conversation. I have seen this fancy gradually coming on, and, fool that I was, was afraid to speak for fear of making things worse. I thought it might be only a passing whim, like those which flutter twenty times through girls' silly heads before they are married, and was unwilling to treat it as of any consequence. But does Anne mean to deceive me? It is not at all like her. She never did so before. No, she has courage enough for anything, and is incapable of deception. But these foolish feelings strangely affect young women and—young men, too. She must, herself, be deceived. She cannot be acquainted with the state of her own heart. Yet it may not have gone so far that it cannot be stopped. I had other plans for her, nor will I give them up. Father! mother! Pooh! nothing can be done with them. He would not see her lip quiver or a tear stand in her eye, if it could be prevented at the expense of half his fortune, and mother always thinks both perfection. No, if anything is to be done it must be with Anne herself, or Pownal, perhaps. Yet I would not make the little minx unhappy. But to be the brother-in-law of the son of an insane basket-maker! It is too ridiculous."

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No two persons could be more unlike in temperament, and in many respects in the organization of their minds, than William Bernard and his sister. She, the creature of impulse, arriving at her conclusions by a process like intuition: he, calm, thoughtful, deliberately weighing and revising every argument before he made up his mind: she, destitute of all worldly prudence and trusting to the inspirations of an ingenuous and bold nature: he, worldly wise, cautious, and calculating the end from the beginning. Yet were his aspirations noble and untainted with a sordid or mean motive. He would not for a world have sacrificed the happiness of his sister, but he thought it not unbecoming to promote his personal views by her means, provided it could be done without injury to herself. He was a politician, and young as he was his scheming brain already formed plans of family and personal aggrandizement, extending far into the future. Anne was mixed up with these in his mind, and he hoped, by the marriage connection she might form, to increase a family influence in furtherance of his plans. These seemed likely to be defeated by Anne's partiality for Pownal, and the young man felt the disappointment as keenly as his cool philosophical nature would permit. But let it not be thought that William Bernard brought worldly prudence into all his plans. His love of Faith Armstrong had no connection with any such feelings, and she would have been equally the object of his admiration and choice, had she been a portionless maiden instead of the heiress of the wealthy Mr. Armstrong. We will not say that her prospect of succeeding to a large fortune was disagreeable to her lover, but though when he thought of her it would sometimes occur to his mind, yet was it no consideration that corrupted the purity of his affection.

Anne, when she left her brother, hastened to her chamber and subjected her heart to a scrutiny it had never experienced. She was startled upon an examination her brother's language had suggested, to find the interest Pownal had awakened in her bosom. She had been pleased to be in his company, and to receive from him those little attentions which young men are in the habit of rendering to those of the same age of the other sex: a party never seemed complete from which he was absent: there was no one whose hand she more willingly accepted for the dance, or whose praise was more welcome when she rose from the piano: but though the emotions she felt in his presence were so agreeable, she had not suspected them to be those of love. Her brother had abruptly awakened her to the reality. In the simplicity of her innocence, and with somewhat of a maiden shame, she blamed herself for allowing any young man to become to her an object of so much interest, and shrunk from the idea of having at some time unwittingly betrayed herself. She determined, whatever pain it might cost, to reveal to her mother all her feelings, and to be guided by her advice.

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True hearted, guileless girl! instinctively she felt that the path of duty leads to peace and happiness.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Oh, how this tyrant, doubt, torments my breast!
My thoughts, like birds, who're frighten'd from their nest,
Around the place where all was hush'd before,
Flutter, and hardly nestle any more.

OTWAY.

Our story now reverts to the Indians, of whom we have for so long made little or no mention. It is in vain for us to attempt to control the course of our tale, and to compel it, as it were, to be content with the artificial banks of a canal, stealing insensibly on, with uniform smoothness, to its terminus. Whatever we may do, it will assert its liberty, and wander in its own way, foaming down rocks and rugged precipices, like a mountain stream, at one moment, at the next, stagnating into a pool, and afterwards gliding off in erratic windings, roaming like Ceres, searching through the world for her lost Proserpine. Not ours to subject the succession of events to our will, but to narrate them with such poor skill as nature and a defective education concede, trusting that a homely sincerity, if it cannot wholly supply the place of art, may palliate its want.

Peena, the partridge, or Esther, as she was more commonly called by the whites, heard, with an exquisite delight, that the little boy; whom she had left on the steps of the house, in New York, and now discovered to be Pownal, was the son of Holden. Nothing could have happened more calculated to deepen the reverence she had long felt for the Solitary, and to convince her—though no such argument was necessary—that he was a “great medicine,” or one peculiarly the favorite, and under the guardianship, of Superior Powers. She herself seemed controlled by the Manito that watched over Holden, and compelled, even unknown to herself, to guard his interests. For was it not she who had preserved the child? Was it not she who had placed him in a situation to become a great and rich man?—for such, to her simplicity, Pownal seemed to be—was it not she who had brought father and son together, and revealed each to the other? As these reflections and the like passed through her mind, a shudder of superstition thrilled her frame, and she turned her attention to the consideration of how she might best fulfill the designs of the Manito. For it will be remembered, that, although nominally a Christian, she had not wholly cast off the wild notions of her tribe, if it be, indeed, possible for an adult Indian to do so. The maxim of Horace:

“Quo semel est imbuta recens servabit odorem
Testa diu,”

is of universal application, nor has it ever greater force than when reference is had to ideas, connected with the terrors of an unseen world, and where the mind that entertains them is destitute of the advantages of education.

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Esther, it may readily then be supposed, did not delay after their arrival, to go to see both Holden and his son. She could not behold again, and recognize the child she had preserved, in the young man who stood before her, without strong feeling, nor could Pownal look unmoved upon the gentle and timid woman, to whom he was so much indebted. Esther knew again the string of coral beads she had left upon the boy's neck, and ascribed it to the whispers of the Great Spirit, that she had allowed them to remain. She did not return from her visit to Pownal empty handed. In fact, she was loaded with as many presents, of such articles as suited her condition and half-civilized taste, as she and the boy, Quadaquina, who commonly accompanied her, could carry. It was the mode which naturally suggested itself to Pownal, as alike most pleasing to Peena, and most calculated to impress her mind with a sense of his estimate of her services, especially as there was connected with the gifts a promise, that during his life her wants and wishes should all be supplied. Peena now felt herself the happiest and richest of her tribe, and her heart glowed with devotion towards those who had been the means of investing her with wealth, and the consequence attached to it.

"Hugh!" ejaculated Ohquamehud, in amazement, as the squaw and her son threw down upon the floor of the cabin the rich red and blue cloths, and hats, and shoes, and other articles which Pownal had pressed upon them. The exclamation escaped involuntarily, but, with a natural politeness, the Indian asked no questions, but waited till it should please the squaw to furnish an explanation.

The sweet-tempered Peena saw his desire, and turning to the boy, she said, in their native language, in which the three always conversed together:

"Speak, Quadaquina, that the eyes of thy father's brother may be opened."

The boy, in obedience to the command of his mother, and without looking at the Indian, tersely replied:

"They are the gifts of my white brother with the open hand, the son of the Longbeard."

Ohquamehud appeared offended, and he asked, in a sharp tone:

"Is Quadaquina ashamed, when he speaks to a warrior, to look him in the eyes, and did he learn his manners from the pale faces?"

The boy turned round, and gazed full at the other, and his eyes glistened, yet it was in a low, soft tone he replied:

"Quadaquina is a child, and knows not the customs of warriors, and children turn away their eyes from what they do not wish to see."

Ohquamehud's face darkened as he said:

“The arts of the Longbeard have blown a cloud between me and my kindred, so that they cannot see me, and it is time my feet were turned towards the setting sun.”

“It is the fire-water that puts out the eyes of Ohquamehud, and makes him forget what he owes to the wife of Huttamoiden,” exclaimed the boy, with suppressed passion.

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"Peace, Quadaquina," said his mother. "Ohquamehud is not now the slave of the fire-water. Go," she added, detecting, with a mother's sagacity, the tumult in the mind of the high-spirited boy, "and return not until thou hast tamed thine anger. Wolves dwell not in the cabin of Peena."

The boy, with downcast eyes, and obedient to his mother, left the hut.

In explanation of this scene we may say, that, unhappily, like most Indians, Ohquamehud was addicted to the use of spirituous liquors, his indulgence in the fiery gratification being limited only by his inability at all times to obtain it. Although unable to indulge his appetite in the cabin of Esther, he occasionally procured strong liquors in the huts of the other Indians, with whom the practice of taking stimulants was almost universal, and sometimes in such quantities as utterly to lose his reason. Returned on one of these occasions, he demanded rum from Esther, and, upon her refusal to give it, struck her a blow. This so exasperated the boy, Quadaquina, who was present, that, with a club, he prostrated the drunken man, which, indeed, in the condition he was in, was not difficult, and would, had he not been restrained by Peena, have inflicted a serious injury, if not killed him. Ohquamehud never knew that he had been struck, but ascribed the violent pain in his head the next day to the fire-water, and the contusion to a fall. Peena, while lamenting the excesses of her relative, felt little or no resentment towards him; but not so with the boy. He despised Ohquamehud for the miserable exhibitions of imbecility he made in his cups, and hated him for the violence to his mother.

"Look," said Peena, pointing to the articles, and desirous to remove the rising discontent from the mind of the Indian, "the heart of the young Longbeard (for she had no other name for Pownal in her language) is large. All these he took out of it for Peena."

"Accursed be the gifts of the pale faces!" exclaimed Ohquamehud. "For such rags our fathers sold our hunting-grounds, and gave permission to the strangers to build walls in the rivers so that the fish cannot swim up."

"Peena sold nothing for these," said the squaw, mildly. "Because the young Longbeard loved Peena he gave them all to her."

"Did not Peena preserve his life? But she is right. The white face has an open hand, and pays more for his life than it is worth."

"The words of my husband's brother are very bitter. What has the boy whom Huttamoiden's arm saved from the flames, done, that blackness should gather over the face of Ohquamehud?"

"Quah! Does Peena ask? She is more foolish than the bird, from which she takes her name, when it flies into a tree. Is he not the son of Onontio?"

“Peena never saw Onontio. She has only heard of him as one, who like the red men, loves scalps. The Longbeard is a man of peace, and loves them not. The eyes of Ohquamehud are getting dim.”

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"The eyes of Ohquamehud are two fires, which throw a light upon his path, and he sees clearly what is before him. It is only blood that can wash out from the eyes of a warrior the remembrance of his enemy, and nothing but water has cleansed Ohquamehud's. Thrice have I meet Onontio, once on the yellow Wabash: again, where the mighty Mississippi and Ohio flow into each other's bosoms, and a third time on the plains of the Upper Illinois. Look," he cried suddenly, throwing open his shirt, and exposing his breast, "the bullet of Onontio made that mark like the track of a swift canoe in the water. It talks very plain and will not let Ohquamehud forget."

"If the Longbeard be Onontio, his son has done my brother no injury."

"The gifts of the pale face have blinded the eyes, and stopped the ears of my sister, so that she can neither see nor hear the truth. Who, when he kills the old panther, lets the cubs escape?"

"There is peace between the red man and the white on the banks of the Sakimau. The long knives are as plenty as the leaves of the western forests. Ohquamehud must forget the bullet of Onontio until he finds him on the prairie, or where the streams run towards the setting sun."

"My sister is very wise," said the savage, his whole manner changing from the ferocity, which had at first characterized it, to a subdued and even quiet tone. "But," added he, as it were despondingly, "let her not fear for the safety of the Longbeard. Ohquamehud is weak and cannot contend with so great a medicine." He turned away, as if unwilling to continue the conversation, nor did Peena manifest any disposition to renew it.

There was, however, something about the Indian, that alarmed the squaw, as she had never been before, notwithstanding the pacific language, with which he concluded. The time was drawing nigh for Ohquamehud's return to the West, and, knowing his brutal temper, she feared that under the influence of the spirituous liquors he indulged in to excess, he might attempt to signalize his departure by some act of wrong and revenge, which would bring down destruction on himself, and disastrously affect the fortunes of the tribe. He evidently cherished a bitter animosity toward Holden, whom he had recognized as a formidable enemy, and although a cool and wary savage when himself, and as capable of appreciating the consequences of an act as clearly as any one and therefore likely to be deterred from violence, there was no knowing what he might do, when stimulated by the frenzy that lurks in the seductive draught. Peena knew the difficulty, with which an Indian foregoes revenge, and her apprehensions were the more excited by the attachment she felt for the two white men. Fears, vague and unformed had before floated through her mind, but they now assumed consistency, and she determined to take such precautions until the departure of her kinsman as should prevent harm either to himself or others. With this view, the moment she was alone with her son, she seized the opportunity to speak on the subject of her alarm. But, first she thought it necessary to reprove him for his feelings towards his uncle.

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"Whose blood," she inquired, "flows in the veins of Quadaquina?"

"It is the blood of Huttamoiden," answered the boy, erecting his head, and drawing himself up proudly.

"And who gave the bold heart and strong arm to Huttamoiden?"

"It was the mighty Obbatinuua, whose name men say is still mentioned in the song on the great fresh water lakes."

"He had two sons?"

"Huttamoiden and"—He stopped as if unwilling to pronounce the name, and turned with a gesture of contempt from his mother.

Peena supplied the omission. "Ohquamehud," she said. "He is a brave warrior, and the Shawnees are proud of his exploits."

"He is a dog!" exclaimed the boy, fiercely. "The blood of Obbatinuua has leaked out of his veins, and the fire-water taken its place."

"He is the kinsman of Quadaquina, and it does not become a child to judge harshly of any member of his tribe."

"Mother," said the boy, gravely, as if he thought it incumbent on him to justify his conduct, "listen. The hearts of Obbatinuua and of Huttamoiden both beat in my bosom. They tell me that the son should remember the glory of his father. Quadaquina is very sick when he sees Ohquamehud lying on the ground, a slave of the fire-water, with his tongue lolling out like a dog's, and he disdains to acknowledge him as of his blood."

Peena was not disposed to blame the boy for his disgust at drunkenness. It was a feeling she had herself most sedulously cultivated by every means in her power, pointing out, as occasion offered, like the Lacedemonians, its exhibitions in its worst forms, and contrasting the wretched drunkard falling, from degradation to degradation, into a dishonored grave, with the sober and vigorous man. She had succeeded in imparting to Quadaquina her own abhorrence of the vice, and was cautious not to weaken the impression.

"Enough," said Peena; "my son will grow up into a brave and good man; but if he despises Ohquamehud for his drunkenness, let him not forget he is his kinsman. Harken," she added, earnestly, and drawing the boy nearer, while she lowered her voice; "does Quadaquina know that Ohquamehud hates the Longbeard?"

"Quadaquina's ears and eyes are open," said the boy.

“Ohquamehud’s feet will soon chase the setting sun,” continued Peena, “but before he starts the fire-water may try to make him do some foolish thing. Quadaquina must have love enough for his kinsman to prevent the folly.”

“Not because Quadaquina loves, but because Ohquamehud is his father’s brother.”

“It is well. Ohquamehud must do the Longbeard no harm, and Quadaquina must watch them both, and, if need be, warn the Longbeard of the danger.”

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The boy, proud of the trust committed to him, promised to obey his mother and be watchful, and from that time commenced a system of patient vigilance, of which a white child would scarcely be capable, but which seems to be a part of the nature of an Indian. Whenever Ohquamehud left the cabin Quadaquina sought no more to avoid him, but accompanied him whenever invited, and if not, generally followed, so as not to lose him long out of sight. There was something about the trust that agreed well with the cunning of the child. It had for him a kind of fascination, like that which induces the hunter patiently, day after day, to pursue the track of the flying game, looking forward to the moment of success, when all his toil is to be repaid.

As for Esther, she lost no time in starting off to apprise Holden and Pownal of the danger she feared. As the canoe glided along under the strokes of the paddle, which she knew how to use as well as any man, she reflected upon the proper manner of communicating her apprehensions; but the more she thought on the subject, the more difficult it appeared. She could not mention the name of her kinsman as the person whom she suspected of an evil design. That seemed to her a sort of treason, a violation of the rights of relationship and of hospitality. He might be innocent. She herself might be to blame for cherishing such suspicions. She knew not what evils the disclosure of Ohquamehud's name connected with the charge might occasion. He might be arrested and put in prison, perhaps, executed. The white people, in the opinion of the Indians, had never exercised much forbearance towards them, and regarded them as an inferior race. The liberty or life of an Indian was, probably, with them, but of little consequence. Besides, might she not be running some risk herself? But this reflection weighed but little with the affectionate creature. While such considerations occurred to the ignorant and timid woman, she was half tempted to turn back, and trust to the Manito or protecting genius, who had thus far borne the Solitary triumphantly through all perils, but her fears at last prevailed over these scruples, and she resolved to give the warning without making allusion to any person.

But Holden, a man naturally of great courage, and familiarized from his earliest years with danger, and the means of avoiding it, paid but little attention to the obscure hints of Esther. He did not even take the trouble to inquire to what direction her allusions pointed. From whom, from what, had he to apprehend danger to his life? He had voluntarily embraced poverty; there was nothing about him to tempt cupidity; he loved all the world, and would hardly, indeed, hesitate to sacrifice, if need were, his life for that of another. What motive could there be to injure him? He was not in the boundless forest of the West, roamed by predatory savages, but in a land of law, and order, and religion. Were he, indeed, in those regions which had witnessed the

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fiery trials and perils of his youth, caution would be necessary; but even then, he would have relied with confidence on his own resources, controlled and directed by a shaping Providence. It was not probable that Holden thought at all of Ohquamehud, but if his mind rested for a moment on the Indian, it could not be with an emotion of fear. The western pioneers feel their superiority too greatly to be accessible to such apprehensions, and Holden had been too long a hunter of savages, to dread either their cunning or their force. Had he reflected on the subject, he would have seemed to himself to stand in pretty much the same relation to a red skin that a grown man does to a child; or, if the Indian were hostile, as the hunter does to the bears, and wolves, and catamounts, he pursues.

“Peena,” said Holden, “I thank thee. It is not in human nature to be ungrateful for affection, whatever be the color of the skin that covers the heart which offers it. But dismiss thy fears, and think of them as unsubstantial as the morning mist. And know that at all times doubt and fear are in vain. Thou canst not make one hair white and another black. It is appointed unto all men once to die, but of the times and seasons, though fixed by the Master of Life with infallible wisdom, and by a decree that may not be gainsaid, no man knoweth. The arrow shot by the hand of Jehovah must reach its mark, though thou seest not its track in the clouds.”

Somewhat more effect attended Esther’s visit to Pownal, not that, indeed, she felt the same apprehensions for him as for his father, or was able to inspire him with fears on his own account. Living in the village, and with habits so different from those of Holden, he was vastly less exposed to a danger of the kind she apprehended. The bullet or the knife of the savage would not be likely to reach him in the streets of Hillsdale. For it is no part of the tactics of an American Indian to expose his own life. On the contrary, he is considered a fool who does so unnecessarily. Stratagem is prized above force, and he is the greatest warrior who, while inflicting an injury, takes care not to expose himself to harm. Esther knew all this, and for these reasons, perhaps, if with Holden she was vague, with his son she was oracular. Consequently, Pownal only laughed at her, when she spoke of himself, as well, indeed, he might, but when she referred to his father, the case was altered. Not that any clear, well-defined danger presented itself, but as in low, monotonous tones the squaw proceeded, darkly hinting at what she would not explain, an oppression fell upon his spirits as strange as it was painful. We can liken it to nothing with more propriety than to that dim sense of terror and discomfort which is sometimes observed in the inferior animals at the approach of an eclipse or the bursting of a hurricane. Yielding to the mysterious monitor, and prompt in action as he was rapid in judgment, Pownal proceeded instantly to seek his father.

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CHAPTER XXXV.

And with him thousand phantoms joined
Who prompt to deeds accursed the mind,
And those the fiends who, near allied,
O'er Nature's wounds and wrecks preside;
While Vengeance, in the lurid air,
Lifts his right arm, exposed and bare.

COLLINS.

Ohquamehud, with all his burning passion for revenge, dared not undertake anything against his enemy, in opposition to the commands of the Manito. After the signal interposition, as he conceived it to be, in favor of Holden at the cabin of the latter, he thought it not prudent to renew the attempt at the same place. The terror of that moment was too deeply impressed to allow him to hazard its repetition. But the power of that Manito might not extend elsewhere, and there were other Manitos who, perhaps, were more powerful, and might be more propitious. He would endeavor to conciliate one of them, and so arrive at the accomplishment of his wishes.

It has been observed that the falls of the Yaupaae were a favorite place of resort for the Solitary. Especially at this season of the year (for it was now the delicious month of June, the loveliest of the twelve) did he love to haunt its neighborhood. There was something in the wild scenery, in the dash and tumult of the water, and in its ceaseless shout, that harmonized well with his feelings in their various moods. His was a grand soul, and felt itself allied to the grandeur of nature. As the air, driven through the pipes of a mighty organ, issues out in solemn concords and divine harmonies, of power to lift the spirit on wings of cherubim and seraphim above "the mists of this dim spot which men call earth" and recall its contemplations to its heavenly origin, so these sights and sounds, playing through the soul of the Solitary, chased away whatever would clog its upward flight, soothing while they elevated, and bridging over the chasm that separates the lower from the upper spheres. This habit of Holden was well known to the Indian, for he had often seen the Solitary musing on a rock that overhung the falls. The retirement of the place, likewise, was favorable to the purpose of an assassin. It was seldom in those days, except tempted by its romance, that a person visited the spot. There were other reasons, also, that had an influence over the superstitious mind of the Indian, in determining his choice.

A child of nature, cradled in her wild bosom and reared in her arms, he, too, felt her awful charms. He could not listen to the voice of the majestic torrent, or gaze upon the grey rocks without a reverent admiration. And in proportion to this feeling was his awe of the Manito who presided over the scene. How prodigious must be His power! The irresistible sweep of the cataract resembled his strength; its roar, his voice; and the

hoary rocks were indicative of his age. Could he obtain the favor of so mighty a Being—could

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he induce him to aid his design, it could be easy of execution. He would make the trial. He would approach him with offerings, and acquaint him with his wishes. The Genius of the Fall ought not to love the white man. The pale faces never offered him gifts, while the red men, long before the arrival of the fatal stranger and since, had covered the shores with presents. He would not be disregardful or turn a deaf ear to one of his children who sought a just revenge.

Animated by these considerations and such hopes, Ohquamehud left the hut of Esther on the afternoon of the following day, to propitiate the Manito of the Falls. His way led through the wood, along the margin of the Severn for a few miles and then crossed the high-road and some open fields and another belt of woods, before he reached the Yaupaae. Arrived at his destination, he looked with a solemn air around as if half expecting to see the Genius of the place. But he beheld nothing, save the wild features of nature, and the moss-grown roof of the old mill, almost hid by the intervening trees: he heard no sound except the uninterrupted roaring of the torrent. In the hot rays of that June sun, not even the birds emitted a note, waiting under their leafy shelters in the darkest recesses of the woods, until the pleasant coolness of approaching evening should tempt them out and reawaken their songs. The Indian, seeing that no one was in sight, commenced collecting brush and sticks of dry wood that lay about, which he heaped up into a pile upon a rock close to the water's edge. After he had gathered together a quantity that appeared to him sufficient, he selected from the stones lying around, a couple of flints which seemed fittest for his purpose, and by striking them violently together, soon succeeded in producing a shower of sparks, which falling on the thoroughly dried and combustible matter, instantly set it on fire, and shot a tongue of flame into the air. Reverently then inclining his body towards the cataract, as in an attitude of supplication, Ohquamehud addressed the Manito, and explained his wishes. He spoke with dignity, as one who, though standing in the presence of a superior, was not unmindful of his own worth. The sounds at first were those of lamentation, so low as scarcely to be audible, and plaintive and sweet as the sighs of the wind through the curled conch shell. "Oh Manito," he said, "where are thy children, once as plenty as the forest leaves? Ask of the month of flowers for the snows that 'Hpoon scatters from his hand, or of the Yaupaae for the streams he pours into the great Salt Lake. The sick-skinned stranger, with hair like the curls of the vine, came from the rising sun. He was weak as a little child: he shivered with the cold: he was perishing with hunger. The red man was strong: he wrapped himself in bear skins and was warm; he built his wigwam of bark, and defied the storm, and meat was plenty in his pot. He pitied the dying stranger; he brought him on his back out of the snow,

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and laid him by the fire; he chafed his limbs and clothed him in furs; he presented venison with his own hands, and the daughters of the tribes offered honey and cakes of maize, and wept for compassion. And the pale face saw that our land was better than his own, and he envied us, and sent messengers to his people to come and strip us of our heritage. Then they came as the flights of pigeons in the spring, innumerable: in multitudes as the shad and salmon, when they ascend the thawed rivers. They poisoned the air with their breaths, and the Indians died helpless in the pestilence. They made war upon us, and drove us from our cornfields; they killed our old men, and sent away our young men and maidens into slavery. O, Manito, thus hath the accursed pale faces requited our kindness.

“Wast thou displeased with the red men O, Manito? Had the children of the Forest offended thee, that thou didst deliver them into the hand of their enemies? See, what thine inconsiderate anger hath done. Thou hast destroyed us, and injured thyself. Where are the offerings that once covered these rocks, the bears’ meat and the venison, the wampum, the feathers of the eagle, and sweet-smelling tobacco? Who now honoreth the Manito of the loud voiced Yaupaae? I listen, but I hear no answer.”

Thus far the voice of Ohquamehud was low and melancholy, as the wail of a broken heart, and his face sad, as of one lamenting for a friend, but now it changed to a loftier expression, and the words were hissed out with a guttural roughness, without being spoken much louder.

“O, Manito!” he continued, “I alone am left to offer thee the sacrifice of the fragrant tobacco. Behold! I will fill thy pipe many times if thou wilt assist me. Onontio hath done me much mischief. He hath burned the villages of my people, and slain our warriors. Why shouldst thou favor him? Is he not a dog which thou wilt kick away from the door of thy lodge? He cometh, sometimes, and sitteth upon the highest rock, to look down upon thy dwelling-place. It is to nourish the pride of his heart. It is to exult that, as far as his eye can see, it beholds no wigwam, nor one bringing thee gifts. Help Manito! Think upon thine own wrongs,—remember the sufferings of the red man, and give me the scalp of Onontio. Accept my offering.”

Having thus spoken, and conciliated by every means that occurred to his untutored mind, the good-will of the tutelary Spirit of the Falls, recounting the generosity of the Indians, and the ingratitude of the whites, remonstrating with the Manito for his supposed anger, and pointing out its folly, trying to stimulate his indignation on account of the neglect of himself, and, to tempt his love of presents by promises, Ohquamehud threw a quantity of tobacco in the leaf, which the Indians were accustomed to raise themselves around their cabins, into the flames. But an incident took place, which, for a time, dashed his hopes to the ground, and covered him with mortification and confusion.

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The day, as we have already intimated, was unusually hot, even for the month of June. As the hours advanced, a sultry and slumbrous silence filled the air, which quivered with the heat. Clouds began to collect in the northwest, and to roll up higher and higher towards the zenith, in immense waves, which darkened momentarily, until half the heavens seemed covered with a pall. The lightning began to play more frequently over the surging blackness, and the mutterings of the thunder became every instant louder. Ohquamehud was not altogether unaware of the approaching storm, but, engaged in the solemn rite, the appearances of the clouds had not attracted as much of his attention as otherwise they would have done. At the instant he threw the tobacco into the fire, the blackness of the clouds was intensest, and a grim silence, as if nature were waiting in anxious expectation of some grand event, brooded over the earth interrupted only by the shout of the cataract; then, a thunderbolt blazed almost in the eyes of the Indian, followed, instantly, by a crash, as if the solid rocks were splintered into fragments, and by a torrent of rain, pouring, not in drops, but, in one continuous flood. For a few moments, the rain continued falling violently, then gradually slackened and ceased. The lightning glittered less frequently; the threatenings of the thunder became less distinct, and the clouds rolled up their dark standards and dispersed, disappearing in the depths of the unfathomable sky.

The Indian, meanwhile, remained immovable, staring at the fire in which the rain hissed as it fell. Thus, like a statue, he stood, until the storm had rolled away; then, recovering from his stupefaction, he turned, despondingly, from the heap of ashes. His offering, then, had been rejected. The Manito either could not or would not assist him. Onontio bore a charmed life. He was a great medicine, beyond the power of his vengeance. Ohquamehud, with a frown upon his brow, dark as the folds of the departing clouds, strode several steps from the rock, when, turning, as if struck by a sudden thought, he commenced searching in the ashes. The surface, of course, was soaked; but, as he penetrated deeper, they were drier, and at the bottom he found unextinguished coals. He carefully searched round, to discover if any portion of the tobacco was unconsumed, but could find none. The offering had not, then, been rejected. The Manito had accepted it. It was not he who sent the storm. Perhaps, some other Manito, who, however, was unable to defeat the sacrifice. The countenance of Ohquamehud brightened, and he began again to collect the brush and scattered sticks. From hollows, in the butts of old trees, and recesses under projecting cliffs, he succeeded in finding enough dry fuel to start the fire anew, and soon it shot up a bright bold flame as before. "O, Manito!" he softly said, "thou art not angry—receive my gift." Again, he threw tobacco into the fire, and, this time, no portent interposed. The greedy flame seized upon the dry leaves, which crackled in the heat, and bore them on its shining billows high into the air. The fire continued burning till all was consumed, and the heap sent up only a spiral of indistinct smoke.

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The importunity of Ohquamehud had wrung from the Genius the consent which he solicited. The gratified Indian stretched out his hand, and again spoke—

“O, Manito, thanks! The heart of Ohquamehud is strong. When he journeys towards the setting sun, his feet shall bound like those of a deer, for the scalp of Onontio will hang at his girdle.”

He glided into the woods and disappeared, ignorant that any one had been a witness of his actions. But, Quadaquina, from an evergreen thicket, had watched all his motions. As the form of Ohquamehud became dimmer in the distance, the boy could not repress his exultation at the success of his ambush, but gave it vent in a whistle, imitating the notes of the whippervill. It caught the ear of the Indian, and he turned, and as he did so, the boy threw himself on the ground. The sun had hardly set. It was too early for the bird to be heard, which never commences his melancholy chant until the shades of evening are spread over the dewy earth. The eyes of Ohquamehud sent sharp glances in the direction whence the whistle came, but he could discern nothing. He listened for awhile, but the sounds were not repeated, and wondering what they could mean—for he relied too implicitly on his senses to suppose his imagination had deceived him—he resumed his course homeward. Presently, Quadaquina slowly rose, and, perceiving no one in sight, followed in the same direction.

The boy, at first, walked deliberately along; but, after, as he supposed, a considerable interval was interposed between him and the Indian, he quickened his steps, in order to more at about the same rate as the other. He had cleared the clumps of trees next to the Falls, and crossed the open fields, and advanced some little distance into the belt of continuous woods along the river, when, suddenly, Ohquamehud, starting from behind the trunk of a large tree, stood before him. Quadaquina’s heart beat quicker, but no outward sign betrayed emotion.

“What does a child like Quadaquina, mean by wandering so far in the dark away from its mother?” demanded Ohquamehud.

“Quadaquina is no longer a child,” answered the boy, “to need his mother. He runs about, like a squirrel, in the woods, whenever he please.”

“Quah! He is more like a bird, and it is to take lessons from the whippervill, that he comes into the woods.”

“Ohquamehud talks like a crow that knows not what he says.”

“When next,” said the Indian, with a laugh, “Quadaquina tries to be a bird, let him remember that the bashful whippervill likes not the sun to hear his song.”

The boy fancying that he had been discovered, and that any further attempt at concealment was vain, answered boldly,

“It is no concern of Ohquamehud, whether Quadaquina is a bird, or a squirrel, or a fish. He will fly in the air, or swim in the water, or run in the woods without asking permission from any one.”

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“And Ohquamehud is not a rabbit to be tracked by a little dog wherever he goes. *Ahque!* (beware). He will strike the little dog if he presses too close upon his heels.” So saying, and as if to give emphasis to his words, the Indian lightly touched the shoulders of the boy, with a small stick which he held in his hand.

It was like lightning falling in a powder-magazine, so suddenly blazed up the anger of Quadaquina, when he felt the touch of the rod. He jumped back as though bitten by a snake, and snatching up a stone, hurled it with all his strength at Ohquamehud. It was well that the Indian leaped behind a tree near which he stood, else the missile, with such true aim and vindictive force was it sent, might have proved fatal. As soon as the stone was thrown, the Indian stepped up to the boy, who stood trembling with passion, but observing no intention on the part of the latter to renew his violence, he passed close by him, with a contemptuous laugh, and pursued his way, Quadaquina following, though at some distance, in his steps. The boy came into the hut of Peena within a short time after the entrance of the Indian, nor could the most jealous eye have detected in either a trace of what had happened. Ohquamehud moved with a grave dignity to the seat he usually occupied, and his pipe presently sent grateful volumes of smoke through the cabin. He noticed, however, that when Quadaquina came in, his mother made no inquiry into the cause which had detained him beyond the hour of the evening meal, and this confirmed the suspicions that were floating in his mind. They were indeed vague, and he fancied that if for any reason he had been watched by Quadaquina, the lesson he had just given would intimidate the boy, and satisfy him there would be danger in dogging the steps of one so vigilant as himself, and who had avowed his intention to punish the offender, if he were caught again.

Quadaquina, when they were by themselves, related to his mother what he had witnessed at the Falls, but made no allusion to the quarrel betwixt Ohquamehud and himself, nor of the threats of the former. He could give no account of the address to the Manito, the distance having been too great to allow him to hear the words. His story caused no alarm to Peena, inasmuch as acquainted with the superstitions of the Indians, she ascribed the sacrifice to a desire to propitiate the Manito, in order to secure a fortunate journey to the western tribe.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

But love itself could never pant
For all that beauty sighs to grant,
With half the fervor hate bestows
Upon the last embrace of foes,
When grappling in the fight, they fold
Those arms that ne'er shall lose their hold;
Friends meet to part; love laughs at faith:
True foes, once met, are joined till death!

BYRON'S *Giaour*.

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Pownal, upon parting with Esther, sought his father. But the expression of his apprehensions was so vague, he was so incapable of giving his fears any definite shape, that he made no more impression than the woman. The calm austerity of the Solitary's face almost melted into a smile at the idea that any event could occur except in the determined course of things. It was the pride of the human heart; it was the presumption of the human intellect that dreamed of freedom of choice or of action. If individual wills were permitted to cross and jostle each other, the universe would be a scene of confusion. Freedom was only in appearance. One grand, serene, supreme will embraced the actual and the ideal in its circle, and all things were moved by a law as certain and irresistible as that which impels worlds in their orbits. The conviction was a part of Holden's self. He could no more be convinced of its fallacy than of his own non-existence, and his son left him with the full assurance that, even were he to know that his life was menaced, he would be the last one to take any precautionary measures for its protection. But, in truth, the fears of Pownal were so slight, that after an allusion to them, he forbore to dwell upon the subject, especially as the conversation took a turn as interesting to him as it was unexpected.

"Thou art of an age, my son," said Holden, abruptly, "to take to thee a wife, and the bounty of the good man whose name I permit thee still to bear, hath placed thee in a condition to gratify an innocent and natural desire. Hath thy heart moved at all in this matter?"

The question was excessively embarrassing, and the young man blushed and hesitated as he replied, that there was yet abundant time to think of such things.

"Think not," said the Solitary, observing his son's hesitation, "that I desire to intrude into thy confidence, though the heart of a son should be like a clear stream, the bottom of which may be seen by a father's eye. I speak, because partly common fame, and partly my own observation, connect thy name in some wise with a young lady's."

"And who is the lady," inquired Pownal, laughing, "whom my indiscreet gallantry has so compromised?"

"Nay, if thou wilt not be frank with me, or choosest to reply in the language of trifling, we will drop the subject."

"I will be frank. I will answer any question you may ask."

"Tell me, then, is there any relation between thee and Anne Bernard tenderer than that of common acquaintance?"

Pownal expected the question, and was therefore prepared.

"I esteem Miss Bernard highly," he said. "I am acquainted with no young lady who is her superior. I should consider myself fortunate to attract her attention. But nothing, except the language of friendship, has passed betwixt us."

"I am satisfied," said Holden, "and it is evidence of excellence in thyself that one possessing the lovable and noble qualities of Anne should attract thee. But though, in the limited circle of the small town, thy presence may be acceptable in the withdrawing room of the wealthy lawyer, thinkest thou he will be willing to give thee the hand of his only daughter?"

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"I have made no pretensions to the hand of Miss Bernard; and even if I did, I see in it no presumption. There is no distinction of patrician and plebeian in this country."

"There are no such names, and yet there is a distinction. Will it please the rich and polished Judge to ally his daughter with the son of one like me?"

"Judge Bernard is above the mean conceit of valuing himself upon his riches. I never heard anything that sounded like arrogance or superciliousness from him, and he has uniformly treated me with kindness. For yourself, dear father, though for reasons of your own you have chosen to lead hitherto this life of solitude and privation, why continue to do so? Why not leave this miserable hut for comforts more befitting your age and the society you are capable of adorning?"

"Forbear! In this miserable hut, as thou callest it, I found the peace that passeth understanding, and its walls are to me more glorious than the gildings of palaces. If thou lovest Anne Bernard, as I strongly suspect, I say not unto thee cease to love her, but wait, hoarding thy love in secrecy and silence, until the fullness of the time is come. Wilt thou not promise me this, for a short time?"

"I will do nothing, father, that may be contrary to your inclinations."

"It is enough: then let there be no change in thy conduct. If thou have the love of Anne, keep it as a precious jewel, but for the present be content with the knowledge thereof: if thou have it not, seek not thereafter. I promise thee it shall be for thy good, nor will I unreasonably try thy patience."

Here the interview ended, and Pownal departed, wondering over the mystery his father affected, though he could not but confess to himself there was a worldly wisdom (as he supposed it to be) in the advice, not to be precipitate, but to watch the course of events. Though unacquainted with the motives of his parent, he was bound to respect his wishes, and felt a natural desire to gratify him to the extent of his ability. He had never found him unreasonable, whatever might be his singularities, and besides, no plan of his own was crossed. He was obliged to admit the possibility of a failure of his suit. To break up the pleasant relations existing betwixt the Bernard family and himself; not to be allowed to approach Anne as before; a cold constraint to be substituted for a confiding friendship! No, the hazard was too great. Things should continue as they were. He and Anne were still young: there was time enough; his father was right; the counsels of age were wiser than those prompted by the rashness and impetuosity of youth.

The following morning was calm and warm, when Holden stood at the door of his cabin, on the second occasion we choose to intrude upon his devotions. Not a cloud was to be seen, and the pearly hue which overspreads a clear summer sky, just stealing out of the shades of night, had not disappeared, except in the eastern quarter of the heavens, where a faint suffusion heralded, like a distant banner, the approach of the sun,

welcomed, at first, by the low twittering of the birds, which gradually increased in frequency and loudness, until they swelled into bold strains, and rose melodiously into the air.

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The Solitary stood, as before, with eyes fixed steadfastly upon the kindling east. Could it be possible that an expectation, which had been so often disappointed, should still be cherished; that no experience, no arguments could dissipate the delusion? It would seem so. By that subtle process, whereby minds possessed by an engrossing idea convert facts, and language, and any circumstances, however trifling, and which, to well-balanced intellects, would seem but little adapted to the purpose, into proofs incontrovertible of their opinions, had he, by dwelling upon certain texts of Scripture, which, with a mad shrewdness, he had collated, imparted to them gigantic proportions, and a peculiar coloring, which dominated and threw light upon the context, but received no qualification or disparagement in return. Without the necessity of repetition, various passages will occur to the reader, which, taken out of connection with what precedes and follows, may easily be made to support a theory of the kind he had adopted.

Holden stood as before, obedient to the command to watch, and verily do we believe, that had he, indeed, seen the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven, the magnificent vision would have impressed him with as much joy as solemnity. But in vain he looked, and having waited until the yellow sunshine, like a shower of gold, fell all around him, he retired into his hut. Not unobserved, however. The Indian, Ohquamehud, with his rifle by his side, from his place of concealment, on the right shore, had been watching all his motions. There had he lain in ambush ever since the stars had deserted the sky. Patiently he lay, with his eyes fixed on the little island. The sun mounted higher; hour after hour passed away, and yet he moved not. The time for the noonday meal arrived, but he heeded it not. The hut of Peena was scarcely more than a couple of miles distant, and he might reach it in a few moments, but he stirred not. In the interval of his absence Onontio might leave the island, and go, he knew not whither, and his watch for the day would be in vain. And now the lengthening shadows were falling towards the east. The middle of the afternoon had arrived.

It was then Ohquamehud saw Holden, or Onontio, as he called him, leave his cabin and enter the canoe. Its bow was turned toward that bank of the river on which the Indian was concealed, but somewhat higher up the stream, and, impelled by a vigorous arm, the light boat skimmed rapidly over the water. It passed so near to the Indian, that a bullet sent from a steady aim must have brought inevitable death, and the thought crossed the mind of the lurking spy, whether it were not better to fire from his ambush, but the recollection of his adventure on the island, and of his offering to the Manito of the Falls, occurred to him, and he allowed the tempting opportunity to escape.

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Holden having run the canoe upon a sandy beach that curved in between two rocks, fastened it by a rope to a heavy stone, and pursued his course along the shore in the direction of the village. The Indian followed at a distance in the woods, taking care to keep his own person concealed, but that of the pursued in sight. Ohquamehud had no means of determining from the movements of Holden, for a considerable time, what were his intentions, whether to enter the village or go to the Falls, but when he reached the spot where, if his design had been to do the latter, he would have turned to the left, to the Indian's bitter disappointment, he advanced up the road to the right.

Ohquamehud pretty much gave up all hope of succeeding in his design that day, but, notwithstanding, still continued his observation. Holden did not proceed far before he entered a small house that stood by the roadside. (This delay, as we shall presently observe, was attended with important consequences.) The person whom the Solitary wanted to see was, probably, not at home, but whatever may have been the reason, he presently left the house, and retracing his steps, struck off, to the delight of Ohquamehud, across the fields, and in a direction towards the Yaupaae. The Indian waited until Holden was out of sight, hidden by the woods on the opposite side of the field, when he slowly followed, looking around, as if in search of game. Having reached the woods, he seemed to think it necessary to use greater precaution in his further approach, the nearer he came to his enemy. With this view, he moved slowly, carefully avoiding stepping on any dry sticks or fallen branches, and stopping if, by any chance, he made the slightest noise. One would have supposed such extreme caution unnecessary, for so loud was the incessant roar of the cataract, that where the Indian stood the keenest hearing could not, even within a few rods, have detected the noise made by walking. It is probable that habit, quite as much as reflection, determined the proceeding of the Indian.

With stealthy tread, creeping like the catamount of his native forests, when he is about to leap upon his prey, the wily and revengeful Indian stole along, holding his rifle in his hand, while each sense was quickened and strained to the utmost. The wood extended quite to the margin of the Falls, so that he was enabled to come near without exposing his person. At length, from behind a large oak, one of the original Sachems of the wood, he beheld his foe. Holden was unarmed, for though, at certain times of the year, when game was in season, he often carried a gun, it was not an uniform practice with him. He stood, unconscious of danger, with his back to the Indian, his arms folded, and gazing upon the water, that roared and tumbled below. The eyes of Ohquamehud gleamed with ferocious satisfaction as he beheld his foe in his power. Thrice he raised the rifle to his shoulder, after carefully examining the priming, and

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as often let the butt slide gently to the ground, pausing a little while each time between, and never taking his eyes off the victim. This conduct might be mistaken for irresolution. Far from it. The fell purpose of the savage never burnt more intensely; his hatred was never more bitter; and he was debating with himself whether to shoot the Solitary as he stood, nor allow him to know his destroyer, or to rouse him to his peril, to play with his agonies, and thus give him a foretaste of death. Holden was at a distance of not more than fifty feet; before him were the precipice and the Falls, behind him was the Indian; there was no retreat. The fiendish desire agitating Ohquamehud was the same as that which the savages feel when they torture a prisoner at the stake, and delay the fatal stroke that is a mercy. He felt sure of his prey, and after a short period of hesitation, determined to gratify the diabolical passion.

He stepped softly from behind the oak, and glided onwards, until the distance betwixt himself and Holden was reduced to thirty feet. The back of the latter was still towards the Indian, and he seemed absorbed in contemplations that shut his senses to the admission of outward objects. Again Ohquamehud paused, but it was only for a moment, and then uttered in a distinct tone the word, "Onontio."

The sound caught the ears of Holden, who instantly turned, and beheld the threatening looks and attitude of the savage. He comprehended, at once, the hostile purpose of Ohquamehud, and the imminence of his own danger, but betrayed not the slightest fear. His cheek blanched not. His eye lost none of its usual daring as he surveyed the assassin; nor did his voice falter, as, disguising his suspicions, he exclaimed—

"Ohquamehud! he is welcome. He hath come to listen to the voice of the Great Spirit, who speaks in the Yaupaae."

"Onontio is mistaken," said the Indian. "The eyes of Ohquamehud are sharp. They have seen the blood of his kindred on the hands of Onontio, and he will wash it off."

"Indian, thou hast discovered—I know not how—that I once bore the name you have mentioned. It was given to me in the days of madness and folly by the western tribes. But, my hands are unstained by any blood, save what was shed in fair and open warfare."

"Ha! Onontio hath forgotten the fight in the night of storms, on the banks of the Yellow Wabash, when the sister of Ohquamehud was slain and his brother pierced by the knife of the accursed pale face, with the curling-hair."

"Indian! I sought to save the maiden's life. I can show the scar I received in her defence. As for thy brother, I know naught of him. If he fell by me, it was in the manner in which one brave warrior meets another."

“It is a lie! The heart of the pale-face is fainting. He is a weasel, that tries to creep through a small hole.”

“If I were armed thou wouldst not dare to speak thus,” said Holden, some of the spirit of his youthful years flashing up. “But, go; thou art a coward to come armed against a defenceless man.”

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"Onontio is a fool! Who told him to leave his rifle in his lodge? He knoweth not so much as a beast or a reptile. When the bear roameth in the forest, doth he leave his claws in his den, or the rattlesnake, his teeth in the hole in the rocks? Let Onontio sing his death-song, but, softly, lest the north wind bear it to the cub, who is waiting for the second bullet in the pouch of Ohquamehud."

A pang of inexpressible agony cut, like a knife, through the heart of Holden. He could brave death himself, but, good God! that his son should be murdered by the savage! The thought was too horrible. For a moment, the courageous heart almost stopped, and, with quivering lips, he commended the young man to the protection of Providence. But the momentary weakness soon passed away, as the dogma of divine decrees or fate occurred to his mind. The blood flowed freer in his veins; his form straightened, and with a dignified gesture, he answered—

"Heathen! I have no death-song to sing. The Christian goeth not to his Maker, boasting of his fancied merits, but, like a child, hiding its face in its mother's bosom, and asking to be forgiven. And know that of thyself thou art powerless. Thou canst do only what is permitted."

"It is well!" exclaimed Ohquamehud, a glow of admiration, at the courage with which Holden met his fate, flashing—in spite of himself—across his countenance, and which he vainly tried to conceal. "The dog of a pale-face is tired of his life, and will thank Ohquamehud for sending him to the spirits of his fathers."

So saying, he raised the rifle to his shoulder and fired. The eyes of the Solitary had been intently fastened upon every motion of his foe, and, the instant before the gun was discharged, he threw his arms violently into the air. Whether the gesture disconcerted the aim of the Indian, or intemperance had weakened his nerves, the rifle was aimed too high and failed of its mark. But Holden's escape was extremely narrow. The bullet grazed his scalp, perforating the cap, and throwing it from his head. In the colloquy, he had, probably, determined upon his line of conduct; for, immediately, upon the flash, he started, with an activity which his appearance hardly promised, towards his antagonist, and before the latter could club his rifle or draw a knife, had seized him around the waist, and strove to throw him on the ground. The Indian dropped the useless gun, and returned the death-grapple.

"Child of the devil!" cried Holden, whose passions were now thoroughly roused, and who fancied himself back again to the time when he fought the red man of the West, "I will send thee, this day, to the place appointed for thee."

Ohquamehud answered not a word, but, straining the other in an embrace as close as his own, summoned all his powers to the deadly struggle.

The two were more equally matched than might at first be supposed. The Indian was more active, but Holden was stronger, and towered above him. The habits of Holden had been eminently conducive to health and strength. There was no superfluous flesh about him, and his sinews were like cord. But, on the other hand, the youth of the Indian was a great advantage, promising an endurance beyond that to be expected from one of the years of Holden.

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With desperate struggles each strove to gain an advantage; but strength on the one side, and activity on the other, foiled their opposing exertions. The turf was torn up under their feet, and they were whirled round, now in this direction, and now in that, until, maddened by the contest, neither thought of his personal safety, nor heeded the frightful abyss on the brink of which they fought. At length, foaming and endeavoring to throttle each other, the foot of one tripped and he stumbled over the precipice, carrying the other down with him in his arms. The grappled foes turned over in the air, and then fell upon the edge of a projecting shelf of a rock, some half a dozen feet below. Ohquamehud was undermost, receiving the full force of the fall, and breaking it for Holden, who, as they touched the rock, threw one arm around the trunk of a small tree that grew out of a fissure. The Indian must have been stunned, for Holden felt his grasp relax, and, still clinging to the tree, he endeavored to withdraw himself from the other's hold. He had partially succeeded, when the Indian, recovering consciousness, made a movement that threw his body over the precipice, down which he would have fallen had he not blindly caught at the freed arm of Holden, which he clutched with the tenacity of despair. The Indian had now recovered from the stunning effect of the fall, and become sensible of his danger. In rolling over the edge of the rock, his moccasined feet had come into contact with a slight projection where his toes had caught, and by means of which, Holden, as well as himself, was relieved in part of the weight of his person. Using this as a support, he made repeated and frantic attempts to spring to the level surface, but the steepness of the rock, and the lowness at which he hung, combined with the exhaustion occasioned by the fierce and prolonged conflict, foiled every effort. At last, he abandoned the attempt to save himself as hopeless, and directed all his exertions to drag his enemy down with him to destruction. With this view, he strained, with all his remaining strength, upon the arm he grasped, in order to force Holden to let go his hold upon the tree. It was now a question of endurance between them, and it is probable that both would have perished, had not an unexpected actor appeared upon the scene.

The boy Quadaquina had been watching Ohquamehud. Like a trained blood-hound, he had kept faithfully on the track and scarcely let the Indian out of sight until he, came near the village. Here he was met by a playmate, with whom, like a child as he was, he stopped to amuse himself for a moment. This was the cause of his not arriving sooner, the delay corresponding nearly with the time Holden was detained by his visit. The boy now came running up, all out of breath, and gazed around, but saw no one nor heard a sound, save the roar of the Fall. His eyes fell upon the gun of the Indian, and the cap of the Solitary, lying

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on the trampled turf, and his mind foreboded disaster. He hastened to the margin of the beetling crag, and peering over it, saw Ohquamehud hanging by Holden's arm, and struggling to pull him down. Quadaquina stepped back, and from the loose stones lying round, picked up one as large as he could lift, and going to the edge, dropped it full upon the head of Ohquamehud. The Indian instantly let go his hold, falling a distance of eighty feet, and grazing against the side of the huge rock on his way, until with a splash he was swallowed up in the foaming water that whirled him out of sight.

Quadaquina watched the body as it went gliding down the rocks, and dashing into the torrent, until it could be seen no more, and then, as if terrified at his own act, and without waiting to see what had become of the man to whom he had rendered so timely a service, started on a run for his home.

As for Holden, upon the weight being withdrawn from his arm, he slowly gathered himself up and sat upright on the rock; nor did he know to what he owed his deliverance. He possibly ascribed it to the exhaustion of his foe. He felt jar'd and bruised, but no bones were broken: his heart swelled with thankfulness, and raising his eyes to heaven, he poured forth a thanksgiving.

"The enemy came against me," he ejaculated, "like a lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places. But thou didst arise, O Lord, thou didst disappoint him and cast him down; thou didst deliver my soul from the wicked. For thou didst gird me with strength unto the battle, thou didst enlarge my steps under me, that my feet did not slip. He was wounded that he was not able to rise. He fell under my feet. It was Thy doing, O Lord, because thou hadst respect unto the supplications of thy servant. Therefore my lips shall greatly rejoice, when I sing unto Thee, and my soul which thou hast redeemed."

After this expression of his thanks, he clambered with some difficulty, by the assistance of the shrubs that grew in the crevices along the sloping platform, until he had attained to the top of the rock whence he had fallen. He cast his eyes below, but nothing was to be seen but the wild torrent: no sign, no trace of the Indian. Holden shuddered as he thought of Ohquamehud, cut off in his atrocious attempt, and breathed a prayer that his savage ignorance might palliate his crime; then exhausted and sore, and pondering the frightful danger he had escaped, slowly took his way towards the village.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

But is there yet no other way besides
Those painful passages, how we may come
To death, and mix with our connatural dust?

“There is,” said Michael, “if thou will observe
The rule of *not too much*, by temperance taught.”

MILTON’S PARADISE LOST.

Till oft converse with heavenly habitants,
Begin to cast a beam on th’ outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the soul’s essence,
Till all be made immortal.

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COMUS.

The shades of evening were falling as Holden entered the village. He proceeded straight to the house of Mr. Armstrong, whom he had seen twice or thrice already since his return from New York, though we have made no mention of the visits.

He found Armstrong thinner and paler than ever. The constitutional melancholy with which he was afflicted appeared to have deepened, and there was something now in the tones of his voice so sad and tender, that they moved Holden to an extraordinary degree. Other friends of Armstrong were affected by them, but, with the exception of Faith, there was no one who seemed to lay these signs of unhappiness so much to heart as the Solitary. This, perhaps, may account, in a measure, for the increased frequency of his visits.

A smile like sunshine stealing from behind a wintry cloud over the pure snow, welcomed Holden. As he took the offered hand of Armstrong, he found it extenuated and cold, and pressed it with more than ordinary feeling, before he took a seat by his side. The first inquiry of the Recluse was, as usual, after Faith.

"She is out," answered her father, "but I expect her soon."

"The sight of Faith is to me as the beauty and fragrance of days long gone," said Holden. "Unsinning Eve was not more lovely."

"She was early dedicated to her God, and is, indeed, a meet offering for his altar," said Armstrong.

"Blessed are they," exclaimed Holden, "whose feet have never strayed from the straight and narrow way. Where they tread spring up immortal flowers, and they breathe the air of Paradise."

"And, alas!" said Armstrong, "how short is usually their stay. How soon they depart for the celestial regions, to which they belong, leaving breaking hearts behind!"

"Woe to the earth-born selfishness, that riseth up in opposition! It is not agreeable to the law of God, nor can be. Down with the rebellion of ignorance and unbelief."

"But is no allowance to be made for human weakness? May we not weep over the calamities of life?"

"Aye, weep, if the tears wash out a sin, but not because the divine will is different from thine own. What callest thou calamity? There is no calamity, but sin."

"It is hard," sighed Armstrong, "to reach that height of abnegation and faith to which you would have me aspire."

“Hard, but attainable, for without faith it is impossible to please Him. There are examples set before us for imitation of what the trusting spirit can achieve. By faith Abraham offered up Isaac when he was tried, having confidence that God could raise him up even from the dead. By faith—but why should I recount the deeds of those grand souls, of whom the world was not worthy, who, through faith, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, even from Enoch, who tasted not the bitterness of death, and Elijah, mounting on a fiery chariot, in a whirlwind, to heaven, down to these latter days, when, as said the apostle, ‘faith should wax weak, and almost perish from the earth?’”

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Armstrong looked at Holden, with an expression like fear.

“Who is equal to these things?” said he.

“I knew a man once,” said the Enthusiast, thinking of the peril he had just escaped, and darkly shadowing forth its circumstances, “whom a ravening lion sought to destroy, and the heart of the man sunk within him, for, in view of the beast, he forgot that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, but an angel whispered it in his ear, and strengthened him, and he defied the lion, and smote him, and killed the lion. Thus doth the Lord continue to perform his marvellous works, for he is faithful and true, and his mercy endureth for ever to them that love him.”

Of course, Armstrong could have no correct idea of what Holden alluded to, nor did he inquire. It was to him only another instance, added by his enthusiastic friend, to the long catalogue of those in the sacred record, for whom faith had triumphed over danger, and wrought deliverance.

“It is, indeed,” he said, “a mighty means to bring down the divine blessing.”

“As is the law of gravitation to the worlds,” said Holden, looking out upon the clear sky, filled with stars, “which is the constant force flowing from the living centre of all things, and retaining them in harmonious movement in their orbits; so is faith to the human soul. When it is present all is peace, and harmony, and joy; when it is absent, a wild chaos, whirling in darkness and confusion, over which the Spirit hath never brooded like a dove.”

At this moment the door opened, and Miss Armstrong, attended by William Bernard, entered the room. She advanced towards Holden, and gave him her hand, which he took into both of his, and looking fondly at her, said:

“Dear child, thy mother’s image, the room is brighter for thy presence.”

“There, William,” said Faith, smiling, “a lady seldom receives so delicate a compliment.”

“Mr. Holden,” said Bernard, “belongs to the old school of politeness, of which Sir Charles Grandison is the model. Modern degeneracy might strive in vain to compete with it.”

There was a slight, a very slight, an almost imperceptible tone of irony about the words, which did not escape the sensitive ear of Holden. He turned towards Bernard, and fastened his large eyes upon him, in silence, awhile, before he said:

“The secret of politeness is to be found in warmth and goodness of heart. Flame blazes not up from ice.” The words, the tone, the look, conveyed his estimate of the character of the young man, and was not without influence on one, at least, of his auditors. “But,”

continued he, “thy presence, Faith, is truly, to me, as light. Deemest thou me capable of unmeaning compliments?”

“No,” answered Faith, suspecting the little feeling of resentment, and desirous to soothe it, “I do not. Forgive my absurd observation.”

“And I hope,” said Bernard, in his most engaging manner, “that Mr. Holden is not offended at my classing him among those who for delicacy and refinement were never surpassed.”

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"I like not," said Holden, "to be made a subject of conversation. We will find a fitter topic."

"You spoke of Faith's resemblance to her mother," said Mr. Armstrong, "whose quick sensibility had also detected the jarring string; how did you discover it?"

"You forget," answered Holden, "that in conversation with me you have spoken of her."

"But not described her appearance."

"The resemblance of a child to a parent, may be oftentimes deduced from qualities of the mind, and traits of character. The outer garment is fitted to the interior man. The exterior and transient is the product of the interior and permanent. But I mean not that it was thus I discovered the likeness; and if for a moment I misled thee, let me correct my error and thy mistake. You will consider these as the speculations of a visionary."

"I do not consider them without foundation," said Armstrong, who, in the turn given to the conversation, seemed to have forgotten his question.

"It is a speculation which, followed out, might lead to many interesting conclusions," said Bernard. "Mr. Holden would greatly oblige us with his ideas."

"Do," said Faith, who delighted in the Solitary's flights. "Explain, dear Mr. Holden, your theory."

Holden looked at Mr. Armstrong, who bowed.

"The first man, Adam," said Holden, "was created perfect, perfect in body as in mind. The dignity and beauty of his person corresponded to the grandeur and purity of his soul, of which it was the outward expression. All graces and harmonies, and perfections of creation centered in him, for he was the image of his Maker. He was incapable of disease, because disease is disharmony and the fruit of sin, which as yet existed not. And he was obedient unto the voice of the Lord, nor did he transgress His laws in anything. His meat was the herb of the field and the fruit of the tree, and his drink the running brook. He had no permission to eat of flesh. But in an evil hour he fell; a leprosy overspread his body and his soul; the divine purity could not approach as before; and to his closed spiritual eyes, the holy Presence once visible, became shrouded in clouds and thick darkness. And as the spirit of man waxed more corrupt and he withdrew himself further from his heavenly source, so did his outward appearance, by a necessary law, whereby the outer and superficial conformeth itself, to the inner and hidden, become deformed and hideous. Hence is man now but a shadow, a skeleton of original beauty. The primeval perfection and present degeneracy of man, are the tradition of centuries."

Holden paused; and Faith said, gently, "There is a way to regain the happiness we have lost."

"There is a way," said Holden, "through Him, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. But mark: like him, must man be obedient. A faith without works is fruitless and naught. How many imagine they have faith, and have it not! Will they give their bodies to be burned? Will they sacrifice the dearest thing they have, if it is His will? Nay, but faith hath almost perished from the earth."

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Bernard observing Holden wandering from his subject, here inquired, "And by a reversal of the process by which it was lost, the outward beauty may be recovered?"

"Yes. By the restoration of internal beauty. It is the latter that shapeth and shineth through the former. But the eyes of men are blinded, and they cannot, because they will not, see the truth. The crust of inherited corruption interposeth betwixt them and the light. Hence, having eyes they see not, and ears, and they cannot hear. There is a law to control the spiritual, and a law for the material, and it is by observance of these two laws, that man's first estate is to be regained. He must, therefore be temperate, and sober, and wise in the regulation of his appetites and passions, banishing those pernicious inventions, whereby he degradeth and engendereth disease in a glorious structure that ought to be the temple of the Holy Ghost, and must diligently cultivate all noble aspirations, weeding out selfishness and gross desires, loving his neighbor as himself, and the Lord his God with all his heart, which latter is the admiration and love of beauty, and truth and justice, and of whatever is excellent. Thus both outwardly and inwardly will gradually be transformed, the marred and defaced image of humanity into the glorious likeness of the Son of God."

"That day so longed for and so glorious, is far distant I fear," said Mr. Armstrong.

"Nay, but the signs of His coming are kindling in the Eastern sky," exclaimed Holden, "and soon amid the hymns and hallelujahs of saints shall he establish His benign and resplendent empire. Then shall commence the upward career of the race, whose earthly goal is the state of primeval perfection; whose heavenly it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive. Then in that bright Millennium, whose radiance streams through the advancing ages, shall man cast off the slough of ignorance and sin, and rise like the painted butterfly, on the wings of faith, into the serene air of truth."

Our readers must not hold us responsible for the sentiments of Holden. They are his own, and no one's else, and expressed in his own words, with all their wildness and incoherence. Opinions like these seem to have prevailed at all periods of the Christian era. They were entertained in the times of the Apostles, and are cherished now by a modern sect. Milton alludes to them in his treatise "Of Reformation in England" in language which for its stately eloquence, deserves to be transcribed to enrich this page. He speaks "of that day when Thou, the eternal and *shortly-expected* King, shalt open the clouds to judge the several kingdoms of the world, and distributing national honors and rewards to religious and just commonwealths, shalt put an end to all earthly tyrannies, proclaiming thy universal and mild monarchy through heaven and earth; when they undoubtedly, that by their labors, counsels, and prayers, have been earnest for the common good of religion, and their country, shall receive above the inferior orders of the blessed, the regal additions of principalities, legions, and thrones, into their glorious titles, and in super-eminence of beatific vision, progressing the dateless and irrevoluble circle of eternity, shall clasp inseparable hands with joy and bliss in over-measure for ever."

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His auditors never thought of reasoning with or contradicting the Enthusiast. They listened in silence, only when he paused, making some inquiry or suggestion, in order to induce him to develop his notions still further; and so in conversation of this kind passed the evening.

Upon the departure of Bernard, Holden was pressed to pass the night at his host's, and accepted the invitation. The events of the day had proved to be too much for even his iron frame, and he was not unwilling to be relieved of the long walk to his hut. Before retiring, he listened reverently to a chapter from the Bible, read by Armstrong, and joined with him and Faith, in their customary devotions.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

No man who sinks to sleep at night
Knows what his dreams shall be;
No man can know what wonder-sight
His inner eye shall see.

THOMAS L. HARRIS.

When Holden was left alone in his chamber, he sank into a seat and covered his face with both hands. He remained in this position for some time, and when he removed them, it was very pale, and exhibited traces of strong emotion. He cast his eyes slowly around the room, examining every part, not even the furniture escaping minute observation. But of all the objects a portrait that hung over the fire-place attracted the most attention. It was that of a man, past the prime of life, and who in youth must have possessed considerable beauty. The features were regular and well-formed, the forehead high and broad, and the hair long and abundant, waving in curls over the shoulders. What was the age designed to be portrayed, it was difficult to determine with any degree of exactness, for there was a contradiction between the parts which appeared scarcely reconcilable with one another. Looking at the furrows that seamed the face, its pallor, and the wrinkles of the brow, one would have said that the original must have been a man between sixty and seventy, while the hair, dark and glossy, indicated much less age. Yet, the perfection of the drawing, the flesh-like tints that melted into each other, and the air of reality that stamped the whole, proclaimed the portrait the work of a master, and it was impossible to avoid the conviction that it was an authentic likeness.

Holden placed the candle on the mantelpiece in such a manner as best to throw light upon the picture, and stood at a little distance to contemplate it. As he gazed, he began to fancy he discovered traits which had at first escaped his observation. An expression of pain and anxious sadness overspread the face, and gleams of light, like the glare of insanity, shot from the eyes. So strong was the impression, and so deeply was he

affected, that as if incapable of enduring the sight, he shut his eyes, and turning away, paced several times backwards and forwards, without looking up. After a few turns, he stopped

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before the portrait, and fixed his eyes upon it again, but only for a moment, to resume his walk. This he did repeatedly, until at last, with a groan, he dropped into a chair, where, crossing his arms upon his breast, he remained for awhile lost in thought. Who can say what were the reflections that filled his mind? Was he considering whether the painter meant to delineate insanity, or whether it was not a delusion springing from his own disordered intellect?

It was a long time before sleep visited the Solitary in his soft and curtained bed. It might be owing to the events of the day, so startling and unusual; it might be on account of the yielding bed, so different from his own hard couch; or in consequence of the effect produced by the portrait; or of all these causes combined, that sleep was long in coming, and when it did come, was disturbed with dreams, and unrefreshing. Before, however, Holden fell asleep, he had lain, as if under the influence of a spell, looking at the picture on which the beams of the moon, stealing through the branches of the large elm that shaded the house, flickered uncertainly and with a sort of wierd effect, as the night wind gently agitated the leaves.

It seemed to Holden, so insensibly glided his last waking thought into his dreams making one continuous whole, that the portrait he had been looking at was a living person, and he was astonished that he had mistaken a living being for a piece of painted canvas. In a stern, deep voice the man who had taken possession of the chair in which he himself had been sitting, ordered him to approach. If Holden had been so disposed, he had no ability to disobey the command. He, therefore advanced towards the figure, and at a signal knelt down at his feet. The man, thereupon, stretching out his hands, laid them upon his head in the attitude of benediction. He then rose from his seat, and making a sign to Holden to follow him, they noiselessly descended the stairs together, and passed into the moonlight. The man constantly preceding him, they went on, and by familiar paths and roads, and in the ordinary time that would be required to accomplish the distance, arrived at a spot on the banks of the Wootuppocut well known to Holden. Here the stranger stopped, and seating himself upon the trunk of a felled tree, motioned to his companion to be seated. Holden obeyed, waiting for what should follow. Presently he saw two figures, a male and female, approaching. The latter was veiled, and although the face of the man was exposed, it swam in such a hazy indistinctness that it was impossible to make out the features. Still it seemed to him that they were not entirely unknown, and he tormented himself with ineffectual attempts to determine where he had seen them. He turned to his guide to ask who they were, but before he could speak the stranger of the portrait placed his fingers on his lips, as if to require silence. The two persons advanced until they reached a small brook that babbled down a ravine, and fell into the river. Suddenly something glittered in the air; the figures vanished; and upon looking at the brook Holden beheld, to his horror, that it was red like blood. He turned in amazement to his guide, who made no reply to the

look of inquiry, unless the word “Friday,” which he uttered in the same deep tone, can be so considered.

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Holden awoke, and the sweat was standing in great drops on his forehead. As his senses and recollection were gradually returning, he directed his eyes towards the place where the portrait hung, half in doubt whether he should see it again. The beams of the moon no longer played upon it, but there was sufficient light in the room to enable him to distinguish the features which now, more and more distinctly emerged to sight. The hollow eyes were fixed on his, and the word "Friday" seemed still quivering on the lips.

Holden lay and thought over his dream. With the young and imaginative, dreams are not uncommon, but with the advanced in life they are usually unfrequent. As the fancy decays,—as the gay illusions that brightened our youth disappear, to give place to realities,—as the blood that once rushed hurriedly, circulates languidly—farewell to the visions that in storm or sunshine flitted around our pillows.

It cannot, indeed, be said that Holden never had dreams. The excitable temperament of the man would forbid the supposition, but, even with him, they were uncommon. He turned the one he had just had over and over again, in his mind; but, reflect upon it as he pleased, he could make nothing out of it, and, at last, with a sense of dissatisfaction and endeavoring to divert his mind from thoughts that banished sleep, he forgot himself again.

His slumbers were broken and harassed throughout the night, with horrid dreams and vague anticipations of further evil. At one time he was at his cabin, and his son lay bleeding in his arms, pierced by the bullet of Ohquamehud. At another, Faith was drowning, and stretching out her hands to him for succor, and as he attempted to hasten to her assistance, her father interfered and held him violently back. And at another, he was falling from an immeasurable height, with the grip of the Indian at his throat. Down—down he fell, countless miles, through a roaring chaos, trying to save himself from strangulation, until, just as he was about to be dashed to pieces against a rock, he awoke sore and feverish.

The sun was already some distance above the horizon as Holden rose from his troubled slumbers. The cool air of morning flowed with a refreshing sweetness through the open window, and the birds were singing in the branches of the large elm. With a feeling of welcome he beheld the grateful light. He endeavored to recall and reduce to some coherency the wild images of his dreams, but all was confusion, which became the more bewildering, the longer he dwelt upon them, and the more he strove to untangle the twisted skein. All that he could now distinctly remember, were the place whither he had been led, and the word spoken by the portrait.

When he descended to breakfast, both Mr. Armstrong and his daughter remarked his disordered appearance, and anxiously inquired, how he had passed the night. To these inquiries, he frankly admitted, that he had been disturbed by unpleasant dreams.

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"You look," said Mr. Armstrong, "like the portrait which hangs in the chamber where you slept. It is," he continued, unheeding the warning looks of Faith, "the portrait of my father, and was taken a short time before he was seized with what was called a fit of insanity, and which was said to have hastened his death.

"How is it possible, dear father, you can say so?" said Faith, anxious to prevent an impression she was afraid might be made on Holden's mind.

"I do not mean," continued Armstrong, with a singular persistency, "that Mr. Holden's features resemble the portrait very much; but there is something which belongs to the two in common. Strange that I never thought of it before!"

Holden during the conversation had sat with drooping lids, and a sad and grieved expression, and now, as he raised his eyes, he said, mournfully—

"Thou meanest, James, that I, too, am insane. May Heaven grant that neither thou nor thine may experience the sorrow of so great a calamity."

Faith was inexpressibly shocked. Had any one else spoken thus, with a knowledge of Holden's character, she would have considered him unfeeling to the last degree, but she knew her father's considerateness and delicacy too well to ascribe it to any other cause than to a wandering of thought, which had of late rapidly increased, and excited in her mind an alarm which she trembled to give shape to. Before she could interpose, Armstrong again spoke—

"Insane!" he said. "What is it to be insane? It is to have faculties exalted beyond the comprehension of the multitude; to soar above the grovelling world. Their eyes are too weak to bear the glory, and, because they are blind, they think others cannot see. The fools declared my father was insane. They say the same of you, Holden, and, the next thing, I shall be insane, I suppose. Ha, ha!"

Holden himself was startled. He muttered something indistinctly before he answered—

"May the world never say that of thee, dear James!"

"Why not?" inquired Armstrong, eagerly. "Alas! you consider me unworthy to be admitted to the noble band of misunderstood and persecuted men? True, true! I know it to be true. My earthly instincts fetter me to earth. Of the earth, I am earthy. But what shall prevent my standing afar off, to admire them? What a foolish world is this! Were not the prophets and apostles denounced as insane men? I have it, I have it," he added, after a pause, "inspiration is insanity."

Holden looked inquiringly at Faith, whose countenance evinced great distress; then, turning to Armstrong, he said—



"Thou art not well, James. Perhaps, like me, thou hast passed a disturbed night?"

"I have, of late been unable to sleep as well as formerly," said Armstrong. "There is a pain here," he added, touching his forehead, "which keeps me awake."

"Thou needest exercise. Thou dost confine thyself too much. Go more into the open air, to drink in the health that flows down from the pure sky."



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"It is what I urge frequently on my dear father," said Faith.

"Faith is an angel," said Holden. "Listen to her advice. Thou canst have no better guide."

"She shall redeem my soul from death," said Armstrong.

When Holden left the house of his host, he determined to carry into effect a resolution which, it appeared now to himself, he had strangely delayed, such was the influence what he had just seen and heard exercised over him. That Fate or mathematical Providence, however, in which he so devoutly believed, notwithstanding he acted as though none existed, seemed as if, tired out with his procrastination and irresolution, determined to precipitate events and force him to lift the veil, that for so many years—with a wayward temper and love of mystery, inexplicable by any motives that regulate the movements of ordinary minds—he had chosen to spread around himself. What followed only convinced him more thoroughly, if that were possible, of his helplessness on the surging tide of life and of the delusion of those who imagine they are aught but bubbles, breaking now this moment, now that, according to a predetermined order.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

We receive but what we give
And in our life alone does nature live.

COLERIDGE.

Mr. Armstrong was disposed to gratify his daughter, and to follow the advice of Holden. That very morning, soon after the departure of the Solitary, he accepted an invitation from Judge Bernard, to take a drive with him to one of his farms in the afternoon. Accordingly, the one-horse chaise, which was the usual vehicle in those days, of gentlemen who drove themselves, stopped, late in the day, at Armstrong's door.

"Anne hopes," said the Judge, as they were about to start, "that in retaliation for my capture of your father, Faith, you will come and take possession of her. For my own part, if I can bring him back with a little more color in his cheeks, I shall expect a kiss or two."

"You shall have three, dear Judge, for every smile you can win from father," exclaimed Faith.

The road which the gentlemen took, led, at first, after leaving the table-land on which their houses were situated, through the thickly-settled and business part of the town, at the head of the Severn, the whole of which it traversed, and then approaching the banks of the Wootupcut, followed its windings in a direction towards its source. The country



through which the river flowed presented an appearance of soft and varied beauty, the view of which, while the cool breeze across the stream fanned the fevered brain of Armstrong, ought, if anything could, to have soothed his jarring nerves, and breathed a portion of its own tranquillity into his heart. Is it not true what the sweet poet sings of Nature and her lover, that

“She glides
Into his darker musings with a mild
And gentle sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness ere he is aware?”

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The river, for the greater part of the drive, flowed through a valley, which it divided into two very unequal portions, skirting occasionally with its left bank the woods that ran quite down the sides of the hills to the water, and then winding away to the right, leaving considerable intervals of level land betwixt itself and the woods above mentioned, but, almost invariably, having still wider expanses of champaign, that gradually ascended from the stream, until it met the forest-covered hills that bounded the valley, on the right. In some instances, the woods extended on both sides down to the river, throwing an agreeable shade over the way-farers, and shedding abroad a cool, moist freshness, that brought with itself a woodland-scent, compounded of the fragrance of sassafras, and fern, and sweet-briar, and mosses, and unknown plants. Then, again the road would run for a considerable distance through an open space, unshaded by trees, to cross, a little further on, another belt of woods, thus making their darkened recesses doubly grateful from the contrast of alternating light and shade, while all along the stream murmured a soft expression of thanks for the lovely country it irrigated, for the blue sky, that mirrored itself in its bosom with floating clouds, for the sunshine sparkling on its ripples, and for the overhanging woods, and birds, that sung among the branches.

The disordered spirit of Armstrong was not insensible to the charm. He gazed round, and drank in the beauty by which he was surrounded. He scented the sweetness of the woods, and it seemed to impart an agreeable exhilaration. In the pauses of the conversation, hitherto carried on almost entirely by Judge Bernard, he listened to the monotonous, yet soothing flow of the water, and it sounded like an invitation to cast off trouble. As he listened the shooting pain in his head diminished, his thoughts became less sombre, and he surrendered himself to something like enjoyment. Very soon it seemed as if he were exerting himself to be agreeable to his companion, and to make up, by taking a more active part in the conversation, for former silence and neglect.

"This clear river," he said, "this beautiful valley, with its quiet woods, are a blessing to me to-day. It is a pleasure to breathe the air. Has Italy bluer skies?"

"The encomiums of travellers on the skies of Italy are to be received by us with some qualification," answered the Judge. "They are mostly written by Englishmen, and the comparison is between the humid climate of England and the drier one of Italy. This being borne in mind, the praises lavished on Italian skies are just. But as compared with ours, they can boast of little or no superiority in beauty. I have seen as gorgeous heavens in my own country as ever glorified the land of the Caesars."

"And how is it with the landscape?"

"There we must yield to Europe. We have nothing to be compared with the grandeur of the Swiss mountains, or the combination of loveliness and magnificence around the lake of Geneva."

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"But Niagara!"

"Aye, Niagara! unequalled and alone. There can be but one Niagara."

"And the Alleghany and White Mountains?"

"Fine scenery, but hills in comparison with the mountains of Switzerland."

"And now for the works of man. You must have been struck by the contrast between the towns in our own country and in Europe."

"Yes, certainly, the difference is great."

"In what does it consist?"

"Principally in the newness of the one, and the oldness of the other. There, what one sees reminds him of the past; here, he beholds only presentiments of the future."

"There is a great difference, I am told, and read too, in the style of building."

"You may well say that. Here there is no style. Our houses are models of bad taste, and pretty much all alike. The time will undoubtedly come when we shall have a domestic architecture, but it will require some years before we get rid of narrow cornices, innumerable small windows, and exclusive white paint."

"You should make allowances for us," said Armstrong, deprecatingly. "Consider the poverty of a new country, and the material that poverty compels us to use."

"I am willing to allow the excuse all the weight it deserves, but I cannot understand how poverty can be an excuse for bad taste, or why because wood is used, a house may not be made to have an attractive appearance. I think there are other reasons more efficacious than the plea of poverty, which can, indeed, no longer be made."

"Come, come," said Armstrong, "you do not love anything about us Puritans, and your objections, if politeness would allow you to speak them out plainly, would be found to contain a fling at Calvin's children; but hearken, if I cannot find excuses to satisfy even you."

"I shall listen eagerly, but must correct you in one thing. I not only love some things about the Puritans, but some Puritans themselves."

"Surely, I know it. But now listen to my defence. The first settlement of the country was attended with a great many hardships. The country was colder than the immigrants were accustomed to; they arrived in the winter, and the first thing to be attended to was to secure shelter. Under these circumstances you will admit that attention to the

principles of architecture was not to be expected. They knocked up houses as cheaply, and plainly, and rapidly as possible, content if they kept out wind and weather. Wood was preferred, because it was cheaper, and quicker worked. Thus lived the first generation. The condition of the second was somewhat improved; they had become accustomed to their houses and were tolerably satisfied. The third had never seen anything better, and not having the means of comparison, could not make it to their own disadvantage, and finally, as man is a creature of custom and habit, and reverence, they learned to regard a style of building that had

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sprung out of the necessities of their ancestors, as an evidence not only of good sense, but of good taste. The immigrants, arriving from time to time, might have disabused them, but these would naturally fall into the ways and sentiments of the people, and were their tastes ever so ambitious, probably had not the means to gratify them. This is the origin, and thus is to be explained the continuance of American architecture."

"An architecture," said the Judge, "that would have driven a Greek out of his senses. But though I will not quarrel with you about its origin, does not its perpetuation for so long a time affect the character of our countrymen for taste?"

"It will pass away," said Armstrong, gloomily, "and with it the stern virtues that are of more importance than a trifle like this."

"There can be no connection between an improvement in architecture, and a deterioration of morals."

"Prosperity brings wealth, and wealth is the means to gratify the caprices of luxury and taste. Perhaps, at some future day when stone and marble shall have superseded wood and brick; and magnificent Grecian and Gothic temples, resplendent in stained glass, taken the places of the humble, unpretentious meeting-houses, the thoughtful and judicious will sigh for those times of primitive simplicity, when an humble heart was more than an ostentatious offering, and God's word was listened to devoutly on hard seats instead of being dozed over in cushioned pews."

"You are becoming gloomy, Armstrong," said the Judge. "This will never do. Progress, man, progress I tell you is the word. The world is improving every day. Banish these sick fancies."

Armstrong shook his head. "I envy you," he said, "your hopeful and joyous spirit, while I know you are mistaken."

"Well, well, my friend, I wish I could give you a portion of it. But to come back to where we started from. After finding so much fault, it is time to praise. However we may ridicule the ugliness of our houses, this much must be admitted in favor of our villages and country towns, that in cleanliness and an appearance of substantial comfort, they infinitely surpass their rivals in Europe. I do not except the villages in England. Who can walk through one of our New England country towns, where majestic elms throw their shadows over spacious streets, and the white rose clammers over the front doors of the neat, white painted houses, standing back a rod or two from the street with gardens stretching behind, while Peace and Plenty bless the whole, and not be grateful for a scene so fair, for a land so fortunate!"

They had now arrived in sight of the Judge's farm-house, which stood at some distance from the main road, from which a lane planted on both sides with maples, led to it. As they drove along the Judge pointed out the changes he had made since he became the owner.

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"When I purchased the property," he said, "the house looked very differently. It was stuck full of little insignificant windows that affected me like staring eyes; its two or three inches of cornice stole timidly out, as if ashamed of itself, over the side, and the whole wore an awkward and sheepish air. It made me uncomfortable every time I looked at it, and I resolved upon an alteration. So I shut up half the windows, and increased the size where I could, and threw out a cornice, which, besides the merit of beauty, has the practical advantage (that is the national word, I believe) of acting as an umbrella to protect the sides against the mid-day heat of the sun in summer, and the storms in winter. Besides, I added the veranda, which runs nearly the whole length of the front."

"I confess it is an improvement upon the ancestral style," said Armstrong.

"I expected the acknowledgment from your natural taste, which is excellent," said the Judge laughing, "except when corrupted by traditional prejudices. I must take care of my horse myself, I suspect," he added, as they drove up to the door: "the men are probably all in the fields. He will stand, however, well enough under this shed." So saying, and after Armstrong had alighted at the door, he drove the horse under a shed, near the barn, and fastened him; then joining Armstrong, the two entered the house.

"La, Judge!" said Mrs. Perkins, the farmer's wife who received them, smoothing down her check apron, "you take us by surprise to-day. We didn't expect you, and the men-folks is all in the lot. Didn't you find your ride very warm?"

"Not very; and if it had been, the pleasure of seeing you, Mrs. Perkins, would more than compensate for any annoyance from the heat."

"You are so polite, Judge," replied Mrs. Perkins, simpering. "I declare you are equal to a Frenchman."

With all his French education, this was a remark the Judge would have been willing to dispense with; however on the French principle of considering that as a compliment, the meaning of which is equivocal, he bowed and introduced Mr. Armstrong.

Mrs. Perkins courtesied. "She'd heard," she said, "of Mr. Armstrong, and that he had the handsomest daughter, in the town of Hillsdale."

"It is your turn now," whispered the Judge. "Let me see how you will acquit yourself."

But Armstrong was not a man for compliments.

"Faith looks as well as young ladies generally I believe," he said.

Mrs. Perkins did not like to have her pretty speech received with so much indifference, so she answered,



“I was, perhaps, too much in a hurry when I called Squire Armstrong’s daughter, the handsomest: I forgot Anne, and she’s a right to be, sence she’s got her father’s good looks.”

“Dear Mrs Perkins, you overwhelm me!” exclaimed the Judge, bowing still lower than before. “I think higher than ever of your taste.”

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"Ah! You're poking fun at me, me now," said Mrs. Perkins, hardly knowing how to receive the acknowledgment. "But wouldn't you like to take something after your ride?"

Those were not the days of temperance societies, and it would have been quite *secundum regulas*, had the gentlemen accepted the offer as intended by their hostess. The Judge looked at Armstrong, who declined, and then turning to Mrs. Perkins said,

"The strawberry season is not over, I believe"—

"Oh! I can give you strawberries and cream," interrupted the hospitable Mrs. Perkins.

"And would you be so kind as to give them to us in the veranda? The sun does not shine in, and it will be pleasanter in the open air."

"Sartainly. Eliza Jane!" she cried, elevating her voice and speaking through an open door to one of her little daughters, with a blooming multitude of whom Providence had blessed her,

"Eliza Jane, fetch two cheers into the piazza. That piazza, Judge, is one of the grandest things that ever was. The old man and me and the children, take ever so much comfort in it."

"I am glad you like it. But we will spare your daughter the trouble of taking out the chairs, and carry them ourselves."

"Not for the world, Judge, for I think it's best to make children useful."

Accordingly Eliza Jane brought the chairs, and the mother retiring with her, soon returned with the little girl, bearing in her hands a tray containing the strawberries and cream. The Judge kissed the child, and gave her a half dollar to buy a ribbon for her bonnet.

"I do declare Judge!" cried the mother, whose gratified looks contradicted the language, "you'll spoil Eliza Jane."

"A child of yours cannot be spoiled, Mrs. Perkins," said the Judge, "as long as she is under your eye. With your example before her, she is sure to grow up a good and useful woman."

"Well, I try to do my duty by her," said Mrs. Perkins, "and I don't mean it shall be any fault of mine, if she ain't."

It was nearly sunset by the time the gentlemen had finished, when the Judge proposed to visit a piece of wood he was clearing at no great distance from the house. Armstrong

acquiesced, and they started off, Mrs. Perkins saying, she should expect them to stop to tea.

Their route lay through some woods and in the direction of the Wootuppocut, on whose banks the clearing was being made. As they approached, they could hear, more and more distinctly, the measured strokes of an axe, followed soon by the crash of a falling tree. Then, as they came still nearer, a rustling could be distinguished among the leaves and the sound of the cutting off of limbs. And now they heard the bark of a dog, and a man's voice ordering him to stop his noise.

"Keep still, Tigel!" said the voice. "What's the use of making such a racket? I can't hear myself think. I say stop your noise! shut up!"

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"It is Tom Gladding, whom Perkins hired to make the clearing, one of the best wood-choppers in the country. It is wonderful with what dexterity he wields an axe."

As the Judge uttered these words, the two gentlemen emerged from the wood into the open space, denuded of its sylvan honors, by the labors of Gladding.

The clearing (as it is technically termed), was perhaps a couple of acres in extent, in the form of a circle, and surrounded on all sides by trees, only a narrow strip of them, however, being left on the margin of the river, glimpses of which were caught under the branches and the thin undergrowth. A brook which came out of the wood, ran, glistening in the beams of the setting sun, and singing on its way across the opening to fall into the Wootuppocut. The felled trees had been mostly cut into pieces of from two to four feet in length, and collected into piles which looked like so many altars scattered over the ground. Here it was intended they should remain to dry, during the summer, to be ready for a market in the fall.

"So it's you, Judge and Mr. Armstrong," exclaimed Gladding as the two came up. "I guessed as much, that somebody was coming, when I heard Tige bark. He makes a different sort of a noise when he gits on the scent of a rabbit or squirrel."

"I dare say, Tiger knows a great deal more than we fancy," said the Judge. "Why, Gladding you come on bravely. I had no idea you had made such destruction."

"When I once put my hand to the work," said Tom, laughing, "down they must come, in short metre, if they're bigger than Goliath. Me and my axe are old friends, and we've got the hang of one another pretty well. All I have to do, is to say, 'go it,' and every tree's a goner."

After this little bit of vanity, Tom, as if to prove his ability to make good his boast by deeds, with a few well-directed blows, that seemed to be made without effort, lopped off an enormous limb from the tree he had just cut down.

"I've heard tell," said Tom, continuing his employment of cutting off the limbs, "that the Britishers and the Mounseers don't use no such axes as ourn. You've been across the Big Pond, and can tell a fellow all about it."

"It is true, they do not. The European axe is somewhat differently shaped from your effective weapon."

"The poor, benighted critturs!" exclaimed Tom, in a tone of commiseration. "I saw one of them Parleyvoos once, try to handle an axe, and I be darned, if he didn't come nigh cutting off the great toe of his right foot. If he hadn't been as weak as Taunton water—that, folks say, can't run down hill—as all them outlandish furriners is, and had on, to boot, regular stout cowhiders, I do believe he'd never had the chance to have the gout

in one toe, anyhow. Why, I'd as soon trust a monkey with a coal of fire, in a powder-house, as one of them chaps with an axe."

"We have the best axes, and the most skillful woodmen in the world," said the Judge, not unwilling to humor the harmless conceit of the wood-chopper.

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"It's plaguy lucky we have, seeing as how we've got so many thousands and thousands of acres to clear up," said Tom, with a sort of confused notion, that the skill of his countrymen was a natural faculty not possessed by "furriners." "But, Judge," he added, "I'm astonished at your cutting down the trees at this season of the year, and it kind o' goes agin my conscience to sling into 'em."

"I know what you mean. You think they ought not to be cut when the sap is rising. I suppose, the fire-wood is not so good?"

"Not half. Turn the thing as you choose, and you'll see you're wrong. In the first place, the wood ain't nigh as good; then, you lose the growth the whole summer, and, lastly, you take away a fellow from business that's more profitable."

"How?" said the Judge. "Do I not give you full wages? Can you get higher wages elsewhere?"

"No fault to find with the pay," answered Tom; "that's good enough. But, that ain't the idee. What I'm at is, that when I work, I like to see something useful come to pass. Now, every time I strike a blow, it seems to go right to my heart; for, I says to myself, this ain't no season for cutting wood. The Judge don't understand his own interest, and he's only paying me for injuring him."

Judge Bernard was too well-acquainted with the honest independence of Gladding to be offended at his uncomplimentary frankness. Nor, indeed, looking at it from Tom's point of view, could he avoid feeling a certain respect for that right-mindedness, which regarded not merely the personal remuneration to be received, but, also, the general benefit to be produced. He laughed, therefore, as he replied—

"You do not seem to set much value on my judgment, Gladding. Perhaps, I have objects you do not see."

"It ain't to be expected," said Tom, "and it ain't rational to suppose, that a man, who, when he was young, spent his time travelling over all creation, and then when he come home, took to the law, should know much about these matters; though, I guess you know as much as most folks, who ain't been brought up to 'em. But, as you say, it's likely you've got reasons of your own, as plenty as feathers in a bed, and I've been talking like most folks whose tongues is too long, like a darned fool."

"You are too hard on yourself, now. But, for your consolation, we will stop to-day with this piece of work, and you shall not be pained to cut down any more trees out of season. The clearing is as large as I wish it, and we will see to the burning of the brush, when it is drier. But, where is Mr. Armstrong?"

Armstrong, at the commencement of the conversation, had strayed away by himself, and sat down by one of the altar-like piles of wood, near the margin of the brook. Here he leaned his head on his hand, and seemed lost in meditation. He was in this posture when the exclamation was made by the Judge, who, on looking round, discovered the missing man, and immediately advanced toward him. So deep was his abstraction, that it was not until his friend's hand rested on his shoulder that he was aware of the other's presence. He arose, and the two retraced their steps together. The sun, by this time, had sunk behind the horizon, and, as they passed, Gladding threw his axe on his shoulder and joined their company.

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"I'm glad," said the wood-chopper, as they stepped out of the clearing, and turned to look back upon what he had accomplished, "that job's done, and I can turn my hand to something else more like summer work."

"Do you mean to proceed no further with your chopping?" inquired Armstrong.

"Not at present. All has been done that I desired, and I ought to respect Gladding's conscientious scruples."

Armstrong looked inquiringly from one to the other, but asked no question.

The hospitable invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Perkins was too pressing to be resisted, and it was not until the full moon had risen, that the gentlemen departed. The soft beauty of the delicious evening, or some other cause, exercised an influence over Armstrong, that disposed him to silence and meditation, which his companion perceiving, they returned home without exchanging scarcely a dozen words.

CHAPTER XL.

Man is a harp, whose cords elude the sight,
Each yielding harmony disposed aright;
The screws reversed (a task which if he please,
God in a moment executes with ease),
Ten thousand thousand strings at once go loose,
Lost, till he tune them, all their power and use.

COWPER

The aberration of mind of the unhappy Mr. Armstrong was at last with inevitable and steady step approaching its dreaded culminating point. To the outward eye he exhibited but little change. He was indeed, at times more restless, and his eyes would wander round as if in quest of some object that was trying to elude his sight; at one moment listless, silent, and dejected, and again animated, almost gay, like one who, ashamed of an exhibition of moody temper, tries to atone by extraordinary efforts of amiability for the error. His intimate friends had some knowledge of these changes, and to Faith, above all, living with him in the same house, and in the tender relation of a daughter to a parent, each of whom idolized the other, they were painfully apparent, and great was the anxiety they occasioned. How bitter were the tears which in solitude she shed, and frequent and fervent her supplications to the universal Father to pity and protect her father! How willingly, even at the sacrifice even of her own life, would she have restored peace and happiness to him!

But to the neighbors, to those who saw Armstrong only in public, no great change was manifest. He was thinner and paler than usual, to be sure, but every one was liable to

attacks of indisposition, and there was no reason why he should be exempt; he did not speak a great deal, but he was always rather taciturn, and when he did converse, it was with his usual sweetness and affability. They guessed he'd be better after a while.

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Such was the common judgment in the little community among those who had any knowledge of Armstrong's condition. They saw him daily in the streets. They conversed with him, and could see nothing out of the way. But some few who recollected the history of the family, and the circumstances attending the latter years of Armstrong's father, shook their heads, and did not hesitate to intimate that there had always been something strange about the Armstrongs. Curious stories, too, were told about the grandfather, and there was a dim tradition, nobody knew whence it came, or on what authority it rested, that the original ancestor of the family in this country, was distinguished in those days of ferocious bigotry, when the Indians were regarded by many as Canaanites, whom it was a religious duty to extirpate, as much for an unrelenting severity against the natives, bordering even on aberration of mind, as for reckless courage.

It is sad to look upon the ruins of a palace in whose halls the gay song and careless laugh long ago echoed; to contemplate the desolation of the choked fountains in gardens which *were* princely; and with difficulty to make one's way through encroaching weeds and tangled briars, over what once were paths where beauty lingered and listened to the vow of love; or to wander through the streets of a disentombed city, or seated on a fallen column, or the stone steps of the disinterred amphitheatre, to think of the human hearts that here, a thousand years ago, beat emulously with the hopes and fears, the loves and hates, the joys and sorrows, the aspiration and despair that animate or depress our own, and to reflect that they have all vanished—ah, whither? But however saddening the reflections occasioned by such contemplations, however much vaster the interests involved in them, they do not affect us with half that wretched sorrow with which we gaze upon the wreck of a human mind. In the former case, that which has passed away has performed its part; on every thing terrestrial "transitory," is written, and it is a doom we expect, and are prepared for; but in the latter it is a shrouding of the heavens; it is a conflict betwixt light and darkness, where darkness conquers; it is an obscuration and eclipse of the godlike. We therefore feel no desire to dwell upon this part of our history, but, on the contrary, to glide over it as rapidly as is consistent with the development of the tale.

Next after Faith, the faithful Felix noticed, with disquietude, the alteration in his master, and many were the sad colloquies he held with Rosa on the subject. Holden in some way or another was connected in his mind with the cause of Mr. Armstrong's melancholy, for although for several years the latter had not been remarkably cheerful, yet it was only since Holden's acquaintance had become intimacy, that that melancholy deepened into gloom. The simple fellow naturally looked round for some cause for the effect, and none presented itself so plausible as the one he adopted.

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"I wish," he had repeatedly said to Rosa, "that the old man would stay away. I'd see the devil with as much satisfacshum as him. Miss Faith too, I am sorry to say, is out of her wits."

One morning when Felix went up stairs, in answer to his master's bell, he could not avoid remarking on his altered appearance.

"I hope you will 'scuse me, sir," he said, "but me and the servants very much alarm about you, sir."

"I am obliged to you, Felix, and to all of you, but really there is no occasion for any alarm," said Mr. Armstrong.

"The case is the alarmingest when the patient doesn't know how sick he is. There was my old friend, Pompey Topset. He was setting up on the bed, when I come in to see him, smoking a pipe. And says he, says Pompey to me, says he, Felix, how do you do? this child never feel better. Then he give one puff and his head fall on the breast, and the pipe jump out of his mouth and burnt the clothes, and where was Pompey! He never," added Felix, shaking his head, "was more mistaken in all his life."

Mr. Armstrong was obliged to smile. "So you think me in as dangerous a condition as Pompey was, when he took his last smoke."

"Bless you, Mr. Armstrong for the sweet smile," exclaimed, the negro. "If you know how good it make me feel here, (laying his hand on his heart) you would smile pretty often. I can remember when the wren wasn't merrier than you, and you laughed almost as much as this fool Felix." At the recollection of those happy days, poor Felix pressed his hands upon his eyes, and tried to hide the tears, that in spite of his efforts stole through the fingers. "But," continued he, "I hope in the name of marcy, that you ain't so bad off as Pompey. That can't be. I only spoke of him for the sake of—of—the illumination."

"And what would you have me do?" inquired Armstrong, desirous to take all possible notice of the affectionate fellow.

"I pufess a high 'pinion of the doctor," answered Felix. "There is no man who gives medicine that tastes worse, and therefore must be the powerfulest. I would proscribe the doctor, sir."

"You would prescribe the doctor? Ah, Felix, I am afraid my case has nothing to do with his medicines."

"There is one other thing I should like to mention if I wasn't 'fraid it might offend Mr. Armstrong," said Felix, hesitatingly.

"And what is that, Felix? I will promise not to be offended."

Thus encouraged, Felix ventured to say.

"I have remark that Mr. Holden come often to see you, and you go to see him. His visits always seem to leave you kind o' solemncolly like, and all the world is surprise that you are so condescensious to the basket-man."

"Enough of this," said Armstrong, abruptly and sternly. "You permit too much freedom to your tongue respecting your superiors. Leave the room."

Poor Felix, aghast at the sudden change in the manner of his master, precipitately retired, casting back a grieved look, and ejaculating under his breath, as he closed the door, "Good Lord!"

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"What is the matter with me?" said Armstrong, presently to himself, upon being left alone. "I invite this poor fellow, whose only fault is that he loves me too much, to speak freely, and then treat him harshly for his unintentional impertinence, assuming an importance that belongs to no one, and as if we were not worms creeping together towards the edge of that precipice from which we must fall into eternity. Whence springs my conduct but from pride, self-will, selfishness? I would arrogate a superiority over this poor negro. Poor negro! There spoke the pride of your heart, James Armstrong! But well is he called Felix in comparison with you. Happy in being born of a despised and persecuted race; happy in being condemned to the life of a servant, to an ignorance that diminishes responsibility; happy in receiving no good thing here. Strut about, James Armstrong, in purple and fine linen, but know that for all these things, God will assuredly call thee to judgment."

That whole day Armstrong seemed debating some question with himself. He paid less than even his usual attention to what was passing around, and more than once was spoken to without heeding the address. In the afternoon, he started off by himself, saying he might not return until evening. Felix, whose anxiety the rebuff in the morning had strengthened and confirmed, watched his master as he left the house, and would have followed to guard him against a danger, the approach of which he instinctively felt, but which he could not see, unless Faith, to whom he thought proper to communicate his intention, had forbidden him. She found it difficult to prevent him, so greatly were the fears of the black excited, on whose mind the motives of delicacy that induced Faith to desire to guard the movements of her father from observation, cannot be supposed to have exerted so much force. Much doubting and questioning the wisdom of the young lady, yet not venturing to disobey her, Felix blamed himself for making her acquainted with his design.

"This child head," he said, apostrophizing himself, "ain't no better than a squash. What made me tell Miss Faith what I were going to do?"

After Armstrong left the house, he continued in the street only a little way, soon striking across the fields and thus greatly abridging the distance he must have passed over had he pursued the high road. The truth is, he was directing his steps towards the very spot he had visited with Judge Bernard. He reached it, notwithstanding he was afoot, in much less time than the drive had taken, so rapidly did he walk when out of sight, and so much was the length of the way shortened. Upon arriving at the place, he sat down upon the same log which had been his former seat, and folding his arms sunk into a reverie. After the space of an hour, perhaps, thus passed, he rose and commenced piling up near the brook some pieces of wood which he took from the heaps about him, making another, differing from them principally in being smaller. As he crossed the sticks laid regularly at right angles upon each other, he filled up the intervals with the loose leaves and dry brush lying around. In this way he proceeded until he had raised a cube, perhaps six feet long, four wide, and four high.

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During the whole time the work was progressing he seemed to be contending with violent emotions and driven along by some power he vainly tried to resist. Terror, awe, and repugnance were all portrayed upon his countenance. But still the work went on. When it was finished he stood off a few steps, and then, as in a sudden frenzy, rushed at, and seizing upon the several sticks of wood, hurled them in every direction around until the whole pile was demolished. Neglecting his hat that lay upon the ground, he then ran with a wild cry, and at the top of his speed, bounding, like a wild animal, over the brush and trunks of trees, as if in haste to remove himself from a dreadful object, until he reached the woods, when falling upon his face, he lay quite still. After a time he appeared seized with a hysterical passion; he pressed his hand on his side as if in pain, and heavy sobs burst at irregular intervals from his bosom. These finally passed away, and he sat up comparatively composed. A struggle was still going on, for several times he got up and walked a short distance and returned and threw himself down on the ground as before. At length, indistinctly muttering, unheeding the blazing sun that scorched his unprotected head, and lingering as though unwilling to advance, he returned to the scene of his former labors. And now, as if unwilling to trust himself with any delay, lest his resolution might falter, he proceeded, with a sort of feverish impatience, to reconstruct the pile. Shortly, the pieces were laid symmetrically upon each other as before, and the dead leaves and brush disposed in the intervals. After all was done, Armstrong leaned over and bowed his head in an attitude of supplication. When he raised it the eyes were tearless, and his pale face wore an aspect of settled despair. Resuming the hat, that until now had lain neglected in the leaves, he went to the brook and washed his hands in the running water.

“Could man wash out the sins of his soul,” he said, “as I wash these stains from my hands! But water, though it may cleanse outer pollution, cannot reach the inner sin. Blood, blood only, can do that. Why was it that this dreadful law was imposed upon our race? But I will not dwell on this. I have interrogated the universe and God, and entreated them to disclose the awful secret, but in vain. My heart and brain are burnt to ashes in the attempt to decipher the mystery. I will strive no more. It is a provocation to faith. I dare not trust to reason. There is something above reason. I submit. Dreadful, unfathomable mystery, I submit, and accept thee with all the consequences at which the quivering flesh recoils.”

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Upon the return of Armstrong, all traces of violent emotion had disappeared, and given place to exhaustion and lassitude. Faith had, by this time, become so accustomed to the variable humors of her father, that, however much they pained her, she was no longer alarmed by them as formerly. It was her habit, whenever he was attacked by his malady, to endeavor to divert his attention from melancholy thoughts to others of a more cheerful character. And now, on this day, so fraught with horrors of which she was ignorant, although the silence of the unhappy man interrupted by fits of starting, and inquiries of the time o'clock, revealed to her that he was suffering to an unusual degree, she attempted the same treatment which, in more than one instance, had seemed to be attended with a beneficial effect. Armstrong was peculiarly sensitive to music, and it was to his love of it that she now trusted to chase away his gloom. When, therefore, in the evening, she had vainly endeavored to engage him in conversation, receiving only monosyllables in return, she advanced to the piano, and inquired if he would not like to hear her sing?

"Sing! my child?" said Armstrong, as if at first not understanding the question; "Oh, yes—let me hear you sing."

Faith opened the piano, and turning over the leaves of a music book, and selecting a sacred melody as best befitting the mood of her father, sung, with much sweetness and expression, the following lines:

How shall I think of Thee, eternal Fountain
Of earthly joys and boundless hopes divine,
Of Thee, whose mercies are beyond recounting,
To whom unnumbered worlds in praises shine?

I see thy beauty in the dewy morning,
And in the purple sunset's changing dyes;
Thee I behold the rainbow's arch adorning;
Thee in the starry glories of the skies.

The modest flower, low in the green grass blushing,
The wondrous wisdom of the honey bee,
The birds' clear joy in streams of music gushing,
In sweet and varied language tell of Thee.

All things are with Thy loving presence glowing,
The worm as well as the bright, blazing star;
Out of Thine infinite perfection flowing,
For Thine own bliss and their delight THEY ARE.

But chiefly in the pure and trusting spirit,
Is Thy choice dwelling-place, Thy brightest throne.

The soul that loves shall all of good inherit,
For Thou, O God of love art all its own.

Upon Thine altar I would lay all feeling,
Subdued and hallowed to Thy perfect will,
Accept these tears, a thankful heart revealing,
A heart that hopes, that trembles, and is still.

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At the commencement of the hymn, Armstrong paid but little attention, but as the sweet stream of melody flowed on from lips on which he had ever hung with delight, and in the tones of that soft, beloved voice, it gradually insinuated itself through his whole being, as it were into the innermost chambers of his soul. He raised the dejected eyes, and they dwelt on Faith's face with a sort of loving eagerness, as if he were seeking to appropriate some of the heavenly emotion that to his imagination, more and more excited, began to assume the appearance of a celestial halo around her head. But it is not necessary to assume the existence of insanity to account for such an impression. If there be anything which awakens reminiscences of a divine origin, it is from the lips of innocence and beauty, to listen to the pure heart pouring itself out in tones like voices dropping from the sky. The sweetness, the full perfection of the notes are not sufficient to account for the effect. No instrument made by human hands is adequate to it. There is something more, something lying behind, sustaining and floating through the sounds. Is it the sympathy of the heavenly for the earthly; the tender lamentation not unmixed with hope; the sigh of the attendant angel?

Upon the conclusion of the piece, Faith rose and took a seat by her father.

"Shall I sing more, father?" she inquired.

"No, my darling," answered Armstrong, taking her hand into his. "Dearly as I love to hear you, and although it may be the last time, I would rather have you nearer me, and hear you speak in your own language; it is sweeter than the words of any poet. Faith, do you believe I love you?"

"Father! father!" cried she, embracing him, "how can you ask so cruel a question? I know that you love me as much as father ever loved a daughter."

"Promise me that nothing shall ever deprive you of a full confidence in my affection."

"I should be most wretched, could I think it possible."

"But suppose I should kill you this instant?"

"Dear father, this is horrid! You are incapable of entertaining a thought of evil towards me."

"You are right, Faith, but only suppose it."

"I cannot have such a thought of my own father! It is impossible. I would sooner die than admit it into my mind."

"I am satisfied. Under no circumstances can you conceive a thought of evil of me. But this is a strange world, and the strangest things happen in it. I speak in this way because I do not know what may come to pass next. I have always loved my fellow-



men, and desired their good opinion, and the idea of forfeiting it, either through my own fault or theirs, is painful to me. But men judge so absurdly! They look only at the outside. They are so easily deceived by appearances! Do you know, that of late I have thought there was a great deal of confusion in the ordinary way of men's thinking? But I see clearly the cause of the errors into which they are perpetually falling. All the discord arises from having wills of their own. Do you not think so?"

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"Religion teaches, father, that our wills are sources of unhappiness only when opposed to the Divine will."

"I knew you would agree with me. And then think of the folly of it. The resistance must be ineffectual. That is a sweet song you sung, but it seems to me the theology of it is not altogether correct. It celebrates only the love of God, and is, therefore, partial and one-sided. He is also a consuming fire."

"A consuming fire to destroy what is evil."

"I hope it is so. But do you know that I have been a good deal troubled lest there might be truth in the doctrine, that Necessity, an iron Necessity, you understand, might control God himself?"

"Why will you distress yourself with these strange speculations, father? There are some things, it was intended, we should not know."

"Why," continued Armstrong, "it is an opinion that has been entertained for thousands of years, and by the wisest men. The old philosophers believed in it, and I do not know how otherwise to explain the destiny of the elect and reprobate. For you see, Faith, that if God could make all men happy, he would. But he does not."

"I think we ought not to engage our minds in such thoughts," said Faith. "They cannot make us wiser or better, or comfort us in affliction, or strengthen us for duty."

"They are very interesting. I have spent days thinking them over. But if the subject is unpleasant we will choose another. I think you look wonderfully like your mother to-night. I almost seem to see her again. It was very curious how Mr. Holden discovered your likeness to her."

"I was quite startled," said his daughter, glad to find her father's mind directed to something else. "I wonder if he could have seen my mother."

He explained the way in which he found it out. "Was it not ingenious? No one else would have thought of it. He has a very subtle intellect."

"I was not quite satisfied," said Faith. "His explanation seemed far fetched, and intended for concealment. I think he must have seen my mother."

"If that is your opinion, I will inquire into it. But I do not wish to speak of Holden. You have been to me, Faith, a source of great happiness, and when you are gone, I know I shall not live long."

"We shall live many happy years yet, dear father, and when our time comes to depart, we will thank God for the happiness we have enjoyed, and look forward to greater."

“Your time is at the door, my daughter,” said Armstrong, solemnly.

“I know that at any moment I may be called, but that does not affect my happiness, or diminish my confidence, that all is well according to the counsel of His will.”

“I see thee in the shining raiment of the blessed! I behold thee in the celestial city!” exclaimed Armstrong.

It was later than usual when the father and daughter separated that night. It seemed as if he were unwilling to allow her to depart, detaining her by caresses when she made suggestions of the lateness of the hour, and assenting only when the clock warned that midnight was passed. Then it was he said:

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"I do wrong to keep you up so long, Faith. You should be bright and well for an excursion I intend to take with you to-morrow. You will go with me, will you not?"

"I shall be delighted. The clear sky," she added, walking to the window, "promises a fine day."

"Upon how many new-made graves will to-morrow's sun shine? I wish mine was one of them"

"O, do not say so. You will break my heart."

"Not willingly. O! I do not pain you willingly. You were not born to suffer much pain. Living or dying, you will be a pure offering to your Maker, my daughter."

"Father, how strangely you talk! You are ill."

"As well as I shall be in this life. But do not be troubled. To-morrow will make a change."

He was near the door when he uttered the last words; and now, as if not daring to trust himself in a longer conversation, he hastily opened it, and proceeded to his chamber. Faith followed his example, pondering sadly over the conversation. It did not escape her, that it was more incoherent than usual, but she had seen persons before under great religious distress of mind, whose peace was afterwards restored, and she doubted not that, in like manner, her father's doubts would be solved, and his spirit calmed. With, her heart full of him, and her last thought a petition on his behalf, she fell asleep.

CHAPTER XLI.

'Tis necessity
To which the gods must yield; and I obey,
Till I redeem it by some glorious way.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

The next morning was beautiful, like most June mornings. Armstrong, who had not closed his eyes during the whole night, rose with the dawn to wander through his garden, which was a favorite resort. His walk, at first rapid and irregular, as if he were trying to work off a nervous excitement, gradually slackened, until it became a firm, composed step. With folded arms and compressed, resolved lips, he paced up and down the paths. He was living in an interior world. He heard not the singing of the birds, which, in great numbers, frequented the spacious gardens and orchards lying around; he saw not the beautiful flowers, burdening the air with sweetness; nor the young fruit, whose progress, through the various stages of its growth, he had once

watched with so much pleasure. His mind went back to the time when he was a school-boy with his brother George; when they slept in the same bed, and associated in the same sports; it then advanced to their college days, and the face of the beautiful girl, who became his wife, flitted by him. He thought of that fair face now for many a long day, mouldering in the grave, into which he had seen the coffin lowered; then his thoughts reverted to his brother George, so brave, so generous, so strong once, but who presented himself to his vision now, a livid corpse, dripping with water. Next came his mother,

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of whom his recollection was faint; and then his father, with insanity in his eyes. He felt, as it were, their presence around him, but it was a companionship which afforded no pleasure. There seemed to be something about himself that invincibly held them off, notwithstanding their attempts to approach—a sullen sphere, which projected a dark shadow, only to the edge of which the spirits could come, and which they made repeated efforts to cross.

While Armstrong was suffering under these strange delusions, Felix approached, to call him to breakfast. The black beheld him walking backwards and forwards, with orderly and composed steps, and congratulated himself upon the change since the day before. He had not, however, ventured to address his master since being ordered away, and uncertain how he would be received, preferred to be spoken to first. With this view, he drew nigh one of the flower-beds, which Armstrong was passing and re-passing, and pretended to busy himself with tying up one of the rose bushes, then in full bloom. Armstrong did not see Felix as he passed, so deep was his reverie, but on retracing his steps, he observed a shadow on the path, which occasioned him to lift his eyes, when he discerned the black. He stopped and spoke.

“Felix,” he said, “I was unkind to you yesterday. I ask your pardon.”

“O, Mr. Armstrong,” said Felix, his eyes protruding with astonishment, “there is no ’casion. I say so many foolish things, it is no wonder you out of patience sometime.”

“No, Felix; it was a fancied superiority that made me speak harshly. You have always been a good and faithful servant,” he continued, taking out his pocket-book, which he opened mechanically, as from the force of habit, “and I wish I had it in my power to express better my sense of the obligation. But why do I open it?” he said, closing at the same time, and offering it to Felix. “You will find here what may be of use to you, though I think there is little enjoyment purchasable with money.”

“Why! Mr. Armstrong,” cried Felix, stepping back. “What for do I want more money? I have enough, and you will please keep it, sir, to give some poor man if you wish.”

“You are right to despise it,” said Armstrong. “It shows a superiority of soul. Now here is this poor black,” he went on soliloquizing, though all the time Felix stood before him, “who has learned that lesson of contentment which the generality never learn. Rich in his poverty here, an inheritor of the skies, I have only insulted him by so contemptible an offer.” His head sunk upon his breast, his eyes fell upon the ground, his pocket-book dropped from his unconscious hand, and he resumed his walk. The negro stooped and picked it up, saying, to himself:

“Very strange! Mr. Armstrong act as if pocket-book chock full o’ bank-bills grow like chick-weed, but I will take him under my protecshum till I give him to Miss Faith.”

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Upon Armstrong's return from the end of the walk, Felix delivered himself of his errand, and his master directed his steps towards the house.

He found his daughter with the breakfast apparatus before her, and looking as fresh and charming as the morning itself.

"You have shown better taste than I, father," she said. "You have been enjoying the beauty of nature, while I was lying on a downy pillow."

"Sleep is sweet to the young and healthy," said Armstrong, "and my selfishness kept you up so late last night, that I do not wonder you are not as early as usual."

"My late hours have done me no harm. But when shall we take the drive you promised me?"

"At any time that is most agreeable to yourself."

"If you refer it to me, I shall not long hesitate."

"It will make no difference with me. Choose, yourself, my darling."

"Then, why not this morning, while the air is fresh with the dews of night, and before the roads are filled with dust? I anticipate a great deal of pleasure, for it seems to me some mystery hangs about this drive, and that you are preparing for me a delightful surprise."

Armstrong started, and an expression of pain gathered over his face.

"That was earlier than I intended," he said, "but a few hours can make no difference."

"If it is not perfectly convenient; if you have another engagement, put it off later. It was only the loveliness of the morning which made me select it."

"I have no other engagement so important," said Armstrong; "it is of great importance to us both: I ought to gratify any request you can make, but"—

"Why hesitate, dear father, to make your own choice without regard to a chance expression of mine? I really have no preference contrary to yours."

"There is no such thing as chance. We will go this morning, my darling," said Armstrong, with decision. "I have observed, there are some persons controlled by a heavenly influence, which prevents their erring. I have felt it sometimes, and, I think I feel it now. You were always right from infancy. The influence upon us both is the same, and, I am convinced, we should follow it."

Accordingly, shortly after breakfast, Faith and her father entered the coach, which was driven by Felix. The route they passed over was the same taken by the Judge and Armstrong, and we are, therefore, relieved from the necessity of a description. Besides, we are now too much interested in Armstrong, to allow us to pay much attention to the beauties of external nature. Of such infinite worth is a human being; so incalculably grand and precious those faculties and powers which connect him with his magnificent source; so fraught with mystery the discipline he endures, a mystery in which each one endowed with the same nature, has part, that the natural and the visible shrink into insignificance in comparison with the unseen and spiritual. Of what consequence is a world of insensate matter, when brought into competition with the immortal spirit?

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Vain would be the attempt to describe the tumult of feelings that, like billows of fire, dashed through the soul of the unfortunate man. Sitting, as he supposed, for the last time, by the side of one dearer than life, his eyes no longer dwelt upon Faith, with that expression of calm and boundless love, whence she had been accustomed to drink in so much happiness. Yet, was the love all there, but it was a troubled love, a love full of anguish. What sweetness! what confidence in him he read in her face! It was like the placid surface of a mountain lake, in which the skies delight to mirror themselves—no emotion hidden, no thought concealed—and, for all this innocent confidence, what was his return? He was entertaining, in his mind, a dreadful purpose; carefully concealing it so that it should be beyond the power of suspicion, and inveigling her into a snare, which, upon being discovered, must fill her young heart with an agony worse than death. But no thought of swerving from his purpose crossed now the mind of Armstrong. Considerations like these had long been reflected upon, and in connection with others, been able, indeed, to retard the execution of his design, but not, as it seemed, to defeat it. Whatever weight they might have had, they were obliged to yield to more powerful antagonists. He was no longer a free agent. A force, as with the grip of a vice, held him fast. A scourge, whose every lash drew blood, as it were, from his heart, drove him on. Beautiful, magnificent, the harmonious and healthy play of the human faculties; horrid, beyond conception, the possible chaos of their diseased action!

Meanwhile, Faith, ignorant of what was passing in her father's mind, endeavored to interest him in the objects which attracted her attention, but in vain. The moment was nigh which was to accomplish a deed, at the bare contemplation of which his whole being revolted; but, to whose execution he felt drawn by a power, as irresistible by him as is that force which keeps the worlds in their places, by those rolling spheres. Engrossed, absorbed by one dominating idea, there was no room in his mind for another. The musical tones of Faith's voice; the smiles evoked for his sake, that played around those lips sweeter than the damask rose, clustered inevitably about that one thought. But, he felt them as a swarm of angry bees, that eagerly settle upon a living thing to sting it into torture. That living thing was his burning, sensitive heart, quivering, bleeding, convulsed, longing for the bliss of annihilation. And thus, in an agony far greater than that which the martyr endures in the chariot of flame which is to waft him to heaven, as the sufferings of the immortal spirit can exceed those of the perishable body, the insane man pursued his way. How unending seemed that road, and yet, how he longed that it might extend on for ever! Within the time of each revolution of the wheels, an age of torment was compressed; yet, how he dreaded when they should stop!

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But this could not last, and, at length, the coach reached a spot where Armstrong proposed they should alight. Accordingly, he assisted Faith out, and, preceding her, they took their way across the fields. Faith, unable to resist the attraction of the wild-flowers scattered beneath her feet, stooped occasionally to pick them, and soon had her hands full.

"What a pity it is, father," she said, "that we should step upon these beautiful things! They seem little fairies, enchanted in the grass, that entreat us to turn aside and do them no harm."

"It is our lot, in this world, cursed for our sakes," said Armstrong, hoarsely, "to crush whatever we prize and love the dearest."

"The flower is an emblem of forgiveness," said Faith. "Pluck it, and it resents not the wrong. It dies, but with its last breath, exhales only sweetness for its destroyer."

"O, God!" groaned Armstrong. "Was this, too, necessary? Wilt thou grind me between the upper and the nether millstone?"

"What is the matter, father?" inquired Faith, anxiously, catching some words between his groans. "O, you are ill, let us return."

"No, my daughter, there is no return. It was a pang like those to which I am subject. Will they ever pass off?"

They had reached the open space of ground or clearing made by Gladding, and Armstrong advanced, with Faith following, directly to the pile he had built near the brook.

"What a beautiful stream!" exclaimed Faith. "How it leaps, as if alive and rejoicing in its activity! I always connect happiness with life."

"You are mistaken," said Armstrong. "Life is wretchedness, with now and then a moment of delusive respite to tempt us not to cast it away."

"When your health returns, you will think differently, dear father. Look! how enchanting this blue over-arching sky, in which the clouds float like angels. With what a gentle welcome the wind kisses our cheeks, and rustles the leaves of the trees, as if to furnish an accompaniment to the songs of the birds which flit among them, while the dear little brook laughs and dances and claps its hands, and tells us, like itself, to be glad. There is only one thing wanting, father, and that is, that you should be happy. But I wonder why this pile of wood was built up so carefully near the edge of the water."

"It is the altar on which I am commanded to sacrifice thee, my child," said Armstrong, seizing her by the arm, and drawing her towards it.

There was a horror in the tones of his voice, a despair in the expression of his face, and a lurid glare in his eyes, that explained all his previous conduct, and revealed to the unhappy girl the full danger of her situation; even as in a dark night a sudden flash of lightning apprises the startled traveller of a precipice over which his foot has already advanced, and the gleam serves only to show him his destruction.

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"Father, you cannot be in earnest," she exclaimed, dreadfully alarmed at being in the power of a maniac, far from assistance, "you do not mean so. Oh," she said throwing herself into his arms, "I do not believe my father means to hurt me."

"Why do you not fly? Why do you throw your arms about me? Do you think to defeat the decree? Unwind your arms, I say, and be obedient unto death."

So saying, with a gentle force he loosed the hold of the fainting girl, who with one hand embracing his knees, and the other held up to deprecate his violence, sunk at his feet.

"God have mercy upon us! Christ have mercy upon us," her pale lips faintly gasped.

"Faith, my precious, my darling," said Armstrong, with a terrible calmness, as he drew a large knife out of his bosom, "You know I do not this of myself, but I dare not disobey the command. It might endanger the soul of my child, which is dearer than her life. Think, dear child, in a moment, you will be in Paradise. It is only one short pang, and all is over. Let me kiss you first."

He stooped down, he inclosed her in his arms, and strained her to his heart—he imprinted innumerable kisses on her lips, her eyes, her cheeks, her forehead—he groaned, and large drops of sweat stood on his face, pressed out by the agony.

"You will see your mother and my brother George, Faith. Tell them not to blame me. I could not help it. You will not blame me, I know. You never blamed me even in a thought. I wish it was for you to kill me. The father, it would seem ought to go first, and I am very weary of life."

He raised the knife, and Faith, with upturned and straining eyes, saw it glittering in the sunshine. She strove to cry out, but in vain. From the parched throat no sound proceeded. She saw the point about to enter her bosom. She shut her eyes, and mentally prayed for her father. At that moment, as the deadly instrument approached her heart, she heard a voice exclaim, "Madman forbear!" She opened her eyes: the knife had dropped from her father's hand; he staggered and leaned against the altar. A few words will explain the timely interruption.

When Armstrong and his daughter left the carriage to cross the field, the mind of Felix was filled with a thousand apprehensions. He would have followed had he dared to leave the horses, but this, his fear of the consequences if the high-spirited animals were left to themselves, forbade. With anxious eyes he pursued the receding foot-steps of his master and young mistress until they were lost to sight, and then, with a foreboding of evil, hid his face in the flowing mane of one of the horses, as if seeking comfort from his dumb companion. Some little time passed, which to the fearful Felix seemed hours, when, whom should he see but the man whom of all the world he dreaded most. It was Holden, bounding along with strides which showed that the habits of his forest-life were



not forgotten. At any other time the apparition of the Solitary would have imparted anything but pleasure, but now it was as welcome as a spar to a shipwrecked sailor. Holden advanced straight to the carriage, but before he could speak the black addressed him,

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"Oh, Mr. Holden, if you love Mr. Armstrong and Miss Faith, go after them quick; don't stop a minute."

"Where are they?" said Holden.

"They go in that direcshum," answered Felix, pointing with his chin, across the field.

"How long ago?"

"Ever so long; Oh, good Mr. Holden, do hurry," said Felix, whose anxieties made him magnify the progress of time.

Holden asked no further questions, but increasing his speed, hastened on an Indian lope in the direction indicated, following the traces in the grass.

As he hurried on, his dream occurred to him. The features of the country were the same as of that he had traversed in his sleep: he remembered also, that the day of the week was Friday. As these thoughts came into his mind, they stimulated him to press on with increased speed, as if something momentous depended upon the swiftness of his motions. It was well he did so. A moment later might have been too late; a moment more and he might have seen the fair creature he so loved weltering in her blood. Too late to stay the uplifted hand of the deranged man with his own, he had uttered the cry which had arrested the knife.

Holden stooped down, and taking into his arms the insensible form of Faith, bore her to the brook. Here he lavishly sprinkled her face with the cool water, and sobs and deep drawn sighs began, after a time, to herald a return to consciousness. Armstrong followed, and as he saw the pale girl lying like a corpse in the arms of Holden, he threw himself down by her side upon the grass, and took her passive hand, which lay cold in his own.

"She is not dead, is she?" said he. "O, say to me, she is not dead. I thought I heard a voice from heaven—I expected to hear it—which commanded me to forbear. Did I disobey the angel? Was he too late? Too late, too late, too late! Oh, she is dead, dead. My Faith, my daughter, my darling! O, God, it was cruel in thee!"

But presently, as we have said, sighs and sobs began to heave the bosom of Faith, and as she opened her languid eyes their soft light fell upon the face of her father.

With a cry of delight he sprang from the ground. "She is not dead," he exclaimed, "she is alive! I knew it would be so. I knew it was only a trial of my faith. I knew God would send his angel. He has angels enough in heaven. What does he want of Faith yet? My darling," he said, getting down and leaning the head of his daughter upon his bosom, "God did not mean it in earnest. He only meant to try us. It is all over now, and hereafter we shall be so happy!"

Holden, who, when Faith began to revive, had surrendered her to her father, stood looking on, while tears streamed down his face. Faith had now so far recovered as to sit up and look about her, and throwing her arms around her father's neck, she hid her face in his bosom."

"My brain whirls," she said, "and it seems to me as if I had had a dreadful dream. I thought you wanted to kill me, father."

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"No, no, no!" cried Armstrong, "I never wanted to. It was my trial," he added, solemnly, "and I shall never have another, Faith. God is too merciful to try a man twice, so."

"James," said Holden, and his voice sounded with unusual magnificence, "dost thou know me?"

"Certainly," said Armstrong; "it is a strange question to ask me. You are Mr. Holden."

"I am thy brother George."

Without a doubt, without a misgiving, Armstrong, still holding his daughter, extended his hand to Holden.

"So, George," he said, "you have risen from the dead to save Faith's life. I knew God would work a miracle if it was necessary."

"I trust I have risen from the death of sin but I have never been in the grave of which thou speakest. Know that in veritable flesh and blood, I am thy brother George, who hath never tasted of death."

But this was an idea which Armstrong was incapable of receiving. He shook his head, and muttering to himself, "Can the dead lie?" looked suspiciously at Holden.

The announcement of the Solitary struck Faith, at once, as the truth. Her mind was in no condition to reason and compare proofs. She only felt how sweet had been her intercourse with him, and how he had contrived to make her love and reverence him. She hoped it was true, he was her long lost uncle, and she believed it because she hoped it.

"My Uncle George!" she said, as attempting to rise she received his embrace. She could say no more. The agitation of her feelings choked her voice and vented itself in a flood of tears.

"What, crying, my darling?" said Armstrong. "This is no time for tears. You should rejoice, for is not George here, who left his grave to save your life, and has not our faith received its triumphant crown?"

"Alas!" exclaimed Holden, by a word and look conveying his meaning. "As soon as you are able to walk, dear Faith, we had better return to your home."

"I think I am sufficiently restored," she replied, "if you will assist me."

Holden gave her his arm, and supported her to the carriage, followed with great docility by Armstrong, who broke out into occasional snatches of music, once a common habit, but in which he had not been known to indulge for a long time.

CHAPTER XLII.

O, you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature!
The untuned and jarring senses O, wind up!

KING LEAR.

As soon as they reached the house of Armstrong, Dr. Elmer was sent for, and to him Holden communicated the events of the morning, not concealing his own relationship. This last particular was a case not provided for in the books, or coming within the scope of the good doctor's practice. Contenting himself, therefore, with ejaculating,

"Is this the lord Talbot, Uncle Gloster,
That hath so long been resident in France?"

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he shook Holden by the hand as an evidence of welcome, and, without hesitation, assented to the propriety of the Solitary's suggestion, that the insanity of Armstrong and his attempted violence, should be kept secret. Rest was prescribed by the doctor for Faith, whom, contrary to her inclinations, he compelled to retire to her chamber, whither he sent a composing draught, with assurances that her father was doing well, which declaration, probably, had quite as much effect in inducing the slumbers that succeeded, as the anodyne. He next turned his attention to her father.

No one, without particular observation, would have remarked any change in him. Upon returning home, he had quietly entered the parlor and sat down in a large arm-chair, which was a favorite seat, looking first around with a grave and pleased expression. His daughter was with him then, who, indeed, until the arrival of the physician, had remained by his side, and nothing seemed to please Armstrong so much as retaining her hand in one of his, to pass the other over her silken hair, and let it slide down over the pale cheeks, all the time gazing at her with an appearance of infinite affection. But when the doctor felt his pulse, he found it bounding like a frightened steed; and this symptom, together with the heightened crimson of the cheeks, and deepening blackness of the eyes, but too plainly revealed the access of violent fever. Bleeding was in vogue in those days, and much practised, and the skill of Elmer could suggest nothing better for the pressure of blood on the brain, than letting blood. Having had, therefore, Armstrong conducted to his chamber, he opened a vein, and bleeding him till he fainted, he afterwards administered the medicines he thought proper, enjoining the strictest quiet, promising to be with him every moment that his professional engagements permitted. During the whole Armstrong was passive, yielding himself like a child to all that was required, and seeming to be in a beatitude, which made whatever might occur of but little concernment. As the doctor was about leaving, he accepted of Holden's proposal, which was rather uttered as a determination, to remain, and send for his son. "If," thought Elmer, "Holden is Armstrong's brother, he has a right to stay; if not, he has at least saved Faith's life, as she says herself, and he knows after all, a 'hawk from a hand-saw.' Young Holden, too, is a sensible fellow, and I think I may trust them." In some such way thronged the thoughts through Elmer's mind. "I will," he said to himself, "stop as I pass Judge Bernard's house, to let Anne know that her friend Faith is indisposed, and ask her to sleep with her to-night." Such, accordingly, was, for a short time the composition of the family under Mr. Armstrong's roof.

Once or twice daring the night Faith started in her sleep, and threw her arm around her lovely companion, as if to ask for protection, and Anne heard her moaning something indistinctly; but, on the whole, her sleep was refreshing, and in the morning she awoke, paler, indeed, and weaker than common, but with no other signs of illness about her.

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"They will soon pass off," said the doctor. "It was a severe shock, but youth and a good constitution are great odds."

But it was not so with Armstrong. The combined effects of loss of blood and of the medicines he had taken, were unable to calm the excitement of the nerves, much less produce drowsiness. All night he lay with eyes wide open, burning with fever, and calling for drink. But, although his body suffered, the exaltation of his mind continued to triumph over pain, and, from the words that escaped him, from time to time, it would seem as if he felt himself absolutely happy.

When Doctor Elmer came in the morning, and heard the report of Holden, he expressed no surprise.

"It is as I supposed," he said. "He must have a run of fever, and what the result may be, no mortal man can divine. Let us hope for the best, while prepared for the worst."

Faith, from the moment she was permitted, was assiduous by the bed-side of her father. The delusion with respect to Holden, which had taken possession of him, whom, while continuing to recognize as his brother, George, he would not believe was alive, fancying it was his spirit, extended itself after a time to his daughter, whom also he believed to be dead. So far as could be gathered from the disjointed utterances that escaped him, he supposed that his own spirit was trying to escape from the body, and that the spirits of his brother and daughter had been sent to comfort and assist him.

Thus tossing and tumbling on a heated bed, which the delicious breath of June, streaming through the open windows, could not cool for him, passed nine long wretched days, during which the confinement of both Holden and Faith was almost incessant, for whenever either moved from the bed or made a motion as if to leave the room, Armstrong would intreat them, in the most touching tones and pathetic language, which neither the brother's nor daughter's heart could withstand, not to leave him, for he was just then ready, only one more struggle was necessary, and he should be free. And besides carrying into his insanity a habit, of which we have spoken, he would insist on holding their hands. The touch of their heavenly bodies, he said, sent a sensation of roses and lilies through his earthly body; they refined him and attracted him upward, and he was sure he had sometimes risen a little way into the air. "O!" he would exclaim, "I never knew before, how much flowers resemble spirits. They smile and laugh alike, and their voices are very similar."

On the tenth day the fever abated, and Armstrong gradually fell into a long, deep sleep. So long, so profound was the slumber that the attendants about his bed feared that it might be one from which there was no awaking. But the orders of the doctor, who, at the crisis was present the whole time, were peremptory that the patient should not be disturbed, but Nature allowed, in her own way, to work out her beneficent purposes. Armstrong then slept many, many hours, in that still and darkened room, while attentive

ears were listening to the deeper drawn breath, and anxious eyes watching the slightest change of countenance.

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At last he awoke, and the first word he spoke, so low, that even in the hushed chamber it was scarcely audible, was, "Faith." A smile of wonderful sweetness illuminated his face, as he tried to extend his hand, white as the snowy coverlet on which it rested, toward her, but so weak was he, that only a motion of the fingers could be perceived. Faith, through the tears which fell upon the hand she covered with kisses, could mark the light of returned intelligence, and her heart swelled with an almost overpowering emotion.

"O, doctor," she said, turning to Elmer, "say he is safe."

"I hope so," answered Elmer, "but control yourself. I forbid all agitation."

The life of Armstrong, for some days longer, vibrated in the balance. So excessive was the weakness consequent upon the tremendous excitement through which he had passed, that sometimes it appeared hardly possible that nature could sufficiently rally, to bring the delicate machinery again into healthy action. But stealing slowly along, insensibly, the gracious work went on, until one day the anxious daughter had the happiness to hear from the lips of the doctor that her father was out of danger.

It seems a strange thing, but so it is, that the events of the dreadful day, when, as if by a heavenly interposition, his hand had been arrested when raised to take away the life of his daughter, and also of the time when he lay insane upon his bed, were blotted completely from the memory of Armstrong. The scratches of a school-boy on a slate were never more perfectly erased by a wet sponge. All his conduct proves this. When he beheld his brother after the return of reason, he addressed him as Mr. Holden, and never, in conversation with any one, did he make allusion to his aberration of mind. Nor during the short period while he remained on earth, did he know of his conduct on the banks of the Wootupocut. The secret was confined to the bosoms of a few, and it was mutually agreed that it was wisest it should be concealed.

It was not until the health of Armstrong seemed completely restored that his brother, in the presence of his son and of Faith, disclosed his relationship. He had made it known before to his son, to whom, as well as to his father, we must, for the brief period our acquaintance with them continues, give their true name of Armstrong. It may well be conceived, that young Armstrong had no objections to recognize in the lovely Faith a cousin, nor was she unwilling to find a relative in the amiable and intelligent young man.

But, if they were pleased, how shall we express the happiness of James Armstrong? The sting of a sorrow that had poisoned so many years of his life was extracted. If he had been the cause of misfortune to his brother, he had it now in his power to repair, in a degree, the wrong he had inflicted. Nor had he recovered only a brother, but also a nephew, whom he could love and respect, and who would, in some measure, supply the loss of his son, by transmitting his family name, the extinction of which no man can regard with indifference.

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Long was the conversation of the brothers after their children had left them to themselves. Together they wandered over the scenes of childhood, recalling its minutest, and, what would be to strangers, uninteresting scenes, George Armstrong listening, with a sad pleasure, to the details of his parents' lives after his own escape from the Asylum, and, also, to changes in the family of his brother since their death; while James Armstrong as eagerly drank in the particulars of his brother George's adventures. But little respecting the latter need be added, after what has been disclosed.

We already know, that George Armstrong married, in one of the Western States, and commenced the life of a pioneer, and that, in a night attack, his cabin had been burned, his wife killed, and his son carried away by the savages. It would seem that the effect of these misfortunes was again to disturb his reason, and that, urged by a passion for revenge, he had made himself terrible, under the name of Onontio (given by the natives, with what meaning is unknown,) among the Western Indians. But, after a time, the feeling passed away, and he became, somehow, a subject of religious impressions, which assumed the shape of a daily expectation of the Coming of Christ, joined with a firm belief in the doctrine of predestination. In this frame of mind, influenced by a feeling like the instinct, perhaps, of the bird which returns from the southern clime, whither the cold of winter has driven it, to seek again the tree where hung the parental nest, George Armstrong came back to the place of his birth. He was supposed to be dead, and, even without any such prepossession, no one would have recognized him; for, the long beard he had suffered to grow, and the sorrow and hardship he had undergone, gave him an appearance of much more advanced age than his elder brother, and effectually disguised him. Why, instead of taking possession of the cabin, on Salmon Island, and secluding himself from society, he did not make himself known to his brother and demand his inheritance, always puzzled the gossips of Hillsdale, and yet, it appears to us, susceptible of explanation.

When he came from the West, he felt, at first, as if the ties which had united him to the world, were broken, never to be renewed. What he most prized and loved he had lost. He was an exception to other men. He had been isolated by destiny, whose iron finger pointed to solitude, and solitude he chose as most congenial to his bruised spirit. But, besides, an idea had mastered him, in whose presence the vanities and indulgences of the world and all worldly considerations, shrunk into insignificance. Of what consequence were wealth and distinction to one who looked momentarily for the introduction of a state of things, when they would be of less importance than the baubles of a child? The gay world might laugh and jest in its delusion, but it was for him to watch and pray. Some feeling of resentment, too, towards

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his brother, may have helped to color his conduct. As time, however, wore on, his heart began to expand to human affections; for we have seen, how fond he became of the society, first, of Faith, and, finally, of his brother; deriving, possibly, a sort of insane gratification from even the concealment of his relationship, as a miser gloats over the security of his hoard. It is, indeed, probable, that, but for the discovery of his son, he would have died without betraying the secret, but, that discovery awakened anew feelings which he never expected to have again in this life. He looked upon his son and the inheritance, which to him was valueless, assumed an importance. And it may be—who can tell?—that, sometimes, a doubt—for how long had he waited in vain?—might throw a shadow over his expectation of the Millennium. But this we have no means of determining, and, as we shall presently see, his subsequent life rather sustains the opposite opinion.

CHAPTER XLIII.

By his great Author man was sent below,
Some things to learn, great pains to undergo,
To fit him for what further he's to know.

This end obtained, without regarding time,
He calls the soul home to its native clime,
To happiness and knowledge more sublime.

ALLAN RAMSAY

The period of time which has elapsed since the occurring of the events detailed in the preceding chapters, enables us to give a tolerably full account of the destiny of the actors, who, for the space of a few months, have flitted across our stage.

James Armstrong lived in the enjoyment of pretty good health some two years after his recovery. The melancholy with which nature had tinged his disposition was, indeed, never quite eradicated, but probably those two years were the sweetest and sunniest of his life. Those whom he most loved were prosperous and happy, and the reflection of their happiness shone upon his daily walk. At the end of that time he fell asleep, and in the confidence of a lively faith and the comfort of a holy hope, was gathered to his fathers. Immediately upon the restoration of his reason he had divided his estate with his brother, or rather with his nephew, for the Solitary refused to have anything to do with wealth. It would be to him, he said, a burden. He was not a pack-horse, to carry loads, though they were made of gold.

With whatever eyes, however, the possession of property might be viewed by George Armstrong, his son, who, within a few months afterwards, was united to Anne Bernard, with even the approbation of her brother, considered the addition thereby made to his income as no disagreeable circumstance. Mr. and Mrs. Pownal, the benefactors of his youth, were present, and the former had the satisfaction of dancing at the wedding. No marriage could be more fortunate. A similarity of taste and feeling and the harmonies of virtue had originally attracted and attached each

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to the other. Anne had loved Armstrong because she recognized in him her own truthfulness and nobility of spirit, and he her, for her grace and beauty, and that inexpressible charm of sweetness of temper and gaiety of spirit, that, like the sun, diffuses light and animation around. Their career has been like a summer-day. A numerous family of children has sprung from the union, who promise to perpetuate the virtues of their parents. And it is to be hoped, and we believe it to be a fact which the passage of so many years may be considered to have tolerably settled, that the fatal blood-taint of insanity, which had seemed hereditary on the side of one of the parents, has disappeared.

As for the Solitary, who survived his brother many years, he could never be weaned from the mode of life he had adopted. As long as James Armstrong lived, they were frequently together, few days passing without one seeking the other, as if both were striving to make up for their long separation, but yet George Armstrong preferred the rude simplicity of his hut, and his hard couch, to the elegant chamber and yielding bed, nor could he be persuaded to stop more than a night or two at any one time, either at the house of his brother or of his son. The efforts made to change this feeling were soon found to be unavailing, and his commanding temper, as usual, had its way. After the death of his brother, his visits to the village became less frequent, and he was seldom to be met with, except at the house of his son. It was a strange sight to see him, with two or three grand-children on his knees, and playing, perhaps, with one of the little ones, amusing itself with hiding behind the flowing majesty of his long beard. A great part of his time was passed among the Indians living on the banks of the Severn, to the amelioration of whose condition and Christianization he devoted himself to the last. And some insist that he never quite gave up the expectation of the Millennium during his life, for early fishermen, passing his hut before sunrise, are said to have reported that they had seen the Solitary more than once, waiting for the rising sun, and heard his bursts of passionate expectation. An occurrence, too, at his death, which happened at the house of his son, justifies this opinion—when sitting up suddenly in his bed, he stretched out his arms, and exclaiming with a wild energy, “Lord, Thou art faithful and true, for I behold Thy coming,” he fell back upon the pillow and expired. From respect to the memory of his father, his son bought the island where the Solitary lived so many years, and having planted it with trees, declares it shall never pass out of the family during his own life, and so long as it can be protected by his will.

Judge Bernard, his wife, the doctor, and the Pownals are gone, and the three former repose with their friends in the romantic burial ground, to which we once before conducted our readers; the two latter in the cemetery of the thronged city, undisturbed by the sounding tread of the multitudes who daily pass their graves.

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William Bernard, about the time of the marriage of his sister, made a formal offer of his hand to Faith, but without success. He was refused gently, but so decidedly, that no room was left for hope. But if the enamored young man lost his mistress, he was satisfied there was no rival in the case, and moreover that probably there never would be. So selfish is the human heart, that this reflection mitigated the bitterness of his disappointment. Convinced that the prospect of altering her determination was hopeless, and unable to remain in her presence, he made a voyage to Europe, where he remained five years, and on his return, entered into political life. He has since filled many eminent stations with credit to himself and advantage to the country, and only delicacy restrains us from naming the high position he now occupies, of course under a different name from that we have chosen to give him. But he has never found another being to fill the void in his affections, and remains unmarried, the most graceful and attractive of old bachelors.

And what shall we say of Faith, the pure, the high souled the devoted Faith? As long as her father lived, he continued to be the object of her incessant solicitude. She watched him with a tenderness like that of a mother hovering about her sick infant, devoting her whole life to his service, and when he died, the tears she shed were not those of complaining grief, but of a sad thankfulness. Sad was she that no more in this world should she behold him whom she had ever treasured in her inner heart; thankful that with unclouded reason and resigned trust, he had returned to the Source whence he came. Soon after his death, she joined her uncle in his labors among the Indians, abandoning her home and devoting the whole of her large income to the promotion of their interests. There was much in her character that resembled that of George Armstrong, and notwithstanding the disparity of years, caused each to find an attractive counterpart in the other. There was the same enthusiasm, trespassing from constitutional tendencies, upon the very verge of reason; the same contempt of the world and its allurements; the same reaching forward toward the invisible. Her surpassing beauty, her accomplishments and great wealth, brought many suitors to her feet, but she had a heart for none. She turned a deaf ear to their pleadings, and "in maiden meditation fancy free," pursued her course like the pale moon through heaven. Perhaps the awful shock which she received on the terrible day when the appearance of her uncle saved her life, working on a temperament so exalted, may have contributed to confirm and strengthen what was at first only a tendency, and so decided the character of her life. She died as such gifted beings are wont to do, young, breathing out her delicate soul with a smile, upon the bosom of her faithful friend, Anne Armstrong. A purer spirit, and one better fitted to join the bright array of the blessed, never left the earth, and to those who knew her, it looked dark and desolate when she departed.

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We have thus disposed of the principal personages in our drama. It remains to speak of some of those who have borne an inferior part in the scenes.

Esther left, with Quadaquina, for the Western tribes about the time when the boy attained the age of sixteen years, and historical accuracy compels us to admit, that, since their departure, we have lost all traces of them. One would suppose she would have remained with her powerful protectors, but it may be she feared the demoralization around her, to which, in spite of the efforts of the benevolent to the contrary, so many of her fated race fell victims, and preferred to expose Quadaquina to the perils of savage life, rather than to the tender mercies of civilization. We strongly suspect, that her wild creed was never fairly weeded out of her heart.

Primus remained to the end the same cheery, roguish fellow we have seen him, and when he died was buried, as became a revolutionary celebrity, with military honors, which so affected Felix, that, when his turn came—knowing that he was entitled to no such distinction, and, yet loth to pass away unnoticed—he begged Doctor Elmer to write him a “first-rate epithet.” The doctor redeemed his promise, by prefacing a panegyric, in English, with the following quotation from Virgil—

Hic jacet
FELIX QUI
Potuit Rerum cognoscere Causas
QUI
Que Metus omnes
Et inexorabile Fatum
Subjecit Pedibus
Strepitumque Acherontis avari.

The doctor, on being asked its meaning, one day, by an inquisitive negro, who had, for some time, been rolling the whites of his eyes at the inscription, in a vain attempt to understand it, replied, it meant that Felix was an intelligent and brave fellow, who lived like a wise man, and died like a hero, whereat, his auditor expressed great satisfaction, considering both the Latin and the sentiment a compliment to “colored pussons,” generally.

Gladding emigrated to the West, where his stout arm and keen axe did himself and the State good service. After making a fabulous number of “claims,” and as many “trades,” he found himself, at middle age, the master of a thousand acres of cleared land, with a proper proportion of timber; his log-cabin converted into a brick house, and sons and daughters around him.

We had almost forgotten to speak of the fate of Constable Basset. The good people of Hillsdale soon found out that his talents did not lie in the line he had adopted, and, at the next election, chose another in his place. Thereupon, not discouraged, he turned

his hand, with national facility, to something else—following, successively, the business of a small grocer, of a tavern keeper, and of an auctioneer. Somehow or other, however, ill luck still followed him; and, finally, he took to distributing the village newspaper, and sticking up handbills. This gave him a taste for politics, and having acquired, in his employment as auctioneer, a certain fluency of speech, he cultivated

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it to that degree—in town meetings and on other public occasions—that, in the end, there was not a man in the whole county who could talk longer and say less. His fellow-citizens observing this congressional qualification, and not knowing what else he was fit for, have just elected him to Congress, partly because of this accomplishment, and, partly, on account of his patriotic dislike of “furriners,” a sentiment which happens now to be popular. Both his friends and enemies agree that he is destined to make a figure there; and Mr. Thomas Armstrong—in compensation, perhaps, for a youthful trick—has promised the Member of Congress a new hat and full suit of black broadcloth, to enable him to appear in proper style on Pennsylvania Avenue.

THE END