

The Life and Adventures of Maj. Roger Sherman Potter eBook

The Life and Adventures of Maj. Roger Sherman Potter

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Contents

The Life and Adventures of Maj. Roger Sherman Potter eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	14
Page 1.....	16
Page 2.....	17
Page 3.....	18
Page 4.....	19
Page 5.....	20
Page 6.....	21
Page 7.....	22
Page 8.....	23
Page 9.....	24
Page 10.....	25
Page 11.....	26
Page 12.....	28
Page 13.....	29
Page 14.....	30
Page 15.....	31
Page 16.....	32
Page 17.....	33
Page 18.....	35
Page 19.....	36
Page 20.....	37
Page 21.....	38
Page 22.....	39

Page 23.....	40
Page 24.....	41
Page 25.....	42
Page 26.....	43
Page 27.....	44
Page 28.....	45
Page 29.....	46
Page 30.....	47
Page 31.....	48
Page 32.....	49
Page 33.....	50
Page 34.....	51
Page 35.....	52
Page 36.....	53
Page 37.....	54
Page 38.....	55
Page 39.....	56
Page 40.....	57
Page 41.....	58
Page 42.....	59
Page 43.....	60
Page 44.....	61
Page 45.....	62
Page 46.....	64
Page 47.....	65
Page 48.....	66

Page 49.....	67
Page 50.....	68
Page 51.....	70
Page 52.....	71
Page 53.....	72
Page 54.....	73
Page 55.....	74
Page 56.....	75
Page 57.....	76
Page 58.....	77
Page 59.....	78
Page 60.....	79
Page 61.....	80
Page 62.....	81
Page 63.....	82
Page 64.....	83
Page 65.....	84
Page 66.....	85
Page 67.....	86
Page 68.....	87
Page 69.....	88
Page 70.....	89
Page 71.....	90
Page 72.....	91
Page 73.....	92
Page 74.....	93

Page 75.....	95
Page 76.....	96
Page 77.....	97
Page 78.....	98
Page 79.....	99
Page 80.....	100
Page 81.....	101
Page 82.....	102
Page 83.....	103
Page 84.....	104
Page 85.....	105
Page 86.....	106
Page 87.....	107
Page 88.....	108
Page 89.....	110
Page 90.....	111
Page 91.....	112
Page 92.....	113
Page 93.....	114
Page 94.....	115
Page 95.....	116
Page 96.....	117
Page 97.....	118
Page 98.....	119
Page 99.....	120
Page 100.....	121

Page 101.....	122
Page 102.....	123
Page 103.....	125
Page 104.....	126
Page 105.....	127
Page 106.....	128
Page 107.....	129
Page 108.....	130
Page 109.....	131
Page 110.....	132
Page 111.....	133
Page 112.....	134
Page 113.....	135
Page 114.....	136
Page 115.....	137
Page 116.....	139
Page 117.....	140
Page 118.....	141
Page 119.....	142
Page 120.....	143
Page 121.....	145
Page 122.....	146
Page 123.....	148
Page 124.....	149
Page 125.....	150
Page 126.....	151

Page 127.....	152
Page 128.....	153
Page 129.....	154
Page 130.....	155
Page 131.....	156
Page 132.....	157
Page 133.....	158
Page 134.....	159
Page 135.....	161
Page 136.....	162
Page 137.....	163
Page 138.....	164
Page 139.....	165
Page 140.....	166
Page 141.....	168
Page 142.....	169
Page 143.....	170
Page 144.....	171
Page 145.....	172
Page 146.....	173
Page 147.....	174
Page 148.....	176
Page 149.....	177
Page 150.....	178
Page 151.....	180
Page 152.....	181

Page 153.....	183
Page 154.....	184
Page 155.....	185
Page 156.....	186
Page 157.....	187
Page 158.....	189
Page 159.....	190
Page 160.....	191
Page 161.....	193
Page 162.....	194
Page 163.....	195
Page 164.....	196
Page 165.....	197
Page 166.....	198
Page 167.....	199
Page 168.....	200
Page 169.....	201
Page 170.....	202
Page 171.....	203
Page 172.....	204
Page 173.....	205
Page 174.....	206
Page 175.....	207
Page 176.....	208
Page 177.....	210
Page 178.....	211

Page 179.....	212
Page 180.....	213
Page 181.....	214
Page 182.....	215
Page 183.....	216
Page 184.....	217
Page 185.....	218
Page 186.....	219
Page 187.....	220
Page 188.....	221
Page 189.....	223
Page 190.....	225
Page 191.....	226
Page 192.....	227
Page 193.....	228
Page 194.....	229
Page 195.....	230
Page 196.....	231
Page 197.....	232
Page 198.....	233
Page 199.....	234
Page 200.....	235
Page 201.....	236
Page 202.....	238
Page 203.....	239
Page 204.....	240

Page 205.....	241
Page 206.....	242
Page 207.....	243
Page 208.....	244
Page 209.....	245
Page 210.....	246
Page 211.....	247
Page 212.....	248
Page 213.....	249
Page 214.....	250
Page 215.....	252
Page 216.....	253
Page 217.....	255
Page 218.....	256
Page 219.....	257
Page 220.....	258
Page 221.....	259
Page 222.....	260
Page 223.....	261
Page 224.....	263
Page 225.....	265
Page 226.....	266
Page 227.....	267
Page 228.....	268
Page 229.....	269
Page 230.....	270

Page 231.....	272
Page 232.....	273
Page 233.....	274
Page 234.....	275
Page 235.....	276
Page 236.....	277
Page 237.....	278
Page 238.....	279
Page 239.....	280
Page 240.....	281
Page 241.....	282
Page 242.....	283
Page 243.....	284
Page 244.....	285
Page 245.....	286
Page 246.....	287
Page 247.....	288
Page 248.....	290
Page 249.....	291
Page 250.....	292
Page 251.....	293
Page 252.....	294
Page 253.....	295
Page 254.....	296
Page 255.....	297
Page 256.....	298

Page 257.....	300
Page 258.....	301
Page 259.....	302
Page 260.....	303
Page 261.....	304
Page 262.....	305
Page 263.....	306
Page 264.....	308
Page 265.....	309
Page 266.....	310
Page 267.....	311
Page 268.....	313
Page 269.....	314
Page 270.....	315
Page 271.....	316
Page 272.....	317
Page 273.....	319
Page 274.....	321
Page 275.....	322
Page 276.....	323
Page 277.....	324
Page 278.....	325
Page 279.....	326
Page 280.....	327
Page 281.....	328
Page 282.....	329

Page 283.....	330
Page 284.....	331
Page 285.....	332
Page 286.....	333
Page 287.....	334
Page 288.....	335
Page 289.....	336
Page 290.....	338
Page 291.....	339
Page 292.....	341
Page 293.....	342
Page 294.....	343
Page 295.....	344
Page 296.....	345
Page 297.....	347
Page 298.....	348
Page 299.....	349
Page 300.....	351
Page 301.....	353
Page 302.....	355
Page 303.....	356
Page 304.....	358

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Start of eBook	1
CHAPTER I.	1
CHAPTER II.	5
CHAPTER III.	11
CHAPTER IV.	17
CHAPTER V.	21
CHAPTER VI.	27
CHAPTER VII.	31
CHAPTER VIII.	34
CHAPTER IX.	39
CHAPTER X.	43
CHAPTER XI.	49
CHAPTER XII.	55
CHAPTER XIII.	60
CHAPTER XIV.	67
CHAPTER XV.	71
CHAPTER XVI.	75
CHAPTER XVII.	83
CHAPTER XVIII.	89
CHAPTER XIX.	93
CHAPTER XX.	99
CHAPTER XXI.	102
CHAPTER XXII.	106
CHAPTER XXIII.	112
CHAPTER XXIV.	117
CHAPTER XXV.	124
CHAPTER XXVI.	131
CHAPTER XXVII.	137
CHAPTER XXVIII.	142
CHAPTER XXIX.	149
CHAPTER XXX.	154
CHAPTER XXXI.	157
CHAPTER XXXII.	161
CHAPTER XXXIII.	168
CHAPTER XXXIV.	172
CHAPTER XXXV.	179
CHAPTER XXXVI.	186
CHAPTER XXXVII.	190
CHAPTER XXXVIII.	197
CHAPTER XXXIX.	204

CHAPTER XL.	208
CHAPTER XLI.	213
CHAPTER XLII.	218
CHAPTER XLIII.	221
CHAPTER XLIV.	225
CHAPTER XLV.	229
CHAPTER XLVI.	235
CHAPTER XLVII.	241
CHAPTER XLVIII.	247
CHAPTER XLIX.	254
CHAPTER L.	258
CHAPTER LI.	263
CHAPTER LII.	265
CHAPTER LIII.	268
CHAPTER LIV.	272
CHAPTER LV.	276
CHAPTER LVI.	278
CHAPTER LVII.	283
CHAPTER LVIII.	285
CHAPTER LIX.	290
CHAPTER LX.	293
	298
Information about Project Gutenberg	299
(one page)	
(Three Pages)	301

Page 1

CHAPTER I.

Which treats of things not particularly interesting, and might have been omitted without prejudice to this history.

Cape cod, you must know, gentle reader, is my bleak native home, and the birth-place of all the most celebrated critics. The latter fact is not generally known, and for the reason that the gentry composing that fraternity acknowledge her only with an excess of reluctance. Her poets and historians never mention her in their famous works; her blushing maidens never sing to her, and her novelists lay the scenes of their romances in other lands. One solitary poet was caught and punished for singing a song to her sands; but of her codfish no historian has written, though divers malicious writers have declared them the medium upon which one of our aristocracies is founded. But I love her none the less for this.

It was a charming evening in early June. I am not disposed to state the year, since it is come fashionable to count only days. With my head supported in my left hand, and my elbow resting on my knee, I sat down upon the beach to listen to the music of the tide. Curious thoughts crowded upon my mind, and my fancy soared away into another world. The sea was bright, the breeze came soft and balmy over the land, and whispered and laughed. My bosom heaved with melting emotions; and had I been skilled in the art of love, the mood I was in qualified me for making it. The sun in the west was sinking slowly, the horizon was hung with a rich canopy of crimson clouds, and misty shadows played over the broad sea-plain, to the east. Then the arcades overhead filled with curtains of amber and gold; and the sight moved me to meditation. My soul seemed drinking in the beauties nature was strewing at the feet of her humblest, and, perhaps, most unthankful creatures. Then the scene began to change; and such was its gently-stealing pace that I became moved by emotions my tongue had no power to describe. The more I thought the more I wondered. And I sat wondering until Dame Night drew her dusky curtains, and the balconies of heaven filled with fleecy clouds, and ten thousand stars, like liquid pearls, began to pour their soft light over the land and sea. Then the "milky way" came out, as if to take the moon's watch, and danced along the serene sky, like a coquette in her gayest attire.

How I longed for a blushing maiden to tune her harp, or chant her song, just then! Though I am the son of a fisherman, I confess I thought I heard one tripping lightly behind me, her face all warm with smiles. It was but a fancy, and I sighed while asking myself what had induced it. Not a brook murmured; no willows distilled their night dews; birds did not make the air melodious with their songs; and there were no magnolia trees to shake from their locks

Page 2

those showers of liquid pearls which so bedew the books of our lady novelists. True, the sea became as a mirror, reflecting argosies of magic sails, and the star-lights tripped, and danced, and waltzed over the gently undulating swells. A moment more and I heard the tide rips sing, and the ground swell murmur, as it had done in my childhood, when I had listened and wondered what it meant. The sea gull, too, was nestling upon the bald sands, where he had sought rest for the night, and there echoed along through the air so sweetly, the music of a fisherman's song; and the mimic surf danced and gamboled along the beach, spreading it with a chain of phosphorous light, over which the lanterns mounted on two stately towers close by threw a great glare of light: and this completed the picture.

While contemplating the beauties before me, I was suddenly seized with a longing for fame. It was true I had little merit of my own, but as it had become fashionable at this day for men without merit to become famous, the chance for me, I thought, was favorable indeed. I contemplated my journey in quest of fame, and resolved never to falter. "Fame," I mused, "what quality of metal art thou made of, that millions bow down and worship thee?" And all nature, through her beauties, seemed returning an answer, and I arose from my reverie, and wended my way toward the cabin of my aged parents. A bright light streamed from one of the windows, serving as my beacon. I had not gone far before Fame, I thought, replied for herself, and said: "Know, son of a fisherman, that I am a capricious goddess; at least, I am so called by the critics. And they, being adepts in deep knowledge, render verdicts the world must not dispute. I have the world for my court: my shrine is everywhere, and millions worship at it. Genius, learning, and valor, are my handmaids. I have great and good men for my vassals; and upon them it affords me comfort to bestow my gifts. I seek out the wise and the virtuous, and place garlands of immortality upon their heads; I toy with my victims, and then hurl them into merited obscurity. Little men most beset me, most hang about my garments, and sigh most for my smiles. The rich man would have me build monuments to his memory; the ambitious poor man repines when I forget him. Novel-writing damsels, their eyes bedimmed with bodkin shaped tears, and their fingers steeled with envious pens it seems their love to dip in gall, cast longing looks at me. Peter Parley, and other poets, have laid their offerings low at my feet. I have crowned kings and emperors; and I have cast a favor to a fool. With queens and princes have I coquetted, and laughed when they were laid in common dust. I have dragged the humble from his obscurity, and sent him forth to overthrow kingdoms and guard the destinies of peoples. Millions have gone in search of me; few have found me. Great men are content with small favors; small men would, being the more ambitious of the two, take me all to themselves. Millions have aspired to my hand; few have been found worthy of it. Editors, critics, chambermaids and priests, (without whom we would have no great wars,) annoy me much. I am generous enough to forgive them, to charge their evil designs to want of discretion, to think the world would scarce miss them, and certainly could get along well enough without them.

Page 3

"In my halcyon days there appeared before me one Cneus, who was great of piety, which he laid at my feet, soliciting only a smile. After him came Hector, whom I condoled for his misfortunes. Upon the head of Achilles, who sought the smallest favor, I placed a garland. Eurylas, a man of large friendship; and Alexander, who was known among the nations for his liberality; and Cæsar, who had some valor; and Trajan, whose probity no one doubted; and Topirus, a man of great fidelity; and Cato, of whom it was said that he had some wisdom-these came, and in humility bowed before me and accepted my offering. For the delight and instruction of future generations, I have had their names written on the pages of history, which is the world's gift. And this was an age of the past.

"Then the age of modern poetry and oratory came in with one Shakspeare, and a friend of his of the name of Bacon. And it went out with Sheridan, and one Pitt, and a queer man of the name of Byron, whose name I have written in letters of gold, and have placed where envious bishops cannot take it down, though they build ladders of lawn. I will watch over it, and it shall be bright when kings and bishops are forgotten.

"Then there came the age of Washington; which was a new age, in a new world, with new glories and new men, whose names I have enshrined for the study of the young, the old, the great, and the good. On Jefferson's brow I laid a laurel that shall be green in all coming time; and the memories of Webster, Clay, and Calhoun shall long wear my mantle, for they won it worthily.

"Latterly, I have been much annoyed by one Benton, who, being a man of much light and shade, climbs my ladder only to break it down, and is for ever mounting dragons he cannot ride. If I shake him from my skirts to-day, he will to-morrow meet me upon the highway, and charge me with ingratitude. Dancing-girls and politicians beset me on all sides, reminding me that, without them, the world would go to ruin. Political parsons and milliners daily make war upon me. And singing women, and critics who herald their virtues for pennies, threaten to plunder me of my glories. And, though I am not a vain dame, many of these think me as cheaply bought as their own praise.

"I would not have you mourn over the age of poetry and oratory, for that also is of the past. You must not forget that it is become fashionable for men to give themselves to the getting of gold, which they pursue with an avidity I fear will end in the devil getting all their souls. You, son of a fisherman, shall be the object of my solicitude. Go out upon the world; be just to all, nor withhold your generosity from those who are worthy of it. Be sure, too, that you make the objects of your pursuit in all cases square with justice. Let your purposes be unvarying, nor be presumptuous to your equals. Beware lest you fall into the company of boisterous talking and strong drinking men, such as aspire to the control of the nation at this day; and, though they may not have been many months in the country, kindly condescend to teach us how to live. Also let those who most busy themselves with making presidents for us keep other company than yours, for their trade is a snare many a good man has been caught in to his sorrow."

Page 4

And Fame, I thought, continued discoursing to me in this manner until I reached the cabin of my father, when she bid me good night and departed. I entered the cabin and found my father, who was bent with age, sitting by the great fire-place, mending his nets. My mother was at her wheel, spinning flax. She was a tidy little body, of the old school. Her notions of the world in general were somewhat narrow and antiquated; while the steeple-crown cap she wore on her head so jauntily, and her apron of snow-white muslin, that hung so neatly over a black silk dress, and was secured about the neck with a small, crimped collar, gave her an air of cheerfulness the sweet-ness of her oval face did much to enhance. My father, whose face and hands were browned with the suns of some sixty summers, had a touch of the patriarch about him. He often declared the world outside of Cape Cod so wicked as not to be worth living in. He was short of figure, had flowing white hair, a deeply-wrinkled brow, and corrugated lips, and blue eyes, over-arched with long, brown eyelashes. My mother ran to me, and my father grasped me firmly by the hand, for he was not a little concerned about my stay on the beach. Indeed, I may as well confess, that he regarded me as a wayward youth, over whom it was just as well to exercise a guardian hand. In his younger days he had been what was called extremely good looking, a quality he frequently told me I had inherited, and from which he feared I might suffer grievous harm, unless I exercised great caution when divers damsels he had a jealous eye upon approached me. My mother was less jealous of my exploits among the sex, which she rather encouraged.

Another cause of anxiety with my father was the fact that I had written a "Life and Times" of Captain Seth Brewster; which work, though the hero was a fisherman, reached a sale of forty thousand copies, put money in my pocket, and made me the pet of all the petticoats round about. It was not unnatural, then, that my father, with his peculiar turn of mind, should set me down as being partially insane. I had also manufactured several very highly-colored verses in praise of Cape Cod; and these my publisher, who was by no means a tricky man, said had made a great stir in the literary world. And his assertion I found confirmed by the critics, who, with one accord, and without being paid, declared these verses proof that the author possessed "a rare inventive genius." The meaning of this was all Hebrew to me. My mother suggested that it might be a figure of speech copied from Chaldean mythology.

Another cause of alarm for my morals, in the eyes of my father, was the fact of my having made two political speeches. And these, according to divers New York politicians, had secured Cape Cod to General Pierce. And, as a reward for this great service, and to the end of illustrating in some substantial manner (so it is written at this day) their appreciation of a politician so distinguished, I was waited upon

Page 5

by a delegation of the before-named politicians, (two of whom came slightly intoxicated,) who had come, as they said, to tender to me an invitation to visit New York. A public reception by the Mayor and Council; a grand banquet at Tammany Hall; the honor of being made one of its Sachems; free apartments and two charming serenades at the New York Hotel; and divers suppers at very respectable houses, were temptingly suggested as an inducement for me to come out and take a prominent position. Indeed, such were the representations of this distinguished delegation, that I began to think the people of New York singularly rich and liberal, seeing that they trusted their surplus money in the hands of persons who were so loose of morals that they could find no other method of spending it than suppering and serenading men of my obscure stamp.

But if my father was alarmed lest my morals should suffer by these temptations, my mother would have answered to heaven for my virtue, though a dozen damsels were setting snares for me. And this will be shown in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

Which treats of how I left my native Cape, and sundry other matters.

I *had* no sooner disclosed to my father my musings with Fame, and the aspirations she had excited in me, than he went right into a passion, and set me down as extravagant and mad. He had entertained hopes of making me a schoolmaster, perhaps an inspector of fish, in which office excellent opportunities for increasing one's fortunes were offered; but I had been rendered quite useless to the parish ever since the New York politicians had taken me into their favor. Anybody, he said, might go out upon and know the world, but few had the courage and daring to grapple with its difficulties. And then, the world was so wicked that men of reflection instinctively shrank from it. Notwithstanding my wild, visionary plans, he yet had hopes of me. But if I sought distinction in the political world, it would be well not to forget that it had at this day become a dangerous quicksand, over which a series of violent storms continually heaved. And these storms, by some mysterious process or other, were incessantly casting up on the shore of political popularity and making heroes of men whose virtues were not weighty enough to keep them at the bottom. "Be an humble citizen, my son," said he: "learn to value a quiet life. You are not given to loud and boisterous talking, to lying, or to slandering; which things, at this day, are essential to political success. Worthy and well disposed persons are too much afraid of being drowned in the violence of the storm politicians with shallow brains and empty pockets create, by their anxiety to take the affairs of the nation into their own keeping. Remember, too, that if you fail in the object of your ambition (and you are not vagabond

Page 6

enough to succeed), the remotest desert will not hide you from the evil designs of your enemies. You may seek some crystal stream; you may let your tears flow with its waters; but such will not lighten your disappointment, for the persecuted heart is no peace-offering to the political victor. Politically vanquished; and you are like an unhappy lover who seeks him a rural deity and sings his complaints to the winds. Your eye will become jealous at the fortunes of others, but your sighs over the cruelty of what you are pleased to call human imperfections will not bring back your own. Stay quietly at home, my son, and if you cannot be a schoolmaster, chance may one day turn you up President of these United States. Let your insanity for writing books not beguile you into crime; and above all, I would enjoin you, my son, never to write the 'Life and Character' of an in-going President, for then, to follow the fashion of the day, and make for him a life that would apply with equal truth to King Mancho, or any one of his sable subjects, will be necessary that you write him down the hero of adventures he never dreamed of, and leave out the score of delinquencies his real life is blemished with. If you do this, wise men will set you down a scribbler for charity's sake."

Thus spoke my venerable father. But I remembered that he had several times before said that if I would so square my morals as to become in favor with the matronly portion of the parish he would even try and make a parson of me, which was, in his opinion, a promotion still higher than schoolmaster. Having got a parish, and chosen the richest damsel of the flock for my wife, there was nothing to hinder me from snapping my fingers at the world and its persecutions.

My father, I would here observe, in justice to his memory, was much given to the study of religion, and would not unfrequently invite to his house the parson of a neighboring village, that he might debate with him on matters appertaining to the creed, which he had been thirty years narrowing down to the finest point. And yet he always kept a vigilant eye to his worldly affairs, nor ever let a man get the better of him in a bargain. Indeed it was said of him that though he had not been to sea for many a day he so linked himself to the fortunes of his neighbors as to secure a large share of the bounty so generously paid by our government. That there was nothing in this inconsistent with his love of true religion my father was assured by the parson, who held that worldly possessions in no wise blunted the appetite for redemption; and that even bill-discounting quakers, with their bags of gold on their backs, would not find the gates of heaven shut to them. And as the parson was a man of great learning, though small of figure, and very curatical in his features and dress, his opinions were in high favor with the villagers, among whom he had given it out that he was a graduate of Yale and Harvard, both of which

Page 7

celebrated institutions had conferred high honors upon him. This high throwing of the parson's lasso getting abroad atoned for innumerable antiquated and very dull sermons, for the delivery of which he would excuse himself to his private friends by saying that his salary was but four hundred dollars a year, one third of which he took in No. 2 mackerel no one would buy of him. He was excessively fussy; and if he advocated temperance to-day, he would to-morrow take a sly smash, never forgetting to add that it was recommended by his physician, who was likewise a man of great learning. Under the influence of this medicine, it was said, by malicious people, which no parish is without, that if the occasion demanded a serious sermon he was sure to preach one that would send all the young folks of his congregation into a titter. If the occasion was such as to tolerate a little humor, he was sure to send them all into a melancholy mood with the gravity of his remarks. In fine, he was sure to be on the opposite side of everything natural. The only question he was not quite sure it would do to get upon, was the slavery question. And for this he always excused himself by saying that there were many others in the same condition. It would not do to be in the desert, hence he inclined to the policy of our fashionable clergy, who are extremely cautious not to steer too close to questions not popular enough to be profitably espoused. If Parson Stebbins (for such was his name) let drop a few words in favor of freedom to-day, Obadiah Morgan, the most influential member of his church, would to-morrow politely withdraw. A word or two complimentary of the South and her peculiar institutions was equally sure to find him taken to task by the philanthropic females of his parish. In truth, he could approach neither side of the question without finding a fire in his rear. And as his empty pocket would not allow him to rise to independence, he resolved to preach to that portion of his church which was content to let the slavery question take care of itself.

The parson joined my father in his endeavors to shake the resolution I had taken, and said many things concerning the snares set by the wicked world, and how easy it was for an ardent youth like myself to fall into them, that grievously annoyed my mother; for, as I have said before, she had great faith in my virtue, and so doted on me that she had a ready excuse for all my follies. Indeed, she would often smile at the combined alarm of my father and the parson, saying she held it infinitely better that a youth like myself go out upon the world in search of distinction, for therein lay the virtue of his example. Children were born to the world; if they had daring enough to go out upon it and battle with it, the parson's advice to stay at home was unnecessary. You could not make human things divine; and, to expect miracles from saints now-a-days, or truth from critics, or liberality from parsons, was like looking for reason in our "current literature."

Page 8

When my father found that I was, in spite of the admonitions of the parson, resolved on setting out, and that he was confronted by the strong opposition of my mother, he gave up in despair, telling me whatever befell me, not to look to him for succor. My mother, on the other hand, gave herself up to my preparation for the journey with so much ardor, that she for several days almost wholly neglected the regulation of her domestic affairs. My precious new suit of black, in which I had adorned myself on Sundays, and, not a little vain of my appearance, shone out at church, was got out and brushed, and then nicely packed away in my valise, which likewise contained an ample supply of unmentionables, and homemade shirts, and stockings, and other articles appertaining to the wardrobe of an adventurous young man. My mother also exercised a wise discretion in the selection of such books as she thought would afford me “maxims of guidance,” as she called it, through the world. A pocket Bible, and a small volume of the “Select Edition of Franklin’s Maxims,” a book in high favor with the good people of the Cape, were got of a bookseller in Barnstable, a queer wag, who had got rich by vending a strange quality of literature and taking fish in exchange. In addition to these good books provided by my mother, I was careful not to forget my “Polite Speech Maker,” a book which I confess to have studied much. In truth, like many distinguished members of Congress, I am indebted to it for my great political popularity. Resolved as I am that this history shall never swerve from the truth, I would sincerely recommend a study of the “Polite Speech Maker” to all juvenile politicians, dealers in liquor, editors of three-cent newspapers, and learned litterateurs, whose names, according to sundry malicious writers, it is come the fashion of the day to reflect in one mirror.

In the “Polite Speech Maker” will be found such sentences as “the tranquilized glory of our glorious country,” and “the undying beauties, that starry emblem, our flag, awakens in our heart of hearts;” and sundry others, equally abstruse, but no less essential to the objects of primary meetings. The author of this invaluable work is my learned friend and very erudite scholar, Dr. Easley. And as some readers hold the study of an author of much more importance than his book, I may be excused for saying here that no one can take up one and forget the other, since literature, as is there set forth, was never before either blessed or encumbered with so great a doctor.

My library and outfit being complete, my mother, having provided me with a yellow waistcoat and white plush hat out of her private purse, gave an evening party in honor of my departure. Parson Stebbins, the doctor of a neighboring village, (not Easley, for he had set up his fortunes in New York,) and sundry bright-eyed damsels of my acquaintance, were invited, and came accompanied by their sturdy parents. The last

Page 9

jar of jam and applesauce was stormed, the two fattest pullets in the yard brought to the block, choice mince and pumpkin pies were propounded, three dollars were expended upon a citron cake such as Cape Cod had never seen before, and no less than a dozen bottles of Captain Zeke Brewster's double refined cider was got of Major Cook, the grocer. Stronger beverages were held in questionable respect by the Cape folks. My mother did, indeed, busy herself for nearly two days in the preparation of this supper, declaring at the same time that she would not be outdone by any housewife this side of Barnstable at least. Nor did she heed my father, who continued the while muttering his misgivings.

The stars shone out bright on the night of the party, which passed off to the delight of every one present. The fowls, and the pies, and the jam and apple-sauce, and a dish of tea the parson declared could not be excelled, were all discussed with great cheerfulness. My father, as was his custom, drew his chair aside after supper, and engaged two of his guests in religious conversation, while the doctor and the parson got into a corner, and soon became deeply absorbed in a question of law, which they debated over the cider.

No sooner had my mother set her table to rights than she, with an air of motherly watchfulness, drew her chair beside the damsels, with whom I was exchanging the gossip of the Cape, and entered cheerfully into our conversation.

More than one of the bright eyed and ruddy cheeked damsels gave out hints that led me to believe they would have accompanied me on my journey and shared the fortunes of my career. Nor did their hints disturb my mother, whose mind was too pure to conceive their attentions aught else than blessings. And thus, with an abundance of good cheer, and the interchange of those civilities so common to villagers, and the singing of an orthodox hymn or two, in which my father joined, while the doctor and the parson continued their discussion over the cider, passed one of those rustic evening parties so characteristic of Cape Cod.

Half-past nine o'clock arrived, and it being an hour of bedtime religiously kept by the villagers, the bright eyed damsels and their chaperons, each in turn, shook me warmly by the hand, congratulated my mother on having a son so daring, lisped words of encouragement in my ear, and took an affectionate leave. Among them there was one Altona Marabel, the daughter of a worthy fisherman. This damsel had a face of exquisite beauty; and her great lustrous eyes and blushing cheeks had caused me many a sigh. And now I saw that her heart beat in unison with mine, for the words good-by hung reluctant upon her lips. Nay, more, she would have sealed the love she bore me with a tear, for as she shook my hand it came like a pearl in her eye, and she wiped it away lest it write the tale of her heart upon the crimson of her cheek.

Page 10

Neither the doctor nor the parson were disturbed at the departure of the rest of the company; for they continued to praise the quality of the cider and debate the question of law until my father went into a deep sleep, from which he was disturbed by the parson, who, in response to an invitation from the doctor, commenced singing a song for the entertainment of my mother. Such joviality was uncommon with the parson, and so surprised and astonished my father, that he intimated to the doctor that it would not be amiss to get him home. Being something of a wag, the doctor intended to vanquish the parson with the cider, and then perform certain mischievous tricks with his features. But this my father, who was not given to sporting with the weaknesses of others, prevented, by ordering my mother to lock up the six remaining bottles. "We might debate the question until daylight, but I could not convince you," spake the parson, rising from his chair on finding the bottles empty, and rather fussily adjusting his spectacles, "it is not expected that law is a part of your profession."

The doctor being a well bred and courteous man, bowed and held his peace. Indeed, he saw that the parson's intellect was somewhat deranged; hence he held it more becoming a Christian to tender his services in conducting him to his home, which was some two miles off. The parson now took me by the hand, and having looked me in the eye steadily for nearly a minute, addressed me as follows: "You, young man, I am afraid, have got a dangerous turn of mind. Many is the young man that has been hurried to destruction by a too daring and adventurous spirit. But if your resolution to go out upon the world in search of fame is not to be shaken by anything I say, then I would enjoin you always to so fence up your character that the devil and slander-loving editors cannot pick holes in it. Pray much. Let no one tempt you with mild drinks, for such only lead to the taking of stronger ones. Go regularly to church, but let not your eyes fall upon the faces of pretty women so that your ears be sealed to the sermon. Never make love to another man's wife. Remember this when you are a great man, for with them it is become a fashion. Let ruffians go their own way. Let gentlemen be your companions, and never fail to show them that you can at least be their equal in courteous demeanor. Always pay your washerwoman; be not ashamed to acknowledge your father, and remember that the fonder you speak of your mother, the more you will be beloved by strangers. Avoid politicians, who are come to be great vagabonds, who drink bad liquor and give their thoughts to base designs against the nation's gold. If you become great and valorous, historians will no doubt defame you, and lay crimes of which you were innocent at your door, as is common with them. But you must bear what they say of you with Christian fortitude, remembering, always, that it is a delight with them to tear greatness

Page 11

from its high throne." The parson looked wisely in my face as he said this, and shook his head warningly. "Most of all," he continued, "never permit yourself to fall into the hands of treasury swindlers, money changers, and malicious editors, who will set you up as the only fit person to be President of these United States, though you have not a single qualification necessary to the office. For they, being tricky men, will be sure to let you down with the same facility they took you up; and when your ancestors, down to the third and fourth generations are dug up, (as it has become necessary to do,) and their character, together with your own, made blacker than the ink they seek to damage one another's character with, they will be the first to declare they were mistaken in you—that you were not the man they took you for."

The parson said many other things of a like character, out which I did not think worth writing down in my memory. He then shook hands with my mother and father, expressed his surprise at the lateness of the hour to the doctor, and took his leave, meeting with a strange mishap on his way home, which will be related in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

In which is related A pleasant meeting with A renowned major.

Early on the following morning, before the sun had hung the eastern sky with golden mists, my mother was astir, and in due time had a plain but substantial breakfast prepared. And, too, I heard my father muttering his misgivings in an adjoining chamber. My valise, nicely packed and strapped, stood by the door; this I thought a contrivance of my father to shake my resolution. Indeed I must confess that whenever my eye rested upon it, an emotion of regret moved me, and my fancy filled with an hundred perils that seemed incident to my career. The earnestness of my mother, however, always restored me to confidence. Her motto was, never despond, nor sit idly at home, when fame and fortune are to be gained by going abroad. She did everything with great cheerfulness of manner, and though the frosts of fifty winters had made snow-white the hairs of her head, and plowed their furrows deep into her oval face, there was a vigor in her action that might have excited the envy of youth.

Though I could not suppress the effect of those reminiscences of home, which on the eve of departure from it, rise up and disturb the feelings, no sooner was breakfast over than I shouldered my valise, and with my father on my left, and my mother on my right, sallied forth to the garden gate, where we halted before taking a last parting. The favorite watch-dog, Tray, who had gamboled with me in my boyhood, and held himself worthy of protecting me in his old age, followed us, wagging his tail in evident delight at the prospect of bearing me company. A soft breeze fanned over the beach, the dew-

dripping rose bushes, that lined the green-topped picket fence, waved their tops to and fro, the sparrows whistled and sung, and wooed, as if Providence had made them for that alone; and all nature seemed putting on her gayest attire to inspire me with resolution.

Page 12

"My son," said my father, grasping me tightly by the hand, as the words trembled upon his lips, and the breeze played with his gray locks, and his eyes filled with tears, "if go you must, be a man in all things; but heed not the sayings of men who talk loudest of being your friends."

"Why should he not go, daddy?" replied my mother, who was accustomed to addressing him in this manner. "Be your own judge of the world, my son, nor ever think bad of it until you have made your virtues an example to others, for they who condemn the world most have least to lay at its door." She then took my hand affectionately, and after gently rebuking my father for his attempt, as she styled it, to excite me to melancholy, which she held to be a great enemy to youth, kissed me and bade me adieu. And I set out, taking the road to Barnstable. They both leaned over the little gate, and twice exchanged adieus with me, as I turned to have a last look at all that had been so dear to my childhood. Faithful old Tray bore me company, and wagged his tail approvingly, and the rose tree tops, as I fancied, waved me a God speed; and the wind whispered joyously; and the birds flirted and sported before me on the sandy road, and tuned their songs to the temper of my feelings.

Between me and Tray there existed the uninterrupted friendship of a lifetime, the recollections of which I have sometimes thought of writing for the benefit of future generations, seeing that to write one's recollections, (to which may be added the recollections of others,) is become extremely fashionable. Tray had been my companion in many an adventure, all of which I thought he at this moment treasured in his memory, and would have recounted were he possessed of the power of speech. Having ascended a piece of rising ground, about a mile from the house, I sat down by the road side, intending to take leave of him and send him back, according to the request of my mother. He immediately planted himself close by my side, laid his great paw incessantly upon my knee, and, with looks of regret, would have expressed the friendship he bore me with caresses. Indeed there seemed a hidden goodness in his heart, a nobleness that caused the current of his friendship to flow with much gentleness, and a singleness in his mute appeals to my approbation, that I could not help contrasting with the insincerity of those dogs who go about the world on two legs, and imagine themselves most valiant when devouring one another.

After resting for a few minutes, and casting a longing look over the scene behind me, recalling, as it did, so many old associations, I told Tray that we must part; and that as he was now well down in years, perhaps we should never more meet again. He seemed to understand all I said to him, and, as I patted him gently upon the head, repaid my friendship by caressing my hand, and turning upon me several sympathetic looks. On telling him that he must go home, he hung his head, and drooped his tail, and moved slowly into the road, several times halting and casting reluctant looks back. Then he stretched himself down in the sand, and placing his head between his great paws, watched me out of sight.

Page 13

Having journeyed about two miles, I reached a cross-road, and saw approaching one of those great wagons familiarly known in that part of the country as "tin wagons." It was drawn by an exceedingly lean, gray horse; and a short, fat man, with a broad, florid face, beaming with good nature, was mounted upon a high seat, made of a bundle of sheepskins. He was squint eyed, spacious mouthed, and had a nose that was flat to the end, which turned up in a short pug. His hair was of a sandy color, and parted carelessly down the center; and his dress was of well-worn gray satinete, which sat loosely upon his rotund figure. His hat, of soft black felt, was drawn well down over his low forehead, and but for his beard, which was thick and matty, one might easily have mistaken him for a cross between a Dutch washerwoman and a pumpkin-bellied quaker.

His team moved along at a measured pace, as if keeping time to the song he was singing, with great flow of spirits, for his own entertainment. I waited until he came up, much amused at the manner in which he every few minutes cracked his big whip. "Stranger!" said he, in a shrill, squeaking voice, "which way are you journeying?-what can I do to serve you this morning?" He reined up his team, and dismounting in a trice, extended his hand with a heartiness I was surprised to find in a stranger. "Jedediah Smooth, the renowned fisherman, is my father, and I have set out in search of fame and fortune," was my reply. At this he set his small, but searching eyes upon me, and seemed confounded, the cause of which I was not a little anxious to learn.

"Son of the worthiest of fathers!" he exclaimed, in a voice of great earnestness, "my delight at meeting one whose fame as a politician has preceded him, knows no bounds." Again he shook my hand fervently, as a pleasing delirium seemed to have seized upon his senses. "Accidents are sometimes equal to conquests," he continued. "Know, then, that you confront Major Roger Sherman Potter, commonly called Major Roger Potter. Like a titillation of the fancy, I have been thrown up and down by the tide of political fortune and misfortune until I became sickened of it, and resolved to seek obscurity, and live like an honest man by the sale of tin, and such wares as the good people of this remote part of the world might have a demand for. You must not judge me by the calling necessity has now forced me to follow, for I hold it right, and in strict accordance with the nature of our institutions, that when fortune forsakes us, we stand not upon the order of a reputation, which at best is but a poor thing in time of need, but give ourselves manfully to any labor by which our hands may preserve the honesty of our heads. It is much better, I think, than following the fashion of our politicians, who reward the people who send them to Congress by neglecting their duty to the country, and studying those arts by which they can appropriate to themselves the choicest spoils."

Page 14

The Major now led his team a little out of the road, hung his feed bag to his horse's head, and while the animal was eating, spread a sheepskin upon the ground, under some elder bushes, and invited me to sit down to a plentiful supply of crackers and cheese, to which he added a quart of cider drawn from a small keg he kept secreted under his box. He also discovered to me the fact, that in addition to every variety of tin ware, mop handles, washboards, crimping moulds, and wooden faucets, he kept a small supply of fourth proof brandy, which he sold to those who had a want in that line for winter strained sperm oil, a name convenient enough to suit all purposes. In truth, the good people of the neighboring villages had taken so strongly to the temperance cause, that no spiritous liquors could be got of anybody but the doctor, and then only on a certificate from the parson, who vouched for your good character, and set forth that to the best of his belief, it would be used only as a medicine. And the doctor, who had a scrupulous regard for all good and well regulated communities, took a joint interest with the parson, and so raised the price of this sort of medicine as to make the trade an extremely lucrative one. But as the rich were never known to be denied, and the poor had not money enough to enjoy so expensive a cure for their maladies, which were greatest in number, the popular enactment became not only a grievous, but a very oppressive monopoly. And this monopoly the major, who esteemed himself a great public benefactor, sought a cure for in selling for three shillings a pint, an article equal in quality to that for which the doctor and the parson demanded ten. But this, he said, very good naturedly, he was compelled to do on the sly, for though his customers were principally poor people, if it got noised abroad, nothing could save him from the fury of a mob of pious and very orderly people, who would get up town meetings and vote him down an intolerable nuisance. This done, and the market for his tin pints and washboards would be closed for ever.

Having refreshed ourselves with the crackers and cheese and cider, the Major very pleasantly commenced recounting a little affair of honor he had been called upon to adjust but a few minutes before, and as he was proud of his skill as a diplomatist, the recital afforded him an infinite amount of pleasure.

"Parsons and doctors," said he, taking a copious cup of cider, "no doubt imagine themselves (and they have an undisputed right so to do) to be the very embodiment of natural benevolence and inviolable fidelity. But there are things of an opposite nature, to which their hearts and inclinations are as susceptible as those of the tenderest virgins. I was pursuing my journey this morning, when 'old Battle,' my horse, who has smelled powder enough to make his nerves more steady, pricked up his ears at something he saw in the bushes by the roadside. Reining him up, I dismounted, and to my great surprise

Page 15

discovered two well-dressed men fast asleep, locked in each other's arms. 'Faith of my father!' says I, 'who's here?' A slightly guttural sound was followed by a hoarse voice answering, 'It's only me.' And then a lean figure, with two well-blackened eyes, and a face otherwise disfigured, disconnected itself from its fellow, rose to its haunches, and stared at me with wild dismay. A white neckcloth, somewhat besmeared with blood, denoted his profession. On coming to his senses he aroused his companion, and commenced charging him with being the cause of the sad plight he was in. Neither seemed to have a very distinct recollection of the event that had founed them in a condition so disgraceful to them as respectable citizens; and the other protested his innocence of any misdemeanor, but was equally at a loss how to account for the disfigured face of his companion, and was about charging the whole affair to a dispensation of Providence, that being the most convenient and fashionable method for disposing of such things. But the man of the disfigured face, who was no less a person than Parson Stebbins, (and his companion the doctor, of whom mention was made in the foregoing chapter,) clung tenaciously to what he was pleased to call his love of facts, and said he would come out with it all, that the truth of history might not be impeached.

"They had been spending the evening at your father's house, and were regaled with cider of such uncommon strength as to make a deep impression upon their sensibilities. The doctor declared they drank nothing stronger, notwithstanding the parson accused him of having a small flask in his pocket. It was late when they left the house; and as they had been warmly discussing whether it was right in the sight of God to hang a woman for killing her drunken husband, without coming to any decision, they agreed to change the subject to one of a theological character, it being absolutely necessary that they have something to debate on their way home. The doctor inquired of the parson, what he thought of the doctrine held by many popular divines, that God made Moses and Elijah visible to the Apostles on the occasion of the transfiguration. The parson, after pausing a few moments, and remarking that he had a curious feeling in his head, which seemed to sit unsafely upon his shoulders, replied that the question was of too abstruse a nature to be debated by any but members of his own profession, to which it of right belonged. If he were to speak his mind it would be to give doctors in general no very high reputation for either morals or religion. 'True history never gave them much mention; and though Aristotle had treated their vagaries with great condescension, Cicero never could be got to look with favor upon them. Yours is a mischievous profession, the members of which are always seeking the demolition of useful sciences.' This the parson said in so angry a tone that it excited the pugnacity of the doctor, who was scrupulous of his profession, and declared he would not stand by and hear it slandered.

Page 16

“They had now staggered among some laurel bushes at the side of the road, when the doctor, having inquired if the parson meant anything personal, and not receiving an immediate answer, fetched him a blow that felled him to the ground, and almost simultaneously followed him. And now so great was his fear of having done him bodily injury, that he seized him in his arms, and, thus embraced, they had slept until I disturbed them. Each now commenced giving a confused version of the affair, criminating and recriminating in a manner that only served to increase the disgrace to which it attached. The doctor protested his innocence of the deed, while the parson continued to discant upon the consequences that would result from the disfiguration of his features. At the same time they both intimated their readiness to have me sit in judgment upon their affairs, and accept my decision as final.

“When they had put on their hats I bid them sit down upon a moss-covered hillock, and hold their peace. Having done this with great good nature, I seated myself on an opposite one, and commenced to deliberate upon their case. The state of debility in which they had unfortunately found themselves on the previous night must, doubtless, be put down to the strength of the cider. The debility, then, being acknowledged, neither could be held accountaable to the other for acts committed while morally insane. As to the imputation cast upon the medical profession by the parson, even were it done when the mind was morally sane, it ought only to be set down to the natural envy existing among members of different professions, and was much to be deplored, for instead of one being ambitious to claim a superiority over the other, they ought to regard themselves coworkers in equally good causes, and for the advancement of a common humanity. In order to settle the questions they had attempted to debate, I proposed that they adopt the rule laid down by our noisy Congressmen, each being satisfied in his own mind that he had demolished the arguments of the other, and for ever settled the question at issue. The battering they had given each other was a thing of the past. Was it not better then to let a bygone be a bygone, rather than seek a technical satisfaction, that while it afforded the public some amusement would only bring themselves a great deal of pain? They could no more recall the past than they could make a set of rules for governing the appetites of the people. There were always simpletons enough to believe that they could be cured of consumption by taking such nostrums as cod liver oil and Wistar’s Balsam; so also would the world always be pestered with men simple enough to believe that every man must square his inclinations to the measure of their own. But one point now remained to be deliberated upon, and that was how the doctor should atone to the parson for his damaged face. I, however, soon overcame this, by suggesting that it would be no more than

Page 17

right, and equally becoming of a Christian, that the parson accept the doctor's deep regrets in offset for the injuries he had received in his features. This the parson, who was not to be outdone in his benevolence of soul, readily acquiesced in; and thus was saved the trouble of calling in the aid of a lawyer, who, with no earthly hope of restoring the broken peace, would have made destructive inroads upon both their pockets. The two now shook hands, and with expressions of the highest esteem for each other, thanked me and took their departure for home."

I had my suspicions that this story was a romance of the Major's own manufacture; nor were my suspicions dispelled by any subsequent act of his. And notwithstanding he was ready at all times to redress the wrongs of thirsty humanity, he kept a sharp eye to the equivalent, and had an inveterate hatred of all who opposed his free trade principles, which, in a measure, accounted for the story of the doctor and the parson. In truth, he had the facility of an Arab for manufacturing romances, which he used as a means to demolish his enemies, as will hereafter be shown in this history.

CHAPTER IV.

Major Roger Potter recounts his numerous exploits in war and politics.

Having finished the story with great sincerity of manner, the major commenced to brighten and polish up his face with his handkerchief, and to pack away his provender. This done, he bridled old Battle, his horse, arranged his seat of sheepskins, and invited me to mount and ride with him; for no sooner had I discovered to him the object of my undertaking than he dubbed himself the luckiest of fellows, offering to be my companion in arms, and the sharer of my fortunes. Three loud cracks of the whip, and old Battle started off at a brisk pace, the major adding that if we made haste we would reach Barnstable by nightfall. As the wagon rolled over the road, a cackling noise was kept up, much to my surprise and annoyance; this I found was caused by a coop of disconsolate chickens, which the major had bought on speculation, and fastened to the back of his wagon, intending to make a good thing by selling them for Shanghais whenever he could find a customer.

"Now, although I know you so well by reputation, you may not have heard so much of me as many others have. It is no great thing for a major like me to be engaged in this sort of business, you will think; but an honest living made by vending tin is better than a fortune gained by fingering the affairs of the nation. Indeed I have often thought a man was never so great as when he condescended to make his living honestly. As you see, I have surrendered myself to fortune, and am what some would call 'down in the world.' But I have been up, and made a noise, and will make more when next I get up." These

remarks were delivered with such evident self-conceit, that I was at a loss how to comprehend their meaning, and asked the major to explain himself.

Page 18

After cracking his whip twice or thrice, he resumed, "My father, (he is gone, God bless him,) was an honest shoemaker in the town of Barnstable, where I was born and reared. Being poor, he could not give me much schooling; but we lived comfortably, and enjoyed the respect of the town people. I assisted him at his trade of making shoes until I reached the age of two and twenty, being esteemed a skillful mechanic. Joining the Barnstable Invincibles, a very disorderly militia company, I was twice elected its captain, which was considered a very good practical joke, the militia there being in very bad odor with everybody but the young damsels of the town. To my military title, then, I owe one of the most fortunate circumstances of my life-that of getting a wife. And this wife, though she bore my title the strongest love, was quite as good as I deserved. In due time we were blessed with one, and then another little Potter, and I began to thank heaven for making me the happiest of men. A snug little home was the result of frugality and industry, and peace reigned in it. But my wife was vain of my military reputation, which she regarded as a hinge for taking a higher position in the world. I must tell you that she cut two clever speeches from an old newspaper, declaring that I must study them, so that with a few alterations, (an art well understood by our clergymen and politicians,) I could set up for a public man, making them apply to all great questions with equal force.

"Wife was of a good, puritanical family, and, as I afterwards had reason to know, well understood how to push her husband up in the world. I got the speeches down without the slightest difficulty." Here the major wet his organs of speech with a little of something he kept in a small flask he drew from his breast-pocket. "They were full of blaze. In truth, I may say without fear of contradiction, that a dozen patriots might have found room to roll up in them and die gloriously. Still, it didn't seem to me much for a man to get a speech into his head; so, after getting another, I found no difficulty in getting twenty, all of which were applicable to general subjects. The Tippecanoe fever then began to spread with great virulency, and such was the power of its contagion that John Crispin threw away his lapstone, and Peter Vulcan hung up his anvil, and both went about the country delivering themselves of great speeches, with which they deluded the simple-minded villagers, who forced greatness upon them at every step. And so forcibly did the opinion that they were great men take root with the good natured mass, that the great men of the newspapers, and the kind-hearted critics, who are greater, seconded the opinion, and set them down for wonders. The ambition of my wife now knew no bounds. She insisted that I should go to the next political meeting, and then and there deliver one of the speeches I had got into my head, and which I had twice spoken before her,

Page 19

that the variations might be squared to the occasion. My shoe bench I sold for a trifle, and my pegs and awls were consigned to the children for playthings. The Tippecanoe side of politics being the most popular, as well as profitable, I tied to it at once; and on going to the "Coon-meeting" surprised and astonished every one with the power and arguments of my speech. I may indeed humbly say, I flashed into greatness with the quickness of lightning. Neither Cicero nor Lysurgus were ever, in their day, thought so well of by the multitudes. It got noised about that Webster would have to give up to me. And I am sure that if the elder Adams or Jefferson had been living, they would have been set down by the editors, in the gravest sentences they were capable of penning, as mere shadows in comparison."

Here the major paused to make room for the Provincetown stage; a great yellow coach, full of passengers, which we had come upon suddenly. The driver of the stage, not liking the slow pace in which old Battle was proceeding to make room for him, laid his whip briskly over his haunches, quickening his movements, but driving the major into a furious passion. The sudden twitch landed us both upon the sandy road, under the pile of sheepskins we had used for a seat. In this dilemma the major called loudly for assistance, swearing that if the stage driver would but stop he would give him battle to his satisfaction. This only served to increase the mirth of the passengers, who rather encouraged their mischievous driver, now looking round and making grimaces at his adversary. The major, however, was not long in extricating himself from the sheepskins, when, for want of a better weapon, he seized a string of tin pints, and running as fast as his short legs would carry him, hurled them one after another at the stage coach. Ceasing to afford the passengers this amusement only when his wind gave out, the major swore by his military reputation that if they would only give him an opportunity he would whip the stageload before breakfast, and think it a mere trifle. The coach now rolled out of sight, and the major sat down by the road side to contemplate the loss of his tin cups, which like spilled apples, were strewn along the sand. It would not do to suffer so great a loss, so he girded up his nether garments, and commenced picking up his cups, lamenting their bruises as he strung them upon his string. Finding that we sustained no other loss than that of the major's temper, I set his team to rights, and, having mounted the sheepskins, we were ready to proceed on our journey. "Such an insult as that offered to me when I was in the Mexican war," said he, mounting over the wheel with one of those expletives much used among soldiers, "and I had demolished the lot at a stroke of my sword. Zounds! why can't stage drivers be gentlemen?"

Page 20

This was the first intimation I had had of his being a hero of the Mexican war. Regaining his good humor soon after, I resigned him the reins, and he desired me to tell him at what point of his story he had been interrupted. Having done this, he resumed its thread as old Battle jogged on at his usual slow pace. "I now took up the trade of politics," he continued, "and went about the country, making speeches and demolishing everything that came in my way. I had ideas enough for any number of speeches, no matter what the length might be; but the evil was how to put the sentences together. I could make points such as Cicero and Lycurgus never thought of; as for patriotism, there was no trouble about that. I had a dozen platforms at my fingers' ends, and could move an audience equal to Lamartine. Here then was my game, and at it I made a nice thing. The editor of the "Provincetown Longbow," who was celebrated for making at least two Cabinet ministers a day, declared to his readers that it was lucky for the era that my great wisdom had been discovered; that it would be a great wrong in General Harrison to offer me any less office than Secretary of State. The "Barnstable Pocketbook," a clever little sheet, edited by Miss Holebrook, who snapped her political whip in the teeth of the town, and had come off conqueror in many a tilt with editors in breeches, was willing to compromise with me of the Longbow, by assuring its readers that only two years' study of law would make me an excellent judge of the Supreme Court. These well bestowed encomiums, (as I think they are called,) so elated my wife that she speedily took to giving tea parties, to which all the majors and generals of the town were invited. And as they demolished the hospitality of her teacups they made her believe the nation never could get along unless I had two fingers in its affairs.

"My children, before as distasteful as the butter one gets in New York hotels, were now so sweet that the whole town wanted to kiss them. And the parson, who had scarcely been known to say, 'how do you do, Mrs. Potter,' now made his calls so frequent, and his bows so gracious, that the neighbors said it would be as well to have an eye out. I got fifteen dollars and my feed, for each speech. Now and then an inspired soul threw in an extra five. So that at the end of two months I had funds enough to establish a bank in Wall street, with three branches in the country. My credit, too, received an unlimited extension. And this my wife took advantage of to new furnish the house and haberdash the little Potters. I contented myself with drawing on the tailor for two suits of his best broadcloth, such as would appertain to a politician so distinguished. But in truth I must confess, without blushing, that my wife was not long in contracting debts a richer man would have found difficulty in paying.

"However, having cleared away all doubts and elected Harrison, whom I was careful to see safe into the arms of the people, my friends all advised me to set out for Washington, where such abilities as I had discovered could not fail of being rewarded by the government they had so ably served.

Page 21

“As a military title was held indispensable to the success of a politician, the Barnstable Invincibles elected me Major, an honor which could not be overlooked by the politicians at Washington, whose business it is to give offices and save the Union. So, with the praises of two newspapers and the well-wishes of the town, I set out for Washington, believing that the chief magistrate, in the exercise of his great wisdom, would reward me with at least a foreign mission.”

CHAPTER V.

Which treats of how the major fell among politicians and other new York vagabonds.

Having paused a few moments to moisten his lips, for the day was excessively warm, the Major spoke a few encouraging words to old Battle, and resumed his story.

“If wisdom becometh the great, money is not to be despised by the politician, I thought. So, having stocked my purse with not less than two hundred dollars, I arrived safely in New York and put up at the Astor House, an hotel in high favor with ex-secretaries and dilapidated politicians, inasmuch as the worthy landlord accepts the honor of their being guests of his house in satisfaction of his bills. It was night when I arrived, and the splendor and strangeness of everything around bewildered and confused me so much, that I forgot to put the prefix of ‘Major’ to my name, when I registered it in the big book. And this single omission had the effect of consigning me to an attic room in the ninth story. Having intimated an objection to this lofty position, the polite waiter said it was the most convenient room in the house, since, in case of a fire breaking out I could use the sky-light, and, having gained the roof, would be rescued by the firemen with their scaling ladders; whereas, a lower position would render me liable to be blockaded and devoured by the rush of flames. I told the polite waiter, who was a gifted Irishman, and though not four months in the country, had taken to politics like a rat to good cheese, that he was entitled to my thanks for the information. An intimation, however, that I was a Major of some renown, surprised the gifted Irishman not a little. That he conveyed the news to my worthy host I had not a doubt, since on the following day I was removed to a spacious room on the second story.

“On descending to the great supper room, I was accosted by one General John Fopp, of the Tippecanoe Club, who congratulated me on my safe arrival in the city. Being extremely easy in his manners, and apparently ready to render me services of no mean importance, I invited him to join me in a cup of tea, which invitation he was not slow to accept. Being much impressed with his dignity of manner, and the glibness with which he discoursed upon the events of the last campaign, I listened to him with profound respect. He said

Page 22

he would see that my name was duly chronicled in the newspapers, not a few of which he assured me he had full control over. In fine, nothing that could serve the interests of one who had made himself so famous during the late campaign was to be left undone. He knew every speech I had made by heart, as he said; and he had the name of every town I had been in at his fingers' ends. Indeed, so varied were his accomplishments, that I at once set him down for one of those great men, in the possession of whom New York is more fortunate than her sister cities, and of whose merits strangers, for divers reasons, have had occasion to speak with great confidence.

"When the newspapers had faithfully recorded my arrival and given an undoubted history of my doings in politics, I was to be introduced to the Collector and Postmaster, both of whom, though differing with me on great national questions, would receive me as became gentle-men. The Mayor, too, would receive me at the City Hall, in presence of the Common Council, and review the police, which body of men had become, under the new order of things, more devoted to beards and brandy than the good order of the city. He said I must be careful not to accept the invitations of councilmen to drink, for they were sure to saddle the payment upon their guest, to say nothing of their lately adopted art of making invitations a means of supplying their own wants in the article of liquor. And as drinking had become their most distinguishing characteristic, perhaps it would not be amiss to defend myself, he said, after the fashion of our smaller politicians, who, as a general thing, invited councilmen to confer with them at the bar, and left the settlement to be arranged between them and the host.

"On finishing our tea, the General was kind enough to say he would show me over the city. He could not, however, introduce me to the Coon-club that night, seeing that it had adjourned and gone on a frolic. Only too glad to accept the services of a companion so valuable, I joined him, and we were soon at the door of the Broadway Theater, where the General, to his great surprise, discovered that in the change of his vest that evening (he had foregone the pleasure of a very fashionable party in the Fifth Avenue to do me ample honor) he had omitted to replace his purse. I begged he would not mention it, drawing forth the required sum. With great apparent mortification he begged me to disburse the trifle and consider it all right in the morning. This I was only too glad to have the honor of doing.

"An highly colored melodrama, in four acts, one of which was laid in each of the four quarters of the globe, (and if there had been a fifth, the cunning author would have had an act for it,) was proceeding at a stormy pace, the principal character being personated by a gentleman of color, the audience, I thought, were trying to emulate in loudness of talking. My new companion seemed to have an extensive acquaintance,

Page 23

for he introduced me to no less than twenty judges of the Supreme Court, whose good opinion, he said, it was well to cultivate, and many other persons, not one of whom was less than a major-general of the Ninth Regiment, a corps somewhat celebrated for its courageous marching and counter-marching up Broadway. Of the etiquette that ruled among the military heroes of New York I knew but little; nor was I well acquainted with the accomplishments necessary to her judges: but it was impossible to suppress the thought, that if soliciting treats of strangers were regarded as a qualification, they could not be beaten, though the whole Union were put to the test. And so excessive were their duties in taking care of the Union, that their faces had assumed a deep purple color.

“Ascending several flights of stairs, we, by great exertion, reached what was called the ‘third tier,’ which lofty domain was, by the generosity of the manager, set apart for damsels whose modesty and circumspection would not permit of their occupying seats in the dress circle. I, however, noticed in them an audacity of manner that did not appertain to such artless beings as my companion would have me believe them. It struck me, too, that the toilet of these artless damsels was not what it should be. Indeed, there was an extravagance of color, and scantiness at both ends of their drapery, that both my mother and grandmother would have set down as in extremely bad taste. My companion soon cleared up this little matter, by informing me that the toilet of these artless damsels, so bright in color and scanty in places, was in strict keeping with the standard of fashion adopted by the very best society, which was to be more undressed than dressed, that the devil—who always wanted to look in-might see for himself.

“What there was lacking in drapery, to save my emotions, I might, my friend said, make up in the color of my imagination. They were all the daughters of rich bankers in Wall Street; hence no one had a right to interfere with their mode of dress. Stewart, at whose shrine of satins and silks ten thousand longing damsels worshiped, owed his fortune to their love of bright colors. And although he had filled two graveyards with ruined husbands, and was preparing a third for the great number of wives whose constancy he had crushed out with the high price of his laces, no one was simpleton enough to blame him. No matter how many sins of extravagant men he might have to answer for, the purchase of seven pews in Grace Church, and the good will of Brown, would secure his redemption. Stewart was a hero whose deeds should be recorded in history, and to whose memory a monument ought to be raised in every fashionable graveyard; and upon which it would be well to inscribe an epitaph written by Brown, the sexton.

Page 24

“My companion said he would (and he did) introduce me to several of these daughters of rich bankers, which was very kind of him. The unrestrained quality of their speech at first struck me as being a little curious, such indeed as I was not accustomed to; but I found them extremely easy to become acquainted with, and in nowise prudish. They did, however, keep up a suspicious intimacy with a brilliantly lighted, though not very fragrantly scented, saloon on the left. In this I was assured there was nothing improper, inasmuch as it was sanctioned by the customs of the best society in New York, and much frequented by the Mayor and Aldermen.

“One of the damsels, whose winning smiles excited the filaments of my heart with joy, condescended to express an enthusiastic admiration for my watch-chain, while another very modestly said she would owe me a lasting obligation if I would lend her my watch, that she might wear it at the Tammany Hall ball, to which she was invited by one of the managers. She pledged her honor, of which she seemed to have a large stock, to return it safe. As it was the first favor she had ever condescended to ask of a gentleman, she felt sure I could not deny a lady. Notwithstanding my respect for rich bankers and their daughters, I begged that she would excuse me in this instance, and charge to my poverty what might otherwise seem a want of generosity. She said she would sing to me, and be the light of my dreams; but even this failed to impress me with a due respect for her desires. With that penuriousness characteristic of bankers, their papas, it was clear, had not stocked their purses with change enough to cover their wants, which habitually ran to ice-water and something in it.

“It was clear they took me for a country bumpkin instead of a great politician, and were inclined to make much of my excess of simplicity. Motioning my companion that it was time to be going, I expressed the great delight their company had afforded me, and took my leave, promising to pay them another visit at no very distant day. I now began to mistrust my companion, whose deportment did not seem to square with that which I had been accustomed to associate with great generals. But he was tailored and barbaled after the manner of gentlemen, and was likewise excessively smooth of tongue.

“On turning to depart, my companion reminded me that it was customary on such occasions for all distinguished persons to present each of the artless young ladies with a golden dollar, which they preserved as a fund, intending, when it became sufficiently large, to start a ‘Journal of Civilization,’ in which the literature of other lands was to be much improved for the benefit of this. The ‘Journal of Civilization’ was not to be considered a reflex of free brains, but rather as a reflex of free stealing, which was to be advocated at great length in its columns. Its general department would, my companion told me, be devoted to the histories of great historians, commencing

Page 25

with Jacob Abbot and ending with Peter Parley. Of its politics not much was to be said, seeing that they were written by my learned friend, Doctor Easley, author and compiler of 'The Polite Speech Maker,' and ought never to be taken as meaning what they said. Sharpeye and Scissors were to be honored with the post of general editors; and the musical department, which it was intended should be strong enough to drown all weak instruments, had been consigned to three magnificent harpers, who were capable of climbing a gamut of any number of notes. Neither had tuned their harps very extensively to home literature, the love they bore it being of the chastest kind; and though they were capable of conferring princely endowments upon it, they had turned a deaf ear to all its cries and distresses.

"Not seeing the enlarged benefits that were to flow from this Journal of Prospective Civilization, nor having any great faith in the quality of civilization stolen literature would confer upon a nation, I preferred to distinguish my generosity by a more national and less tricky example. This, I observed, did not give satisfaction to the damsels, who turned away with a look of contempt, and no doubt to this day entertain a very poor opinion of me.

"When we had reached the street my companion very modestly said there were not less than a thousand curious places a politician should visit before being qualified for taking a high position among his fellows. Many of these were established for the benefit of poor men in pursuit of fortunes, which it was absurd to think could not be got without a too strict adherence to truth and probity. First, he said, he would introduce me to the high priest of the Pewter Mug, which was the Star Chamber of Tammany, though many simple-minded people residing in the rural districts had mistaken it for the place in which Mr. Beecher, the reverend, wrote his celebrated star letters. No famous politician or statesman ever visited New York without scenting its pure atmosphere. And even Marcy himself, who, notwithstanding his grievous fault of quoting great authors, would be written down in history as a knight of diplomatists, had been heard to say (he was a frequenter of the Mug) that he owed the profoundness of his wisdom to the quality of the beverages there served. And as the first dawn of his generosity was supposed to have broken forth in this compliment to the accommodating high priest, it did him infinite credit in the future.

"A little reflection, however, produced a second thought. If I were as invulnerable as Virgil's witch, I could survive the process of initiation, for then I could enchant the faithful, who were politicians whose metal had been hardened in the furnaces of the custom-house, and had passed enactments, which they enforced with great rigor, that no country-made politician should be admitted unless he could drink and stand sober under thirty-two brandy cobblers per day, and was able to treat each member to his daily ration of an equal number, for the space of two weeks.

Page 26

"Promising my companion that I would profit by his valuable hint, we turned into Duane Street, and, after groping our way up one of its wet and narrow alleys, halted at the cellar-door of a dilapidated little house that seemed to have been ignominiously crammed in between two dead walls and left for an owl roost. I was never wanting in courage, as my companions in Mexico can assert, but I confess that a sort of shaky sensation came over me just then. This was observed by my companion, who hoped I would not be alarmed, since the place we had arrived at was nothing more than the celebrated locofoco 'nest number three,' the members of which had their head quarters at Tammany Hall and the Irving House, and were very respectable men, and good working politicians. A less inquisitive man than a citizen of Cape Cod is acknowledged to be, could not have failed to discover the artifice. But my enthusiasm carried away my discretion; and, after descending six slippery steps, we came to a door upon which my companion gave two loud knocks, and placed his ear to the crevice. Mutterings, in a tongue very like the Tuscan, were interspersed with loud swearings, which were in turn diffused with curious whisperings. Another loud knock, and a peremptory demand from my companion, and the door was cautiously opened by a witchlike figure, the hideous face of which protruded apace, and then shrank quickly back, as if to present me a commentary of what I might expect within.

"'Rise, strike a light, and let the quality of metal you are made of be seen!' said my companion, as he stepped inside. The light of a tallow candle, in the hand of a half-shirtless figure, with bruised face and upright hair, discovered a cellar about twenty by sixteen feet, and seven high. The man of the shirt and candle, I took for the high priest of the locofoco nest number twenty-three, so nimbly did he mount a little counter at the further end, and set to arranging his bottles and glasses, thinking, no doubt, that he had caught a customer of extensive generosity. The atmosphere was thick and gloomy; nor was it rendered purer by the fourteen stalwart fellows who lay stretched at full length upon half-emptied whiskey barrels, and seemed much devoted to shattered garments, disfigured faces, and collapsed hats. 'Here,' my friend said, 'is your true working politician, who has no fear of the infernal regions, and never thinks of heaven.' At a word from him, they rose to their feet, though not without an effort, and having given their hats an extra tip, and thrust their hands into places where pockets ought to have been, and let drop a few words of discontent, like my learned friend Easley once said Calypso did, they seized tumblers and ranged up to the counter, forming a most striking panorama of dejected faces. 'I love and reverence these men,' said my companion, modestly suggesting that I must do myself the honor of paying for their medicine, 'since they were extremely useful in absorbing the refuse liquor made at our distilleries, and keeping up the respectability of the party to which they belong. Indeed, they are not the base fabric of the vision you might take them for; they are all pensioned members of the Empire Club, a very disorderly body of men, of whom it is said that no man can be elected President of the United States without first consulting their approbation.'

Page 27

“They held their peace, and drank with great apparent experience. I did not dispute my companion’s assertion, that they had rendered noble service during many a campaign, and were capable of rendering much more; still, my opinion of politicians in general was in no way heightened by their appearance. Being disappointed in their ends and aims at the last election, they now stood much in need of a trifle, with which to pay Bishop Hughes for praying a recently-deceased brother through purgatory, a service he never performed without feeling the money safe in his palm. All at once they set up a howl like midnight wolves, which so alarmed me that I hastened into the street, where my companion soon joined me, saying it was a way they had of expressing a joke. Not being accustomed to the ways of working politicians of the New York school, I made my way as fast as possible into Broadway, when, to my surprise, I discovered that my watch had parted company with me. My companion was equally surprised, offered me any number of regrets, and said he would go back and have every political vagabond arrested and locked up in the Tombs, where, if his acquaintance with the judge was not of too intimate a nature, the thief would be detected and punished in the morning.

“Pausing for a moment, a second thought, he said, satisfied him that to seek redress by so bold a course would not be good policy. The thief would have gone off with his booty, hence it would be better to remain quiet until morning, when, having come back to hold consultation with his fellows on some question of politics, as was customary with them, the services of a detective would do the rest. Just as we were debating this subject a well-dressed man advanced toward us, and, stooping down, picked up a corpulent pocket-book, with the possession of which he seemed not at all easy. ‘Friend,’ said the man, ‘I am an honest Quaker, can’st thou tell me if thou art the owner of this, for I leave for my home in Albany in the morning, and want not to be burdened with it.’ After an exchange of civilities that satisfied me he was a gentleman, I told him it was none of mine. He insisted however, that I take possession of it, and in the morning pursue measures to have it restored to its rightful owner.” And what followed will be recorded in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

What befell major Rodger Potter, and how he found himself outwitted.

Knowing how well modesty becomes greatness, I listened with profound attention to the major’s story. Every now and then he would relieve my feelings by suggesting that the most interesting part of it was yet to come. We had now pursued our journey some fifteen miles under a burning sun, when we came to a running spring, beside which the major drew up his team, and, dismounting, proceeded to fill

Page 28

his bucket. Having drank of the limpid water from one of his tin cups, and placed the bucket before old Battle, whom he patted with great fondness, the major next proceeded to take care of his disconsolate chickens, which for the last three miles had been keeping up an opera of discordant sounds, to his great annoyance. Uncovering his coop, which he carried at the tail of his wagon, he set two tin cups of water before them, and scattered moistened meal at their feet, enjoining them to hold their peace in the future. And while in the act of doing this, he reminded me that great men were exalted by small things, and however bemeaning the nursing of chickens might be regarded in a military man, there was in it a nobleness the great only could appreciate. The chickens, however, did not seem to appreciate his sacrifice of dignity, for they devoured their food with an increase of music. Having attended to the wants of his live stock, the major frisked round his wagon to see that his wares were all safe, and then commenced singing a song, as if a transport of joy had suddenly come over him. "I tell you what it is, my friend," said he, pausing in the middle of his tune, and drawing his favorite flask from his breast pocket, "the world 'll think none the less of us for traveling thus shabbily. There may be nothing courtly in the profession of tin-peddling, yet it is an honorable enterprise, and has its obstacles as well as other honorable enterprises." I besought him not to make himself uncomfortable on my account; that I was not yet so famous that I could not ride over the country on a tin-wagon, without feeling it a sacrifice of dignity.

We now sat down by the spring together, and proceeded to refresh ourselves with his crackers and cheese, to which I added a newly-baked pumpkin pie my mother, in the outpouring of her simplicity, had slipped into my haversack; and while regaling ourselves in this unpretending manner, the major, whose ardor was rather increased by the liquid he mixed with his water, resumed the recital of his first adventure in New York: "Being desirous of facilitating the Quaker's honesty, my companion, General Fopp, suggested an easy way of disposing of the matter. The pocket-book, he said, no doubt contained an enormous amount, which the unlucky owner would be anxious to regain as early as possible in the morning, and to that end would advertise in all the newspapers, offering a large reward to the lucky finder, as an inducement for him to preserve his honesty. The first step then would be to find a convenient place for counting the contents of the pocket-book, and considering the amount which could be properly offered the Quaker, as the reward of his honesty. So, after consulting within myself for some few minutes, I followed my companion and the Quaker into the back parlor of a cigar shop, where we carefully counted the great roll of notes, and found the amount to be exactly four thousand three hundred and twenty-two dollars, which nice little sum,

Page 29

together with papers of great value, showing the owner, one Henry Paterson, to be a man of large dealings in Wall-street, were entrusted to my care. My companion expressed his inability to trust himself with so large an amount of property, especially as the servants at his hotel were proverbially inclined to take liberties with other people's goods. At my request, he said he thought two hundred and fifty dollars would be a moderate consideration, since the owner would no doubt value the restoration of his property at twice that sum. I was not possessed of so large a sum; but being anxious not to wrong the Quaker, whose quiet demeanor completely won my confidence, I produced one hundred and fifty dollars, which he accepted, saying it was much more than he expected. My political companion said the air of contentment with which he accepted the reduced sum, was in every way becoming, and bespoke him a worthy gentleman. As a precaution I took a receipt for the amount, which Greely Hanniford (for such was the Quaker's name) signed, and took his departure. My companion said he would do himself the honor of calling upon me at eleven o'clock in the morning, an earlier hour being considered very unfashionable among military men. He would then, if necessary, bear testimony to the transaction. It was now twelve o'clock, and bearing me company as far as the Astor House steps, he exchanged civilities and took his departure, having first slipped a card into my hand, upon which was inscribed in neat letters, 'General Fopp, 32 Pleasant-side Row.' Pleasant-side Row being a mystery to me, I retired to bed thinking of my first night's adventure in our modern Babylon, and awoke early in the morning to regret that delay in the pursuit of my mission might cause grievous injury to the nation."

Again, we bridled old Battle, and proceeded slowly on, the sun being intense enough to dissolve both our brains, and the major cutting short the thread of his story by saying we would dine with Mrs. Trotbridge, whose house we ought to reach by high noon.

"However, it was neither here nor there," the major resumed; "I knew that no military man of any distinction could escape the formalities and ceremonies it was necessary to go through before being regularly enstated into the good graces of New York society, and so gave myself up to the policy of making the best of it. I got up, and after making divers inquiries of waiters found straying along the confused labyrinth of passages, got down stairs. My first business was to search in all the morning papers for the man of the lost treasure in my possession; I read them all only to be disappointed. Nor had the companion of my adventure remembered to have my arrival, with becoming comments, put in all the papers, as he had pledged his honor to do, having, as he said, an unlimited control over them. I carefully consulted the columns of the Herald. And though I discovered in the editor a love for sharpening

Page 30

up his battle-axe, and making splinters of his fellows at least twice a week, not a gleam of light was thrown upon the man whose loss I felt it in my heart would be his ruin. I contemplated the wants and anxieties of those who sought to make them known therein, and smiled at the curious manner in which a thousand ambitious individuals expressed their readiness to supply the wants of others. I turned to the Tribune. But neither in the gravely-spun philosophy of its editorials, nor among the pearls of its advertisement columns, could I find a word to relieve my anxiety. The sages who are supposed by the knowing ones to jot things down in that very consistent inconsistent journal, had likewise forgotten to mention my name; which apparent neglect much discomposed my mind. I was, however, somewhat relieved by a friend, who informed me that it was in their true spirit. One of the waiters told me with an air of great wisdom, that the Tribune never took up military men except to set them down with bruises. This waiter was a gifted Irishman, and a great politician. During a sweet little touch of a rebellion, or a famine (which are about the same) in his country, he had read the Tribune twice a day to his wife, Biddy Regan, who expressed herself delighted at the forked lightning style it then kept up in defense of the rights of her fifty first cousins.

“Eleven o’clock arrived, but no General Fopp came. Anxious to relieve myself of the treasure, I approached the highly perfumed and somewhat rotund clerk, whose bows were worth at least a quarter eagle, and related the story of my adventure to him. The jewels his shirt was bedazzled with seemed to brighten, while his face radiated smiles, in which it was not difficult to read that he set me down for a simpleton. He took the pocket-book into his hand, and saluting me by my military title, inquired how many banks my companion of the adventure proposed to start in Wall Street. Just then I remembered that the generous fellow did propose starting ten or so; and, in addition, that he pledged one half of Wall Street that, at no very distant day, I would be president of these United States.

“The clerk now smilingly counted the bills, all of which he pronounced, to my utter astonishment, on banks that existed only in the mischievous imagination of some knight of the order of vagabonds, which ruled the city, moulding things to its liking, and had fortified itself in a castle of brass. I stood as if transfixed to the floor. My reputation, my money, my hopes of a foreign mission—all were gone. I expressed my regret that the man should have so little respect for his military reputation. The clerk, however, relieved me on that point, by stating that nothing in the world was easier than to be a general in New York, and that the individual who had gained a victory over me was no doubt one of that particular species of military heroes so numerous dispersed about all the street corners of Broadway, and who now and then find it good for their health and courage to take a trip to Europe, where titles command better attention. As for the Quaker, Greely Hanniford, he was no doubt a major of the General’s division.

Page 31

"I was anxious to keep this matter as quiet as possible, bearing the loss like a philosopher, and forming a resolution in my mind never again to be taken in by a New York general. I observed, however, that two bearded vagabonds (such at least I took them for) in hats of priests, came suspiciously up, for the discovery made some stir, and took down all that was said. And this was, by these malicious historians, (as the polite clerk informed me they were,) put in all the afternoon newspapers. I now began to think this was what the cunning rogue meant by saying he would have my arrival recorded, with proper comments; for indeed the comments were of a character that might have satisfied a major of much more renown. One sagacious fellow, after reciting what he was pleased to set down as my political history, and the political history of all my shoemaker ancestors, at whose honest calling he tipped a sneer, as is common with the learned men of our very republican press, expressed his regret that so sharp a politician should have been made the victim of an ordinary sharper, but thought it quite likely we had been visiting temples of the unclean together, such being the favorite resorts of politicians. Another equally sagacious fellow said, that the least harmless view he could take of the matter was, that the distinguished major had permitted his political enthusiasm to carry off his discretion, and had kept hours in the company of a stranger too late to find an excuse with respectable people. A third said, the whole affair looked very suspicious; and for the character of politicians, he hoped there was quite as much innocence in the major's story as he seemed anxious to have appear on its face; but he very much doubted if such honesty was a good recommendation to one in pursuit of a foreign mission."

CHAPTER VII.

In which is related how pleasantly the major took his misfortunes.

"After these cunning scribblers had exhausted their ingenuity in moulding for me a character so scurvy, that the man who holds up buildings at street corners could not be got to pick it up, and had laid at my door charges that would have brought tears into the eyes of all my ancestors, they wheeled suddenly about, took back all they had said, threw glory at my feet, and, to the end of doing mankind a benefit, held me up as a model major. They were all ready to make me any number of promises, to render me any reasonable service, and to follow me to battle. Had I offered them a consideration, no doubt it would have been refused with splendid contempt.

Page 32

"Mine host of the Astor, who was a shrewd fellow, thought the character of his house damaged, and must needs consult his honor, the Mayor. That high functionary, knowing the agility with which such heroes as Fopp exercised their heels, gave out no encouragement of catching the rascal. Had it been a scamp, who by his winning manners deceives inconsolable widows, seduces artless damsels, and otherwise exercises his skill in the art of fascinating females, his Honor had been after him with all the courage of his police force. But as it was merely taking in a stranger, the matter, his Honor thought, had better be stopped, since the degree and quality of the crime was so like that known as 'sharp practice' in Wall street, that to punish one and let another go free would only be manifesting a strange disregard of equal justice. And the landlord was too shrewd a fellow not to know that to employ detectives, who were costly men to move, would entail an expense greater than the sum lost, without mending the damaged reputation of his house. I therefore contented myself with the satisfaction of having had my character restored to me by the newspapers.

"A different turn now came in my affairs, and finding it was only a harmless custom of the editors to make splinters of a great public man, I invited them to a sumptuous dinner, which they set upon with an appetite equaled only by that displayed by them while devouring my character. But, on the whole, they were a jolly set of fellows -quite as jolly as one could desire. If they entertained a magnificent dislike for one another, it was to be set down to a spirit of commercial rivalry, which, though it might work out good in some instances, was of itself to be deplored, inasmuch as it had nothing in common with that generosity of soul which should rule universal among men of letters."

I found the dinner a specific antidote for a bruised character, for no sooner had my literary friends eaten it than they were ready to outdo one another in saying good things of me. One cunning fellow told his readers that the election of General Harrison was entirely owing to the wisdom I had distilled into the minds of the people of Cape Cod. And though I never had even scented the perfumery of war, another said that as a military man I had no superior. Concerning my mission, they were all sure no testimony they could bear would add one jot to my transcendent ability for representing the nation abroad. The government could not make so great a mistake as to overlook me.

"Heaven having given the editors great success in their arduous business of restoring me to favor, I was received at once into the embraces of fashionable society. Brown, who digs graves for departed sinners, and provides the parties of our aristocracy with distinguished people, called to inquire what evenings I was 'disengaged,' seeing that he had several openings on his list, which was unusually select 'this week.' He secured invitations

Page 33

to nothing but the most refined and wealthy society-that which gave receptions merely for the sake of doing honor to persons so distinguished. Genin sent circulars to say that hats of the latest pattern could be got cheaper and better of him than any one else. Tiffany & Company, in a delicately enveloped card, reminded me, (for Mrs. Potter's sake, no doubt,) that their stock of jewelry was of the finest description. Ball & Black sent to say that swords and other appurtenances necessary to a military gentleman could be got of them, much superior in quality, and cheaper in price, than at any other establishment in Broadway, or, indeed, in the city. Stewart, I was told, had just opened an invoice of India shawls, which he had ticketed at twenty-five hundred dollars each. But as his motto was quick sales and small profits, he was running them off at two hundred dollars less. It was hinted that Mrs. Major Potter better call early or they would all be gone. Had Mrs. Major Potter been the sharer of my adventure, and exhibited so wanton a determination to rush her husband into bankruptcy, as it appeared was the fashion with the ladies of New York, then Mr. Major Potter had gone one way and Mrs. Major Potter another."

Here the major gave his whip two or three smart cracks, and bid old Battle proceed at a more rapid pace, as his appetite caused him to make sundry contemplations about the dinner he would get at the house of Mrs. Trotbridge.

"Well, seeing that I was up and popular," said the major, resuming his story, "Townsend piled my room with circulars, saying his sarsaparilla was the only kind used by politicians and military men, who invariably pronounced it the cure for those diseases which, it is charged by a Spanish writer, of great learning, are incident to their professions. Brandreth sent me samples of his pills, which he said were unequalled for purging politicians of all those ill humors they were heirs to. And both (moved by Brown, no doubt) sent me invitations to parties given in honor of me at their princely mansions on the Fifth Avenue. Barnum, too, considering me a remarkable curiosity, sent two tickets to his great show house, which the vulgar called a museum. And the Misses Whalebone & Gossamer sent to say that their assortment of baby clothes was of the choicest description, and that they would be much pleased if Mrs. Major Potter would call and examine for herself.

"As I was always considered a good looking man," (the major, though as ugly a man as could well be found, was extremely vain of his looks,) "no end of sly looks were turned upon me at parties by marriageable damsels, who mistook me for a single man on the look out. As to young widows, why, the tears hung as temptingly in their eyes as pearls. Whether they were for me or their deceased husbands, I am not bound to say, self praise being no recommendation. It often occurred to me, however, that marrying a widow would be an act of charity heaven could not fail to record to the credit of any good natured bachelor.

Page 34

“And this, too, I will say, that nothing could have been more elegantly conducted than the parties to which I was invited. Indeed, I saw no occasion for repaying hospitality after the manner of those malicious writers, who take pleasure in sneering at the quality of entertainment given by our aristocracy, merely because it is composed of men who have got rich by the very republican business of sailing ships and selling eatables. Now I by no means underrate the man of letters who truly represents genius, or learning; but that every dabbler in small satire should dub himself a man of letters, and therefore set up for an idol before whom better men must bow, or have their social affairs battered to pieces, is something I cannot condescend to admit. By all means, if the little fellows will have a court, let them have one of their own, and to their liking; for they will quarrel over those ills they seem born to; and if they can quarrel without interfering with the rights of others, the peace of the earth may be preserved. In fine, I would have them cram themselves into everything great and good, and ask only that they be careful not to weaken those pedestals upon which our republic is expanding itself. But enough of this.

“Having passed through fetes of unequaled splendor the politicians began to put questions to me, which, in many instances, it was not convenient for me to answer, inasmuch as by a single word I might commit myself to principles my party would not sanction. They, however, took me into their keeping, and so delayed my journey to Washington that I began to feel that I had got among friends of the wrong kind.” We were now entering a short curve in the road, between two hills covered with chestnut trees, beneath which several lean sheep were grazing, when the major’s story was interrupted by the shrill sound of a fishmonger’s horn.

CHAPTER VIII.

What took place between the major and the fishmonger.

A soft glow enhanced the beauty of the foliage on the hill side, tottering stone walls lined each side of the road, and the crowing of cocks, and the lowing of cattle, together with a pastoral view obtained through the scraggy trees, betokened our near approach to a farm house. “Let us forget politics and go in for a bit of trade with this fishmonger!” said the major, as he jerked the reins, that old Battle might take heed, and quicken his pace. Another blast from the fishmonger’s horn, and his wagon appeared in the road, approaching at a rapid pace. The fishmonger, doubtless, thought there was no trade to be had of a tin peddler, whose wares had nothing in common with his own, and was about to drive by at a brisk pace, when the major reined up old Battle, and half hidden in a cloud of dust, cried out, in a thin, squeaking voice, “Ho! stranger, what like for fish have you?”

Page 35

“Cod, haddock and bass,” replied the fishmonger, who seemed as lean and well starved as his horse, which was of a light sorrel color, and presented so pitiable a pack of bones that no real philanthropist could have looked upon him without shedding many tears. The two tradesmen now got down from their respective wagons, and approaching each other with hands extended, presented a corporeal contrast one seldom sees in the rural districts of New England, inasmuch as the fishmonger stood six feet in his grain-leather boots, and was so lean of person that one might easily have imagined him fed on half-tanned leather and Connecticut nutmegs, while the major stood just five feet two in his stockings, measured exactly twenty-seven inches across the broad disc of his trousers, and had a belly equal to that of three turtle-fed aldermen rolled into one. The major too, had a head very like a Wethersfield squash stunted in the growth, with a broad, florid face, and a spacious mouth, and two small eyes he could see at right angles with. The fishmonger, on the other hand, was hatchet faced, had a dilating jaw, and a vacant look out of his eyes, which were well nigh obscured by the battered hat slouched down over his parchment colored forehead.

They began at once to raise their wares, to shake each other cordially by the hand, and to exchange salutations of mutual confidence. Old Battle, who had a deep fellow feeling for his master, must needs imitate the affection he displayed for the fishmonger, and to that end began to make free with his horse, which, after sundry friendly bites of the mane, and otherwise exhibiting himself in a manner very much unbecoming a horse of such good morals, reared and had done serious damage with the bones of the other, but for the interposition of his master, who separated them with the stock of his big whip. Peace being restored, the animals were removed to a respectful distance, and I was introduced to the fishmonger as the greatest young politician ever known in that part of the country. The major, it must here be recorded, otherwise this history would be imperfect, was scrupulous not to admit that a young politician, however brilliant his capacity, could be equal to an old one. In this he differed but little from many other great military politicians of my acquaintance.

As the major seemed not to have a care for any other political campaign than that which elected General Harrison, it was a custom with him to inquire of every new acquaintance how he voted in that event, before engaging in a trade with him. Having put the question as a preliminary, the fishmonger replied that he had voted as good and square a “Coon ticket” as any citizen in the town where he lived, but that he received two pieces of gold for so doing, and thought it no harm.

Page 36

"It is how a man votes," said the major, adding a nod of satisfaction, "not what he gets for his vote. That's his business, and except heaven, no one has a right to interfere. Here, take these, know how much I esteem you, and remember when you drink your cider out of them that I am your friend." Here the major took two tin pints from his wagon, and having patted the fishmonger upon the shoulder, presented them to him, with a speech very like that made by a Mayor of New York, who, having dined with his board of aldermen, holds it incumbent upon him to bestow praises the cunning rascals know are meant for a jest. This done, the major drew forth his flask, saying that it would be no more than good manners to christen the pints. The fishmonger answered that he had no objection, the weather being very oppressive. A stout draft was now poured into each cup, and having myself declined, compliments and bows, such as the fishmonger had never before received, were exchanged, and the whiskey drank with great apparent satisfaction.

"As the sun is warm, and my profits to day have not amounted to much," said the fishmonger, with an air of stupidity that by no means pleased the major, "I must hurry these ere fish through!" The major expected a different return for his generosity, and reminded his friend that he had not yet showed him a sample of his wares. At the word, the other mounted his little box of a wagon, and in a trice laid three cod and two flabby haddock upon the lid, declaring they were as fresh and bright as a new-coined quarter. And though at the most rapid pace his horse could travel, he was more than six hours from the nearest sea-shore, he was ready to swear by the hair of his head, of which he had but little, they were only two hours caught. "Five cents a pound for the cod, and four for the haddock!" ejaculated the fishmonger, raising a haddock by the gills, as if to assert some near point to the notch it would bring down on the steelyard. "Well, to you, here, have the cod for four and a half; that's offsettin' your good turn, and I make it a point never to be out of the way with a fellow trader." Saying this, he hung a codfish to the hook of his steelyards, and finding seven pounds marked, said thirty cents would cover the cost, that being a cent and a half more off. Generosity, the Major saw, was not bait that tempted the fishmonger to reciprocity. "I should like two of them at the price you name; but as paying cash is not in my line, perhaps we can trade, somehow? By my military reputation, I never let a chance to trade slip. Yes, by my buttons, I made a good thing of it when at the head of my regiment in Mexico." This the major said by way of softening the fishmonger's generosity; but that honest-minded individual replied in the following laconic manner: "Bin in Mexaki, eh? Darn'd if I'd like to bin there."

Page 37

The major, not at all pleased with the unimpressable nature of the fishmonger, said, somewhat curtly, that no one cared whether he would or not. "However, here's at you for a trade," continued the major, adding that generosity was the surest road to fortune. And having bid him hang another cod to his steelyards, he drew from his stock a small tin strainer, with which he offered to make a square exchange for the fish. "Say the word, and it is done!" ejaculated the major, patting the other upon the shoulder. The fishmonger shook his head, and looked askant at the major, as if to say he would rather be excused. The major now, out of sheer generosity, as he said, and anxious, no doubt, to sustain the character of military men, threw in a pint of number four shoe pegs, which article was among his wares, and which he was ready to swear by his military honor the people of Connecticut raised Shanghai chickens on. The fishmonger said he did not know exactly what to do with the shoe pegs; but as a New Englander was never at a loss to find a use for every thing, and not wanting to be hard with a fellow trader, he would call it a bargain. They now mounted their respective teams, and drove on in opposite directions.

A little red house, half buried under a hill side, interspersed with scrubby trees and blackberry vines, now appeared in sight. This the major described as the house of his dear good friend, Mrs. Trotbridge, the widow of three husbands, and yet so young in feeling that she was in daily expectation of getting a fourth. He never failed to make her a present, and partake of her good cheer while passing that way. The fish would be a great treat with the widow; and though the strainer and shoe-pegs, for which they were exchanged, did not "stand him in" more than a shilling, the fish would rise up in her eyes to the worth of a jolly good dinner.

Old Battle, recognizing the house as one he was accustomed to rest and feed at, quickened his pace, and disturbing the repose of pigs, chickens, and young ducks, nestling by the roadside, soon reached the garden gate. Dismounting in great haste, the major bid me follow him, and, leaving old Battle to take care of himself for the nonce, hastened up the pathway toward the front door, for the house was separated from the road by a narrow garden, enclosed with pickets, and full of stunted shrubbery. The inmates of the house were soon astir, and the major's name was, one might have thought, called from every window. Then the basement door suddenly opened, and two little, mischievous looking Trotbridges, scampered out to meet him, and so clung about his short legs, and otherwise offered him proof of the affection they bore him, as almost to impede his progress. Mrs. Trotbridge, at the same time, appeared in the door, three or four flaxen headed little members of the Trotbridge family clinging at her skirts, and shaking their chubby fingers in ecstasy. Mrs. Trotbridge stood at least an

Page 38

head taller than the major, and was in figure so lean as to give one the idea that she had been pressed between two opposite points of theology. Her face was worn and wrinkled; her eyes small, gray, and staring, and fortified with a pair of silver-bowed spectacles, which were incessantly getting down upon her long, flat nose. Her complexion, too, was the color of alum tanned sheep skin. The major's arrival was evidently a great event with the Trotbridge family, for while the two elder boys, one about eight and the other nine years old, ran to see which should be first to take care of his horse, Mrs. Trotbridge, saying, "Well, as I'm living, if here ain't the major again," hastened down the pathway, one hand under her check apron and the other extended. There now took place such a series of embracings, accompanied with kisses, as one seldom sees in lovers over sixteen.

The major followed speedily into the house, while the two boys unharnessed, fussed over, and took care of his horse, which one mounted and the other led by an halter to a little dilapidated barn, such as are common to that part of the country. I was next introduced, with some ceremony, to Mrs. Trotbridge, as the politician who had gone over the country effecting such wonderful political changes. After divers courtesies, the good woman put so many questions to me concerning my past history and future hopes, that I found it somewhat difficult to answer them. Mrs. Trotbridge had no very deep love for politicians in general, the doctor of the parish having told her that they did serious damage to brandy punches. Had I felt inclined, I verily believe she would have held me in conversation until midnight, such was her nimbleness of tongue.

The walls of the room, which was about twenty feet by twelve in dimensions, were hung with small, colored pictures, in mahogany frames; an high shoe bench in one corner, a few flag bottom chairs, a table and two small workstands, and four pair of shoemaker's clamps, arranged at the windows, constituted the simple but substantial furniture. But there was over all an air of neatness about it truly charming. There was a place for everything, and everything was in its place. "Must make yerselves at home here," said Mrs. Trotbridge. "Things, maybe, ain't as nice as yer used to havin' 'em, but poor folks must do the best they can, and hope better 'll come."

And while the good woman set about lighting a fire in the great open fireplace, Major Potter got between two chairs, into each of which an urchin mounted, with a broom in his hand, and so belabored his jacket as to fill the room with dust. "The major is always at home in this house," dryly ejaculated the good woman, taking down her bellows and commencing to blow the fire.



Page 39

"I know how to appreciate it, Mrs. Trotbridge, and hope nothing may come to lengthen the distance between our friendship," returned the major, shrugging his great broad shoulders, and adding that I could now go through the process of dusting while he washed his face, preparatory to listening to how times went with Mrs. Trotbridge. He had previously ordered the boys to water his chickens, and now, having at his desire brought in the fish, he presented them to the hostess with all that pomp and dignity so common with government employ^{ees}, who present the heads of departments with services of plate bought with their own money, and which intolerable nuisance had its origin among the kings and queens of the buskin. They were, he slyly intimated, worth seven Massachusetts shillings. The shrewd fishmonger wanted nine, but, saying I was going to present them to a dear old friend, he threw off two. No New York alderman ever received a gold snuff box for abusing his office with more condescension than did Mrs. Trotbridge the fish so kindly presented by the major. Saying he was proverbially a modest man, the major begged she would forego any return of thanks and accept them solely as a token of the affection he bore her, and which he certainly would enlarge were it not that Mrs. Roger Potter yet lived, and was hale and hearty. The widow blushed for once, saying as she did so, that there was a time when such a compliment would not have been lost upon her, but now that she had got on the wrong side of forty, was getting gray, and had seen three dear good husbands put away in the grave, she did not think it right to be "lookin' out," especially as Parson Stebbins had always said, when he looked in, that woman's worldly thoughts ought to end at forty.

My suspicions of the major's probity were now almost confirmed, for when she offered to vouchsafe him her generosity, by frying a piece of the fish for dinner, he expressed a positive preference for bacon, a good flitch of which he saw in a little cupboard she opened in search of her stew pan. And although he expressed it a stain upon his gallantry to deprive her of even an ounce, I thought the quality and not his gallantry stood in the way. "Lord bless you, Mrs. Trotbridge," said the major, "men distinguished in arms never make presents to eat of them."

The good hostess replied, by saying, she might have known, but it was seldom persons so distinguished came that way; and when they did, she entertained them just for the honor of it. Peace, she said, reigned in her little house, and she was more happy with the thought of eating the bread of honesty, so remotely, than she would be with a palace in the olive groves of Cordova the man who lectured told about, seeing that they who live in palaces must depend upon others for bread, while she could raise her own.

CHAPTER IX.

How major Roger Potter got his dinner, made an exchange of chickens, and took leave of Mrs. Trotbridge.

Page 40

Had Major Roger Potter been as well qualified to take advantage of a political necessity, as the cunning quality of his gallantry in this instance fully testified, he was to get the better in a matter of trade, he had never fallen from so high an estate as that of defending the nation's honor to that of selling tin ware and shoe pegs.

The major, saying he had an inert sympathy for the humble, and that nothing had so much pleased him as to do Mrs. Trotbridge service, now commenced to set her table, which he did with the familiarity of a good housewife, while the anxious woman bestirred herself in preparing dinner, expressing her doubts as she did so, that her efforts would not meet our expectations. Suddenly remembering that I was so great a politician, the good woman, having made sundry inquiries concerning my wants, bethought herself that I would like a book to while away the time; so, leaving her stew pan in charge of the Major, who, having set the table with great exactness, was seated upon a small stool at the fireside, beating the doughnut batter in a bowl on his lap, she proceeded to a small book-rack over a window, and brought me a copy of Elder Boomer's last sermons, the reading of which she was fully assured in her own mind would interest me.

The major interposed (wiping his portentous belly, which had become disfigured with batter,) by saying that seeing the book advertised by the publishers (who were men of truth in all matters concerning their trade) as the greatest of recently published works, he got a copy for Mrs. Potter, who declared it a wonderful book, and had lent it to all the neighbors, who had read it until nothing would do but they must get up a religious revival. Indeed, if things kept on as they were going, there would soon not be a sinner left in the region round about Barnstable, such a change had the book worked in the pious feelings of the good people. I seated myself beside a window that overlooked the little garden, and turned over the leaves of the book, affecting to be deeply interested in it, but really listening to an interesting colloquy that was being kept up between the good woman and the major, at whose side several little flaxen headed urchins had crouched down, and with an air of paternal regard, watched intently in his face as he compounded the batter with so much force and energy, that at least one half it was lost in spatters over their features. And while doing this, so eager was the major to ascertain the exact state of Mrs. Trotbridge's affairs, that the increase of her pigs and poultry formed a prominent feature in his inquiries. She had let her little farm of thirty acres out on shares to neighbor Zack Slocum, who was esteemed the best crop-getter this side of the crossroads. The peach trees, of which she had seven ranged along the little picket fence round the garden, gave no very strong evidence of doing much, while the cherry tree over the well was touched with blight; but for

Page 41

all that she felt that providence would in some way enable her to scrape up fruit enough to get over the winter. What was deficient in one part of the country was made up by the plenty of another. She had recently, however, felt a great drawback in the bad times consequent upon the policy of the present administration. At last she had been told it was the folks in power at Washington who had made times so hard, that the wealthy manufacturer for whom she “binded” the shoes her boys stitched, could only give two cents a pair, where formerly he gave two and a half. But the cunning fellow, who was the sharpest kind of a straight Whig, said if they got their side in at the next election, he would come back to old prices, with cash instead of store pay. Mrs. Trotbridge hoped it might be so, for the half cent was a serious loss to a family so humble. But she was at a loss to account how it was that if times were so hard, the manufacturer, who could not afford to pay old prices, wanted a greater number of shoes bound, and would hurry her life out to have them done in less time than it were possible to do them.

The good woman, considering herself honored by such military and political greatness, spread her table with fried bacon and new laid eggs, and the cold pork and beans left over from yesterday, a few shavings of dried beef, currant jelly of the most tempting kind, doughnuts, hot and fresh out of the bacon fat, and bread made of wheat raised on the two acre patch across the road, and to which she added a cup of tea so delicate in flavor that it would have made a Dutch grandmother return thanks to the East India Company. In truth there was a snowy whiteness in the table linen, and a nicety and freshness of flavor in the viands one only finds at a country house in New England, and which those accustomed to the “hudgey smudgey” cooking at the great hotels of cities cannot appreciate.

The good woman regretted that she could not add a mug of cider, for since the temperance folks had shut up the tavern kept by General Aldrich, at the village, travelers with a taste for that article had to thirst and keep on to Barnstable. “May heaven vouchsafe you plenty of such good fare,” said the major, taking his seat at the head of the table, as we drew up and engaged the bacon and eggs with appetites that were sharpened to the keenest edge. And so fiercely did the major gorge himself, showing no respect for the last piece upon any plate, that the little urchins, who had occupied seats at the table, began to gaze upon him with wonder and astonishment, and to slink away, one after another, to relieve their pent up mirth. Indeed, so formidable was the onset he made upon the bacon and eggs, that I found it necessary to withdraw after the first fire, lest the good hostess be compelled to call her frying pan into use a second time. Having finished the humble but grateful meal, we proceeded, at the desire of the major, to examine the pig and

Page 42

poultry yard. Her two cows, she said, twitching her head in satisfaction, had had fine thriving calves, and the old sow had a nice increase of fifteen little spotted rascals, as round and plump as foot-balls. As for poultry, the only kind that had not done well was her turkeys. And of this there was visible testimony in four dyspeptic young ones that walked sleepily around two old ones, kept up a very ill-natured whimpering, and in addition to being featherless were quite as much bedowned as the face of a freshman. The major, who had a remedy for everything, set at once to prescribing for their distempers, which he swore by his military reputation they could be purged of by taking homopathic pills dissolved in the smallest quantity of Wistar's Balsam of Wild Cherry. He had not the slightest doubt but that by following up this course of medicine a sufficient length of time, the ill-feathered patients would be restored to a happy state of health, and become popular fowls at the poultry show. The medicine was as harmless as need be, though extremely expensive. There was a satisfaction, however, in knowing that their valuable lives could in no way be endangered by an over dose.

Expressing his entire satisfaction with the appearance of Mrs. Trotbridge's poultry, the major fastened his keen eyes upon six fine black feet pullets, the possession of which he at once began to covet. And to that end did he proceed to discourse on the value of Shanghais, inviting Mrs. Trotbridge, at the same time, to take a peep at the rare lot of that breed of chickens he had in the coop. The good woman followed him to his wagon, where he dismounted his coop, and revealed as scurvy a lot of chickens as eye ever rested upon, all of which he swore by his military reputation, would come to rare Shanghais, and get big enough to eat off barrel-heads in less than two months. Indeed, such was the wonderful account given of these fowls by our hero, that the simple-minded woman would have pledged her farm for no more than a pair. "La's me! do tell. Eat off barrel heads in two months! Mean flour barrels, I 'spose?" ejaculated the good woman, drawlingly, as her urchins gathered round, peering eagerly in through the slats of the coop.

"Just so," returned the major; "know a chicken of this breed that grew so tall, that he would follow wagons going to mill, and feed out of the hind end." In reply to an inquiry as to how she could become the owner of a pair, money being a scarce article with her just now, the major said he would, in view of his anxiety to do her service, let her pick two, for which he would take in exchange the six black feet pullets. For this profession of his generosity, the good woman returned a thousand thanks; and the black feet were forthwith transferred to the major's coop, while she took possession of what she esteemed a rare prize.

Finding there was no more to be made of his generous hostess, the boys harnessed old Battle, and taking leave of her with divers expressions of friendship and regret, we mounted and proceeded on our journey, four urchins clinging to the tail of the wagon, cheering at the top of their voices until we had lost sight of the house.

Page 43

CHAPTER X.

The major resumes the story of his adventures in new York.

My determination not to swerve from the truth in this history, may cause me to relate things of the major his military friends, who are exceedingly sensitive, will set down as malicious attempts to damage the profession of arms. Let it be understood, then, that what charges I shall bring against the major will, on inquiry, be found to have their origin in an uncontrollable passion for trade only. Whether it will be found that he has committed acts for which he can be arraigned before a court-martial, such being the fashionable process of making heroes of military delinquents, must be left entirely to the reader's judgment.

Having got well upon the road, the major turned to me with an air of evident self-satisfaction, and addressed me as follows: "If Mrs. Major Potter was out of the way, I would make twain of the widow, merely for the love her children bear me." Here he jerked the reins and bade old Battle, who was giving strong proof of the quality of his wind, quicken his pace. "However, as it is wicked to contemplate matrimony with a wife on hand, I must console myself with having cleared in the trade with her and the fishmonger, at least two dollars and forty cents. The chickens are not what she takes them for. There can be no doubt of their coming to Shanghais, but as to their eating off barrel heads, they can do that now, only set the barrel heads upon the ground. All the ill feathered devils in my coop are not worth a single black foot." The major, like many others who affect gallantry, rather prided himself on the chivalry there was in deceiving widows and getting the better of fishmongers. We were thus pursuing our journey, when the major suddenly reminded me that he had been interrupted in the recital of the story of his first adventure in New York, and begged I would tell him the exact point where he left off. This I did, as far as my memory served, out of sheer charity. He then begged me not to get impatient, for he would soon get to where he was the hero of several extraordinary exploits, which he had performed while taking care of the nation. "That's the point," said the Major, taking the cue. "The story was interrupted at the point where we held it fortunate detectives were not employed to go in pursuit of Fopp, as they both were of one kith and kin, only that they had different processes for draining purses.

Page 44

“My fashionable friends, on hearing of my distress, had no more attentions to bestow upon me. And as I had no more dinners to give, the newspapers also let me drop very quietly. I should not forget to mention, however, that one huge fellow, who commanded the columns of a very small paper, and made the importance of his position a means of getting loans of his friends, said time would establish the fact that I was an adventurer. I entertained a hope that the good old Evening Post would have answered this, but it never did. It was something that I could console my heart with the fact, that the little paper could do me no harm, since its circulation never got beyond two hundred prosey old women, who admired the way the cunning fellow wore his hair and discoursed upon good society, though he held it a virtue never to pay a debt.

“A friend or two, as poor as myself, and who had clung to me as long as a dollar remained, advised the getting up of an affair of honor with this editor; but, as I had always chosen to be a philosopher, and believing valor an article better preserved with peace than war, I objected. It was then suggested by one of my friends, who was, or had been a politician, (an enemy of his said he had twice been driven out of Wall Street for violating its rules of morality,) that the affair could be more easily settled over a champagne supper at Delmonico’s. The best eater and drinker could then demand his opponent to consider himself vanquished and pay the bill, the same being accepted as a sufficient apology. Upon inquiry, it was found that the editor was famous in this sort of warfare, hence it would not do to engage him at odds so unequal. Telling my friends then, that I would take two weeks to consider it, they thought the matter might be indefinitely postponed. Another friend hinted, slyly, that editors, as a general thing, held character of so little worth that nothing so much delighted them as to demolish it over a strongly compounded punch.

“Well, with the loss of my money, I had the satisfaction, or rather mortification, soon to know that I had gained the suspicions of mine host of the Astor, who had the temerity to stick his bill in the door one morning. My balance on hand not being equal to the amount, I shoved the curious bit of paper into my pocket, and proceeded down stairs, slightly inclined to saunter and contemplate the matter over in the park. But the polite host, with an eye made keen by his doubts, intercepted me at the bottom of the stairs, beckoned me behind the big bright counter, and said I must pardon the request, but he would like the trifle between us squared. Notwithstanding his great respect for politicians in general, they so often forgot these little matters as to make it a serious affair with him. The kindness of his manner set my conscience in a tumult; and this, added to the fact that he had entertained me in a princely style, sent me into a state of great grief. One likes to perform kind offices to a courteous recipient. Indeed, nothing would have so much pleased me as to discharge every obligation to so excellent a landlord. I might at some future day need the comforts of his house, especially as several of my friends had intimated, while fortune smiled, that the voice of the people might one day call me to rule the nation.

Page 45

“Dispensing all ceremony, I invited mine host to a conference in one corner, and then and there pleaded the lean condition of my purse, to which he listened with great patience, and when I had done begged me to consider him a friend. Once indeed he seemed on the point of shedding tears of sorrow for my troubles; but his eyes resumed their usual dryness. On the following day, his sympathy having no doubt run out, he informed me, with great politeness of manner, that the demand for his lodgings was more than equal to the supply. ‘Perhaps,’ he added, ‘you can make it convenient to continue your journey.’

“I was in the condition of an army unable to move for want of supplies. It was no difficult matter to make a dozen or so of political speeches, or to make a meeting split its sides with laughter, or to tear the sophistries of an opponent into tatters, but to be cheated out of one’s money in a great city, and leave the Astor to enter the Irving, or the more fashionable ‘New York,’ with an empty pocket, though common among New Yorkers, was a feat I had not learned to achieve.”

The mischief of the matter was, that no sooner had I got rid of General Fopp, than a man, whom I shall for convenience sake call the great Captain Splinters, made my acquaintance. This man, of whom many queer things were said over tea-tables, by people calling themselves the aristocracy, plumed himself on being the greatest politician Manhattan Island ever was blessed with. People of steady habits differed in their views on this subject, some asserting that the honor of the island would sustain no loss if he were made Governor of New Jersey, or President of the Camden and Amboy Railroad, in which latter capacity he would have ample means of gratifying his ambition for mutilating legal voters. I had heard of this man through the newspapers; he seemed, however, a much smaller man than they had represented him to be. In fine, he told me the newspapers had always taken great pride in misrepresenting him; but he said so many good things of himself, and recounted the many scrapes he had been in with such evident self-satisfaction, that I began to mistrust there was something in him. It was at least certain that he had hung himself to the government, in the very harmless belief that it could not get along without him. Of his pranks, as related by himself, I had no very high opinion, inasmuch as they made public virtue cut a very sorry figure. He, however, requested me to bear in mind the fact, that he never squared his opinions with those who set so high a value upon public virtue that they were for ever nursing it and weeping over it at their firesides.

“He thought the nation extremely fortunate in possessing an individual capable of rendering it services so varied as he was capable of. He made power his game, and to the end of extending universal liberty to vagabonds, he had at his command the services of no less than four hundred and forty as arrant knaves as ever did bloodletting at elections, or managed the rascality necessary to the success of their candidate. They had given up the business of stealing; and being much in need of money and clean raiment, had taken to the more profitable occupation of president-making, hoping

ere long to be rewarded by a grateful government with important and lucrative appointments.

Page 46

"This Captain Splinters, of whom so much was said, expressed great sympathy for my misfortunes, and seemed to entertain a hearty horror for such fellows as Fopp. He said that now, being on the road to fame, it was only necessary to fasten to him, when, having great power in his hands, he would ensure me the nomination for next President. I got to liking him, he was so companionable. We visited together many low drinking places up dark alleys, wherein political mischief was very generally manufactured by youths who dressed in flashy colored garments, were lean of figure, and very noisy. Their features were sharp, but undefined, and about them there was air of recklessness made more striking by their long, oily locks, (which were turned under in the neck,) and the strong profanity of their conversation, which invariably turned either upon some pugilistic rencounter, or a question of municipal or national policy. Being a popular politician, it was necessary, Splinters said, that the good opinion of these men be secured; and this could be best done by ordering the landlord to give them strong drinks without stint. He added, that unless I did this, my political shop would be closed for ever. I at first pleaded the scanty condition of my purse, but it availed me nothing. The dread alternative stared me in the face, and seeing that they were very outspoken men, I stood their demands at the bar until an empty purse put an end to my generosity.

"He, Captain Splinters, then led me by the button to Stanwix Hall, which he said was the head quarters of his four hundred and forty president-makers. Here the glare of an hundred gas lights threw curious shadows over a throng of staggering and grotesque figures in toppling hats, broad, brown skirted coats, with brass buttons, and bright striped trowsers. 'These men,' said the Captain, introducing them to me, with an extension of his left hand, 'are made of better metal than they seem; you must not judge them by what you see on the surface. Keep but their wants well supplied, and my honor for it, they will take such care of the nation as no man shall gainsay-'

"'Aye! aye!' interrupted a dozen husky voices, as the whole number circled around the great bar, spread with a barricade of decanters, 'we are good men, and strong. Let the nation but call us, and we will do it such service as it may need. We are all honest men, who wait but the word from our captain, ere we break the liberty that binds the delusions of men calling themselves our betters.' The captain now leaned over the bar and whispered something in the ear of the landlord, a burly man, who stood with his coat off and shirt sleeves rolled up. Drinks were now quickly compounded for each man, who seized his glass as the Captain, who was glib of tongue, commenced a speech in compliment of me. It surprised me not a little, that he made me the hero of more political conquests than were written down in our history since the declaration of

Page 47

independence; but as he vouched for the truth of every one of them, with an oath to every sentence, his men received them with great cheering. Indeed, they emptied their glasses, offering to lay their services at my feet. It was curious to see how much these men, so apparently shattered by strong drink, knew about the ins and outs of the constitution. Albeit, for men whose education was as doubtful as their means of living, (even reading and writing was not in very high favor with them,) they knew a deal about Congress. More than one had his pockets full of letters written him by distinguished members. And it seemed a custom with them, when emptying a glass, to drink the health of some senator, who sent them Congressional documents weekly and promised to say a good word in their behalf to the President.

“Having enjoyed four rounds, the men began to examine the bottom of their glasses, and to cast longing glances first at the landlord and then at the captain. Such was the influence of the latter over them, that at a word they set their glasses peaceably upon the counter and subserviently retired to remote parts of the hall, where they commenced to smoke strong flavored cigars. A word from Splinters, it was said, and these men would set upon and demolish any object of his dislike. And to such an extent had their mischievous excesses been carried, that it had cost the city no end of tears and gold, for which they had no other penance to offer, than an incurable ambition to run mad in worshipping their captain.

“A touch on the elbow, and Splinters whispered that the landlord’s opinion of me would be raised by settling the score. And to do this I reached my last dollar. Having thus graciously initiated me into high favor with his men, the Captain kindly offered to see me safe home. Taking him for so good a friend, I discovered to him the state of my finances, which he said was a matter of no moment, since he would give me his note for five hundred dollars on thirty days, which Duncan, Sherman & Co., or any banker in Wall Street, would be glad to discount, merely for the pleasure of making my acquaintance. A flood of joy poured into my ears and heart at this expression of friendship. So we walked into the office of the Astor, when Splinters, affecting an air of great confidence, dashed off the note, and, bidding me look misfortune right in the face, took his leave. But he said he would call the next morning. He forgot to keep his promise, and when I presented his ‘I promise to pay,’ at the counter of Messrs. Duncan, Sherman & Co., flattering myself that they knew all about it, the whole counting-room of clerks went into a titter. One set me down for a madman; another directed me to the care of the commissioners of the insane asylum; and a third thought I would do to go into business in Wall Street. Captain Splinters would, no doubt, seeing that only his name was wanted, furnish capital to any amount, provided always that he shared the result of the circulation,

Page 48

they said. It was clear to me that the house of Duncan, Sherman & Co. was not fast in the discount line. I then looked in at Drew & Robinson's. Thinking I had come to buy steamboats, a little, shriveled up old man led the way into a dark back office, saying he could give me but five minutes to make known my business. Anxious to facilitate matters, I produced the note, saying that he of course knew the signer by reputation, and would like to discount it out of compliment to him. A sight at the name, and it seemed as if he was about looking the glasses out of his spectacles. Then he went straight into a passion, ordering me to leave the premises or he would call a policeman. Not to swerve from the truth, I may say here, that I thought it very fortunate in getting into the Street without being kicked there. All Wall Street, it seemed to me, was in a state of anxiety. Every man looked as if he were besieged by his neighbor, or had had a breach made in him by some sudden revolution, and was in search of a physician to save his bleeding bowels. Here and there I met a man looking as if he had just rushed into the street to proclaim the baseness and treachery of a newly discovered foe, who, with a thousand anxious thoughts, had carried away the last remnant of his fortune.

"I found I had been laboring under a political delusion. Indeed, I felt like one in a desert without means of alleviating his misery, and turned to make my way out of Wall Street and declare myself its eternal enemy, so ungrateful was the reception it had given me. And as I was proceeding through the mass of rapidly moving figures that surged along the sidewalk, my eye caught the sign of Van Vlete, Read, & Drexel. The name struck me as being consonant with generosity, so I looked in, and was accosted by a tall, lean man, with a dusky complexion, and a face radiant of intelligence. He stood behind a massive, semicircular counter, piled with bank notes and gold; and having readily engaged me in conversation, which he had the facility of doing without being interrupted in his business, I found him a man who could talk faster and much more sensibly than any revival preacher outside of Rhode Island. And to this he added the rare quality of being courteous, which was remarkable in a Wall Street dealer in money. Having discovered my business, he smiled and shook his head, evidently at what he was pleased to consider my freshness.

"The captain's paper, he said, might be set down as floating security, the value of which was so prospective, depending as it did upon his future good behavior as well as the fortunes of his party, that he did not feel inclined to purchase any very large amount of it. However, as he liked to be considered as a man of good parts, and as I had a prospect of getting a foreign mission, he would advance ten dollars on the five hundred, taking the risk of such change as years might produce in the fortunes of the great captain, which even the moon seemed to favor. Having declined this generous offer, we parted excellent friends."

Page 49

A cloud of dust rose up in the road about half a mile ahead, which, together with the barking of a dog, and the “hellowing” of a loud voice, announced the approach of a drover, and interrupted the major’s story.

CHAPTER XI.

In which major Potter encounters A swine driver, and trades with him for an intelligent pig.

A voice crying “Schew, ho! schew, ho!” broke louder and louder upon the ear, until, beneath a cloud of dust, there appeared the snouts of some twenty lean swine, scenting the road from side to side, as if in search of food. They were followed at a short distance by a tall, square shouldered man, dressed in the homespun of the country. He carried a pair of steelyards over his shoulder, and was accompanied by his dog, a sharp eyed sagacious animal, that every few minutes coursed into the bushes by the roadside, and kept the swine in proper marching order.

The major was thrown into ecstasies at what he deemed an auspicious opportunity for another trade, and began to count his profits ere he had come up with the swine driver. A few minutes more, and the swine driver cried out at the top of a voice that seemed to have come through a tin trumpet, so grating was it, “If you kill my shoats, neighbor peddler, them tin traps of thine shall suffer as will not be good.” The major now reined up old Battle, and throwing down the reins, dismounted, and began parleying with the swine driver as to the value of his drove. “It is cruel of you,” said the major, “to be driving such lanterns to market. From thy looks, I had thought thee a better man. But, as I have a fancy for trade, if thou wilt put them at a figure low enough, and take my tinwares for pay, we may come to a trade that will profit us both.”

“To the devil with your tinware; and if you cannot get it there fast enough by any other process, mount a South Carolina ass! for it occurs to me you would look well mounted upon such an animal!” This somewhat uncourteous retort disarmed the major, who stood for a time not knowing what to say in reply. In truth, he was overawed by the sternness of the swine driver’s manner, and the terseness of the monosyllables with which he answered questions that were subsequently put to him. He had a face, too, that wore an expression grave enough for a Scotch metaphysician, and was long enough and heavy enough for a Penobscot Indian; and to which was attached a nose very like a bill-hook in shape. “Honest swine driver,” ejaculated the major, “being versed in the mysteries of human nature, and never judging men by their occupations, I took you for a gentleman; and as such, I am certain, had you but known the high quality of my reputation, you would not have insulted me.”

“That all may be,” interjaculaled he of the weary face.

Page 50

"You have, p'raps, heard of Major Roger Sherman Potter? That's my name," resumed the major, a smile of confidence lighting up his features, as he extended his right hand, and patted the swine driver good naturedly upon the shoulder with his left. "I bear no man malice, am known over the country as Major Potter, the honest in trade and strong in politics."

"I have myself had something to do with politics," moodily muttered the swine driver, relieving his shoulder of the steelyards.

And while this colloquy was proceeding, the herd nestled down upon the ground to rest. One, more sagacious than his fellows, made a companion of the dog, at whose side he stretched himself, and laid his head upon his shoulder with an air of kindness and affection quite uncommon to his species. "That pig," spoke the swine driver, "seems a more cunning brute than our New York politicians, for he makes friends with his enemy, and by that means secures his peace, if not his services. He has conciliated the good that is in the dog, and now the dog is his firm friend. He will let that pig have the better half of his meal, while he would not permit another to come within barking distance of his trough." Here the swine driver entered upon a history of this sagacious animal, which it will be necessary to preserve for a future chapter in this history. It may, however, be well here to say, as well for the benefit of the reader as for the instruction of mankind in general, that Felix Shulbert (for such was the swine driver's name) bought him of Father Fenshew, a poor priest of great learning, who had so cultivated the pig's understanding, that he could give his approval or dissent to the canons of the church quite as well as some popular members of the ecclesiastical councils of which the reverend and very learned Father was an ornament. As to politics, he knew a great deal more of them, notwithstanding he mixed less with those who made them a profession.

"Now, tell us, honest man, what through life has befallen thee to produce this sadness?" inquired the facetious major, adding, that he saw the tale of his trouble written in his face.

The swine driver replied, that disappointment, and the malice of enemies, and the false reports of evil minded damsels, had reduced him to poverty, and poverty had forced him into the trade of swine selling, which he followed in the hope of getting a living that would be acceptable to heaven. An air of deeper sadness now overshadowed his countenance, and raising the coarse straw hat from his head, he wiped the sweat from his saffron-colored brow, and heaved a sigh. The major having introduced me to the herdsman as the greatest politician Cape Cod had ever given the world, drew forth his never failing flask, which he said contained a panacea for all ills of the mind, and enjoined him to partake. The man exhibited no timidity in accepting the invitation, for having taken two or three swallows, he smacked his lips in approval, and said, he already felt it mellowing his temper. He then searched in his wallet, and finding some crusts and a ham bone, threw them to his dog, who generously shared them with his

companion, the pig. This done, we took seats by the roadside, while the drover began, in brief, to recount his troubles.

Page 51

Educated for a divine, he took orders, and for a series of years preached with much success to his congregation and honor to himself. At length an evil day came, and with it a spirit of malice that leveled its shafts at his bachelorhood, crept into his church. Unfortunately he had declared his determination not to marry in the presence of several venerable matrimony-mongers, and the result was, that so many slanders were got up against him, that his church became a bed of thorns continually pricking him. "My heart, which heaven can bear witness, is tender enough, became overburdened with grief," said he, his eyes filling with tears, as he wiped the sweat from his sun-burned brow, "for it seemed as if the whole church had turned its back upon me, and so many were the plans laid to effect my downfall, by those who should have held me up, that even the mantle of St. Peter could not have saved me. Thus, it was said that I had made too free with my housekeeper, who, in some things, was a good enough woman, but (and it was well known to the parish), little could be said for her virtue. Heaven knows I had never in my whole life permitted an evil thought concerning her to invade my mind; and yet she was got to bring against me a charge so grave that we will pass it over without a name. Your must, however, remember that this was the work of my enemies, whom heaven forgive, as I freely forgive them, such being the glory of charity, which is the truest religion. Indeed, sir, it was said that I did this woman grievous harm, and the parish rose up in her defence, and, what is more, set her up as a model of injured innocence. I could only protest my innocence, and pray what chance is there for innocence against the voice of calumny?"

"Then this was the penalty of your bachelorhood? You should remember, brother, that so good a chance to become a father as that which is offered to the pastor of a flourishing congregation should never be lost; and he who fails to embrace it, evinces a want of wisdom the clergy would do well never to betray," said the major, begging that his newly made friend would proceed with his story. "As I never disdain friendship, (hoping the rudeness of my remarks at our meeting may find pardon in my sorrow,) I will give a respite to my tongue by quenching my thirst with another sup of the contents of that flask, for it gives me much relief in body as well as in mind." The major was only too glad to grant his request; and having passed him the flask, he said, as the other raised it to his mouth, he hoped it would transfer the hidden secrets of his heart to the light of day, since nothing pleased him more than a recital of the sorrows of the forlorn ambitious. And here he of the swine, and he of the tin traps, continued to converse most strangely, the latter sympathizing with every new sorrow, of which the former seemed to have a never ending supply. "Being in a remote village of Pennsylvania," resumed he of the sorrows, "and having neither trade nor friends,

Page 52

I thought to get my living by teaching school; but the shafts of scandal followed me, and the honest and simple-minded villagers thought it wise not to have their children taught by one who had attempted the virtue of an innocent. I saw nothing but to take to politics, which I did much against my sense of self respect, it being a profession requiring those who followed it to live a vagabond life, as well as to become the associate of vagabonds and mischief making priests. I took a strong part in a presidential campaign" ("Jist like me," interrupted the major), "and being on the successful side, as wise men always are, I went to Washington in the hope that my services would be rewarded by a grateful government. But in this there was a mistake, for the government seemed to have forgotten every thing but the slanders against my character; and though the hussy whose oath had sealed my doom was removed to Washington, where she was atoning for her outraged virtue by practicing the arts of the fair but frail, it neither lessened the sting of my misfortunes, nor restored me my character. She had sworn falsely, when her morals were no better than they should be. She now offered to do me justice by swearing to the truth; but so public had become the character she bore, that though she might swear to the truth of her own falsehood a thousand times, no one would believe her. It was curious to see the anomaly of my position; for while I could have poured out a flood of lamentations at the want of virtue in Congress, no one valued my own of sufficient weight to be recommended for an office. Congress, that had no virtue, or if it had, its quality was too hard for use, was for ever standing in admiration of its beauty and whiteness, as a member or two since expelled had been pleased to call it, and was as scrupulous of having it called in question as a coy damsel. I who had virtues, was cast out because the color of it, as seen through the spectacles of my enemies, was not as white as alabaster. Ah, I have wiped the sweat from my fevered brow, and thought what a wrong-headed world we had-many a time! Every man has a history worth relating, or he must be a poor being in the measure of his kind; but I am afraid mine is becoming barren of entertainment."

I had myself become interested in the swine driver's melancholy, and joining with the major, begged he would proceed with his story. "I took my misfortunes like a philosopher, knowing full well that heaven would grant me mercy in time of need. I had nearly spent, in Washington, the last dollar paid me for lecturing during the campaign, when the jade who had caused all my troubles, hearing of my poverty, came to me, fell upon her knees, implored my forgiveness, and offered to share with me the fruits of her infamy. I freely forgave her; nor could I forbear to shed a tear at the honesty of her repentance. But her gold I bid her give, as had been a custom with her, to her friends, in places so high that the source

Page 53

of their wealth remained a mystery no man dare probe. Telling her I had rather join the brigands in the hills of Lombardy than accept her gold, I at once turned my energies to writing speeches for members of Congress incapable of writing their own, and correcting the dictum of those made by men whose time was too much taken up at the gambling crib and drinking saloon. And for this labor, so easily performed when one possessed the ability, I was to receive five dollars a column, of the Globe. Small as was this allowance, I found great difficulty in collecting it, since members too honest to sell votes generally wrote their own speeches, and those who lacked that little virtue had so many speculations on hand as to render it quite impossible for them to find time to pay their speech writers. However, between giving Latin lessons to two or three of the New York delegation and this speech writing, and teaching the rudiments of grammar to an Arkansas member, whose custom it was to make a speech every day, I scraped a few dollars to the good, and retiring to my native village entered upon the business of swine driving, in which calling, thank God, I have at least had an opportunity to be honest. In truth, brother tin peddler, (I call thee brother, since I find so good a friend in thee,) it seems to me a man may prepare for heaven and find no obstacles in so honest a trade. I have now followed it for seven long years." Here the major took his hand, earnestly, and swore that he was ready to serve him with his life, so deeply had his story affected him.

"It was but yesterday," resumed the swine driver, "that a tin peddler of New Haven, who vends his wares over this part of the country, and though a great rogue, makes people believe him honest by asserting that he is a graduate of Yale, passed me on the road and killed three of my swine, causing me a loss of some eight dollars, for I sell them at three cents a pound, by my steelyards; and when I demanded him to make good the damage he jeered and drove on. And to make the matter worse, the cunning rogue has tricked the simple minded people into the belief that he is a man of great wisdom, which was no hard matter, seeing that he threw into all his sayings a large amount of Greek and Latin it would have puzzled the devil himself to translate. This, my brother, accounts for the rudeness of my greeting, and for it I now ask to be forgiven. Having lost my shoats in the manner I have related, I sat down and swore eternal enmity to all of the trade."

The swine driver thus ended the recital of his grievances, when the major, holding it his duty to set the fallen upon their legs, divided his pine apple cheese and crackers among us, and commenced advising him in the following style: "I see, brother drover," said he, "what a grief having fallen from thy high estate in the church, is to thee. Take then my advice. Keep thy ambition within proper bounds until thou hast got bread enough to live in peace for

Page 54

the space of one year. Then return penitent to thy native village, say thou art wearied of swine driving, and hast resolved to live an honest man until death calls thee away. Get this idea well into the heads of the villagers, then come boldly out and declare thyself to have sinned beyond measure, and to have been so great a reprobate that the world had not another like thee. Publish neither cards, nor pamphlets, nor books, in defence of thy character, and above all, do thou be careful not to purloin the coat and breeches of thy companion, nor go uninvited to balls, for, though it be the custom of unfortunate parsons who take to literature at this day, it will lower thee in the sight of heaven. But say, that having qualified in sin, and resolved to seek forgiveness, thou art come to lay thy implorings at the church door. Change, in the meantime, thy opinions of matrimony, and be careful to state, within hearing of certain unmarried damsels the corners of whose ages it will not do to multiply by ten, how it is become a firm belief with thee that matrimony will increase the measure of thy joys. And when the moment it will do for thee to move in this thing has arrived, do thou show thyself a man of sympathy by joining fortunes with a damsel who has lived hoping, until she has turned the brown corner of forty. Having thus paved the way by being converted to matrimony, and confessing crimes that would have crushed a dozen men of better metal than thyself, thou wilt be restored to thy church, and live like one comforted by the exalted opinions of the villagers."

It was evident that the major spoke thus stiltedly with a design upon the swine driver's intelligent pig, which still manifested its affection for the dog, beside whom it had gone to sleep. The swine driver promised he would take the first opportunity of profiting by such excellent advice. To confess the truth, he had looked forward to the day when he would return to his church as that which was to restore him to happiness.

The major called upon me to bear testimony to the friendship they swore to each other, and strengthened over a sup from the flask. "Now, as I have made thee a happier man than I found thee, perhaps you would grant me a request?"

"You have but to make it," replied the swine driver, his countenance lighting up for the first time. "My wife, Polly Potter, is as fond of pigs as the women of Spain, and our aristocratic damsels who affect, to imitate them, are of poodles. She is never without one, which she nurses with great care. She is now in great tribulation, having lost her last by a croup, which baffled the skill of the most eminent physicians. And so deep was her sympathy for it, that she had it buried in a corner of the garden, with a rose-bush planted to its memory." This so excited the swine driver's pity, that I verily thought he was about to make the major a present of his whole herd, as a means of consoling his disconsolate wife. As soon, however, as the

Page 55

major disclosed to him his desire to purchase only the gifted pig, affairs assumed a different complexion. The swine driver declared he would not part with Duncan (such was the gifted pig's name,) for his life, seeing that he was guide pig, and could so prognosticate storms as to entirely dispense with the use of a barometer. A few more appeals on behalf of the inconsolable woman, however, and the swine driver agreed to part with Duncan, upon condition that he be kept as one of the family until he returned that way, receiving care according to his gifts. The major pledged his military reputation that not a bristle on his back should be disturbed, and also that he should receive such attention from the family as would make his domestic happiness complete. And as a pledge of his faith, he proceeded to present the swine driver with three nutmeg graters, two strainers, and a sheepskin, the wool of which he swore was worth not less than two dollars.

The swine driver received these presents with much condescension, but said it was necessary they agree that the pig be weighed, as that would be a means of ascertaining how he fared during his stay with the lonely woman. This point being settled satisfactorily, the pig answered to his name, and ran to his master with the docility of a spaniel. And now, amidst the loudest of squeals his lungs were capable of, his hind legs were secured and his body hung suspended by the steelyards, the dog in the meantime keeping up a loud barking, and threatening to make ribbons of the major's coat-tails for taking such improper liberties with his friend. "Eighty-four pounds, exactly," muttered the drover, counting the notches upon his steelyards as the major bagged his pet, who continued to give out so many squeals of distress that the sagacious dog seized the major by the broad disc of his pantaloons, and so rent them that he swore none but his wife, Polly Potter, had ever seen him in such a plight. Nevertheless, he placed the pig safely upon his wagon, and having mended the breach in his dignity with a few pins, proceeded on his journey, in what he considered a good condition. "To be torn to pieces by a blasted dog! He didn't know me, though, poor brute," muttered the major, rubbing the injured parts with his left hand, and tossing his head in caution of what might be expected another time.

CHAPTER XII.

Which treats of how major Potter arrived in Barnstable, and sundry other queer things, without which this history would not be perfect.

Page 56

It was quite dark when we entered the town of Barnstable, making as much noise as if the devil had broken loose and come to carry off the inhabitants, who were a timid people, but sharp enough to cut the best side of a trade. The bright blue waters skirting the town seemed reflecting ten thousand curious shadows, while several tall steeples of churches, (showing that the people had theology without stint, and to their liking,) loomed out through a gray mist that tipped the clouds with a pale fringe. And the clean green shutters of the bright white houses, and the neatly arranged gardens, with their picket fences, ranging along both sides of the street, and the flowers that were giving out their perfumes to the night breeze, were all blending in a panorama of exquisite softness.

The major plumed himself not a little on his popularity with the town's people, who made his departures and arrivals no common events. Nor was his admiration of himself one whit less than that so common with some others I have in view at this moment, and who follow the profession of arms.

And now, news of his approach having got spread abroad, he had scarcely entered the outskirts of the town when little Barnstable, hatless and shoeless, came running to meet him, cheering, clambering upon his wagon, and making such other demonstrations of welcome as satisfied the major that the town had waited his return with no little anxiety, though it annoyed old Battle exceedingly, for he had great difficulty in drawing the load over the sand. Seeing the distress the animal was in, two mischievous urchins fell upon him, seized him by the halter, and, after throwing it over their shoulders, were joined by some two dozen more, who ran ahead dragging him by the mouth, while three others plied his belly with switches. The major, in the meantime, continued to contemplate the fortune there was in a pig so learned, and who was now mingling his loudest squeals with the cheers and bravos of the urchins, until the very welkin rang with their echoes. We proceeded according to old Battle's slow pace to what I shall for convenience sake call the Independent Temperance Hotel, the guests of which were so alarmed at the strange noises in the streets that they came running out to ascertain the cause.

"Well, I'm back again, you see! and as for the rest, you may find that out!" exclaimed the major, cracking his whip, and declaring he would give the urchins three stripes apiece unless they ceased teasing old Battle, whom he now reined up in front of a large portico that opened into a spacious hall of the hotel. The bystanders, among whom there was a lawyer or two, as well as another species of hanger-on about a country tavern, sent up three loud and long cheers, which brought the major's friends in a crowd about the door. The major raised his hat, acknowledged the compliment with his usual grace, and dismounted over the wheel, displaying as he did so, the pins that had served to protect his dignity. But of this he was unconscious, and bidding me follow, he waddled into the house, an expression of gladness lighting up his broad red face, and saluting his friends, not one of whom said a word touching the condition of his garments.

Page 57

“Major! is it you? Well, there ain’t nobody more welcome in this hotel!” exclaimed a small, frisky figure, rushing through the crowd, and seizing him earnestly by the hand.

“Me?” replied the major, returning his salutation with equal warmth of manner, “Well, I reckon it is! you think of me in my absence, I see, colonel. Well, there is no roof Major Roger Sherman Potter feels so much at ease under as this.” Here the landlord, whose name was Zach Aldrich, to which was added the title of Colonel, as a mark of distinction, for having commanded with great gallantry the Barnstable Invincibles. The host was fond of a joke, and after giving his guest a cordial welcome, bid him hasten into the parlor, where the hostess, who had long held him in great esteem, was rubbing her palms to see him. Impatient to pay his respects to so good a lady, he trudged up the hall, and turning to the right, entered the parlor, in which were seated some seven females, to the great delight of numerous bystanders, whom the major congratulated himself were laughing for joy at his return. He had scarcely disappeared, however, when a loud shriek was heard, and one after another the females came scampering out of the room, so sorry a figure did he cut. “Zounds, me,” exclaimed the major, “what can have come over the witches?” and he followed them into the hall, surprised and astonished, while the compact little figure of mine host was seen almost splitting his sides with laughter. Indeed, I venture to say without fear of contradiction, that never did military hero cut so extravagant a figure before females; and as he had that scrupulous regard for their good opinion, so common with his brethren in arms, so was he only saved from swooning by the aid of a little whiskey and water. This, however, was not applied until the cause of the alarm was discovered. “Upon my life, Colonel,” said the major, as the host aided him in securing his garments with a few pins, “I never was known to offer a discourtesy to ladies through the whole course of my eventful life. No, I wouldn’t, by my military reputation, I wouldn’t have had such a thing occur to me, especially as my friend here is the most distinguished politician in this part of the country.” I could not restrain a blush at this naive remark, and begging that he would reserve his compliments for one more worthy of them, he continued by pleading with the host, and enjoining him to say to the ladies, that never in his life had he met with so serious an accident, and as it was woman’s nature to be gentle and forgiving, he hoped they would forgive him this once, “and I shall not be so rude and ungrateful as to soon forget their generosity,” he concluded. Having mended his garments thus summarily, mine host led the way into the bar room, in one corner of which was a square, mahogany counter, upon which stood a tin drain containing a jug of water, and several empty tumblers. An open stove stood opposite the counter; and in it were massive dog-irons

Page 58

in brass, highly polished. A square Connecticut clock ticked on a little shelf between two front windows; and suspended upon the walls were pictures of horses and bulls that had won prizes at the Worcester Cattle Show. Certain parts of the bar room were much distained with tobacco juice; while beneath the stove grate there lay a heap of cigar ends, and other soft projectiles common to such taverns. And these, with a bench and a few reed bottomed chairs, made up the furniture.

In one of these chairs, a lean and somewhat shabbily clad man sat, his feet upon the rounds, his body thrown back against the wall, his face half buried in a slouch hat, and apparently dozing, but really keeping a watchful eye upon every movement in the room. The landlord, whose round face was lit up with a mischievous laugh, said he would bet his new frock coat, which had brass buttons and a velvet collar, and his white trowsers, and even his ruffle shirt, that the major had made a successful trip, and would do the generous without more ado. The bystanders said it would be only right that a person who had witnessed so many proofs of his own popularity as the major had done should pay the forfeit he had incurred by calling on such good beverages as the host was celebrated for affording his guests. The major placed the fore finger of his right hand to his lip, cast a look of inquiry at the bystanders, and then said he knew it would be no easy matter to apologize to ladies for so singular a transgression, but how his treating could extenuate an insult offered to another party, he could not exactly see. "By my word as a man of standing, I have spent much sweat and labor in getting the little Fortune has favored me with, and it seems to me that he who needs it most had better quench his thirst with what remains in his own pocket!" spoke the major, giving his head a toss, and edging aside from his importuners.

The landlord replied, that as the major had brought him a distinguished guest, he should claim the right to do the hospitalities of his own house, and this he held the more incumbent, as the major was returned from so long an absence. But in obedience to the spirit of temperance that ruled in the village, and was so rigid in its exactions, that it kept Captain Jack Laythe, the man who dozed in the chair, a spy over his counter, he could give them nothing but cider and mead. Indeed the whole town had gone into such exceedingly steady habits, that if an old friend chanced that way, and took it into his head that a drop of heavy would do him no harm, he was forced to wink him down into the cellar, and relieve his wants in a little out of the way place, for even the smell of whiskey upon the tumblers was set down as proof of guilt sufficient to call a town meeting.

Page 59

They had scarcely drank the cider set before them by the landlord, when the man in the chair began to exhibit signs of motion. Then getting up from his seat, his sharp sallow visage assumed a look of revenge; and approaching the counter, he began scenting the tumblers. "Captain Jack Laythe!" said the major, casting upon the man a look of hate, "you might find a better business than scenting tumblers for temperance folks. You're a pretty Christian, surrendering yourself to such meanness!" It was evident that the major's choler was raised, and that he rather courted a set-to with the spy, who had no great admiration for heroes of any kind. Indeed, the major declared that if such a thing had happened when he was with his regiment in Mexico, his sword had not long remained in its sheath.

"This man," rejoined the spy, with a nasal drawl, "is a burning torch to the town, which he keeps in a perpetual uproar. The devil never thought of half the evil he has inflicted upon certain of the townspeople, for he serves them with his poison, and they go about as if they were dead. Time and again has he been commanded to surrender his traffic of misery, on penalty of being ridden into the river; but he has neither fear of the devil, nor respect for the laws; and though every pulpit in the land should preach against him, they cannot put him to shame." The host, who was itching to have revenge of the spy, hurled a lemon squeezer at his head, which took him between the two eyes, and caused him to retreat into the street, amidst the cheering and jeering of the bystanders. The major, too, applied his boot in right good earnest to the retreating gentleman's rear, and asserted his courage by making threats in the door, while the other, having regained his sight, stood challenging him to come out into the street, and take it like a man. The major called upon the bystanders to bear witness that he had courage enough to tackle a dozen or more of such spies, only he would rather not soil his hands just now. Nor was there any honor in fighting such people, which was a chief point in such game.

The landlord now reminded the major that the town esteemed him too highly to have him compromise himself by holding a parley with such a fellow, who was no other than an old Pawtucket stage driver, who having tempered his throat with brandy until it had dried up his wits, saw fit to reform, and had become the most implacable enemy of all who enjoyed what he had abused.

The spy seeing the landlord about to set on his big dog, took to his heels, muttering in a low and plaintive tone, and threatening to report his grievances to Parson Bangshanter, and Squire Clapp, two leading members of the temperance league, and who, in respect to good morals, had taken the sale of liquor into their own hands, and were making a good thing of it. The major now remembered that his wife, Polly Potter, would get the news and be impatient to welcome him, and so bidding the host and his company good night, and assuring me that he would ring the town out to pay me proper respect in the morning, he took his way home, meeting with so serious an accident as had well nigh cost him his life, the particulars of which I must reserve for another chapter.

Page 60

CHAPTER XIII.

Which treats of two strange characters I met at the independent temperance hotel.

Having got rid of the major, I desired to change my clothing before supper, and was shown to a snug little room up stairs by a damsel of such exquisite beauty and bashfulness, that my whole soul seemed melting within me, so quickly did her charms enslave me. In answer to a question that hung trembling upon my lips, and which I had only power to put in broken accents, for she passed me the candle, and as she did so, I touched her hand, and saw her bosom heave gently, and her eyes fill with liquid light, out of which came the language of love, she said, with a smile and a lisp, that they called her Bessie. Nature had been all bountiful in bestowing her gifts, for surely, thought I, the nation can boast of no prettier Bessie. I thought of the garden of Eden, of the palm groves of Campania, of every rural beauty that just then beguiled my fancies. But in neither of them did there seem happiness for me without Bessie for the idol of my worship. I had, indeed, touched the hidden spring of her sympathy, and as it gushed forth in unison with my own, I read the flutterings of her heart in her crimsoning cheeks, and contemplated the bounties of that Providence which forgets not the humblest of its creatures. "Oh, sir," said she, "what will my father say?" and she attempted a frown, and started back as I stole a kiss of the cheek now suffused with blushes. Then with an arch toss of the head, she turned her great black eyes rogueishly upon me, and said in a half whisper that I must not attempt it again. But I could not resist the magic of her glance, while, together with the cherry-like freshness of her lips, and the raven blackness of those glossy curls that hung so ravishingly over her fair blushing cheeks, discovering a delicately arched brow, and enhancing the sweetness of her oval face, carried me away captive, and made it seem as if heaven had created our loves to flow on in one unhallowed stream of joy. Her dapper figure was neatly set off with a dress of black silk, buttoned close about the neck, and showing the symmetry of her bust to great advantage; and over this she wore an apron of brown silk, gimped at the edge, and her collar and wristbands were of snowy white linen. "Heaven knows I would not harm thee, for thou art even too fair; only a knave would rob one so innocent." And I held her tremblingly by the hand, in the open door, as she attempted to draw herself away, beseeching me with a bewitching glance to "remember her youth." Bessie was the landlord's daughter; and though she was scarce passed her seventeenth summer, had become so famous for her beauty, as to number her admirers in every village of the county; and many were the travelers that way who tarried to do homage to her

Page 61

charms. I had just raised her warm hand to my lips, hoping, after I had kissed it, to engage her in conversation, when the door of a room on the opposite side of the passage opened, and a queer little man, with a hump on his back, and otherwise deformed, issued therefrom, and with a nervous step hurried down stairs, muttering to himself like one lost in his own contemplations. Bessie, with the suddenness of one surprised, vaulted in an opposite direction, and, ere I had time to cast a glance after her, disappeared down a back stair, leaving her image behind only to haunt my fancy, and make me think there was no one else in this world with whom I could be happy.

A few minutes, and having completed my toilet, I appeared at the supper table, which the blushing Bessie had spread with all the niceties of the season, and was waiting to do the honors. My appetite was indeed keen, but the flashing of her eyes so troubled my sensitive nature, that I entirely forgot the supper, and began to inquire, half resolved to end my journey here, if mine host could accommodate me for a month. Bessie heaved a sigh, saying it should be done if she had to give up her own room. To which I replied that nothing could induce me to give her trouble for my sake; that I would take up my lodgings upon the corn shed, where, with the stars and her charms to occupy my musings, I could be so happy.

When supper was over, Bessie ushered me into a large sitting room, on the left of the hall, and bid me good night. A large, square table, upon which was a copy of Godey's Lady's Book, the New England Cultivator, the New Bedford Mercury, and sundry other papers of good morals, stood in the center of the room. The walls were papered in bright colors, and the floor was covered with an Uxbridge carpet, the colors of which were green and red, and made fresh by the glare of a spirit lamp that burned upon the table. A chart of the South Shoal, a map of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and sundry rude drawings in crayon and water colors, hung suspended from the walls. The air of quiet cheerfulness that pervaded the sitting room, bespoke the care Bessie had bestowed upon it, and the active part she took in the management of the household. And, too, there was a piano standing open at one end of the room, for Bessie, in addition to having studied Latin and algebra two years at the high school, had taken music lessons of Monsieur Pensin□, and could play seven tunes right off.

An aged, clerical-looking man, his visage lean and careworn, with his newly-married bride, a simply clad country girl of eighteen, sat at a window, looking out upon a little square, and every few minutes exchanging caresses they imagined were seen by no one else in the room. Indeed, when they were not caressing, they were whispering in very affectionate proximity. Once or twice I overheard, "My darling," and, "You know, my love," which curt but meaning sentences are much in fashion with persons on a bridal tour, and who set out with the belief that earth has no ill that can disturb the solace of their perhaps weak love.

Page 62

The little deformed man, of the nervous temperament, and whose well formed head seemed to have been thrown by accident upon his distended chest, paced, or rather oscillated up and down the room, swinging his arms restlessly, now casting a glance of his keen gray eye at me, then pausing at the farther end of the room to read the notice of a lecture on Crabbe, inscribed upon a great red poster. There was something in the lettering of the poster that displeased him exceedingly, for, having scanned over it, he would turn away with a quickened pace, and mutter some incoherent sentences no one present could comprehend, but which his increasing nervousness betold were expressive of anger. The thought of Bessie made me impatient, and following the example of the little deformed man, I also commenced pacing the room, but on the opposite side of the table, meeting and exchanging glances with him in the center. The maps upon the walls furnished me themes for contemplation in my sallies; and I read and reread the exact latitude and longitude of the South Shoal, as it appeared on the charts. Then I paused at a front window, and peered out into the starlight night, and saw the tree tops in a little square opposite, move gently to the breeze, while my fancies recurred to the association of that home, at the fireside of which I pictured my father and mother, sitting thinking of me. At the opposite end of the room I read, for it was there printed upon the red colored poster, that the celebrated Giles Sheridan, (who was no less a person than the little deformed man who paced the room so briskly,) would lecture on Crabbe, in the basement of the "Orthodox Meeting House," at seven o'clock, on the following evening.

It perplexed me not a little to know why this Giles Sheridan, this queer little man, had selected for the subject of his lecture, a person so little known in the rural districts of Massachusetts. Had he consulted either the political or mechanical tastes of the people, instead of their literary, the cause would not have been involved in so deep a mystery; but this will be explained hereafter.

The clerical looking man had just kissed his young bride, and muttered something about the joys of paradise, as I, for the ninth time, paused to ponder over the curious announcement. And as I did so, the little man, with that sensitiveness common to true genius, looked up at me with an eye beaming with intelligence, while his lips quivered, his fingers became restless, and he locked his hands before him and behind him, in quick succession, then frisked his straight hair back over his ears with his fingers, and gave out such other signs of timidity as convinced me that he was a stranger in the land, and would engage me in conversation merely to unburden his thoughts. I have said true genius, in speaking of this queer little man, for indeed, if strange nature had so disfigured his person as to make it unsightly, she had more than compensated him with the gifts of a brilliant mind.

Page 63

"Like myself, sir, you are a traveler this way?" he spoke, with a voice clear and musical, and with just enough of a refined brogue to discover the land of his nativity, or to give melody to his conversation. "You will pardon me, sir; but I saw you evinced an interest in the notice of my lecture. Ah! sir; even a look of encouragement cheers and fortifies this misgiving heart of mine. Few, sir, very few, think of me, seeing that there is nothing about me pleasing to the eye." And as he said this, he sighed, frisked his left hand across his forehead, and shook his head. I saw he was troubled with that lack of confidence in himself, so common to men of his kind; he was also too timid for one thrown upon a strange land with only genius to aid him in struggling against adversity. On discovering to him who I was, and that I had written a Life and Times of Captain Seth Brewster, which my publisher, and several independent critics he kept in his employ, had praised into an unprecedented sale, though it was indeed the veriest rubbish, his pent up enthusiasm gushed forth in a rhapsody of joy. I told him, too, that two sonnets which I had written, over the signature of Mary, had been published in the "New Bedford Mercury," the editor of which very excellent paper said they were charming, though he never paid me a penny for them. It may interest all aspiring female poets to know that these little attempts at verse found their way into the "Home Journal," and were highly praised by it, as is everything written by Marys of sixteen.

"Men of letters are brothers!" said the little, deformed man, grasping tightly my hand. "They should bind their sympathies in eternal friendship. You have no other word for it! The world never thinks of them until they are dead; ought they not then to be brothers to one another while they live?" He now placed two chairs, frisked about like one half crazed, expressed his joy at meeting one who had aspirations in common with him, said he wished the meek old lover in the corner had his young bride in paradise, and bid me be seated and join him in a talk over the past and present of letters. I replied by saying I was more impatient to know what had brought him to Barnstable with so strange a subject for his lecture. "That is the point, and I will tell you; for a stranger is never to blame for doing wrong when he thinks he is doing right!" said he, with great earnestness of manner. And he drew his chair closer, and tapped me impressively on the arm with the fore finger of his right hand. "And you read my name, Giles Sheridan, on the pink poster. I am well known in some parts of the world, and not so well known in others. Thanks to a merciful God, I am not the worst man in the world, and yet I am deformed; and as the world praises most the beauty that adorns the surface, so few think of me, care for me, or say, 'Giles Sheridan, there is meat and wine at my house, where you will be welcome.' Thinking even a cripple might find favor and fortune in the

Page 64

country, I came over not long since, and sought the city of Boston, it being, as many had told me, the great center of America's learning and refinement. There I gave a lecture or two; but being a stranger, and deformed withal, the reception I met was cold and discouraging. Against such men as Lowell, and Curtis, men born on the soil, and of such goodly person as made them the pets of the petticoats and pantaletts, I could not hope to succeed. In truth, I gave up, sick at heart, clean only in pocket, and with the alternative of a garret and a crust staring me in the face, in a land of plenty. At length a friendly hand came to my succor, and through it I was invited by a committee, composed of the tavern keeper, the schoolmaster, the Unitarian clergyman, and the milkman, (who had a relish for letters,) to deliver three lectures in this town, for which they promised to pay me five dollars a lecture, and my victuals. Yes, sir, my victuals. Five dollars and victuals for a learned lecture was something for a man whose pocket stood much in need of replenishing. I came, disposed to do to the best of my ability; and the victuals I have had, and they are good. I chose Crabbe for the subject of my lecture, in deference to my own taste, and also because I was led to believe, judging from analogy, that the knowledge of men of letters which ruled in Boston, must also rule in the villages and towns round about. It was that which led me to announce Crabbe, which announcement has much disturbed the town. No one seems to know who or what manner of man he was, and many curious questions have been put to me concerning his origin, the things he did while living, the manner of his death, and what was said of him afterwards. Several inquisitive old ladies, who called to see me to-day, put many questions concerning his morals and religion. Not entertaining a doubt of his loving all religion that was founded in truth and reason, I sent them away fully satisfied that Mr. Crabbe was a man of good standing in the church. You will remember sir, it was Crabbe who said, 'There sits he upright in his seat secure, As one whose conscience is correct and pure.'

Here he continued to repeat several of the most beautiful lines written by that poet, and which are familiar to his readers.

"An unhappy sort of man, clothed in the garb of a mechanic, and calling himself a nonresistant, has several times called to inquire if Mr. Crabbe, of whom I proposed to speak, was an advocate of physical resistance. Not being able to satisfy him upon this point, he has sought in divers ways to pick a quarrel with me." Just at this moment the door opened, and there entered to the evident annoyance of the little deformed man, one Ephraim Flagg, a clicker of shoes, and an ex-stagedriver. He was lean and low of figure, had a long bony face, and a gloomy expression of countenance, and a straight, narrow forehead, and coarse, silvery hair, that stood erect upon his head. "I have come again, you see;

Page 65

but don't let your choler get up, my little stranger. Peace and little men ought to keep each other company," spoke the man, with a strong, nasal twang, after having adjusted his thumbs in the arm holes of his waistcoat, and passed twice or thrice up and down the room, with a tantalizing air. Ephraim Flagg had given up driving the stage between New London and Norwich, and had recently taken to books, and so studied certain exact and inexact sciences, as they were called, and neglected all business, that it was feared he would become a town tax. In addition to this he had made himself famous for quarreling with all those who differed with him on the peculiarities of his social problem.

"Sir!" replied the lecturer, "as you chose neither to be convinced, nor to accept reason for argument, perhaps we had as well end this bantering!"

"Oh! there you are," interrupted the nonresistant, "you must not allow your ill temper to rise. You can't get (no you can't) the better of your adversary that way. If a man kicks you, and if you want to show yourself his superior, turn right round and thank him. Depend upon it, there is nothing equal to it! It so unhinges the man. Now, as to this Mr. Crabbe, (you forgot, in our controversy yesterday, to say where he was born,) being a gentleman, and in favor of using physical force-"

"Seeing that I am engaged, Mr. Flagg," interrupted Giles Sheridan, "perhaps you will excuse me any further controversy on the peculiar merits of Crabbe's combativeness."

"But there was one point not made quite clear to me, and I came back, not to make you angry, for men who give lectures should have good tempers, but to inquire if this Mr. Crabbe was ever knocked down; and if he was, how and in what manner he returned the kindness?" To this question, Giles Sheridan was not inclined to vouchsafe an answer. The nonresistant then said, the principles he had been trying to defend, were being illustrated. "I am an enemy to physical force; but I have gained a victory over you! You won't deny that, I take it?" continued the nonresistant, taking a seat uninvited; and, having placed his feet upon the table, near Giles Sheridan, who was scarce able to restrain his feelings at the want of good breeding therein displayed, threw his hat upon the floor, and said he would wager four dollars and thirty cents, which was all the money he possessed, that he could lecture on the principles of nonresistance, and draw an audience greater by ten per cent. than would come to hear about Mr. Crabbe. "You don't know whether your man had a liking for tobacco and whiskey?" he parenthesized. A look of contempt flashed from Giles Sheridan's eye, as he twirled his fingers, and curtly replied, "I wish, for your own sake, sir, that your tongue did not betray the error of the doctrine you have set up-"

Page 66

"Oh! there you are!" the nonresistant quickly replied, "establishing by your acts what you have not courage to acknowledge with your lips." Wounded in his feelings, the little deformed man turned away, and commenced inquiring what I thought about several learned, but very heavy reviews that had recently appeared in Putnam's Magazine, a monthly so sensitive of its character for weighty logic, that it never gave ordinary readers anything they could digest. I confessed I was not sufficiently qualified to speak on the subject; to do which, required that a man be a member of that mutual admiration society, beyond whose delicate fingers it seldom circulated. The nonresistant evidently saw my embarrassment, and saying he had but one more question to ask respecting the man Crabbe, continued in the following manner, while Giles Sheridan remained doggedly silent. "Now, look a here! if your Mr. Crabbe had a bin a farmer who had grown a nice field of wheat, which his neighbor's horse, being breachy, had got into, wanting to get the best of that neighbor, would he have killed the horse, or would he have gone to that neighbor and said, 'Neighbor, thy horse is in my wheat, pray come and take him out, that I may not bear thee malice?'" This question, and the quaint manner in which it was put, so conciliated the little deformed man that he could not resist a smile. "I have you there!" exclaimed the nonresistant with a toss of his head.

"It occurs to me that Crabbe never had a farm, hence it would not become me to speak for him. For myself, I had driven the horse out with my dog," replied the other.

"There you are wrong," retorted the nonresistant, "for the dog would have destroyed the wheat, and so carried the devil to the heart of the farmer, that he had gone to law, if, indeed, he had not killed the horse, and by so doing lost all power over his adversary. Whereas, if he had spoken gently of the conduct of the horse, the owner would have been sorely grieved, and set about making good the damage, according to the promptings of his own heart."

The landlord hearing the nonresistant's voice, entered the room and ordered him to begone about his business, and seek some better employment than that of hectoring every traveler who chanced to put up at his inn. But the nonresistant replied that he was not to be insulted by a landlord who professed to keep a temperance house, and sold liquid death daily on the sly; nor would he leave the inn, in which he had a common right, until his own convenience dictated. This so enraged the landlord, that although he was a little man, he seized the nonresistant by the collar, and would have forced him to leave the premises but that the other proved too strong for him. Indeed the nonresistant, notwithstanding his principles, had well nigh divested the landlord of his coat, and done serious damage to his face, and was only ejected from the house by the timely assistance of the hostler and the bar tender.

Page 67

CHAPTER XIV.

In which the town is thrown into A state of alarm, and sundry other things worth mentioning.

The nonresistant, resolving to make the street his castle, stood for some minutes making grimaces, and hurling coarse invective at the landlord, who, with sundry idlers, had gathered into the portico. He then took his leave, swearing to have satisfaction of his assailants, as Giles Sheridan, looking out at the window, said he should long remember the fellow for the courtesy he had manifested towards him.

Peace being restored, the landlord, his shirt ruffle in a sad plight, returned to apologize for the disturbance to his guests; while peeping in at the door, I saw Bessie, her black eyes almost swimming in tears, and evidently alarmed for my safety. Again Giles Sheridan spoke up and said: "It can be no good that brought the fellow hither. He must have been begotten under an evil star, and nursed by a virago. The fellow has but to take good care of his invective; and if he adopt the ass instead of the madman, he may in time become an excellent critic." Here he paused, turned his head quickly, and frisked his fingers nervously through his straight, silvery hair. The clerical looking groom, hearing the little deformed man speak thus, led his young bride frightened to bed.

The lecturer now drew a much worn and almost illegible manuscript from his pocket, and commenced reading to me a few passages from it, in a clear, shrill voice, and with much earnestness of manner. His love of approbation, I saw, was only equaled by his want of self-confidence, which made him anxious to hear what I would say of it. So I listened with more than ordinary attention while he read, and then expressed a firm belief that the people of Barnstable could not fail to appreciate his ascetics. This so encouraged him that his heart seemed beating with joy, and he warmed into enthusiasm, and read on, watching intently the changes of my countenance, as if he wished to read in them my fleeting thoughts. I was about to inquire whether it were good policy to measure public taste by one's own, when he paused, and heaving a sigh, said in a modulated tone of voice, that so many queer inquiries had been made of him respecting Crabbe, that he began to doubt whether he could interest the people in a discourse upon the character of one they had scarce heard of. No longer ago than yesterday, he said, General Sam Wheeler, the popular high school committeeman, looked in to say, that it was getting all over Barnstable, and had very nearly got into the columns of the Patriot, that he had been got down by the evil agency of the anti-temperance men to lecture on a new process of making brandy from crab apples. And the Baptist clergyman rather encouraged this report, which was doing serious damage.

Page 68

I was told, too, that the subject of my lecture had been warmly debated by the ladies of the Orthodox Sewing Circle, where Mrs. Silas Heywood, who had written several strong articles for the Patriot, which journal adopted them as its own, was heard to declare emphatically that she had never heard of this man Crabbe, though she had read no end of books. Miss Bruce had been six quarters at the high-school, knew something of Latin and algebra, and had taken music lessons of Monsieur Pensin□; but she had never heard of Crabbe until she read "Night and Morning," where, out of sheer affectation, as it seemed to her, she found that the author had made sundry quotations from him to adorn the heads of his chapters. As for Miss Leland, who had been two years abroad with her father and mother, and was supposed to know all about literature and the poets, she thought Mr. Crabbe could not be much, since she had not even heard of him while in England. Mr. Faulkner, the storekeeper, had not a book of Crabbe on his shelves, though he dealt largely in hardware and literature, and was a very respectable scholar. And Squire Brigham, the lawyer, who mixed himself up with other people's business a great deal, busied himself in saying: Crabbe must have been an obscure fellow, for though there was a pyramid of old books in his library, he had not one of this author's among them; and perhaps he ought to be thankful for it, for indeed Mrs. Forbush had said to him in confidence, that she understood of the little deformed man that Crabbe had written some very bad things of lawyers. Mrs. Forbush went regularly to Boston to get the fashions and attend the Lowell lectures; Mrs. Forbush had written a religious novel for the "Olive Branch;" Mrs. Forbush said, who would have thought of giving such a looking little creature five dollars and his victuals for lecturing upon such a subject

The cry of fire without, and the loud peals of an alarm bell, suddenly threw the town and the tavern into a state of great excitement. Giles Sheridan stopped short in his discourse, and the inmates of the house rushed in great agitation into the street. The alarm spread rapidly, and people began to run in every direction but the right one. One declared it a false alarm. That it was set on foot to afford recreation for the mischievous, another was quite sure. A third was ready to swear he saw the incendiary run down "the lane." People ran in opposite directions, crying fire. People, wayward and confused, were endeavoring to persuade one another that the scene of the fire was not in the direction they were going, though neither smoke nor flame could be seen in any part of the town. And while the people were thus confused, an harsh and grating voice cried out that the fire was down the lane, a narrow pathway that led from one part of the town to another. The confused figures of men who had stood contemplating here and there about the square, now rushed down the lane, and soon came in

Page 69

hearing of moans and lamentations, which grew louder and louder, as of one in great distress. "Oh! unworthy sinner that I am, let every man exert himself to remedy this misfortune!" a stifled voice was heard to cry out, as a crowd, having gathered round a pit, where some workmen had been digging for a well, discovered no less a person at the bottom, half buried in sand and water, than Major Roger Potter. "Peace, good man, and thy misfortune shall be remedied soon," said the Orthodox clergyman, who was among the alarmists, and, notwithstanding his accustomed frigidity, could scarce suppress a smile at seeing the major cut so sorry a figure. The clergyman now ordered the bystanders, who were much more inclined to enjoy the joke, to bring ropes, and assist in relieving the distressed man, who, if not a friend of the church, was at least a Christian. "Aye, aye," responded the major, "and be not long about it, for the sand is caving in, and I feel the devil fingering my toes." Seeing the people come to his relief, the major regained his courage, (for when discovered he was nearly frightened out of his wits,) and began heaping curses upon the head of the miscreant who had laid so diabolical a plot against his life. Indeed, he stubbornly refused to be convinced that it was anything else than a trick of his enemies to rob him of his military title. In fine, he declared to the parson, who several times rebuked him for his free use of profane adjectives, that nothing but his good will for mankind in general prevented him from taking summary vengeance of his enemies with his sword, which, fortunately for those who were making light of his distress, he had left at home. It was not that he set so high a value upon his life, for he had shown while in the Mexican War that he was not wanting in valor, and was ready at any moment to sacrifice it to his honor; but it sorely grieved him to think of what a loss the nation and Barnstable would suffer in his death by falling into a pit.

The rabble, as he called those who had come to his relief, now began to jeer him, and to demand of him a speech, merely to occupy the time while ropes necessary to his deliverance were being brought. This so enraged the major, that in addition to swearing he would not be drawn up by such a set of inhuman rascals, he commenced to curse his hard fate. A few moments more and he became calm, and looking up beseechingly in the clergyman's face, which was reflected by the light of a lantern, he enjoined him to hasten to his wife, Polly Potter, and tell her of the plight he was in. She had never forsaken him in his misfortunes. But the clergyman was scrupulous of his dignity, and not fancying the strong quality of the expletives he was using, took his leave, saying he could not waste sympathy upon one who so far forgot his afflictions as to take the name of the Lord in vain.

Page 70

Ropes were now at hand, and amidst much laughter and jeering, the major was relieved from his perilous position, not, however, until his face had received some bruises and his garments much injury. The crowd now professed so much affection for him, that he began to deplore the loss of his temper, and to offer apologies for what he had said when in the pit, which were readily accepted, with regrets for his misfortune. Indeed, he inwardly congratulated himself that he had not lost a whit of his political or military popularity, and that the mishap was one of those peculiar interpositions of Providence which may occur in the life of any great man. As to the oaths that had lost him the friendship of the clergyman, he regretted them from the very bottom of his heart, and hoped his friends, in the exercise of that generosity they had ever evinced for him, would set them down to the bewildered and confused state of his faculties. Hoping he would never again be in a condition to merit their jokes, the major bowed in the politest manner, and turned to take his departure, adding that he would have to perform certain offices pleasing to his wife, Polly. He had, however, no sooner turned his back, than the crowd gave out shouts of laughter, seeing the condition his nether garments were in. Being unconscious of the cause, the major mistook their shouts for a manifestation of his popularity, and having paused to acknowledge it with a bow, continued on his way as the crowd dispersed.

It seems that the mischievous urchins, on seeing the major enter the tavern, mounted his team and drove several times round the town, the pig and chickens keeping up a medley of noise that seriously annoyed numerous peaceably-disposed citizens. And having satisfied their mischievous propensities, they left old Battle to himself, knowing that he would keep faith with his master. Finding his faithful animal gone, when he issued from the tavern, the major, not doubting the steady habits of his horse, very naturally believed that he had taken his way home, and thus forestalled his arrival. The only thing that caused him any fear was, that some accident might occur to his live stock. He therefore took the shortest road home, and so completely absorbed in the contemplation of his profits, and of the prospect of another chance for political fame, was he, that he hastened on regardless of the planks the workmen had placed round the well they were digging, and of which he became conscious only when he had tumbled some twenty feet to the bottom. Beginning to sink deeper and deeper in the sand, from which all his efforts to extricate himself failed, he set up a cry of fire, regarding it the one which would soonest bring him relief. And this cry he bawled until he sent the whole town into a state of excitement.

And now, since I have exhausted the limits of my chapter, I must reserve what took place between the major and his wife Polly, and how she almost fainted at seeing him enter the house in so shattered a condition, for another chapter.

Page 71

CHAPTER XV.

In which there is an interesting meeting between major Potter and his wife Polly.

Major Roger Sherman Potter lived in a little red house in the outskirts of the town of Barnstable. There were two crabbed little windows in front, for it could boast of but one story, and a narrow green door, over which a prairie rose bush clustered, as if to hide its infirmity. A small window, reminding one of a half closed jackknife, and in which were two earthen flower pots containing mignonnette, set jauntily upon the roof, which was so covered with black moss, that it was impossible to tell whether it was shingled or tiled. Indeed such was the shattered condition of the little tenement, that you might easily have imagined it suffering from a forty years' attack of chronic disease, and quite unfit for the habitation of so great a military hero. The major, however, had a peculiar faculty for reconciling humbleness with greatness, and always overcame the remonstrances of his wife, (who was continually urging the necessity of a larger tenement, in accordance with their advanced popularity,) by reminding her that General Scott, who was a great military hero, and to whom the nation owed a debt of gratitude it had no notion of discharging until after his death, was kept poor and humble by the nation, merely for its own convenience. In truth, whenever Polly Potter upbraided the major for not keeping up proper appearances, he would mutter so that her ears could not escape the meaning, that rags might cover a nobleman, while the knave might scent his fine linen with the perfumes of Arabia. In reply to this, Polly would remind him in her own way, that tattered garments and good society were not the fashion of the day, and seldom went together.

"Well, here I am, wife! in an unsuitable condition, I confess," said the major, stalking into his little habitation, and embracing his wife, who had been waiting his coming in great anxiety, seeing that old Battle had arrived nearly an hour previous, with the tin wagon in a very disordered condition. "Heavens! my faithful husband, my dear good husband, what has happened?" shrieked his wife, standing aghast for a moment, and then throwing herself almost fainting into his arms, as two shy looking and ill clad little girls, and a boy of some twelve years old, clung about her garments, and commenced to cry with all the might of their lungs. The major's wife was a slender, meekly attired woman, with exceedingly sharp features, a bright, watchful eye, evincing great energy of character, and a complexion which might be considered a compromise between the color of Dr. Townsend's sarsaparilla and the daintiest olive-induced, as the major afterwards told me, by bilious disorder.

Page 72

The major was at a loss how to account to his wife for his shattered condition, nor was he conscious of the disordered state of his nether garments, the rent in which had been made larger by the process of getting him out of the pit. However, as her recovery was almost as sudden as her notion to faint, and seeing that nothing serious had resulted therefrom, he placed her in a chair, and commenced recounting to her how he got into the pit, which he swore, and made her believe, was set for him by his enemies, who had for many years bore him great malice, in consequence of his fame, which, God knows, he had worked hard enough to gain. "La's me, husband," said the artless woman, making him a return of her affections; "it's just what I've a dozen times told you they'd do, if they'd only a sly chance. There's Robins Dobson, who has been trying for years to be Major of the Invincibles, and it's just what his wife wants. She wants to see his name, with the title 'tached, in the Patriot some mornin'. Poor folks has a hard enough time to get up in the world, and when they gets up, everybody wants to pull 'em down. That's the way the world goes." As it had always been a custom with the good woman to believe no greater military character than the major ever lived-an opinion he shared to the fullest extent-so was it the most pleasing thing with him to reciprocate the honor by asserting, whenever an opportunity offered, that history afforded no example of a military hero ever before being blessed with so good a wife. Indeed I very much doubt whether there ever existed a heaven in which love, joy, and mutual confidence were so liberally exchanged as in this, the major's little tenement. As for furniture, it could boast of but little, and that of the shabbiest kind. It was true, there was a print of General Scott hung upon the discolored wall, and another of Zack Taylor, and another of General Pierce, mounted upon a ferocious-looking charger, and about to demonstrate his courage (not in attacking the lines of an enemy) by rushing into the thickest of a hailstorm. By these, especially the latter, Polly Potter set great store, inasmuch as they illustrated the major's taste for the profession of which he was so illustrious a member. I had almost forgotten to mention, while enumerating the portraits of these great generals, that there was hanging over the tea-table (as if to do penance for some grievous wrong committed against that venerable institution) a picture of General Webb, who had distinguished himself in several great battles, fought in the columns of an almost pious newspaper, published in Wall Street, New York, and whom Polly Potter verily believed, having heard it of the neighbors, to be a wonderful diplomatist, which was rare in so great a general.

Page 73

“And now, seeing that we have had but scanty fare for the week past, and have got deeply in debt to the grocer, who has twice threatened to take our little things for pay, pray tell us of your voyage, and what success you have met with;” said the good woman, which reminded the major of his neglect of his faithful horse, which, in reply to a question concerning his arrival, he was told had come safely home, and been put in the barn, but without either pig or chickens. The major was not a little surprised on hearing this account of his team, and repaired at once to the barn, where he found old Battle a little jaded, but otherwise in his usual good condition, and as ready as ever to acknowledge the caresses of his kind master. To his utter astonishment neither pig nor chickens, upon which he had set so much store, as constituting the larger half of his available profits, were to be seen. He now swore either that the town was full of thieves, or that it was another trick of his enemies to deprive him of the means of sustaining his hard-earned reputation. His wife now, evincing great grief at the sad misfortune, held the lantern while he counted his skins and tin ware, which he found to tally exactly with his account of stock, which he kept on a dingy slip of paper, with the exactness of a cotton broker. “Curse on these enemies of mine; they are all an evil minded set of blockheads!” ejaculated the major, pausing to consider a moment, and then heaving a sigh. “Husband, curse not your enemies,” enjoined the confiding woman, “for the Scripture teacheth that we must pray for them; and you know we have much need of being exalted above them.”

“I leave what the Scripture teacheth to Parson Boomer,” interrupted the major, “who deals in that sort of commerce. Scripture, as I take it, has little to do with one’s military reputation. And, may the devil take me if I don’t think military men get it right nine times out of ten, and won’t be far behind them in getting to heaven, (I mean the parsons,) unless they look well to the state of their morals.”

Being very short, and stout, and singularly duck-legged withal, the major, having had his attention called to the condition of his garments, drew forth his cotton handkerchief and hung it about his loins, as a means of protecting the exposed state of his battery. Thus protected in his dignity, he resolved that his wife should bear him company, and together they would sally down the road a mile or two, in search of his lost live stock. As this necessarily incurred some danger to his person, which it required courage to overcome, he thought it well to step into the house and get his sword, a weapon that never failed him, and with which, according to his own account, he had killed innumerable Mexicans. Having girded on this venerable weapon, he came forth as never before did military hero, swearing to have satisfaction of every enemy who chanced in his way.

Page 74

Let it be understood by all my military acquaintances, that I mean no offence in what I have here written. Nor must it be inferred because I have thus accoutered the major, who must be set down for a military politician, that such is the fashion with all great majors and colonels; for indeed history furnishes no account of their going to war with what is generally accepted as their most vital parts protected with pocket handkerchiefs, not even when fleeing before the enemies' bullets. Nor would this history sustain the reputation for truth I have from the beginning resolved it shall maintain with generations yet unborn, were I to leave unrecorded this act of heroism, seeing that it has so many counterparts among those who affect the profession of arms, and are honest enough in their belief that the nation's battles cannot be fought without them.

And now, having prepared himself for a tilt with assailants, rather than a search for his pig and poultry, he strode forth, his wife following a few steps behind, lantern in hand, and so regulating the shadow as not to obstruct his vision. Being a woman of great kindness, and much given to religion, his wife would pause every few steps, and enjoin the major to treat his adversary, if any he should chance to meet, with great consideration. There was no knowing, she said, but that it might all be the work of some mischievous boys. "That may be, wife; but they are set on by older heads. There's Captain Tom Baker, and Sergeant Prentice, of the Invincibles, in it somewhere! And they'll never stop molesting me until they have felt the weight of this sword!" returned the major, touching the hilt of his sword, and quickening his pace.

They had not proceeded far, when the rippling of a brook, and a slight rustling of leaves among some bushes by the roadside, caused the major to halt suddenly, half unsheath his sword, and place himself in an attitude of defence. "I said we should find them, wife; and may the devil take me if I don't make dead men of them in a trice."

"Truly, husband, it is only the wind and the brook you hear, and which, at this hour of the night, sounds very like the talking of conspiring men," interrupted the woman, as if to encourage the major, who shrugged his shoulders, and began to show signs of fear in the backward and cautious movement of his steps. "As I hope to be saved, wife," returned our hero, in a modified tone of voice, "though it takes more than a trifle to alarm me, who has seen much service in Mexico, I am not mistaken. A vagabond of some kind lurks in the bushes yonder, for I heard his voice as distinctly as if it had been bawled into my ears. There! hear you not the sound of his footsteps? Go you ahead with the light, and leave the rest to me."

"Pray, husband, do not let your fancies lead you to rash acts."

"Rash acts?" rejoined the major, "to kill a score of such lurking vagabonds would only be doing good service for the devil, who merits one's aid now and then." In evidence of her faith in the cause of the sounds, the good woman advanced forward, and, followed by the major, with his sword drawn and braced, they proceeded cautiously on over the bridge, though not until our hero had several times stopped to listen, which he declared

was enjoined by every rule of the profession, and was a means to avoid surprise while advancing upon an enemy.

Page 75

Having ascended the brow of a hill, a short distance beyond the bridge, it was agreed between the major and his wife, that, being out of danger, they might now look more after the lost property and think less of assailants. The major, in the meantime, commenced giving his wife an account of the pig's knowing qualities, which, together with a description of the eccentric swine driver, amused her not a little. If the pig, she argued, was possessed of one half the gifts set down to him, he would take care of himself for the night; and as to the chickens, not even the black people who lived on the hill, would think of coming out at night to steal them-for though they were proverbially fond of keeping a large poultry yard, and not over scrupulous of the means by which they supplied it-they were too sparing of their energies to waste them at that hour of night. She therefore enjoined that they return peaceably home, and leave the search to be resumed at daylight. The major admitted the reason of his wife's argument, but declared his determination to traverse the road round and return by way of the tavern. It might, in truth, betray a want of courage, did he retrace his steps at this stage of the road.

"As to courage, husband," said his wife, holding the lantern so near that the shadow reflected over his broad face, "I am sure you have already proved that you are not wanting in that; and as there are but a few hours until daylight, we had as well go home and get us comfortably to bed." The figure of a man, whose dusky shadow reflected along the fence, was now seen approaching in the road. The major had no sooner descried him, than he fell in with his wife's opinion, and as a practical illustration of his faith in it, commenced retracing his steps so fast that it was with much difficulty she could keep up with him. Looking neither to the right nor the left, he continued on until he had gained the house, from the door of which he turned to look back, when, finding the figure had vanished, he said with an air of regained courage, that it was not that he feared the miscreant, but having a wife and three children dependent upon him, he could not hope for forgiveness were he to risk his valuable life in combat with a lurking vagabond. He therefore shut the door, partook of an humble supper, and went quietly to bed, leaving the pig and chickens to take care of themselves until daylight.

CHAPTER XVI.

Wherein is recorded events which took place on the day following the major's arrival at Barnstable, with sundry other queer things.

Page 76

The sun was filling the east with golden filaments, and the sparrows were making the air melodious with their songs, glad, no doubt, at the major's return, when, on the morning following the events I have recorded in the foregoing chapter, I was awakened by a voice singing sweetly under my window. I soon recognized it as the voice of Bessie, whose image rose up in my fancy as the fairest of living creatures. At first, my senses seemed seized with a pleasant delirium; but soon the strains came so sweet and tender that I lost all power over my emotions, while it seemed to me as if my fancy had winged its way to some land where love and joy rules unclouded. "O, sweet transport, whither wilt thou beguile me!" I said with a sigh, as the voice ceased its singing, and the effect was like an electric shock, consuming me with disappointment. But I heard the dulcet echoes mingling faintly with the songs of birds, as if some seraph had strung her lute to give sweet music to the winds; and I was consoled.

After a few moments' pause the voice again broke forth from the garden, and I caught the following words, which, if I can trust my treacherous memory, belong to a song written by the learned Dr. Easley when in the tutelage of his literary career, and heaven knows, (for he was then a priest of slender means,) before he ever thought of translating German or becoming the pensioned puffer of three New York booksellers: "Come, gentle stranger, haste thee hither, Tarry not, for I am lonely—Come and tell me whom thou lovest Or the throbbing mischief will my heart betray." This being a fair and honest specimen of Easley's early attempts at versification, it was said of him by those best qualified to judge, that had he but stuck to the pulpit and sonnet writing, he would in time have become an adept, for he could compose pathetically enough, and so regulate his points as to make his theology appear quite profound. But he had a weakness which ran to the getting of gold, and this betrayed him into the commerce of literature, where he had become a critic of easy virtue, and had attracted about him innumerable adorers, principally maidens of twenty, whose elegant endowments and clever novels he could not sufficiently extol. Besides being a poet and a great praiser of small books, the learned doctor had a rare talent for making ladies' slippers, which, it had been more than once hinted, was the trade of his early youth. It was now charged upon him, though I do not assert it of my own knowledge, that he had found it profitable to become the assassin of criticism and the undertaker of literature, for which offices he was amply qualified, notwithstanding the very serious writers in Putnam's Magazine thought he ought to be transported to Sandy Hook, there to do penance among the breakers a whole November. And this punishment they would no doubt have carried out, but for the two newspapers and four booksellers, who stood in so much need of his virgin goodness that they refused to part with him even for a day.

Page 77

After another pause, the voice of Bessie again struck up, and this time she sung: "O, had I Ariadne's crown, At morning I would sing to thee—Would sing of dew-drops on thy ringlets, Then my Apollo thou should'st be." This, also, was by the learned Doctor Easley, and is extracted from a poem published in his native village many years ago. Having great confidence in its numerous beauties, which the villagers, being humble people, failed to discover, the doctor resolved to seek his fortune in New York, confident that first rate poetic talent never was appreciated in the country.

The sweetness of Bessie's voice (not the words) so enchanted me, that I arose, dressed myself, and hurried down stairs, and into the reading room, where the little deformed man was premeditating the ill fate of his lecture. He returned my salutation with great earnestness of manner, told me he had walked three times around the square, listening to the birds sing. And, too, he had been regarded by young Barnstable as an object of curiosity. Impatient to engage me in conversation, he drew forth his notes, which he as suddenly shut up and returned to his pocket, on seeing the clerical looking man enter the room, accompanied by his bride, her countenance the very picture of innocence betrayed.

The little deformed man had evidently taken a dislike to the gray haired and milky faced groom; for no sooner had he pocketed his notes than he set to pacing the room rapidly, frisking his fingers alternately behind and before him, and casting half angry glances over his shoulder at him. I took advantage of this display of irascibility on the part of the lecturer, and passed into the hall, where Bessie, having ceased her singing, was busily arranging the furniture and attending to those little domestic duties which, in towns where fashion rules, are left to untutored servants. She received my salutation with a modest courtesy, but became so confused and agitated as I pressed her hand, that, unable to resist the temptation, I stole a kiss ere she was conscious of my intention. "It is not kind of you, sir," she said, in a half chiding whisper; "you must not do it again." And she set her black eye upon me, inquiringly, and artlessly raised her apron, as if to wipe away the blushes. Fain would I have pressed her to my bosom, and beseeched her to regard me as a brother. But her face suddenly became lighted up with a smile, and such was the perfection of its beauty that to me it seemed created only for an angel. I asked myself if there was on earth any thing I could aspire to with so much gallantry as her love; nor could I suppress the thought, that he who would betray it was unworthy even of the devil.

Page 78

Bessie quickly regained her temper, and as if suddenly recalling something to mind, began prattling to me in the most artless manner. "Just think, sir," said she, "what a disturbance there is in town this morning." And she laid her hand gently upon my arm. "That queer man they call the major, and who is thought half fool and half philosopher, has got back; and there's always such a time in town when he comes. And, don't you think, he has brought an audacious pig with him. And the pig has gone to work (they say, sir, that he is possessed of a devil) and broke into poor Elder Boomer's fowl yard, and eat up all his chickens. And the brute does such queer things! As for the poor elder, God knows he has a hard enough time to live. He only gets five hundred dollars a year, and what the sewing circle does for him. Only last week the circle gave him new dresses for all his family, and a nice three-ply carpet, which I made for him. I forgot to tell you, too, that about a month since the circle gave him a new set of dimity bed curtains, and two marseilles quilts; and now they will have to make him up the loss of his chickens. Just think of it, sir! And he's such a good old man, and preaches such good sermons. I do wish, you could hear him once, sir." Here Bessie paused to take breath. I assured her that he must be a fortunate man who had such lips to speak his praises. At which she gave me a rogueish look, blushed, and tossed her head reprovingly. Nothing, I replied, would give me so much pleasure, especially did she bear me company, as to attend the elder's church; but, however strong my inclinations, they could not now be gratified, for the imperative nature of my mission left me but one or two days to tarry in Barnstable. This caused her feelings some disquiet; but with great good sense she changed the subject of conversation, and commenced giving me a detailed account of the various kind acts performed by the sewing circle, of which she was a member, and which was chiefly made up of worthy ladies, who sought out the needy and relieved their wants, knowing that charity well bestowed is recorded in heaven.

The sewing circle exercised a sort of paternity over all cases of distress, and according to Bessie, never withheld relief, except when the object requiring it was given to strong drink. In truth, it was held that something must be done for all persons in distress; and so many were the poor foreign families moving into town, that it was seldom the circle had not its hands full. As to the provision prohibiting strong drink, it was found at times to work somewhat inconveniently, inasmuch as most of the objects of charity, (the clergy excepted,) liked a little; and being of foreign birth they could always find the means to get it, though they generally swore they had not wherewith to get a penny loaf.

"And what is worse," resumed Bessie, recurring to the mischievous pig, "as if it wasn't enough that the elder lost all his chickens, but some evil-minded people must go and get into the church, and put a coop full of poor little fowls on the pulpit. O! there's such an ado about it over town!"

Page 79

It being the custom of the country to breakfast at seven o'clock, and that hour having arrived, a man in a blue smock frock issued from a side door, (Bessie vaulted up the hall as he entered,) and commenced ringing a bell in so loud a manner that I verily thought he would alarm the whole neighborhood. An opening of doors, and a general movement for the dining room, a long, simply furnished, but exquisitely clean apartment, was now made. A table covered with linen of snowy whiteness, and set out with great good taste, ranged up the center of the room; and we sat down to a breakfast of steak, and ham, and eggs, and cold chickens, and fish balls, and hot rolls, and corn cakes, and brown bread-all prepared so nice and delicately, that even the most fastidious could have found nothing to grumble at. Indeed it was said of the the landlord of the "Independent Temperance," that he spared neither pains nor expense in the management of his house, which had gained much fame over the country, though it had thrice made him a bankrupt with three score of creditors, who were always ready to say wicked things of him. Some people said if the temperance society would only let him have his way, he would pay, and no thanks to anybody.

Bessie, and two trimly dressed maidens of riper years, waited upon the guests, nor thought the occupation bemeaning. And so nimble were their movements, and so gentle the manner in which they dispensed their courtesies, that I began to regret my bachelorhood, and to wish all male attendants exiled to Nantucket, where their habitual unclean condition would find a welcome among the whalemens.

I had well nigh dispatched my breakfast, when there arose a loud noise, as of voices in dispute, in the bar-room. Bessie began to tremble from head to foot, and to turn pale. "You must give up the pig, or stand the chances-now mind that!" said a voice which I at once recognized as that of the renowned Major Potter.

"Heaven knows I am a man of peace; but you must make good the loss I have suffered. All this trouble and mischief is done by the audacious brute you have brought into the town. You go out for good, and always come home bringing the town trouble. I have warned you of the error of your ways. But since you take not heed, we shall see what virtue there is in the Squire." This was said in a more modified tone of voice. Bessie said that it was the voice of Elder Boomer.

"You needn't think you are such a treasure! The town can get along well enough without you. By my military reputation, if I don't think all this ado about the poor pig is a trick to get the advantage of a neighbor you imagine hasn't got as good a lien upon heaven as yourself. Now, good man, do you take the safest plan, give the animal up to its owner, and trust to heaven for the price of the chickens, for it is written somewhere, that peace makers, being blessed, should not be peace breakers-"

"To quarrel is not my desire," interrupted the elder; "for such would not become me, who have no experience in arms; but I enjoin you to give up the life you are living, and so turn your energies to Christ's truth, that you may become worthy of heaven."

Page 80

"Heaven has nothing to do with my pig!" rejoined the major. "Nor do I think this talking of heaven, while keeping him in bondage, will amount to much. Come! turn him out, be a christian, practice what you preach, and trust to heaven for the reward, as you would have me do!" To this the elder replied somewhat testily, that he would keep the animal fast locked up until the damages were settled, notwithstanding his faith in future rewards was in nowise shaken. I entered the bar room and found the major thrusting his hands into the huge pockets of his trowsers, walking round the elder, who was a man of meek aspect, and singularly lean of figure. Then canting his head with an air of self complacency, he enjoined the elder not to separate his works from his faith.

No sooner had the major caught a glance of me, than he approached, saluted me as became his military rank, and drew me aside to show me how handsomely the Patriot had recorded his arrival. This done, he commenced recounting the causes of his dispute with the parson, who would every few minutes speak up, and dispute the truth of his assertion, which so displeased the major, that had the parson been a fighting man, he would have challenged him to mortal combat, as it is called. As it was, he contented himself with getting in a passion, and swearing to have revenge, though it cost him six years' separation from his wife, Polly Potter.

Although famous for his disregard of truth, the major affected never to have his word disputed, and was at all times ready to draw his sword in its defence. "Heaven, as you know, knows all things, sir," said he, addressing himself to me; "and it knows me incapable of doing a dishonorable act. And therefore I say to you, for I hold it an honor and no disgrace to be a politician, that if you will hear patiently the cause of my dispute with this parson, I will accept your decision in the matter as final. But, heaven save the mark! use your judgment a little, sir, and be not like some of our judges, who seek to please those who promise most, and having little virtue, ask you to accept their good advice in excuse for their evil example." The major having said this with an air of conciliation, gave his head a significant toss, and his trowsers, which had got loose about his hips, a few twitches into place.

It now came to the parson's turn to speak. He shook his head at first, and was not a little reluctant about acceding to such terms; but on being assured of my position as a politician, who had done so much for Cape Cod, and the hard cider campaign, he resolved to accept my decision as final. Meanwhile, the major had screwed up his courage, and was making a circle round the parson, and loudly calling upon the landlord to bear witness that it had been his motto through life to wrong no man.

Page 81

Numerous idlers had by this time gathered round the disputants, each giving his opinion on the merits of the question, and offering to back it up with dollars or drinks. Indeed, some of the opinions delivered by them were quite as profound as any delivered by our City Justices, and indeed discovered a superior sense of prudence. But it soon became evident that popular opinion was on the side of the major and his pig. And popular opinion was right, the major said, and ought to be respected all over the world. At this juncture of affairs, the lean figure of the nonresistant, (who was sure not to be far off when there was any chance of a disturbance,) stood in the doorway, and immediately engaged in the dispute. "I have not come (heaven knows I have not!) to give an opinion; but as I am here, it may be as well so to do, for heaven knows I am a man of peace, which it is my mission to preserve." The nonresistant was here interrupted by the major, who squared up to him with clenched fists, and bid him begone, or he would make splinters of him in a trice. The man, however, was not daunted by such threats, and getting his choler up, told the major he verily believed him to be a mixture of Jew and Celt, and as such, always more ready to talk than fight. He then told the parson, that although he held him in no very high favor, he would hint for his own sake, that he could in no way get the better of his enemy so well as by releasing the pig from custody, and delivering him into the hands of his owner, saying: "Neighbor, prudence being the twin brother of peace, and both being acceptable to heaven, I have thought it well to restore thee thy pig, that thou mayest comfort him. He has eaten up my chickens, it is true, and he has otherwise done me grievous harm; but I freely forgive him, seeing that heaven made him a brute. Thou mayest take care of him; do for him what seemeth good; and know that as a christian I bear thee no malice. Let the good offset the evil, and I will trust in heaven to repair the loss I have suffered."

The nonresistant held that kindness was of itself so great a weapon, that it would incite generosity in the major-in a word, that he would give all his tin ware, with old Battle thrown in, rather than let such goodness suffer. But the major was not so easily seduced, and, calling the nonresistant a miscreant, he again bid him begone, or he would hasten his exit with the toe of his boot. On assenting to sit in judgment on the case in dispute, I took the precaution to stipulate that peace be preserved, and that the one should keep his lips sealed while the other was making his statement. But the parson commenced his statement by declaring the pig to be possessed of the devil; indeed it could not be otherwise, he said, since the strange antics it performed, and which he minutely described, betrayed a desire in him only to do evil. This the major immediately rose to dispute; and thrusting his hands into the ample pockets

Page 82

of his breeches, he declared with great emphasis, that he would not hear a word said against the pig's morals and sagacity, seeing that he had been reared and educated in the care of the clergy. In truth, he had given out so many proofs of rare sagacity, that the major stated it as his intention to speedily proceed with him to New York, there to have his "Life and Times" written by the erudite Easley, who was said to be strangely profound as a critic, in which capacity he wrote for three newspapers, and read for three or more publishers, all of whom were celebrated for not selling less than one hundred thousand copies of every work to which they affixed their imprint, though it was said of them that they had thrown to the public no end of literary carrion, which Easley had praised.

Order being restored, the major gave way to the parson, who closed his case by asserting that his poverty entitled him to compensation. The major now rose, and with considerable clearness, set forth the fact, that no evidence had been produced to show either that the pig was disposed to evil, or that he had devoured a single chicken. Feathers were scattered round, but feathers might have been laid there as a blind by some rascal who had divers evil designs against the hen roosts of his neighbors. Christians ought always, the major contended, to take a generous view of things before they couched the fatal spear. Again, there was neighbor Kimball's pet fox, an arrant rascal, who was known to have a strange penchant for young chickens, and had committed depredations enough to consign him to the gallows.

The above view of the case somewhat modified the parson's temper, and as he would not have those present think him less than a Christian gentleman, who would rather go supperless to bed than wrong his fellow, he, in the blandest manner, begged them not to think for a moment that he intended wrong. So, with great sanctity of countenance, he laid his hand upon his heart, called Omnipotence to witness that he bore the major no ill will, and was ready to atone for aught he had said damaging to his feelings. And this display of repentance well nigh dissolved the major into tears. The disputants now shook hands, and swore eternal friendship. The major bowed, and placed his hand to his heart; and the parson bowed, and placed his hand to his heart; and thus was I relieved from rendering a verdict, which most likely would have pleased neither. It was likewise intimated to the parson, that the sewing circle would make good his loss, with fourfold interest, which consoled him much. Together then the two friends, without further ceremony, set out to release the animal from bondage, congratulating one another that they had been wise enough to keep out of the hands of lawyers. On arriving at the parson's yard, to which they were followed by a crowd of idlers, they were not a little surprised to find that the pig had taken his departure, having first beaten the dog in a fair

Page 83

fight, and twice driven the kitchen maid frightened into the house. Great anxiety was now manifested to see an animal of such rare qualities; and on further search being made, he was discovered in neighbor Kimball's yard, fraternizing with his pet fox, and otherwise conducting himself so unbecomingly, as to make it evident that the friends of free love had inducted him into the mysteries of their system. In truth, he bore no small resemblance to a few of the disciples of that very accommodating system, for he was lean of figure, had a long, narrow head, and a vacant look out of the eyes.

"Duncan! my own Duncan!" ejaculated the major, his broad face flushed with joy. The animal raised his snout, gave a significant grunt, and ceasing his caressings, ran to his master, a double curl in his tail. Having got possession of his property, the major returned thanks within himself, invoked a blessing on the head of the parson, whom he cursed in his heart, and set out for home, followed by his pig and a score of mischievous boys, making the very air resound with their hootings.

CHAPTER XVII.

Which treats of what was done with the pig; and also of the lecture on Crabbe, by Giles Sheridan, and various things.

When Major Roger Potter reached his home, he found his wife Polly waiting with eager desire to see the animal he had so vividly described. "Pray to God, dear Polly," said he, embracing and kissing his wife, as the mischievous boys set up a loud yell, "for our pig is safe, and in him there is a fortune, which you shall share, and he comforted." And having consigned the animal to the care of his wife, who, although a strong minded woman in her way, looked at first with no little distrust on the animal, but became favorably impressed on seeing him cut certain curious capers round the room. Indeed she soon began to congratulate herself on the possession of so rare a creature, and to invoke certain ills on the head of the parson for holding him so tight in his fingers. "Peace, dear Polly," enjoined the major, "for goodness belongs to our kind. The nonresistant was right, (and right should have its right,) when he advised me to use goodness as the most effectual weapon to demolish an adversary. It becomes me, as it does all good christians, to reverence and adore the Church; but I own it is not in me to reverence those priests and deacons who affect to regale your palate with truth, while splitting God's goodness into fragments, merely to please those who have a terrible thirst to get to heaven over a road no one else travels."

"As to that, my dear husband," responded the earnest woman, "I cannot be a judge. But a major as famous as yourself, should be careful how he mixes glory with his profanity; lest the public, whose servant he is, set it down against him, and use it to his injury on election day."

Page 84

"Truly, wife," rejoined the major, assuming an air of great self-complacency, "we military politicians had needs keep our wits whetted, and be careful how much honey we mix with the brimstone. But I must go look up my chickens; and if the devil, as some say, regulates the future affairs of politicians, we may safely leave our enemies to him." The good woman now brought food for the pig, when, having devoured it with a keen appetite, the major, in order to test his various talents, put him to a severe examination. It was found that he could perform with wonderful agility numerous gymnastic feats, such as jumping backward and forward, walking and vaulting upon his hinder legs, and keeping time to certain tunes. He could also distinguish between certain figures and letters of the alphabet, to the latter of which he would, when directed, point with his nose. Like some of our New York politicians, the pig was a wondrous animal in various ways. In fine, so extraordinary was his talent, that, as I have before said, the major resolved at once to proceed with him to one of our great cities, where first rate talent, whether of pigs or tragedians, was sure to find appreciation. But before this could be carried out, it was necessary that the services of Monsieur Pensin□, who gave lessons in politeness to youths just entering society, be engaged to cultivate and so polish his manners as to render him an acceptable member of the Union Club, under the patronage of which institution, (generally supposed to have been established for the cultivation of effeminacy and other vices, common to the Dutch of New York,) he was sure to become a lion. Monsieur Pensin□ had figured in New York; was an exile of unquestionable nobility; and if we can trust the Tribune, a journal in high favor with foreign counts, a hero of enlarged celebrity.

And now the sagacious animal, fatigued with the labors of his examination, evinced an inclination to sleep, and to that end sought a distant corner of the room. "We must treat him tenderly, dear Polly, for he has wonderful instincts," said the major, casting a look of endearing sympathy at the animal. The good woman pledged her word not to be found wanting. Indeed so well did she appreciate the instincts, and even the tastes of the animal, that, having at hand a stray copy of the New York Express, and another of a very rare but no less wonderful journal, called the Mirror, (whose editor was famous for the immense amount of light and shade he threw into his financial operations,) she spread them upon the floor for his bed. And with an evident fellow feeling for those worthy journals, the animal coiled himself down, casting an approving look at the good woman as she covered him with an aged copy of the Herald. Seeing the animal thus reconciled, the major declared, that so pure a native American as Duncan could not have selected bed more appropriate, though he was not quite sure how the Express editors would regard the matter. Indeed, he was not quite sure that they would not, feeling sorely grieved, dig up Duncan's ancestors, and thereby find a means of damaging his character.

Page 85

As the precious animal calmly went to sleep, the major sallied out, having first drawn his sword to disperse the noisy boys who had gathered about his door, and who hurled no few missiles at his head before they were routed. He then set out for the church, where he had an altercation with the sexton, which had resulted in blows but for his courage giving out. Twice he lost his temper, and twice he regained it. He at length got into the church, in search of his chickens; and to his great surprise and mortification, found that some political or military enemy (he would swear it was no one else) had broken his coop, and set them loose among the pews. Indeed it was high noon when the major got possession of his fowls, which he did with the aid of the sexton and several mischievous boys. He then secured them nicely in his coop, and having shouldered it, returned to his wife, presenting her with another proof of the success of his voyage, and relating how he got the advantage of Mrs. Trotbridge in the trade of the Shanghais. After which he seated himself in a chair, and for several minutes seemed absorbed in deep study. "Now, I tell thee, my dear Polly," he suddenly broke out, "Major Potter was born for no ordinary man. My enemies can inflict no injuries that will discourage me, for I have got scars enough, heaven knows; and scars are the proofs of a brave soldier. Major Potter never ran from an enemy! And that is something for a man to say who has been in the Mexican war. It was, as you know, by the merest slip in the world that I did not succeed to fortune the two last times I was in public life. And, dear Polly, I have now a better chance than ever, having fallen in with a great politician in search of fame. By joining our fortunes I will so manage it as to get the better of my enemies; and with a little aid from my friends of the newspapers, you will yet see me in power. I am a man of valor, I mix but little honey with my brimstone; and let my enemies say what they will, take my word for it, you shall yet see yourself the wife of a foreign minister."

"As to your valor, dear husband," returned his affectionate wife, "no one ever doubted it who knew you; and though there is nothing I so much covet as to be the wife of a foreign minister, and to move among great people abroad, and talk about it when I get home, our family is growing up, and need all we can earn to get them bread. And as they might become a town tax, while you were getting the office, perhaps we had better thank heaven, and remain humble folks until we can get to be fine ones without being sneered at."

"Indeed, Polly," said the major, in reply, "if any such mishap should befall you while I am gone, you must pray heaven, and get along as well as you can until I send relief. It is noble to struggle on and wait for the reward, which always comes." The good woman heard these words with tears in her eyes, and began to tax her resolution for means to meet the emergency; for she saw clearly that the major had got a freak into his head, and was about to give up the business of peddling tin ware, at which he made an honest living, and again lead the vagabond life of a politician.

Page 86

And while this colloquy was proceeding between the major and his wife, I had taken a seat in the reading-room of the "Independent Temperance," where Giles Sheridan, the little deformed man, was nervously pacing the floor, and pausing every few minutes either to give me a few random sketches of his career in the world, or to mutter his misgiving at the result of his lecture on Crabbe. In truth, he had been waited upon several times during the morning by persons regarded by the town as famous for their great learning, all of whom said, if he had chosen a subject less remote, they would have guaranteed a large house; as it was, they were not quite so sure of the result. Soon the dapper figure of Bessie appeared in the room. "Please, sir," she said, as her cheeks crimsoned with blushes, "they say you came into town with that queer man they call Major Potter?"

"And what of that, my child?" I replied, as another sentence trembled upon her lips, which were as tempting as ripe cherries.

"Why, sir," she lisped, "you must know that although he now and then talks like a sensible man, he is set down for a great fool. He affords a deal of amusement for the boys, and never comes home but what he keeps the whole town in an uproar. Being a great fool is what got him elected Major of the Invincibles. And then he fancies himself a great politician, and goes about the country delivering lectures, as he calls them, and leaves his family to starve. Proceed no farther with him; for I heard our minister say (and he never profanes his calling) that the devil had run away with his brains. He is always talking about his valor, and his military dignity; but his poor distressed wife can tell you all about that." She was proceeding to say much more, but was interrupted by the appearance of the major, who, as he said, came to say, that as his wife was sick of a fever, and the house in a somewhat disordered condition, I must excuse his not giving me an invitation to dine with him. He hoped, however, that sufficient proof had been given to convince me of the high estimation in which he was held by Barnstable in general. "Pardon what I may have said extravagant of myself, sir. The rabble, you know, are always ready to get down a man of genius, and to misconstrue his acts; but the thinking never fail, as they have done with me, to give merit its due." Having said this with refreshing self complacency, the major turned to Giles Sheridan, (Bessie had left the room,) and as if to add to his discomfiture, told him he had little to expect from his lecture on Crabbe, of whom it was said that he could not be much of a poet, since the people of Barnstable knew so little of him. Indeed he offered to wager two dozen tin pints, a Shanghai chicken, and his military honor with the little deformed man, that he would give an exhibition with his pig, whose wonderful qualifications had already got noised over town, and attract a greater audience. Indeed, as I have resolved never to swerve from the truth in this history, it must be here acknowledged that the pig had become quite as famous as his master.

Page 87

The little deformed man was in nowise pleased with such a comparison of his acquirements, and answered by saying, it did not become him to hold argument with a man, however high his military position, who would place genius in the scale with brute instinct. Seeing the pain he had caused the little man, the major said he meant no offence, and was ready to get upon his knees, dissolved in tears, if that were necessary to a good and sufficient apology. In fine, it must be said of the major, that, although he was at times emphatic in his eccentric declarations, he would not knowingly wound the feelings of those who had done him no harm. And, unlike some editors of New York newspapers, he always held himself accountable according to the strictest military rules, nor was he ever known to regard the character of his fellow in arms as of so little worth, that he would daily splinter it for the amusement of the public.

The major said he had come to see if I was comfortable, and to inform me that he had thrown the editor of the Patriot a sly hint about noticing the arrival of so distinguished a person as myself. And the editor had assured him it would be properly recorded in his columns, and so embroidered as to make it pleasant to his fancy. The major now took leave of me, satisfied within himself of having convinced me that he was a man of stupendous parts. I must not forget to say that he promised to call again, and be present at the lecture in the evening, inasmuch as his absence could not fail to be seriously felt.

Night came on, and with it there gathered into the lecture room of the Orthodox Church, an audience of many bonnets and much respectability. Proverbially inquisitive, the people of the good old town of Barnstable were on tip-toe, to see the man of whose curious figure they had heard so much. And as if to gratify their curiosity, Giles Sheridan now rose, frisked the little black scroll about in his fingers, wiped the sweat nervously from his brow, and, in a faltering voice, gave an interesting sketch of the early life of his darling poet. This he continued for more than an hour, now warming into eloquence, now subsiding into a low, desponding voice. But his hearers sat unmoved, nor was one hand of applause raised to cheer his too misgiving heart. They wondered, and listened, and looked at one another, as was the custom of the country. The little deformed man, however, took it as a proof that he had failed to interest them; and this sorely taxed his sensitive nature. I ought also not to forget to mention that the speaker was twice interrupted by the major, who begged that he would state the exact quality of poetry written by his friend, the poet. The audience took this interruption very good naturedly, while the speaker gratified the major's curiosity by reciting a number of verses written by him. The major then said he was fully satisfied that this Mr. Crabbe must have been a great poet; but he thought if the

Page 88

speaker had known one Sergeant Milton, who wrote poetry in honor of the regiment he was major of during the Mexican war, he would not have set Mr. Crabbe on so high a horse. Indeed, according to what the major said, this Sergeant Milton was the most wonderful poet that ever sung of the Mexican War; and in addition to the gift of being a versifier, he was celebrated for brewing an excellent whiskey punch, without which no poet could hope for prosperity in New York, where punch begat poetry, and foul linen seemed inseparable from poets.

The speaker smiled at the major's quaint remarks concerning his friend, Sergeant Milton. But such was the failure he fancied himself making, that he would gladly have given the fifteen dollars he was to receive in pay for his lectures, and said not a word about the victuals, to have got quietly out of town. But in truth he had not a shilling in his pocket, and the money he was to receive of the committee constituted the forlorn hope of his future fortunes. So, with a heart overburdened with despondency, and an eye made liquid with anxiety, he concluded in a faltering voice, and heaved a sigh. And as no one came forward to congratulate him, and the very atmosphere seemed to partake of the frigidity of the audience, he watched his hearers disperse in silence, frisking his fingers, and wondering if he had made them any wiser on the life of one Crabbe.

But a silent tongue is no proof of what the heart feels; nor does the outward demonstration carry with it the stronger appreciation of merit. And so it proved in this instance. It being the custom of the country not to applaud on such occasions, the audience went home to unbosom its approval, which was of the heartiest kind. On his way home, the little man was joined by an elder of the church, who, seeing his despondency, said unto him: "Permit me to congratulate you, sir, for never was audience more interested in a lecture. You did nobly, sir." The little man's heart was touched. He grasped the speaker by the hand firmly, and as his enthusiasm broke its bounds, he poured forth his gratitude in a rhapsody of thanks. Indeed, so quickly did the word of consolation reinstate his confidence, that he became like an overjoyed child, and in the innocence of his heart invited the elder home with him, that they might enjoy a punch together. In short, he not only convinced Barnstable that Mr. Crabbe was a great poet, but so enlisted sympathy for himself, that the benevolent ladies of the sewing circle, seeing the dilapidated state of his raiment, made him up a purse, and presented it with an intimation that Warren, the tailor, lived at the corner. I should not forget to mention, that his second and third lectures proved more successful than the first, and that Major Roger Potter looked in at the "Independent Temperance" to compliment the little deformed man on the very learned character of his lecture, much of which (so he said) had so deeply interested him, that he had resolved to incorporate it into his next political speech, which he intended soon to make in opposition to that arch agitator, Thomas Benton, Esq., and which the state of the nation demanded should be done at no very distant day. Having said this, he called me aside, and enjoining me to

keep what he said a profound secret, whispered what will be related in the next chapter, and took his departure.

Page 89

CHAPTER XVIII.

Which treats of how major Roger Sherman Potter, solely in obedience to the demands of the nation, turned A deaf ear to the remonstrances of his wife Polly, and sailed for new York, to the great delight of little Barnstable.

"You will see, sir," whispered the major, putting the fore finger of his right hand to his lips, "that my inclination never runs to small things. It quite confounded my wife, Polly, when I revealed to her my intention of complying with your request, and of our setting out together in search of fame and fortune. But as I have the power of persuasion pretty largely developed, and am in all quite a philosopher, I overcame her objections by telling her you were a sprightly young gentleman, whose political fame and great learning was coupled with the most kind and affectionate disposition. 'Honor, husband,' says she, 'to whom honor is due. I know you have deserved, if you have not yet achieved. But let not your success in office carry away your modesty and humility. And above all, remember to think of us at home, for I have heard it said that politicians let their loves run too free when away from their wives.' Having assured her that I would not forget her admonition, and be careful upon what damsel I let a double look fall, she consented that I might depart a third time, and see what could be done. And I made a vow never to forget her while the sun of prosperity shone upon me. Now, if you will just fix the time of our departure, you will find me ready. Major Potter, as you have seen, is no small man in Barnstable. Major Potter never comes and goes without being noticed. And if you haven't had proof enough of my popularity, you'll see what an ado there will be made when I leave. Honor, as my wife Polly says, always awaits them who merit it; and though a man's modesty will not let him be for ever speaking of himself, I may say it to you, seeing that we are about to join our fortunes, that the people never see me go without a regret. As to my children, I shall give each an admonition before I leave; and as I hope one day to see them enjoying the admiration, as well as the distinction my military reputation will confer upon them, it will be safe to leave the rest to heaven." The major conveyed this information in so quaint a manner that I could not suppress a smile, though it disclosed a resolution I by no means welcomed. In truth, I had already seen so much of his eccentricities, that I was hoping our acquaintance would cease in Barnstable. But it now became apparent that he regarded himself not only a necessary item in my welfare, but as being most essential to the achievement of my designs. So, charging me to think no more of Bessie, whom he hinted was as coy a little witch as ever waited on the table of a country tavern, and ready at all times to make love with every dashing young fellow who chanced that way, he took his departure, promising to call at noon on the next day.

Page 90

Having passed the night in refreshing sleep, I was up with the sun on the following morning, and before noon had received the calls of several distinguished citizens, two or three of whom requested that I “remain over,” and deliver an address on the state of the nation. Offering my inability as an apology for not complying with their request, I was surprised that so obscure a person should receive such homage. The mystery, however, was very soon explained. The major, adopting the method in fashion with some of our modern politicians, had been actively noising it about, that no greater politician than myself ever lived; and that, being on my way to Washington in search of a foreign mission, I had generously invited him to accompany me. The major was indeed building up my reputation with a view to the consolidation of his own. He had also deluded the editor of the Patriot, (who was a man much given to good jokes,) into writing several long articles in compliment of my political achievements, and which were of so serious a style, that the distant reader, unaccustomed to the tricks of editors, must have been grievously misled. And indeed such was the fact, for the political excitement makers of New York had no sooner seen the article copied into their newspapers, than they set about contriving a plan by which to rob the city treasury of some thousands of dollars, under the pretext of giving me a public reception worthy of the city and so great a man.

Toward evening, the major made his appearance in the “Independent Temperance,” and handing me a copy of the New York Herald, pointed to a letter in its columns, written by one Don Fernando, who it was said hoped soon to be mayor of the city, which office many persons seriously believed had been created for the accommodation of men happily endowed with a fondness for showing their greatness, which was the case with the aspiring Don Fernando, whose light was no taper burning in a small space. The letter set forth, with many flourishes, the necessity for showing proper respect to one so distinguished in the political world. And this the major held to be a significant token of the success that awaited us. He further hinted that the next thing we should see would be a resolution introduced at the Board of Common Council, (provided a member could be found sober enough to do it,) to vote a sum of money adequate to the occasion, with an additional clause, that a committee be appointed to carry out the arrangements. But why should not a worthy servant of the people be thus honored? There were those of the honorable council who held it no harm to be liberal in the treatment of distinguished strangers, seeing that it cost them nothing, and might, by some bare possibility, afford them an opportunity of making a speech, as well as indulging a natural passion for free drinks. The major was in ecstasies with the prospect, and now disclosed to me the fact, that he had sold out his stock of tin ware for two hundred dollars, his Shanghai

Page 91

chickens for fifty, and his wagon for ninety, making in all three hundred and forty dollars, two hundred of which he had set apart as peace and comfort money for his wife, Polly, and the balance he had resolved to tuck nicely away in his wallet, to serve in case of emergency. We must take Duncan with us, he said, for he was a pig of wonderful parts, and deformed monstrosities being much in favor in New York, we could make a good thing of exhibiting him, which would save us against the rubs of ill fortune. As to old Battle, he had been his companion in so many wars and tin ware campaigns, that he had resolved also to take him along, though it cost a new pair of saddle-bags. And as the New York politicians were bent on doing him great honor, he would no doubt be invited to review the troops, (perhaps be escorted by the Seventh Regiment,) when, as a matter of economy, the animal would serve an excellent purpose; and, being quite as high in metal as he was in bone, he would no doubt astonish the bystanders with his proud demeanor.

There was lying in the harbor of Barnstable, bound for New York, a great, broad sterned sloop, called "The Two Marys," commanded by one Luke Snider, who was an old pilot along the coast, and as burly an old sea-dog as ever navigated the Sound. Luke's wife, a lusty wench of some forty summers, accompanied him, as mate and could steer as good a trick as any Tom Marlin that ever stood at a tiller. Indeed, Luke manned the "Two Marys" with his own family, for his two sons, who made up the crew, "went hands before the mast," while the good wife added to the office of mate that of cook. The "Two Marys" was, in addition to her other distinguishing qualities, dignified with the title of "New York Packet," and when in port always kept a sign in her rigging denoting that fact. Indeed, Captain Luke Snider was regarded an extremely sharp fellow by all who knew him, and in addition to having carried on a large trade in onions and watermelons, was a salt water politician of great influence, and could so direct the votes of his fellow craftsmen as to make him in high favor with all candidates for public office. And the major, who had an eye to the future, never let an opportunity to conciliate Luke's friendship slip, and would at times swear by him. And to further demonstrate his friendship for the versatile skipper, he now proposed that we take passage on the "Two Marys," as well for the purpose of disarming our political enemies, who might charge us with presumption did we take a more fashionable conveyance, as to carry out a genuine stroke of political economy. Feeling that objection would be useless, I consented to leave the matter entirely with him, being satisfied that so great a politician and military hero was a safe person to trust with such arrangements.

And now the morning of our departure having arrived, the bright aurora was filling the balconies of heaven with golden clouds, and all nature seemed putting on her gayest attire. Then the sun rose in all its splendor, and not a cock in town but gave out a crow, nor a dog that was a dog that did not send up a bark, nor a sparrow that didn't get into a tree top and mingle his sweet notes in the curious medley, which the major held to be in honor of his departure, the elements always being on the side of greatness.

Page 92

At ten o'clock I took leave of Bessie, having sealed my affections for her with a kiss, and wiped away the tear that hung so touchingly in her eye, as she said in a subdued voice, "Perhaps we shall never, never meet again. But if you will not forget me, I will not forget you." To which I replied that death only would make me forget her, since there was written in her face loveliness so perfect, that time could only brighten it in my memory. Again she blushed, and cast upon me such a bewitching look that it almost made me falter in my resolution to leave her behind. And my faltering increased as her warm hand pressed mine, and the words, "Will you write to me, and give relief to one whose thoughts will follow you?" hung tremblingly upon her lips. But just then I saw what a great soul she had within her, and how when moved she would tread upon that dangerous brink, from which so many launch into a world of woe. I pressed her hand in return, and bade her adieu; promising never to forget her, nor allow another to beguile my fancies, but to be unto her as I felt she would be unto me-the angel of my dreams.

Hastening on board of the "Two Marys," I was received with great consideration by Captain Luke Snider, who said he was delighted at the prospect of having so distinguished a passenger, and with no little ceremony introduced me to his wife. A gentle wind blew fair, the peak of the "Two Marys" mainsail hung in lazy folds, and the great jib, partly set, flapped every few minutes, as if eager for the great event of the major's arrival, which was waited by an anxious crowd of idlers, who had gathered on the wharf, and who were diverting themselves with divers jeers at Captain Snider, of whom it seemed they had no very high opinion. Suddenly a great noise was heard in the distance, and the rotund figure of the major, mounted upon old Battle, and dressed in a slouchy suit of Uxbridge satinet, made his appearance, followed by a mob of boys, hooting and shouting at the very top of their voices. The animal, not at all disturbed by the singular character of the ovation, moved forward at a methodical pace, whilst the major, judging from his extreme good humor, was not a little delighted at the honors he imagined were being showered upon him. No sooner did the crowd on the wharf get news of the major's approach, than they sent up a deafening shout, and hastened to meet him with so much determination to do him homage, that even old Battle began to prick up his ears. Two mischievous urchins now tied a small air balloon to old Battle's tail, while another would every few minutes switch his gambrels with a twig of thorn, and so make him jerk his hinder legs as nearly to throw the indomitable major over his head. Duncan, the pig, was led by a boy at some distance, and performed his part in the comical programme by keeping up a medley of discordant squeals. And what with the barking of dogs, who seemed to claim a right to take part in the proceedings, and the squealing of pigs,

Page 93

and the loud acclamations of the grotesque throng, one might have set it down as a fact that Little Barnstable was out on a frolic. As to the figure cut by the major, that may be safely left to the reader's fancy. His short legs scarce reached below old Battle's saddle girth; and, in addition to the slouchy suit of Uxbridge satinet, he wore a shabby white hat, very like that worn by Philosopher Greeley on election days. Never was departure of foreign ambassador attended with such demonstrations, all of which the major viewed as highly complimentary to him as a military politician. Having reached the end of the wharf amidst cheers and bravos, the crowd would not permit him to dismount until he had addressed them on the state of the nation. Saying it always gave him great pleasure to gratify the wishes of the people, he faced half round in his saddle, and bowed with an air of great self complacency. Then his broad, red face crimsoned, and his thoughts seemed in his beard, for after stroking and fretting it for some seconds, he spoke as follows: "Fellow-citizens: I am sure I have not merited the great homage bestowed upon me to-day. But that is neither here nor there. Let me enjoin you all to live patriots, avoiding ceremonies and performing sacrifices for your country. And above all, live as good christians, and not as fluttering butterflies, who attract only with the gay color of their plumage while they live and die soon to be forgotten. And as to the nation itself, why, may the devil get me, (and I'm no friend of his,) if I don't think all that is needed to render it safe, is just to let it alone. Nor would it be much lost if some kindly disposed gentleman would kill off a few score of our Union savers, who, like quack doctors, go about with their pockets full of plasters, and are for ever hunting for the crack in the nation's skull. And I would advise all politicians to spin less patriotic yarns, to be more modest, to learn wisdom, to drink less whiskey; in truth, to think more of God and their country, and to get them honest godfathers, who will teach them what a sad thing it is to think so much of the nation's gold." Having said this, the major stopped suddenly, and turning in his saddle, caught a glimpse of the air balloon attached to old Battle's tail, which was making curious gyrations in the air; and seeing the ludicrous figure he was cutting, he called upon all present to aid him in punishing the miscreant who dared to offer such an insult to his dignity. But the crowd only answered with jeers and acclamations, which so increased his anger that he dismounted, and, giving his pig in charge of Captain Snider, led old Battle hurriedly on board, cursed them for an unthinking set, and set sail amidst the loud acclamations of the crowd. As the "Two Marys" sped seaward, Polly Potter and her three children were seen waving their adieus from a neighboring height.

CHAPTER XIX.

Page 94

In which the reader is informed how major Roger Potter, in love of his country, and to sustain the honor of his profession, displayed his courage during A storm.

Not a little disturbed, lest I should distrust the quality of his valor, the major approached me shortly after we had set sail, and having stroked his beard for a few seconds, said: "I do hope, sir, you will not think it strange I did not use my sword to avenge the insult offered me by the enemies who mixed up with my friends on the wharf. But I am a man of discretion, and my forbearance was in consideration of my friends, whose bodies might perchance have got scarred by the blows aimed at my foes. Being a friend and fellow fortune seeker, I need have no scruple in saying to you, that I have always held it an axiom, that all great men husband their valor well, and never use it except with great discretion. In truth, and as I hope to honor the profession to which I belong, it was the exercise of that worthy discretion God implanted in my heart that saved me from two duels, the consequences of which might have been very bloody. I assure you, I have often thought how, if it had been my fate to die in either of those sanguinary contests, my wife Polly would have been left to mourn the loss of a most excellent husband and father. And yet I have just been thinking, how nothing in the world would so much please me as to see the 'Two Marys' engaged in battle with a Sound pirate, for then it would afford me an opportunity of letting you see a little of the courage that distinguished me when at the head of my regiment in Mexico."

The "Two Marys" was an exceedingly formidable craft, and very safe in a sea, of which Captain Luke Snider, fashioning after those who build very bad steamers for a very good natured government, never failed to boast. Indeed, the "Two Marys," like several of our best boasted war steamers, was not blessed with a capacity for speed, and had only made forty miles' distance in three days, which fact was ascertained by the log Luke's wife kept with a piece of chalk on the top of the companion slide.

It was on the afternoon of the third day, then, that there arose a terrible storm. The wind was in the south-west, and with a pelting rain, the sea rose into such angry waves as to threaten serious consequences to all on board, and more especially to old Battle, who had quarters near the windlass bits, to which he was tied, and where, notwithstanding the major's constant solicitude, he became so lean of frame that a speedy dissolution was seriously apprehended. And this great event, so disastrous to the major's future prospects, would have been welcomed by Captain Luke, of whose deck he was making sad havoc, and who had twice been heard to say he was only a pack of useless bones, whose life would be better saved by his being thrown overboard. The major overhearing this, was not a little wounded in his pride, for he set great store by old Battle, and declared him an inseparable part of his fortunes.

Page 95

And now, while the “Two Marys” bowed her head to the sea, and shook her great jib in the face of the wind, old Battle swung to and fro, and could with great difficulty keep his feet, while his legs were so swollen, that it required some effort to use them. The major attributed the largeness of old Battle’s legs to a rheumatic gout he was at times troubled with, and which went far to show that he was a horse of good constitution, who had been reared in the care of a Christian gentleman of rank.

While there the animal stood shivering in the pelting storm, presenting as forlorn a figure as could well be imagined, the major descended into the cabin, and soon returned, bringing with him his shattered saddle and holsters, and with an air that indicated an amount of courage almost incalculable, soon had it girthed upon his favorite animal. This done, he demanded the animal to stand firm, and, with a self confident toss of the head, mounted, to the great surprise of all who witnessed so curious an act of daring. He then braced himself in his saddle, and commenced to look defiant in the “teeth” of the gale. He had not, however, remained long in this position, when a sharp sea struck the “Two Marys,” causing her to lurch to starboard, and prostrating old Battle broadside upon the deck. Nor did the sea, which was mightier than the major, vouchsafe the slightest respect for him, inasmuch as it sent him head foremost against the knight heads, and with so much force, that, had not his skull been thicker than an ordinary bombshell, there was no telling how many fragments had been made of it. As the matter now stood, it only added another proof to the many instances in which warriors owe the preservation of their lives to the thickness of their skulls. “I commend my soul to heaven, and call all present to bear witness that I die forgiving my enemies,” spoke, or rather groaned the major, as his left hand rubbed convulsively over his haunches, and he cast an imploring look upward at those who had gathered about him to render succor. One of the sailors now picked him up in his arms, and laid him upon the tarpaulin of the main hatch, when, certain restoratives having been applied by Luke’s wife, he soon began to scratch his head, and exhibit such other signs of animation as made it certain the country would not be deprived of his services just yet. Nor was it many minutes after he had given out such strong proofs of his willingness to meet death, when he looked piteously up at the good woman, and begged her to get to his poor beast, who was groaning loudly in his distresses, and render him such relief as his case demanded.

Page 96

Great efforts were now made to raise the poor animal from his perilous position, which great work, to the no small joy of the major, was effected by putting the "Two Marys" on the other tack. Old Battle now shook the water from his mane, and as if to thank his deliverers, gave out a loud neigh. And so suddenly did this bring the major to his feet, in the full possession of his senses, that he set about thanking heaven for its kind interposition in saving him and his horse to his country, which now stood in such great danger of being dissolved into fragments, that his whole energies would be required to save it. Another thankful look cast upon those about him, and he spake and said it was, after all, but an interposition of Providence, merely for the purpose of showing how many trials great politicians had to overcome, and how necessary it was that they have heads like New Hampshire oak. And while the docile animal did penance in the teeth of the pelting storm, the major, his legs seeming to have shortened with the fall, staggered aft, and approaching me with a confidential air, said: "I respect the great reputation you have made, young man. And I think you will admit that it required no small amount of valor even to attempt such a feat as you have just witnessed. I have read many histories of great men, and they were all liable to accidents at times. But if I did not achieve what I undertook, you must bear in mind the fact, which has been established by certain philosophers who write in Putnam's Magazine, that the terrors of war are nothing to the terrors of disgrace and dishonor; and to face such a sea, mounted upon such a charger, was quite equal to advancing upon the artillery of an enemy. Now, upon my word, I am not so much bruised after all; and as the accident was not from any want of courage in me, I will presently give you an opportunity of seeing what sort of metal Major Potter is made of." Here the major paused as if to regain his thoughts, and thrust his hands into the ample pockets of his trowsers. Suddenly he remembered that he had remounted without a bridle, to which strange oversight he charged all that had happened. "Some look upon the good fortunes of others only to bewail their own condition in life, but such never was my course. I hold fame a golden treasure, which diligence can unlock, notwithstanding what is said by our great men of the little newspapers, who, like slighted lovers, always have a portfolio filled with mournful complaints against the world in general, especially if it mind its own business, and seem inclined to peace." The major concluded these remarks, for which Captain Luke Snider was inclined to set him down as not so shallow pated after all, and hastened into the cabin, for the storm had somewhat subsided, and brought forth his bridle, which he had on his faithful horse in a trice. "Pray, good friend," said I, "heed well what you do, for a good life saved is worth the reward. And if you should be thrown into the sea, heaven save the mark, what is to become of the nation?"

Page 97

"A man in public life, especially if he have rank in the military, should always prove his valor to those he is called upon to serve; and as there are many ways of doing it, I have chosen this one as preferable to all others. You must, therefore, shake off your suspicions, and take notice of what I do, that you may bear testimony of my courage, whenever you are called upon to do so. I say this, knowing how curiously officious on matters of physical development are the New York politicians, among whom we shall mix, though we must take heed lest, like dogs and crows, they fall upon and devour us." He now shrugged his shoulders, and, with an air of resumed courage, again mounted his faithful beast, and, heedless of the remonstrances and entreaties of Captain Luke's wife, braced himself firmly in his saddle, drew up the reins, and sat facing the storm until he was drenched to the skin. I now began to fear he would get benumbed, and falling into the sea become a victim to his courage; but on approaching him, and appealing to him to desist, assuring him that the country could ill spare so great and wonderful a politician, he merely wiped the water from his eyes and declared his determination not to give in, but to continue thus showing the fixedness of his purpose, until the good woman called him to supper. Fortunately an incident happened, which relieved him of the peril in which he had placed himself, in order to sustain what he called the pride and honor of his profession, and it was this: While he was thus valiantly seated in his saddle, cutting so sorry a figure that every parson in the parish would, had he been seen by them, set about offering up a prayer for his soul, there appeared to windward, and bearing directly down upon us, a large brig under full sail. She came dashing on over the sea, and soon it became evident to all on board the "Two Marys" that there was danger of a collision with the stranger, who was a deeply laden Boston packet, speeding on at no less a pace than ten knots an hour. At first, the major affected not to partake of the alarm which had seized upon those on board, and said he rather relished such opportunities of displaying what he always held to be true manliness; but as the stranger approached nearer and nearer, nor swerved a hair from her course, the major was seen to cast an anxious look now and then at the companion way, as if he hoped to be abundantly rewarded for his valor by retreating to the cabin. A few minutes more, and the stranger's ponderous bows rose majestically over the seas, and bore down upon us with a velocity that threatened destruction to all on board. Being now so near that objects upon her deck were plainly visible, the major took off his hat, and, with quick gestures, commenced making signals for her to keep off. But, as if unconscious of being admonished by so distinguished a major and politician, the stranger varied not a hair from her course, but bounded forward, as if determined to come

Page 98

athwart of the “Two Marys,” to the ruin of Captain Luke Snider and his good wife. Seeing this, the major looked confusedly for a few seconds, then alighted with extraordinary agility, and retired to the cabin, saying he would get his sword and be prepared to give the fellow a warm reception, since he believed him a Sound pirate, in search of plunder. Instead, however, of returning with his sword, he thought it as well to imitate the course pursued by so many of our valiant politicians, and quietly took a seat upon one of the lockers, where he waited with breathless suspense, as if expecting every minute to see the stranger’s cutwater pierce the quarter of the “Two Marys.” As for old Battle, he had left him with a benediction, to which he now added sundry prayers for his deliverance. It was not, he said, because he had any very strong fears of death, but solely in consideration of what his country would suffer by his loss.

And while the major was thus offering up his devotions, the strange brig ran close down to the “Two Marys,” close hauled her sails, and passed astern with a sort of coquettish contempt for so small a craft. In truth, she mistook the sloop for a fisherman, and bore up for her in the hope of procuring some fresh caught cod; but finding she was mistaken, was glad enough to be rid of her.

“Upon my word,” ejaculated the major, with an air of regained courage, for he was certain the stranger must have passed, “just let the fellow come; and if his timbers be not like iron, Major Potter will give them a shivering.” The major now took down his sword, and making several strokes, as if to test the strength of his arm, swore not to lose so excellent an opportunity of making mince meat of every rascal who dared to molest the “Two Marys.” Again appearing upon deck, he cast several anxious glances to windward, and then, having given his head a significant toss, inquired what had become of the stranger. “Pray, look the right way, and be not deceived with your eyes open,” spoke Captain Snider, giving his head a toss, and pointing astern. “Magic, and nothing else, got him so far out of reach in so short a space,” re—the major, with a flourish of his sword, at the same time declaring his readiness to give old Battle and the gifted pig, if the “Two Marys” would but go in chase of her.

“Faith, sir, I think it would be as well to let peace reign between you; for though the “Two Marys” is as staunch a craft as ever floated, and might with safety be put upon the chase, I am not so sure what time she would come up. And if you will be cool for the present, I promise in due time you shall have a chance at an enemy big enough to test your metal; but it must not be said that blood has been shed on board of my packet; for I am a poor man, and, heaven save us, if I should be brought to trial in New York, but it would go hard with me, for I have heard it said that there the rich may murder, but the poor only are punished for such crimes.”

Page 99

"As you are absolute in command," rejoined the major, with a low bow, "and refuse me this opportunity of showing my skill as a soldier, perhaps it is as well, seeing that discretion is always the better part of valor, and in consideration of what I have already achieved, I may put up my sword until larger game offers."

CHAPTER XX.

Which treats of A delicate affair that took place, and which was the result of A mistake, that had nearly cost the major his life.

Having generously given up all hope of a tussle with the strange brig, the major sheathed his sword, and with a condescension worthy of our very noisy senator in Congress from Arkansas, betook himself to feeding his favorite pig, who was demanding his supper in the loudest squeals his lungs were capable of. "Wonderful as it may seem," whispered the major, confidentially, "no great man, with a vigorous understanding, would hold these little kind acts damaging to his reputation as a politician; whereas history teaches that little men without reputation are for ever disturbed, lest the company they fall into be not equal to their condition. But one must not be surprised at this, since great mental powers are now exhausted over sausage suppers, and the smallest minds have got to managing Congress, and through Congress the nation, by mere stratagem. You may think, sir, that I meddle with what does not concern me; but you must bear in mind that I am a man of the people; and though I have compassion for those little minds that so flit and flicker about Congress, I am not so well pleased when they play purse-mouse to the great rogues of the lobby, who would sell the nation's honor for gold enough to save them from honest labor." Here the major patted his pig gently upon the head, as the animal seemed inclined to return such kindness. He then said it afforded him grateful satisfaction to contemplate an animal of such excellent qualities, especially when contrasted with that herd running about Congress devouring the vitals of the nation.

This strange speech took all on board by surprise, for not even Captain Luke, who had seen him perform some singular offices, would have believed him capable of such sound logic. In truth, had he been any other than Major Roger Potter, the captain had set him down for a profound philosopher. But he had more than once heard it hinted that the major, when performing one of his political feats, had himself played no very inconsiderable part as lobby agent to Congress, where his reputation as a great rogue caused his services to be in much demand.

Page 100

It was now in the dusk of evening, the *Two Marys* was shaping her course for the north shore, the wind had subsided, and the sea moved lazily along in unbroken swells. Supper was announced, and Major Roger Potter hastened into the cabin, saying: "It is as well that we eat, for though I feel a qualm coming over me now and then, which seriously disturbs my temper, I must not forget that food may cure the ills of my head." Having cast several scrutinizing glances over the humble fare Luke's wife had prepared, and for the quality of which she offered innumerable excuses, saying they were yet poor, and could not afford better, the major rolled his little blinking eyes upwards, laid his hat carefully upon the locker, and with one of his best fashioned bows, and in obedience to what true gallantry demanded, bestowed upon Luke's wife a compliment which, I venture to say, there is nothing upon record to compare with it, though such things are exceedingly cheap with the profession of which he claimed to be so renowned a member. "Madam," said he, clasping his hands over his belly, the globular of which had changed somewhat, "though I am a politician and a soldier, both of which professions require the exercise of great understanding, I can dispense courtesies when they are deserved. The supper you have here set out is fit for a prince, and worthy of you as the wife of our gallant commander. In truth, madam, I have long held that there is no office in which woman can so well display the greatness of her power, as in the preparation of a good supper, and this art I would have them perfect, instead of writing sensation novels for publishers, who think of nothing but setting the nation by the ears, and putting money in their pockets. If she be good at working a shirt, heavens! but she will be a blessing to the man who weds her, for our fashionable damsels can neither knit nor sew, and seem fit only for putting carefully away in glass cases." Captain Luke listened to the delivery of this speech with dogged silence. In truth, he harbored a suspicion that military men were a little too free with their courtesies to other men's wives, and that it was just as well to keep a jealous eye upon them. He therefore desired the major to sit down and eat such as was set before him, and thank God, for such was better than wasting so much ceremony.

"I see, sir," returned the major, "that you do not draw your logic from experience, for to praise that which is good, and not that which is bad, as our critics do, is to prove yourself a well bred gentleman." The major having concluded his reply, drew from his pocket a metal comb, and commenced combing his coarse red beard, when after he had arranged it to his satisfaction, he took a seat at the table, where he devoured the viands with such evident appetite as to surprise and astonish every one present. And this further increased the captain's dislike of him, for it concerned him much, lest his stores run out ere his voyage was at an end. As for the

Page 101

rest, it afforded them much amusement to see him play so active a part in devouring the food. "I am not a subject for jest, I would have you all know," said the major, with an air of much displeasure. "It never was charged upon me that I was a man of ill temper; or that I was a man easily given to quarrels; and as these things are surely true, so it will not do for you to trifle with my respectability. There must also be that difference between us which my military position demands." The sternness of these remarks, and the great gravity with which they were delivered, produced a silence that lasted for several minutes, and likewise so confounded me that I began to think his brain was not so much at fault after all. Each in turn now broke silence by offering an apology, and treated him with so much consideration, that he arose from his seat in the very best humor possible, saying that as they had set so good an example, he must acknowledge that he was sorry for what he had said, and hoped they would set it down to his quick impulses, which, though incident to the feelings of a good soldier, were marvelously apt to lead him astray. He now remembered that he had left his bridle and holsters upon old Battle, and repaired upon deck to relieve him of the burden, which he did with much care and many caresses.

At ten o'clock, the major, who was not a little anxious lest the "Two Marys" should come in collision with some larger craft, undressed and retired to his berth, where the trouble of the nation ceased for a time to distract his brain. All now went smoothly on until midnight, when, it being Luke's wife's watch on deck, the major awoke from his first nap, and hearing his pig running about the deck, making divers noises, as if in great distress, hastened to his relief in a condition not easily described in this history. The pig seeing the major in pursuit of him, ran aft with a mischievous grunt, and was evidently inclined to seek a shelter under the honest woman's garments. And in fear of a liberty by no means sanctioned in books of true politeness, she gave out a loud scream just as the major, unconscious of the state he was in, for he was too gallant a soldier to have exposed himself to a female, not even in the starlight, tripped over a rope and fell against her with such force that both came to the deck, and with so much noise as to bring Captain Luke, (who would have sworn some strange craft was grinding the timbers out of the "Two Marys,") immediately to the rescue. Unfortunately for the gallant major, he had fallen uppermost, and in a position where the binnacle light threw a curious shadow over that part of his person he was most scrupulous in protecting, as are all military gentlemen of quality. I think it may be said, without disparagement to this history, that neither Alexander, nor Napoleon, nor Wellington, nor, indeed, any of the great warriors, whose deeds historians have recorded with so much ostentation, ever met with so strange an accident,

Page 102

or one which led to so many embarrassments. And although Captain Luke had never had occasion to doubt the chastity of his wife, whose face, being as ugly as could well be conceived, he had always held to be an adequate protection, his first impulse now was to take summary revenge for what he considered an unwarrantable trespass upon his rights. Thereupon he seized a club, and in the heat of his passion, and without malice aforethought, or even giving the major time to extricate himself, he took what his eyes saw for granted, and so belabored him about the head and shoulders as to render him speechless.

“Base villain!” exclaimed the Captain, “if your life was worth it, I—yes, I would think no more of taking it—you fish blooded vagabond! First attempt to make free with my poor wife, and then aggravate me by declaring your innocence!” Being a man of great strength, the captain got his wife out from under the major, whose blood was running freely, and set her upon her feet, in an almost fainting condition. The affair, though singularly desperate, was but the work of a minute; and when I reached the deck, the “Two Marys” was in the wind, Captain Luke was consoling his wife, the pig was running about the deck in great tribulation, and my companion in pursuit of fame lay weltering in his gore. Even old Battle had given out signs of alarm, and such was the state of confusion prevailing on board, that it required no small stock of courage to bring matters to a requisite understanding. I stooped over the major to ascertain exactly how many bones were broken, and as I did so, Captain Luke commanded that he be thrown into the sea.

“Yes, and let his traps follow, for I verily believe his pig possessed of the devil, who has thrown an evil spell over the wind, of which we have scarce had a fair puff since we left,” he exclaimed.

Hearing this command, the major began at once to give out signs of returning consciousness, and whispered that though he had received grievous damage to his head, and seriously believed there was not a whole bone in his body, he thought he might yet be sufficiently restored to settle his worldly concerns. Indeed he had during his whole life made it a point never to shut the door against life, but to so nurse the remaining vitality as to make it take its longest run, so that one’s days in the land be as long as possible.

CHAPTER XXI.

Which treats of what took place when the cause was explained.

Almost the first words spoken by the recovering woman were, "Husband, now that I have collected my senses, and come to remember how it all happened, I feel you have done grievous wrong to the poor man, for truly it was no fault of his."

"Fault of his!" exclaimed the captain, interrupting her in surprise. "Pray, whose fault was it then? Did I not see him with my eyes, and in his shirt? The devil take me but if it was you who seduced such an ill begotten thing, I will soon wash my hands of such a wife, though she had borne me a score or more of children."

Page 103

"Listen, dear husband," replied the good woman, her eyes swimming in tears, "and lay nothing wrong at my door, while your anger has got your reason; for I know you will suffer most when you come to know the cause of all the bruising you have given the poor man." The major now gave out a series of pitiful groans, and so bemoaned his fate, that even the hardest heart must have dissolved into sympathy for him. And though he had no sooner gained the use of his tongue than he declared by all the saints in the calendar, not less than six of his ribs were broken, and that his skull had received, on a square guess, half that number of fractures, neither a rib was found disturbed, nor the slightest fracture in his skull. The blood had flowed from flesh cuts, which only required a little dressing to restore his head to its original good condition. Ordering a sheet brought, I threw it over the major, got him upon a seat near the companion way, and commenced dressing his wounds, while one of the sailors held the lantern. "Providence, which directs all things, and more especially the movements of the soldier, must have ordained me this bruising, else I should not have got it," said the major, shaking his head admonishingly, and casting upon me a look of deep mortification. Ever and anon wiping his nose, as if uncomfortable about that organ, he expressed considerable anxiety lest his face should have got scarred; for he was as vain of his personal appearance as a great New York general I have in my eye, but whose acts of heroism have never got beyond the columns of the almost pious newspaper he edits. Being assured he was in no way disfigured about the face, he raised his hands, and called heaven to bear witness that he never in all his life concerted wrong against his friend's wife, though he had had amours enough, God knows. He then commenced to give an account of how he came in the questionable predicament for which he got the bruising, saying, that in his anxiety to secure Duncan, who, he feared, might get overboard, he entirely overlooked the scanty nature of his raiment, for which he was ready to offer an apology, and swear that all beyond that arose from the great misfortune of having tripped his toe. All this the good woman was ready to confirm with an oath, if such had been necessary; but indeed it was not, for the very simplicity of the recital so affected Captain Luke Snider, that he would have gone upon his knees, and offered no end of atonement for the wrong he had done him, had not the major reached out his hand, and with a magnanimity truly wonderful, declared there could be no stronger evidence that they were both gentlemen, than by settling their differences in a quiet way. And if one condescended to offer an apology, the other ought at once to accept it condescendingly.

Page 104

If, then, Captain Snider had shown great agility in seriously damaging the major, he now lost no time in bringing balms to heal his wounds, and rendering him such other services as his condition demanded. The good woman, too, was not a whit behind any of them; for on regaining her equanimity, she busied herself bringing liquids and linen, and so bound the major's head with plasters and bandages, (two of which were crossed over his nose,) as to make it present a pitiful picture. Indeed his whole stock of valor was gone, and no one would have recognized the head with the two little eyes blinking through the cross bands as that of so renowned a military man as Major Roger Sherman Potter was known to be. He now thanked heaven that it was no worse; and having asked several questions concerning the safety of his horse and pig, said, he verily believed greatness was better illustrated in what a man suffered than in what he did on the field of battle—an opinion which seems to be largely shared by the adventurous heroes of this day, since the more they are vanquished the more they value their own greatness. Notwithstanding this, it must be confessed he had a slight misgiving as to whether his military dignity remained undamaged, since the blows were inflicted with a club, and not a sword. And, again, it afforded him consolation to think that the greatest men known to history had suffered great rebuffs while doing the world service.

The Two Marys was now well in shore, and being apprehensive lest the major's condition should take an unlucky turn, Captain Luke resolved to steer for Tarpaulin Cove, where the aid of a physician could be called in, if necessary, and also a fresh stock of pumpkin pies procured. For though the major had been got nicely into his berth, his dosing was accompanied with sudden spasms, arising from acute pain.

The sloop now continued on her course without anything remarkable occurring, and arrived at Tarpaulin Cove about nine o'clock on the following morning. And, notwithstanding the major was up and apparently quite comfortable, for he was suffering most from the wounds in his dignity, he refused either to go on shore, or to have a physician called to dress his wounds. Nor did he lisp a single word about having resided at the Cove not many years ago, where he pursued the business of a dealer in melons and onions, which he suddenly abandoned, whether for want of success or otherwise, was not generally known among his creditors, who had remained ignorant of his whereabouts up to this day, though it was more than once given out, that he had taken to the trade of a "critic of books," and was in the employ of a New York publisher.

Page 105

Indeed the major was not only silent on the subject of his residence at Tarpaulin Cove, but expressed great impatience to get away from it, saying, that as his friends in New York would be waiting his arrival in great suspense, no time ought to be lost along the road. And when he saw the boat coming off with a stock of fresh provisions and the doctor, he retired to the cabin, and there quietly engaged his thoughts over an old newspaper. The doctor was a rough sort of man, and, although he had given much time to the study of medicine, and was celebrated for the purgatives with which he killed his patients, while preserving the gravest demeanor, could not suppress a smile when brought to confront the major, at the sorry figure he cut in the bandages. "The case seems more serious than I had hoped to find it-an eighth of an inch only saved the cerebral; but I hope there is no fracture, for that would incur one of those delicate and peculiarly dangerous operations it has not fallen to my lot to perform for so many years, that I fear it would not become me to undertake it, though I was at one time celebrated for my skill, and indeed made my reputation on these sort of cases," said the physician, taking a small packet from his pocket, and advancing a few steps toward the major, who moved away apace, and applied himself more assiduously to his newspaper. The doctor was at a loss how to account for this movement on the part of the invalid, and turning round to the captain, begged he would say to the gentleman, that he came not of his own accord. In fine, that it was rather to pay his compliments to such distinguished persons as he had been informed were on board.

"As to that, Mr. Doctor," replied the major, who overheard what was said, "if you will but leave me your good will, I think I may venture to get along without your plasters and purgatives, for my constitution remains undamaged by such things." The doctor now came to the conclusion that he had been made the victim of a joke, and, quickly retreating to the deck, he demanded five dollars of the captain for the visit, admonishing him in no very amiable terms of the consequences, in case he refused. But the captain had not five dollars to his back, though, as he expressed it, he had good staunch property enough to buy a village in Rome. "Then put me ashore!" said the doctor, "and I will see what virtue there is in the Squire." He was soon set on shore, with the loss of nothing but his temper, which is either the cheapest or the dearest thing in the world to lose, but which may be regained at any time by applying to the village parson. The anchor was then got up, and with a fine, fair wind, the "Two Marys" continued on her voyage, to the great joy of the major, who now began to relate certain things concerning his residence in Tarpaulin Cove, where, according to his account, he had held the high office of Justice of the Peace, and given such eminent satisfaction in the administration of justice, that

Page 106

his name became famous all over the state. As to the doctor, whose name was KILLSLY, the major described him as as arrant a rascal as ever compounded nostrum or thrust pill down the throat of unwilling patient. "You may have thought my conduct toward that man unusual, considering the habitual courtesy of my profession," said the major, addressing the captain, "but I hold it right, that a man of honor should treat a great knave, which I knew him to be, precisely in the manner I did. KILLSLY, it was found, shortly after he came to live at the Cove, had been an abortionist in New York, where he dashed about in a livery of great brightness, and had a purloined crest of so curious a device that no one could make out what it meant, though several had applied to Mr. HAYES, of Broadway, who supplied the wives of grocers and linen drapers with arms and crests, (as the dwellers in Snob Avenue have it,) charging only four shillings and sixpence for his services, including advice as to what color the livery ought to be. KILLSLY was in high favor with what is there called fashionable society, which, out of sheer respect for his skill, afforded him no few opportunities for the exercise of it. At length he got mixed up in a singularly delicate but very common difficulty, which rendered it desirable to make a change of residence. Well, he came to the Cove, and here might have lived as every good man ought to live, loving God and keeping his fingers out of his neighbor's affairs; but a damsel, who tossed her feathers at the rustics of the village, and would coquette only with city beaux, chanced to be overtaken by a by-blow and had need of his skill, it being necessary to protect her virtue, which her friends described as being whiter than snow. But death, which scruples not in such matters, betrayed the secret, and sent the whole village into a fever. There being no doubt of KILLSLY's guilt in the matter, I thereupon had him arrested and brought before me; and, being the guardian of public morality, I ordered him to prison, there to await the sitting of the County Court. Believe me, gentlemen, I would, as I failed not to tell him, have had him well hanged, had the case been left entirely with me. But I leave it to others to speak of the justice of my judgments. Now, though I say it, he called me a fool; and for that it would have gone hard with him, since society can well afford to lose all such vagabonds. But justice was weak in the screws, and he at last escaped between what is called a flaw in the indictment and the ingenuity of his lawyer, as is generally the case with such knowing fellows." All this and much more, the major said, and would have sworn it true. The sailors listened with grave demeanor, and were surprised and amazed at what they considered his extraordinary wisdom.

CHAPTER XXII.

How news of an extraordinary character was received and restored the major to sound health; also A few remarks concerning the manufacture of heroes.

Page 107

The judicious and forgiving reader will, I am sure, join me in approving the facility with which the major regained his stock of courage, (lost when entering Tarpaulin Cove,) on hearing that the politicians of New York had determined on making him a hero of no mean parts, and were devising a grand programme for our reception. And this consoling news I read to him from that very enterprising and extremely reliable journal, the New York Herald, a copy of which I got of the parson, who was its Tarpaulin Cove correspondent, and admired it much for its mingling of divine and human things, as well as the amount of honey the editor always mixed with his brimstone. The Common Council had, according to this sagacious journal, held a meeting, and, at the expense of much unintelligible oratory and disorder, passed a resolution appropriating five thousand dollars for the purpose of giving us a reception worthy of either Cicero or Washington. And this was to be entirely in consideration of the great public services we had rendered the country.

And it was further resolved, and therein set forth, that Aldermen Pennyworth, of the Sixth Ward, and Brandybottom, of the Second, together with Councilmen Bluster and Sputter, (the last named gentleman being clever at a speech,) be a committee of reception, invested with power to draw up and present a suitable address on behalf of the citizens of "this great metropolis." It was also resolved, in a flourish of speech utterly unknown in anything ever attempted by Choate, that the mayor, who, though he contemplated himself the greatest of potentates, was famous only for commanding an unruly police to bludgeon the heads of peaceable citizens, should publicly receive us at the City Hall.

This news so elated the major, that he commenced running about the deck, after the manner of a madman. He next tore the bandages from his head, and swore though his eyes were disfigured, his body remained in most excellent condition. As to persecutions, all great men ought to endure them with humility, for they were only the forerunners of great honors. He therefore resolved to say no more of the scars, but, in proof of his faith, to for ever esteem Captain Luke Snider a public benefactor, and to set about commending himself to the consideration of all good citizens, for therein, as he conceived, lay the virtue of true eminence. And now that he had a horse of such excellent parts, and a pig whose rare gifts, (did the critics do him justice,) must prove invaluable, he flattered himself he was fairly on the road to fortune, and might safely leave the rest to the hero makers of New York.

Page 108

I must inform the honest reader, that great value was set by the Common Council upon the fact, that the major had transferred his affections from the whig to the democratic party, which could not fail to shed a lasting luster upon its principles. Two honest Hibernian members of the very common board of very uncommon councilmen, had, with that modesty so characteristic of them, paid me the high compliment of saying, that I had been justly styled the great northern political war horse. I could not suppress a blush at seeing myself cut so strange a figure, inasmuch as the flourish of speech was such as had never been thought of by Aristotle, and would have paled even Henry Clay. Let no man, therefore, doubt the truth of what I here say; for I am not given to writing satires, preferring to wait until heaven shall send me some nobler mission. Nor would I have the reader express surprise, that persons so humble as the major and myself should be thus suddenly subjected to the process of hero making so much in fashion with the forty thousand idlers and politicians of New York, who have graciously taken upon themselves the directing of all public affairs, seeing that good men are so engaged in the getting of gold as to care not a whit if the devil get all their liberties. And if the reader have read the histories of Greece and Rome, wherein it is written that he only was made a hero who had achieved some great undertaking, and thereby conferred lasting honors upon his country, his surprise may be increased at the strange elements of character necessary to a hero at this day. But I humbly beg him to consider the circumstances of these forty thousand idlers and other politicians, who, having no employment for their fingers, let the devil direct their brains, and have turned hero making into a commerce of so cheap a quality, that no good christian can be got to engage in it. In fine, (and it is no vulgar invention of my brain,) the virtues required of an hero at this day, are that he have been a great marauder, who, having invaded the country of a poor, down trodden people, driven them from their quiet homes, plundered them of their property, ravished their daughters, drenched their fields with the blood of the innocent, and whitened the highways with the bones of his own dissolute but deluded followers, and spread desolation over the land, had to leave it a vanquished miscreant. And upon the principle, that if you give power to the idle and reckless they will make heroes to suit their kind and circumstances, he will then be received at the Battery with a great waste of powder, and such other noisy demonstrations as shall please the unruly. From thence he shall be conveyed in a shabby carriage, drawn by four lean horses, escorted by six firemen in red shirts, and preceded by two Dutch drummers with serious faces, and long, light beards, and a dyspeptic negro fifer, through sundry of our most crowded streets. And there shall follow him a procession of urchins, so

Page 109

abject in raiment that all peaceable lookers on will wonder where they came from, and how it happened that in a city so well supplied with water their unclean appearance, and the evident satisfaction they derived from scratching, was a sight for the eyes to behold. The hero must be careful to admonish the two or three ex-aldermen who accompany him, that it will not do to expose the necks of bottles in their pockets during their passage through the streets; he must also be sure to deliver his bows with becoming grace, and to keep his right hand upon his heart, (if he have one,) giving the mob to understand that therein beats his love for righting wronged humanity. Nor will he lose anything in reputation, if he exercise great courtesy in returning those manifestations of approbation which are become so common with enthusiastic chambermaids, who flourish napkins from third and fourth story windows, and are mistaken by the uninitiated for damsels of quality with delicately perfumed cambrics. And as he let nothing slip through his fingers while bathing in blood the homes of the people he had made wretched, so must he now comfort himself with the assurance, that the uproar of the rabble constituting his train is all cheers sent up by the honest people in admiration of his wonderful exploits. And, being free from every restraint or obligation, he may, with advantage to himself, recur to the deeds of Cæsar and Alexander, (not forgetting to remember Cicero,) to which he may compare his own. He can then sneer at your people of quality, and having sufficient cause, prepare himself for a speech of extraordinary eloquence, in which he need have no fear of profaning, for his hearers will stand amazed, and think how mighty a thing it is to be a hero.

I would also advise him to give his thoughts entirely to himself, and be careful not to betray them with his words, lest some ambitious critic set them down and use them at some future day to his damage. He must likewise sufficiently eulogize the companions in his exploits; and though they were true to nothing but debauchery and their own conceits, it will serve him best if he tell distressing tales of their patriotism. And above all, he will be wholly deficient in rendering himself justice, if he do not set forth with the very best of his rhetoric, how much he is misrepresented by the press, which will persist in calling him a monster, when in truth he is a servant of heaven, sent upon earth to raise the fallen. And when he shall have been drawn through a sufficient number of streets, and the eyes of the curious shall have been gratified, and the dyspeptic fifer has exhausted his wind, and, together with the Dutch drummers, can no longer invest the jaded train with a martial spirit, then, if the lean animals have strength enough left in their dilapidated frames, the cortège, as it is well called, may proceed into the Park, where the hero, if it do not rain, may take off his hat to the multitude of rejected humanity,

Page 110

(such as ragged politicians and wasted vagrants,) there assembled. Having paused a few moments, (to the great impatience of his shattered admirers,) that the aldermen who accompanied him may quench their thirst, he will alight amidst the huzzas of the throng and ascend the platform, built for the occasion by an enthusiastic carpenter. An ex-alderman, of dogged deportment, whom the clamorous mob greet with the title of judge, will welcome him in an address, (he will read it by the light of a tallow candle, held in the hand of a corpulent councilman,) written by a well starved critic on the Times newspaper, and for which service he (the said starved critic) was promised five dollars. The hero will undoubtedly take it for granted, that he is as great a general as he is there set down; nor must he be amazed if he find it written of him, that the noble deeds of which he is the champion far outshine all that has heretofore been set down in history. In fine, he must receive each compliment with a gracious bow, remembering that they are employed with the sincerity so characteristic of our gravest politicians. It being customary, I make no doubt the address will be received with "deafening applause," though it were impossible those present could hear one word of it. The reading will then conclude with twenty thousand voices spontaneously calling for the hero, who must rise with great gravity, and, having surveyed the dilapidated throng, proceed to respond in a speech of at least half an hour long. While delivering himself of this speech, he must be careful not to think of the gray haired fathers and mourning orphans he has left to mingle their tears over the devastation he inflicted upon their country, lest it damage his rhetoric. But he must declare that he is overwhelmed with the honors thus showered upon him by an assemblage so respectable. Of course he will not forget to mention, that his emotions have quite deprived him of the power, even if he had the capacity, of expressing his gratitude for this very unexpected manifestation of their approbation. And this peroration he must end, with complimenting the virtue and discretion, the self sacrificing devotion, and the high purposes of the motley assemblage, who are meanwhile getting up numerous fights for their more immediate amusement.

The drummers and fifer having refreshed themselves, the hero must be got carefully into the carriage by his generals and adjutant generals in waiting, when the four lean horses, who were comforted with oats during the delivery of the speeches, will draw him up Broadway to the tune of "The dead I left behind me!" It being after nightfall, when the balconies of heaven are filled with black, warlike clouds, it will be necessary that the train proceed with torchlights, which are an essential part of the ovation to all great heroes. These generally consist of thirteen lighted tallow candles and two transparencies, in the manufacture of which six shillings

Page 111

were expended for as many yards of Lowell cotton, sufficient to supply shirts to the unwashed Hibernians who bear them. The torchlights, as is customary, must be carried by hatless and shoeless urchins, who will feel great pride in the service, and have no scruple at scrambling for the pennies thrown them by the mischievous who line the sidewalk. The transparencies must also bear the significant motto, "Welcome to the brave." All this and much more being done, the hero will have arrived at one of our most fashionable hotels, where splendid apartments have been prepared for him; and for which the cunning landlord was careful to get his pay in advance. As those who follow such trains and such heroes have an habitual aversion to water, its diminution or increase on arriving at the hotel will depend very much on the state of the weather. But no true hero will for a moment think of entering his hotel unless all the ambitious chambermaids in it are grouped upon its balconies, and its entrances so lined with pickpockets, that it becomes absolutely necessary that his generals force a passage. The crowd outside will then greet his advance up stairs with much shouting, interspersed with demands for a speech, which, on partaking of a well compounded punch, in which his generals will not forget to join him, seeing that he is their only worldly stock in trade left, he may manifest his willingness to receive friends of distinction. This being regarded as an oversight by his most famous general, and the corpulent alderman, he will be reminded that the safety of the building is really in danger from the enthusiasm of the citizens outside, who refuse to go peaceably to their homes until he appears before them on the balcony, where they can offer him their homage, and hear from his lips at least three speeches. All this being done to the entire satisfaction of his admirers, then let him snap his fingers at your unprogressive gentlemen of quality, (who are much given to sneering,) and comfort himself that "the people" are always right. The torchbearers having exhausted their pennies as well as their patriotism, and the peaceable intervention of a shower having dispersed the mob, the hero, satisfied he has received every honor a grateful people can bestow, will, as is customary, betake himself much fatigued to his apartments, where he must remain in consultation with his generals and a few select friends, (on the grave question of what is to be done next?) until two o'clock in the morning, or, perhaps, until Aurora begins to open her windows in the east or the expert bar tender has wearied of mixing libations not even the most self-complacent of the generals has a shilling to pay for. This sad state of affairs being reported to head quarters, the hero will, unless the aldermen present pledge the city for security, hasten to his cot, and having snuffed out his candle get quietly to bed.

Page 112

Having overstepped the limits of my chapter in these few remarks upon our present system of hero making, the reader must look for something better in the next chapter, and accept for apology the fact that I have written of things I have seen, out of sheer love for the truth of history. In perusing this subject, I had almost forgotten to remark, that the hero, though he have gone quietly to bed, will not be considered at the very apex of his fame until the men of the newspapers, with their usual love of enterprise in journalism, shall have written down and published to the world (they, it must not be overlooked, follow close at the heels of the torch bearers) all that was said and done, not even forgetting to mention how delicately the horses raised their tails when occasion required.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Which treats of A party of yachters met on the sound, and what pains they took to comfort the major, on being made acquainted with his various exploits.

The major had been unusually serious during the day, and toward evening approached me with his right hand extended. "I cannot too forcibly express to you the deep obligation I owe you for the many kindnesses you have shown me. Thankful am I to escape the clutches of that doctor, though, perhaps, it would have been well to have enlisted his generosity, and got him to apply his plasters to my horse, for his legs stand much in need of them. As to the misfortune that befel me, pray think no more of it; for though I confess to being found naked to my shirt, a bishop could not be more innocent of wrong intention, even though he were an Onderdonk, who had been persecuted for his virtues. And now, let us change this matter, for I have been considering the profoundness of my purpose all day; and as our reception in New York will be an affair of much magnitude, I want to consult you on the most proper measures to be adopted in the present state of affairs. My reputation being already established, it will no doubt be agreeable to you that I receive and acknowledge the honors, you paying that deference to me which an adjutant general pays to his superior. We must master fortune by the quickest process; and as it matters nothing to the politicians of New York which of us they honor, so long as the ovation affords them excitement, your ends will be best served by keeping me well backed up. And as there is no knowing what sort of a turn the grand reception may take, I have been much concerned lest those who get it up discover in me (as they have done in worse men) an excellent candidate for President, in which case I must give great care to the wording of my speech, for that must be made to square with coming events." Holding it, as I always have, and shall still continue to

Page 113

do, more generous to forgive the vagaries of men who are given to imagining themselves great, as they, rightly viewed, can do no harm, and, indeed, afford much of that amusement so necessary to good digestion, I replied, that I had always considered his claims to public favor as superior to my own. And this so pleased him, that he declared it the first time, notwithstanding his great experience in life, that he had found a politician willing to sacrifice himself for the benefit of another, which he swore to remember until the day of his death. We now sat down together, and continued consulting upon various matters appertaining to our journey, and in which the major took great delight, especially as I acquiesced in all his opinions.

Night had now overtaken us, and the "Two Marys" was proceeding slowly on her course, close in shore. It was impossible the mind could conceive a finer night, for not a cloud was visible in the heavens, which formed over us a gorgeous arch of azure blue, hung with what poets call liquid pearls, now casting shadows like frolicking fairies over the broad sea plane below; and then, after flitting and coquetting, passed away into the mysterious distance. In truth, so seductive was the scene, that it excited in my breast a few of those fancies of heaven that give so much employment to the brains of young lovers. Yonder, tall light houses ranged along the shore, like stately giants in their night robes, filling the horizon to the right with a halo of pale light. Then a noise as of the rilling of distant brooks came floating in sweet cadences through the air, which seemed laden with the perfumes of new made hay; and the hollow echo of the watch dog's bark mingled in the soul inspiring chorus. And as I turned thinking of Hervey and his Meditations, my eye caught the ripe moon rising to invest all with that reposing softness poets and painters have so long in vain attempted to describe.

A streak of bright light trailed along the heavens in the west, and beneath it were steamboats so gigantic in proportions that they resembled illuminated palaces vaulting over the sea; while close off our starboard bow, there appeared advancing toward us a fairy like fleet, with low, rakish hulls, taut rig, and sails made whiter by the moonbeams playing upon them. The whole fleet seemed to skim over the sea, though the "Two Marys" scarce moved. One, more tiny than the rest, and which appeared to have made an offing, bore down for us, and seemed intent upon crossing our bows. The major, whose attention had been directed to them for some minutes, and who seemed always to have a pirate haunting his mind, rose quickly to his feet, swearing that he could not this time be mistaken in the character of the craft advancing upon us, since pirates always stole upon the objects of their plunder, and were, as he had read in various novels, just the sort of craft there seen. So disturbed was he in his feelings, that he demanded of Captain Luke Snider that he make a

Page 114

signal of warning-first notifying the fellow to keep off, and then through the trumpet telling him of what a thrashing he would get if he dared to come on board a vessel with so terrible a major for passenger. Had not old Battle been lying down, and the time required to get him up been fatal to such a great undertaking, he would have had him saddled and got ready for the contest, which he felt in his heart would be bloody enough to furnish material for three popular novels. Twice he started for the cabin, vowing to get his sword and be ready; twice he halted, and with much concern inquired of the captain, what he thought of the saucy looking craft. But the captain shook his head, looked aloft, and shrugged his shoulders, which increased the major's fears, and afforded Luke no little diversion, though he maintained his silence with becoming gravity. He had no fear of the fellow, "but a good soldier ought always to be ready for an emergency," the major said. "Faith, and I can swear it by St. Dennis, (who was as good a saint as any of them, for what I know,) he means us no harm, and may bring us good news. I have sailed the Sound these thirty years without meeting a craft that would harm me in hull or rigging. A wharf thief now and then carries off my ropes; but then he belongs to a tribe of scurvy vagabonds who never venture out of New York harbor, for there they have the law on their side, which is well enough for them."

The major's thoughts were now for several minutes, hung between his fears and this comforting reply. But not being quite satisfied, he turned to me, as I leaned over the rail contemplating the beauty of the scene before me, and inquired what I thought of pirates and their pranks. If the approaching craft was not a pirate, he said, her movements at least bespoke her bent on no good. The little craft was now seen to sheer, which caused the major's perturbation to become irresistible; and suddenly putting his hands to his lips, he shouted at the top of his voice: "Ho, strange ship! Whence come you? and what want you, that you steer right in our way? Bear away, there, or may the devil take me but you'll get the worst of it, for this is the Two Marys, of Barnstable." All on board were much amused at this freak, and stood silent, as if waiting for a reply. In a few moments the music of a harp was heard, and such was the skill and delicacy with which it was played, that the very air seemed filled with mysterious spirits, who, having carried off the lutes of some companion lovers, were chanting dulcet requiems. And the soft, sweet notes floated over the sea in seductive cadences. Then two female voices sang sweetly to the accompaniment of the harp; and so exquisite was the effect that I fancied rejoicing angels whispering their songs to the winds that played so gently around us. One of the voices was a soprano of much sweetness and flexibility, for it ascended the scale with great ease, and its higher notes were flutelike. The other was a contralto of no mean order. And there joined in chorus with these, two male voices, evidently well trained, and of much compass.

Page 115

The singing threw an air of mystery over the little craft, which served to make the major more impatient to know her character. Had the place of meeting been in the Caribbean Sea, he said, why, there could be no mistaking her character, for the pirates who infested it, as he had read in one of Sims's novels, made their captive females sing to them at night, whereas on the Sound, there was no record of what pirates and oystermen really did with their female captives, unless it was that they banished them to Blackwell's Island. But he was still more surprised and confounded when he heard the words of the song the party in the little craft were singing, and which ran thus:

"Beneath the stars, so pure and bright,
Come let us be merry on the sea to-night!
On the sea to-night! on the sea to-night!

"Let lovers to groves where moonbeams enchant;
But we have hearts that are free,
And we'll woo on the sea to-night!
On the sea to-night! on the sea to-night!"

This song, so curious in sentiment and rhyme, was also written by the very learned Dr. Easley, who, in consideration of its being a prize song, had it copyrighted. I have, therefore been extremely scrupulous only to purloin this small portion of it, (knowing, as I do, the high value he places upon all his literary productions,) lest he hold me amenable to the laws of the country, made and provided for the protection of poor authors.

The little craft had now approached so near, that her low, black hull, with the figures upon deck, was distinctly seen. It was evident that she espied us, for the singing suddenly ceased as she hauled her wind, which at that moment increased a little, and came dashing down upon us in fine style. And as those on board were heard keeping up a conversation in French, the major's fears again returned, and after an ineffectual attempt to get old Battle upon his legs, he ran aft in a state of alarm, and thus addressed Captain Snider, who had taken the helm of the "Two Marys":

"I verily believe, sir, these are no friends, for they speak in an unknown tongue, which is that used by pirates when devising infernal plots!"

The Captain, after casting a careless glance upward, as if to count the mast hoops upon his great mainsail, replied, "That as he was not gifted in tongues, and knew but little of his own, he could not be a judge; but this he would say, that they were only a party of yachters, who instead of intending us harm, would pay us the compliment of coming on board to regale us with their 'good cheer,' of which they usually had an abundant stock."

The major's fears now entirely deserted him, and his thoughts were directed to how he could best appear before such distinguished pleasure seekers. It has before been

described how the major was not a little vain of his military position; and lest the humble character of the craft on which he voyaged might not be regarded in its proper light by the strangers, he thought of mounting his uniform, in which they would not fail to recognize him as a person of distinction. While, however, he paused in a state of uncertainty, the little craft came within a fathom of us, and a voice cried out, "What sloop is that? and from whence came you?"

Page 116

"The Two Marys, of Barnstable! six days out. You will be welcome on board, and such fare as we have shall be at your service!" replied the captain, in the manliness of his nature, as he at the same time ordered one of his sons to get "fasts" ready. The yacht (which was none other than the "Saucy Kate," of the Harlem Yacht Club) now dropped her fenders, and rounded to, like a thing of life, under the stern of the "Two Marys," while Captain Luke put his helm down, and luffed into the wind. Another minute and she was fast alongside, when there came rollicking on board two ladies accompanied by two gentlemen, whose demeanor, though they were dressed in garbs peculiar to the occasion, at once bespoke them persons of ease circumstance. One of the men was peculiarly tall and erect of person, had a long, brown mustache, and hair that is called Saxon, which he had evidently taken some pains to keep well ordered. As to his face, though there was nothing particularly striking in it, (if a resemblance to the great General Webb be excepted,) I very much doubt if Brady could have selected a better subject to fill a vacant niche among those handsome men whose photographs adorn the entrance to his gallery on Broadway. The other was a frisky little man, with a promising red beard and mustache, and a dull blue eye, and a little freckled face, and a puggish nose. His dress was trowsers of white canvas, and a Norseman's jacket, with rows of large horn buttons down the sides, and a corpulent cigar pouch in the breast pocket.

"Upon my life, now, but you can't have much comfort aboard here," spoke the frisky little man, in a voice of singular effeminacy, as he tipped the narrow brimmed glazed hat that had covered his narrower head. "As for ourselves," he continued, fingering the great blood stone studs in his brown cambric shirt bosom, "we are navigating merely for the love of the thing. Want to get the thing right, and don't care a straw for the expense, not we!" This he concluded by saying, in a manner so finical that one might have mistaken him for a Bond Street milliner in the garb of a sailor, that his name was Nat Bradshaw, a recently elected member of the Union Club. The little, finicking man addressed no one in particular, but seemed much concerned lest we should not fully comprehend his respectability, though in truth he might have passed easily enough for a fool. The man of the tall figure, and whose frank and manly manner was enough to banish the sorrow excited by the effeminacy of the other, pressed forward with his hand extended, and inquired for the captain.

"It's me, Luke Snider, who's skipper," spoke the honest-hearted old salt, as the other grasped him by the hand, and gave him such a warm greeting as made him think he had met an old friend. And while these civilities were being interchanged, one of the damsels, a blonde so beautiful that earth had not, as I thought, another to compare with her, tripped gayly about the deck, singing as unconcernedly as a lark at sunrise:

Page 117

“But give me the sea,
And from the old folks free,
And we’ll wait for the tide to-night!
For the tide to-night-for the tide to-night.”

“He whose thoughts are not given to evil needs no censuring eyes,” thought I, as she turned, and tripping lightly towards me, flung her left arm round the waist of her companion who was a girl of slender form and features, and had a countenance in which pensiveness was deeply written; then, with her right hand resting gently upon her shoulder, she looked roguishly up in her face, for her eyes were of crystal blue, and beamed with mischief, and said, in a voice of much solicitude, “Rose, dear Rose! let me snatch away your troubles, for Nat Bradshaw, you know, always was a fool. It’s a habit he’s got of kissing everybody who will let him. And what’s worse, you can’t get it out of his head, little as it is, but that he is a great beauty-that everybody admires his white hand, and the big diamond I know he has’nt paid Tiffany for yet. And because we girls, just to tease him, and have a bit of fun, invite him to polk with us, he’s got to fancying it’s all in admiration of his graceful bearing. Oh! he is such a fool; and I don’t believe he’s got any money! I don’t! Just snap your fingers at Master Nat, and tell him not to try it again! that’s the way I do with such jokers.” She spoke with so much simplicity, and in so sweet a voice, that the girl of the slender figure seemed at once to regain her spirits, while the major, who had given particular attention to this little episode, now stood in admiration at the beauty of the speaker’s face. Then he approached me, and placing his lips close to my ear, whispered, “Pray say to them who I am, and leave me to take care of the rest.” These words being overheard by the gay hearted belle, she turned on her heel coquettishly, and vaulting to where he of the tall figure stood, making certain inquiries of the captain concerning his voyage, locked her hands in his arm, and there leaned gracefully for a few moments.

Flora, for such was this damsel’s name, had her home in Madison Square, New York; and there was about her something so artless and yet so tantalizing, that her power over the affections was irresistible. In fine, she was one of those dashing, merry hearted creatures, who make chaos of the affections to-day, and have a balm to heal them to-morrow.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Which treats of how the merry voyagers made much of major Roger Potter, and how they invited him to an interview with the commodore of the fleet.

Page 118

The captain and he of the tall figure had sufficiently exchanged compliments, when good Dame Snider came on deck, and invited the strangers into the cabin to partake of the refreshments she had there prepared. But Flora, who was much diverted by the good woman's earnestness, spoke up and declared the hospitalities of the occasion must be left to her, for she had charge of the larder; and so well stocked was it, that they could feed six aldermen for a week without fear of stint. Nat Bradshaw, too, raised the cigar exquisitely from his lips, and in his finicking manner said, the "Saucy Kate" was famous for the quality of her stores, nor ever permitted a stranger to do the hospitalities. In truth, it must be confessed that Nat had what is called a streak of generosity mixed with all his weaknesses.

"No, mother, (you won't think me bold for calling you mother?) leave the refreshments to me, and I am satisfied," interposed Flora, taking the honest hearted woman cordially by the hand. Then she doffed the little hat, that rolled up so pertly at the sides, and had given her such a saucy air; and as she did so, there fell upon her shoulders such a profusion of golden curls as would have crazed the heart of a Frenchman. The exquisiteness of her beauty was now fully disclosed. Her complexion resembled alabaster, and in addition to a face so oval that a sculptor could not have improved it, her great blue eyes, which, as I have said before, sparkled like pure crystals, were set off with finely curved arches, giving perfection to a brow poets call Grecian, and over which two broad wavy plaits of golden hair floated, as it were. Her nose, too, was of that high born order we recognize in the delicate but prominent lines, and, together with her mouth and chin, were such that the most fastidious could not have detected an imperfection. And as the moonbeams played upon her features, lighting them up as it were, she seemed a creature more of heaven than earth.

"Flora! Flora! my dear cousin," spoke he of the tall figure, seeing her thus doff her hat, "you must not, for I am anxious lest you catch cold."

"Cold?" she interrupted with a coquettish smile; "not I, indeed. The colds have a liking for Nat Bradshaw. They can get through him with so little difficulty, that they never take to me while he's by."

"Now, ah! 'pon my soul, that's clever. Say how I owe you one." Thus Nat replied, stopping in a desperate effort to light a short cigar without damaging the down he persisted in calling his mustache. He also raised his hat, and throwing his body into the shape of a triangle, made one of these bows which are peculiar to members of the Union Club.

Page 119

Rose now came to the assistance of the merry hearted Flora, who quickly doffed the blue jerkin that, girded round her waist, had given her such a sailor-like air, and disclosed a bust of such perfect symmetry, that it would have served as a model for a statue of Diana. And this was charmingly displayed in a sleeved corset of dark green color, cut after the fashion of a habit, with an incision in front, disclosing a stomacher of fine Spanish lace, set with rows of tiny brilliants. Her gauntlets quickly followed her jerkin, exposing tiny, swan white fingers, sparkling with jewels. And although herself unconscious of the cause, such was the perfection of her beauty, that I stood as if transfixed, gazing upon her in mute admiration, until my emotions melted into confusion. Nor was Nat Bradshaw unaffected by it, for I saw him cast an envious eye now and then. As for the major, he either stood bowing with his hat in his hand, or was getting in every one's way, and was anxious lest his introduction be delayed another minute. He afterwards told me in great confidence that, when Flora doffed her hat and gauntlets, he would have sworn her nothing less than an angel he would have taken to his arms, and pledged his military honor to worship until death, had not Polly Potter stood in the way.

Again, Flora struck up her song, and tripping on board the "Saucy Kate," which, with her sails half brailed up, had been left in charge of two boatmen, brought back with her a curious little packet, she soon spread into a table, and, with the assistance of Rose and Nat Bradshaw, had it mounted in a trice with cold iris ribbed beef, boned turkey, chickens, bird pies, jellies, and a basket of delicious fruit; to which was added lemons, and sundry bottles of champagne, and sherry that had been cooled in ice.

And while these preparations were proceeding, Major Potter, whom I had not yet had an opportunity to introduce, whispered something in the ear of Captain Snider, who, on turning to him of the tall figure, said, "And now sir, since an opportunity offers, perhaps you will permit me to introduce you to my distinguished passenger, Major Roger Sherman Potter; whose name is come famous in our part of the country, where he is acknowledged to be the greatest living politician."

"Major Roger Potter, I am commonly called," repeated the Major, placing his left hand to his heart, and, with a motion of his right, in which he held his hat, making one of his politest bows. "And as I see (and it required no effort) that you are no common people, my reputation is, doubtless, familiar to you, for much has been written of me in the newspapers. As to what you say of me as a politician, I will leave my right to such honors in the hands of others, since, being a military man, it would not become me to speak of myself."

Page 120

"Major Potter!" exclaimed the stranger, extending his hand, and shaking that of the major so earnestly as to make him verily believe he stood before one who had long been familiar with his history. "I would indeed be confessing myself stupid to say I was not acquainted with a name so famous in the political world. Truly, sir, if one so humble as myself may be permitted, I will here say, that nothing could have afforded me so much pleasure as this meeting, for there is nothing I so much reverence as the man who has deserved well of his country." The stranger, who was something of a wag, was not long in discovering the major's weakness, though he addressed him with great deference. But as the major held politeness as something which chivalry demanded of all military men that they never let themselves be outdone in, and for any little neglect of which they were held to a severe account, he, after making a becoming number of bows, replied in this wise: "And since you know me so well, and the etiquette of the profession commands that we speak not of ourselves, will you honor me with your name and the profession you follow?"

"Without the slightest hesitation, sir. I was educated to the law; but since the bar of our city is come to be not what it should be, I have thought it as well to live on my money, and save my character. As to my name, they call me Frank Story."

"Combining all that is great, glorious, and honorable!" exclaimed the major. "In the village where I was born, your name is as familiar as that of the landlord of the tavern. Having done much for your country, I make no doubt you have sustained the honors left you by the great dead!"

"I see, sir," returned he of the tall figure, "that you take me for a descendant of the good and much lamented Story."

"Truly so," interrupted the major.

"Which I am not," rejoined the speaker.

"It makes no difference; for I hold it just as well that a man inherit the characteristics of a great man from a similarity of name and profession as by having the same blood in his veins. I hold to this philosophy, which I find squares with that accepted by most of our great politicians at this day. On my reputation as a military man, sir, I came to respect these principles from first hearing them advanced by General Cheves McDuffy Quattlebum, while in the Mexican War, which I had the honor to fight in. Yes, sir; I had the honor of fighting in that war, and have seen many a man killed!" Here the major gave his head a significant toss, and placing his hat under his arm, thrust his hand into the inevitable pockets of his trowsers. "And as it was said of this Quattlebum that he was the greatest living politician known in his state, which, if my memory serves me, and it's not bad, was South Carolina, I make no doubt you will give great weight to the opinion. In truth, sir, you must know that this General Quattlebum was so well thought of in his state, that she would make no exception to his greatness, not even for so great

a general as Pringle, Allston Commander, who rose from an honest man and a blacksmith, to be a great military politician, embodying in himself all the necessary elements for dissolving the Union, so desirable an object with the people of Carolina.”

Page 121

He of the tall figure listened with commendable gravity to this strange display of sense and nonsense, which afforded him much amusement. When the major concluded, he presented me as the greatest living politician Cape Cod, or indeed any other district of Massachusetts, had ever given to the world. He, however, corrected himself, lest what he had said might compromise his own preeminence, and added that I had joined him merely to gain that experience so necessary to the perfection of all great minds. This done, he commenced to give an account of his horse and pig, whose rare qualities he failed not to extol highly; all of which afforded the listener an infinite amount of amusement. Begging the major to excuse him for a few moments, Frank Story slipped slyly to where Flora and Rose were setting the table, and calling the former aside, held a conversation with her that showed they were intent upon mischief, for she was heard to say, "Let me alone, and you shall see how I will play my part."

And now that the refreshments were ready, (seats being dispensed with on such occasions,) the party gathered round the table, and were served by Flora with so much ease and grace as to surprise even her own companions, who had not thought her capable of such skill in the duties of "a lady of the house." The major commenced to eat with his eyes fast fixed upon Flora, to whom he anxiously waited for an introduction. Meanwhile Nat Bradshaw, exhibiting great familiarity with corkscrews and cigars, had uncorked the first bottle of champagne, for which the major had expressed a preference, seeing that it was a favorite drink with the army. He of the tall figure now lifted his effervescing glass, and having cast a glance at the major and a wink at Flora, said: "Now, my pretty cousin, prepare for a surprise!" Flora looked up as if confounded, while the others held their peace. "I will not keep you longer in suspense," resumed the speaker, "but inform you that the great statesman whom we seek, and for whose reception in New York the city treasury has been flung wide open, and which it is the object of the Yacht Club to enhance by tendering him an escort, now stands before you. My cousin, I now present you to Major Roger Sherman Potter, whose political and military fame even the most malicious writers have not dared to defame—"

"Commonly called Major Roger Potter," whispered the major, with a bow.

Having offered a sufficient number of apologies for the error, he of the tall figure in turn introduced his cousin Flora and her friend Rose to the major. The ladies affected not to believe their senses, and for some moments looked at one another in doubt, while the major, for the first time in his life, acknowledged himself completely overwhelmed by the compliment, as well as the strange news it conveyed. Twice he bowed, and twice his tongue refused to serve him. But in order the better to express his feelings, he had recourse to that method most common with our great actors, who lay their hands upon their waistcoats, look devoutly into the pit, and seem very generally ready to thank the gods for all their favors.

Page 122

"And now, sir," spoke Flora, with great softness of manner, "since fortune has been so kind as to afford me this great and unexpected pleasure of being the first introduced to one so renowned, I will propose a toast, and with your permission couple it with your name. I propose that we drink, with three cheers: 'All honor to him who has worthily served his country, in whose history his name will be enshrined for the benefit of unborn generations.'" Having concluded, Flora gave her glass a twirl over her head, and three cheers were given so heartily that they went directly to the major's heart, and made him declare within himself that there could now be no doubt of his own greatness.

"Madam, upon my honor I am no flatterer, but being a military man, gallantry demands of me some acknowledgement of this compliment you have paid me, and which it would be my life's happiest event to make, were it not that your beauty so embarrasses me. Indeed, madam, I have, while in Mexico, led various forlorn hopes, charged the enemy's lines, and looked a shower of bullets in the teeth without winking; and all these dangers I would repeat a dozen times rather than face the fire of your beauty, to which every hero, however great, must surrender himself a captive."

"What you say of my beauty, I might say of your valor, than which there is to woman no stronger object of admiration. To pay homage to valor is womanly on the part of our sex. And never in my life have I felt, though I have seen some brave men, that I was paying homage to greatness with so much honor to myself. I have read in the newspapers that our nation, like a sinking ship, was by you saved from inevitable fate—"

"Indeed, madam, I leave it to others to say what I have done for the nation. But you will not find me wanting when called upon; and, as I have always said, give me but a chance, and they shall have enough of my greatness!"

"Truly, sir," rejoined Flora, "I hold it fortunate that the nation should have found so honest a man. But as government is something our sex take no part in, perhaps you can tell me if there be any truth in the report, that politicians have no higher aims in these days than plundering the government; and that patriotism being a thing quite unknown, the great object with our congressmen is how they can best put money in their pockets, in the pursuit of which they are so insatiable as to sell their manliness in exchange for it?"

"Since you have set me down for an honest man, madam, which is no small compliment, I will say that my wife, Polly Potter, who is something of a politician, and as true a wife as needs be, always says of me, that my honesty will be my fortune. And as she has a queer way of expressing herself, she has many times said to me, 'Roger, when them politicians get to strippin' the nation to her very skin, do thou be the man to come forward and hold down the apron, and keep her shame from being altogether exposed.' And this I have pledged her I would do, and may heaven protect her. As for stripping the nation to the skin, or even taking away her clothes, that, though I am

neither prophet nor editor, they shall never do while Major Potter has an arm and a tongue."

Page 123

Flora blushed, and for some minutes held her peace, as well she might. And as he had gorged himself to that degree that serious consequences were apprehended, and was somewhat disturbed at the questions Flora would put at the moment when his mouth was most full, and which true politeness command that he reply to, the silence which prevailed afforded him an excellent opportunity for despatching his meal in peace. Nat Bradshaw, whose countenance wore a sinister smile, added to the joke by constantly filling the major's glass and pledging him in a toast.

When the major had finished his supper, Flora, whose nature was of such a turn that she could not give much rest to her mischief, entreated him that he relate for their entertainment some of the wonderful exploits of which he was the hero during the Mexican War.

"Your grace and beauty, madam, and I am no flatterer, demands that I comply with your request, though it is against the rules of the profession, which set forth that the deeds of all great military men are the property of the nation," replied the major. But as his vanity was stronger than his respect for the rules of the service, he at once commenced and went on to relate some of the most wonderful exploits ever achieved by mortal valor, all of which he described as having taken place during the war with Mexico, though I venture to assert that they have never been recorded in any published history of that war. Nor will it be necessary to add, that he made himself the hero of every one of them. Indeed, if there was a forlorn hope he had not led, or a plan of attack that had not been suggested by him long before it was executed, they were not worthy of mention in this history. And he would interpolate by saying: "All these things I relate no man will deny, but as history takes care of my General Scott, so such as me, who have braved the brunt of it, must see to ourselves." And these marvelous adventures the major would have gone on relating until the hour of morning, when sparrows rise, had not he of the tall figure put an end to Flora's mischief, by remarking, that as the wind was freshening, and the squadron had tacked ship, it was necessary they return and report what had taken place to the commodore, who would no doubt receive it as great good news. "And now, sir," said he, taking the major by the hand, "this meeting will long live in my memory; and since I see you need rest from your labors, the night, too, being far advanced, we will return and report, for I see the fleet is put on the other tack, and our commodore is strict in the enforcement of his orders. But if it meet your pleasure, the squadron will to-morrow at ten o'clock form port and starboard lines, fire a salute, and proceed in escort. This done, the commodore will come on board and pay the respect due to your distinguished position." The major replied, that the honor, so unexpected, and in truth so unmerited, he could not but confess would be most gratifying to him; he

Page 124

would therefore prepare himself for the occasion, hoping they would excuse any little deficiency, for barring now and then he was not clever at an impromptu speech. The party now took leave of him for the night, and having handsomely rewarded Dame Snider for the trouble they had given her, set sail on board the Saucy Kate, her white sails flashing in the moonbeams as she made for the fleet, and the music of Flora's voice floating sweetly over the sea.

CHAPTER XXV.

Which relates how the major was received by the commodore of the yacht squadron, and sundry other queer things, without which this history would not sustain its character for truth.

Ungrateful indeed would it be in me, the writer of this history, the companion in arms, and admirer of all that is great and good in the major as a military politician, did I fail to record, in honor of his gallantry, of which none could be more scrupulous, that he offered his arm and escorted Flora safe on board the Saucy Kate, apologizing for the worn condition of his raiment, and regretting exceedingly that he was not habited in his uniform. And although flushed with the importance of what had taken place, the major was haunted with a misgiving as to what ladies of such quality would think of his traveling in so humble a manner. But he bethought himself, that neither scepters, nor miters, nor grand equipages, make the man-in fine, that a man may ride an ass without saddle or bridle and find a good home in heaven, when the doors would be shut against bishops who roll about in liveries devised by the devil, which is his occupation. And this brought him such infinite relief, that he hastened to his faithful old Battle, and having bestowed upon him sundry caresses, told him he ought to be thankful he had so fortunate a master. He also paid a visit to his pig, who was sleeping soundly in his cage of slats. "Now, then," said the major to himself, as he looked in upon the animal with an air of great self-satisfaction, "in the possession of this gifted creature I have a staunch reliance. And should fortune again send me strolling upon the world, as it has done many a popular politician, I will so develop this fellow's gifts that they shall be worth a bank in Wall Street. In truth, he is as well bred as most of our politicians; and as to his honesty, I will pit him against any of them." As Duncan did not manifest the slightest regard for these kindly tokens, the major went quietly into the cabin, and there occupied himself for more than an hour furbishing up a sword of uncommon size, and a three cornered hat the moths had reduced to dilapidation, though he charged it all to the bullets of the Mexicans. And when they were polished to his entire satisfaction, and he had twice or thrice thanked God that it was not the failing of politicians to turn parsons, as it was with parsons to turn politicians, he lay down upon the locker and soon was in a sound sleep, in which he dreamed of a thousand or more things that were to take place in honor of him on the following day.

Page 125

The Saucy Kate was not long in gaining the commodore's yacht, a rakish looking schooner of some two hundred tons, whose lofty spars and middle staysail were seen overtopping the sails of her lesser companions, like a giant among dwarfs. And although it was past midnight when Frank Story entered her cabin, he found it filled with members of the club, who, at the invitation of the commodore, had left their several yachts, and were making night jubilant over a table spread with choice wines, of which there was no stint. There were also massive punch bowls, of chased silver, standing here and there along the table, and filled with delicious punch, which those who preferred drank from goblets of silver and gold. Commodore Skim-merhorn, who sat at the head of the table, was a man of rotund figure, had a bright, ruddy face, and was frank and easy in his bearing. When he of the tall figure entered they were discussing a question of Greek criticism, some of the members of the club being men of much taste and learning. But this they suspended in order to hear his report of the strange sloop. And this he commenced to relate, describing with so much quaint humor the wonderful major he had found on board, that they were all surprised and astonished. In truth, not a few proposed going immediately to pay their respects to him, and learn to what manner of mankind he belonged. But if they were surprised with the description, they marveled when told that this major was no less a person than he whom the New York politicians intended to make such an ado over. However, as the New York politicians were most known for their folly, and making a hero now and then was with them a means of getting bread, it was not so surprising that they chose for a candidate one who would pass readily for a fool.

The speaker added, that with all the vanity of the man, (and in conceits he could not be surpassed even by the erudite Dr. Easley, who contemplated himself the most learned scholar and critic,) he sometimes spoke such sense as to make the listener mistake him for a wise man. He next afforded them much diversion by relating what passed when he informed the major how the squadron had come in search of him, and were delighted at being first to do him honor. Every one present entered immediately into the joke they resolved to carry out on the following day, which was arranged with great deliberation, lest any part of it should fail of being properly executed.

And now that Aurora had taken down her shutters, and was filling the eastern sky with pale, misty light, that threw an halo over the deep, dark foliage of the mountain heights, reflecting their shadows along the still, polished waters, so lovely was the morning, so like a picture of repose each object, and the whole so invested with a mysterious stillness, that one might have mistaken it for a fairy scene. The yacht squadron was ranging alongside of the "Two Marys," forming a port and starboard line, with

Page 126

the Commodore off the weather bow. As the sun peeped out from the watery horizon, two guns were discharged from the Commodore's yacht, and so loud was the report that the major suddenly stopped his snoring, and springing to his feet in a state of great confusion, began to call out at the top of his voice that the sloop was sinking. But he as suddenly regained his senses, and called to mind the honors that were to be paid him, he felt great alarm lest he had overslept himself, and besought Captain Luke Snider, who turned out of his berth at the same moment, to run upon deck and say he was not quite ready to receive them. But as Captain Luke took no heed of his request, and thought only of getting into port, the major, in his great anxiety, ran himself upon deck in his shirt, and cut so sorry a figure that no man would have envied him. All was as still and lonely as the Lybian coast-not a wail came over the sea. Now only the dull stillness was broken by some forlorn robin whistling his song along the shore.

The major, satisfied that the cannon were fired only to welcome the rising sun, and not in honor of him, returned to the cabin, where he got into his breeches and boots. He then drew from under a pile of rubbish in one of the berths, a pair of holsters, he declared were presented to him by General Jefferson Davis, for gallant deeds done during the Mexican War, though no sensible man would have given a dime for them. With these, and his saddle and bridle, he again repaired upon deck, where, after no little exertion, he got old Battle upon his feet.

"It seems, my faithful horse, as if heaven lent thee to me for a mighty purpose," said the major, addressing his horse, who gave himself a hearty shake, and stretched his head and neck to their utmost extent. And after he had said many other encouraging things to his horse, he gave him such an excellent rubbing down that, had it not been for the immense size of his legs, which now appeared quite as short as the major's, no one would have taken him for the same animal. This done, he bridled and saddled him; and with the holsters secured (though they were without pistols,) he was in the major's eye, as war-like a horse as could be desired.

The morning advanced, and breakfast was scarcely over, when a breeze sprung up, which, giving the squadron a leading wind, they began to trim their sails. A port gun was then fired from the commodore's yacht, which was followed by their colors being run up, and floating gayly in the wind. A boat now put off, and being rowed by four men, with an officer in the stern sheets, soon reached the "Two Marys." The officer came on board, and with great courtesy of manner, inquired for Major Roger Potter, who now came forward dressed in the most wonderful uniform ever worn by military politician, inasmuch as there were two patches on his seat of honor, and his coat, which could boast of but one epaulette, had lost a portion of the tails.

Page 127

"He whom you seek, honored sir," replied the major, making a low bow, "stands before you. And as I see you are an officer, here's my hand, for it does me good to meet a brave man."

The officer who was slender of figure, and had a youthful appearance, now delivered a letter from the commodore, saying that he was delighted to have met one who had so distinguished himself in the country's service, and that he held it an honor of no small importance that he had been selected to perform this mission. And when he had taken his departure, which he did without further ceremony, the major approached me, and opening the letter, asked me to read it, as he was none of the quickest at reading writing, which, indeed, was a failing with all great men. I took the letter from his hands, and read as follows: "On board Yacht —, June 14th, Throg's Point bearing W.N.W. 12 miles distance.

"The Commodore of the Yacht Squadron presents his compliments to his honor, Major Potter, and begs to say that on becoming aware of the great reception to be given him in New York, and that it was solely in consideration of the great services rendered his country, in war as well as peace, the members of this club, desirous of enhancing the grandeur of that reception, passed a resolution declaring it their unanimous will to proceed without delay to meet you, offer you their congratulations, and escort you to the city. And as the duty of presenting you their congratulations devolves upon me, I have in accordance with the usages now common among all public speakers, transmitted a copy of the remarks I intend to make, to the end that you may be released from all embarrassment.

"With great consideration, &c., &c.,

"*Van Stiver* SKIMMERHORN, "Commodore Commanding, &c., &c."

"To the Hon. Major Roger Potter, On board the sloop 'Two Marys.'"

On hearing this read, the major's head seemed to fill with various suspicions, for his hands again went into his inevitable pockets, and he gave his shoulders a shrug expressive of his thoughts. But his suspicions never stuck to him long, and he soon found comfort in the fact that there was the commodore's full name attached to it. He then set to teasing his beard, and giving himself to his thoughts. "Pray, young man," said he, "say nothing of my trade in tin, for I see these are men of quality, and, having heard of me only through the newspapers, know but little of my true history. But, let my enemies say what they will, I am not a man to stand at trifles. Honors never puzzle me: it's the thickness of them. I say, though, that when fame puts a man on the pedestal he must never think of falling to the ground, for that would be a fear unworthy my profession." He now read and reread the commodore's letter, and at length said, that though he had written speeches for and given grammar lessons to New York members of Congress, the composing a suitable reply on such an occasion as this alarmed

Page 128

him not a little. In truth, such little things belonged entirely to polite society, and required a grace and diction rarely attained by politicians. Indeed, he regretted much that he was not where he could obtain the services of one of those New York critics, who, being the sons and grandsons of poor bishops, write learned book notices by the yard, and get up addresses for distinguished actresses, who deliver them on occasions of receiving bracelets and necklaces from their admiring friends. "Remember, young man," he resumed, "that the path of honor is open to you as well as me. I say this, because it has just struck me, that we can best fulfill our obligations to one another, by your writing the speeches and me delivering them. Heaven forbid that I should want to wrong you; but we must take up the fruit as it falls. Now surely you will write me a neat reply to this fellow-say much about what I have sacrificed, making it, at the same time, so easy that they shall not have a suspicion of the authorship. And above all, endeavor to make me speak like a sensible gentleman."

Having taken great pains to aid the major in all his exploits, I was more than anxious that he should deport himself properly on this occasion, and hence readily consented to accept the task of preparing his reply, selecting for the service all the choice words I could find in an old speech of Thomas Benton's, delivered by him many years ago, in reply to an address in compliment of his thirty years' services in the United States Senate, and presented by a committee of the Young Men's Missionary Society for distributing bibles to indigent authors. It must here be said of these young gentlemen, that they had no masked motive in thus complimenting the venerable senator, which they did simply from hearing that his compassions had taken a new turn.

I soon arranged the method of my important task, and was teaching the major how to deliver the speech, when a barge was seen along side of the commodore's yacht. Then a salute of seven guns announced the embarkation, and when the smoke rolled away, the barge, rowed by eight sturdy fellows, was seen skimming over the sea, and making for the Two Marys with all speed. "Upon my soul they are coming, and a merry party they are," said the major, settling himself in his strange uniform. The barge pulled alongside, as the portly figure of the commodore, his chapeau raised, stood up in the stern for a moment, and then mounting over the rail was on the deck of the Two Marys in a trice. The major now came forward with an air of pomp and circumstance it would not be easy for the reader to paint in his imagination, unless indeed he had seen General Webb on his way to a tea party. The commodore now elongated his body and bowed, and the major elongated his body and bowed; after which they approached one another as men so distinguished ought to do, when he of the tall figure, who accompanied the commodore, came forward, and with great deference of manner did the honors

Page 129

of the introduction. And when they had exchanged civilities and bows to their satisfaction, the commodore spoke as follows: "Since, sir, the high honor of presenting you with the congratulations of our club devolves upon me, I may here be permitted to say, that no event of my whole life has afforded me so much pleasure. In presenting, then, their hearty congratulations, welcoming you at the same time to our great metropolis and its hospitalities, I cannot too highly express my sense of the many services you have rendered the country, which owes you a higher reward than this club can bestow. In addressing the great and the good—the hero who has fought his country's battles, and the statesman who has carried her safely through impending dangers, our emotions too frequently carry away our power to render due homage. Let me beg you, then, to make every allowance for this feeble manifestation of our high regard. Your fame as a statesman and patriot, as a soldier and a gentleman, is well known and appreciated among us. You have, whenever your country required, lent it the strength of your arm and the influence of your high position; and we seek to pay you homage, because we know, that should she need it again, you would not be found wanting. Nor do we forget your high personal worth, for we have read how well and worthily you have acted the part of a philanthropist, in raising up suffering humanity and redressing the outraged. As an humble expression of our esteem, we beg you then to accept the services of the squadron under my command, in escorting you to the city, where your many political admirers are prepared to receive you with such honors as greatness never fails to command." The speaker concluded, maintaining his gravity of countenance. But the major bowed and was not a little confused, while several of those who stood by, cried out "bravo!" and were much diverted.

"Truly, Mr. Commodore," replied the major, whose head was so thin that he had let every word of the speech I prepared for him get out of it, "as a principle, you may set it down that the weight of an honor is best felt by the man who has deserved it. In accepting the flattering tribute of respect you offer me, let me say, that although I am no scurvy politician, and have opinions enough of my own, I intend to let history take care of my acts, for the verdict of the nation, which is an exacting tribunal, is rendered in my favor, and if the devil and my enemies only mind their business, there will be no need to meddle with it, as I have heard it said of other men. And now that I am more a man of acts than words, as no doubt you have read, let me say that I accept this great honor, the sincerity of which is evident in the earnestness with which you offer it, with as many thanks as a man can, hoping that your great metropolis may grow greater and be all you expect of it; and like a chaste and virtuous woman, do you see to her, that she be not exposed to the designs of demagogues, and

Page 130

that her virtues creep along with her fair fame." The major delivered these remarks with so much ease and fluency, that the listeners stood in silence, and began to think the man they had had described to them for a fool, was in truth an eccentric politician, who was using this mode of discourse only as a means of deception. But when he invited them to examine his horse and pig, which he did while giving the most wonderful description of their varied good qualities, and the many services they had rendered him, the color of his brain at once discovered itself.

One after another, the party, having exchanged congratulations, engaged the major in conversation, and found that he had ready answers for all their questions, though many of them were far off the mark, illustrating the fact, that his mind had been much given to the affairs of the nation, of which he had the most confused ideas. In order to afford the visitors some diversion, he also uncaged his pig, and made him perform a series of antics truly wonderful, and with which they not only expressed themselves highly satisfied, but deeply interested.

The major now visited the commodore's yacht, and was received with a salute of thirteen guns, which he felt in his heart were solely in compliment to his humble worth. A party of richly dressed ladies were on board the yacht, and received the major with so much deference, that he felt sure not even the slightest mark of respect had been omitted. In fine, the ladies all gathered about him, and were so eager to emulate one another in showing him respect and conciliating his favor, that even Flora, who declared herself his first admirer, could with difficulty get an opportunity to present him her souvenir in the shape of a wine cup bearing her name. "Ah! sir," said Flora, reproachfully, "last night you condescended to smile upon me, and I took your smiles for serious intentions. Indeed, I say it in honest truth, that your winning manners had much affected me, though my heart is not of the melting sort. But now, sir, I see you are an arrant coquette, and no exception to the rest of your profession." Another damsel of comely features had set upon the major, and was exciting his vanity to no small extent, when Flora interrupted with the above remarks, preserving a most impatient countenance as she did so.

"As I live, fair maiden, I have no wrong intentions, for my wife, Polly Potter, is not yet dead; nor is it right of a soldier to trifle with the weaknesses of woman. Being a soldier and no flatterer, I will say this, that your beauty has made me your vassal, and had I a dozen hearts, ten at least would be yours."

Page 131

When they had frolicked with him to their hearts' content, they escorted him into the cabin, where a sumptuous collation was prepared, and to which he, after considerable ceremony, sat down and ate enough to have satisfied three critics for at least a week. They then plied him with punches and other strong drinks, which were so mixed as to seriously affect his brain, for it began to reel up his vision, and he broke forth in the most spasmodic strains, addressing those present, whom he declared a political assemblage, on the state of the nation. In my determination never to swerve from the truth in this history, I am compelled here to record, that the Yacht Club found they had paid dearly for their joke, inasmuch as the major, adopting the conduct most in fashion among the politicians of Tammany Hall, did, during one of his strongest oratorical displays, suddenly spring upon the table, demolishing much valuable glass, and making wreck of everything in the vicinity, which, as a popular politician, he swore he had a right to do. The state of confusion being now complete, the ladies ran screaming up on deck, and it was with great difficulty the major could be restrained from behaving himself like a madman. At length, from raving about the state of the nation, he relapsed into a state of stupor, in which he became so insensible that they were all alarmed lest death step in and put an untimely end to his existence. In truth, so much did they fear the result of their joke, that they would have sent for a parson and begged him to pray kindly for the poor man, but that he opened his eyes, and gave out such other signs of returning consciousness as assured them that the only danger now to be feared was that he would soil certain portions of his raiment, which, were it to get out, (and there were always malicious persons ready to speak ill of a politician so famous,) it would do him irreparable damage.

And now, having transcended the limits of my chapter, I must beg the impatient reader, if he love a joke, and have no scruples about its nakedness, to turn to the next, where he will find a result to his satisfaction.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Which relates how the major was restored to perfect health; and also an authentic description of what took place on his arrival in new York.

If, reader, you be an honest man, and in any way acquainted with the pranks of politicians in these our times, you will not pour forth a lamentation over what I have written; for I take it you will see that I have broken the filthy clods only, to get at the real truth. But if you be a politician, thief, or housebreaker-in fine, if you belong to any of these twin professions, the members of which find it convenient

Page 132

to extinguish the light of their own history, and take no delight in truths which concern themselves, then I may expect to be visited with your eternal enmity. Sweeten, then, your breath; and if you would send me to that place I have firmly resolved never to go to, pray call to your aid such papers as the New York Tribune and Evangelist, for they are both clever at sending all who differ from them to the devil, without even the aid of clergy. And as those sent to the devil by this medium have only the Editor of the Herald for mourner, just imagine that gentleman in tears, and chide me no more, for I must see to the major.

The critical condition in which I left the major renders it imperative that I should return to him without further delay. And I must here say, then, in restoring him to consciousness, that much ice water was used, a portion of his hair and beard was shaved off, and sundry aromatic liquids applied to counteract an odor that was by no means delightful to the senses. And when he had recovered sufficiently to sit up, his eyes were fixed confusedly upon those about him; then his hands wandered to his haunches, and he heaved a deep sigh. "Pray tell me, gentlemen, (for I seem to have just come out of a trance,) what has befallen me? Pray tell me, gentlemen, that I may offer you such an apology as becomes my position, for I am in a condition no man need envy. And to lose a hard earned reputation so easily is no trifling thing." The commodore was struggling to suppress his laughter, which had been excited by the forlornness of the figure before him. He however begged the major to be composed. As to losing his reputation by so trifling an accident, he enjoined him not to think of it, since history afforded numerous instances of great heroes who had met with similar ones. In truth, it was just such an accident, taking place on the commencement of a great battle, that saved General Cushing from the bullets of the enemy, and his life to the country! And this timely accident I record here for the benefit of that admiring generation which is yet to come, and which might be deceived by that worthy historian, the author of "The Mexican War," who recorded with so much faithfulness all his gallant deeds, and hanged himself when he had finished. Hearing this, he at once took heart, and declaring that it was all owing to a derangement of the stomach, said, that although it was the first time in his life that he had ever met with such an accident, he had not the slightest doubt of its influence for good, since a man's virtues lay in his power to bear up under such trials.

Page 133

They were now nearing the city, and the "Two Marys" having been left far astern, the squadron put about, preparatory to setting the major on board his own ship, which was done without the firing of a gun, and with as much caution as if they had been handling eggs of a venerable age. It must however be said for the credit of the military profession, that the major never relaxed one iota of his gallantry, and left the yacht with many kind remembrances for the ladies, especially Miss Flora, whose beauty he declared he had never seen excelled, though he had read all Mrs. Southworth's novels by candle light. It ought also to be mentioned that one of the officers, seeing his necessities, and being a man of a philanthropic turn, gave him a pair of breeches, with a stripe down the side. And with these the major consoled himself that he had at least parted friends with the Yacht Club, and that, after all, there was no great loss without some small gain.

The squadron executed a maneuver, fired two guns, and parted company with the "Two Marys," as, with seven days' news from Barnstable, she neared Peck Slip, and made fast to a wharf, on which was assembled a very dejected looking throng of people. Those fortunate enough to have hats took them off, and began cheering in the wildest manner, whilst the more respectable, whose raiment was of an exceedingly damp description, and had been used at night for beds, took to using their hands upon the heads of their neighbors. Here and there a philosophical policeman was seen, with his hands in his pockets. "Heavens!" said I to myself, "instead of being on the road to fame, we have fallen among vagabonds, who will plunder us!" But I was relieved of my fears by being informed that they were all honest voters, who, though they had not a shirt to their backs, took righteous good care of the city's affairs.

When it became known that the major and myself were really on board, there was a great firing of guns, and such other demonstrations of welcome as made the major glad at heart; for he had changed his nether garments, and was now sure the news of what had so recently befallen him had not reached New York. There now came on board four flabby men, dreamy of countenance, and whose dilapidated garments bespoke them persons of menial occupations. But as neither St. Paul, nor Alexander the Great, nor Henry Ward Beecher, (who, I take it, is as great a man as either of them, and will leave more portraits of himself than both,) never dressed according to their "circumstances," so these four flabby men, the major thought, must not be judged by the condition of their raiment, for it was nothing new to see great men shabbily dressed.

Page 134

The shortest of the four flabby men, an oily sort of shabby gentleman, who was blind of an eye, and had very disordered red hair, and a bruise on the end of a very red nose, which looked like a birch knot growing upon a redder face, now came jauntily forward, and having doffed a much damaged hat, that sat on the side of his head with a challenging air, and approaching the major, who had arranged his uniform to the best advantage, spoke as follows: "Long life t'yer 'onor, for me name's Dinnis Finnigan, born on the banks of Lough Neagh, near Kerry; but for all that, as I says to myself, Dinnis yer jist as good an American as iver drew first breath on the soil. And now, seein' it's yersel, Major Potter"—

"Commonly called Major Roger Potter," interrupted the major, with a bow. "And since I see you seek me, I may say I'm the person. I make no doubt you have heard of me. I need not say how glad I am to see you, for that will be told you by my private secretary." Here the major turned round and cast a glance at me.

"The same man that wouldn't hear of the likes o' ye, major, wouldn't be much of a politician. Ye'r as wilcom as the flowers of May, jist," resumed Mr. Dinnis Finnigan, who now disclosed the singular fact that, (Mr. Finnigan was a reformed member of the "Dead Rabbit Club,") he now formed one of the Board of Common Council, where no man could vote better on a question of money. Mr. Finnigan was evidently not dead to the importance of his office, for he promised no end of things in honor of the major, to the carrying out of which he pledged the city, and would with equal sincerity (for his mind was in a condition to make cities appear very small) have pledged the whole Union.

The major had for some moments been fixing his eyes upon Mr. Finnigan with a scrutinizing stare. Suddenly his face became flushed, his eye quickened its glare, and he stammered out, "I know what belongs to good manners, and though you may be a councilman, Mr. Finnigan, my eyes, and they are good ones, tell me I have seen you before."

"Faith, an' that same's not unlikely," interposed the moist councilman.

"Aye, and when you went by the name of Greeley Hanniford, and followed an occupation that cost me all my money."

Here Mr. Finnigan quickly interrupted by saying that as they had both attained to the position of gentlemen, it were best to adopt Bishop Hughes' motto, and let bye gones be bye gones. In truth the major recognized in Councilman Finnigan, the honest Quaker, Greeley Hanniford, who, with General Fopp, of "Pleasant-side Row," had managed to relieve him of all his money during his first adventure in New York.

"But although he neither acted justly nor honorably towards me, our conditions have changed, and it does not become my high position to rake this thing up now, so let's

hope he is come an honest man, and a good politician!" thought the major, extending his hand to the moist councilman, who was not a little troubled at the old reminiscence.

Page 135

"And my motto is, major, let them what's dead, stay dead! But since its not mysel is to spake the addriss, but Dan Dooley, who, by the Virgin, is an alderman, a gintleman, and the friend of Father Fogarty-"

Seeing there was an old score to be wiped out between Mr. Councilman Finnigan and the major, Mr. Alderman Dan Dooley, who was the tallest of the four flabby men, and a whiskey visaged gentleman of ponderous parts, now came fussily forward, and after exchanging many bows and compliments with the major, saying how extremely glad he was to welcome him to the city, introduced him to his son in law, Councilman Dennis Blennerhasset, a frisky little man, with a cocked up nose, and an expression of countenance in which no man with half an eye could fail to read in what land he drew his first breath, if, indeed, the rich brogue with which he returned the major's salutation had not already revealed it. Having, long since, resolved not to have my veracity as a historian impeached, I must not forget to state here, (and I warn every pugnacious critic to be careful how he points his lance at me,) that Alderman Dennis Dooley, although the firm friend of Father Fogarty, was said to be the ablest editor on the Evening Express, which for its profundity of logic, and purity of style, was truly a marvel in journalism. As for Councilman Blennerhasset, no man could bring aught against his capacity for mixing compounds of deleterious liquors, which he sold to the decaying humanity of his district; and, being what was considered a modest man, the notion came into his head that he was born for the high office of Councilman the very day he married the daughter of Alderman Dooley. Mr. Councilman Blennerhasset spoke of himself as we the common council, we the elected to do you honor on this great occasion; we the representatives of this great and glorious metropolis. Having accommodated the we a sufficient number of times to satisfy us that he had the whole city nicely tucked away in the pocket of his shabby coat, he turned round to introduce Alderman Barney O'Toole, who, as a man and a gentleman, could do more off hand fighting than any other man in the board, and was the fourth of the flabby men. But that distinguished politician and gentleman, who had been seven times sentenced for smashing the skulls of his adversaries, was not at hand, having, while Mr. Blennerhasset was thickening the compliments, winked me down into the cabin, where he drew from his pocket a luminous bottle of old Bourbon whiskey, and in the most friendly manner offered to pledge me in numerous glasses.

Page 136

Just at this moment, a dozen or so of wan faced reporters, in massive beards and black hats, pressed eagerly through the crowd, and went to work like beavers dotting down all that was said, and a little more. Then commenced the address by Alderman Dan Dooley, whose breath was redolent of anything but the balm of a thousand flowers, and who delivered his speech with an unctuous self satisfaction, and in a style of rhetoric totally unknown to Pericles, and never thought of by Demosthenes. The address was carefully worded, so as to make the major a greater statesman than had been known in any previous age, which is a fashion at this day; and if I be not much mistaken, this speech was written by that witty scribbler of the "Times" newspaper, who gets up speeches for heroes at five minutes' notice, and then, having pocketed the money, laughs in his sleeve at the men he has made fools.

As addresses of the nearest possible resemblance to that delivered on this occasion by Alderman Dan Dooley, may be found almost any day in the morning papers, I hold it good economy not to occupy my valuable space in recording it here. Nor, indeed, will it be necessary to insert the major's reply, since it was very similar to that made by him to the Commodore of the Yacht Club, and may also be found in all the newspapers. And now, when these ceremonies were over, the major bethought him of his horse and pig, the former of which he found surrounded by a swarm of unruly boys, whom the strange figure he cut, with the holsters and saddlebags mounted, afforded much amusement. The latter was quietly lying down in his cage, but came forward to render homage as soon as he heard the major's voice. I should mention that the major always aimed to be up to the fashion of the times, and learning from Councilman Blennerhasset that demonstrations of a more public character had recently been declined by one or two very distinguished politicians, he made up his mind not to be a whit behind any of them, (for the reason of which the reader may discover by conjecture,) and therefore positively declined all public demonstrations, notwithstanding the Splinters' Guard was soon on the spot, ready to do him escort duty. He, however, retired into the cabin, where, (I say it without envy, for I love a brave soldier,) he took a quiet glass of whiskey and a sandwich with the very honorable "committee of reception." And this being duly noted by the reporters, (one of whom was seen purloining a sandwich or two,) the major gave directions about the care of his pig, ordered his saddlebags upon old Battle, who was weak enough in the extremities, and proceeded to the wharf amidst the deafening acclamations of a hundred ragged urchins, who, notwithstanding the distress of the animal, would have mounted and rode away, but for the kindly interposition of two policemen.

Page 137

There was standing on the wharf a somewhat dilapidated carriage, to which four lean gray horses, such as are used for drawing all great heroes through the city, were harnessed, and presented so forlorn a figure that one might easily have imagined them employed by the devil to convey to his dominions that shabby class of sinners consigned to him on Sunday evenings by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. Into this the distinguished representatives of the great metropolis insisted upon getting the major, that he might be conveyed to the apartments secured for him at the great St. Nicholas Hotel, in a manner becoming so great a politician. But as the major was not quite sure whether his reputation would be best preserved by sticking to the politician, or by dropping the politician, and sticking to his laurels as a military man, he shook his head and hesitated for some time. He was half inclined to dub himself the warrior; and as warriors always appeared best on horseback, he was, to the great delight of the throng, about to mount his faithful animal, assign me his seat in the hero-trap, and follow at a respectful distance. But he bethought himself that both were noble professions; and, surely, to emulate in both must be a prominent desire with all great men. After holding a consultation with me, he said he always remembered the motto: "Great is the man who humbles himself." Being satisfied then that it would not lessen his dignity, nor, indeed, in any way detract from the character of a military politician, who had need enough to look to his laurels, he agreed that Alderman Dan Dooley should ride old Battle. And with this resolve he at once repaired to the carriage, in which he took a seat with the three gentlemen of the committee, leaving me to pick my way as best I could, and drove away for the hotel, (followed at a respectful distance by the loquacious alderman, thus comically mounted,) with this strange string of cattle. And this wonderful cortège was followed by scores of hooting and ragged urchins, who switched old Battle's gambrels, and annoyed him in so many ways, that the alderman at length lost his temper, and was several times forced to dismount and beat back the harassing enemy with stones and such other weapons as he could lay his hands on.

And now, gentle reader, fearing I may weary you with this long train of nonsense, which, however, I have endeavored to make conform to the follies of the day, I will close this chapter, and for what took place at the great St. Nicholas Hotel, refer you to the next.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Which treats of many things Unique and wonderful, all of which took place when the major arrived at the great st. Nicholas hotel.

Page 138

So great was the anxiety of the reporters to jot down the most trifling occurrence, that they followed close at the heels of the juvenile rabble, and at times were in great danger of getting their heads cracked by the missiles hurled by the infuriated alderman, who, in his heart, had a holy horror of such persons, and would have killed a dozen of them without shedding a tear, though they had several times made very intelligible English of his very unintelligible speeches. Fatigued and almost out of breath, they, however reached the grand hotel in good time, and quite took possession of the landlord's best parlor, though he was as polite a gentleman as could be met with in a day's journey. They then entered his gorgeous bar-room, and partook freely of his liquors, (of which he kept none but the best,) telling him that as they were without money, he must charge the score to the freedom of the press. The host being accustomed to the pranks of these worthy men, as they are called by their employers, bid them take comfort in his house; at the same time, knowing their propensities, he cautioned them against making free with his chambermaids.

The cortège had been proceeding at a slow pace, which so increased the difficulties they met from the ragged urchins along the road, that the driver whipped up and arrived at the hotel in peace. But this rather increased than diminished Alderman Dooley's difficulties, for old Battle being unable to quicken his pace, the urchins made him the object of their mischief, and so retarded his progress that the major had arrived full half an hour when he reached the hotel. In truth, he was compelled to dismount and lead the animal, in order to secure his own safety.

The reception at the hotel, as it appeared on the following morning in the newspapers, was something truly magnificent, proving conclusively that the reporters had seen no less than one hundred persons for every one present. My love for truth in all matters of history constrains me to say, that these reporters made a great mistake, since nothing could have been more simple, and yet in keeping with true greatness, than the major's reception at the hotel, and this for the very reason that he had outdistanced the rabble. My declining years and gray hairs forbid me envying any man his laurels, but I will not degrade a noble profession by making myself the vassal of every great man who sets foot on these shores. I say, then, that when the cattle and the major reached the door of this spacious pile of white marble, wherein cheap luxury awaits the million, it was near sundown, and the only persons standing at the grand entrance, were those eight or ten bediamonded gentlemen who carry on their occupation in suspicious places, and are commonly called swell mobsmen, though judging from the air and circumstance with which they occupy the great entrance to the great St. Nicholas, it would seem as if the landlord had employed them for the double purpose of ogling ladies as they passed and holding up his marble columns. I should indeed be sorry to hear that this was true, for an extremely respectable acquaintance tells me the landlord is a most excellent gentleman, and looks well to the reputation of his house.

Page 139

As the carriage stopped the major cast a glance upward, as if viewing the curiously wrought lintels of the massive marble front, and exclaimed: "Upon my soul, gentlemen, it is so grand I begin to fear I shall not be comfortable in it." He had scarcely concluded this sentence, when a distinguished politician, habited in soiled drab trousers and a shabby brown dress coat, and a badly collapsed hat, which he wore well down over his eyes, rushed eagerly out, and was followed by a mellow faced policeman, with a green patch over his left eye and a club in his right hand. Constituting in themselves a committee of reception, the distinguished politician, who was a delegate from the custom house, now made himself right busy in getting the major and the high functionaries safely out of the carriage. And this being done without delay, the policeman ordered the swell mobsmen to stand back until the distinguished politician had presented his congratulations, which he did, adding that he had long been familiar with the potency of the major's greatness, which the city, unlike other cities, was always ready to honor.

The strange figure cut by the major, in his stranger uniform, attracted the attention of sundry enthusiastic chambermaids, who appeared upon the balconies, and recognizing in the character of the team the arrival of an important personage, commenced waving napkins, and giving such other visible signs of their admiration, that he was with difficulty restrained from making them a speech on the spot.

He now moved quietly into the house, the jaded policeman on his right, and the distinguished politician on his left, and followed by the three high officials and a score of reporters. Turning neither to the right nor the left, he proceeded straight on into the great bar room, where the queerness of his walk and raiment attracted no little attention among the well dressed gentry who nightly meet there to discuss over well compounded punches all affairs appertaining to the welfare of the state. And here, having quenched their thirst in mixtures of whiskey and water, which is the favorite drink with all really great politicians, the party quietly retired up stairs to a splendidly furnished parlor and bedroom, provided at the expense of the city, against which a score of six shillings now stood at the bar.

A sudden commotion in the street, accompanied by shouts and huzzas that made the very air echo, discovered the fact that Alderman Dan Dooley had arrived. Indeed, the scene that at that moment was being enacted in Broadway beggared description, and caused a great scampering among the reporters, who hastened to the spot in order not to lose a single occurrence. There stood old Battle, bespattered with mud, and in a condition so pitiable, that no truly philanthropic gentleman could have withheld his tears. Near him stood Mr. Alderman Dan Dooley, excited, distracted, infuriated, and swearing by all the saints in the

Page 140

calendar, to have revenge of a swarm of unwashed and ragged urchins, who stood jeering him at a respectful distance, and whom his sudden advances and retreats rather amused than daunted; for although they seemed in no way inclined to stand his charge, they would follow his retreat with renewed energy. A waiter now relieved the animal of the saddlebags and holsters, and taking him by the bridle led him limping to the stable, where he seized with great avidity the hay and oats set before him. A second policeman, according to a well respected custom among the force, came up when all the trouble was over, and addressing the discomfited alderman, said: "If I had been a minute sooner, sir, this thing would not have occurred; but I was called from my beat to quell a brush at fists between two of our common councilmen, at Florence's. I now come to your protection; and as you are a worthy gentleman, whom it is my office to obey, say but the word and I pledge you my faith to club the heads of every one of your persecutors. But first let me entreat you to get into the house, and if my club fail not, you shall see how I can keep the peace."

The alderman listened with great attention to the policeman, converted his rage into discretion, and disappeared in the great bar room of the St. Nicholas, where he forgot his afflictions in a stout draught of water and whiskey, which so addressed itself to his dignity, that after ordering it charged to the city's account, he repaired quietly into the presence of his true friends, who had already began to unite in compliments to the major. "Now, meiger," spoke Mr. Alderman Dooley, approaching the major, with his right hand extended, "understand that it's we that are the ripisintitives of this mitropilas, in which ye're as wilcome as the flowers of May. Mind that now! And may the smiles of heaven rest upon ye, an' upon the gineration ye bilongs to. Gifts, meiger, are given to the great for a pirpose. Faith, it's my own exparience tells me that! Whisht now! (Here he tapped the major confidentially on the arm.) The city manes to do ye 'oner enough, oneyhow. An' its myself and Terry Brady 'll see the pay comes." Terry Brady was the name of the distinguished politician. Mr. Dan Dooley now being, as he said, "entirely done out," flung his hat under the table and himself upon a luxuriant sofa, carved in black walnut, and upholstered with green and orange colored brocade. And upon this he felt great comfort for his feet, while the high colored figures of the Turkey carpet afforded him an excellent target for the substance he ever and anon ejected from his spacious and discolored mouth.

And, too, my high regard for the fair guests of the great St. Nicholas, of whom it was said by these malicious reporters that they rushed "en masse" to receive the major, immediately he entered the house, reminds me that I must not forget to mention, that the only ladies present were the wife of the distinguished politician, and a damsel of fair looks and firm virtue. I am no higilian, and only use the term "firm virtue" here, as being applicable to this damsel; for although no end of slanders had been cast upon her, the man who dared to come forward and say he had trifled with her chastity, was yet to be

found. By these, I freely confess he was received with a courtesy worthy of so great a politician.

Page 141

And now, when it was night, and two thousand jets of gas threw a blaze of light over the massive pile, which seemed suddenly transformed into a regal palace, where high colors and cheap revelry went hand in hand, the party, joined and rejoined by several other distinguished politicians, refreshed themselves on a sumptuous supper, which the landlord had prepared without regard to expense. And when this was over, and the major's arrival had got fully noised about, there came such a throng of rejected humanity that the house presented the appearance of a palace besieged by bread rioters. And so impassioned did the clamor of the throng become, that I thought if Saint Nicholas, who was supposed to be the presiding deity of this hotel, could look down upon it without a frown, he must be an uncommon saint. In fine, the landlord found that getting so great a politician into his house was not much to its reputation, as the eclat therein gained would be counteracted, with tenfold interest, by the pilfering propensities of his unwashed followers, who now rushed into his house in such ungovernable confusion that guards had to be stationed along the passages, armed with tipstuffs and bludgeons. Indeed, he wished in his heart that the devil or some other gentleman of quality had Major Roger Sherman Potter, for then he could preserve the good name of his patron saint.

Persons of every political hue and circumstance poured in, were presented to the major, and drank of the liquors which were being ordered without stint and despatched with the same freedom by the honorable committee of reception. And thus they came, and drank great draughts, and complimented one another. And although not a few marveled at finding the major such a queer person, and quite unlike what he had been represented, all joined in drinking his health and flattering his vanity. And when it was ten o'clock, there came divers delegations of ungainly persons, (from the custom house, and the post office, and Tammany Hall, and various other halls,) such as fighting men and vagabonds, who, being headed by such ambitious politicians as the invincible George Branders, and flanked by the too honest Emanuel Hart, presented an appearance so suspicious that the guests of the house began to look well to their pockets, while the landlord set several of his servants to gathering up the old clothes. Indeed, it seemed as if rascaldom had broken from its dominions to revel in the palace of St. Nicholas. And as all these shabby gentlemen, but very excellent politicians, stood much in need of something to quench their thirst, it was soon found that the small sum set apart to pay the landlord for all his services, would not even wipe out the score at his bar, to say nothing of the damage done his furniture and other little affairs. He had given bed and board to many a man without getting a dime in return, and thanked heaven that good fortune had enabled him to do so, but now he was not a little

Page 142

disturbed in his temper at the state of his accounts, for he knew the city was as slow to pay an “over ordered” bill as it was quick in paying homage to great demagogues. He therefore, in the kindest manner, intimated to the major, that unless he would be personally responsible for the “surplus,” he must close the score at his bar. And this he said in self-protection, for no man could lay the charge of having done a mean act at his door. The major, with becoming courtesy, pledged his honor to the landlord, and bid him think no more of the bill, since if he closed the floodgate of his bar, which gave out such exuberant medicine as made the tears of patriots to flow, his power would surely be at an end. “Be not agitated, sir,” said he, with an air of enlarged self complacency, “but convert your misgivings into confidence in me, for I see you are a true republican, and would not harm a man whose fame is so well established.” Thus the major addressed the landlord, who retired with regained confidence, and, as I thought, a feeling of self reproach for having intimated his doubts in the matter.

The major was now getting weary with the mighty business of receiving the compliments of ten score would-be patriots and noisy politicians, when there entered a greater man than any of them. And this was no less a person than Don Fernando, a man of much will and circumstance, and now mayor of the city. Many things had been said of this truly great man, not the least of which was, that the Romans ought to be thankful that he was not born in the days of the Cæsars, though in the honest yearnings of his ambition he had frequently indulged in the thought, that his wisdom and invincibility of arm was second to none of them. Indeed, it was said among other things, equally true, that he had more than once consoled himself with the fact, that if he had not gained the notoriety of Cæsar, it was no fault of his will, for he could make promises he never meant to keep, and gnash his teeth at his enemies, to an extent that ought to satisfy the most enthusiastic admirer of Roman greatness. But republicanism, as developed by the prudence of our people, had so changed and altered things, that great men, though they had performed unheard of deeds of valor, were laughed at when they assumed powers not clearly belonging to them.

As the design of this history will be imperfect unless I record what took place when these great men met, and which ought to be read and considered by future generations, I must here inform the reader, that he will find it faithfully translated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Which carefully Records what passed between the major and the mayor-how they made speeches, and were serenaded.

Page 143

We are an exacting people, frequently requiring too much of our great men, and achieving in a week what it took ordinary nations, such as Greece and Rome, years to perform. Therefore I hold it right that we be cautious how we trust the recording of every great event to such witty but careless historians as Bancroft and Prescott, who are much given to pleasing descriptions of wonderful revolutions, but entirely overlook the battered and bruised hero, for the purpose of making others to their fancy.

You must know, then, that this mayor, Don Fernando, (he bore no resemblance to the Don Fernando of Don Quixote,) advanced with the gravity and solemnity of one whose business it was to kill giants; for though he was a man of much humor, he had a necromantic facility for dissembling, and could declare before high heaven his innocence of any crime laid at his door, and in the very next breath issue an order giving peace and comfort to pickpockets. And while I am writing of this great man, I may mention that if there was any one thing more than another he was famous for, it was a curious infatuation for great placards, in which he enjoined all good citizens to preserve the peace, at the same time commanding his worthy vassals, the policemen, to crack the skulls of all who came in their way.

Tall of figure, with a pale and long visage, which he prided himself resembled the visage of an equally great man, he advanced at a pace indicative of one who felt the grandeur of his position. The major was at first not a little surprised at the manner of his visitor; but being himself a dabster at great things, he soon recognized the quality of the new comer, and came forth to meet him in all his uniform, not even forgetting his three cornered hat, which he passed with his left hand while making an unexceptionable bow. Unembroidered greatness-yes, naked greatness, stripped of all falsehood and pretence, and such only as is worthy of governing an honest world, which it would generously do, but for the trifling inconvenience to itself, was here represented in these two great men-the Scylla and Charybdis of these wonderful times. The only perceptible difference in their prowess was, that the mayor stood at least a head and a half taller than the major. Both had begun making unexceptionable bows, when Alderman Dan Dooley, seeing the embarrassment that might occur, came resolutely forward, (having first set down the bottle from which he had replenished Councilman Finnigan's glass,) and addressing the mayor, said, "Faith, then, I ask no greater enterprise than to serve yer 'onor, seein' how ye know the dacency one great man owes to another. By my faith, then, I'm deloighted to prisent ye to the gintleman we all mane to 'onor. Faith, an' it's himself's before ye, Meiger Roger (stay! what the devil is it now?) I have it. Meiger Roger Jefferson Potter!"

"Major Roger Sherman Potter, commonly called Major Roger Potter!" the major interrupted, with a deferential bow.

Page 144

"Faith, an' the neame atween the two's no matter onyhow!" rejoined Mr. Alderman Dooley, who, having left the two great men to themselves, again took to the bottle, and continued serving himself and his friend with an experience in every way worthy of so great an alderman.

"Pray, sir," said Fernando, with a gracious smile, "take nothing amiss that our worthy friend says." And here he blushed, and seemed not a little mortified at the pranks of his favorite alderman, though they were natural enough to the condition he was in. "He means well," resumed the mayor, dryly, "and is an honest alderman, though given to drink at times. And now, since fortune has been so kind as to grant me the opportunity of paying my respects to one so worthy of admiration, let me congratulate you upon your safe arrival in the city. I have the power, and it will be my pleasure to see that the public acknowledgements you have merited are properly bestowed." The major here interrupted by reminding the mayor that he had, on the advice of a very good friend, declined all public ovations.

"As to that," continued Fernando, "fashion has made it necessary to say these little things; for a great man is never so great as when he seeks to avoid homage. And we are not always bound to say what we mean."

"As to my greatness, sir," replied the major, "I will leave that to others; for it is no trifling thing for a man who has done all he can for his country to be snuffed out by the envious pen of some rascally scribbler for the newspapers. Let us think well of ourselves, and leave the rest to our friends."

"Truly, major, you are of my way of thinking, for that is precisely what I do."

"And because you do, you have risen to your present proud position!" interposed the major. "Being a military man, I would have you know that I am no flatterer, but a man who loves peace, and hates the devil and all his arrogant vassals. Your fame, sir, has gone over the land; and as to your greatness, I bow to that, for I have heard many good men testify to it; and now that I see it with my own eyes, written all down the length of your person, no man shall speak ill of you-in my presence! And as you have embarked in great undertakings, may heaven grant you power to carry them to a successful issue."

"As what you have said concerns me much, accept my thanks; for it is the good opinion of men like yourself that pleases me. I have now many difficulties on hand, it is true; but when I have conquered, and shown myself superior to my enemies, I will lay up my sword, give my hand to the people, and my heart to enjoining heaven to grant me repose. The bent of my ambition, sir, would have no difficulty in finding its way but for those wonderful men, the editors, who lay a new born child at my door every day, and think it no harm to set the country by the ears, though they are glad enough when men of our stamp step in to conciliate matters."

Page 145

They thus spent ten minutes in pleasant conversation, complimenting one another, evidently not a little pleased with themselves, and resolved not to leave the settling of their preeminent prowess to any one else. Indeed, the scene enacted between the mayor and the major would have become extremely affecting but for Alderman O'Toole, who, being a man of much understanding, proposed that they seal their friendship with a little brandy and water. Neither having any scruples in the matter, they filled their glasses with much pomp and circumstance. "And now, gentlemen," said Mr. Alderman O'Toole, "I propose the health of your honors together; for barring General Pierce, greater men never lived, as myself knows." They bowed and emptied their glasses to this toast, at which several of those present were not a little amused. The mayor, who was, with his many other traits of character, sufficiently versed in strategy to extricate himself from any snare, said he felt constrained to say a few words in return for the compliment, and was about making a speech on the spot. Happily a waiter entered at the moment, bearing in his hand a plate of cold chicken, which so excited Don Fernando's appetite that he thought no more of his dignity, but seized upon the best meaty leg, and holding it daintily between his fingers, and applying his teeth, never stopped until he had stripped it clean to the bone. And while engaged in this laudable enterprise, they were surprised by a band of musicians in the street, playing "Hail to the Chief." The night was dark, and on looking out of the window, it was discovered that the musicians were some twenty grim looking Germans, with very long beards and longer brass instruments, with which they seemed determined to perforate ten ragged newsboys, who, with the picture of rascality written on their mischievous faces, stood holding as many pitiful tallow candles almost under the noses of the windy fellows, whose eyes were on their notes. When the band ceased playing, the throng cheered and kept up a loud calling for the major, who, the mayor said, must go out and make a speech, for it would not do to offend them by keeping silent. He also deemed it prudent to caution the major against saying what he really thought. In truth, he whispered in the major's ear that he must mind and strike the popular point; and when touching upon anything of great moment, be careful to so construct his sentences that they embody a double meaning. As to promises, he must be sure to make enough of them, only let it be on the principle that promises are always expected to take care of themselves. When the major had listened sufficiently to the admonitions of the mayor, he repaired to the balcony, where he was so surprised to find several ladies, dressed with great taste and splendor, that his modesty became much taxed, though they saluted him with becoming courtesy. The crowd outside, which was now rampant of disorder, recognized in the short, corpulent figure before them, with the red hair standing erect upon a turnip-like head, the man of their wish, whom they greeted with three deafening cheers. The major bowed and spread his hands, in the left of which he held the engrossing emblem of his dignity, his three cornered hat.

Page 146

"Gentlemen!" said he, in a voice somewhat shaky, "I thank you for this great honor, which I may or may not have merited. You know it does not say much for a man that he speaks of himself; but this I will say, that the man who serves his country for his country is the man for me. If you, being people of high quality and much respect, (I never judge men from what they seem on the outside, not I!) shall give me your confidence, I warrant you shall see I am no unscrupulous politician!" Here the throng sent up a loud cheer, and tapered it off with three tigers. "Ah! that is what I like," resumed the major; "I always did like the music of the Democracy. It sounds as if it was the free offering of hearts innocent, and not given to retrieve." "Intrigue," whispered Don Fernando, correctively, as he stood close behind the major, evidently delighted at the good temper of those about him. "Exactly!" bowed the major, "intrigue was what I meant to say!" Affected either by the strangeness of the scene, or his anxiety for the welfare of his much valued animals, he continued in this incoherent strain for some minutes, but said not a word of his early whiggery, or the affair of the Yacht Club. Many of the persons outside now began to marvel at the strangeness of his speech, and to think him not so much of a politician after all. In truth, although he said much about our liberties, and was several times jeered with the question as to what he thought "about niggers," not a few puzzled their brains to find out to what manner of politician he belonged. And as he concluded by enjoining them to be good fathers, dutiful husbands, and honest men, which three virtues were sure to secure the blessings of heaven, the puzzle became still greater. And yet the throng cheered vociferously. When, then, he had concluded, he wiped the perspiration from his brow, fritted his finger through his beard, and shook hands with several of the ladies, who still thought him a great man, in whose strange speech there was much those acquainted with the politics of the nation could perfectly understand.

Again the music ceased, and loud calls were made for Don Fernando, who always had an apology when invited to make a speech, and an excuse for making it on the second invitation, which he never failed to accept. In fine, I say it with no intention of satire, that Don Fernando never let an opportunity to make a speech slip through his fingers, though three invitations, as he held, were necessary to one speech. In truth, he regarded invitations as losing nothing in their passage, when they concerned great men; for it was a rule with our best politicians to make reluctance a virtue.

Page 147

After repeated calls, then, Don Fernando turned to address the multitude, and said in a speech of some twenty minutes, much that they had heard before, and expected to hear again. He cautioned them to look well to their liberties, though it were good to be careful how they were found breaking the peace and men's heads. I would mention here, that this singular admonition was induced by the presence of some six or seven of Don Fernando's old friends among the throng outside. And these worthy men commenced their favorite avocation with such shouts as-"Go it Fernando! Fernando and liberty!" And when they had thus deported themselves to their satisfaction, they took to demolishing the trombones of the players, as if such amusement was to their taste.

Don Fernando concluded his speech by saying, he saw in the persons present, the great and glorious elements of our expanding civilization. Kind providence just then sent a refreshing shower, as if in pity at the condition of the raiment his listeners were clad in. And this sent many to their homes; but the more patriotic had no fear of a shower, and seemed not inclined to leave until they had heard a speech from Mr. Alderman Dan Dooley, for whom they called loudly. These calls were seconded by persons on the balcony, who out of sheer derision, demanded his presence with so much earnestness as convinced the loquacious Dooley that history and his friends would not be content without a word from him on this great occasion. But Don Fernando well knew that the reporters, as was customary with them, would embellish that one word rather curiously, for they were kind to him, and invariably made him say all the witty things they could think of.

"Upon my word, Mr. Dooley," whispered Don Fernando, "the thing has ended well; and it strikes me we have had speeches enough for the evening."

"Faith!" exclaimed the Alderman, "I'm contint to lave them with the spaech of yir 'oner."

Mr. Dooley, if the truth must be told, was not in a condition to get off smooth sentences, though his deportment would have afforded much diversion. And as good speeches lost nothing by keeping, he resolved not to let his off just yet. And so completely was Don Fernando master of the Alderman, that he sauntered, or rather oscillated into a corner, and sat down.

The small hours of morning had well nigh come, when Don Fernando, without change in the dignity of his bearing, took his departure; expressing, as he left the door, the great pleasure it would give him to receive the major at the City Hall on the morrow. And when he was gone, the committee of reception thought no more of him, but drew their chairs round the major, and with divers friends of the same hue and circumstance, commenced showering upon him no end of compliments, declaring him to be the father of more political reforms than Jefferson and Washington ever dreamed of.

When their generosity had come sufficiently mellowed, and the landlord had declared his inability to furnish any more whiskey, and Mr. Councilman Finnigan began to see

ghosts and murderers by the dozen, all of which he would have sworn were real, and set about thrashing with the gallantry of a true Irish gentleman, Mr. O'Toole proposed that the major become a citizen of New York, when he would wager any amount of money to make him next mayor of the city.

Page 148

"I cannot say I would be equal to the duties, gentlemen, for I have never been mayor. My services, (except now and then,)"-here the major filled his glass-"have been for the army and politics, which I take it have nothing to do with setting a city to rights. If spitting an enemy, getting up a riot, and giving peace and comfort to them who have a taste for breaking heads, be things which a mayor must be an adept at, then you may trust me, gentlemen," said the major, giving his hand to Alderman Dooley in pledge of his faith.

Alderman Baggs, who was a man of much wind, and extremely fond of making speeches on these great occasions, though in this instance he had peaceably pursued his advances upon the bottle, and left the speeches to others, proposed that instead of mayor, which after all was no great affair of an office, he immediately set on foot a project for making the major President of the United States. The major, he said, had surely evinced ability enough.

"What you please-make what you please of me, gentlemen, for I am your servant, and the good servant is known by his work-that I know! And if it is your will that I should be President, my highest ambition shall be to serve you to the best of my ability. This I may say, give me the power, as my wife, Polly Potter, used to say, and I will hang fillibusters to your satisfaction."

An alderman of the name of Billy Bristle, who was known to have a slight inclination for fillibustering, and had more than a score of times pledged the city to the measures of gentlemen that way inclined, having just looked in to pay his respects to the city's guest, rose quickly to his feet at hearing so bold a proposal to get rid of his friends, and declared his readiness to fight any gentleman who would say a word damaging to the character of the fillibusters. Alderman Dooley, between whom and Alderman Bristle, an old grudge had stood for some time unsettled, cast a frown upon the assertion, and declared that the language held was an implied insult, whereupon he measured with his stalwart arm the distance between his body and the Alderman's nose. This being the signal for a grand set to, which was had in right good earnest, the scene of confusion that followed no one need attempt to describe, unless he have the pen of a Balzac. Tumblers and broken chairs being the order of weapon most in use, and the major not being skilled in the use of such arms, lost no time in retreating to a dark closet, where, closely packed among sundry old clothes and house rubbish, he congratulated himself by saying: "Now, as I am a military man, and have no taste for this sort of fighting, I will look well to my head, and let them have the glory."

Page 149

The landlord had paced his halls in great tribulation for some time, for he saw he had been grievously taken in, and that the damage to the reputation of his house would be four fold what he would get of the city for all his trouble. Seeing, then, his house in a state of confusion, and having fears for the good name of his patron saint, he rushed into the room, crying, "Gentlemen! gentlemen! pray leave my house, for though I see you are guardians of the city, you seem to have as little respect for the reputation of my house, which is my bread, as you have for the good order of the city. Pray get away from here, and what you have had shall be given for charity's sake." Seeing they were not inclined to respect his admonition, he called a posse of policemen, and ordered them to clear his house of the miscreants; but they, seeing it was their own masters who were deporting themselves in this disorderly manner, merely shook their heads and walked away. In this dilemma, for the landlord saw he could not get of the police what he paid for, he called some two score of his own servants, who, having no respect for high officials who do not respect themselves, were not long in tumbling them into the street; and would have had Major Roger Sherman Potter following them, if he could have been found!

CHAPTER XXIX.

In which major Roger Potter is found almost suffocated; and how he declares that men of lowly birth become dangerous when elevated to power.

The writer of this history, remembering how his mother admonished him to be virtuous and prudent, retired quietly to bed before the passions of the high functionaries had caused so violent an outbreak. And though his regard for the major's reputation was of the tenderest kind, he slept soundly, feeling sure that there was nothing in the list of misfortunes the major was incapable of overcoming. It was with no little surprise, then, that I was awoke by the landlord on the following morning, and told that Major Roger Potter was no where to be found. He regretted having such people in his house; but said it would shorten the account of his misfortunes, if he could but find the missing guest, for it was his custom to treat all men with courtesy.

On repairing to the parlor, which we did as speedily as possible, proof of what had taken place on the previous night lay strewn all over the floor. There, too, lay the major's three cornered hat, as if sitting in judgment upon a promiscuous heap of bottles. But this was the only vestige of the missing hero. At length a sort of murmuring sound was heard, as of some one in great distress. Seeing the landlord much perplexed, I listened with anxious attention, and soon discovered the sound to resemble very much that made by the major over the

Page 150

bruising given him by Captain Luke Snider. On approaching the closet door, it was found to be locked, and the landlord declared there was no space for one so stout within its bounds. Deeming it prudent, however, the lock was turned, to the great delight and relief of the major, who came forth like an half roasted rhinoceros, heaved a sigh, and swore by no less than three saints, as soon as he gained the use of his tongue, that the fellow who turned the key on him was no friend.

"I am marvelously fond of retirement, I would have you know," he spoke, with an air of much concern, "but I choose not to sacrifice my life in this way, for it is a device of the devil, and those in league with him." He emerged from the rubbish half dead with fear, and continued for some minutes proclaiming the baseness and treachery of the act. Then clasping the landlord by the hand, he besought him to be his friend while he took revenge of the enemies who had played this trick upon him.

"Pray be comforted, sir, for these things are mere trifles, and a great man is never so great as when he forgets his misfortunes," said he, "and heaven knows it has all gone wrong with me. You, sir, have a position I lay no claim to."

"Ah!" replied the major, "it is because I have a position, and think of it, that aggravates my misery. And though I am ready to confess that I owe my deliverance to your wisdom and prudence, I begin to think that power is most to be feared when entrusted to men who have been brought up in servitude; for among their many accomplishments they do not include that which teacheth every man who would take care of the nation, to bear in mind, that he serves her best who thinks least of himself. A mule may bray, but it takes an ass to be an ass. I have been these twenty years, sir, serving my country; and I take to myself no little credit that I have served it as well as any of them, of which my secretary can bear testimony." Here the major turned to me for a word of approval. The landlord now put several questions to him concerning his adventures in Mexico and elsewhere, to all of which he gave such extraordinary answers, that he felt assured that whatever eccentricities he might be guilty of at times, he had at least a vigorous understanding, and was as great a man as had come that way for many a day. And so completely did the landlord, who appreciated genius of the highest order, when it did not conflict with his interests, fall in with all the major's crotchets, that he would have written sonnets in his praise, but for the danger of entering upon so hazardous an occupation. He now condoled him for having fallen into the hands of such political vagabonds as had brought disgrace upon his house, and who he swore would bring disgrace upon any house that had doors open to them.

After a moment of deep thought, the major turned to the landlord, and with great earnestness of manner, said: "Since, sir, I have suffered no loss, let us think no more of these little distresses, for they so discipline a man, that if he have a heart it must be made capable of overcoming those obstacles all great men find in their way. We both

agree on this point, Mr. Landlord. And since that matter is settled, if you have no objection, I will join you at breakfast, where we will debate several little matters concerning my mission.”

Page 151

The landlord smiled, and expressed his delight at such an act of condescension, which was rare in so great a man.

The major then made a hasty toilet, and together they entered the western dining room, the size and splendor of which quite astonished him, for the walls were inlaid with mirrors from the ceiling to the floor, and reflected the guests and each object with which the table was set out, while the ceiling overhead was decorated with frescoes and stucco work tipped with gold. Observing many fine ladies present, the major, out of sheer respect to his military reputation, made them all one of his most courteous bows before taking a seat, at which they were not a little diverted.

The landlord being himself a politician of no mean order, asked the major what he thought would be the effect of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise.

"That, sir," replied the major, "depends entirely upon how the people take it. If they hold their peace, then there will be peace. But if these humanity mongers, who would break the peace of the nation to get a new issue on the nigger question, get to kicking up a dust, then there will be no peace. It must certainly be confessed, that niggers ought to thank heaven that they are as well off as they are; and those who say otherwise know not what they say. I also hold it an advantage in political economy, that we keep the lazy rascals where by selling them we can pocket the money when occasion requires."

The landlord was now satisfied that his guest was at least right on this all important question of "niggers," though as many inferences might be drawn from his answer as from a speech of Senator Douglas respecting the territories.

Among other things, the major noticed that not a few of the ladies were deeply absorbed in reading the morning papers, and this so excited his curiosity that he must needs inquire of the landlord what it meant, when he was told that they contained an accurate account of what took place on the previous night, including his speech, which was so perfect a piece of composition, embracing so many subjects, and discovering a power to penetrate the designs of the enemy so truly wonderful, that not only his friends, but every lady at the table was commending him for it. "It is generous of them," returned the major, squinting across the table; "but I would have you know, I am a favorite with the ladies wherever I go, and being naturally tender hearted, I have known times when they would embrace me most affectionately. I say this between ourselves, for their fondness was beyond my expectation." Having ordered a copy of the Herald, (a journal which had for many years furnished the major his political, philosophical, and diversional reading,) he there found not only that he had made a speech of rare eloquence, but one of the most delightful as well as minute biographies of himself ever written. In truth, he was there made the hero of so many exploits

Page 152

as to make this history entirely unnecessary. I ought to mention, however, that the sagacious reporters were cautious not to mention the affair which caused the polite landlord to eject the high officials from his house. This gave an additional charm to the whole concern, and so elated the major as to entirely take away his appetite. Indeed, he resolved from that moment, let whatever come, to travel no farther without a reporter of his own. They made the very best sort of speeches, and could make and unmake great men with a facility truly astonishing, usually laying the greatest stress upon the smallest things.

When breakfast was over, the landlord drew the major aside, and requested as a favor that he would listen to what he said. "Understand me, sir," he said, with a look of concern, "you are welcome in my house, but I fear there are difficulties creeping in that may lessen our friendship if left unexplained. I see you are a man of great mental power, a stranger, and a gentleman, therefore you cannot be expected to know the great distress our aldermen, who are much given to ceremonies of this sort, have brought upon several honest men. You see, sir, how fond they are of the bottle, and as there are only two hundred dollars set apart for the bill at my house, which will not square last night's bill at the bar, pray give them a hint, for their generosity knows no bounds at times; and if I present a bill somewhat over the mark, I am laughed at, and set down for a confirmed fool."

"I see you are an honest man," replied the major, "and it is a pity your house should be damaged by persons who have not the fear of bills before their eyes, though they have the gold of the city at their command. But, sir, let your thoughts incline the most favorable way, for I have some two hundred dollars of my own, as well as a horse and pig of such rare qualities that I already begin to see the fortune they will bring to me." The major now continued giving such a wonderful account of his animals as excited the landlord's curiosity, and made him express a desire to see them. And as nothing so pleased the major as to show his animals to every new acquaintance, he doffed his uniform, and putting on his suit of Uxbridge satin, which rather increased the rotundity of his figure, sallied forth to the stable, and there found old Battle quietly eating hay in the stalls, and the pig fast locked up in his cage. A groom led the limping animal out, and as he hobbled along the floor, a perfect Bucephalus in the major's eyes, the landlord could not comprehend how so sensible a gentleman could become so infatuated with a horse that was as lean as a lantern, unless he be a knave. But notwithstanding the miserable plight he was in, he soon began to raise his head and tail, evidently out of regard at seeing his master, and gave out such other signs of what there was in him, as convinced the landlord he was a horse of some metal, though he would not bring an eagle in the market. And here the major commenced to give an account of the many adventures he had performed with this noble animal, when the landlord interposed by saying, "I admire your enthusiasm, major, but as I have no love

for practical jokes, you may put your frame in the stalls, for he will need all the care you can bestow upon him.”

Page 153

"Pray, sir, reserve your anger, for you have not had time to fully comprehend his many good qualities," replied the major, not a little grieved at the landlord's remarks.

He next visited his pig, who rose quickly to his feet, and commenced making signs of friendship to his master. "This pig, I assure you, sir," said the major, "was brought up in the care of the clergy, was the lead pig of one Felix Shulbert, a poor parson, who on losing his church took to the business of swine driving." The landlord was much amused at the simplicity with which the major related the history of this wonderful pig, who now came jumping out of his cage, to the great delight of numerous bystanders, and cut up so many queer pranks that they were ready to swear him possessed of the devil. He would run to the major on hearing his name called; he would turn somersets; he would walk on his hinder feet; he would point with his nose to any letter of the alphabet he was commanded; and, no doubt, with a little more training, he could have delved the mysteries of destiny with a facility that neither medium nor clairvoyant could have excelled. If, then, the lookers on were at first delighted, they now stood amazed, and declared that so sensible an animal had never before been brought to the city. "I have been told, sir," said the major with an air of self-satisfaction, "that you have in your city one Barnum, a man of much note, who is reputed to have become rich of dealing in deformed monstrosities, and though an honest man enough as the world goes, has had a strange history written of himself. And this history, I am told, has been much praised by the critics, though truly it is nothing but a tissue of certain deceptions practiced upon a credulous public-"

"You are right, there," interrupted the landlord; "he has made fools of so many of his fellows, that his imitators regard his tricks as so many virtues, which the public are ready to applaud. But as your pig is truly a wonder, you will do well to get him in the hands of this clever gentleman, for then his fame will be blown trumpet tongued over the land, people will rush to see him, and the critics, being well paid, will write all sorts of things of his talents. You may then let the devil take the rest, which is the way the world goes."

And while they were thus conversing, this clever man stalked in, much to the surprise of every one present, though it was said of him, that he could smell a monstrosity at the distance of a hundred miles. After fixing his scrutinizing eye upon the animal, and witnessing several of his tricks, which he performed with great agility, he commenced casting reflections upon his performances, saying he had talent enough, but it was of so crude a kind, that he would require no end of practice before it would do to bring him before a discriminating audience. As for the critics, it was no hard matter to keep them right; but it might give rise to a question at the Press Club, that would seriously endanger its harmony. He, however, began to inquire what the major thought about terms. To use a vulgarism very common at this day, he began to "pump him," in regard to the value of the animal's services. And here I must leave him for the present.

Page 154

CHAPTER XXX.

Which treats of how the major received the calls of distinguished persons, and how he discovered the object of his mission.

The landlord enjoined the major, when they returned to the hotel, not to think so much of his horse, for he could not render much service to a military man. As for the pig, he could be depended upon as a source of revenue in case of need, which quite satisfied him on the matter of his bill.

The major spent the rest of the morning in receiving calls, for divers distinguished persons had read his speech in the newspapers, and were eager to pay homage to one of such rare gifts. Among them were prominent members of the Chamber of Commerce, who intimated that he might condescend to make them a speech from the Exchange steps, on the affairs of the nation; members of the Board of Brokers; citizens distinguished for their bountiful charities; members of the Union Club, who suggested that they would propose him for a member; members of the New York Club, who knew he would like to become a member of their body, which consisted of distinguished persons only, and kept the best imported wines and cigars. A person of lean visage, who constituted himself a delegate from the Century Club, begged to inform the major that the club was composed of poor but very respectable literary persons, who eschewed liquors and cigars, and were about introducing a by-law for the admission of ladies, which it was hoped would prove a regulator to the good conduct of all aspiring youths. The club, he knew, would be most happy to make him a member. A delegation from the Knickerbocker represented their club as the most cosy place imaginable; as for the members, they had so strong a turn for literature, that they had elected a grocer for president, and an actor for secretary. A visit from him would indeed be held as a high honor; and as it was strictly forbidden that any member discover inebriation before ten o'clock, he could not fail of spending a cheerful hour with them.

Each brought some such powerful argument to sustain their comparative claims to his favorable consideration. He also received invitations to visit various factories, and become a member of certain charitable societies for the taking care of widows and orphans, and poor authors with large families. In truth, one might have thought they imagined him a man capable of conquering the world with thirty thousand troops, such was the plentiful pile of invitations spread over his table. Even Hall wrote to say faro was played on the square at his establishment, which was visited by none but gentlemen of fashion and circumstance. Mrs. Wise, too, intimated in one of the most delicately perfumed billets, that her soirees were the most select in the city, and if so distinguished a major would honor her with a call, she would guarantee the rest.

Page 155

The major had much to say to all who visited him; and though they listened with particular attention, there was something so strange about him, that, notwithstanding they would, in the coolness of their judgment, have set him down for an insane man, they could not reconcile such a condition of mind with the masterly speech in the morning papers. They were also much disappointed at his appearance, for he resembled more a corsair, or a pirate, than a great politician. And as his coat was threadbare, and his hair short cropped, many thought him a man who could better maintain his dignity at a distance, though heaven might send him fortune and earth give him bounties. But as neither the man of commerce nor the man of letters were capable of fully appreciating a military genius, who found his reward in buffets and hardships, and frequently wore the tattered garments in which he had gained his laurels, it was not to be expected that his preeminence would be recognized at first sight by any but his companions in arms. Hence he found inexpressible pleasure in the calls of several persons, who, though they had never smelled the perfumery of war, took great delight in the appellation of generals. One of these was as great a general as New York was capable of producing, and set much value upon his valor, though the only columns he was known to have led to battle, were those of a ponderous newspaper, in which was carefully preserved all the spice and essence of a wonderful warrior. He could write destructive three column articles with perfect ease, gave extensive tea parties to very respectable ladies, had an opinion ready on all great questions, could get up his choler or his pistol at the shortest notice, could lay his magnificent pistol away as quietly as any other man when the occasion for it was over; and he could, if the nation would only spare him, govern the world with the same refreshing coolness that he could sip chocolate at Lord Twaddlepole's table, which was a high honor with him. If, I say, this good man and excellent general had a weakness, it was for exhibiting his nakedness with all the embroidery, and for letting mankind in general know that he had joined the church, which latter was well enough, seeing that it atoned for numerous bygone backslidings. And as he stood in his boots, nearly two feet taller than the major, it was curious to witness the elongation of the little, rotund figure that stood bowing before him. "I see, sir," spoke the general, whose name was Toadytrip, "that you are a soldier, and belong to the noble profession, in which I flatter myself I have obtained distinction, though it has fallen short of my expectations."

The major received the general with becoming courtesy, and after expressing his gratification at meeting so famous a companion in arms, inquired as to the wars he had fought in, and what number of scars he had received.

Toadytrip fussed himself into a state of very general self sufficiency, and was at first not a little embarrassed; but at length he replied, that though he had never been in battle, he was ready to serve him with meal or metal in any of his undertakings. They now shook hands, and strengthened their friendship over a little brandy, for the general was an advocate of temperance only when it applied to others.

Page 156

"You must know, sir," said the major, "that I am no scurvy fellow, but a man who has stood the devil knows how much buffeting in politics. I have made eight and twenty speeches, sir, in a month; and it was said of me that no man could better them. And if you would know more of my doings, please refer to my companions in the Mexican War."

"Your fame makes that unnecessary. To-morrow I give a tea party, and among the rest of my guests I expect a bishop and a nobleman, who is traveling over the country. They are both honest men, and as jolly fellows as can be found in the land. Honor us with your company, sir, and I warrant you entertainment of no common kind; for there will not be one of the lower order among my guests, and the high promotion you have obtained must, I am sure, be the result of many battles, which my friends will be delighted to hear an account of." The major was delighted with the compliment, but, as will hereafter be shown, was not in a condition to honor the general's tea party with his presence. And the general, having expressed his gratification at this meeting, took his departure, with many bows and assurances of friendship. When he was gone, there came several equally great generals and colonels, though editors of smaller newspapers; several of these promised him the support of their columns in any great undertaking he might embark in. This was especially so with the editors of the Celt, and the Irish Citizen, both of which gentlemen only asked that he would give them a pledge not to form an alliance with the English. In addition to this, they discovered a strong inclination for what was in the bottle, of which the major gave them to drink, and sent them home happy.

It being now two o'clock, the major ordered a black bombazine frock coat from Wyman's, and the committee of reception having arrived with a carriage, he immediately entered it, and was rolled away for the City Hall, where he was received with much pomp and ceremony by Don Fernando, who embraced the opportunity to make a speech, such as, he fancied, Demosthenes never excelled. And the major replied with his customary rhodomontade. Both considered the event an extraordinary one, auguring greater things to themselves. It must, in truth, be said of Don Fernando, that he could receive guests with a courtliness truly wonderful. I have not, however, thought it necessary to record his speech here, inasmuch as it bore a strong resemblance to such as may daily be found in the morning papers.

When they had sufficiently exchanged compliments, Don Fernando took great pains to show the major several objects of greatest interest in the Hall, among which was his corpulent chief of police, and a little man of the name of Sampson Queerquirk, who was his lawyer and factotum. He then took him by the arm, and they sallied out into a great hall, the walls of which were hung with portraits of mayors and other great men. Indeed it seemed as if it were a malady with mayors to admire their own portraits. The small modicum of vanity which slumbered in Don Fernando's bosom quickly took fire, and deeming it the height of discretion not to overlook any thing that might be of deep interest to so great a visitor, he pleasantly added, that a portrait of himself would soon enhance the splendors of the gallery.

Page 157

And in order to give more perfection to the reception, and to make it in every way worthy of so great a politician, he had his troop of worthy policemen drawn up in front of the City Hall, where they performed a series of marches and counter-marches with such wonderful precision, that Don Fernando offered to wager a thousand acres of land in California that a more orderly body of men was not to be found. The major expressed himself delighted with what he saw of them. "Indeed, sir," said he, "I am pleased to see that they carry their clubs like men accustomed to a mighty master. And let malicious scribblers say what they will of them, I make no doubt they will either keep or break the peace at your bidding." At this Don Fernando blushed, but was cautious not to whisper a word about their agility for smashing skulls, and sleeping at street corners, which was truly wonderful.

The major returned thanks for the high honor paid him, and taking leave of Don Fernando, with many assurances of esteem for his great administrative abilities, repaired to his carriage, and returned to the hotel, where he met with a misfortune, the quality of which will be related in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Relating to the appearance of an unexpected character, which grievously disturbed the major's equanimity.

As the major entered the great entrance to the St. Nicholas, a well dressed man of medium size advanced toward him, somewhat nervously, and fixing a quick, suspicious eye upon him, whispered in his ear something that caused him to turn pale. Indeed, he seemed confused and bewildered. Seeing that he had "private" business with the major, the honorable gentlemen of this reception committee, with becoming discretion, quietly took their departure. "If you please, sir," said the man, "there is a little matter of business-these are delicate matters; but you see, sir, (and I make it as delicate as my duty will admit,) I treat every one whose acquaintance I make in this way with indulgence, and more especially men of your standing."

Here the man timorously commenced drawing an ominous looking document from his coat pocket, but the major interrupted, by touching him on the arm, and saying, in a whisper, "As you are a man of discretion, pray deal with me like a gentleman, and just come up stairs; for I would have you be cautious how you let your business out."

The man touched his hat, and followed at a respectful distance, and soon both disappeared into the major's parlor.

"Don't allow yourself to have any fears, sir; for I pledge you no one will know my business. I may say, for I see you are nervous, that I pay so many little attentions here, and to politicians, though not so great as yourself, that most folks fancy me a guest of

the house.” The man smiled, and was in no way displeased when he saw the major feeling for a bottle with something in it. After finding one, he held it before his eye:

Page 158

"And now, sir," said he, "hoping to find you the gentleman I take you for, when you have quaffed a drop of this, which will no doubt do you good, pray tell me what the matter is, and who it is that seeks to take advantage of me?"

"Astor House," replied the man, dryly. "The proprietors are as good, generous fellows as can be found; but they have a way of wanting their own. They direct me to treat you as becomes a gentleman. And now, sir, my name is Tom Flanders; and if you will say how you propose to settle this little affair?"

The major tossed and scratched his head, hitched up his breeches, and seemed to have rolled his thoughts into a state of deep study, in which he remained until the visitor's patience was well nigh worn out.

"My time, if you please to consider it," replied the man, "is money!" Here he read the writ, and the affidavit affixed thereto.

"Upon my soul," the major replied, drawing his chair nearer the man, and extending his hand, "we can settle this affair, and be the best of friends! It's an old stick, but that does not matter; and you have said the truth of those gentlemen of the Astor, whose courtesy it was not right of me to forget, though they did me the honor, when a guest at their house, to say it might suit my position and economy better to take private board."

"It's only one hundred and thirty-seven dollars and costs. The interest, they were good enough to say, should be thrown in, which is something," muttered the man.

There was Mr. Councilman Dinnis Finnigan, alias Greeley Hanniford, who had "done him out" of the money intended for this very bill. Perhaps, thought the major, having come councilman, he will feel like making me an atonement, who knows? "Upon my reputation, sir, I have hit, (yes, I have,) I have hit on a way of settling this little matter between us!" said he, with an air of exultation. "There is one Councilman Finnigan, who not many years ago, (I say it in confidence,) and when he was an honest Quaker, and went by the name of Greeley Hanniford, did very unkindly do me out of all my money. Only the other day I jogged his memory concerning this matter, and if he is come an honest man, he will consider my needs. And seeing that the city, in reward for his past deeds, has made him one of its happy fathers, I take it he has straightened his morals, and become a good christian."

The major here paused, and then inquired of the official if he would condescend to accompany him to the residence of Councilman Finnigan. The officer, in return immediately declared his readiness to proceed with him; at the same time begged to remind him that the journey would be to no purpose; for though the city fathers were fond enough of the city pie, and always made out to keep their fingers in it, they took good care no one else got a sop of the sauce. As to expecting justice of Councilman Finnigan for a past wrong, it was as well to look for gold on Barren Island.

Page 159

They, however, proceeded together to the house of the councilman, and on finding him at home immediately communicated their business, to his great surprise. In truth, the high official immediately began to plead his poverty; and though he would not hear a word concerning the little affair of the pocket book, honestly confessed that he had more than once had it in contemplation to watch a good opportunity, and ask the favor of a small loan, which he stood much in need of to pay his score at the Pewter Mug.

I ought to mention that the councilman treated the victim of his early pranks with much consideration, and after discoursing some time upon the inconveniences of his attendant poverty, took down his whiskey, which he said was an indifferent drink to offer so great a politician, but the best his means would afford. And as it was a drink much in favor with Father Fogarty, who was a priest of great learning, and no renegade, as he had been called by the Herald and Tribune, he hoped he would excuse the rest.

He then explained to him how it was that the city fathers were proverbially poor. It was all, he said, owing to the parsimony of the old comptroller, who, when they felt inclined to be liberal to one another, set himself up for an inquisition. And after expressing his warmest sympathy for the major's misfortunes, referred him to Alderman Dan Dooley, who was a great discounter of notes, and did a favor for a friend now and then, especially when there was a large return and no uncertainty. The major and his official friend repaired without delay to the alderman's house. But that gentleman only had a thousand and one regrets to offer. Nor could Mr. Councilman Blennerhasset, who represented his distresses as quite enough for any poor gentleman to manage, render him any material relief; though the truth of the matter was, that he was up for Congress, and required all his surplus to purchase votes. The major now began to discern the complexion of his friends, and set to work thanking heaven for the mercy of his deliverance from them. In short, he now felt like a christian captive kicked by an ass; and as the official began to evince considerable uneasiness, and speak of the value of his time, the major declared his wits at fault. It however came suddenly into his head that he would straightway go to the Astor, and plead his case with the landlord, who being a man of sympathy, and a christian, would not hear his prayer in vain. Indeed, he felt it a courtesy due from him, for he remembered how kindly the host took the disclosure of the misfortune that had made him a sufferer, which was proof of a man of tender heart. He now communicated his intention to the official, who begged him to remember how far his indulgence had already extended. "You see, sir," said he, "we hold it right to perform favors as bountifully as circumstances will permit; but unless we get something in return our children would go naked." The major now discovered the inclinations of the man,

Page 160

and enjoining him to be comforted, slipped a piece of gold into his hand. And this quickly proved that such medicine went to the right place, and was a sure panacea with officials for the ills of impatience. Indeed, so ready was the official to serve him, when this medicine had taken effect, that in addition to being purged of all his impatience, I verily believe he would have accompanied the major to the devil, (if his inclinations had taken a turn that way,) so great was his condescension and readiness to serve him.

They now proceeded to the Astor, where they found the landlord in his usual good humor, and so glad to see the major that, after shaking him heartily by the hand, he would fain enter his name upon the register as a guest at his house. "It is many years since we met, sir, and fortune, though it has given me no money, has done something for us both," said the major, when they had sufficiently exchanged compliments.

"Truly, I am glad to see you looking so well, major; as for the money, pray do what you can for us; for our house has been a place of comfort for military men and politicians. And I know you will take no offence when I say that 'no money' is the cry with which they raise their voices to us."

"Upon my soul, sir," interrupted the major, swaying his shoulders, "it is not becoming of them to do so with a man of your generosity."

"You have my thanks," rejoined the landlord, with a smile. "I may say, we wish our guests well, and do cheerfully what we can to make the voyage of life pleasant." And while they were thus addressing one another, and endeavoring to outdo in compliments, the official took up his position a few paces aside, and amused himself by twirling on his heel.

"Indulgence well directed, sir," resumed the major, looking askance at the landlord, "produces wonderful effects. And, sir, if you will just please to bestow it in this instance, it will settle the little matter between us, and preserve our friendship. I confess, being a straightforward, honest man, that too many years have passed since your great generosity permitted me to become your debtor. But such, sir, is the condition of my financial affairs, that though I have popularity enough for any politician, I swear by my military reputation that I have not now a dollar in my pocket, and as my wife, Polly Potter, used to say, you can't get butter out of a pine tree."

"I assure you, sir," rejoined the landlord, "it was not our intention to give you trouble, and so quiet your apprehensions."

"And now, sir," exclaimed the major, grasping the landlord warmly by the hand, "I see you are a philosopher; for though you might lock me up, (being your property in law,) and cause my wife Polly to bewail my fate, you would also lock up my prospects, which

are your hopes. Remember, sir, I am a soldier who has fought many battles, and have scars enough to satisfy any man that I am an honorable gentleman.

Page 161

And I would have you consider, sir, that several of my friends, (and they are no small men,) have said it might do to try me in the next presidential contest. And as you are a discreet man, pray keep before your eyes how easy it would be with a salary of twenty-five thousand dollars and the edgings, to shuffle off such a trifle. Consider it well, sir, and you will not let your anxiety interfere with my prospects, since I am now a man of mark, and shall at least get a foreign mission, for the vast services I have rendered the party. And I will share the income with you, if my children go supperless to bed.” The major continued in this manner, pleading his poverty with the landlord, until he so excited the goodness of his heart, that he not only regretted having resorted to law, but actually dispatched the official to his attorney with orders to forthwith stay proceedings. He also accepted the major’s word of honor for the forthcoming of all demands; and, indeed, would not be content until he had dined at his house, and recounted the many deeds of valor he had performed while in Mexico, which he did over a bottle of old Madeira.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Which describes what took place when the major returned to the saint Nicholas; with an account of how he got into debt at the Astor, and various other things.

It was early evening when the major came exultingly into his parlor at the Saint Nicholas, and after quenching his thirst in a nicely mixed beverage, for the day was excessively warm, said: “And now, young man, I own I have not done much for you yet; but you must not be discomfited, for there is a good time ahead, and I begin to esteem myself no small diplomatist. Indeed, if you had seen how I accommodated myself to that affair with the Astor, which threatened to overthrow all my prospects to-day, you would have seen, sir, that I am not a man to build castles in the air. No, sir, I hold the advantage gained over the host of the Astor in the light of a victory gained over my enemies. And though my private affairs are somewhat loose in the joints, what matters it, so long as I stand square in the public eye? Private affairs are private affairs, and I hold it good philosophy that they have nothing to do with a public man and his usefulness.”

The major here commenced to recount, taking considerable credit to himself as a diplomatist, how he got the advantage of the landlord.

Page 162

"I pleaded my poverty while keeping my prospective riches before his eyes," said he; "and as he was as scrupulous of his character for generosity as he was of the reputation of his house, I was careful to enhance the opportunity of flattering both those weaknesses. I also said, by way of perfecting the thing, that when in the capacity of foreign minister, I had agreed to correspond with the Courier and Enquirer, which, notwithstanding it was an almost pious newspaper, and edited by not less than two famous generals, and the grandson of a most worthy bishop, who was a poetaster, as well as a man of so much fashion that he had gained an enviable celerity for writing sonnets and eulogistic essays in admiration of fair but very faulty actresses; being the prospective correspondent of this almost pious newspaper, I consoled the landlord with a promise to write numerous puffs of his house. My point is carried, and if they like not my articles, as the critics say, they will at least give me credit for astuteness, for the man who succeeds is the man in these days!"

"And now, sir," said I, "remember that you promised, as we were journeying over the road to Barnstable, to renew the history of your first adventure in New York, in which you were interrupted by the mischievous boys." And as nothing so much pleased him as to relate his misfortunes at that time, he went straight into a rhapsody of joy, fretted his beard, looked quizzically out of his eyes, and said:

"I have it, sir! I have the exact place. I was, as I am now, on my way to Washington, in the hope of getting a reward for the services I had rendered the party; but having lost all my money by one of these pranks which the gentry of New York practice, and which Mr. Councilman Finnigan, (I honor him in his present position,) is, no doubt, skilled in, I had no means either to pay my landlord, or what certainly was much more, to leave his premises.

"Days and weeks I was a martyr to my doubts and fears, and ate the good man's meat as if his finger was on my shoulder, and his eye on my plate. Several times he suggested, in the most gentlemanly manner, that it would be consulting economy for me to seek private board. But I should like to see the man who could look a widow landlady in the face, (unless he intended marrying one of her daughters,) without a dollar in his pocket. I told the landlord as much, but he only laughed, and said it was a thing very common at this day.

"I got up one morning, eat what little my anxiety would admit, went and sat down upon a seat in the Park, and contemplated the inclinations of the passers as they rushed by; fixed my eyes upon the city hall clock, as it struck ten, and thought the policemen cast an unusually sharp eye at me, as they sauntered by, and puzzled my brain to find some means of relief, for I had just received a letter from my wife, Polly, who was in a sad strait at home, which added to the amount of my own misfortunes. And while I was

Page 163

musings in this way, a street beggar appeared, and notwithstanding he was well dressed, demanded alms; and when I told him I had none to give, he set to cursing me right manfully, which was a custom with such knaves, who imitated the city fathers in more ways than one. And as if to show his contempt for one who had no alms to give, the knave threw me a shilling, which he advised me to spend for the washing of my linen, which he saw stood in much need of it. Remembering that I was a politician, I felt mortified enough, and summoning what little stock of courage I had left, I repaired to the hotel, resolved to be manly, and ask the loan of twenty dollars or so, just to get me over my difficulties—that is, to get out of the Astor and into humble lodgings. Being at that time skilled in the art of making calf brogans, necessity seemed pointing me to that as the only means of retrieving my fortunes.

“On entering the hotel, the landlord kindly pointed me to my baggage, which he had brought down, having much need of his rooms, and carefully set in the office. This put an end to our acquaintance, as well as left me without courage enough to request the loan I had contemplated. I own the whole thing was done with much shrewdness, and was a decided improvement on being kicked into the street. But though I was neither a rogue nor a highwayman, I took up my valise and proceeded into the street, feeling like one whose dignity was never to be restored to him. After wandering about for some time, like one crazed with some religious phantasy, I found myself in front of a little house on Greene Street, with a paper on the walls, setting forth that lodgings were to be had within. I was in a mood to find comfort any where, so knocked at the shabby little door, and was admitted by a negro wench of great fatness, into a greasy little entry, from whence I was shown into a dingy parlor, crowded with well worn furniture. The mistress of the house, the negress said, would soon be home; and pointing me to some books that stood upon a dusty table, and interposed between a dilapidated sofa and an old fashioned tēte-à-tēte, bid me amuse myself. Then she gave me a broken fan, and seemed very generally anxious to make me comfortable. I took a seat in a dyspeptic arm chair, that kept up a curious clicking, and after waiting for some time, perplexed a little at first, consoled myself that others had troubles, perhaps worse than mine. Then I dropped into a nap, and forgot all my cares until the door bell tinkled, and I awoke, feeling sure the mistress of the house was arrived; but it turned out to be the boy with the Evening Post, a journal I always admired for its admirable morals. Indeed I may say I regard it an excellent journal to read in an hour of distress, its philosophy being soothingly profound. I seized the paper, and read from outside to inside, until my courage was quite restored, and I began humming an air which sent me into the happiest of moods.

Page 164

“Presently my eye caught a portrait I fancied to be a likeness of the landlady, hung with dusty crape upon the wall, and having the appearance of a specter peering through the mist. I was curious to see the quality of her beauty, and advancing toward it, parted the crape in the center, and there beheld a face and bust of such exquisite loveliness that I felt sure the rogue of a painter must, in the outpouring of his love for the beautiful, have been trying his skill at flattering the vanity of some damsel with a likeness of Haidee. She had the bust of a Venus, and was dressed low enough in the neck to admit full scope to the devil’s fancies. Her face, too, was so oval that nature could not have added one line more to its perfection; while her complexion was of deep olive, made ravishing by the carnatic flush of her cheeks. And she had what poets and lady novelists call great Italian eyes, beaming lustrous of soul and energy; and hair that floated in raven blackness over shoulders that seemed chiseled. I began to think myself the happiest of men, for my system had always a bit of poetic fire in it. And then these charms, which had already begun to rob my heart of its peace, were made more seductive by a calmly resolved and yet pensive expression of countenance. Indeed, at a second glance, it seemed to approach melancholy, and bespoke that frame of mind when sorrow feeds most upon the heart.

“I touched the frame, and instantly it fell to the floor, with a great noise. And while in the midst of my confusion, a key clicked in the door, and a lady of stately figure, dressed in deep mourning, advanced into the parlor, and, being deeply veiled, took a seat upon the sofa, quite like a stranger. I bowed and said, ‘Madam, I am waiting for the mistress of the house. You are on a similar errand, I take it?’ To which she replied in a voice of peculiar sweetness, that she was the person, and would have me make known my business. She then threw back one veil, and then another, until she discovered a face even more beautiful than that of the portrait I had just replaced on the wall. I must also mention that she seemed conscious of her charms, for with an air of much grace and dignity, she raised her jeweled fingers, so tapering, and smoothed the glossy black hair over her polished brow, while the diamonds of her bracelets sparkled through the white ruffles that hung from her wrists.

“‘My name, madam,’ said I, ‘is Major Roger Sherman Potter, commonly called Major Roger Potter. I make no doubt you have heard of me, for enough has been said of me in the newspapers. But I will say no more of that just now, for it does not become a military man to speak of himself.’

“‘Your name, sir,’ said she, condescending a bow and a smile, ‘is quite familiar. Indeed, if you will pardon it in me, I may say that I have had great curiosity to see a gentleman so popular, for I was raised and educated among distinguished people, and am fond of their society, which I cannot now enjoy, since fortune has treated me unkindly, and I am not what I was, as you may see by my humble calling.’

Page 165

"I begged she would take the most favorable view of her prospects, and at the same time not feel embarrassed.

"‘But tell me, sir,’ she resumed, with a look of great earnestness, ‘did you come on business for my first husband, Mr. Primrose?’

"Not wishing to make her anxiety painful, (for I am not a man of evil inclinations,) I discovered my business to her, but said nothing of the state of my finances.

"‘You have my thanks for the condescension you have vouchsafed, sir,’ she replied, evidently much pleased at the prospect of so famous a lodger; ‘but I fear my lodgings are far too humble for one of your position. They are small, and furnished according to my scanty means.’

"I at once told her that obscurity was my object, and that it was enough that there was peace in the house, for I was engaged over a mighty project, which I could not perfect with so many striving to do me honor. If she was before pleased, she now became exultant, and nimbly led the way up two pair of narrow stairs, entering more freely into conversation, and saying the parlor was at my service when company called. ‘Now these are not large, but comfortable rooms,’ she continued, showing me into a little ten by twelve nook; ‘I have six lodgers similarly situated, and they are all genteel men, doing a large business.’ She then began giving me an account of their various business pursuits, which was so confused and indefinite as to render it impossible clearly to understand whether they were bankers, doctors, clergymen, or stock brokers. In truth, by her own showing, they conversed of stocks, chips, sermons, and splits, with equal facility. But there was something I could not exactly understand, in the manner of her thanking God, that though reduced to this humble style of living she was comfortable, and expected soon to see the day when she would be restored to the rank in society from which she had fallen. ‘There was, as I am a lady,’ she added, with a look of sorrow shadowing her face, ‘a time when every button on my father’s coat cost a dollar, and our family servants all wore as nice liveries as could be seen in Fifth Avenue, for we had them changed a number of times, until we got them unlike any one else’s.’ She was evidently distressed with some past trouble; and when I said, ‘Madam, I will do myself the honor to become an inmate of your house,’ she seemed so overjoyed that it was with difficulty she could withhold her tears. On inquiring her name and what business her husband followed, she replied that her name was Mrs. Pickle, (she having dropped Primrose for sufficient cause,) and that of her husband, Mr. Stephen Pickle, of the young American Banking House of Pickle, Prig, & Flutter, doing business near Wall Street. We returned to the parlor, and when the valise bearing my name, which I took good care to keep in sight, was sent up stairs, and I had told her how the accident to her portrait was caused, she blushed and was so ready to unbosom her griefs, that she immediately proceeded to give me an account of herself, and how it was that she was Mrs. Pickle and Mr. Primrose still living.

Page 166

“Pardon me, sir,” said she, “but as I know you think it strange that I have adopted this humble calling, I will tell you in brief how it happened. A change came over my father’s fortunes, and from being a rich and influential merchant, he was, by what is called endorsing for others, reduced to a state of poverty, and so harassed by his creditors, who in their grasping for what he had would give him no chance to retrieve his fortunes, that he put an end to a miserable existence by hanging himself. My father was a man of simple tastes, and set a higher value upon his good name than upon the worldly show which was coming into fashion at that time. With my mother, it was quite different, for although she was much given to the church, and subscribed largely for the support of an expensive clergyman, she had a love of worldly show and ostentation, that not only reduced my father’s means, but grievously distressed him. The sudden turn in our circumstances produced but little change in my mother, who set great value upon the good looks she imagined me possessing; and having some money of her own, we took board with Mrs. Marmaduke, who kept a boarding house for people of distinction, in Fifth Avenue, and was famous for the style and luxury of her establishment, which had been the scene of several rich matrimonial alliances.

“Having previously formed the acquaintance of a poor but respectable young artist and poet, whose kindness and sincerity, as well as the great love he bore his art, in which he had already gained celebrity, so won my affections, that it seemed as if I could be happy with none other. And when my mother discovered how our inclinations were bent, she forbid him coming to the house. He had no money, she said, and painters were, in addition to being very generally fools, a shabby class of men, who were thought little of among rich merchants, and never took rank in the aristocracy—at least, not in this country. Putting these things together, she could not think of giving her consent to an alliance with such a person. In truth, sir, though my narrative may not interest you, I may mention that she more than once declared that painters and poets were such a shiftless set that they ought to be bundled into the sea together. ‘Think! Maria,’ she would say, ‘of a thing with a weasel of dirty paints in his hands, and a bit of canvas, cut, may be, from some old ship’s sail, before him, and he trying to get some curious notion upon it! A pretty person to go into society with, indeed!’ This did not deter me from my purpose, so we would meet in saloons on Broadway, and exchange our affections, and concert measures for our mutual relief.

Page 167

“Matters proceeded in this way until Mr. Primrose and his friend, Mr. Sparks, came to the house. They professed to be Englishmen of wealth and station, educated at Oxford, and acquainted with enough of the nobility to enable them to mix with our best society. According to Mr. Sparks, his friend Mr. Primrose, to whom he paid great deference, had riches enough to purchase a kingdom or two. Mr. Primrose had a servant in livery, and arms painted on his carriage door, and the fleetest of horses. My mother was much taken with him, and Mrs. Marmaduke declared that a more perfect gentleman had never graced her drawing rooms. He took them both to operas, and balls, and sleigh rides. And he paid them such court as completely won their confidence. In truth, they were both so enamored of him, that they were singing his praises from morning till night. And when he had sufficiently won them over to him, he commenced paying his addresses to me, and so earnestly did he press his suit, that my mother declared it would not do to protract so excellent a chance. And notwithstanding my hand had been pledged to Milando, which was the name of the young painter, my mother insisted, and our nuptials were celebrated, though much against my will. It seems a report, which my mother did not see fit to contradict, had got out that I was the only heir to a large estate, which was the prize Mr. Primrose sought to secure. In two short months the truth was revealed. I had no dowry, which so disappointed him, that he began to cast reflections on my poverty, adding that he had been deceived by the false representations of my artful mother. This gave me so much pain, that I sought relief for my distress in frequenter interviews with Milando, who, seeing himself ill treated for his poverty, resolved to quit a profession in which neglect and distrust too often repay its votaries, and take to one that would at least afford him money; which, according to the fashion of the day, was the only passport into what was called good society.

“Mr. Sparks quarreled with Mr. Primrose, who was in arrears for board with Mrs. Marmaduke, and let it out that he was only a knight of the needle, who had formerly resided in Bermuda, which he left for a cause it is not worth while to mention here, though he was skillful enough at making breeches, and getting up odd liveries for ambitious families. He was missing one morning, and as his friend Sparks had taken the precaution to precede him, there were so many inquiries for him at Mrs. Marmaduke’s, that it soon became clear he had left to escape the importunities of his creditors. In truth, he was declared an impostor, and the whole affair got into the newspapers, the editors of which set about ferreting out a few of his exploits, when it was found that the deception practiced upon me was only one among many, for he had gained a victory over the affections of several widows, and left no less than three wives to sorrow. And so skillfully were his exploits performed, that each victim imagined him the most sincere and devoted of lovers.

Page 168

“This sad occurrence, and its publicity, so mortified my mother, who was harassed with debts she had contracted to keep up appearances, that she survived it but a month. I was then left like a hapless mariner tossed on a troubled sea, and with no friend near. Mrs. Marmaduke made me a mere vassal in her house, and the inmates treated me as if I were born to be scorned. Milando was my only hope, my only true friend—the only one to whom I could confide my heart aching, to whom I could look to save me from a life of shame, to which remorse had almost driven me. And will you believe that he invoked a curse, and resolved to leave his profession, (for he could not live like those shabby men of the newspapers,) to seek means whereby he could live without struggling in poverty and want. True, the wealthy gave him orders for paintings, affected great love for his art, of which they held themselves great patrons when they had bought two pictures. But, as a general thing, they had most excuses when he called, and were least ready to pay, which so tried his proud spirit, that he more than once resigned the pictures to them rather than be a suppliant for his pay.

“Necessity at last drove him to painting Venuses for keepers of bar rooms, who regarded art only as a means to excite the baser passions of the vulgar. And though he was by this enabled to meet the demands on his purse, the thought of degrading an art to which he had given the devotions of his life, grieved him to the heart. He therefore resolved that, as he could not make it serve the high purpose for which it was intended, he would abandon it. And when he changed his profession, he changed his name. He is now Mr. Pickle of the firm I have before mentioned. We were privately married under that name, and have since lived as humble as you see us. When we have got money enough, my husband will return to his profession. And now, sir, pray adapt yourself to our humble mode of living, and remember that our home is your home while you remain with us.”

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Which relates how the major dropped the title of major, and took that of general; also, how he joined the young American banking house of pickle, prig, & flutter.

“When the lady had enlisted my sympathy by her narrative,” continued the major, “which she related in a voice so sweet and melodious that I listened to her with unmixed pleasure, the door bell rang, and Mr. Pickle, a man of straight person and medium height, entered. His hair was black, and curled down his neck, which was symmetrical. And, too, his face was singularly expressive, and his features prominent. In a word, his appearance was prepossessing. And in addition to dressing

Page 169

in the fashion of the day, he wore many jewels. His bearing also was graceful; and on entering the room, he addressed the lady with much courtesy, and called her Maria. She in turn introduced him to me as her husband. And I must say he seemed not a little surprised and confused at hearing my name, and inquired a second time, if I was the Major Roger Potter, of whom so much had been said in the newspapers? And when I satisfied him on that point, he became so truly delighted that he immediately engaged me in conversation concerning the state of the nation, about which he was well read, and indeed knew so much, that I at once took him for a politician. But he assured me he was not; and to farther satisfy me, he commenced a description of the banking and other operations the Young American Banking House of Pickle, Prig, & Flutter were engaged in. They had an office near Wall Street, furnished with the finest desks, carved in black walnut, and Brussels carpets, and stationery of a quality sufficient to carry on an endless amount of diplomacy. They had books showing their correspondence with various prominent bankers in Europe-such as George Peabody, the Rothschilds, Overand, Gurney, & Co., of London; and Monroe & Co., of Paris. They had cards printed showing the most respectable references; they had correspondents in all important towns over the Union, and towns they had none in were not worthy of so distinguished a consideration. They had gold mines in Peru and Mexico and California; silver mines in Chili, and iron mines in Patagonia and Nova Scotia. As to copper mines, they owned them here and there all the way from Lake Superior to Cuba and Valparaiso. Indeed, they owned and were agents for such an innumerable quantity of outlying property, that a country gentleman, as I was, might have imagined them in possession of at least one half of South America, and that the only one worth having. In addition to this, they condescended at times to discount notes, especially when it was a sure thing, and five per cent. a month was a matter of no consequence with the holder. They drew bills, too, and sold exchange on every city in Europe; and would have drawn on Canton, had they been honored with a demand. In fine, there was not a city from Constantinople to Oregon, in which they had not a balance, and were prepared to draw upon. And I verily believe that, had it been necessary, they would have had a Bedouin Arab for agent in Egypt. The house now stood much in need of a little ready cash to steady it on one side, and a prominent name (if coupled with a military title, so much the better) to prop up its dignity on the other. Indeed, I discovered from what Pickle said that the dignity of the house had already begun to tottle a little, and needed a steadying name and a steadying balance.

Page 170

"When we had taken supper together, he renewed the conversation, which finally resulted in his saying that a person so popular as myself was just such a one as they wanted for partner in their house. Inquiring what I thought of the matter, he said he would propose it to the firm, and to-morrow make me a proposal. He also suggested, that if I would drop the Major, and assume the title of General-a thing done every day by the greatest of politicians-the effect would be equal to a large amount of capital. Generals stood well in Wall Street; generals were excellent men (when endorsed by bishops) to send abroad to effect loans; generals were capital fellows to get well out of a financial collapse; in fact, generals were just the men to get through any sort of difficulty. Society bowed to a general; the people were charmed by a general; a general was every thing to a Young American Banking House like that of Pickle, Prig, & Flutter. No matter how visionary your scheme, you had only to tie a general to it, and success was certain. If you could buy up a newspaper or two, so much the better, for then the general would appear as editor, and be prepared, as was the custom of the day, to praise every scheme they were engaged in. I thought the offer very kind of Mr. Pickle, since my affairs were in a financial collapse; and on the following day met his partners, at their banking house, which was an exceedingly stylish affair. The result was, I became a partner in the concern-a silent partner, with the name and title of General Roger Sherman Potter, Prig holding it good policy to retain the Sherman, that being a name of great weight in the banking world.

"The consummation of this being announced in all the newspapers, it was ordered that I occupy a seat in the office at an immense mahogany desk, at least three hours a day. I was to have all the daily papers duly filed at my hand, and to appear immersed in a pile of correspondence, just received per various foreign arrivals. If a customer strayed to me, I was to refer him to Flutter, who was the polite man of the firm, and generally sat in an enclosure of highly polished walnut railings, at a desk, upon which lay an enormous ledger he was for ever footing up, and which he at times left with great reluctance. Sometimes I was directed to refer the customer to a foreign gentleman who sat demurely at a desk in a corner, engaged in filling up foreign bills of exchange. In leaving unnoticed much that the house did, I may mention that it soon got into an extensive credit; for Flutter, who was a man of extremely good looks and dress, kept two of the best looking and most expensive female companions in Twenty-third Street, while Prig had a stud of seven horses, not one of which could be beat at Harlem; and these qualifications were excellent passports into the credit of the banking world of Wall Street. In truth, Flutter would frequently say, that the very hue and circumstance of their establishment was such as to make an impression upon, and secure the confidence of, the most flinty hearted banker; and as love of show was the malady of the nation, you must make the plaster to suit.

Page 171

“Pickle was engaged most of the time in outdoor operations, and left to Prig and Flutter the sole management of the exchanges. And both being extremely generous men, and fast enough for any thing, they soon made a large circle of friends, whose paper they were ready to endorse out of sheer love. I had money enough for all my wants, and began to think myself the happiest of men. It was also deemed advisable, and for the advantage of the house, that I should go to board at the Astor. So, rubbing out the old score, I left my humble lodgings at Mrs. Pickle’s, and returned to my old quarters, where, on seeing the quality of my pocket, I soon got in high favor with the landlord, and gave dinners to my friends. We went on swimmingly for nearly a year, and the Young American Banking House of Pickle, Prig, Flutter, & Co., it got rumored on the street, had been wonderfully prosperous. I sent my wife, Polly Potter, enough to live like a lady, and all the village began to say she was an excellent person, and our children played with the children of the best of them. One day, a short time after we had been drawing no end of bills, and selling largely of foreign exchange, there came back upon us such a large amount of returned paper as completely drove Flutter out of sight, while Prig said he held it advisable not to be seen at the counter. Twenty-four hours passed, and he also was not to be found. Poor Pickle got nervous, and turned pale, and offered all the excuses his ingenuity could invent to save himself from a cage with bars. Curses came like thunder claps upon the head of the house, but it was all to no effect. We had no balance in the bank, and cursing money out of a dead banking house, it seemed to me, was as useless an occupation as trying to get goods out of the custom house without feeling an employ^{ee} of that very accommodating asylum for idlers and rogues. The house thought it advisable to shut up, which it did by posting a notice to that effect upon the door. For myself, I felt like making my peace with my Maker, and enjoining him to send me some less perplexing mission; for the thing got into the newspapers, and we were held up to be a set of impostors, who deserved to be well hanged.

“And then Wall Street got into a strong frenzy, raised a cry of holy horror that such miscreants had been suffered to pollute the atmosphere of its righteousness; to preserve which its votaries were ready to call in all the bishops and priests of the land; though not a word was said of the many who had ransomed their backslidings with the tears of widows they had induced to invest in divers schemes. But to make the matter worse, it was found that Flutter, who was skilled in caligraphy, and could imitate the signatures of others to perfection, had raised a large amount of money on a species of collateral that proved to be worthless, though excellent as illustrating his skill in imitation. In truth, Flutter could manufacture first class paper with a degree of perfection rarely

Page 172

excelled. As neither Flutter nor Prig were to be found, and all attempts to solve the mystery of their ancestry proved futile, poor Pickle was arrested, called a miscreant, and all sorts of evil names; but was declared innocent by a jury of his peers, though his trial made a great noise, and there were enough unkind enough to say he ought to get twenty-one years in the penitentiary. Sly insinuations were also cast out about me; but they were coupled with so much courtesy, that as I had made nothing by the concern, I proceeded straight to the Astor, explained the state of my distress to the landlord, who indulged his disappointment with a few regrets, but at length said I ought to thank heaven it was no worse. He said he would wait for the little affair between us, hoping that fortune would so smile on me as to hasten the pay day. The Young American Banking House of Pickle, Prig, Flutter, & Co., being at an end, I held it prudent to give up my mission to Washington, (I had received news that my chances were slender,) and get quickly and quietly to my wife Polly, who at first thought I had come to take her and the family to live among the fine folks of New York, and was sorely grieved when the truth came out, but soon embraced me like a good wife. And together we lived as happily as could be desired, (I made calf brogans at twenty cents a pair,) until I went to the Mexican War, where, by my merit and bravery, I soon won my way to distinction."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Which describes several strange incidents that took place, and must be recorded, or the truth of this history may be questioned.

The major concluded his narrative, but forgot to mention, that when he returned home to his family, it was as plain Major Roger Potter-a change he considered due to discretion, for the villagers were extremely inquisitive, and might inquire by what process he was made a general. And, as his military honor never failed him, so was it brought into excellent use in gaining an advantage over the landlord of the Astor.

The night was now far advanced, and as we were about retiring to bed, Barnum entered, and, after debating various subjects, the conversation turned upon the wonderful pig, Duncan. The major swore he would not part with him for his weight in gold, as he intended soon to place him under the care of Doctor Easley, who would so cultivate his knowledge of German and other languages, as to take the critics by surprise, and cause them to get up a controversy concerning his talents, which was a fashion with them. And, as neither Easley could be embarrassed with his charge, nor the charge be ashamed of his tutor, who contemplated himself the greatest living critic after Macaulay, he would prosecute his studies with every advantage

Page 173

to himself, since, when he was brought forward for public favor, Easley could not abandon his pupil, and, being well paid, would consider himself in duty bound to write divers panegyrics in his praise. But Barnum, who was as shrewd as the major, though, perhaps, not so great a knave, persisted that such a course of instruction, and with such a tutor, could not fail to prove a grave injury, since the pig's talents were valuable only because they were natural, and the more wonderful on that account. As to Easley, he was but a dilapidated priest, much given to such tricks as were common with them, and, being employed by numerous publishers, who held him in high esteem as a critic, thought it no harm to write profound essays on the very trashy books of very sentimental school girls of sixteen. Barnum continued in this strain until he convinced the major that it would not be safe to place so gifted an animal under instructions to so capricious a critic as Easley, who would surely damage his morals, as well as his manners.

He also declared that his dealings in monstrosities had got him into numerous difficulties with editors and savans, which caused him to contemplate giving it up, though he well knew the public appetite for such things had not lessened a whit. And though the state of his affairs were somewhat chronic, he thought, if he could get another first class monstrosity, he could create an excitement that would make his fortune, and send New York mad. He had thought of getting up a clever imitation of the devil, which he was sure the public would all rush to see, and had undertaken the enterprise, but that he feared the editors would pick some flaw in him; for, though he had made them a mermaid, and a wooly horse, they still complained of his skill, and said he was not fit, when his friends suggested him for President of the United States.

I finally witnessed an agreement between this wonderful man and the major, by which the latter was to engage Duncan to the former at ten dollars a night, for ten nights, the engagement then to expire, and be open to further negotiations, according to the degree of favor then established between the animal and the public. And, as an evidence of his faith in the pig's talent, Barnum declared the first wonderful feat he intended to perfect him in, was that of sitting in state and presiding over primary meetings; and no man of sound sense would say he had not talent enough for the office.

When, then, the bargain was completed, and the major had given an order for the safe delivery of the pig into the hands of the loquacious showman, he touched him on the arm, and said, with an air of much sympathy, "Remember, sir, my affection for this animal makes it not the easiest thing in the world for me to part with him. And he was a great favorite with my wife Polly, who was so much attached to him that she shed no few tears at his departure. Pray see well to his behavior; and, as I take you for as

Page 174

good a Christian gentleman as any of them, I would have you remember that he was brought up in the care of the clergy, and can cut pranks enough if you let him have his way, though, from what I have seen, I should judge he had no love for the vulgar politics they delight to meddle with. Another favor I have to ask is this—that you will not whisper the ownership, lest the matter between us get to the ears of the editors, who would make much of it to the damage of my reputation as a politician. There is, also,” he continued, in a whisper, “a little affair or two outstanding, which might make it extremely inconvenient.”

No sooner had the showman taken his departure, than three distinguished generals entered, saying they had come to pay their respects to a fellow in arms, whom it was the pleasure of the city to honor. Each approached him with great gravity of manner, and, after shaking him warmly by the hand, presented him with sundry congratulations in what are called neat and appropriate speeches. To which the major replied, thanking heaven that with clean hands and various gifts of the head, he had served his country like a man; and, as his mission was not yet filled, he hoped (if the devil interposed no obstacles) yet to render his country a service such as historians would write of. He now bade them be seated, and ordered an abundance of good wine, of which they partook without objection, and were soon as merry a set of fellows as ever bivouacked; for in truth they readily discovered the mental deficiencies of the major, and, to make up for the deception of which they were made victims by the newspapers, resolved to enjoy the diversion afforded them by the quaintness of the major, who, though he had never put foot in Mexico, at once inquired of them the brigade they belonged to, and what service they had seen in that country. The spokesman of the party, whose bearing bespoke him a man acquainted with arms, and who was as great a wag as Tim Bobbin, immediately answered by saying that they were in the hottest of the battles of Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Metamoras, and Buena Vista. And not to say too much of their bravery, he might mention that they were within smell of the gunpowder that stormed the heights of Cerro Gordo. Indeed, they were in so many battles, and bore away so many scars, that it was impossible to remember them all.

“Faith, gentlemen, that is exactly the case with me,” interrupted the major, “for I was in so many, that if I had the memory of a Sampson I could not keep them all at my tongue’s end, though I remember well enough what a buffeting we got at the storming of San Juan de Ulloa. As to the brigade I was in, that’s neither here nor there; and whether it was the first or second will not be set down against a man when he is dead. But if you will have proof that I also was in the hottest of it, pray let your eyes not deceive you.” Here the major gave his head a significant toss, and waddled across the floor to his wardrobe, from which

Page 175

he exultingly drew forth his military coat and three cornered hat. The former was indeed an ancient fabric, with which divers and sundry moths had made sad havoc, though he held it before the light and swore, by not less than three saints, the holes were all made by bullets. If either had doubted this evidence of his valor, he was ready to strip to the buff, and satisfy their eyes with the veritable scars. But they all declared themselves satisfied that he had given sufficient proof of his valor. Indeed, the odor that began to escape as he doffed his coat, in earnest of his sincerity, was by no means pleasant, and consequently hastened a favorable decision.

The major was more than ever elated that the affair should have taken such a pleasant turn, and bid them fill their glasses, which they were glad enough to do, with renewals at such short intervals that the major, who was not to be outdone in number of glasses, providing his patriotism was pledged in them, found himself in a state of mental configuration, for he saw ghosts and dead warriors by the dozen, all of which he would have sworn, in a court of law, were real flesh and blood. In fine, he capered about the room like a madman, feeling at his side for his sword, and swearing, by his military reputation, that he would think no more of killing them than he would so many Washington lobby agents.

Among these generals, there was a short, fat man, of the name of Benthornham, who, with the exception that he was less pumpkin bellied than the major, one might have supposed cast in the same mould, for he was squint eyed, and had a red nose, in size and shape very like a birch tree knot. Nor was he a whit behind the major in tipping his glass; and though there was a review on the following day, to which they had invited the major, out of sheer respect to his fame, there was sufficient cause to apprehend that this General Benthornham, (officer of the day though he was,) would not be sober enough to appear. However, as they all boarded at the St. Nicholas, one of the party suggested, that in order to pay becoming honor to so distinguished a major, they invite him to General Benthornham's room. And as the major never refused an invitation, especially when it came from persons distinguished in the profession in which he claimed to have won no small honors, he at once joined them, and proceeded to the room aforesaid, where brandy and champagne, in great abundance, were provided, and to which the major took with such renewed avidity, that they began to think his bowels vulcanized.

After they had plied him sufficiently with liquor, they insisted that he relate some of the wonderful exploits he had performed in war and politics, which he did, and with such an appearance of truth, that the two who had not so far drenched their senses with liquor as to be incapable of judging, whispered to themselves that he was not so much of a fool after all; in fact, that there was so much truth in what

Page 176

he said, that no man could doubt his being a real and not a sham hero of the Mexican War. "It does not become me to speak of myself, gentlemen," said the major, in conclusion, "but if there was a war in Mexico I was not in, it was not worth calling a war; and as for politics, why I have made twenty-eight speeches in a month, and you may learn of their quality by inquiring of the people of Barnstable, who used to praise them enough, God knows."

It being past midnight, the two sober generals withdrew, undecided as to the major's mental qualities, and left him with General Benthornham, whom he found no difficulty in soon talking into a profound sleep. And this the major, who was not so far gone as to forget what belonged to good manners, regarded as an indignity no really great military man could suffer to pass unresented. He thereupon mounted his three cornered hat and stalked out of the room, in the hope of finding his own and going quietly to bed. But such was the labyrinth of passages, that he lost his way, and mistook for his own the bedroom of a fellow boarder, which was natural enough considering the state of his optics. And though it was an hour when every honest husband should be dividing his bed with his better half, and all suspicions set at rest with the lock on the door fast secured, the major found no difficulty in entering this room, which he did with as little ceremony as he would drive his tin wagon. But no sooner had he begun to doff his wardrobe, than a figure quite resembling a ghost, with a pale, round face, and two eyes of great luster, flamed in the crimped border of a very white nightcap, rose up in the bed, and with an air of bewilderment, said, "Charles, my dear, here it is almost morning, and you are but just home. O, Charles!"

"Please, my good woman," spoke the major, pausing, and looking surprised at the strange object he fancied in his bed, "you might find better business than this. You must know, I am a man of family, and have a wife, which is enough for any honest man. So if you will just take yourself away like an honest woman, as I would have every one of your sex, I will say no more, for I have heard of these tricks, and am not ready to be robbed of my character."

The figure now gave sundry screams, which echoed and reechoed along the passages, and brought not only the watchmen of the house, but a dozen or more boarders, all in their night dresses, and nearly frightened out of their wits, to the scene of distress. Several courageous ladies, with threatening gestures, ventured to say he ought to be well hanged, (the good for nothing fellow!) for attempting such liberties at that hour. Others said military men were all alike.

"Hi! hi! what's here to do?" exclaimed the head watchman, a burly fellow of forty, as he made his way through a barricade of night gowns. "Come, sir, you must take yourself away from here. You have insulted the lady; have intruded yourself where you have no right; and if you get not away before her husband comes, he will cut you to bits." ("He is

a Georgian, and would rather have his wife dead than another man make free with her,” whispered a bystander, as the watchman admonished the major by taking him by the arm.)

Page 177

The major, however, stood with his nether garments in his hands, like one bewildered, muttering, as his eyes blinked in the bright gas light, which one of the courageous females had ignited: "I would have you know, ladies, that I am known for my gallantry, and am a man who would share his meal any day with a lone female. And if you will give me peace by taking this lady away, I will forgive her, and beseech heaven to do the same. I may tell you that I am Major Roger Sherman Potter, commonly called Major Roger Potter; but I say this not of myself, for I take it you know me well enough."

The distressed female now stood erect in her night robes, screeching at the top of her voice, for she believed a madman had entered her room, and went straight into a fit of hysterics, while the watchman and numerous of the female bystanders gathered around the major, and would have torn him to pieces, but for a clergyman, who suddenly made his appearance, in his shirt and spectacles, and commenced reading them a lesson on the qualities of mercy.

But while the parson and one of the bystanders were offering all sorts of apologies for the major, which were having their effect on the females, who, on discovering the nature of the accident, enjoyed the joke exceedingly, the husband of the lady, being informed of what had occurred by one of the waiters, who knew the truant's haunts at any hour, came rushing into the room, and without waiting for an explanation, set upon the major with the fury of a goaded tiger, and when he had belabored him with a cudgel until they all declared there was not life enough in him to last till day light, drew a knife, and had despatched him on the spot, but for General Benthornham, who, being called upon to quell the outbreak, had armed himself with his sword, and came toddling into the room in his shirt and night cap, his sappy face and red nose made scarlet with excitement, and presenting so sorry a figure that the courageous females scampered away to their rooms, and covered their blushes with the sheets.

"Heavens!" exclaimed the general, resting the point of his sword on the floor, "what's here to do?" In another moment he advanced between the contestants, and with his sword struck the knife from the uplifted hand of the Georgian, and commanded him to spare the life at his mercy. "Pray, sir," said he, "don't forget to be merciful, for he is a military gentleman of distinction, and I am sure it was an accident you will readily forgive when it is explained." The Georgian replied, that it had become a fashion with military men to carry their gallantry a little too far with females, and rather than regret the trouncing he had given the major, he hoped the example would have its effect.

Page 178

The landlord now made his appearance, and seeing the city's guest in such a plight, inquired into the cause, but could get no satisfactory account of it; and being scrupulous of the reputation of his house, he enjoined them to keep the affair as quiet as possible, lest it get to the ear of the editors, who would take great pride in using it to his damage. He then closed the door and endeavored to raise the major to his feet, but he was so like a dead man, and had lost so much good red blood, that the landlord became seriously alarmed, and had a doctor, who boarded in his house, at once called in. The doctor, when he had felt his pulse and ribs for some time, said the case was a little doubtful, but he had skill enough to mend it. Indeed, to tell the truth, it only required a plaster or two, and a purgative, to restore him to perfect health. When the major had gained the use of his tongue, however, he declared he had at least seven broken ribs, and he knew not how many cracks in his skull, for it felt like a fractured cocoanut.

And while the doctor was administering his balms to the patient, the Georgian was endeavoring to pacify his wife, who, with the aid of hartshorn and sundry other restoratives, was in a fair way of recovery. General Benthornham, in the meantime, continued to pace the room, so much absorbed in his endeavor to preserve the peace of the house, as to be unconscious of the figure he was cutting.

"And now, gentlemen," said the general, in a foggy voice, "as the lady has received no damage, either to her reputation or person, and you are both gentlemen, I think the little affair can be reconciled, if the major will but explain the mistake with as much delicacy as he is capable of."

"Indeed," replied the major, "I am sure the gentleman will be satisfied that I meant no wrong to his lady, who I thought had got into my room instead of my getting into her's, by mistake as it turns out, when I tell him how it happened. The people where I was raised know me for a peaceable man; and now that I have become a politician, it behooves me to take care of what little character I have, which is not the case with all of them. And God knows I treated the lady with courtesy; for, rather than prove unfaithful to my wife Polly, I bid her take herself away." The major said this in such a tone of humility, that although it left the matter more confounded in the Georgian's mind, it so affected his feelings that he began to regret having dealt so severely with him, and earnestly desired to know the origin of the affair, which the major at once related with great simplicity of manner, and finally, laid all the blame to the strength of the liquor he had indulged in during the evening. General Benthornham had, in the meantime, taken a seat where the bright glare of the gas shone full upon his face, and as the major proceeded with his narrative, would every now and then interpose an approving, "See that now!"

Page 179

When the major had finished his story, the lady was affected to tears, and besought her husband to make the gentleman such amends as the case demanded. But, indeed, that was unnecessary, for the Georgian had become so affected that he would have gone upon his knees and offered the major any apology he might in reason demand. But the lady sprang to her feet, and saying she would dress the injured man's wounds with her own hands, proceeded to her bureau and with her cologne bottle and sponge set about bathing his temples, and performing such other little kindnesses as pleased the major wonderfully, and made him declare he believed it the fate of every truly great public man to suffer in this way. In truth, he was not so sure that we appreciated it to the extent of its value, for it disciplined a man and prepared his mind for meeting the great things that were required of it in this world. "I have no fears of my reputation, madam," he concluded, "but being the guest of the city, I fear if my enemies see the bruised condition of my head, they will say I have had a difficulty with an alderman." While they were each trying to emulate the other in consoling the major in his distress, the lady, who had just then discovered the singular plight General Benthornham was in, caught sight of his bare extremities, which so affected her that she shrieked, and swooned in the arms of her husband.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Which relates the very Unmilitary predicament the major was found in on the following morning, when his presence was expected at the review.

General Benthornham was every inch a gentleman, and though he had what the vulgar call a very ugly conk nose, the ladies held him in high favor, and doubtless had never seen him except in full uniform, when he appeared to excellent advantage, for the point of his hat aided to detract from the immensity of his nose. As soon, therefore, as he saw the lady faint, and was made conscious of the cause, he took to his heels, and scampered out of sight with the nimbleness of a boy of fifteen, muttering apologies as he went, and saying to himself, "Isn't this a pretty pickle for a military man of my age to be in?" The Georgian was nevertheless inclined to treat this second fainting effort of his wife with no great degree of sympathy, and without further ceremony told her, while almost suffocating her with hartshorn, not to make such a fool of herself, for it was the devil who put bad thoughts into the heads of virtuous women. As to the general, he was an old man, and had nothing about him a female of good morals need fear. This suddenly brought her to her senses, when she indulged in a few of those epithets females, however delicate, will use when resolved to show their lords

Page 180

the length they may go in asserting a priority of rights. In truth she threatened to pluck out all her hair, which would have been a performance much to be regretted, seeing that it floated over her shoulders like tresses of silk, and was so luxuriant that a Delhian maid might have envied it. She also cursed the hour she took him for her husband, saying his night revels would be the death of her, and continuing in a strain of execrations and wailings, (wishing herself back with her mother an hundred times, and declaring her's the most wretched of lives,) until he swore she gave him no peace of his life.

The Georgian raised not his voice in anger again; but took the major affectionately by the arm, and, moved by compassion, assisted him to General Benthornham's room, where he strove to comfort him as best he could; and as the night was excessively hot, they quenched their thirst with a little brandy and water, over which they again condoled one another for their misfortunes, and became the very best of friends. The general then begged the Georgian to say to his lady that he intended no affront and that his appearing before her in his shirt was entirely owing to his presence of mind having forsaken him. Bidding them good night, the Georgian promised to convey this apology to his lady, and took his departure, as the two military heroes went quietly to bed.

General Benthornham's was a double bedded room, and when morning came, and the numerous pet birds in the house were tuning their notes, and stray members of the seventh regiment, in their dashing uniforms, might be seen passing down Broadway to their armory, anxious lest some rival corps rob them of their laurels, and as proud of their feathers as the whistling canaries, the general and his guest still slept, but in such a position, and with such loud snoring, that had a stranger entered the room he would have sworn they had gone to bed prepared for battle, expecting at day light, (the time most fashionable for duel fighting,) to open fire and seriously damage each other's most dependable parts. Verily, reader, do not make me the object of your invective, when I say that it is extremely doubtful if the public at large, to which I am ready at all times to pay homage, ever saw a general officer in his native buff. And this I hold to be the reason why it is so prone to overrate the mightiness of some of those warriors who dash up Broadway on parade days, decked out in such a profuseness of feathers. Indeed it has come to my knowledge that the greatest of generals, when presented with that natural uniform in which their worthy mothers gave them to the world, are in no one particular unlike other men, and in truth that it is the splendid uniform that invests them with an appearance of great possessions and power, before which even great poets and scholars are ready to cast their offerings. Taking this view of the case, then, I pray you to give ear while I relate how the general and the major were seen in a position which I venture to assert few truly great military men were ever seen in, either during war or peace.

Page 181

The beds in General Benthornham's room stood parallel with each other, a narrow passage extending between. And, as I have before stated that the weather was excessively warm, when the aid de camp, a profusely feathered foreign gentleman, entered for the orders of his chief, he found both heroes naked to the buff, with the broad disc of their most dependable parts forming confronting batteries, and their bodies making the letter C, very like snails after a shower of rain. On the opposite sides were little tables, upon which stood, within reach, bottles of congress water, decanters in which the liquor had well nigh got to the bottom, and tumblers containing the dregs of two very suggestive drinks called cocktails, all provided at an early hour by a shrewd and very considerate waiter. The aid was not a little abashed when he discovered the condition his chief was in, and declared, in very good French, not a word of which Benthornham could have understood had he been awake, that although he had been aid to Garibaldi when he held possession of Rome, and had served in numerous battles where he had to run for his life, he never had seen general officers cut such figures, which he would not have the brigade see for the world. Indeed, he thought within himself that the sight was enough to have shocked either the seventh or seventy-first regiments, both of which corps were composed of young men of modesty and great respectability. The aid touched his hat out of sheer respect to his sleeping superior, and indeed saluted him according to the regulations of the service. But as neither the general nor the major paid the slightest heed to these courtesies and the aid was a man much given to paying all deference to his superiors, he, without disturbing the general in the least, drew up the sheet and laid it gently over him, as a means of protecting his dignity from further damage. He also performed a similar service for the major, who was snoring at a pace that can be better imagined than described.

When the aid had performed the little services above described, he paced the room for several minutes, undecided as to the next course he should pursue. He had fully expected to find his superior officer in a different uniform, and ready to issue his orders as became a man of so much circumstance. As to the city's guest, he expected to find him at least a respectable gentleman, and one who would take some care of his person. He at length thought it advisable to give the general a few gentle shakes, in the hope of restoring him to consciousness; but, so sound was his sleep, that it became necessary to use violence before even a perceptible motion was produced. After considerable effort, however, he turned upon his face with a loud guffaw, and then upon his back. In fine, he put himself in various strange attitudes, puffed like a porpoise in an head sea, and began swearing as never general swore before, that the wretch who disturbed him of his slumbers should suffer for it at court martial.

Page 182

As the time for forming the brigade was near at hand, the aid very naturally became more and more anxious. "Pardon me this liberty, your honor," said he, addressing his superior, who was rubbing a pair of swollen and very red eyes, "but the regiments are waiting orders, and as the hour is late, the officers will be in much suspense until they are issued."

"Order them," replied the general, "to get to their families, keep respectable for the rest of the day, and then let them defy the devil with their good behavior, for it is not yet light, and in all my military experience (and I have had more than most men) I never heard of a general being called up at midnight to review troops. Get ye away to them, sir, and if they be not content with this order, tell them the fault's none of mine; for if the devil come, you must not disturb my sleep."

"It is my duty to carry your order, general," rejoined the colonel, again touching his hat, "but I am sure it will not be obeyed, for I have heard it said that the seventh regiment have a commendable fear of the devil, and would rather have nothing to do with him." The distinguished French gentleman was so puzzled at the conduct of his superior officer, that he stood shrugging his shoulders, lifting his mustache, and contorting his face into every imaginable expression. At length he swore by Saint Peter, and one or two more of the apostles, that if the general got not up in a trice, and issued his order how to form the brigade, he would withdraw, report his condition, and throw up his sword.

"Stop, sir," said the general, "let not a disrespectful word pass your lips, or I order you under arrest, and sent to the devil, which is a good enough punishment for Frenchmen." The colonel was about to withdraw; but the general again peremptorily ordered him to stop, and, after some effort, succeeded in getting his legs over the side of the bed, and his body in an upright position; and, when he had gazed about the room confusedly, and fumbled about for his drawers, he said to the officer, "And now, sir, I change my mind, do you do this: first order me a waiter! and when you have done it, see that he be not a simpleton, but a good, honest fellow, who will assist me to put on my uniform without keeping his hand to my nose, expecting it to drop shillings. Then get this sleeping gentleman you see here awake, for he is a person of much consequence, and, being the guest of the city, (which I say, seeing how much wind the fathers have wasted over him,) and a major who has seen service in Mexico, it will be of much importance that he go with us. Then, sinking the rules of the service for a few minutes, you must join us in a morning glass, which will do you no injury, for I see you are every inch a soldier. Then, go straightway to the general of brigade, tell him to let the bands play till they have cracked their cheeks, and earned their money, which they will not do unless you tell them. And

Page 183

as I have not seen much of this general of brigade's skill, and have heard it said that his brains are in his boots, tell him that the general in command orders him to form the brigade, which, if he have sense enough, he can do while I am putting on my breeches." Here the general's lower lip dropped, he cast a confused look first on the floor then at the feathered Frenchman, and then began tugging away at his drawers, until his nightcap fell to the floor, followed by his wig and numerous imprecations, for he was vain of his looks, and thought himself a man whom any lady of taste might take for husband with credit to herself. "Then," he resumed, "say I order him to march the brigade up Broadway, in platoon, to Union Square; and let the bands ring out music that shall rend the very air, send the rich of the city to wondering, and crowd the streets with ragged vagabonds. And as I am a soldier, I take it when this is done no man dare say the brigade is not made up of heroes, every man of them; if he do, let him be bayoneted! Call a halt, when you reach the square, and there stand till I come, which will be when I have my horse." After listening with great attention to the general's commands, the aid again saluted, notwithstanding his chief was in his shirt, and then set about waking up the major, which he succeeded in doing after very many violent shakes, and at length seizing him by the shoulders and raising him bodily to his haunches, on which he sat endeavoring to disenchant his eyes, like the moody josch of a mandarin. The major then set to shouting at the top of his voice, exclaiming sundry queer commands, and making such strange flourishes with his hands as at first caused the Frenchman to take him for a madman.

It turned out, however, that he fancied himself mounted upon old Battle, reviewing the Barnstable Invincibles, whom he was berating right soundly for a set of stupid knaves. An invitation from the general to join him and the aid in drinking a morning sweeper, suddenly brought him to his understanding, and, after offering numerous apologies for the distressed state of his person, said he was not aware that the earliness of the hour prevented military men and politicians from drinking one another's health, provided they were of equal rank: he therefore begged the feathered Frenchman to join him in drinking the health of General Benthornham, a gentleman and a soldier; in fact, a man of whom the country was proud, for he had seen wars enough to satisfy the ambition of any gentleman with a military turn of mind. The general condescended a bow in return for so flattering a compliment, and saying the best men were known by their deeds, placed the glass to his lips and quaffed the mixture with a wry face.

Page 184

The aid now took his departure, with orders to his general of brigade; and a servant having appeared, the two distressed officers, still suffering from the effect of the revel, ordered a light breakfast of coffee, toast, and eggs, which, when they had quaffed the congress water, they devoured like true heroes, the superior officer being not a little surprised at the facility with which Major Roger Potter used his fingers, and discoursed of his wife, Polly's, skill in preparing good breakfasts. They then ordered their horses, the major giving particular directions how to saddle old Battle, to the end that he might carry a standing tail, which was rare with him. He also directed that his own holsters be mounted, for, though they were shabby in appearance, no soldier could fail to see that they had seen a deal of service, and would admire them the more for it.

And now, gentle reader, lest you be deceived in either of my military heroes, I will just mention, that the major retired to his own room, and, having habited himself in his well worn uniform, joined General Benthornham, who had also got himself into his uniform, and taken up a position at the table, armed, not with his sword, but a corpulent decanter, from which he was filling his glass. The major never refused an invitation to join in a service held so laudable by the profession, and filled his glass also. And so strong was the beverage, that not many minutes had elapsed when they found it extremely difficult to take a forward move without oscillating from the line. As, however, the brigade was made up of gentlemen, and not fighting soldiers, the general suddenly remembered that it would not do to keep them waiting; and, taking the major by the arm, they toddled (as if the floor were unsafe for such good men to tread upon) down stairs, into the front hall, to the no small delight of the numerous bystanders, who gave them all the room required by their high positions.

And now, when the grooms brought the horses to the door, they were astonished that so famous a major should ride an animal so shattered in his appearance, and also travel with a pig who could match the devil in cutting up antics. They therefore stood viewing him with intense anxiety; and, as old Battle had the spring halt in his near hind leg, they were sure the major, when mounted, must cut a figure rarely presented in Broadway. And among the grooms there was one Bob Totten, a man born and reared in Barnstable, and who had, many years ago, been a fellow cordwainer in the same shop with the major. "Faith," said he, in a voice loud enough to be heard by several of the bystanders, "it's old Roger Potter, or my eyes deceive me, and he used to follow the trade of tin peddling."

Page 185

A group of ragged and vicious boys, attracted by the strange figure cut by the major in his uniform, commenced dividing their jibes between him and his horse, evincing not the slightest respect for either. The question which should mount first was now mooted. The major insisted that he would see his superior officer first in the saddle; while the general argued, with equal plausibility, that courtesy demanded that the major should mount first, he being the guest of the city. They debated the point for some time; and at last compromised the matter by agreeing to mount together. This difficulty being settled, another of equal importance arose.

"You have brought me another man's horse," said the general, in an angry tone; "and if I am known for my horsemanship, I value myself too much to be kicked off by a colt."

"Faith, sir," replied the groom, "the horse is your own, and no other man's; and a horse of steady enough habits he is, too."

The general, however, continued to pronounce him a strange horse, and refused to be convinced until he had applied his spectacles.

And now, matters being arranged to their satisfaction, they mounted amidst the shouts and screams of the boys; which was not to be wondered at, for I venture to assert that young New York had never before seen a major so strangely mounted. The noise and confusion, however, was something old Battle was not accustomed to, for, though he was an horse of uncommon good behavior, he now pricked up his head and tail, and gave out such proofs of the youth that yet remained in his bones, that it was with difficulty his rider could manage him. The general, meanwhile, coursed up Broadway with the lightness of a well mounted dragoon, turning in his saddle now and then to ascertain what had become of the major, who, by dint of hard labor, had got old Battle into a three-jog trot, and his head in the right direction. The mischievous urchins, however, continued to harass his rear, and so belabored his gambrels with whatever came to hand, that he increased his pace wonderfully, and at the same time made it so difficult for the major to keep his saddle that he completely lost his temper, and swore he would ride over the whole of them. But they ceased not to tease him; in truth, an urchin more mischievous than the rest, lighted a bunch of fire crackers he had tied to the end of a rod, and, with wicked intent, applied them to old Battle's tail, so frightening him with the explosions that he took to his heels and dashed up Broadway like a colt of three years, spreading consternation among the promenaders, and causing numerous timid people to seek shelter in doors. In truth, I very much doubt whether John Gilpin ever frightened so many people, or caused so many to look with astonishment. Onward he dashed, passing omnibuses and other vehicles without number, (all of which made way for him,) until he reached the New York Hotel, where he came up with the general, whose horse took it into his head not to be outdone by so shabby a charger, and, giving one or two springs, dashed up Broadway with the fleetness of an Arabian filly.

Page 186

Scarce had the general's horse taken this strange freak into his head, when old Battle stumbled, fell full length upon the pavement, and launched the major head foremost to the ground some yards in advance. "I give my soul to my Maker, for now my end has come," said he, "and I forgive all my enemies." A groan followed this exclamation, his limbs seemed seized with spasms, and then for several minutes he remained speechless. With the assistance of two policemen and several sympathizing gentlemen, he was carried into the New York Hotel, where the landlord kindly provided for him, and made him as comfortable as it was possible until he called in a physician, one Miliano, who had great skill in mending battered skulls, and restoring life to half dead persons. As for the general's horse, he dashed on until he reached Union Square, where he made a bolt into the thickest of the brigade, which he scattered in such confusion and dismay that they looked neither to the right nor the left, but, depending upon their heels to save their valuable lives, ran into the nearest open doors, leaving their muskets to whomsoever saw fit to carry them off. And when the horse had reached the Everett House, he, in evident malice, threw the general over his head upon the pavement, when several persons rushed out and picked him up for dead; but, instead of being dead, he proved to be the soberest of men, and when he was upon his feet ordered the bravest man to go in pursuit of his horse, who was proceeding up Fourth Avenue, a terror to all pedestrians.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Which relates how the major was restored to consciousness; and of the story of an eccentric critic.

Let me avail myself of your good nature, reader, for I am a man who would not artfully conceal truth to the injury of a friend; but I am, at the same time, conscious of the heavy penalty incurred in speaking the honest, unembroidered truth of some of our well tailored heroes, who open and shut like sunflowers under a vertical sun, and present an excellent object to attract the admiration of your fine ladies in Broadway. Heaven knows I appreciate the true hero, and am ready to favor an honest purpose with a joyful heart; but your political general of militia is a model of coxcombry, a creature ready to faint when you want service of him, and the best imposture known at this day. I, however, hold it not well to turn the wheel too far against men who are harmlessly inclined, and in whose marching and countermarching up Broadway (with the pomp and circumstance of men about to face blood and flames) the juvenile and other lighthearted portions of the community find an excellent fund of amusement. Indeed, I remember that others may love what I have no taste to appreciate; and that when fortune turns against me, which is the case at this moment, I had

Page 187

better keep my thumbs out of my neighbor's finger glass. Nor would I knowingly wound with my remarks on General Benthornham's merits as an officer, the pride of one of his many admirers. Suffice it to say, then, (as the learned Doctor Easley would say,) that although his coat had received a rent or two in the back, no sooner was his truant horse brought back to him than he mounted with the daring of a book publisher, and, after evincing no small desire to ride over the brigade a dozen times, and putting it through a series of intricate evolutions, which the various regiments forming it performed with great credit to themselves, he ordered them dismissed and sent home, there to look well to their good behavior during the rest of the day. And for this last and very kind service, they thought him the bravest general history had any account of. In accordance, then, with this parental admonition, they betook themselves home, well fatigued, but as ready to fight as any good men ought to be when satisfied that arms were necessary to the maintenance of law; which, however much I may blush to acknowledge it, was the case in Gotham, which was in sad disorder-not from any bad spirit between its citizens, but merely the curious antics of a very ambitious mayor. Having made an amende I hope will prove ample, let us turn to the patient at the New York Hotel.

Major Roger Potter, who I forgot to mention had been dubbed a General on the preceding evening, lay in a state of stupor, though with evident signs of life, for some hours. Being the guest of the city, no little anxiety was evinced by the physician, who, after exercising great skill in feeling for broken bones and cracks in his skull, declared that he could find neither bruises nor broken bones; but, if appearances were to be taken, he had received such internal injury as must soon put an end to his usefulness in this world, and send him to a better. He therefore got out his lancet, and, after nearly draining his veins of blood, was about to apply a monster plaster to his head, when the patient suddenly opened his eyes and began to give out such extraordinary signs of life that the doctor as suddenly changed his mind, and, laying aside the plaster, at once declared he had the most sanguine hopes of his recovery. Meanwhile a report got over the city that Major Roger Potter was thrown from his horse, and lay a corpse at the New York Hotel. And the newspapers added to this report by inserting the mournful event as a fact. Indeed, the city fathers, who evinced a strange passion for mournings, were well nigh voting a respectable sum to pay proper respect to his remains, for they held it no disgrace to vote sums for melancholy purposes; which, however, they invariably spend in night suppers, over which they give one another bloody noses and black eyes-a distinguishing motto with divers hard headed councilmen. But the major was resolved not to be sent to his long account in so mean a style,

Page 188

and remained with his eyes wide open, and so clearly in possession of his rational senses, that the bystanders, who were all gentlemen of quality, (there not being an opera singer among them,) declared that his power of endurance was without bounds. In truth, it was proven that no amount of battering and bruising could kill so famous a warrior. But, if he opened his eyes, he spoke not a word until the physician was gone, when his lips slowly resumed their power of motion, and he said, in a voice scarcely intelligible, "Quantibus, moribus, canibus, omnibus, ma dormibus."

"Pray, what does he say?" inquired the bystanders of one another.

"Lambabus, Jehovabus, cananius," resumed the major, following the effort with a deep sigh.

"He speaks Latin," replied one of the bystanders; "and as I have a little of that language at my fingers' ends, I recognize that he says, 'Blessed is he who dies in a noble mission.' Yes, there! he repeats it again, and I have it exactly."

The major continued muttering several incoherent sentences, interlarding them with words of intelligible English, which doubly confused his auditors, another of whom declared that though he never had read a verse of Latin in his life, he was sure it was not that, but some strange tongue, in which the sufferer, being a profound scholar, desired to make his "dying declaration." They all finally came to this opinion, and agreed that a priest and a parson be called, as they were not quite sure as to his religion, and it was only necessary to have some one who knew Latin by heart. A druggist was suggested by another; but an objection was interposed on the ground that the Latin of druggists was not to be depended upon. Again, it was said the priest and the parson would get to quarreling over some nice point of doctrine, or as to the exact style of sending him to heaven, which would make it extremely unpleasant for the worldly minded lookers on. "It is just come into my head," spoke a young man of genteel appearance and sympathizing looks, "that there lives in the neighborhood one Orlando Tickler, an Irish gentleman of much ancestry. He is reputed to be poor, but a profound critic of books; it is also said of him that he can speak numerous tongues." Orlando Tickler was a man of fashionable aspect, and had written various learned essays, largely set with Latin sentences, on subjects connected with high art, for which he affected a love equaled only by his contempt for every American who "dabbled in it." And, as he was always ready to give proof of his wisdom, he came at the first invitation, and with so grave and solemn a bearing that no man would have dared to dispute his wisdom.

"And now, sir," said he, in a brogue of peculiar richness, addressing the prostrate hero, "since I see you are dying, and about to leave this world, pray what would you say in respect to yourself?"

The major (now General Roger Potter) fixed his eyes upon Mr. Tickler with such intenseness that he turned pale, and repeated his question. Whereupon the prostrate patient again muttered, "Quantibus, moribus, canibus, ma dormebus."

Page 189

"Faith, and it's as good Latin as my man could speak, which is saying no little for him as a gentleman," said Mr. Tickler, with an air of much wisdom.

"Please, sir, tell us what he says, for we are all impatient, lest the poor man go out of the world with a dying request upon his lips;" interposed one of the bystanders.

"What's that he says, now?" queried Mr. Tickler, in reply. "Well, I have it!-he says, (and I think his mind is a little out because he says it,) that this world is all naked vanity, and the quicker a man makes his peace with heaven, the stronger is the proof that he is a man of sense."

They all agreed that this was a very sensible remark for a dying man, when the major, to their utter astonishment, again opened his lips, and with more vigor than before, muttered one of two sentences, which were all of Latin he had ever known in his life, "Apolla Majora canimus."

"See, now!-what is this it is now?" interposed the learned Tickler. "Faith it's hard enough keeping them all in a body's head. Indeed, an' it's come to me quick enough though! He says he gave his energies to his country, and hopes the devil may get his enemies if they say it was otherwise with him."

Mr. Tickler now commenced a dissertation on the beauties of the Latin language, the origin of which he traced into the ancient Celtic, which, judging from its Nomic melody, he should say bore a trite and common resemblance to that now spoken in Wales, Ireland, and the Highlands of Scotland; and which, notwithstanding the authorities to the contrary, he firmly believed was introduced first into his country by William the Conqueror. Indeed, he insisted that he had twice debated this point with the learned critic, Easley, (whom he styled the New York executioner of literature,) and beat him with ease; for though Easley was a man of profound knowledge and erudition, he was not a match for him at Latin.

"Omnes codem cogimur, omnium," repeated the major.

"Gentlemen," said the critic, "he has something of great importance to communicate, and, if it please you, desires to be alone for a few minutes." The bystanders were now well convinced that Mr. Tickler was a man of profound learning, and more than up to his reputation. They, therefore, withdrew in silence; and had no sooner disappeared than the major rose to his haunches without the slightest difficulty, and gave visible proof that his tongue was restored to its original usefulness.

"Truly, I am under an obligation to you, sir," said he, addressing himself to the critic; "for you have rendered me a service I much needed. I was only stunned, and knew that a little sleep would restore me to my natural understanding. But my tongue had lost its power, and I could not sleep with so many about my bed. The nonsense I muttered was



for a disguise; for I feared if I came suddenly to my senses they would dry up their sympathies, and not think so well of me. But pray, how comes it, sir, that you made such good Latin of my gibberish? Tell me, kind sir, for I see you are a scholar, and it may be that Latin is a natural gift with me; and when you are done I will order up a little brandy, which we will divide between us; for I apprehend it will not embarrass you, since you are a man in whose eye I see wisdom enough for several."

Page 190

"To be honest with you, friend, I will not reject the brandy, for I took a liking to it when I was a strolling player, and believe it does me no harm in my new profession. He here, at the major's request, rang the bell for a waiter. "As to what you said, to tell the truth between ourselves, not a word of it could I make out; for though I can speak many languages, my head is not troubled with a word of Latin, which, I have no doubt, you spoke with great correctness. I would have you know, sir, that it will not do in these pinching times to set up for a critic, unless you have Latin at your finger's ends. And if you have it not, why it serves the same purpose to say you have. With Latin you can enter the Press Club, (which affords you an excellent opportunity of escaping the bills of your tailor,) and if you practice the deception with skill, you will be set down for a man of wonderful capacity. But if you knew what a miserable thing it is to be a critic, you would, I knew, say a man had better follow the devil with a fife and drum than depend on the tricks of booksellers for his bread, which is come the fashion with critics at this day."

"Upon my soul, Mr. Tickler," replied the major, rising to his feet, as sound a man as ever was seen, "I reverence you for your good sense. The truth is, I hold it none the worse of a man that he have not his mouth full of Latin every minute in the day. And as my wife Polly knows, I have languages enough at my tongue's end; but hold it better of a man that he try to get perfect in his own."

"Let us to the priests with the languages," rejoined Mr. Tickler, knowingly; "and let us get to the brandy for here comes the servant." And the servant entered with a bow.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

In which will be found several things common to military politicians; also, A curious history of the critics, as related by Mr. Tickler.

Having given his order to the servant, General Potter turned to Mr. Tickler, and with great politeness said, "I may say to you in confidence, seeing that I shall be all right when I take a bottle or two of Townsend's Sarsaparilla, that my friends made me a General last night; and as experience teaches me that this title will do me great service, pray make it convenient to address me accordingly." Mr. Tickler at once promised to scrupulously regard this admonition, as well as to hold the general's person in profound respect.

Page 191

And now, as many inquiries were made after his health by persons of distinction, he desired the host to send them away, saying he was doing as well as could be expected under the circumstances. And when the gentlemen who retired at Mr. Tickler's request reentered the room, they were surprised and astonished to find the man they had supposed on the point of death restored to perfect health, and weak only from the blood taken from him by the skillful physician. He was, indeed, speaking as good English as needs be, and earnestly debating a question of state policy with Mr. Tickler over an excellent punch. On making inquiries about his pains, he good naturedly assured them he was a much sounder man than before, except that he had a slight itching in one of his toes, which could be readily removed with a bottle or two of Dr. Townsend's Sarsaparilla. They were not a little diverted at the quaintness of the remark, and went away satisfied that he was at least the most remarkable man of the age, if not the wisest.

Not a thought was given to old Battle during all this time, which was the strangest thing of all, considering the affection he bore him. Having drained his glass, the general (which he must henceforth be called) gave Mr. Tickler wonderful account of his mission, and the prospects that were held out to him. "I see, sir," said he, addressing Tickler, "that you are a man of uncommon ability; and as I stand in great need of just such a gentleman's services, to write my speeches, and do an elegant correspondence, you have but to say you will join me, and I promise you such a share of the rewards as will make you a happy man for the rest of your life. My speeches are not difficult, but my correspondence is extensive and curious enough, God knows."

"An office that will better my condition will not stand long waiting my acceptance, as you shall have reason to know, sir, when you make me the offer. Mind ye, I have followed the wretched life of a critic so long that I am compelled to cheat my tailor, and depend on a friend to invite me to dinner. As to my accomplishments, you will find them out by inquiring at the Press Club, which is composed of as nice gentlemen as any lady of taste could wish; and I swear, sir, they have so much learning that they have killed several magazines of great respectability." Mr. Tickler said this with an air of superlative dignity; and having a beard and mustache of exquisite growth, he drew a delicate comb from his pocket, and commenced curling them with great care. In truth, Mr. Orlando Tickler was something of an exquisite, and as much a fixture at the opera as the empty chair of a stockholder. What was more, he leveled an opera glass worth sixty dollars at the belles.

Page 192

“Really, sir,” replied the general with a smile, “you talk like a gentleman of profound wisdom. I perhaps ought to tell you, that a clever young gentleman, who did me the service I desire of you, being ambitious, left me, and set up for a lawyer. And it was in vain I promised him a seat in Congress in two years, if he would remain with me. It is also said of him, that he has taken to writing my history, which an honest bookseller has engaged to publish out of sheer respect to the severe and very uncharitable things he had said of me and my wife, Polly Potter.” The general now begged Mr. Tickler to give him a more detailed account of these critics, of whom he he had spoken so strangely.

“Faith, sir, it gives me pleasure to impart knowledge to others,” rejoined Mr. Tickler; “and as I have no great love for any of them, I will, to be brief, tell you that you may divide them under four heads: The wise critics, the fashionable society critics, the correspondent critics, and the critics at large. The wise critic is generally a dilapidated parson, who, having vacated the pulpit for want of morals, brings into literature the spirit of the viper, which he manifests toward his brother craftsmen with peculiar unction. He preserves a sort of clerical air, wears a white neckcloth, spectacles, and a shabby coat; and in addition to foul linen, he has a great passion for sending poets and novel writers to the devil. He affects to despise a literature not well savored with religious sentiment, but will at times condescend to lavish unmeasured praise upon a book of loose morals. The wise critic generally has lodging with some pious lady in Fourth Street, breakfasts on rolls and coffee at Peteler’s, dines three times a week with his female literary friends, and for the rest takes rice and milk at Savery’s, in Beekman Street. Being literary editor of two or more daily papers, publishers hold him in great respect, and employ him at reading the novels of ambitious school girls, which he will aid them in cramming down the spacious throat of the public. It would not do to offer a wise critic pay for his services; but the accepting of presents he regards in the light of exchanges of love between a friend served and a friend admired. He has numerous affairs of ceremony with gifted widows, who write very excellent sensation books in behalf of downtrodden humanity, and who never fail to express their admiration of his great learning; and this high consideration he repays with ponderous eulogies on their books. His carping he reserves for the devil, and such authors as Prescott, Bryant, and Longfellow.

Page 193

"The fashionable critic belongs to the Press Club, from which it may be inferred that he is an excellent judge of Cologne and hair oil. I say this, sir, seeing how large a quantity of these excellent articles are used by the nice persons who constitute that club. In dress, the fashionable critic is quite up to Fifth Avenue, and in manners he is rather above it. He is in high favor with certain aged dowagers of doubtful ancestry, who never think of giving an evening party without one or two of the best cravatted. He has a wonderful relish for light literature, and affects to speak numerous tongues. In truth, if there be a tongue he is not familiar with, he will tell you most patronizingly that it is a tongue not known in fashionable society. He writes articles for magazines, turns the brains of certain young damsels at boarding schools, and at the end of the year fancies himself a Byron. Now and then he gathers his stray effusions together, and gives them to the forgiving world in a book that sends a titillation of joy to the hearts of his numerous admirers, and also sets every fashionable critic to praising it as the most wonderful work of the age; for unlike the wise critic, the fashionable critic eschews envy, and invariably puffs the bantlings of his fellows. In fine, the fashionable critic is always tied to some lady friend, who has written a book he is about to notice in Putnam, a journal he has nearly choked to death with his great learning. If you would know how he lives I will tell you. He has three dollar lodgings with Mrs. Sponge, in Amity Street, which is fashionable enough for any body. But being a sharp fellow, he takes a dinner or two at the Brevort House, which enables him to indite all his epistles therefrom, so, to his friends, he is at the Brevort House. And, believe me, sir, for I say it more in pity than anger, he is a man much given to appropriating to himself the coats and breeches of his friends, and going uninvited to balls.

"The correspondent critic is generally an energetic gentleman of foreign extraction and doubtful ancestry. Being without means or business, he sets up for a critic of books. He will correspond gratis for papers in Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, Cincinnati, and other large cities. Having "got his newspapers," he forms an extensive acquaintance with authors, publishers, and actors-in a word, with any one in need of puffing, the force of which he gauges according to the amount paid. Although the wise critic holds him in utter contempt, he affects a knowledge of books quite as profound, and can completely outshine him in his style of adulation. As for new books, no enterprising publisher would deign to send him less than two copies, which may be found at a book stall the very next morning. As, however, his sense of feeling is so delicate that he only wants to feel a book to decide upon its merits, this disposing of the books fortunately does not debar him from giving a ten dollar opinion of it in one of his newspapers.

Page 194

When, however, his puffs are not squared according to the publisher's liking, he is sent about his business; sometimes threatened with an exposé of the peculiarities of his trade. He has free drinks and dinners at various first class hotels, which he invariably recommends in his 'articles.' Doctor Thompson's purgative powders, Lubin's perfumery, and the Home Journal, are severally victims of his profound respect.

"The correspondent critic has small apartments at first class hotels, which he changes frequently, out of sheer respect, as he says, to economy. But I have failed to discover how this could apply, since the change was invariably made for a more expensive hotel, while a little score always remained on the ledger, to the no small annoyance of the host. But, sir, where they have it is in 'knowing' the impressibility of certain ambitious actresses, whose acquaintance they cultivate, and for a given sum set them up for Siddonses and Rachels, with the same respect for modesty they evince in puffing Peteler's soda water.

"And now, sir, we have come to the last, but depend upon it, he is not the least of them all—I mean the critic at large." Here Mr. Tickler, who, it must be known, was as big a knave as any of them, and only charged upon others the little inconsistencies he had himself been guilty of, lighted his cigar, and suggested the good results of another well compounded punch, which the general ordered without delay. "I tell you, sir," Mr. Tickler resumed, "he is an oily gentleman in very shabby clothes, and might be easily mistaken for a cross between a toper and a tinker. Lacking capacity for any other business, he forms a cheap connection with the press, where his first office would seem to be that of sitting in judgment upon literature. Indeed, I have seldom seen a more shabby gentleman set up for a man of letters. His aversion to water and clean linen is only equaled by his love of actors and bad brandy, the latter having painted his face with a deep glow. The limit of his 'set phrases' is somewhat narrow; but notwithstanding this little impediment, he has a wonderful facility for making heroes. He assists publishers in 'getting out books,' getting up sensations, and, perhaps, a learned controversy, in which the Evening Post, feeling its reserved rights infringed, will join issue with every one else. The critic at large is, in most cases, a foreign gentleman, who boasts an engagement on the Express, adding at the same time, and with some assurance, that he writes for the Sunday Dispatch and Atlas. This stroke of policy he holds necessary to preserve his respectability. He is in high favor at all the theaters, tips winks to his actress acquaintances, drinks slings and toddies at Honey's with actors befuddling themselves into that dreamy state regarded by the profession as necessary to the clear bringing out of all the beauties with which a beneficent providence endowed the kings and conquerors they are to personate at night, on that sequestered

Page 195

world called the stage. You may know by the downy state of his wardrobe that he has a place to sleep. But where he gets his breakfast is a mystery no friend has ever yet solved for me. Aside from taking a two shilling dinner at an oyster cellar in William Street and wiping his greasy fingers on a leather apron, he would seem to live on hopes and brandy-mixed. He affects great admiration of Johnson and Goldsmith, compares his poverty with theirs, and attributes the present wretched condition of criticism to the disgrace brought upon the profession by Easley and other dilapidated priests. You will frequently see this shabby man of letters standing at the corner of Nassau and Ann streets, his hands in his pockets and his head bent in meditation. Occasionally he will pitch his post in the vicinity of the Herald office, and look up longingly at the windows, as if envying the dare devils who write for that witty journal their fat larder. And here he will remain until some kind friend with a shilling invites him to a sling. Truly, sir, he is starved into flattering his patrons. If you be an ambitious author, you have only to show him the color of your coin, and for two dollars he will make you quite equal to Thackeray. Five dollars in his palm, and, my word for it, he will have you superior to either Bulwer or Dickens. If you be a poet, he will, for the sum of eight dollars, (which is Easley's price,) enshrine you with the combined mantles of Homer and Shakspeare. He applies the same scale of prices to such actors and actresses as stand in need of his services. Notwithstanding his passion for exalting his patrons, he affects in conversation a great dislike for American literature, while at the same time he is ever ready to lavish the most indiscriminate praise upon the books of foreign authors. He never makes both ends meet on Saturday, but will borrow a dollar to go to Coney Island on Sunday.

"And now, your honor, you have the whole mob, and you may make what you please of them." The general raised his glass, and was about to declare he had been highly entertained, when Mr. Tickler suddenly interrupted, by reminding him that he had just called to mind the fact, that there was a play writer critic. "This fellow is the most congenial of them all, has a little room somewhere in North Moore Street, in which may found two or three pictures of fierce looking tragedians; a cot covered with a quilt of various colors, and looking as if it had been used for a horse blanket; a carpet the colors have long since been worn out of; a dumb clock over the dingy mantel piece; a portrait of the deceased husband of the hostess; and a table well supplied with pipes, tobacco, and French plays. The French plays are, when slightly altered and rendered into English, for the public; the pipes and tobacco are for his friends. And although perpetually climbing the mountain of poverty, while building no end of castles in the air, he spends what he gets to-day and has no thought for

Page 196

to-morrow. It having come the fashion of the day for managers of theaters to feast their patrons on the morbid sentimentality of French plays, (as if the vices of our own social system were not enough to excite the vicious propensities of our high blooded youths,) so also would it seem the highest inspiration of the eighteenth century play writer to rehash and coarsify for the American stage all those lascivious eccentricities for which the French are famous. Hence, your jolly play writer is generally engaged with his friends, smoking pipes and reading the last French piece. The pleasure excited by this congenial occupation is invariably heightened with libations of whiskey, the play writer having a credit with the grocer at the corner for three bottles, which, in a case of emergency, may be extended to four. He writes occasionally for the Sunday newspapers, thinks John Brougham the greatest dramatist and wit of the age, and stands ready either to join him in a glass or sing his praises, though there is as much reason for committing so flagrant an outrage as there would be in praising the ten thousand and one stanzas written by that wonderful and very eccentric bard, Richard Yeadon, who has sung of so many springs and watering places as to dry up his own muse. He is likewise something of a dabbler at reviewing novels, but they must be largely sprinkled with murders, and have plots strong enough to carry anything but the clergy. All other critics are to him great bores; but, like them, he has a price for his services, and will, if you pay him, make Shakspeares and Corneilles of very ordinary persons. As for respectable society, he never even scented the perfumery of its outskirts; he therefore holds it in utter contempt. Ready at all times to adapt himself to circumstances, if he chance to get in arrears to his landlady, he will square the account by marrying either herself or her daughter." Mr. Tickler proceeded in this strain, relating sundry curious things of the critics, until the night was far advanced, and concluded by suggesting that no serious damage could result to his constitution from another punch. The general immediately fell in with this opinion, and indeed was so entertained by his narrative, that he would have ordered a dozen punches without considering his obligation to him wiped out. The punch being dispatched, the general slipped five dollars into Mr. Tickler's hand, and desired him to proceed to the host, thank him for his great kindness, and clear the little score from his ledger. Greatly delighted at the prospect of performing this service, Mr. Tickler proceeded to the office, and was informed by the polite host that it was a custom with him never to take money of persons driven to seek shelter in his house by accidents. To end the matter, he vowed it not only gave him great pleasure to have so distinguished a military gentleman in his house, which had bore a character for hospitality he was scrupulous it should continue to maintain, but that he would be happy to see him again. Indeed, he wished him success in all his undertakings, hoping they would bring comfort in great abundance.

Page 197

Slipping the price of a criticism into his own pocket, the adroit Tickler returned to the general, swore the host was the most generous fellow within his knowledge, and said, "See here, sir! faith of my father! but he would only take three dollars for it all. And he passed the devil knows how many compliments on your valor, for I couldn't count them." He now proffered the remaining two, but was not slow in acting upon the general's admonition to put them in his own pocket. "And now, sir," resumed Mr. Tickler, with an air of great anxiety, "let us hasten home to your lodgings, and to-morrow I will write this generous man a note for you, thanking him for such rare disinterestedness. And it shall be such a note!" The general, however, was not quite sure whether such an act would become a man of courtesy, and expressed a desire to see so generous a landlord and tell him how much he thanked him. But as this would seriously disturb Mr. Tickler's arrangements, that gentleman got him out of the house as speedily as possible, assuring him that such a proceeding would be contrary to all the established rules of etiquette. Quietly then, they proceeded down Broadway together, suspicious that they were seen by every passer by, and entered the St. Nicholas by a private door. And so unobserved was this achievement, that the host was, on the following morning, surprised and astonished at the return of his guest, whom he would have sworn was lying a corpse at the New York Hotel.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

General Potter receives A letter from his wife Polly; he engages to fight the king of the Kaloramas; prepares to leave for Washington; and various things curious and interesting.

When Tickler parted company with the general, it was with the understanding that they meet again in a day or two, and consummate the agreement whereby the adroit critic was to follow the fortunes of his master through politics and war. He therefore went directly to his home, and returned thanks for the mercy of this opportune deliverance from his dire necessities. A shilling he had not had in his pocket for several days; and as to the five dollars, it would enable him to assume a position of no small importance among his friends at the opera.

As to the general, he awoke early in the morning, and began to contemplate his honors. There could not be the slightest doubt of his fame in politics, seeing how many distinguished persons had sought to pay him homage. Indeed, he had been carried by a process known only to politicians to an incredible height of popularity, which, being vain of, he bore with a patience and cheerfulness equaled only by the docility of old Battle, his horse. The city fathers,

Page 198

it must be mentioned, finding him not quite up to their expectations, were endeavoring to drop him with as little noise as possible. But it seemed a question which was most deceived, the general or the city fathers. The latter found the former a shallow pated man, who from mere joking, had been made to believe himself a great politician, and by a singular cleverness in committing to memory the altered speeches of others, had created for himself a respectability that always vanished on an acquaintance with him; while the former declared that the population of a city was no proof of the amount of moral rectitude by which its government was conducted, seeing that he had found those of the city fathers with whom he had come in contact, very craggy headed men, and sadly deficient in everything but creating disorders and bringing disgrace upon the city: in fine, that they were not what they ought to be.

The general now began to look about him for means whereby he could distinguish himself in war, and make his fame national. He argued within himself that however famous a man might become in politics, there was an uncertainty always impending. But to be famous in war, was something as durable as time, and which always excited the warmest admiration of one's countrymen. And while he, with confused fancies flitting through his imagination, was thus contemplating his present greatness and future prospects, a servant entered, bearing a letter.

"Love of me!" exclaimed the general, "It's from my wife, Polly!"

A superscription in a series of hieroglyphics that would have defied the combined erudition of Rawlinson and Layard, the general deciphered thus: "To Major Roger Sherman Potter. In New York." The seal, which was of broken wafers, pressed with a thimble, was broken with eager anxiety, and the general, his eyes transfixed on the dingy page, read the contents, which ran thus:

"Barnstable, June -, 185.—"My Dear husban

"You knows i niver did like these ere politiks, for all the expereiance i've had in um tells me they nethir brings meat nor pays the store bills. I see they bin making ever so much on you yinder in New York; but that ant nothin', when a body has debts to pay, and childirn to shoe and larn. I know, and you know i know, that when you was young you had capacity (talent they call it) enuff to get to Congriss; and thats why i tried so to get you there, and sold all the ducks and chickens, and strained, you know, ever so many ways to help you up in the world; but now i see there's not a whit a use int, for i've a come convinsed that them politiks makes an honest man a rogue, and sends his soul to the devil, and his family to the town-house. I like to see you made so much of, for i have the nateral feelins of a wife, and if, as you used to say, i didn't know much of filosofy, why i have some sense, and want you to come straight home, and see to your poor family, for it takes all we can get for

Page 199

binding shoes to buy bread. But what i want to tell you is three days after you left on the Two Marys, Sheriff Warner come with a rit, and carried away the three pigs, and Warner has bin donnin me life out for that old store bill, and Draner says he wont wait another day for the rent, and Aldrich says you owe him ten dollars borrowed money, which you had better pay afore you make so much noise in New York. But what i want to tell you is, that i lent what little money you left to Captain Ben Larnard, who says he can't pay it back right away, but will when his wife gits home, though Captain Spelt's wife says she's run off with another man. And there's that trifle due when you went away to Jefferson Bigelow the butcher, he keeps a lookin in and giving me the startles, and saying how Squire Benson lives at the corner. Now as you love your poor wife and children come home, and let politiks alone, and provide for your children like a good christian and an honest man, which I have heard it said a politishon cant be. And this is the prayer of your true and affeckshonite wife *Polly Potter*."

"A bombshell from my wife Polly, sure enough!" ejaculated the general; "but she is a sensible woman, and with learning would have made her mark in the world. A man must not look back though, but renew his demonstrations against misfortune, and then if he succeed let him thank his energy. And yet it is true, as my wife Polly says, my politics have brought me in but little meat, and my children have often times gone scantily clad, whereas they might have had plenty if I'd stuck to the bench. However, a point approached, is a point gained, and now that my hand is almost upon a mission, which will repay for all my disappointments, it will not do to walk back into the house and shut the door."

Thus the hero reasoned within himself. It was true, old Battle was eating his head off. But the pig had made a wonderful sensation, and so crowded the house every night as to demonstrate the fact that first rate talent of every kind was highly appreciated in New York. The critics, with scarcely a dissenting voice, had declared the pig a marvel, a profound embodiment of talent, one of the wonders of the age; an animal possessed of such rare gifts that no lover of the curious in natural history should lose the opportunity of witnessing his performances. And in order to diversify these distinguished and very popular entertainments, the clever showman had introduced a piece called "Evenings with the Critics," in one scene of which was presented a litter of nine precocious pigs, habited in bright, colored mantles, and seated on seats forming a semicircle, with Duncan in ducal robes seated on a throne, and presiding with the gravest demeanor. The nine small pigs were supposed to represent various members of the critic tribe, while Duncan, who was in spectacles, personated Doctor Easley. And so cleverly did the showman understand the instincts of critics, as well as the

Page 200

beauties of his art, that he produced the scene with the merits of a poem called Hiawatha under consideration. Each pig waited the signal of approval or disapproval from Duncan, and according to his verdict, either fell upon and grievously soiled the poem, or grunted in one string of praise as they danced round it. And the audience understanding the logic of this, the performance proved highly entertaining. Indeed, renowned tragedians, very popular low comedians, leading business ladies, whose fame had been made for twenty years, and singing ladies who hailed from no less a place than the Covent Garden Opera, London, were driven by the pig mania into Poverty Lodge, from whence they sneeringly declared that no better proof of the low standard of public taste could be afforded.

And now, while pondering over the letter received from his wife, Polly, and feeling as if he could kiss her a thousand times, and entreat her to bear with him, since this time he was sure of success, and would return to her so much exalted that the whole village would turn out to do him homage, Barnum entered, and without further ceremony declared himself so enamored of the pig, whose success with the public was unprecedented, that he cheerfully paid down the amount of the closing engagement, and produced a paper which proved to be a re-engagement at an advance of terms, that so completely satisfied the general, that he signed it without further hesitation. The showman being a advocate of temperance, declined General Potter's invitation to join him over a punch; and being a man of business, took his departure as soon as he had perfected the re-engagement, promising to keep the pig's birthplace and antecedents a profound secret. And when he was gone, the general took fifty dollars of the money paid him, and sate down to write the following letter in reply to that received from his wife Polly: "St. Nicholas Hotel, New York, June -, 185-. *"My dear wife Polly:*

"Your letter is just received, and grieves me enough, God knows. You must know, dear Polly, that riches are not got in a day, nor is fame gained in a week, though a man may be popular and not have money enough to get a shilling dinner. And truly, since I arrived here, so much honor has been showered upon me that my shoulders are scarce broad enough to carry it all. As for those who make up the government of this great city, I have come to think they are not to be trusted; for if my good nature would recompense them for the respect they have shown me, my common sense is not to be shut up with gilded doors when I see men much given to strong drink and breaking one another's heads, which it seems to me is the fashion with these high office gentlemen. I now send you fifty dollars, which will comfort you for a time; remember, I will send you some more when less engaged with matters concerning the public. Give each a little, just to keep matters quiet; but be careful not to let one of them know how much you

Page 201

have in the purse, or they'll all rush upon you and strip you to the last dollar. I have success at my finger's ends, and am sure of a mission, as you will see by the newspapers, which have said no end of good things of me. I have met with one or two slight misfortunes, but as they are such as all great politicians and military men must expect to meet, I will say no more about them. Heaven bless you and the children, is the sincere wish of your affectionate husband, "*Roger Sherman Potter*."

"P.S. Excuse my brevity, dear Polly, as I am much pressed with public affairs. Old Battle is well, but served me a scurvy trick only a day or two ago."

Having sealed and despatched this letter to the post office, General Potter suddenly remembered that he had not seen his faithful horse since the accident in Broadway that had so nearly cost him his life. He therefore repaired to the stable, where a scene so truly affecting took place, that the grooms had great difficulty in restraining their tears. No sooner did old Battle hear his master's voice, than he began neighing, when his master, in return, patted and caressed him as if he had been a child. In truth, the animal was much bruised about the knees and face, and altogether presented a figure sorry enough to enlist the sympathy of any kind gentleman. "It was no fault of yours, my true, my faithful friend," said the general, patting him on the neck and fondling him. "The ragged urchins did it all, and if their parents be not careful the devil and the gallows will put a sudden end to their career. Thou hast shared my trials in many an expedition, and it is my intention that thou share many more." In this manner the general continued to condole old Battle, until the grooms forgot their grief, and were well nigh splitting their sides with laughter. Leaving his horse, the general returned to his rooms, and found a stranger awaiting him.

"The importance of my mission, sir," spoke the man, who arose to his feet with great dignity of manner, and was evidently a man of much circumstance, "is the best apology I can offer for this self-introduction-"

"I see, sir," replied the general, "that you are a man of quality. Keep your seat, then, and accept my assurances of good faith in whatever it may please you to offer."

"My name," resumed the stranger, his stately figure and frank, open countenance, forming a curious contrast to the rotund figure of the general, "is Pekleworth Glanmoregain, so well known in the world of commerce that I apprehend it is not the first time you have heard of me." The general bowed. "Your fame as a military man having come to my knowledge, as also your ability for statesmanship, I have sought you out, with a view to engaging your services in carrying out a great project I now have on hand. But what passes between us I desire shall be kept a profound secret for the present, since events mature with such a rapidity at this day that it is impossible to keep track of them." The stranger paused and cast a scrutinizing glance at the general, who

was surprised and astounded at the vagueness of his speech. Indeed, he began to have a suspicion that the stranger was on an errand of evil, or, perhaps, had come to engage his services in some unholy enterprise, such as poisoning an heir or giving false evidence.

Page 202

"Pray, remember," said he, in a voice indicating great anxiety, "that if I have not much of the world's riches, I am at least an honest man, which is saying something, as things go. I may say, too, that I set some value upon my military reputation; therefore, let what you have to offer be such as it will not lower my reputation to accept. To tell you the truth, sir, I have a foreign mission in my eye, and am sure of getting it when I go to Washington, since my qualifications are not a whit behind any of them."

"Bury your misgivings, I enjoin you," replied the stranger, "for I am a responsible man, and the service I require of you is highly honorable. I have a mighty project in view, and if it can with your assistance be carried to a successful issue, not only will I make you a great general, but a rich man for the rest of your life."

The prospect of being made a great general so elated our hero, that as the stranger discovered his project in detail, he entered into it with great alacrity, and would, as an earnest of his ability, have given him an account of all the wars he had been in, and the victories that were gained solely by following his advice, but that the stranger assured him it was unnecessary, since he had already seen enough proof of his being a man of valor.

Pekleworth Glanmoregain, I must mention here, was a man who had become famous in commerce, and had large possessions. But these he was not content to enjoy, but sought to increase his wealth by means our forefathers would have characterized with much severity. There was, according to Pekleworth Glanmoregain, a territory somewhere on the Spanish main, familiarly known as the Kingdom of the Kaloramas. The Kaloramas were an inoffensive people, who had been much degraded by intestine wars, and were so low in the scale of physical and intellectual quality as to enlist in their behalf the sympathies of the powerful and magnanimous. But as that which is nationally weak only serves as a prey to that which is nationally strong, so the poor, emaciated Kaloramas had for years been a prey to the avarice of rival adventurers, who, in that spirit which arrogance always asserts over ignorance, would make their king a puppet and themselves mere vassals. And this the wily adventurers did, by professing great friendship for the king and his people, then setting up a fictitious claim to a voice in the affairs of the kingdom, and finally demanding for such service, which any knave or fool might have rendered, not one, but all his islands. In truth, the Kingdom of the Kaloramas, though insignificant in its own political aspect, had furnished a grand theme for a comedy of modern diplomatic errors, in the performance of which numerous clever gentlemen had found much innocent recreation, though not a man had been found capable of solving the plot to the satisfaction of the spectators. In fine, what caused so much longing after, and so many evil eyes to be cast upon this little kingdom of the poor Kaloramas,

Page 203

was the fact that it had within itself a great highway, over which the commerce of two oceans passed. And such were the advantages held out by a monopoly of this highway, that each claimant stood ready to censure the ignorance of the government that doubted his right to higher consideration than that given to his fellow adventurer, whom he would hang to the nearest tree with as little scruple as he would eat his breakfast.

“And now, sir,” resumed Glanmoregain, “I have described the Kingdom of the Kaloramas to you, and also the immense advantages it possesses. To be honest with you, then, I desire to gain possession of it, which I take it will be no hard matter, provided the general who engages in my service be capable of outwitting his rivals. And as each keeps a general and a poet of his own, I am resolved to outdo the rest by having a general and two poets, which surely will secure the success of my enterprise.”

“Truly, sir,” interposed the general, somewhat surprised at the hugeness of Glanmoregain’s desires, “I hold it no man is more capable of undertaking what you desire, for God has given me talents which have served me in war, and I have been careful not to abuse them in peace. Let me then have men and meat, and, if you please, a few of those gifts men so much covet, and I warrant you I make the glory all your own. Say but the word, and it will not be long before I have this king you speak of hung to the first tree, and myself elected in his place.”

“You are exactly the gentleman I want,” spoke the other; “and as to men and meat, I may mention, general, that I have numerous ships at my command, and provisions without stint! And there are at least ten thousand vagabonds, whom, heaven knows, the city would be well rid of; and these, being officered by well starved members of the legal profession, whose name is legion, can be got to do the fighting for the mere love they bear such amusement. Indeed, general, I am no prophet, or the appearance of such an army would soon frighten the king out of his kingdom, which would be a blessing, seeing that it would save so much blood. First disorganize the judiciary, then endeavor to spread dissension among the people, (which is a thing common enough with the ministers we send abroad,) and when these things are done the king can be easily overthrown, which will secure me the advantage I desire as well as a victory over my rivals.”

“Faith, sir, I pledge my military reputation to do all these things; and if I fail it will be no fault of mine, for my arm is strong enough to meet the enemy at his own game. And as your speech betrays you a man of profound wisdom, I will tell you, for it will be of great advantage to our cause, that I am about to engage one Orlando Tickler, a critic of great learning, who speaks several tongues, and has no less than seven newspapers at his bidding. And what is more, he is much given to poetry, and can get up sonnets in praise of our victories. Think you not he can play an important part?”



Page 204

"A person we much need," said Glanmoregain, patting the general on the shoulder; "and if he have seven newspapers at his bidding, why, if he but know how to use them in making victories of defeats, I will wager my life on the success of my enterprise. And if you can get that foreign mission you speak of, so much the better. Let it be to the King of the Kaloramas, and you can then use your privileges to get such a knowledge of the weaknesses of the court as will enable you to overthrow it with the greatest facility."

The preliminaries being arranged, the general promised to proceed strictly according to the advice of Glanmoregain, and to lose no time in proceeding to Washington to secure his appointment. He also promised to keep his own counsel; and to prove their good faith, they sat down to a bottle of old port, which, when they had finished, Glanmoregain took his departure, promising to call on the following day, and left the general to pack up his baggage, preparatory to taking his departure.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

In which general Potter finally secures the services of Mr. Tickler; and, together with Pekleworth Glanmoregain, they visit the opera before setting out for Washington.

Glanmoregain went home thinking within himself that the general was, mentally, not quite up to what he had expected to find him. However, as generals were not always to be judged either by their epistles or conversation, so the rotund figure, he thought, might prove himself a dabster in war as well as politics. Further, he did not so much want a general who would have his own way in every thing, (for then there was danger of his holding what he got, under the rules of war,) but rather one whom he could mould and direct according to his desires. In fine, the man, he thought, might reflect the follies of a fool, and in the quality of wars he intended to prosecute, be exactly the general he wanted. The general, on the other hand, commenced setting himself down as the most fortunate military man of his day. Indeed, all the pedantry of his extravagant nature was excited to a degree that made him already begin to contemplate himself the hero of endless victories. He also cast a stray thought to old Battle, and fancied himself mounted upon him at the head of a victorious army, returning proudly home after having demolished several kingdoms and built up as many republics. He also lost no time in writing a second letter to his wife Polly, in which he set forth, with much flourish, that he had been so elevated in the opinion of the nation, that now he was offered the command of an army; which he had accepted, and was about to invade the kingdom of a foreign prince. And this letter he sealed and dispatched with all possible speed, hoping in his heart that it might reach his wife Polly in advance of the other.

Page 205

When this was done, Mr. Tickler entered, and, after passing the usual compliments, proceeded, without further ceremony, to write a note to the landlord of the New York Hotel, returning thanks for his extreme generosity. But not a word was said about the three dollars. Mr. Tickler declared it would not do to lisp a word concerning it, as such would be in direct violation of the rules of etiquette common at this day. Having despatched the note, the general set about relating what had taken place between himself and Glanmoregain, and expressing himself delighted at the opportunity of so soon displaying his prowess in war. "Faith!" exclaimed Mr. Tickler, "every merchant will soon get him a general of his own. By the love of my mother! now it's just struck me: perhaps I can get a small advance on the strength of my future services? for I am in arrears with my landlady, whose look of melancholy so admonishes me every time I enter the house, that I have for more than a week taken advantage of the back door." The general shrugged his shoulders, declared the will good enough to render the desired relief, but that the means were wanting. To be out-spoken, he hinted to Mr. Tickler that, in the event of joining his service, it must be upon the condition that he depend on the fortunes of war for his reward. As to the hostess, he declared that he had not a doubt of her being a very excellent lady, as hostesses ought to be. Still, he gave it as his opinion, that it were much better political economy to leave the poor woman's house with a small bill unpaid, than eat himself into a large one. He further suggested that when the time came, he pack up and leave as quietly as possible, neither looking to the right nor the left, but getting out of the city by the most direct route; and when a respectful distance was reached, just to drop her a friendly line, saying he could not find it compatible with his conscience to longer eat her bread without paying for it, but as soon as fortune put the means in his way, he would lose no time in rubbing out the score.

"Love of my mother!" again ejaculated Tickler, "but your astetics are well enough. And I like the logic that closes the door on a small debt, rather than bury a friend with a big one. See that, now, master general!"

The preliminaries whereby the adroit critic was to follow the fortunes of his master, were now arranged, and the agreement signed. Tickler was to be faithful and obedient to his master, rendering him such services as the change of events might demand, being content with rations and clothing until the fortunes of war turned up something better.

Page 206

When night was come, Glanmoregain again made his appearance, having previously extended an invitation, to escort the general to the opera. And as Tickler was about to perform so important a part in his project, he could do no less than invite him also. Vain of the importance he imagined himself possessing in the eyes of the public, the general was with some difficulty restrained from mounting his uniform, which he held necessary, lest he be confounded with some ordinary individual without claim to popular favor. Having persuaded him to forego this unnecessary display, the three sallied out together, and soon arrived at what is curiously called the Academy of Music, a building which several friends of the writer of this history, and who are gentlemen of acknowledged taste, declare to be unexcelled for splendor and beauty of architecture, not even excepting the La Scala, St. Carlo, Covent Garden, or even the Tacon. With all deference for the opinions of my accomplished friends, I must confess that the exterior of the building struck me as a huge, square mass of brick much disfigured with awkward looking windows and common place lintels. Indeed, it might easily have been mistaken for a charity hospital; and in the absence of a front, discovering the slightest architectural grandeur, bore no small resemblance to an absurdly constructed barracks.

Entering what in a church would be designated a vestibule, but which here served as a convenient place for loitering gentlemen who speculate in tickets, and the only visible furniture of which had been reformed down to a cheap chandelier, they passed on through a narrow baize door, flanked on one side by an oily ticket taker, and on the other by a fashionably dressed and bearded gentleman, whom the manager, in his praiseworthy efforts to please a capricious public, seemed to have placed there for the ostensible purpose of staring in the faces of ladies, and so circumscribing the width of the passage as to render it exceedingly difficult of ingress. They passed on into the "dress circle," where the seats were peculiarly adapted for making the back ache, and soon found that they had got behind a huge column, (of which there were many similar ones,) where no human eye could get a glimpse of the stage, though the unfortunate visitor paid ten dollars for his seat. As to the interior of the house, it forcibly reminded me of an immense gypsum quarry, with rudely excavated galleries, forming such a jumble and confusion of lines, that it was in vain you looked for an architectural beauty. Indeed, I venture to assert, that such a huge conglomerate of plaster and cheap gilt never before decorated one edifice, and that dedicated to high art. And if the uncouth images, with limbs of giants and heads of ordinary females, which met the eye at every turn, were to be accepted in proof of the high standard of taste at which we had arrived, then surely plaster and gilt ought to form the motto. Figures of

Page 207

ugly females, in plaster, bore up the second tier; groups of nymphs, in plaster, stared at you from the circle borders; grim visaged figures, in plaster, looked tauntingly at you from the proscenium; a troop of impolite figures, in plaster, beset you in flank and rear, and haunted you at every turn, as plaster figures had evidently haunted the imagination of the architect. In fine, every deficiency seemed compensated with an image in plaster, or, what was worse, one of those fashionable society men who sit in dumb show, listening to the melody, without enjoying the sense or knowing a word of what is being sung.

A great admirer of this plaster-perfect edifice was my friend, Miss Kate Suppletongue, who declared to me that though she had been twice to London and Paris, she had seen nothing equal to the Academy for grandeur. Tom Slenderstring, of the Brevoort House, too, said neither the St. Carlos nor the Covent Garden could compare with it for beauty of design. And Tom was a traveled man, whose verdict the whole avenue accepted in matters of taste. My disappointment then was only equaled by the height to which my expectations had been raised by these excellent authorities. But what grieved me most, for I am a man of sympathy, was the batteries which had evidently been committed on these females in plaster forming an advance guard to the d.c.s circle, and obstructing the view while affecting to support the upper boxes. I am told that the directors and stockholders are men of large humanity, whose only vanity lies in fancying themselves liberal patrons of art, which is pardonable in gentlemen much given to commerce. I beseech them, then, as they are christian gentlemen, to look to the distressed condition of these females, some of whom have lost their noses, others their fingers and toes, while still others have had curious antics performed with their bosoms, which would seem to afford no little diversion to certain females of easy virtue, who, together with the empty seats of the stockholders, are firm fixtures of the dress circle. My pity was indeed excited at beholding the large aperture made by some strange accident in the abdomen of one of these plaster females, and which aperture a thoughtless young gentleman made a convenient place for depositing his hat and cane, much to the amusement of those in the vicinity.

As the opera (which is familiarly known as that of Lucrezia Borgia) proceeded, the general, who was not accustomed to this style of singing, began to think it a mere tilt of voices between the singers. "Pray, what does it all mean, sir?" said he, turning to Mr. Tickler with much anxiety, "for I cannot understand a word of it; and it seems to me there are enough more in the same predicament, for those who have books I take it cannot find the places." Mr. Tickler, who affected to have the whole opera at his fingers' ends, began an explanation of the history and plot of the opera, which, however, only served to leave the matter more confused in the general's mind; and he declared he saw no good reason why they should scream their troubles in a language not one word of which nineteen-twentieths of the audience could understand.

Page 208

“Faith of my father, sir,” he continued, “but if the fleshy man would only stop his screaming, and set to sing ‘Auld Lang Syne,’ or something of that sort, it would be much more to my liking. To your fashionable folks with your fashionable singing, for all me: and let them who understand it pay for it; to be honest with you, sir, (and I see you are much given to this sort of singing,) I can make no more of it than that the fleshy man you call the tenor, and who you say is no scaly fellow, but a man with whom several damsels have become enamored, is outdoing the big man you call the basso, in telling his troubles to the audience, who, I take it, care not a whit about them, seeing that most of them are keeping up a loud conversation on matters concerning their neighbors, which is a proof of their resolution not to let the bawling fellows upon the stage have it all their own way. As to the moral of the representation, I have no doubt it is good, as you say; but I hold, that vice is better shut up in the closet than served out for the amusement of the young. But lest you say I am not a man of feeling, I can tell you I pity the tall woman you call the prima donna; and if she would accept a word of advice from me, I would tell her to so square her example for the future, that she may be prepared for Heaven when Death knocks at the door, since she is a lady of so much beauty that it would be a pity to see her leave this world without redemption. And as I see the big, fat chorus women are laughing in their skins at our ignorance of what they say, I would have them take heed lest they fall into the snare you describe as being set for the square shouldered damsels you call the atrato.” “Contralto!” interrupted Mr. Tickler. “Well, have it contralto, then; the difference is only in a word or two, which matters nothing now-a-days. And as to the opera, I hold it best that we get home and attend to matters concerning our journey, for I see the two foreign gentlemen on the stage are for having a fight between themselves; and as it would not become me, as a military man, to stand by and see any unfair play, or indeed, to have anything to do with it, let us prove the strength of our understanding by getting quietly away.” During this colloquy between the general and Mr. Tickler, Glanmoregain had been a quiet listener; but he was not a little amused at the singular innocence of the man he was about to entrust with the important office of overthrowing a kingdom. And although he would have remained to the end of the opera, which, so far as the principals were concerned, was really being performed in a very creditable manner, he accompanied the general to his quarters at the St. Nicholas, where they, having made such arrangements for the journey as will be recorded in the following chapter, parted for the night.

CHAPTER XL.

General Roger Potter and his secretary arrive in Washington, to the no small alarm of certain adepts and office seekers.

Page 209

The general arose on the following morning before the sparrows were up; and as he had ordered the landlord to have his bill forthcoming, he found it duly laid on his table, with a balance so ponderous that he commenced comparing it with the contents of his purse, without at first being able to comprehend the process that had found him thus involved. At length he discovered that although the city fathers had discharged a certain amount of the bill, out of respect of his being the guest of the city, they had ordered refreshments, (such as wines and suppers,) at his expense, and to such an extent as to make it quite clear that he would have saved at least one hundred dollars had he never seen these worthy dignitaries. In fine, the cunning fellows took very good care never to honor a guest without making him pay dear enough for it. But he had enough to square the bill, and something left; and he would have the landlord know that he was none of your shabby politicians who lives on hopes and pays their debts with promises. He therefore paid his bill with an air of wealth that completely won the landlord's confidence, (for he had previously entertained no few fears of his bill.) Beside, circumstances made it necessary for him to leave old Battle until his return, for which he had stipulated with Glanmoregain, which was to him a grievous affliction. In truth, General Potter, disordered as his wits were, regarded old Battle as a perfect safeguard in every emergency.

And now as the blushing dawn threw her golden drapery over the eastern sky, as if to cheer the general on his journey, Mr. Tickler, panting for breath, and evidently alarmed at something he could not clearly define, made his appearance, bearing a single valise.

"Faith, sir," he stammered, "I'm right glad to see you ready, for it seemed to me that no less than twenty sheriffs and all my creditors were at my heels."

"Pray, sir, be not so nervous," replied the general, "for your life's your own."

"That may be all true," rejoined the critic; "but let us leave the argument until we have got safe out of the city, for my conscience tells me that he who slips his creditors had better be sure of his heels."

The two now slipped as slyly as possible to the carriage, and without stopping to take leave of any one but the landlord, took their departure for the Camden and Amboy station, Tickler looking back, and thanking his stars that he had got clear of his creditors. And as they were pursuing their journey to Philadelphia, Tickler turned to the general, saying:

"Though I may have violated the laws of friendship in this little matter between me and my landlady, I at least breathe freer, and know that I am an honest man. But! heaven save me, sir, if we should get shivered to splinters on this road, (which I am told is one celebrated for the dexterity with which it performs such acts,) what would be said of me by my enemies, for I have enough, and many of them are as good critics as can be found!"

Page 210

“Have a care for your friends, Mr. Tickler-have a care for your friends; and let not fear of your enemies carry away your judgment. Example after me; meet your enemies with sword and pistol, and settle the matter as becomes gentlemen. Honestly, friend Tickler, I hold it better a man shut his ears to the sayings of his enemies, for if they spit him to-day, the praises of his friends will offset it to-morrow.”

They now continued their journey, and without serious accident or hinderance of any kind, arrived in Washington before sunset, and proceeded directly to “Willard’s Hotel,” that being not only the most fashionable, but the house at which distinguished politicians and military men of quality registered their names, though the host was neither celebrated for his courtesy, nor the politeness of his servants, nor the excellence of his table.

“I am General Roger Sherman Potter, commonly called Major Roger Potter, of whose fame, I take it, you have heard enough said in the newspapers,” spoke the general, addressing a tall, dark complexioned, and lean visaged man, who was no less a person than the landlord. After casting a scrutinizing glance at the amount of baggage his guests had, as was customary with him, (sharpers had more than once assumed the title of general,) for it was not considered polite to present a bill until the end of the week, the landlord replied by saying in a tone of indifference:

“As to that, sir, perhaps I have, and perhaps I have not; it is not quite clear to my mind at this moment. It is a difficult matter for men of our profession to distinguish between generals.” The landlord smiled, and continued his glances up and down the figure before him, as if contemplating his stupendous belly, as contrasted with the shape of his turnip head.

“Heavens! Mr. Landlord, just jog your memory, and see if you don’t find in it a recollection of the ceremonies that have attended me on my journey here,” ejaculated the general, not a little crest-fallen that the host of so popular an inn had no knowledge of one who had made himself so famous in politics.

In fine, the landlord, sharp sighted as he was, puzzled his wits not a little to find out what manner of men his guests were, for he had never in his life met so crude a general, with a secretary so fashionable. The general, however, happened to finger his purse, which contained several gold coin, the color of which proved an excellent panacea with the landlord, whose courtesy now knew no bounds. In truth, he ordered them the best double bedded room in his second story; and from being somewhat taciturn, was now ready to vouchsafe a smile and ready reply to all the general’s questions, which were not a few. He then invited them to write their names in his register, which service the general said he would leave to his secretary, Mr. Tickler, who performed it with great skill, nor forgot to add the title, which he fancied would secure them superior attentions.

Page 211

And now, while these preliminaries were performing, numerous fashionably dressed, but seemingly idle men, gathered about the general, viewing him with a feeling divided between curiosity and suspicion. Several military men, too, who prided themselves not a little on their West Point reputation, cast sneers at him, saying he could not be much of a general since he had not even heard the drum beat at the Point. Others said it were impossible so punch bellied a man could endure the fatigues of war, especially when mounted; while still others declared he would pass readily for a fool, if, indeed, he was not one of those sham generals of whom New England had an infinite number. The whole mob of military men, in fact, affected to regard him with contempt, and would have prayed Heaven to be rid of all such intruders, notwithstanding they traveled with secretaries.

But there was in Washington another, and, perhaps, not less influential class of men, who took a very different view of the general, and, before he had been three days in the city, sought by various impertinent questions to ascertain the object of his visit, which they professed to have the power to advance. And these men were lobby agents, correspondents of newspapers, and adepts at all sorts of schemes for plundering the treasury, which they represented as a very soft-sided concern, and so easy of access that it only required a man of undaunted courage to make a breach in it. Correspondents of newspapers swore by their honor, which was the cheapest thing they possessed, that if he had a project before Congress, they could “get it through for him just as easy as the turning of a mill wheel.” Indeed if their declarations were worthy of reliance, they could make any man famous for a trifle; and as for members of Congress, they had but to praise them in their epistles to secure their votes in getting a scheme through. I have never been set down for a malicious writer; but as these gentlemen correspondents would have you believe, they had the nation and Congress in their breeches pockets, I may say, without fear of contradiction, that the devil never projected a scheme they were not ready to aid, and equally ready to crook their palms for the trifle that made it a virtue with them. In fine, I am not so sure that they would not have enjoined the whole calendar of saints to come forth and bear testimony to their honesty, though they were abetting a dozen dishonest schemes.

The cunning fellows also produced papers containing dispatches setting forth that General Roger Potter and his secretary had arrived, and taken rooms at Willard’s. One more daring than the rest, said right in the teeth of truth, that it was reported in diplomatic circles that General Potter would receive an important mission as his reward for the great services he had rendered the democratic party. Finally, after informing the nation, (which they fancied was as deeply interested as themselves,) that General Roger

Page 212

Potter's visit to Washington was connected with as many as forty different things, they came to the very convenient conclusion that he was really come to ask of Congress compensation for extraordinary services rendered the government by his dead ancestor, (living ones he had none,) during the war of 1812, such being very common at this day. And as nothing could be more fatal to a claim before Congress than the fact that it was founded in honesty, the lobby screw would swear by his ability to get all fictitious ones through. This was the result of that indifference among Congressmen which makes the distinction between justice and fraud something too insignificant to waste time over.

The general declared with all his power of persuasion that he had no claim before Congress; and Tickler was ready to swear to the truth of what he said. But divers lobby men and correspondents refused to be convinced; and after putting an infinite number of questions to him, swore they would take it up, regardless of its character, and "rush it through" Congress for twenty five per cent.

It ought to be mentioned here that the "correspondent" esteems himself a much more respectable gentleman than the "lobby agent," whom he affects to hold in virtuous contempt. More than once was the general warned by these facile gentlemen of the press, not to have anything to do with the vagabonds of the lobby, who, though they gave it out that they had Congress between their thumbs, and could double it up, and mould it exactly to their liking, were regarded by every member honest enough not to crook his palm more than once during the session, as so many buzzards resolved on having carrion.

The general had, however, been advised by Glanmoregain to slip a trifle into the palms of certain correspondents, to the end that their praise could do no harm, and might do much good.

Now there was living in Washington about this time, one Ben Stretcher, a man of wonderful genius, and a correspondent of no less than five very enterprising newspapers, for all of which he manufactured wars and diplomatic irruptions with a facility that would have put Lord Stratford de Radcliffe to the blush. Stretcher knew everybody in Washington, and everybody in Washington knew Stretcher. If an enterprising gentleman came to Washington with the very harmless and common inclination of plucking the government, Stretcher was sure to make his acquaintance, and equally sure to find out what feathers he had, and how best they could be plucked. Wearing his beard after the manner of an apostle, and having a countenance into which he could infuse an air of great wisdom, Ben was sure to insinuate himself into the good graces of every new comer, to whom he would confide all the secrets of the government, which he carried about on his head, as a negro does a basket of apples. His skill at manufacturing state secrets was, however, equaled only by his skill for finding out state secrets.

Page 213

The President never acted on important state affairs without first consulting him. As to cabinet ministers, he was not only the intimate friend and adviser of the whole batch, but swore he had them all so completely at his bidding, (being called on frequently to rectify their blunders,) that no foreign appointment could be made without his consent. Indeed, Ben Stretcher never failed to assert, while drinking his punch, that nothing was more easy than to double up Congress, Administration, Cabinet, and the whole mob of office givers, put them in one's pocket, and walk quietly off. Ben's greatest wisdom was, however, displayed to great advantage in the facility with which he gave to the country matters of grave importance that were to be transacted at various cabinet meetings in prospective. In truth, he often made the government cut a sorry figure in the eyes of those not familiar with the art of making state secrets; for being "especial" correspondent of the numerous enterprising newspapers I have referred to, he will to-day frighten the country with an "exclusive" dispatch to the Daily Discoverer, revealing the momentous fact (?) that a war with England was inevitable; while with equal grandeur of equanimity, he will to-morrow assert that there is not the slightest cause to fear "a disturbance of the friendly intercourse now existing between this country and Great Britain." And these wonderful prophecies, together with extraordinary state secrets, he would vary every day, according to the demands of the public and his own taste. Lucky, indeed, were the journals having Ben Stretcher or a getter up of "startling" news, and many were they who sought to engage his services. It was, nevertheless, curious to see how Ben, smiling within himself, would, in a third dispatch, assert that all his prophecies had been verified, though, heaven knows, he was generally as far off the truth as the poles are from the equator.

In order not to lose time in paying his respects to so distinguished a general, and a gentleman who, no doubt, had important business with Congress, where his services might find employment, Ben took the earliest opportunity to make a formal call one day; but finding only Mr. Tickler at home, he relieved his disappointment in a colloquy, which will be recorded in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XLI.

In which is recorded A curious conversation that took place between stretcher, tickler, and the general, and what they thought of the state of the nation.

Mr. Stretcher entered the general's room with his head canted toward his left shoulder, his countenance wearing an air of great wisdom, his hat in his left hand, and the fingers of his right to his beard. "I take the liberty of introducing myself, sir," he spoke, and bowed with becoming courtesy. "Ben Stretcher, that is my name, which, perhaps, is familiar enough to you, being so well known in Washington."

Page 214

"Lord bless me! why, the name is familiar enough, God knows; and it'll not be sayin' much to tell you that my own name is Orlando Tickler, a critic who has fame enough in New York, and of whom I take it you have heard mention."

"Permit me to say, sir, that I am truly happy to meet one so distinguished. As for the name, a household word was never more familiar to me." They now shook each other warmly by the hand, and after exchanging numerous compliments, took seats, and commenced to converse freely upon various subjects connected with the affairs of the Union. And when they were agreed exactly as to its disorders, and had fifty different remedies they were ready to apply whenever the nation demanded their services, Mr. Stretcher said to Mr. Tickler, "And now, sir, as I am a man fond of rendering service to persons in need, I am come (according to the rules of courtesy) to pay my respects to the general, of whom it is reported that he is come to Washington in search of an important mission. It gives me infinite pleasure, however, to meet his secretary. Now I would suggest to the general that I may be of great service to him, for I am a correspondent of not less than five newspapers, and can make the Administration do my bidding."

"Faith," ejaculated Mr. Tickler, in reply, "I am glad enough to hear what you say, for my master has need enough of your services to get the mission; and I may tell you in confidence that I have much cause of despairing, for although I know but little of my master, except what I get through the newspapers, I already begin to see that he is simpleton enough for anything, and no little of a knave."

"You astonish me!" interrupted Mr. Stretcher, thoughtfully.

"Faith of my father," resumed Tickler, folding his arms, "I see nothing to be astonished at, for I take it any simpleton may set up for a statesman, and if he have but a fair mixture of the knave to throw in, he may carry the gifts of the government in his breeches pockets; also, if the devil do not carry him off in one of his pranks, he will no doubt distinguish himself as a foreign minister." Here Mr. Tickler paused for a moment, and then bid the gentleman of the five newspapers, and all the administration, to remember that these remarks were made in confidence.

"I confess, Mr. Tickler," replied Mr. Stretcher, "I admire your plain manner of speech. But you surprise and astonish me with what you say of the soundness of the general's understanding. In truth, sir, though I know something of the arts practiced by editors in making famous politicians, I had read a speech or two made by the general and upon the wisdom therein contained set him down for a profound scholar, and no small statesman. However, this I will say, and pledge my reputation on the truth of it, that if he be no scholar, but simply an unmitigated mixture of Jew and simpleton, it will rather improve than damage his prospects for the best foreign mission in the gift of the government. Do not mistake me, sir; for I would not say a damaging word of our excellent President, whose too great goodness of heart may account for his lack of

discretion; but he has a passion for bestowing gifts on Jews and simpletons, of which history affords no example!"

Page 215

"Faith of my father! if that be the case, then my master will get as fat a slice as any of them," rejoined Tickler, rising from his seat with regained spirits, and grasping the other warmly by the hand. "And now, seeing that we fellow kindred professions, we will be free in our advances, and settle this matter over a punch." Mr. Tickler rang the bell, and when the servant appeared, ordered two stout punches. Having exchanged compliments, and commenced sipping at their straws, Mr. Tickler touched the man of the newspapers confidentially on the arm, and whispered in his ear, that not having a dollar to his pocket, he began to think General Roger Potter, as he was called, had brought him to a whistling market, on a fool's errand. "Honestly, friend," he continued, "I was when you entered thinking how best to escape the landlord, for I see he is a sharp fellow; and this paying two dollars and three quarters a day is a thing not so easily done with an empty pocket."

"A very common thing, a very common thing, Mr. Tickler; and though the wits of the landlord are sharp enough, it is no rare thing for him to get shorn by those who seek meat-offerings of the government."

Here Tickler's mind seemed to run back to a subject upon which it was wont to dwell—the style of his dress. And, throwing himself back in his chair, he raised his right foot upon his left knee, and inquired of Mr. Stretcher how he liked the style of his boots, which were of the brightest leather, and so tight that when he walked, it was with the caution of one stepping upon eggs, and in fear of having to pay for the broken ones. Stretcher expressed himself delighted. In truth, he was not long in discerning the critic's little weaknesses; and to the end of flattering them, told him that he was in every particular of dress, the most stylish gentleman it had been his good fortune to meet for many a day. And this so pleased Mr. Tickler, that he would have ordered a second punch, but that the adept declared it was a custom with him never to drink more than one, not even with his oldest friends.

And though Stretcher drank his punch freely enough, he was somewhat disappointed at the developments made by the critic concerning his master. As for the secretary, he set him down in his heart as not only a curious specimen of pedantry, but the most fashionable poor gentleman he had ever seen in search of office; and heaven knows he had seen enough of them.

"It is said of the general," spoke Stretcher, laconically, as he set down his glass and commenced to stroke his beard, "that he has means enough at his command!"

"Upon my faith I know but little of his means, except that I have seen him with a purse full of gold, which is saying something for his means. And he pays readily enough for all he gets, which is more."

Page 216

Mr. Tickler said this with such an air of self-confidence, that Stretcher immediately began to exhibit signs of anxiety, and was proceeding to make further inquiries, when the door opened and General Roger Potter stalked in, quite out of breath from the excess of heat. Mr. Tickler having drained his punch to the bottom, proceeded without further ceremony to introduce Mr. Stretcher, undertaking at the same time to give the general an account of his business, as also the wonderful influence he had over the various heads of departments. The general expressed great delight at meeting so influential a gentleman; and seeing that he had the government between his thumbs, at once intimated a desire to engage his services. Not to be outdone in courtesy, Mr. Stretcher expressed great delight at meeting so distinguished a General. "It would neither become me, nor the profession to which I belong to speak of myself; for though I have gained fame enough in politics, my military reputation stands so high with the nation that no man can take it down," spoke the general.

"For that matter you speak true enough, Sir," replied Mr. Stretcher, smiling and bowing blandly; "and, as I was just saying to your secretary, you have served the party like a patriot, and deserve well of the government. If it is an office you seek, why, you have only to name it, and I warrant it shall be safe in your pocket in forty-eight hours."

"Since you are capable of such extraordinary achievements, upon my soul, sir, you are just the man for my business."

"I can tell you, general, no man can say of Ben Stretcher that he ever betrayed his trust; no man can say of Ben Stretcher that he cannot twist the government round his thumbs; and no man can say of Ben Stretcher that he artfully connived at doing wrong; for he knows his thread of life has not long to run. Truly, sir, though many a man has tried hard enough to bring me down to his own level, not one has yet been found to raise his finger against my honor; and if you engage my services, I warrant to give you proof enough of my qualifications."

The general listened attentively to the adept's remarks, and after a short pause, spoke and said, "And now, sir, seeing that you have sufficient endowments for my business, before proceeding further in this matter we will have a punch; for that will soften the heart, and at the same time give such light to the mind, as will enable us to talk the matter over pleasantly."

After turning to Mr. Tickler and apologizing for having declined a second punch with him, he then made his compliments to the general, saying that as the occasion was a rare one he would make an exception to what was otherwise a firmly established principle with him.

"Faith," interposed Mr. Tickler, on hearing the punch suggested, "you both talk like men of the world and scholars; for a punch is a mighty potent in matters of this kind."

The punches were up in a trice; and while Mr. Stretcher and the general debated their affairs over them, Mr. Tickler quietly sipped his in the corner.

Page 217

"To be honest with you," spoke the general, addressing Mr. Stretcher, "I am come here in the hope of getting a reward for my services, which is no uncommon thing; and as I take it there are many worse men than me serving the country, I flatter myself I stand a fair chance, seeing that my expectations are neither extravagant nor unwise. I am also of opinion that a man should think more of his country and less of his pocket; and to that end it will content me to be sent a commissioner to the King of the Kaloramas, though it would be natural enough not to refuse the mission to the Tuilleries. As for the secretaries, I have paid my respects to the whole batch; and though they are willing enough to say good things of me, and to extol my political achievements, they say pleasantly enough that the commonwealth could not do without me, and, therefore, that I must stay quietly at home. In short, they tell me that only such talent as is worthless at home can be spared to go abroad. The president I found a most excellent gentleman, ready to gratify my wishes, and to give me at least six of the seven missions in his gift. In truth, I found him a person ready to please in various ways, and take it that he has a liking for adorers, such as have little scruple in lavishing praise upon his well regulated government, the solidity of which, it is well enough to say, he has raised a pitch higher than any of his predecessors."

"You have it, exactly!" interrupted Mr. Stretcher. "He is possessed of wonderful faith; and if you want a favor of him you have only to ply him with such toys and trinkets as you have named to secure it. If, however, (and I take what you say for truth,) you are patient enough to be content with a commissionship to the King of the Kaloramas, there will be no more trouble about the matter than the making of a bird cage."

"Ah, sir! but how am I to reward you for your services? for a man is not expected to be a philanthropist in these matters, and my wife Polly Potter always said it was cheaper that a man pays for what he gets," returned the general. The adept charged the general to give himself no concern about that little matter, but merely to set it down for an after consideration. And to this they both agreed, and emptied their punches in the full belief that they were all-bountiful in the power of constructing commonwealths and managing governments. "Faith, it is just come to my mind that the president good-naturedly advised me to forthwith transmit my application in writing to the State Department," spoke the general, as if just waking to a sense of his obligations. To this Stretcher said nothing was more essential, and as much depended on the style and wording of the application (at which he had experienced enough), he enjoined the general to delay this matter until the following morning, when he would arrange it to his liking. Mr. Stretcher then took his leave, consoling himself that he had got a fleece of great value. And now as the limits of my chapter are exhausted, I must beg the reader to turn to the next for what took place on the following morning.



Page 218

CHAPTER XLII.

Which Records the singular character of the application made by general Roger Potter for an office, and how he is sent minister to the king of the Kaloramas, that being the easiest method of getting rid of him.

Stretch, after having looked in at the State Department, where he extolled the qualifications of General Roger Potter in language that would have astonished Cicero and put Lycurgus to the blush, busied himself the greater portion of the night in preparing the general's application for the mission to the King of the Kaloramas, a nation of savages few had heard of, and yet fewer visited. In short, I may mention here that the only benefit the government expected to derive from going to the great expense of sending a minister to Kalorama was that the savage, whom divers renegades had set up for a King, might have a guano island or two, which by some well-directed trick could be fritted away from him; while, having impressed him with the greatness of our prowess, he would hold it good policy to keep his peace. With a ponderous document, then, covering some forty pages of foolscap, and minutely setting forth all the great political results achieved by the general, and upon which he based his claims to the high consideration of the administration, Mr. Stretch, not a little vain of his skill in drafting such instruments, entered the general's room early on the following morning, and found him in consultation with his Secretary, who was writing a letter to the Secretary of State, of which the following is an exact copy:- "Willard's Hotel, July 7th, 185-. *To his excellency the secretary of state:*

"Being informed by my friend, the President of these United States, who has given me no few assurances of his inclination to serve me, that it was to you all those in search of rewards for their endeavors must address themselves, I take it you will not set me down for a maker of wheel-barrows when you read this, my application for the mission to the King of Kalorama, which God knows is but a trifle, though I am willing to accept it out of respect for the man who is ready to die honest, and has no itching for what money he may get of his country. As to my qualifications, I take it you know enough of them already. But this I will say, that I am not a man to betray a trust, nor am I tricky; which is more than all of your ministers can say of themselves! In short, if your excellency would know all about that, I can refer you to Barnstable, where I am set down for a peaceable neighbor and as good a Christian as any of them. But I have heard it said that

Page 219

diplomacy was only a tissue of scheming to get the advantage over a weak neighbor; therefore it is as well to be silent on my Christianity, seeing that such is not adapted to the business required of a good minister. And though I am ready to pledge my military reputation (which I got in Mexico) neither to get into controversies with editors, nor to fight duels for what may be said of my wife Polly's muslin; nor indeed to cut up such queer pranks with all who come in my way that I shall be wondered at; nor to leave my debts unpaid, which is common enough with our young diplomatists, I will give battle to all sorts of wickedness which is the mother of despotism. This last I say because I have a Damascus blade that achieved wonders in Mexico, and to this day is as good as new. Grant but my request, and I will see well to this savage. And if he behave like a gentleman there shall be peace between us; but if he be obstinate, and cut up capers, and put himself upon his dignity, then I engage to get as many of his Islands as you shall command, which, judging from the gravity of your nature, I am sure you will value as so many pearls. But I pray your excellency to say to my friend the President that I have a rare talent for conducting governments, and am in favor of taking Cuba by the beard without all this coaxing round the bush, which reminds me of the means used to decoy a tender-hearted virgin. In short, as to that, I will turn my back to no man for my faith in what destiny owes us, and pray that the whole continent may soon be ours.

"Having said thus much, please write me down a man who will fulfill his promises, though sent to the remotest end of the earth. And here let me mention that it is reported of the administration that it has a passion for making ministers of unconverted Jews, and such other shabby politicians as the country can well spare. Now, though it may damage my prospects, I will tell you honestly that General Roger Potter never during his whole life trafficked in cheap gallantry and old uniforms. Truly, your excellency, I am neither Jew nor shabby gentleman, but as honest a Christian as can be found; and for that matter take it that my claim to the apples ought at least to be equal.

"As a recommendation of great value, I have been advised to state that I have no language at my tongue's end but my own; and, in truth, that needs much polishing. And most likely this savage king will be found in the same predicament, which is well for him; for if he had a whole Babylon of tongues in his head, like the three learned executioners of Putnam's Magazine, the devil would get his kingdom and leave him a beggar. Now as this savage can only speak his own tongue, you may fancy the solitude that must yawn between us. We may say what we please of one another without rendering our actions dangerous. Faith, as my Secretary says, it seems to me we may entertain a mutually magnificent opinion of each other without danger of disturbing the dragons. And if we commit blunders it will be convenient to charge them all to the deficiency of our tongues.

Page 220

"And now, your excellency, if these qualifications be not enough, pray remember that I have as many more in store. Be not timorous in the matter, but ponder well over my claims to your consideration; and if it please you to grant my prayer, I will accept the boon with as many thanks as you may demand. "Your Excellency's Humble Servant, "*General Roger Sherman Potter.*"

"Heavens, sir!" exclaimed the accommodating Mr. Stretcher, as the general read to him what he had prepared, "but you have left the perfecting of this business to me. Let me beseech you, then, not to dispatch such a letter, for I am not the man to question your abilities; but having got the matter in train, you must not knock the fruit down before it is ripe. Here your honor will find a document in every way suited to the purpose." Mr. Stretcher here produced a ponderous paper, wherein every speech made by the general was carefully referred to, and also no end of political achievements set down to his credit; such, in fine, as would have defied the skill of a dozen politicians of such inferior calibre as Clay and Webster. The general seemed a little chary of this big document, and took it in his fingers somewhat reluctantly. And as he did so, Mr. Tickler, who until then had remained silent, spoke up and said, "By my faith, gentlemen, had the matter been left to me, they should have had proof of my knowledge of Latin in the sentences, for I have heard it said that Secretaries of State are fond of it. But I will smoke my cigar and leave the rest to you."

"As for your Latin, friend Tickler," replied the general, affecting to read the ponderous document Stretcher was waiting in great anxiety for a verdict upon, "we will say no more about that, for it occurs to me you made it do good service at the New York Hotel." This so put the matter at rest with Mr. Tickler that he held his peace and smoked his cigar. "Upon my word, sir," resumed the general, addressing himself to Mr. Stretcher, "it will be a perilous adventure to send so ponderous a document to the State Department when business is pressing and time precious. Being a timid man, the secretary will lay it over for to-morrow, and to-morrow he will think no more of it. But suppose we compromise this matter, Mr. Stretcher. Let both documents be sent, and if one have virtue, surely two cannot fail to effect our object."

"Surely, general, you are blind to your own interests, and respect not my reputation," replied Mr. Stretcher, going right into a passion, and so far forgetting what belonged to good manners as to say he verily believed the general a trifling simpleton, who was resolved on making an ass of himself in the eyes of the administration, as well as doing him (Stretcher) out of the pay for his services. And this so excited the ire of the general, who was scrupulous of his honor, as well as vain of his good understanding, that he forthwith proceeded to take down his sword,

Page 221

swearing to have summary vengeance of the man who dared to cast such reflections upon his dignity. Seeing this Mr. Stretcher took to his heels, the general saying it was well he did or he had cleft him in two pieces. And while the excited general stood brandishing his sword in the door, Mr. Stretcher shouted back from a corner of the passage, that unless his demand for services, which were two hundred dollars, be settled at high noon, he would see what virtue there was in the law.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Which Records how the general got his commission, and returned to new York, with several other things common to politicians.

Several days had elapsed, the general's letter was before the cabinet, and many were the speculations as to what sort of a mission a man with such strange intellect was capable of filling. It must be confessed that his letter afforded the cabinet no little diversion; indeed, many were the members who marvelled at the queer mixture of sense and nonsense it contained. And the more they amused themselves in pondering over it, the more did they seem to find veins of good sense concealed in it. If, then, one agreed he was fool enough to be harmless in his associations with the people to whom he might be accredited, certainly if sent to some obscure and remote part of the earth, he had sense enough for the small service that would be required of him as a diplomatist. And as a dumb man could perform some excellent parts when left to himself, and was sure not to get into mischief from the too free use of his tongue, so also would there be peace between nations, the representatives of which would not understand each other. Another agreed that it were strange indeed that a man who had been so feted by the authorities of New York, and was represented by the newspapers as having rendered such important services to his party should apply for a mission so obscure. But on further consideration this was set down to his credit; for it was held that though he might be wild and extravagant in some things, he had at least the virtue of being modest in his demands, which was rare in office-seekers at this day. Further, there could not be a doubt but that he was one of those persevering gentlemen who would give the department much annoyance with his importunities, and the shortest method of getting rid of him would be to give him the mission. It was, therefore, jocularly agreed to grant his prayer; and the Secretary was forthwith charged to prepare his instructions and provide him with the necessary credentials.

Page 222

A few days passed, and divers correspondents of newspapers famous for getting early news flashed over the wires, to the no small surprise of the nation, the important intelligence that General Roger Sherman Potter was appointed “charge de affairs” to the King of the Kaloramas. And this bit of very important news set many gentlemen well-read in geography to puzzling their wits to find out the exact location of this wonderful kingdom. Nor could they divine what benefit it was to be the good fortune of our government to derive from such a strange mission, though diplomacy had so many intricate labyrinths that it were impossible for the ordinary mind to keep trace of all its objects. If, thought many, Kalorama were a wild of uncultivated deserts, upon which the burning rays of a tropical sun beat without clemency, he who would face its terrors must have the courage of a dragon. But none of these trifles disturbed the equanimity of the general, who regarded this appointment in the light of another feather in his fame. He also had the good sense not to go into raptures over his appointment; but to follow out the instructions given him by Glanmoregain, who took a more comprehensive, if not a strictly diplomatic, view of the matter and its future results.

The government did, also, in the kindest manner, grant the general's prayer that Mr. Tickler (of whose gallantry and great learning he spoke in praises that would have secured a dozen appointments,) be appointed his secretary. Nothing then remained but the approval of the Senate; and as he reposed quite as much in his extraordinary value to the nation as that wonderful Wall Street general who now and then sends forth a whole gasometer of diplomacy from his little sanctum, so also did he, having got his appointment safe between his thumbs, snap his fingers at the Senate. In truth, he set an extravagant value upon his worth to the nation, and the honor that would be conferred upon it in having so great a general to represent it abroad! His most absorbing thought, then, was how he could make the most speed in getting to the place of his appointment, where he already began to fancy himself committing no end of diplomatic exploits, as a pink and flower of a general ought to do.

And now, feeling the tremendous demands of the nation upon his shoulders, and fancying every eye turned upon him, he drew his chair beside Tickler one day, and spoke as follows: “Friend, you shall know more of me when you have been longer in my service. I have already made you a great man; for as you know by this time, the office of Secretary to my legation is great enough in all conscience. Some men have a stomach for office like a cormorant, which is a serious scourge to the nation. Pray, sir, if you have a turn that way, get rid of it before another moon.”

“By my honor, general, I've no such craving; for I was content enough before I saw you to live a poor critic, and never thought of being a Secretary. But tell me, what sort of a king is this we are sent to; for with all my reading I have never heard of him before?”

Page 223

"By Heavens, sir! I know as little of him as yourself; but I take it he is a savage who it will require some fighting before he yields to all the demands I shall make of him."

"Now as to this fighting, your honor may excuse me; for though I have knocked a man or two down with my stick, and will turn my back to no man in valor at pen-fighting, I have no liking for these knives and pistols, for at best there is only an inch or two between them and a man's life."

"You must cultivate your courage, friend Tickler; you must cultivate your courage!" interposed the general, as Mr. Tickler quietly drew a fresh cigar from his pocket. "The day is come when, if a man would live in a mansion, he must have an undaunted heart, and courage enough to commend himself to whatever may turn to his advantage. You shall have chances enough to fill your pockets with gold. And now that we have these government matters to attend to, you shall soon see that General Roger Potter can manage a nation as well as any of them, if the clergy but let him alone."

"As to the gold, general, I pray the day may soon come; for I like to feel something in my pocket, which is lean enough now," rejoined the critic, casting an anxious look at his chief.

"Trust to fortune, and I warrant you a castle and so much gold that every malicious scribbler you have had a tilt with shall speak ill of you."

Tickler was inclined to look upon the castle as one of those he had so many times built of air, and declared that in addition to not having enough to buy a cigar, he had several times caught the landlord's eye, and knew that his bill was uppermost in his thoughts.

"Remember, friend," resumed the general, "the law will not let him hang you; and as he has been paid for one week, I take it there will be no moral harm if you shell him out of the rest, as you did the widow. Nor does it discover great valor in a man that he arm himself with his fears instead of his sword. It is necessary that you be firm and fearless, never for a moment deserting your chief, and always standing ready to do his bidding, if it be to make his enemies dance."

"Love of my mother, sir!" ejaculated Tickler, "you would not have me shell this landlord; for then it would get into the newspapers, and I'd be set down for a great rogue."

"Sharp fellow as he is, I take you, friend Tickler, for a sharper. And as you had skill enough to shell a widow, pray let your inclination take a natural turn, and if you cannot shell this fellow out of so small a trifle, then I am much mistaken in your qualities for a diplomatist; for I can tell you that it is come a fashion at this day for all our first-class secretaries to get well in debt, and then leave their creditors to whistle. Now, as my purse is getting low, and it will not do to let the nation suffer, do you pack up a couple of shirts, and heeding nobody, pass down the avenue, affecting the unconcern of the new

member from Georgia; and when you have reached the cars (if any man say aught, tell him you are seeing a friend off) go quietly away in them, thanking Heaven for the bountiful examples that have been set you by high officials. Here! here are ten dollars; get speedily away, and I will join you in Baltimore. Fail not to meet me, for the nation needs all our efforts, and this is no time to trifle."

Page 224

Tickler revolved this matter over and over in his mind; then he remembered how many ladies there were esteeming him for a gallant Irish gentleman. If this affair got into the newspapers, he thought, it might seriously damage him with the sex, of whose good opinion none could be more scrupulous. Suddenly he remembered that he was now Secretary of Legation, and with the examples set by several of his illustrious predecessors, he was not long in concluding there could be no harm in taking to his heels, and letting the landlord's concern about his bill offset for the shabby table he set. Also, the general had promised to make him as good a soldier as he had been a critic! And the ten dollars would, if he chanced not to meet some damsel of his acquaintance by the way, be enough for him to live fashionably for at least a week.

"It is well enough to think of your honor, friend Tickler; I think none the worse of you for that. But when you have disappeared I will raise my hands and swear there has been foul play; that you have been waylaid and despatched (having a full purse in your pocket) by those murdering villains who infest the city; that the government had better bestir itself in the matter." Thus spoke the general; and soon they settled the matter between them, and Mr. Tickler, consoling himself that the landlord was a shabby fellow, proceeded forthwith to the cars, and was soon on the road to Baltimore.

Several days elapsed, and, as might naturally be expected, a great stir was made about Mr. Tickler's strange disappearance, concerning which the general expressed great anxiety, offering to put up at least a thousand dollars as a reward to any person who would clear up the mystery. One declared he had seen Tickler in company with General Sam Houston; another was willing to swear in court that he saw him last in the company of Senator Douglas; and still another would have sworn he saw him on the day after his departure in the company of one Dabney Grimkey, a writer of sensation novels; and that both were entering a house of suspicious character, on the island, the inmates of which ought all to be arrested and made to give an account of themselves. Indeed, simpleton as the major was, he had cunning enough for the whole of them, and initiated his diplomatic career by dispelling all their suspicions. I ought, however, to except the landlord, whose experience in such matters caused him to have a misgiving that all was not exactly right.

When then General Potter gave notice of his intended departure, and demanded his bill, the clever landlord was careful to add the amount due from Mr. Tickler. This was quickly disputed, and as there was no law by which the host could compel payment, and the general declared he was a gentleman who only bore him company out of sheer politeness, he set to rubbing his palms in disappointment, swore no few oaths, and promised himself to be careful in future how he entertained generals traveling with secretaries. To all this the general remained unconcerned; and having but little baggage, took his departure for New York, Mr. Stretcher, who had been minutely watching his movements, following the carriage and importuning for the amount of his demand for services rendered as an adept. But the general only snapped his fingers,

and reminded the adept that it was agreed between them to let so small an affair remain "an after consideration."

Page 225

CHAPTER XLIV.

Which treats of A grievous disappointment, as well as many things of great interest that took place on the general's return to new York.

It was evening when the general reached Baltimore, thanking Heaven that he was safe out of a city where it was the fashion with gentlemen who were not sharp enough to fleece the government to turn upon and fleece one another, and to let strangers look elsewhere for mercy. Elated that he was a minister, our hero took up his valise and straightway proceeded to the Gilmore House, since it would not do for so famous a diplomatist to put up at one of your shabby hotels. And here, having entered with all the pomp of his nature, he slyly whispered to the clerk who he was, and desired that he would enter his name in this wise: "General Roger Sherman Potter, Minister Plenipotentiary to the King of the Kaloramas." And this delicious bit of rodomontade being satisfactorily performed, it was with great difficulty the bystanders could restrain their laughter. Then the stubby little figure, casting a half-sly glance at every one he met, waddled up and down the hall, looking in curiously at every open door, and at times vouchsafing a bow to those he never had seen before. And when he had hobbled about to his satisfaction, he approached the desk and anxiously inquired of the clerk for his secretary, Mr. Tickler; but to his surprise and great disappointment no one at that house had heard aught of such a person.

The general was now much concerned about his secretary. All sorts of things evil and suspicious did he fancy; but they only served to increase his anxiety. In truth, it now seemed that what he had only intended for a joke when leaving Willard's might turn out a very serious affair. Some prowling villain might have slyly put him out of the way, and there was an end to all the pains and expense he had been at to instruct him in the ways of a good secretary. There was a bare possibility, however, that much as the affairs of the nation required their undivided attention, Mr. Tickler, who had in more than one instance given proof of having a touch of the gallantry common to the true Irish gentleman in his composition, might have fallen in with some damsel whose charms were stronger than the demands of the nation. But as he had reposed great trust in his secretary, so also did he find it no very difficult task to banish these suspicions. When then he had eaten his supper, which he did in great tribulation, he sallied out in the hope of obtaining some tidings of him at the various inns throughout the city. But the search proved fruitless, and he returned to the Gilmore, still more puzzled to find an explanation for so strange a mystery. He went to bed when bed-time came; but it was only to dream of wonderful exploits performed by himself in foreign lands, and awake to lament the loss of his secretary.

Page 226

When then morning came he took his departure, proceeding by the early train to New York; for he held it good policy to get away as speedily as possible, lest his arrival get noised over the city and he be called upon to address some public assemblage, which might put him to great inconvenience in the absence of his secretary; for though he boasted that he had a profound way of his own for effecting purposes, he was not expert at fine writing.

While then the train swept onward toward Philadelphia, various reflections crowded upon the general's mind, and he said to himself: "Perhaps it had been as well for me to have allowed the fellow fixed wages; for, being a critic, which means that he is not a man to comprehend the greatness of rewards that may be in the future, he might have said, 'Heaven help me!' and taken to his old business." Again it flashed across his mind that if Tickler's courage was not quite up to the mark, he might have decided to try the virtue of his heels now, rather than trust them when facing a villainous enemy on the field of battle. But all these speculations proved mere hauntings of the brain; since when he arrived at the Girard House in Philadelphia, he found to his great surprise that "Mr. and Mrs. Tickler" had stopped to take dinner while passing that way a couple of days ago. "Faith of my father!" exclaimed the general, laughing in his sleeve, "either some one has told me, or I have read it in books, that all really good secretaries have a turn for these little gallantries. And if I understand the matter right, it is an excellent proof that he has the capacity for as great a secretary as any of them. In short, I have no doubt but that he is possessed of the rare faculty of giving his head to the nation, and his heart to as many damsels as may have a liking for it."

Being informed that his secretary had taken the road to New York, the general was further encouraged by the hope of meeting him there, and therefore proceeded on his journey without further concern, arriving at the St. Nicholas in due season, to the great delight of every guest in the house. Days and even weeks rolled past, but no tidings could be got of Mr. Tickler. His faithful horse was there, and had so improved as to conduct himself quite like a youth. Even his pig had not proved untrue to him. In short, Duncan was a great favorite with the public, and so many good opinions had been given of him by the critics, that Barnum proposed to purchase him outright, to the end that he might make him a feature of his museum. And although he offered for him a sum large enough to send three missionaries to Africa, the general said that the affection he bore the animal was such that he could not think of parting with him. Indeed, everything but the general's secretary seemed to have remained true to him. He now began to feel himself overwhelmed with responsibilities; for while he fancied the nation demanding great things of him on one side, the Administration urged him to

Page 227

prepare for Kalorama without delay. But what made the loss of Tickler more overwhelming was, that numerous and very distinguished political friends called to congratulate him on his appointment, which they described as sure to result in important advantages to the nation. Not a few proposed giving a banquet in honor of him on the eve of his departure—a custom which had become so common at this day that no distinguished minister ever thought of leaving without it. But this the general serenely declined, giving as a reason that he had heard it said how the gentlemen most busy in getting up these banquets left the payment to him who got the glory. He also had a slight recollection of what it cost him for the homage of the city fathers, and resolved to keep his fingers out of the pitch-pot for the future.

Like a good husband and a true hero, he visited his wife Polly, comforted her with a purse of gold and various other things, and gave her such a wonderful account of his successes as to make her doubt her senses. He also congratulated her that she was now the wife of a foreign minister, which would afford her the means of sending their son to the academy and their daughters to boarding school, where they would learn to play the piano, and be as fine as any of your ladies. But the good woman was affected to tears when he told her of the great distance between Barnstable and Kalorama, and only consented to his departure for that distant dominion out of respect to what every good woman ought to sacrifice for the benefit of her country. While, however, the thinking people of Barnstable were at a loss to know by what means he had got such an office, and were inclined to set it down for a joke of some waggish fellows in Washington, who were intent on testing the quality of the government for giving offices to fools, little Barnstable turned out in full force, and without the slightest respect for the great change in his fortunes, persisted in offering him a full measure of that species of ovation it was wont to pay him in times gone by.

Nearly two months had now passed; and although the newspapers frequently foretold the exact day the general would sail for the scene of his labors, nothing was heard of his secretary. It ought to be mentioned here that he occupied his time in frequent interviews with Glanmoregain, who had designs on Kalorama very different from those entertained by the government. For while the latter had furnished instructions to the general, strictly enjoining him to cultivate a good understanding with this savage king, and to impress upon his mind the advantages of peace, avoiding carefully all disputes arising between rival chiefs, the former commended a course diametrically opposite. Having riches enough at his command to overthrow a dozen such kingdoms as Kalorama, and which he promised to deal out without stint in the employment of such vagabonds as are more fond of fighting than saying their prayers,

Page 228

he instructed the general to first find out how many cunning priests and lawyers were in the country; what love they bore one another; whether they were renegades or natives; what influence they had over the king; and how best they could be set by the ears. And when this knowledge was thoroughly acquired, to hasten the formation of rival factions, being careful to throw the hot iron in wherever there was a chance, pleading at the same time for peace and harmony. Then if he could only get the priests at “cat-tails” with the court, which was easy enough, why, the prospect would be prodigious. Every thing must be taken in time and season; and if the lawyers were renegades, and he could get them at splits with both, he could then get some ambitious leader (one with more self-love than patriotism) just to tip him the wink, and invite him to become the champion of the strongest faction; he could then, being careful to let the cause of humanity and the spread of civil liberty be his watchword, go out with his sword sharpened, and after cutting down the existing powers, snatch up the diadem and place it upon his own head. Glanmoregain explained his various plans with such minuteness that they all became cloud and mist in the general’s mind; indeed, he began to debate within himself as to the means by which he could serve two masters whose interests seemed to run in directly opposite channels. Minister Potter had, however, a ready facility for everything, and although something of a simpleton, pledged himself to carry out Glanmoregain’s instructions with as many protestations of good faith as he had offered the government in proof of his sincerity. “Upon my military reputation, sir,” said he, as Glanmoregain delivered to him a packet containing his instructions, “it will not take me long to get things as you want them. Say only that you want a dozen more such kingdoms, and I warrant to have them in your pocket in less time than it would take you to walk up Wall Street. But pray, sir, as to these vagabonds you speak of, take care that they be not men who have no fear of the devil and want all to be generals.”

And when the merchant and his general had got all these little government matters so nicely compounded that they began to feel whole kingdoms between their fingers, the former took his departure and left the latter to himself. There were now only three days remaining before the general’s departure; and as the government had vessels enough fouling their copper in our harbors, it was ordered that one be detached to convey the general to his place of destination. While then he was sitting puzzling his brain how to get a secretary who could manage the newspapers and attend to the duties of his office, and was ready to believe that Mr. Tickler had been foully murdered, that gentleman made his appearance, and gave so strange an excuse for his absence that I must beg the reader to turn to the next chapter, where he will find it faithfully recorded.

Page 229

CHAPTER XLV.

Of the meeting between the general and his secretary, who relates an affair of gallantry that had well-nigh cost him his life; also, of the departure for Kalorama.

"Tickler! my faithful secretary, the friend and companion of my future fortunes!" exclaimed the general, embracing the trembling Tickler as he entered the room somewhat timidly. And after shaking him warmly by the hand he ordered two punches, over which he promised to give him an account of the anxiety he had suffered at his absence, and which might have proved a serious affair to the nation.

"By my honor, general," replied Tickler, fingering his beard, and looking somewhat confused, "your kindness is as unexpected as I know it is sincere. And if you say the punches, it is as you say. It is to ask your forgiveness I came, and here you offer me proofs that I have not even incurred your displeasure."

"Mercy and courtesy, friend Tickler, belong to our profession," interrupted the general, elongating his body, placing his thumbs in the arm-holes of his waistcoat, and striding twice or thrice across the room. "I feared you were dead, friend Tickler. And it might look suspicious," he resumed. "But you are alive, and I am glad enough of it." The punches now smoked upon the table; and as the general drew up his chair beside the secretary, that functionary began to relate the cause of his absence. "I got safe into Baltimore, you see, and having no more fears of the finger-taps of sheriffs, was quietly wending my way for the Gilmore House, and had reached a fine old mansion that stood a little from the street, when my attention was attracted by a voice singing so sweetly that I became like one transfixed, for the strains seemed melting my very heart. And you know, general, that it's no hard matter to melt the heart of an Irish gentleman. The voice sounded like one I had heard before, and I paused, and listened, and wondered whose it could be, and suddenly it ceased. I turned to gaze in the direction from whence the music came, and there saw, through an open window, a girl of such exquisite beauty that I felt like getting upon my knees and worshipping her as the idol of love. During the pause she sat at a piano motioning her fan, and with so much grace and delicacy that even a Castilian could not have excelled it. Her complexion was like alabaster, her features of Grecian cast, and as regular as if they had been chiseled. And these charms were made more bewitching by the luxuriant tresses of black hair that hung carelessly down upon her broad, white shoulders. The thought that I had seen her before almost crazed me. Then suddenly her delicate fingers tripped over the keys of the piano, and she struck up a song, the words of which I have not now at my tongue's end, but which I remember said a deal about hope, anguish, and hearts that were true. Something also was said about the cold marble, and withered hopes. I may say, sir, that it bore a strong resemblance to songs I have heard sung by lovers in my own country,-"

Page 230

"Pray proceed with what came of the lady," interrupted the general, impatiently.

"Why, sir, she sang this song so sweetly that the very air seemed filled with melody, and I fancied myself either in Limerick or Paradise. After gazing in admiration of her for several minutes, she turned her eyes toward me; and as she did so, 'Heavens!' says I, 'there's Linda Mortimor!' And if you would know who this Linda Mortimor is, listen and I will tell you. Her father was a merchant of New York, of princely fortune and good ancestry. And this fortune, together with his pride, he was resolved never to let get beyond the narrow limits of a circle of distant but equally fortunate relatives. But Linda, who was just budding into her seventeenth summer, let her affections fall upon an opera singer, a tenor of the name of Leon Benoni, who had some fame in his profession, and was likewise a man of good morals, which is rare with such gentlemen. I had known Leon for many years, and between us there existed a strong friendship. And as he returned Linda's affections with a love so impassioned that he swore death only could separate them, I promised to render him such service as he might need in an emergency. The possession of a girl so pure, so tender in years, and yet so beautiful, was a prize Leon would have braved death to gain."

The general, more impatient than ever, again interrupted by enjoining Mr. Tickler to stick to Linda, and omit what Leon said.

"When you have two lovers in a story," returned the critic, "you cannot well get along with what one said: you must fetch them along together."

"That may be your New York fashion," interpolated the general; "but I know one Joe Doane, of Barnstable, who had a whole year of love stories in his head, and got along well enough with one lover to a story."

These remarks somewhat displeased the secretary, who gave vent to his feelings in certain upward turns of his short nose. In truth, he was well-nigh ending the love story on the spot; for he cursed in his heart the stupidity of a gentleman of such shallow tastes that he would only have one lover in so good a story. But he bethought himself that now they were both high officials, he must show proper deference to his superior. "If you would have love stories," pursued the critic, with an air of regained pride, "pray take them in their natural state, and not as they are made by popular novelists, who get all sorts of murders into them. As to this young couple, seeing that Heaven (which forms destinies,) had ordered their love to run one way, I arranged their interviews, and so managed the exchange of their communications that they had pledged their affections in eternal constancy for months before the affair reached the ears of Linda's parents. And when it did, a great excitement was got up against Leon, who was charged with various crimes against the dignity of the family; indeed, so far was their indignation carried that several ambitious members of the family threatened him with no few ounces of cold lead. Opera singing was, at best, they said, but a shabby

occupation, followed only by such trifling foreigners as had nothing else to do, and were wisely kept outside the pale of society.

Page 231

"Leon then was cruelly separated from Linda, whose hard-hearted parents had her locked up in her chamber, where she remained seven months writing her grief in verses of such rare sentiment and purity of style that I doubt if Byron has anything to excel them. But finding that her love for Leon was incurable, and that the confinement was producing insanity of mind, her father thought to affect a remedy by offering Leon ten thousand dollars to quit the country. This he spurned, bidding the father give his money to him who measured the soul of man by its value.

"Linda's only companion during the confinement, was a pet canary, which she had trained to convey messages across the street, and into the window of a chamber occupied by one Minnie Rush, a companion and schoolmate, and one to whom she could intrust the secrets of her heart with explicit confidence. Through this medium then she discovered the place of her confinement to Leon, for whom I arranged a plan of scaling her prison and carrying her away. And this plan we undertook to execute of a dark night in November, when a pelting storm drenched the earth with rain, and the wind howled, and all the adverse elements seemed to have combined to complete the fury of the tempest. Linda was prepared, and paced her room with curious hopes and anticipations swelling her heart, and even filling her eyes with tears. When the clock struck twelve, we had, by dint of great exertion, got the ladder to Linda's window in the third story. And as Leon commenced ascending, Linda slowly opened the window. Fiercer and fiercer their throbbing hearts began beating; each second seemed an hour; and although the storm howled piteously, anxiety had so sharpened their senses that they distinctly heard the slightest movement. Quickening his pace as he advanced, and thinking only of the prize he would rescue from its prison, he was well nigh the top of the ladder. Another minute and the two lovers would have been clasped in each other's arms. Not a thought would have been wasted on the hard-hearted father; Leon would have borne the darling of his heart away in triumph! But lo! a crash was heard; the ladder yielded to the gale, and Leon, who was a man of much weight and circumference, fell to the ground with a broken leg. 'A pretty pickle you'r in now, Orlando Tickler,' says I to myself. But to make the matter worse, the ladder fell also, and so great was the noise that the father of Linda and two friends rushed out of the house in their night clothes, and with pistols in their hands. Seeing the cause of the disturbance, they at once gave chase after me; and though I would have stood by Leon until death separated us, it came into my mind that getting away as fast as possible would be the best service I could render him, seeing that it would afford him an opportunity to creep away into some hiding-place.

Page 232

"I must not forget to tell you, general, that although I am a fleet-footed man, so closely was I pursued that I received not less than three shots in the skirts of my coat, and had been a dead man, but that two good-natured policemen came up, and stopping the enraged father, bid him give an account of himself; for they were unaccustomed to seeing gentlemen run naked in such a storm, armed with pistols. This enabled me to reach a place of safety. But the thought struck me that they would return and make search for Leon. I therefore followed them at a stealthy pace and at a safe distance for myself. Leon had crawled through a little gate and into a garden close by, where he found a shelter beneath some larch bushes, and was safe from the vengeance of his pursuers, who several times passed and re-passed within a few feet of him. The wreck of the ladder was all that greeted their eyes.

"When then the father and his friends returned disappointed to the house, I approached the policemen, and giving them an account of the affair and a few dollars, soon secured their good services. In truth, sir, they declared by their truncheons that if they had been let into the secret a little earlier the hard-hearted old parent had been locked up in the station house, and made to give an account of himself, and, perhaps, to pay dearly for being caught in a plight so dangerous to the peace of the neighborhood. They, however, kindly assisted in getting a carriage, in which Leon was got to his home, where he remained seven weeks without singing a note, and suffering much in mind, as well as body. And when he recovered, it was only to find that Linda was gone-had been carried away, and no one could tell him the place of her concealment. Thus forlorn, he gave himself up in despair, and came near dying of a broken heart, though he was attended by three physicians. But the post-man brought him a letter one day, and a timely letter it was; for by it Linda informed Leon that she was in Madrid with her father, which caused him so much joy that I had fears lest it derange his understanding. But a cloud came over his joy when she told him that such was the surveillance she was under that her life seemed a mere continuation of wretchedness. And while she still declared her love was unchanged, she artfully added that her father had so modified his opinions of foreigners as to press a suit between her and a Spanish Count, of whom it was said that he possessed estates in Arragon. This news seriously affected Leon, who was of an impulsive temper, and quick to give himself up to grief; for he knew what strange changes time and distance works in the mind of a young, ardent girl like Linda. He knew, too, how difficult a thing it was to resist the fascinating manners of the courtly Spaniard. All these things caused him to sorrow, and this sorrow so fed upon his heart that he resolved to get to Madrid with all speed and rescue her from so tyrannical a parent, though

Page 233

it cost him his life. But he was suddenly taken sick of a fever, which, in addition to well-nigh carrying him to the grave, left his intellect in a deranged state, and so reduced him in body that his friends resolved he had only a month or so more for this world. I had watched over Leon, and but for my poverty would have remained by his bedside until death separated us. It was my necessities, sir, that compelled me to join you.—”

“By my honor, friend Tickler,” interrupted the general, approvingly, “I will now swear you make a good soldier; for such faith is rarely met outside of the profession to which I belong.”

“As to that,” resumed Mr. Tickler, “your great experience in these matters must make you the better judge. It then got (I turn now to Linda and Leon) into the papers that Leon was dead. And though I know not by what process this was effected, I can tell you that many obituaries were written in respect of him. Seeing that he had been so honorably disposed of by the editors, Leon held it better not to contradict the report, but as soon as he was in possession of sufficient strength, to leave in disguise for the scene where he would welcome death or win the prize for which his heart yearned.

“Judge, then, of my surprise when I recognized Linda in the lovely creature who played with so much skill, and sang so sweetly. Our recognition was mutual, for I stood where the shadow of the moonbeams played over my face. ‘Heavens!’ says I, ‘how can I rescue her?’ I saw she was not free, but rather the victim of a heart burdened with cares. My next thought was how to communicate with her. I retired to a little cottage close by, where I wrote a note on tissue paper, proposing an appointment on the following day, and secured it to the stem of a rosebud. Then I found a poor woman, a Savoyard, playing on her harp in the street; and having read that these women were accustomed to performing such parts for the rich lovers of their own country, I engaged her to play under the window until she had so attracted the attention of Linda as to make her understand by signs what was in the bud. This she engaged to do in a manner that would make success certain. She then repaired to the task; and having played several airs from the opera of Linda of Chamouni with great artistic skill, soon brought Linda to the window, where she at first listened as if she were taking lessons of a master, but soon changed her listening to surprise at the singular signs made by the woman between the airs. The mystery was dissolved when I again appeared at the front gate and stood in the shadow of the moonbeams. Linda declared she would not be content until the poor Savoyard was got into the house, averring that as she had never before heard such exquisite playing, she was anxious to ask the woman some questions concerning her history. To please Linda, then, she was got into the house, where, embracing a favorable moment, she slipped the

Page 234

bud into Linda's hand. I had suggested a place of meeting at twelve o'clock on the following day; and I leave to your conjecture what took place up to that time. Let me tell you, then, that she escaped from the house through the aid of a faithful servant, and we met, exchanged our joys as never did brother and sister; yes, we unburdened our hearts and gave each other accounts of all that had passed since the night Leon attempted to rescue her from her chamber.

"Linda had not been to Madrid, but Cuba; and the letter to Leon was nothing more than a cruel fabrication of her parents, who had persuaded her that he was dead, and produced papers recording his death in proof of their declarations. When I discovered to her that Leon was still alive, she fell upon her knees and beseeched me to speed with her to him. I knew and felt my duty to the nation; but the request of this lovely girl was something the gallantry of my soul could not refuse."

The general, who had listened attentively while sipping his punch, interrupted, saying, "I reverence your magnanimity, young man, and am glad to see that you had no thought of appropriating the prize to yourself. I am glad, too, that you had an eye to how much the nation might suffer by this love affair."

"Says I to myself," resumed the secretary, "Orlando Tickler! now it's between the nation and this fair girl—choose which you will let go to ruin. Faith, the nation is well enough," says I, "and here goes to do my duty by this distressed damsel. And with nothing but what she had on her back, and a purse of gold, we turned our backs upon Baltimore, and like doves chased by sportsmen, proceeded with all speed to Leon, who had taken up his abode at an airy villa on the banks of the Hudson. And here again I will leave to your conjecture what took place when they met; and conclude by saying that I went mad with joy on seeing them locked in each other's arms. And while New York was being searched in vain by the friends of her unyielding parents, I saw them made one twain by the village parson; then I left them as happy a couple as ever mingled love, and sought you, intending to ask forgiveness. You have it all, sir; and may Heaven reward you for the forgiveness you have vouchsafed me."

And now, the time for the general's departure having arrived, old Battle was got safely on board, when this wonderful politician, soldier, and diplomatist, and his clever secretary, set sail for the Kaloramas; and when they had proceeded on their voyage for some weeks met with so serious an accident that the writer of this faithful history deems it proper that he should record it in the next chapter.

It ought also to be mentioned here that the general, out of sheer respect to his honesty as a critic, appointed Easley guardian to his gifted pig, whose earnings he promised to transmit to Polly Potter instead of the unfathomable depths of the "Bleeding Kansas Fund."

Page 235

CHAPTER XLVI.

Containing A faithful account of what took place when general Potter and his secretary crossed the line, and how he rode the flying horse.

Being ignorant of any rule compelling historians to give the names of such ships as convey their ambassadors to foreign lands, I have resolved that the omission in this instance shall be made up by the fancy of the reader, whom I feel in my heart will generously give me credit for what I have written, the truth whereof no man of common sense will doubt. A further motive for not naming the vessel on which this wonderful minister sailed is, that what took place on board might afford matter for one of those extremely fashionable episodes called Courts-Martial, and which are principally held at Washington for the entertainment of such aged members of the service as are fond of listening to, and sitting in judgment upon, the minute and circumstantial details of indiscreet conversations held among young gentlemen of the ward-room; and which, it must be confessed, reflects but little honor upon the service. But to the ship.

When the ship was many days' sail from land, and affairs on board had passed pleasantly enough, the officers, one after another began to hold conversation with the general, and to flatter his vanity in various ways, styling him "Your Excellency," and intimating that he must be perfect master of all great subjects. In truth, they soon discovered from the disjointed character of his discourse upon various subjects that his wits were deranged; for no matter what subject they introduced, he would mount his favorite hobby of taking care of the nation. But how a man could be an adept in politics and a simpleton in so many other things they could not clearly understand. They therefore came naturally enough to the conclusion that the government had set a trap to get rid of a gentleman with designs on the treasury, and caught a mouse instead of a minister. Nor were they less surprised with the singular relations existing between the general and his secretary, who had more than once declared to them that he had puzzled his wits in vain to get at the true quality of his master's understanding. They therefore resolved among themselves to make him the subject of a little diversion. He had entertained them with accounts of the wonderful achievements of the Potter family, as also his own exploits in the Mexican war, at which they were all astonished and confounded.

Page 236

When, then, the general appeared on deck one day, in his new uniform, which he got of Fox in New York, and which he verily believed necessary to the great undertakings he was about to engage in, the first Lieutenant approached him, and with great gravity of manner, said, "Your Excellency has doubtless heard of the custom which renders it necessary that all great officials crossing the line for the first time pay their respects to Neptune, king of the sea and father of barbers, who will come on board and shave you to your satisfaction. And when this ceremony is over the officials then display their skill at riding the flying horse, the success or failure of which is invariably held a good or bad omen of the success or failure of their mission."

The general listened with curious attention to these remarks. "I own, Mr. Lieutenant," said he, in reply, "that if you approached me on matters of government or something that concerns the politics of our country, there you will find me at home; but as to these affairs of the sea, I know as little about them as your village parson. As to riding a flying horse, I will leave that to Mr. Tickler, my secretary; for though no man will say I am not skilled in riding, I can tell you I have been twice thrown by my horse Battle, and care not to have more of my limbs broken. But by all means let this Neptune you speak of be introduced to me, and if the shaving can be dispensed with, so much the better, since I am not fond of ceremonies, and may have need of my beard in dealing with this savage king."

"Your Excellency reasons well," rejoined the Lieutenant; "but judging from the fame he has already acquired, and which is as familiar to us as our school-day primers, I feel that he would not have it said of him that he was a whit behind his many predecessors, who held themselves honored in being the recipients of this ceremony, which, in truth, is considered another feather in their dignity. But this I will say, that where secretaries are present, the custom has been so modified as to vouchsafe the shaving to them, while riding the flying horse is strictly reserved for the highest officials."

"What you say of my fame, Mr. Lieutenant, is just what many others have said, and may be set down to my honesty as a politician. And, as you say it is well to look to my dignity, I will confer with my secretary and hear what he says concerning this affair of the shaving." Having returned this answer, the general sought his secretary and recounted to him, in private, the conversation that had taken place between himself and the lieutenant, upon which the learned critic swore by Saint Patrick, and a dozen more equally good saints, that no man should trifle with his beard, of which he was as scrupulous as many of our more fashionable clergymen, and, indeed, kept it highly polished with daily applications of Rushton's best pomades. He also declared that however ready he might be to render service either

Page 237

to his government or ladies in distress, he verily believed the whole affair a joke got up by the officers, who were much given to practising such tricks upon the unwary; and therefore he would have them look elsewhere for subjects of jest. The general, however, assured him that it was a grave mistake, since gentlemen of such standing and valor would not deign to trifle with the respectability of a secretary invested with such important functions. He therefore proceeded with him into the presence of the first lieutenant, around whom several of his fellow-officers were gathered, and on stating what had taken place, they one and all assured Mr. Tickler in the most grave and becoming manner that they had not the slightest intention of offending his dignity, nor indeed in any way provoking him to think ill of them. Nevertheless, they begged him to bear in mind that this ancient custom was only kept up with a view to test the real courage and resolution of high officials proceeding on these great and important missions. "I am not frightened at trifles, gentlemen," replied Mr. Tickler, somewhat agitated; "but it seems to me that this shaving you speak of is not generally known among barbers. And I have read every book written by Ike Marvel (and bright gems, hung in the murky firmament of our maudlin literature, they are, too!); but not a word does he say about secretaries of Legations paying penance in this manner with their beards. However, if his excellency has courage to ride the flying horse, Orlando Tickler will not be found wanting. Pray let the ceremony proceed; but spare me my beard if you can, for I am no dump, and know that it was said by somebody that a poor gentleman had better stick to his garret than go beardless to court." The officers now proceeded to arrange the matter between themselves, and resolved to carry it into effect on the following morning.

And now a rosy dawn ushered in the morning on which the great and all-absorbing event was to take place. A clear sky, a sea so calm that scarce a ripple was to be seen, every sail spread to its utmost capacity, and the mellow tints of the rising sun playing over and investing them with a majesty of outline at once grand and imposing. And yet the massive hull scarce moved, so gentle was the breeze that fanned through her canvass.

The officers were astir before Mother Carey's chickens had dipped their wings; indeed, the very elements seemed to have combined to favor this great and wonderful event, which, seeing that it was in honor of so great a politician as General Roger Potter, was to surpass all other events hitherto recorded in this history.

Page 238

A stage of rough planks was erected during the night just abaft the fore-mast, and over this a mizen topgallant studding-sail formed an awning, between which and the mast there was a huge wind-sail, leading down into the forehatch. The fore-courser and lower studding-sails were now clewed up, and a messenger dispatched to inform the general and his secretary that the ship was crossing the line, and as Neptune's temper was crispy of age, he might on discovering any want of respect, invoke a storm. Not content with this, two officers high in rank rushed into the state-room of Mr. Tickler, and evincing great anxiety lest his reputation for courage suffer, drew him from his berth, and winding him up in a sheet, bore him struggling in their arms to a seat arranged on the platform. At the same time a great blowing of sea-conchs (said to be Neptune's chorus), accompanied by the heaving and splashing of waters, was heard directly under the bows, and was indeed enough to strike terror into a stronger heart than Tickler possessed. In short, the secretary found his courage giving out, notwithstanding he had on the evening previous given several of the officers a most interesting account of the many duels he had figured in. In truth, it must be confessed that if the secretary had not been secured to his seat with gaskets, he would, regardless of precedents, have taken to his heels and left the ceremony to those who had a liking for it. And as it was, his fears continued to increase with the approach of the ceremony.

A double file of men, in their neatest attire, now formed in order from the orlop to the fore-chains. At this moment the general, arrayed in his war-worn uniform, sallied forth with becoming dignity, and evidently much concerned about the important part he was to play in this great event, for he felt in his heart that the honor of his country depended entirely upon the skill he displayed in riding the flying horse. He was also not a little concerned lest his secretary should fail to carry himself with becoming nerve, and encouraged him with promises to permit him to say things creditable to himself in his first letter to the New York Daily Discoverer.

Old Neptune, trident in hand, and as fishy an old salt as could well be imagined, now rose with great gravity and stateliness over the bow; and having cast a piercing glance at the file of men, who raised their hats and saluted him with becoming deference, advanced slowly, and being met by two senior lieutenants, was first informed of the great fame of the voyagers, and then welcomed on board with a speech. This done he was introduced to, and exchanged courtesies with the general, who made him sundry bows, and would have put many questions to him concerning his ancestry; but as it was customary with him to lose no time, he proceeded forthwith to the shaving. Perhaps I ought here to inform the reader that this Neptune wore a sort of toga, made of the skins of sea-lions;

Page 239

that his beard was like unto fibrous coral found on the coast of Florida, and hung almost to his waist; and that a crown of sea-moss decorated his venerable head. Muttering something in a language the first lieutenant declared was Spanish, and exchanging bows with Mr. Tickler, whose face and beard only were visible above the white sheet, Neptune resigned his trident to one of the sailors, and approaching the candidate for this great honor, felt and felt his beard, then gave his head a toss of satisfaction, and smiled. A grinning negro now advanced in his clean white apron, and an immense bowl, held with his left arm; and this was filled with a composite for shaving, such, I venture to assert, as Rushton never thought of; for being a mixture of grease, tar, and soap, the odor that escaped was anything but aromatic. Here the secretary quite lost his temper, and swore by the Virgin in a deep rich brogue, which was not uncommon with him when he spoke natural, that he saw through the whole thing; and that the man who defiled his beard with such stuff as that would have to suffer for it when he got the use of his hands. Heeding not what he said, the negro applied the lather with an immense paint-brush, and had well-nigh suffocated the critic, who cried for mercy at the very top of his voice, to the no small diversion of the bystanders, who enjoyed it hugely. Solemnly Neptune then commenced to shave the critic with an immense razor made of wood; but he was so nervous in the management of it, and scraped the critic's face so unmercifully, that he bellowed out at the very top of his voice, "Holy Saint Peter! come to my relief, and let not this thy child be tortured by his enemies!"

"Be not a whimpereer, but comport yourself with courage, Mr. Tickler," said the general, apparently quite as much diverted as any of them: "I have a hearty respect enough for these critics; but if they let their courage leak out in this way, Heaven only knows what they will do when they come to face the guns of the enemy?" he concluded, whispering in the ear of one of the officers. Having stepped aside to wipe the razor, as he said, they were all surprised and astonished to find that Neptune had disappeared amidst the plunging of waters and blowing of sea-conchs. Scarcely had he gone when an immense current of water came down upon the head of the suffering Tickler, and which he was assured was nothing more than the tail-end of a water-spout, though in truth it was poured from buckets in the hands of a cunning rogue concealed in the windsail close by. And the force and density of this so nearly drowned the simple-minded critic that he several times gasped for breath, and indeed seemed on the very point of dissolution. The whole ceremony was performed in a remarkably short space of time; and when the lathered and drenched Orlando Tickler was set at liberty, he cast the winding sheet from his shoulders, stood a few moments making the most savage gestures at his adversaries, (most

Page 240

of whom had sought places of safety,) and challenged the best of them to meet him like men; then he scampered away to his cabin, muttering as he passed the general, "Faith! and I wish your excellency better luck with what there is left." It ought to be mentioned here that the hanging by the heels, which is a part of this excellent and very ancient custom, was, out of sheer respect to Tickler's fame as a critic, omitted in this instance.

The wind now began to freshen so that every sail filled to perfection; but as there was but little motion on the ship, it was resolved not to ride the flying-horse until breakfast was over, when it was hoped a rolling motion of the hull would afford a better opportunity for the display of skill. "Mr. Lieutenant," said the general, approaching that officer with his ear canted, and touching him confidentially on the arm, "although there was sport enough in this shaving of my secretary, I begin to have certain fears about riding the flying-horse; as you say, it may afford me a chance to display my courage and horsemanship: but, if it be similar to the shaving, I cannot see wherein it will serve my dignity; and therefore I say that it seems to my mind better that you give the performance to some other gentleman." The lieutenant replied that this was a feat entirely free from the severities accompanying the shaving; in truth, that it was solely a means of displaying agility, being much practised by the South Carolinians after their tournaments. And in order to prove to him that it was in every way worthy the high consideration of so distinguished a politician and general, he promised to make several of the seamen give him an example. Somewhat reconciled to this assurance, the general proceeded to prepare himself.

When, then, breakfast was over, they all repaired on deck to witness the general's skill at riding the flying-horse. The ship rolled lazily, an oar with the blade resting upon the quarter deck, the stock extending some eight or ten feet forward and secured near the end with a rope made fast in the mizen-caps, constituted the horse, which swung to and fro with the motion of the ship. A hat was then placed on the end of the oar, when an old experienced sailor mounted with a staff in his hand, and having crossed his legs (like a tailor upon his board), let go the rope, and, with his hands extended, swung to the motion of the ship, maintaining his balance with the ease and composure of a rope-dancer. This done, he dislodged the hat with his staff; and to prove how easy it was to perform the feat, he thrice repeated it to the great delight of all on board. "Faith of my father!" exclaimed the general, "I see no great things in that; and if it be all you require in proof of my courage, I will show you that I can do it a dozen times, and with less trouble than it would give me to ride my horse Battle." All now made way for the wonderful general, whose shortness of legs rendered it necessary to bring benches to facilitate his mounting; for the flying-horse stood some six feet or more from the spar deck, and was not so easily mounted by a general accustomed to the saddle.

Page 241

A silence as of the tomb reigned among the bystanders while the great General Potter proceeded to mount; which he effected after considerable puffing and fussing, and adjusting his three-cornered hat, of which he was singularly scrupulous. Holding on by the rope with great tenacity, the only difficulty now in the way seemed his legs, which were too short to get crossed upon the oar. Declaring he had never before rode an animal of such sharpness in the back, he proposed that the crossing of legs be omitted, when he would show them that he could dislodge the hat with great agility sitting astride the oar. But as this would leave no chance for the sport that was to follow, the officers all asserted upon their reputations that in no instance of which they had any knowledge had such a concession been made, no matter how distinguished the ambassador. But in order not to be wanting in courtesy, two of the officers assisted him in getting his legs crossed. This done the benches were cleared, and, not a little disturbed in his courage, the gallant general swung away to the motion of the ship. Several voices now called to him, demanding that he let go the rope and dislodge the hat. "When a man knows his life is in danger, it occurs to me, gentlemen, that he had better be left to choose his own time in parting with it!" replied the general. He however let go the rope, and suddenly making a pass at the hat with his staff, lost his balance and was plunged headlong into the larboard scuppers, and with such force that had not his bones been equal to wrought-iron, not a sound one had been left in his body. He now gave out such pitiful groans as brought the officers to a knowledge of the serious character of the joke, which was put an end to by their picking him up and bearing him away to his cabin.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Of the general's recovery, and his interview with Mr. Tickler; also, of the landing at Buzabub, and various other strange and amusing things.

When the general was sufficiently recovered from the effects of the fall, he began thanking heaven that it was no worse, and inquiring of the officers who stood around him, each trying to emulate the other in offering him consolation, whether any of his predecessors had been thrown into the scuppers in this manner. "You may say there was a lack of skill, gentlemen; but I at least gave you a taste of my courage, which is something in these days." Thus he addressed them as he rose to his feet, with evident self-satisfaction, and believing in his heart that a man was as much to be praised for what he attempted as for what he achieved. "That you are a gentleman of courage no man with eyes in his head will dispute; and as our country is extremely fortunate in the possession of so brave a general, we have been saying among ourselves that the interests of the nation demand that you should be less prodigal of it!" replied one of the officers.

Page 242

"It affords me no small pleasure that you can bear witness of what you have seen; for although this misfortune may not comport with my dignity as a minister sent to preserve friendly relations with a savage king, you will at least say it was an enterprise that tested the quality of my metal. As I have always said, a man had better stick to his functions; for if he mount strange horses, his head may prove so wanting in brain that he will certainly fall to the ground a great fool. But you have seen enough to satisfy you of my courage, and now I must hasten to my secretary, who is no small man, though unaccustomed to the perils we soldiers know so well how to enjoy." So making them a bow, the general proceeded to Mr. Tickler's cabin, where he found that gentleman busily engaged over a pot of Rushton's pomade, which, together with two bottles of Lubin's double extract, had been presented to him by the officers, as a balm to heal his injured dignity. "This is no joke, your excellency," said the discomfited critic; "you may smile at a man with his beard full of tar; but let your excellency just try it with his own, and I wager he'll wish the devil had it before he gets it restored." The general laid his hand on Mr. Tickler's arm, encouragingly, and replied, "Friend Tickler, heaven has given you a good understanding, and it comforts me that you take this little affair no worse."

"How much worse your excellency would have it I know not. And it occurs to my mind that this mauling and scraping is no part of my mission. I am not a malefactor, but a man sent abroad to serve his country, which it is my intention to do faithfully, if only they leave my dignity undamaged."

"It's not every one thinks so well of his dignity, friend Tickler," interposed the general.

"I am glad your excellency speaks in this way; for if a man bring his dignity to an end, pray what use is he to his country?"

"There your philosophy is at fault, Tickler; for many's the man now in the service of his country who has not so much dignity as my horse Battle. Console yourself, sir, and remember that hardships are the prop-sticks of a rising man's glory. And having borne your part in this ceremony with such consummate fortitude, you must know that the officers set you down for a terrible fellow."

"Let them practice their pranks on some one else, or by the saints they shall suffer for it. But tell me, your excellency, is it a custom with secretaries to trick their landlords, undergo these batterings and bruising, and go for weeks without a shilling? If it be, Orlando Tickler returns to his profession of a critic! And to tell you the truth, sir, it is not clear to me of whom I am to get pay for my services at this outlandish court. But pray where is this Kalorama? for I have puzzled my brain over it not a little. And while you are about it, please enlighten me further on the benefits this mission of yours will bestow upon mankind, that I may be instructed while I am getting this grease and tar out of my beard."

Page 243

"A good diplomatist, I have heard it said, friend Tickler, never blurts out what he means to do, but keeps a still tongue until he has effected his ends. Keep then your faith square, ask no questions, watch closely, and the result shall come as clear as day to you when I am on the field." The secretary gradually became more reconciled to his fate, and soon renewed the labor of restoring his beard.

Several days now passed with so much pleasantry that the general and his secretary became the admiration of all on board. Not a man, from the commander down to the humblest "ordinary," but was eager to pay them homage, minister to their comfort, or afford them amusement. They were thus happily pursuing their voyage when the commander, one pleasant evening, having entertained the general with various sea stories, was approached by one of his officers, who reported that Spark Island had been sighted from aloft. This news sent a thrill of joy into the hearts of all on board, for Spark Island lay ten leagues off the coast of Kalorama. Every eye was now fixed in the direction indicated, and many were the glasses brought into use. After various scannings, what seemed a mere speck on the horizon was pronounced by the commander to be nothing less than the famous Spark Island, a bit of land quite resembling the steeple of one of our fashionable churches, and which nature, in one of her strange freaks had ejected from the bottom of the sea, that certain gulls and other sea-birds, having no other convenient place to build their nests, might take advantage of its solitude. "Verily, your excellency," said the commander, addressing General Potter with great suavity of manner, "there is so curious a history connected with this pitiful little island, that I feel you would be deeply interested with a recital of it."

"Indeed, sir," returned the general, "as this history concerns me as a diplomatist, I should be delighted to hear it from your lips."

"You must know, then," resumed the commander, "that the natives along the coast have a tradition they firmly believe in, and which sets forth that this island was thrown up by a special act of providence as a place of refuge for a poor priest, a good and holy man, who, being admitted to the confidence of the court of a Chief then ruling over Kalorama, was discovered, by a keen-sighted attendant, in an amour with one of his daughters, a girl of so much beauty that various chiefs had come from the east, and the west, and the north, and the south, to lay their offerings at her feet. But to none of them would she give her hand and heart. And although the priest protested his innocence before heaven, and the girl, whose name was Matura, declared her chastity as unsullied as the driven snow, the father was not to be moved, but per-emptorily ordering them both into a canoe, sent them to drift at the mercy of the waves, a merited banishment-in his eyes. Many years passed, and nothing being

Page 244

heard of the priest and Matura, it was thought the sea had swallowed them up, when they were discovered on this lonely island by some Spanish adventurers from a neighboring coast. The priest at once gave the visitors an account of how the island rose from the ocean by special providence for his protection, together with a minute description of all that had taken place since their banishment. He had chanted vespers regularly three times a day, while Matura had confessed to him, sang to him, and made him garments of the feathers of birds, the flesh of which furnished them with food. What seemed most singular, was that although their locks were whitened with the cares of fourscore years, both stood ready to swear before an inquisition of saints that neither in thought nor deed had they sinned against the commandments.

“Meanwhile the servant, instrumental in procuring the banishment of the priest and Matura, was brought to his death-bed, and as he was troubled about leaving this world with so deep a crime in his heart, he came out and declared that the charge he had brought against the priest and Matura was a tissue of lies which he had been bribed to promulgate by another priest, to whom he was in the habit of confessing. But the innocence thus revealed was of no avail; for the priest and Matura died on the island, and there was an end of it as far as that went.

“The Spaniards returned and reported the discovery to their people, as also the story of the priest and Matura. Whereupon the Spaniards laid claims to Spark Island, they being, as they asserted, the first discoverers. But the story, together with the discovery, was not long in coursing down the coast to the ears of the Kaloramas, who immediately fitted out a fleet of seven canoes, and dispatched them in charge of twenty stalwart natives and a priest, who had taken high orders, such an one being held necessary to the safety of the expedition. Well, they descried the island, and having landed, found the bones of the priest and Matura in a cave, on the side of a steep bluff. And when these were brought home, the people of Kalorama went into deep mourning, and had them buried with great ceremony in a grove of cocoanut trees, where all girls of tender years were taught to go at early morning and lay offerings of flowers upon the grave of Matura the innocent.

“But there soon sprung up a great dispute as to the possession of this island. The Spaniards claimed it in virtue of their discovery, while the Kaloramas, with no less plausibility, asserted a priority by virtue of its having been first inhabited by the priest and Matura, whom they claimed as citizens of Kalorama. And, notwithstanding a manuscript written by the priest while in his lonely exile, and describing how an All-wise Providence had created this island solely for his preservation, was by an intriguing Spaniard placed in the hands of the King of the Kaloramas as proof against his own countrymen, the question

Page 245

of possession rose into such gigantic proportions that a great war broke out between the disputants. And although neither could ever hope to derive the slightest benefit from its possession, the contest was bloody enough on both sides. And when they had fought many battles, involved various other nations, and desolated each other's dominions, they agreed that each should send a deputation of not less than three priests, who, when they had visited the island, should declare upon the merits of the case. Whereupon two expeditions were fitted out at great cost of time and treasure; but after cruising for more than thirty days, not a vestige of Spark Island could they find. Therefore, it was agreed among the priests that as a visitation of providence had created the island for a holy purpose, so also had God in his wisdom caused it to sink into the sea, that an end might be put to the savage wars waged for its possession. And as neither party could dispute this solemn verdict of the priests, both cheerfully accepted it, and were for ever after inalienable friends. And there is an end to that, as far as it goes.

"It was generally agreed that Spark Island had vanished, for nearly a century passed, and not a mariner could be found to say he had seen it, though several were ready to swear by their buttons that they had heard mermaids singing precisely where it once stood. And so matters remained until a few years ago, when two of our enterprising countrymen, who were cruising down this way in search of adventures, came upon it, and finding it covered with a rich and valuable manure, fancied it a new discovery, laid claim to it in the name of our government, and, blinded by their enthusiasm, declared it one of the greatest islands history had any account of, though truly it was but six furlongs long and four wide. Many and wonderful were the representations made to our government by these adventurers concerning this great discovery, and the benefits that were to flow from it to our country. The humblest husbandman was to get a mere pinch of its rich deposits, and, having sprinkled it over his broad acres, would immediately find them transferred into fields of luxuriant corn. Mere ounces were to make fertile the most sterile lands; and even old Virginia put on her spectacles, and began looking forward to the time when every bald hill, from the Rappahannock to the Blue Ridge, would wear a rich carpet of green.

"It was curious enough to see with what an open ear the government listened to these wonderful stories, and the agility with which it sent a great fleet, and a terrible commodore, to enforce our claim to the possession of this island. A dispute now arose between the Kaloramas and our government, regarding the nature of the discovery by these adventurers, and many learned and very profound opinions were given, describing its exact history and boundaries. When, however, we were on the point of declaring war against the Kaloramas, as the most sure way of getting the

Page 246

island, it turned out that all these authorities, discovering such profound knowledge, were wide off the mark. In addition to this, the fleet, after a long and pleasant cruise, which afforded the officers amusement enough to last them a life-time, at length found the island, which was so small that even the most reliable chart makers had neglected to locate it. They were, therefore, so much diverted at its apparent insignificance that they came to the very sensible conclusion that the few birds having their nests in it had the best claim to it; and, indeed, that to disturb them would be to inflict a great cruelty. After coming to this conclusion they returned home in excellent humor, and reported the result of the expedition (the report covered some sixteen folios) to the government at Washington, presenting it at the same time with a casket containing four ounces of the rich and highly-scented treasure found thereon. And I am informed that the government was so pleased with the result of this costly expedition that it has ever since remained profoundly silent on the subject-even refusing an enormous sum offered by a Philadelphia bookseller for the report, which he was anxious to publish, out of sheer love for the public. However, open questions of the smallest kind being indispensable to great governments, inasmuch as they afford occupation to diplomatists, and such idlers as follow the trade of politics, I must not forget to mention here that our government still continues secretly to dispute the point with the Kaloramas; even threatening to thrash them right soundly, unless they relinquish their claim. And here Spark Island stands, like the lone steeple of some forsaken church." Thus the commander concluded, when General Potter, who declared the history had deeply interested him, laid his hand confidentially on the arm of the speaker, saying: "There is, I verily believe, something said in my instructions concerning this Island. Just let me alone, and I warrant to have it safe in the possession of our government, (and a dozen more just like it!) in less time than you have been talking about it. As for the priest, though he never did me any harm, I hold it well that the amorous rascal was banished in a canoe, that being an easy way of getting rid of him. But my heart is tender, and you speak in such praise of this Matura's beauty, and chastity, that I shall surely go to bed weeping, if, indeed, I do not dream of hand to hand combats with her hard-hearted father. I shall not forget this affair, Mr. Commander! and shall give King Nebo to understand that I know all about the dirty tricks of his ancestors."

"I would like to know," inquired Mr. Tickler, "if there was anything said in the manuscript left by the priest, about his seeing Spark Island rise from the sea with his own eyes?"

"Nothing could have been more minutely described," replied the commander. "One moment there was only a broad sea-plain before him, in the next he saw it shoot up like a spark, which was why he called it Spark Island." Mr. Tickler declared himself entirely satisfied with this explanation, and was sure the priest could not have been mistaken.

Page 247

When the night was far advanced the general and his secretary retired to their cabins, where they slept soundly, and awoke on the following morning, to find the ship safely moored in a snug little cove or harbor, opposite the Village of Buzabub, a seaport on the Coast of Kalorama, and so buried in Mango and Pride of India trees, as nearly to conceal the few shabby dwellings it contained. The general was up before the monkeys began to chatter, and anxiously paced the deck, in his new uniform, seeming to care for no one but old Battle, whom he every few minutes stopped to congratulate on the termination of the voyage, all of which the faithful animal seemed perfectly to understand. In truth, the general had evinced so much solicitude for his horse during the passage, that the officers and men were quite as much diverted with the proofs of affection displayed by the faithful animal, as they were at the eccentricities of his master.

When then the general had paced the deck a sufficient length of time, he repaired to the cabin of his secretary, saying: "Friend Tickler, my learned secretary, get speedily up, for this is to be the most important day of my life, outshining, by far, the day of my reception in New York. Get up, write me a speech that shall become this remarkable event, and so mix it up with Latin sentences, that these savages will take me for a profound scholar, and pay me courtesy accordingly; for I have a fear of their knives, which, I am told, have terminated the existence of several ambassadors."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

One of the most truthful accounts of how general Potter spent A night among the dead.

Tickler rose quickly from his bath, and applied himself diligently to the manufacturing of a most wonderful speech for his master. Nor was he at a loss for Latin sentences; for, having provided himself with a book of Latin proverbs, he could have supplied a mob of politicians with speeches, every word of which was Latin.

And so anxious was Tickler to serve his master, that he broke not his fast during the morning; nor, indeed, was he aware that breakfast was over, until the booming of thirteen guns brought him to a sense of his position. And those thirteen guns were intended for a salute, and were quite enough for a town so poor that it had not wherewith to answer them; and on that score, excused itself, for what might otherwise have been set down for a grave insult. But the general set every gun down in honor of himself, and was so vain of his exalted position, that he approached the commander, saying: "I thank you heartily for the great honor you have just paid me in the guns; and, let me tell you, sir, I value the compliment more, since it comes from one so worthy of his country as yourself. You have displayed great fortitude and valor during this perilous voyage, which I shall not forget to mention in my dispatches, while my secretary will make due note of it in his letters to the newspapers, and I say it to you in confidence, he

is correspondent for no less than seven.” The commander bowed, and, smiling, thanked the general for this expression of his high regard.

Page 248

A fleet of canoes was now seen putting off from shore. Advancing with great speed they soon reached the ship, which they surrounded, while one of their number, bearing two tawny chiefs, and a priest, who acted as an interpreter, made fast alongside. The chiefs and the priest came speedily on board, and were welcomed by the commander, with no little ceremony. And as the chiefs were decked out in a great profusion of feathers, and cloaks of as many colors as the rainbow, the general set them down for at least sons of the king, and commenced addressing them accordingly, when he was suddenly interrupted by the commander, who informed him that they were only messengers sent by the father, or chief magistrate of the village, to inquire for what object the ship was come. And when informed of the great and important character of the mission, they presented the ambassador, as they were pleased to call the general, with two parrots and a male monkey, as a token of the friendship intended by their king, and also as a means of dispelling all apprehensions of evil designs. This done, the priest was invited into the cabin, where, to his great delight, refreshments were served, to which were added sundry strong beverages, which he drank with such avidity and evident relish, that the commander began to have fears for the safety of his understanding. Being a man of great compassion, the commander got the priest away. Thereupon he joined the chief, and together they returned to make preparations for the reception of our hero and his secretary. And when it was well nigh high noon, the general and his secretary disembarked amidst the booming of guns and the huzzas of the crew. And although this afforded him no small amount of pleasure, he expressed great anxiety lest the landing of old Battle be delayed another minute; "for," said he, "if it be necessary to make an impression on these savages, then let me have my horse, and you shall see how quick I will do it." As these little evidences of his weakness only served the more to divert the officers, they proceeded forthwith to effect the landing. Scarcely had he set foot on shore, however, when he was surrounded by a swarm of tawny beings, naked almost to the buff, and so eager to get a sight at so great an ambassador, that they pressed forward with a clamor that threatened the most serious results to life and limbs, at the same time interposing a serious impediment to the progress of his train. Nor did his great rotundity, and the queer figure he cut in his uniform tend to lessen their excitement; for they commenced capering round him, hooting, and performing the most amusing antics, - all of which he mistook for expressions of gratitude and joy. But as it was a custom with our government to select for ministers men who could not understand one word of the language spoken at the court to which they were accredited, so in this instance did its results prove highly fortunate; for, as neither could understand a word the other said,

Page 249

our government was saved from being called upon to resent the most flagrant outrages ever offered to one of its ministers. But as fortune always favors the great and chivalrous, the priest with whom he had an interview in the morning, suddenly came to the rescue, and so great was his power over the poor natives, that they held their peace at the raising of his finger, and dispersed to a respectful distance at his bidding.

Diminutive asses were now brought, and when the company were mounted, the priest escorted them, on foot, to a little chapel, in which were assembled divers other priests and dignitaries, whose raiment bore a strong resemblance to the venerable wardrobe of one of our bankrupt theatres. Here the general was welcomed by the priest, in return for which he delivered them the speech prepared for him by his secretary. But not one word of the Latin that gentleman had so liberally thrown in, could the priests understand, though they were complete masters of the tongue.

As for the town itself, it was composed of detached huts, built of mud and sticks, and in keeping with the degraded condition of the poor natives, between whom and the priests and renegades, who affected to govern them, a strange confusion of understandings existed. In speaking of renegades, it may be well to mention that the town seemed to swarm with flaxen-headed children, some toddling about in their bare buff, some basking in the sun, and others devouring plantains and pomegranates. Indeed, there were various proofs of an infusion of renegade blood, rarely met with in so remote a country. Further observation also discovered the fact, that even the dogs, and the pigs, and the cattle were a cross with other species of animals, and partook largely of the spirit of animosity that ruled between the priests and the renegades. In truth, no two could be found living in harmony. And strange as it may seem, the natives of Buzabub, although bountifully supplied with whiskey, powder and priests, were at the lowest point of civilization. And yet, heaven knows, these modern messengers of civilization had done much to sweep away the primitive virtues of the poor Kaloramas.

When the ceremony of presentation was over, and such hospitalities as the town afforded proffered the general and his secretary, they were made comfortable at the house of a priest, for three days must elapse before the king's permission to proceed to Nezub, which was some ten leagues inland, would arrive; and no ambassador ever dared to advance without it. The general was also informed that it was customary for all great ambassadors to travel in a sort of palanquin, borne by four stalworth natives, who were relieved every two miles. And this journey, he was gravely assured, would occupy not less than eight days; but as the train would be accompanied by a priest and two renegades (the latter acting as interpreters), the time would pass pleasantly enough. "Odds me!" exclaimed the general; "but this

Page 250

riding in such a machine, Mr. Priest, does not comport with my notion of dignity.” “Your excellence,” replied the priest, “must remember that there are various opinions as to what constitutes true dignity. For myself, I hold to Saint Peter’s notion, that a man may maintain his dignity, though clothed in sackcloth. And since no really great ambassador ever thought of travelling in any other manner, I think you may venture to follow their example, without fear of damaging your dignity.” This so completely reconciled the general, that he declared all his objections removed, and enjoined the priest not to think him a whit behind any ambassador he might have in his eye. But Mr. Tickler was seriously discomfitted. “Pray,” said he, with an air of great anxiety, “will your reverence be good enough to say how I am to accompany his excellency, for I am a poor critic, and know but little of these affairs.”

“Secretaries,” rejoined the priest, “follow their masters, mounted on a mule, and he in turn is followed by two renegades, similarly mounted; the priest following, mounted on an ass. And this is strictly in accordance with an ancient custom, for the priest being necessary to the strict morality of the train, it is becoming that he should humble himself.” Mr. Tickler shook his head, and was evidently much disappointed at the shabby position he was to occupy in the train. Indeed, he wished himself back in New York a dozen times, and swore he would consider it a kindness if the devil had his secretaryship. Encouraged, however, with extravagant promises of what the future might have in store for him, he betook himself diligently in writing long and very eulogistic articles to the New York newspapers, in which he described the great deference paid them by the officers during the voyage, the wonderful reception at Buzabub, the great resources of the country, and the immense advantages that must result from this mission. Nor did Tickler forget to mention that General Roger Potter was exactly the man to effect all our objects. Three whole days did the cunning critic occupy in the preparation of these marvellous accounts; which were so well larded with Latin quotations that the writers for “Putnam” went into ecstasies of delight over their great literary merits.

During this time the general became a lion of no small dimensions, and whether mounted on old Battle, or afoot, was so great an object of attraction that a swarm of urchins, from the smallest toddler in his buff to the more mature imp of fourteen, persisted in following close at his heels, presenting him with pomegranates and plantains, and, indeed, offering him such salutations as their instincts directed; for they fancied him the great school-master they had been told would one day come from the East to teach them how to be great men.

Page 251

While all these things, then, were progressing, and the general seemed leaping to the apex of his fame, the officers of the ship, not content with the joke they had already perpetrated, resolved on having such a parting with him as would be both amusing and instructive. They therefore invited him to a grand banquet, which they represented as given out of sheer respect to his rare qualities as a diplomatist. And as he held all these ovations as so many jewels in the coronet of his popularity, the invitation was readily accepted. In truth, he flattered himself that news of this grand banquet would get to the ears of the king, who, seeing how much he was esteemed by his own countrymen, could not fail to make him any concession he might demand. He thereupon commanded his secretary to make him a speech of great strength and beauty, that he might astonish them quite as much with the profoundness of his learning as with the clearness of his understanding. "Faith! I am ready to write your excellency speeches by the dozen, with the quality to your mind; but as you never stick to one of them, I would suggest that if you but condescend to advance me a trifle of my salary, I can employ the time much more to my liking; for several comely damsels, with rich olive complexions, have already sang to me, and, as your excellency knows, I am a critic of tender parts."

"I see your drift, friend Tickler. But keep the devil from your elbow and you will soon forget the songs of these damsels. If they throw a sly wink or two, turn your back and walk away. Do this, and I will answer for your virtue. As to the speeches, no man could have made them more to my mind; and it was merely to show you the breadth of my own capacity that I did not stick to them."

"Yes, and there's the Latin! Though I crammed in my whole book of quotations, you would so hack it up in the delivery that neither the priests nor the devil could understand a word of it," curtly retorted Mr. Tickler.

When night came, they all prepared for the banquet, which, although not so sumptuous as those given in New York to great officials, was by no means a meagre affair, since it included a variety of dishes held as great delicacies by the Kaloramas. As to wines, the officers had an ample supply brought from the ship. All stronger beverages were got of the host of the inn in which the banquet was to come off, a fellow calling himself Fareni Faschi, but whose real name was Philip Fitzpatrick, a renegade who had committed crimes enough in New York, which place he trusted to his heels and left, in order to save his neck. Not to keep the reader longer in suspense, I will here inform him, whether gentle or simple, that no such banquet had ever before been given in Buzabub, and that General Potter took his seat on the right of the chairman, (who was no less a person than the commander!) amidst the sounding of trumpets and the jingling of symbol-bells. And so scrupulous was

Page 252

he of his uniform, that an attendant placed before him-not a napkin-but a large tablecloth, which so added to the humorous aspect of his face that even the priests present could not resist a smile. All now proceeded as jubilant as a marriage in Canon. The general gorged himself as never minister gorged himself before. Even Mr. Tickler, who sat at his right, looked with astonishment at the skill and alacrity with which his master demolished the various dishes set before him. As to the punches, highly-spiced cordials, and wines, he mixed them indiscriminately, and drank them with such a rapidity that Tickler became alarmed for the safety of his understanding. Indeed, it was so evident that his intellect was becoming deranged that the officers ordered the courses hurried as much as possible, for they were anxious to be rid of the priests, before whom they would not for the world have their country's great representative do aught damaging to his reputation. When, then, the attendants came to remove the cloth, the general looked up with astonishment, and addressed one of them thus: "I would not have you stop for me, gentlemen waiters, for I am a slow and dainty eater, and would like another turn at that well-seasoned pie." Tickler, who had been no way dainty about the number of glasses he quietly quaffed, touched his master significantly on the elbow. "Your excellency has need to look well to his manners," said he, "for those priests have their eyes polished, and are whispering no good."

"That dish of which your excellency has eaten with so much relish," rejoined the waiter, "is snale patte, a dish so rare and savory that it is all eaten up: but if your excellency will be patient we will have some more prepared expressly for him."

"Heavens, sir! spare yourself the trouble; for if it be such meat I have been eating, why then, to the priests with it; for I shall soon need a doctor." The priests overheard this remark, and thereupon arose, returned thanks, and retired. The chairman rose as soon as they were gone and made a speech, which he addressed to our hero, and with such clever irony that he sent the whole company into a titter. He congratulated our country on the possession of so famous a diplomatist as General Potter, a gentleman whose name would be a gem in our history, and whose wonderful achievements as a statesman had shed lustre upon our country's fame. "We have accompanied him here in safety; we regret to part with him; but feeling that he will prove himself a faithful sentinel of our country's interests, we devoutly pray that his mission may be an unprecedented round of successes," said he. Indeed, he astonished every one present with his facility for paying compliments, and so confused the general that he was at a loss what to say in reply. In short, he declared government had a rich inheritance in such persons, and was moved by a wise policy in sending abroad gentlemen not encumbered with a whole Babylon of tongues.

Page 253

When the chairman had finished his speech the general rose with great pomp and circumstance to reply. He cast a wild and confused look about him, and then paused as if to collect his thoughts. "It must not be said of me that making speeches is not one of my functions, for, as your honor knows, I have made a score of them recently; but that which I just now had so pat at my tongue's end, and was just the speech for you, has got right out of my head, which just now feels like a split mountain. What you say of my services to my country is true enough; for I am none of your thieving politicians, but a man who acts under the patronage of honesty, which heaven knows is enough for any patriot. Faith of my father! and I can tell you that these expressions of sincerity and esteem gratify me much, for they are like so many suns and stars in the firmament of my glory-"

"If your excellency would only throw in a little of the Latin," interrupted Mr. Tickler, in a whisper; "such another chance will not offer these three years." But he resumed, heedless of the admonition: "And I would have every man who goes abroad carry his country in his pocket, not forgetting to take it out now and then for the purpose of worship." The speaker here became confused, and after making several ineffectual efforts to continue, settled into his chair and held his peace, as the commander and most of the guests took their departure, much gratified with the evening's entertainment. The general was now left with the officers and his secretary. And these fine young gentlemen were so bent on mischief that they pledged the "ambassador" and Mr. Tickler in bumpers, and with such rapidity that both were soon in a state of stupefaction. And for the nonce they laid the general full length upon the table. Mr. Tickler they placed in a sort of pillory with his hands and feet secured, his face painted most hideously, and the stuffed image of a huge Indian of savage aspect, fronting him, his spear poised.

And now, when it was passed midnight; when every snake in Buzabub had coiled himself up, shut his eyes and gone quietly to sleep; when pestering centipedes, lizards, and cockroaches were gone peaceably to their holes; and not even a monkey winked, lest he disturb the elements, which were hushed into perfect silence,-there might have been seen at the door of the inn no less an animal than old Battle, harnessed to a vehicle quite resembling those hearses used in the villages of New Jersey, and presenting in the pale moonlight a figure both forlorn and ludicrous. And this was further increased by a figure representing Death, mounted upon the poor animal, with his scythe and glass adjusted-the whole presenting a picture of death very like that described in Revelations as seated upon the pale horse. The face of the figure was deathly pale, his raiment was a sheet, and a tall, white cap was on his head; and for the rest he was in his buff. On the hinder part of the vehicle a figure of Time

Page 254

was mounted; while still another, representing the devil, was gravely mounted on a seat in front. Four mischievously-inclined gentlemen now made their appearance, staggering under the weight of our great and wonderful “ambassador,” whom they thrust, head-foremost, into the vehicle. Never was minister plenipotentiary handled with so little ceremony: never was so famous a war-horse made to perform such shabby service, to the serious damage of his master’s great reputation.

At the word, this curiously-equipped cortege drove rapidly to a great grotto, in which the distinguished dead of Nezub were placed, preparatory to being prayed through purgatory by the priests. And here, having safely secured and barricaded the entrance, General Roger Potter—statesman, philosopher, warrior, and politician—was left to sleep in the company of his faithful horse and the dead.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Which treats of what took place when the general and his secretary gained their understandings.

Like one slowly regaining from a state of stupor, with a generally disordered system and grievously sore bones, the general came to his understanding on the following morning, and to his utter astonishment found himself in a position where he could neither move to the right nor the left. All was dark, and a silence as of the tomb reigned. He had a dim recollection of the banquet; the vagaries of his past life flashed through his mind; the grand achievements he had fancied marking his future dwindled into disappointment. “As I’m a sinner,” said he, struggling in vain to extricate himself, “this mission of mine is not all sunshine and feather beds.” He now heard the kicking and frisking of his horse, and becoming somewhat alarmed, bawled out at the top of his voice for Father Segong and his secretary. But as his wily secretary was in no condition to come to his relief, even had he been within hearing distance, and the good priest was fast asleep in his chamber, the only reply he got was the echoes of his own bawlings. Mistaking the nature of the sounds, he came to the conclusion that the good priest had turned joker, and was trifling with his misfortunes. Losing his patience, then, he called his elbows into service, and succeeded after much perturbation in escaping feet-foremost from his shell. And as he stood erect upon his feet, a thousand queer fancies again crowded upon his mind and so haunted his imagination that all his courage vanished, and he began to feel in his heart that he had fallen into a trance, and been buried alive by the priests, who had left him in a state of probation until they could find time to pray him through purgatory. He felt and felt about the vehicle and the horse, who was so high of bone that he at once recognized him. “Battle! Battle! my trusty friend!” he exclaimed, almost

Page 255

dissolved in tears, "could I have seen that this was to be our end!" And with these words of condolence he patted him upon the neck until the animal was so deeply moved that he acknowledged the kindness with a neigh that sent all the bats in the grotto to fluttering; the noise of which was like distant thunder, and sent such a thrill of terror to the heart of our warrior that he opened not his mouth for several minutes. Indeed, as his courage had run out, he was upon the eve of giving himself up to despair. But discovering the cause, and suddenly calling to mind that he was a military man, as well as a politician, he regained his courage for the nonce, and feeling for his sword, which, fortunately, he had left at home, declared he would be the death of every bat in the cave.

The writer of this history, duly mindful of the value of truth, and moved by the great regard for that high honor and sincerity which rules at this day, feels constrained here to confess that the general was not without a suspicion that there might be a joke at the bottom of it all. He therefore commenced searching for an opening, but had not proceeded far when a faint gleam of light flashed through a crevice near the entrance, and, to his horror, discovered rows of rude coffins, standing upright, but with the ghastly faces of their inmates exposed, and made more unnatural by a pale glow of light playing over them. "Protect me, O father, protect me, for I am but a weak sinner, at thy mercy," he muttered, and fell upon his knee, as every ounce of his courage left him; several times he essayed to continue his prayer, but as praying was no part of his political creed, and was little practised by military men, his tongue failed to serve him. Sure now that he had been buried alive, he gave out several loud shrieks, and regaining his thoughts, said in a low, supplicating tone, "I acknowledge, O forgiving Lord, to have committed manifold sins, and to have merited the devil and his punishment, since, being a politician, I have told lies enough to sink a kingdom. Forgive me for the many stories I have told. I never was in Mexico, and solemnly declare that if you will be merciful to me, and restore me to my family, that I may not die in this charnel house, to forsake the life of a politician, and so devote myself to doing your will that when the end comes I shall surely be fit for the kingdom of heaven. Yes, merciful and forgiving Lord, there's that story of my first adventure in New York; draw near and forgive me, for I solemnly declare there is not a grain of truth in the whole of it, as you will see by comparing it with the facts of history." Again his tongue failed to serve him in prayer; again he yielded to his doubts; again he commenced shrieking at the very top of his voice. And this proved a most fortunate expedient, for an Indian girl, straying that way, overheard these distressing cries, and surmising that they proceeded from the grotto, hastened to the door, and letting down a little trap, a stream of light

Page 256

was admitted into the cave, when she discovered the general, who as suddenly started to his feet, and forgetting his promises to the angels, ran to the trap, and looking out into a sort of trench, demanded of the girl, (she was running terrified unto death,) that she stop and relieve him from his perilous position. But the girl ran screaming to the inn, and bid the host get to the grotto, “for” said she, in her own tongue, “I saw the devil in it, and he is surely the devil, for my eyes are good, and he looks exactly as father Segong describes him.”

The host and several of the officers, swearing to have vengeance of the perpetrators of so foul a deed, hastened to the grotto, tore away the barricades, and affecting great indignation at the insult offered their representative, set him free. Indeed he had no sooner sallied forth than they beset him with offers of assistance to ferret out and hang the robbers, who they had not a doubt were the authors of this grave attempt on his life. They also vied with each other in offering him their regrets, which were bestowed with so much apparent sincerity that he was almost moved to tears, and at once set himself down as a man in no want of warm and true-hearted friends. “Verily, gentlemen, I thought my end was come, but my courage was not shaken a whit; I just resigned myself, for the soldier who fears death deserves a good hanging. But, pray Mr. Landlord, for you are no fool, what sort of a place do you call that! And if you say it was robbers who played me this dirty trick, why, I am content; but I have a notion that the priests know something about it, and in truth took this method of being rid of me, as well as getting a job at praying me into a better world.” The general said this with so much simplicity of manner that the officers were astonished at his self-complacency. As to the host, he replied with becoming gravity, assuring the general that it was no trick of the priests, who were good and holy men, but of the Tutack robbers, who came from a neighboring country, and were much given to carrying off travellers of distinction, for whose ransom they demanded large sums. “If you will but give me the name of this country,” interposed one of the officers, “we will sail there with the frigate, and take revenge for this insult offered to our representative; yes, we will blow down every town on the seaboard.”

“If there be towns to blow down, the order must come from me, gentlemen. But we will let that matter rest until I get my army,” rejoined the general, rubbing his eyes, and continuing to disfigure his face by mixing the colors with which they had painted it.

They had now reached the inn when they assisted him in washing his face, which they swore the bats had sadly disfigured. They also convinced him that they had been since grey dawn, searching the country round for him, which increased his confidence in their sincerity. And when he was restored to his natural brightness, and felt within himself that his dignity had not received the slightest damage, and indeed that such small misfortunes in no way interfered with his capacity to make great treaties in behalf of his

country, the officers escorted him to the house of good father Segong, and then took a final leave of him. Not a word did they lisp concerning what had befallen his secretary.

Page 257

On entering the house, which he did with a slight misgiving as to the quality of reception he would meet, the priest greeted him warmly, and made known to him the anxiety he had felt at his absence. "For," said he, "prayers were postponed, and breakfast has waited your excellency nearly an hour." Being told that his secretary was in the next room, he immediately repaired thither, and was much concerned to find him in great grief of mind. "If your excellency will but discharge me here, and put me in a way to get the trifle that is due me, that I may not starve while seeking my way home, he shall have my prayers all the rest of his life," spoke the secretary, looking up with so solemn a countenance that no man of heart could have withheld his pity.

"Pray, friend Tickler, what has befallen you?" inquired the general, with an air of astonishment.

"Yes! what has befallen me? That's neither here nor there! If instead of assisting you in making treaties, going to court, and enjoying ladies of distinction, the functions of a secretary consist in his being the victim of everybody's jokes, and getting trundled about like a Connecticut bumpkin, then I have no love for the office, and am resolved to return to my profession of critic; for I hold it better a man starve to death, than to be killed outright by these tortures." Not satisfied with this explanation, the general demanded that he should proceed. Tickler thereupon gave him an account of what had occurred; saying that when he came to his senses, he found the Indian facing him, with a poised spear; and indeed everything that took place, except the fury excited by his fears, and the manner in which he alternately shouted and prayed until he was released; to all of which the general listened attentively, but lisped not a word concerning his own troubles. In short, it was no difficult matter to see that Mr. Tickler had been harshly dealt with. "Friend Tickler!" exclaimed the general, "being a man of strong understanding, it is not becoming of you to take these trifles so to heart. And you are mistaken if you set it down to those young gentlemen, for I can swear it was done by the Tutack robbers, who were bent on having your money. But remember, that the more fortitude you display during the assaults of your enemies, the better will you be prepared to enjoy the luxuries that are in store for us both. Pray remember what glory there is in being a great diplomatist, which I warrant to make you. As to money, why, your pockets shall be full when we get to Nezub. Drive these trifles from your mind, let your thoughts be on your country, and when the time comes, I will make you a major, for I see you have gallantry!"

"It is well your excellency says that, since no man can say aught against my gallantry. And if it be to put it to this test, then I stick to your excellency, if he go to the devil." They now returned and took breakfast with the priest, receiving his blessing when it was over, and then proceeded to make preparations for the journey.



Page 258

CHAPTER L.

In which the reader will find the most faithful account of the journey to Nezub; and also what took place when general Potter was presented to the king.

When it was high noon, the usually quiet town of Buzabub was suddenly thrown into a state of great commotion. Horns were sounded, reeds blown, and bells jingled. In fine, so many and various were the ways in which homage was paid to the departure of the "great ambassador," that it would be impossible to enumerate them in this history.

A messenger now entered the priest's house to announce the readiness of the train; and as his reverence had prepared his saddle-bags and umbrella, and laid in a good stock of provisions, he led the way into the street, followed by the general and his secretary. Here they found the renegades, both clad in loose robes, already mounted on their mules, which displeased the good father, for he was a man of courtesy, and knew what was due to rank. After some debate as to the position old Battle should take, it was agreed that he follow next the palanquin, and be led by a native; and this so delighted the general, that he promised to remember it all the rest of his life. He then took his seat, satisfied with himself and all the rest of mankind. And the priest having mounted his ass, and Mr. Tickler his mule, this wonderful train of cattle, so remarkably mounted, set off under a burning sun, the general in the van, and the priest bringing up the rear, with his broad umbrella spread. As for the provision bearers, they shouldered their packs, and were followed by a tumultuous throng, sounding horns and cheering until they had reached some distance beyond the town.

For seven days they journeyed in this pleasant manner, resting to take refreshments three times a day, pitching their tents at night beneath palm trees, or in mango groves, interspersing mass and prayers with various amusements for the diversion of the general and the priest, who was a good lover of jokes, and indeed had no very high opinion of those of his order who go about with doleful countenances. And when they were halted, the general got of the priest much concerning the differences existing between his order and the renegades, between whom a deadly feud existed, both struggling for an ascendancy in the government. Tickler also found excellent companions in the renegades, with whom he discussed matters of ancestry and books, of which both professed to know much, though truly they were ignorant men, and as great knaves as ever left their own country to pester the authorities of another. They were also curious to learn of Tickler what had brought his master to Kalorama; but on that score he was as ignorant as themselves, though of his master's influence at home he assured them no man had more. He also gave them a wonderful account of his many achievements in war.

Page 259

Thus they journeyed, the simple-minded inhabitants of each village through which they passed welcoming them with salutations of joy, paying great reverence to the priest and his ass, and regaling them with fruits and such other refreshments as their humble plantations afforded.

Starting early on the morning of the eighth day, they had proceeded some four miles up a gradually inclining slope, when the City of Nezub appeared in sight, on the brow of a hill, almost buried in a grove of palms, and surrounded by picturesque scenery, over which the clear atmosphere threw a charm not easily described. Clumps of mango, palm, and olive trees gave a beautiful contrast to the softer herbage on the slopes; while the earth seemed teeming with the richest flowers, impregnating the air with their sweet odors.

When they were within a mile of the city, numerous shabby-looking dignitaries, and a great concourse of half-naked people, came out to meet them, and amidst music and rejoicing accompanied them to the city, and indeed, seemed anxious to carry the priest and his ass on their shoulders, though they were inclined to make derision of old Battle's shabby appearance. And now, when the bearers had carried the general to a little cottage, provided for him at the expense of the king, and he was safely lodged in his quarters, the good priest took leave of him with a prayer for his soul, and went to his home feeling that he had rendered all the service required of him. "Upon my soul," said the general, when the priest was gone, "but they would not make all this ceremony if they knew the drift of my mind. Take notice, Tickler, that they have here a fine country, which is so scurvily governed, that to my mind there would be no harm in taking it away from them."

"Your excellency knows best about that," replied Mr. Tickler, "but the devil take me if I want to share the hanging you might get in playing at that game. Please run your eye over the instructions, and see what they say on that head."

"I see, friend Tickler, that you are not skilled in these matters, for you cannot tell what is in the egg until you break it. And as it is customary with the best of our ministers to look over instead of into their instructions, you will not find me behind any of them, for I intend to astonish with the audacity of my undertakings. Mark that well. And if you have not courage to join me in these things, why, the quicker you get home the better, for I hold that a man of your metal is always best off where his gallantry and such other graces as heaven has blessed him with will attract most adorers."

Page 260

“Faith of my mother! but your excellency talks queerly. I have not a dollar in my pocket, and you bid me get home over a road lined with robbers” interrupted Mr. Tickler. “Now that I am here, and owe a service to the country of my adoption, it shall not be said that I left your excellency, who will see my courage come out when he affords me an opportunity.” They now spent three days in close consultation on the precise language necessary in addressing the king at the first audience, which he had signified his readiness, to grant on the morning of the fourth day. The general insisted that it be interspersed with so much latin as to confuse both the king and the interpreter, though both were profound scholars. “I have rare skill in mixing latin, as your excellency knows but you grind it up so in the delivery that neither the king nor the devil can understand a word of it. And as your English is good enough for the best of them, I would advise you to stick to it, since no great military man ever gained anything by dabbling in classics.” This so touched the chord on which all the general’s weaknesses hung that he went right into a rhapsody of delight. “I begin to be of your way of thinking, friend Tickler,” said he, tossing his head approvingly. “I have speeches enough in my head, and am resolved to make the first that comes to my tongues end.”

And now, when the morning on which they were to have an audience with the king was come, the general arrayed himself in his best uniform, not forgetting his three cornered hat and white gloves; and mounting old Battle as Mr. Tickler mounted his mule, they proceeded to the king’s palace, a rude building of palm logs, situated in a pretty square, and surrounded by shade trees and clustering vines. Here they were received with the blowing of horns and jingling of bells; which continued to keep up a deafening sound while they were being conducted into the presence of his majesty, who wore a bright red cloak, and a hat quite resembling that of a Beadle. In complexion his majesty was a shade darker than ebony, and as to figure, he was as stalwarth a sovereign, though perhaps not as clean a one, as could be found in all the kingdoms round about: in short, if his majesty was none of the cleanest, he at least wore a contented air, which is rare with kings. And as he sat on his throne of ingeniously woven palm-leaves, he seemed more intent on viewing his pipes and holding a parley with various priests than listening to the address of the famous representative. Indeed I very much doubt if a wiser king ever lived, for he evinced a happy indifference for anything but his own comfort. A fellow of ponderous belly and face, calling himself Don Perez Goneti, but whose real name was Peletiah Anseeth, a renegade, and as arrant a rascal as ever left Georgia to save his neck, now came forward, and addressing the general, informed him that he was the king’s keeper, and lawgiver to the nation. This announcement

Page 261

surprised the general, for the man was dressed in a yellow tunic, with blue tights, and a red ruffle about his neck. In fine, it must be confessed that this Don Perez Goneti bore a much stronger resemblance to an escaped convict, or a street juggler, than to a great lawgiver. A consultation now took place between this great lawgiver and the general, as to whether the speech of the latter would be acceptable to his majesty. "For," said the lawgiver, "his majesty is no fool." "And if he takes me for one, it will not be wise of him!" replied the general. The lawgiver now presented the general, with uncommon ceremony. And although the king bowed, it was evident he regarded the plenipotentiary with inward suspicion, and would have thanked heaven to be rid of both him and his secretary. The general tugged up his breeches, and with an air of self-complacency truly admirable, spoke as follows, the lawgiver acting as interpreter. "May it please your majesty, to whose gracious consideration I commend myself, I am general Roger Sherman Potter, of whom I make no doubt your majesty has heard enough said. And this gentleman (here he turned to Mr. Tickler) is my secretary, perhaps not so well known, but, nevertheless, a man of reputation."

The king yawned and inquired of his minister what the queer looking man said.

"He says your majesty is a great potentate, which is true enough. But he requests that you acknowledge him the greatest living ambassador! Honestly, your majesty, he has great skill as a jester, which I take it is why he was sent here."

"Let him proceed, for if he be a fool, what he says touching our greatness may be turned to profit. Let him proceed, that he prove the wisdom of his government in sending him." The lawgiver now bid the general proceed.

"Here are my credentials," resumed the general, "and if your majesty will run his eye over them, he will see that the president of the United States accredits me minister extraordinary to your majesty's court. That being a proof of his good will, he hopes you will return it with similar testimony. Of the good nature of our president no man can say a word but in praise; and I can swear he entertains a high opinion of your royal person, is earnestly desirous of preserving peace between us, and resolved to respect that comity which should rule among nations so distinguished, and without which neither of us can get along, seeing that we have so many sympathies in common. As for myself, all I have to say is that your majesty will find my conduct so squared as to be acceptable in your eyes, for Heaven is with the peacemakers." Here the general paused as Don Perez Goneti proceeded to the interpretation.

Page 262

"The man talks so strangely, that may the priests hang me if I know what to make of it. But this I do know: he says many things that would not be pleasing to your majesty's refined ears; such for instance, as that your majesty governs so badly, and has so little knowledge for turning the vast resources of his country to advantage, that the president of the United States seriously contemplates taking the matter in hand, for he knows it would be acceptable to the saints as well as your ill-governed people." At this, his sable majesty went right into a passion and so conducted himself, ordering the queer strangers, as he called them, taken into the plaza and hanged, without further ceremony, that General Potter and Mr. Tickler (neither of whom could understand a word he said) set him down for a madman, inquired of the lawgiver what it all meant, and began to have fears for their safety. Indeed the state of confusion that reigned in the audience chamber came well-nigh putting an end to this remarkable mission. "Pray Mr. Lawgiver, what is the matter with the king, for he acts like a man who has lost his understanding?" inquired the general.

"It is only a freak of his; and if you would have the truth of it, I can tell you, that he is berating these vagabond priests, who give him no peace of his life." Don Perez Goneti then turned to the king, and said: "If your majesty will but listen another minute, he may hear something more pleasing, for the ambassador says he has something good in store."

"Let him proceed then," replied the king, "and if he redeem himself, the hanging shall be spared." The general resumed, while Mr. Tickler trembled in his boots.

"It is come to the president's knowledge, that your majesty is in possession of several valuable Islands, which in their present condition yield no revenue. Therefore he has directed me to say that he will relieve you of them, and turn their fruits to such uses as Heaven ordained they should fulfill. And I can tell your majesty that the president has a remarkable taste for Islands, and so long as he can get them, cares not a whit for the means!"

"May it please your majesty, this great ambassador has a most fertile imagination, to which he adds a supple tongue. He says the evils of your reign are the natural results of the mischievous interference on the part of the priests; and that the President of the United States, having resolved that this state of things shall no longer exist, has instructed him to seize upon all your Islands, and turn their fruits to such uses as Heaven has ordained." This so exasperated the king, that he swore, in the language of his country, that he verily believed the persons before him vagabonds sent by the devil to disturb the peace of his country. Nor indeed were the priests backward in stirring the mischief, for they whispered among themselves that he ought to be well hanged for the slur flung at their order. "Take

Page 263

these men away!" exclaimed the king in the height of his passion, which he was saved from further betraying by the uplifted hand of the priests; "and tomorrow morning at parrot-wink let them be well hanged in the plaza." The king and the priests now retired in great confusion, which so astounded General Potter and his secretary that they must needs inquire what it all meant, for their difference of tongues left a gloomy void between them. And when it was explained by the lawgiver, at whose mercy they were, they looked one at the other in consternation, and were led away perplexed and full of sorrow.

CHAPTER LI.

Which explains why Don Perez Goneti practised the deception; and of the wonderful discovery of A new mode of punishing ambassadors.

When it was night, and not a beetle was heard, and the guards found great difficulty in keeping awake, Don Perez Goneti came to the house of General Potter, disguised in the robe of a priest. He found the general engaged over dispatches to his government, and letters to his wife Polly; in both of which he set forth in sad and pitiful sentences, "the dire fate" that awaited him. As for Mr. Tickler, he had not an ounce of courage left, but was nevertheless writing articles for the seven New York newspapers, of which he was correspondent. According to Tickler, as set forth in these grave articles, no greater outrage had ever been committed upon the unoffending representatives of the United States, and for which he demanded summary vengeance. "Gentlemen!" said the intruder, discovering himself, "I am Don Perez Goneti, the lawgiver! Fear not, for I come to cheer you. This king, you must know, is a great knave, and so under the thumb of the priests that an honest man like myself is not safe a day in his office. Having long meditated his overthrow, I come to offer you the hand of friendship in your distress, and to say that if you will join me in carrying out my design (I have a strong party at my command), we will teach this king what it is to be a subject. By the saints, he has no good will toward your country, as you have seen."

"What you propose is exactly to my liking, for I must tell you that the very same thing has occupied my thoughts; but since I am to be hanged in the morning, why there's an end to all." Don Perez smiled, and assured the general there would be no hanging, since the king was a great coward, and feared the penalty of such an act. "Honestly, your excellency, he has already revoked the sentence, and substituted a novel but very harmless punishment, which when you have endured, he will order you out of the country." This cheering news sent a thrill of joy to Tickler's very heart, for he had been mourning his fate, dissolved in tears; declaring at the same time that dying in the service of one's country was not so desirable a business. Don Perez and the general now held a long consultation, and having sworn mutual hatred of the king and priests,

agreed to join forces and seek his speedy overthrow. Don Perez also took charge of their letters and dispatches, which he promised to forward to Jolliffee, a town on the coast, between which certain conspirators kept up a communication with New York.

Page 264

Having restored the general and his secretary to a state of happiness, Don Perez took his departure, when they went quietly to bed, giving themselves no more trouble about the hanging, and entertaining only a slight misgiving as to the nature of the punishment substituted. But of this they were made conscious when morning came. And here I venture to assert that not even the most famous inventor of prison discipline for once dreamed of so curious a mode of punishment as that I am about to describe, and which I seriously recommend as a cure that may be profitably applied to vagrants, idle politicians, and all such persons as live by destroying the peace of the community.

When breakfast was over, three solemn-faced priests, followed by two attendants, entered General Roger Potter's apartment, to the no small discomfiture of Mr. Tickler, to whose mind all the horrors of hanging suddenly returned. "Gentlemen," spoke one of the priests, "we are come to prepare your souls for the punishment which it has pleased our royal master to order." "Pray, your reverence, your royal master had better be mindful lest this punishment cost him his crown. But as you are humane gentlemen, be good enough to enlighten us as to what sort of punishment his Majesty has substituted for the hanging?" inquired the now undaunted general.

"It is enjoined that we hold our peace," replied the priest; "but of the punishment you will know quick enough." And now, when the priests had prayed devoutly for the souls of the culprits, they accompanied them to a building bearing a strong resemblance to a Vermont corn-shed, where two attendants, having first stripped "the Ambassador" and his secretary to their shirts, chained them back to back, and in this pitiful plight compelled them to sit on a huge block of ice, until it was dissolved. And when this punishment was inflicted, it was ordered by the king that they be conveyed beyond the limits of the state. "I know not what you think of this punishment, friend Tickler," said the general, evincing much discomfiture as he took his seat "but to my mind, this being condemned to sit on a block of ice until it dissolves, in nowise becomes my military position, to say nothing of my standing as a minister."

"Faith, your excellency, I begin to think we have both been well fooled, for the smart of this ingenious punishment is more than I have mettle to endure." Tickler had scarce uttered this sentence when he began to scream at the very top of his voice; and to declare the pain so acute that he would much prefer the hanging.

"I am fast coming to your way of thinking, friend Tickler," replied the general, as the priests began offering them consolation, "for every bone from the top of my head to the soul of my feet begins yielding to the pain, which feels as if ten thousand needles were shooting through me."

Page 265

"Heavens!" exclaimed Tickler, "if your reverences will only relieve us from these torments, you may commend our souls to whom you please, for I have no ambition but to get home. If his excellency wants to die a great martyr, I have no objection!" Here Mr. Tickler relapsed into a state of melancholy, and gave vent to his feelings in a flood of tears. But the priests only looked grave, and would have offered them absolution without a change of countenance. "Bear up, bear up, friend;" rejoined general Potter, "and keep in mind that you suffer for your country's sake. It will soon be over, for the ice melts fast. And if you write not of this outrage, so that it shall fire every heart at home for revenge, then I am much mistaken in your capacity as a critic." Thus bitterly they lamented their fate, until the severity of the pain had well nigh exhausted their strength, and left them in a condition which will be described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER LII.

Which Records several amusing things that took place when the ice was dissolved.

Novel as the punishment I have described in the previous chapter may appear to the grave reader, it was not without its severity. If any one doubt this, let him but try the experiment, and I warrant that a few seconds will be sufficient to convince him; and if he be of a merry turn of mind, let him get some kind friend to try the experiment in his presence; but be sure that the performance takes place in the presence of not less than three priests, all of whom must preserve the most solemn demeanor. And now to the matter of the release.

When then the ice was melted, and the culprits were restored to their clothes, the general thanked the priests for their great kindness, and congratulated himself that this most remarkable event, which completely put to blush all the other events of his life, had in no way damped his ardor for great military exploits. "I have great discernment, Tickler," said the general, rubbing his haunches, "and unless the fates come against me, rely upon it this envy of the king will cost him dearly. A little more strength at our backs, and I had made him dance to the tune of this sword of mine." "If your excellency would take my advice," replied Tickler, "he would get speedily home, for if this barbarous vagabond of a king should take it into his head to give us another melting down on the ice, I would not give a straw for either of our lives." An escort, mounted on mules and asses, now arrived and put an end to this dialogue, for it was the signal for the general and his secretary to pack up their alls. And this being done with the assistance of the priests, they were soon mounted, (the general upon old Battle and Mr. Tickler on his mule,) and on their way to Jollifee, a small town on the coast,

Page 266

which they reached in due season, and where this remarkable plenipotentiary spent several months unmolested. I say unmolested, for in truth all trace of him, so far as the public were concerned, seemed to have been obliterated for a time; but he was in reality busying himself carrying on a deep intrigue with Don Perez, for getting possession of the kingdom; as to Mr. Tickler, he betook himself to studying the language of the country, his want of which he discovered had nearly cost him his life.

While then they sojourned at Jollifee, various remarkable dispatches were transmitted to Washington, in all of which the general set forth the grievous injury done him, calling upon the government to take the matter seriously in hand. And as it had got to the ears of the senate at Washington that the administration had not only sent a fool, but a crazy man, to represent us abroad, sundry grave senators demanded the production of these despatches, since they had a curious itching to peep into them. And as the president lost no time in complying with this polite request, and my desire to relieve the reader's impatience has never been doubted, I have purloined one, which I insert here for his diversion, pledging my whole stock of honor that it is a precious sample of the flock, and reads as follows: "*Dispatch* No. 3. "*Jollifee*, in the Kingdom of Kalorama, October 14th, 18-. To His Hon. the Secretary of State for the United States.

"As minister plenipotentiary to this Court, you will expect me to keep you advised of all that is going on. Before you read this, then, just run your eye over dispatches one and two, which, as you are no fool, will straighten your ideas concerning my doings. Now, all the ado that was made over me on my arrival, the triumph with which I was carried in a chair to Nezub, and the courtesy condescended by the king in providing shelter for us, was, as your honor will regret to hear, all deception. The king is an arrant knave, and the priests have so filled his head with evil thoughts that he burns to have a quarrel with us. The poor natives feel well enough toward us; and as to myself, they came to look upon me as the light of their deliverance. And with this advantage, I had resolved to show them that I was the man for their cause; for I am not to be terrified by a savage, and in acting the part of a good Christian we also serve God. Being a peaceable gentleman, as your honor knows, I squared my address to meet all the demands of courtesy. But as your honor instructed me that it was the president's most anxious desire that I get as many of the king's islands as I could conveniently, I must tell you that no sooner had I touched on that point than he went right into a passion, conducting himself very like a New York alderman, and ordering that I be hanged. And what made the matter worse I had not a word of the language of the country at my tongue's end. But the king had not courage enough to execute the

Page 267

hanging, and so, after chaining me to my secretary, the fellow condemned me to sit naked for two hours on a block of ice, which I would have your honor know, is a punishment no man need envy. My great courage and the fact that it is an honor to die in the service of our country was all that saved me. And now, when you have let your patriotism boil, pray, consider this matter gravely; and don't forget to tell the president that with a few sturdy fellows at my back and I had made short work of the savage who has sent me into exile at this place, where I intend remaining for some time. With great consideration, I remain, &c., &c.,

"Roger Sherman Potter, Minister."

The reading of this curious document afforded the senate no little diversion, while to the government it was a fatal stab, for it discovered the queer order of intellects it had chosen to perform its offices abroad. It is scarcely necessary to add that the senate, though proverbially good natured, made it incumbent on the administration to recall this wonderful diplomatist at an early day. When then this news was conveyed to the general he snapped his fingers, and instead of taking the matter seriously to heart, as is common with many of our venerable diplomatists, directed his secretary to say in reply, that although the office had not yet afforded him enough to pay his debts he freely relinquished it: indeed that having got better business he was glad enough to be rid of an office that had a dozen times nearly brought him to death's door.

The secret of this independence on the part of General Potter was soon discovered. Don Perez Goneti had declared against the government, and had taken the field against the king and his followers, with a band of rebels, bent on having revenge of the priests and possession of the kingdom: while in reply to sundry dispatches addressed to Glenmoregain, describing that he had made such movements as placed the kingdom exactly between his thumbs, the general had received letters advising him of the shipment of a whole cargo of as good vagabonds as were to be had in the New York market. In truth it was wonderful to see how credulous this opulent merchant was; and how readily he fell into all the visionary schemes for overthrowing governments that had their origin in the disordered brain of my hero. As for generals, the large-eyed merchant had consigned my hero no less than a whole mob, no two of whom could be found to agree on a single subject, if you except emptying the contents of a good bottle. And I verily believe had General Roger Potter fancied a kingdom in some remote corner of the South Sea, Glenmoregain would have furnished him the means to get possession of it, though there was no earthly prospect of its yielding him a dollar profit.

And now, having got matters to his entire satisfaction, the general flattered himself that as he was clear of all diplomatic responsibilities, nothing now remained to put him in a position to have revenge of his enemies but the arrival of these fighting vagabonds and generals, at the head of whom he would, when mounted on old Battle, proceed to the

relief of Don Perez Goneti, who had proclaimed death to the priests and liberty to the poor Kaloramas.

Page 268

For what took place on the landing of these vagabonds, as also the battle of the banana hills, the greatest battle ever fought in modern times, the reader is referred to the next chapter.

CHAPTER LIII.

Which describes the arrival of an army of vagabonds; and how the great battle of the banana hills was fought.

General Potter was not kept long waiting for means to prove himself a great warrior, for the cargo of vagabonds, described so exultingly by Glenmoregain as of the choicest kind, arrived early one morning, and conducted themselves so riotously that the simple-minded people of quiet Jollifee were thrown into a state of great excitement, and imagining them demons escaped from the infernal regions, took to their heels and ran terrified out of town. And this was regarded as a great blessing, for the vagabond army, numbering not less than five hundred, took possession of their houses and made clean work of their poultry yards, which fortunately for the Commander-in-chief were well stocked. But what pleased General Potter most was that Glenmoregain advised him of his intention to ship a dozen more just such cargoes, for there was no lack of such vagabonds in New York, and heaven knew it would be a blessing to get rid of.

And when they had sent terror and dismay to the hearts of the poor natives, and plundered their homes, and revelled to their heart's content, General Potter, feeling in every inch of him how great it was to be Commander-in-chief, directed that his generals appear before him, that he might consult with them concerning various projects of war he had in his head. In obedience then to this sum-mons there appeared before him at least twenty generals and as many major-generals; not one of whom had ever scented the perfume of battle, for ill truth they were dilapidated politicians, and editors, whose lack of brains and love of the bottle had brought them to the very verge of distress. And when they had partaken of the General's good cheer, he addressed them as follows: "Gentlemen! conscious that you are all brave soldiers, I would have you listen with becoming gravity to what I have to say; for I am no fool, and intend to have satisfaction of this King for the insult he offered to our country in compelling me to sit upon the ice. Know then that I have resolved to make the penalty the loss of his kingdom; and as I see you are all patriots, pray bear in mind how great is the undertaking. If we fail, why, then there will be enough to sneer at us; if we be victorious, then the valor of our arms will be sung and glorified in many lands. Remember that success closes malicious mouths. Be heroes then, see that your swords be sharp and your wits not blunted; for I hold that there is no judgment

Page 269

so just as that of a country conferring honors upon the brave; and he who earns the glory shall have it. As to myself, you shall see more of me when the enemy affords me a chance. But forget not that my motto is: "Compositum jus fasque animi," which, seeing that you are all scholars, I make no doubt, is familiar enough to you. To-morrow we will march against the enemy, so let no man say he is sick."

The generals were not a little diverted by this speech, which I venture to assert was never excelled for originality, though many stranger addresses have been made by Commanders-in-Chief to their officers. Indeed they were not long in discovering all the weaknesses of the man, and questioned among themselves whether it were better to yield him explicit obedience or set him down for a fool and treat him accordingly. They however took their departure, promising that nothing should be left undone; in fine that his orders would be obeyed to the letter.

And when they were gone, General Potter shrugged his shoulders, and looking askant at his secretary, who had remained silent during the interview, said: "Honestly, Mr. Tickler, I would like to have your opinion respecting these gentlemen generals of mine, for they seem a set of scurvy fellows, and have much need of raiment." Whispering, with his lips to Tickler's ear, he continued, "and there is a flavor about them by no means agreeable. And unless I be a bad prophet, either the devil has been painting all their noses, or they have long been familiar with the bottle."

"Faith of the saints, if your excellency would know what I think of them, it is this-that, barring you have the capacity of Wellington and Napoleon combined, you will have your hands full in keeping these generals from making war upon one another; though you may find it difficult to keep the army to their fighting when the enemy appears."

"I have them in my power, Tickler," replied the general, giving his head a significant toss; "and if they keep not peace between themselves then I will order them all hanged. And as the rules of the service must not be broken, I will take good care that they show me that deference due to my high position. What is more, friend Tickler, you shall be judge in all these matters, which is an honor of no mean quality; and which is here conferred upon you out of respect to your great learning." Mr. Tickler shook his head, and stroked his beard, despondingly. "It is well enough to be judge, your excellency; but as I have a fear the honors you seem so free to lavish upon me would not keep house well with my poverty, I would prefer first to have that relieved. Do not forget that our man has fed us on stolen provisions for these three weeks," replied Mr. Tickler. An end was put to this dialogue by the general reminding Mr. Tickler that men of great learning ought always to be patriots, since history furnished proofs enough of their great endurance under poverty.

Page 270

On the following day, the general mounted his faithful horse, and with Mr. Tickler on his mule, proceeded to review his army of vagabonds. And though he complimented them on the great perfection of their drill, and bid them esteem themselves the heroes of no end of victories, they were in truth as awkward a set of fellows as ever shouldered musket, in short, not one of them knew how to take the first move in forming a section, though they could rob hen roosts and banana fields with a facility truly remarkable. And now, as the noon-day sun was oppressive enough to dissolve all their brains, the general ordered his second in command, one Absolam Broadbottom, to say to the army that he would march at nightfall. And when nightfall came, the army commenced its march, and was followed by the general, who cut such a shabby figure, when surrounded by his staff, that the whole army was ready to dissolve with laughter. In short the Commander-in-Chief afforded them an amount of amusement that quite compensated for the loss of hen-roosts. As a truthful historian I must not forget to mention that the general, like a good and discreet warrior, kept at a respectful distance in the rear, ordering at the same time that the country in advance be well scoured, lest some lurking portion of the enemy's army come upon them by surprise, doing serious damage before he could get his army in trim for making them dance again.

When they had travelled many miles, displaying great courage under all sorts of trials, the general suddenly discovered that he had lost his secretary, which sad misfortune he began to bewail in right good earnest. "I would have you know, Broadbottom," said he, addressing his second in command, "that the success of our undertaking will be hazarded without him, for he is a man of great learning."

"Umph!" returned Broadbottom, "if victories are to be gained only by your men of great learning, our country will have little to boast of in that line. It is now midnight, and I would suggest a halt for the night."

The general replied that the suggestion was an excellent one, and bid him act upon it. "You must know sir," said he, "that it is so many years since I have had aught to do with an army, that my memory needs much refreshing on these small matters." He also ordered Broadbottom to detach a file of men and send them in search of his secretary, which order was forthwith executed, to the great delight of those composing it, who instead of troubling themselves about the secretary, were resolved on spending the night at a ranch where dancing was to be had.

Page 271

And now when all was quiet; when the general, having seen his horse comfortably provided for; when not even a vulture was heard croaking his hopes of a banquet on some dead hero; and when the great and all powerful Potter was sleeping quietly in his camp, the whole army was thrown into a state of great confusion by various voices calling out that they had come upon the enemy, who was forming for battle. The alarm soon found the whole camp out in its shirt, ready to give as good as sent, though report had it that the force of the enemy was prodigious. Another moment and Broadbottom, panting for breath, came rushing into the commander's camp, crying at the very top of his voice: "General! general! for heavens sake get up and take command of the army, for the enemy is advancing rapidly upon us, and there will be one of the bloodiest battles!" A clash of arms was now heard outside, which confirmed what he said, and also sent a thrill of terror to the heart of the great Potter, whose stock of courage was as suddenly snuffed out. Loud reports of musketry followed the clash of arms, and then night was made terrible with divers other piercing cries common to battles of the most sanguinary character.

Feeling in his heart that it would not do for so great a general to let his army know that even an ounce of his courage had left him, he gave a turn in the sheets and was out of bed in a jiffy. He then got into his breeches, but not without some delay, occasioned, I am sorry to say, by divers snakes having invaded the camp and coiled themselves peaceably away in the nether parts. And this, added to the time lost in finding his sword, with which he swore he would trip the toes of all who came in his way, had well-nigh incurred the most fatal consequences. "Minutes are hours, general," spoke Broadbottom, addressing the commander; "and the slightest delay may play the very devil with the glory of our arms, and put an end to the noble enterprise we are engaged in." Hearing this from his second in command, the general quickened his motions and, buckling on his sword, ran out in his night-cap, but without either coat or boots. Indeed, I here assert that history, so far as I have read, affords no instance of one so famous in war as the great Potter proceeding to take command of his army in so strange a uniform. "Now, to my horse!" he exclaimed, "for I take it no man can command an army unless he be mounted." Broadbottom, who was a stalwarth Mississippian, and withal as great a wag as could be found in that state of wags, affected great concern lest the battle be lost for want of speedy action on the part of the commander-in-chief. And as misfortunes will come upon us during the most trying moments, so was it found on reaching old Battle that he had been suddenly seized with a cholic, and indeed was giving out so many proofs of his illness that his master was unable to withhold his tears. In short, so strong was the affection General Potter

Page 272

bore his horse that, being a man of great compassion, he was in no condition to fight a terrible battle. Still the noise of battle without warned him how much his presence was needed on the field. "Heavens! general," said he, wiping the tears from his eyes, "get you to the field without a moment's delay, sink all scientific rules, attack the enemy in front and rear, and when you have shown him that you care neither for him or the devil, turn his flank, which will throw him into confusion and give us a victory. Take the fighting of this great battle to yourself, for I see you are a man of wonderful capacity. And if you give the enemy a right good drubbing, depend upon it I will make the glory all your own, for it shall be recorded in more than one newspaper. It will not do to leave my poor horse in this condition." Broadbottom left the general shedding tears for his horse, and proceeded to carry out the orders of his superior, the extraordinary result of which will be found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER LIV.

Which treats of various curious things that occurred when the result of the great battle of the banana hills was announced to the commander.

Morning dawned as the clash of battle ceased, and victory was proclaimed by the vagabond army. And although General Potter had been biting his thumbs in fear of the result, this news so restored his courage that he mounted his three-cornered hat and declared nothing would deter him in future from commanding in person and making splinters of the enemy with his own sword.

"General!" exclaimed Broadbottom, as he came rushing into the camp, "the success of our arms is complete; yes, the god of war has smiled, and we have gained a great victory over the enemy-"

"Truly, general," interrupted the commander-in-chief, "you deserve well. But this I can tell you,-there is nothing like one man infusing his strength into another, which it was my good luck to do when directing you how to fight this battle, which, heaven be blest, has crowned our arms with glory."

"Aye," replied Broadbottom, with a smile, "I understand this well; but if you could have commanded in person, much blood and many valuable lives had been spared."

"That I am fully conscious of," rejoined the commander; "but when men have prodigies to perform, two heads, if I have read right, are better than one. But my horse is now restored to his usual good condition, which, thank heaven, will afford me an opportunity of displaying my valor in the next great battle. Give me, then, an account of the dead and wounded; as also what you have done with the prisoners." Broadbottom was not

slow in performing this service, and gave the commander such a wonderful account of the number of the enemy they

Page 273

had killed that he stood surprised and confounded. "As for the commander," spoke Broadbottom, "he was shot from his horse and borne from the field by his staff; but not until he had dropped a purse of gold, which I have brought you as a trophy." And with an air of great courtesy he placed the purse, which contained some twenty doubloons, in the hands of the commander, who made him a return of his thanks for such rare faithfulness. "As for the dead," resumed Broadbottom, "we have buried them in the Banana Hills, from which this great battle must take its name. And as you are well read in philosophy, you will, I am sure, confess that we took the most certain method in disposing of the wounded; for there were some forty, and we hung every one of them."

"Truly, sir, I see you are a Christian gentleman, as well as a soldier; and I have no doubt you were moved to this kind act by a knowledge that it would be inhuman to prolong the agonies of these unfortunate men-"

"You have hit it exactly, general!" interrupted Broadbottom.

"And I am not so sure but that you would have rendered heaven a service in hanging all the prisoners, for he who dies in battle, they say, has an extra claim to the better kingdom that is promised us."

"I have no doubt you are right as far as your ethics go, general; but deeming it more becoming the comity of war, we set them all at liberty, and it would have made your heart dance to see how they took to their heels." An end was put to this dialogue by the commander inviting his generals to breakfast with him, in order, as he said, that he might have an opportunity of complimenting them for their valor, and also of hearing from their own lips an account of the wonderful exploits each had performed,-all of which were proceeded with to his entire satisfaction.

When breakfast was over General Potter mounted old Battle, who was not a whit the worse for his cholic, and reviewed his troops. And though they were sadly deficient in raiment, and altogether presented a most shattered appearance, he declared that never had he in all his experience seen an army look so soldier-like. But this compliment the vagabonds set down for too good a joke to be lost, and, notwithstanding the gravity preserved by their generals, were well-nigh splitting their sides with laughter.

"Now, Broadbottom," said he, when they returned to the camp, "as the guard sent in pursuit of my secretary have returned without getting any tidings of him, and a report of this great battle is imperatively necessary, pray tell me if you have a gentleman who can perform such service?" Broadbottom thereupon informed his commander that there was on the staff one General Stoneheart, a gentleman of much learning, and as good an editor as ever abused his neighbors. "And he is skilled in making such reports," said he,

“for I can swear of my own knowledge, general, that he will do the thing exactly to your liking. And withal, he is correspondent

Page 274

of more than one New York newspaper, and has a secret for making victories of the most signal defeats." Stoneheart, a small, ill-clad, shrimp-looking man, was immediately summoned, and appeared before the commander, who interrogated him as to his capacity. All his answers being satisfactory, he was at once set to work preparing the reports, which I venture to assert were never excelled for glowing descriptions of the many prodigies performed in one battle, and which, it is scarce necessary for me to add here, made New York dance with delight when they appeared. "If you have a love for latin," said General Stoneheart to his chief, "I can give them a huge quantity of it." And this so satisfied the great Potter of his being a gentleman exactly suited to the service he required, that he gave no further thought to the subject, but merely concluded by telling him to rub in the latin while the ink lasted.

When, then, the reports were ready he dispatched them with a special bearer; to whose care he also intrusted the purse of gold taken from the enemy, with directions that it be delivered into the hands of his wife Polly, as a proof of the success of the business he was engaged in. He also wrote a letter, stating that he was now at the head of one of the most valiant armies, and would of a certainty soon have kingdoms enough in his possession; which news she might circulate among the neighbors.

And now, having fully described this great battle, I beg the reader will not take it seriously to heart, for in truth it was all a joke practised upon the commander by this Broadbottom, who arranged the whole affair. Nor will I longer keep him in doubt respecting the purse of gold, which was nothing less than the plunder brought in by a scouting party, who having fallen in with a train of poor natives on their way to Buzabub to buy provisions, had robbed them of their all.

Having made these explanations, I will say of General Potter, that, feeling in his heart that no man was more truly brave, night again found him proceeding with his army towards Nezub, which he reached on the dawn of the fourth day, having marched undaunted through deserts and solitudes, and endured privations that would have made such shabby warriors as Pillow shake in his shoes. But although the general would have it that the mission of his army was to reform the nation, nothing but devastation followed in its wake.

Don Perez Goneti came out to meet General Potter, and escorted him to the headquarters of his army, which, though composed of only two hundred rebels, he declared to be the most valiant men it had ever been his good fortune to know. The general found this army encamped within two miles of Nezub, and notwithstanding the enemy had wisely kept himself confined to his strongholds, their domestic quarrels had afforded them the means of activity necessary to the good condition of such armies. As for the king and the priests, they were daily seen from Goneti's

Page 275

camp, bestirring themselves in the perfection of an army of extermination. And now that these two wonderful armies had met, the allied generals betook themselves to the exchange of courtesies, presentations, and speechmaking. In fine, it seemed as if there was to be a never-ending strain of compliments lavished by each other, for the benefit of the world in general, and for themselves in particular. And while all these ceremonies were being performed to the great delight of the recipient heroes, "the forces" were left to revel to their hearts' content. Honestly, so intent were they on gratifying their inclinations that they quite forgot the enemy and continued plundering the poor natives until neither a chicken was to be seen in their yards nor a banana in their fields.

Thus, for days and even weeks were these reforming armies left to riot at will. One night as Don Perez Goneti was entertaining General Potter at a grand banquet, a lieutenant entered the camp, and with a confused air said: "May it please the commander, as officer of the guard sent to reconnoitre the enemy's position, I have to report, that we penetrated within a few yards of a small chapel in the outskirts of the town. A faint light glimmered from one of the windows, which bespoke mischief within. As the enemy had no outposts we approached to the very window, and looking in discovered eleven priests, plotting no good, I can assure you, for we overheard them discussing an attack to be made upon us to-morrow at daybreak. And after praying devoutly for the success of their undertaking, and saying their beads no end of times, it was resolved that when they had gained the battle to hang us all to the nearest trees, commending our souls to heaven and our bodies to the vultures. And this I heard with my own ears, and can tell you that it is impossible to conceive how nicely these good men had arranged our overthrow." Before the speaker was finished, the eleven priests, their hands bound with cords, their heads bent, and their countenances wearing an air of deep melancholy, were marched into the camp under a guard of soldiers. "And we surprised them, and have brought them here, prisoners of war;" concluded the officer, making a bow as he withdrew.

The downcast and forlorn appearance of these holy men was indeed enough to have enlisted sympathy in their behalf. An end was thus put to the banquet, and Don Perez Goneti inquired of the prisoners, in a peremptory manner, what they had to say for themselves. One more aged than the rest, held up his head, and answered that as it was their mission to do good on earth and pay reverence to the Great Master, so also would they remain true to their king; nor would they crave mercy, since "God protected the right." It must here be mentioned that the two commanders formed themselves into a court, and sat in judgment upon these holy men; while the rest cared not a whit if the devil got the priests. "You confess then that you have been guilty of conspiracy,"

Page 276

spoke Don Perez Goneti, "which means that you have merited the halter, which I order you at daylight in the morning; and may the devil take care of you until then, so get to your beads." The guards now marched them away in solemn procession. No sooner had they disappeared, when General Potter, who had at first commended this sentence, turned to his compatriot, and with an air of much anxiety, said: "Pray do not let it be said that I question the justice of your judgment, but I would have you take heed how you hang priests, for being invested with a holiness the unrighteous cannot understand, I am told they have revengeful spirits, which will come back, and not only come back and haunt us wherever we go, but so direct the fates against us as to seal our downfall."

"Aye, and there you are right," rejoined Goneti, "for to my own knowledge, the king of Tutack ordered a priest hung, and his spirit came back and so haunted the kingdom, that it has not prospered since."

"You see then that I have looked well into the thing, and offer you sound logic;" resumed the ready Potter. "Hear me, sir! for I have a better punishment in my head. Spare these holy men the hanging, and let each be mounted on an ass, so that his robes cover the animal's hinder parts. And when you have them thus conditioned, let it be ordered that they ride three hours during the day, for not less than ten days, making a circle in the plaza, and offering up such prayers as our souls may stand in need of." This so delighted Don Goneti that he marvelled at the breadth of his compatriot's intellect, and not only set him down for a man of prodigious resources, but at once fell in with his opinion, forthwith issuing an order that it be carried out to the letter, as will appear in the next chapter.

CHAPTER LV.

Which treats of how the priests bore the punishment; and also A description of the ever-memorable battle of the miracle.

With great reverence be it said of the priests, that they did penance, mounted after the style ordered in the foregoing chapter, for many days and with such fortitude as gained them the good will of many of their enemies in war. "The height of our perfection in grace," said one of the priests, as his ass went the round of the circle, "may be measured by the ease with which we can humble ourselves. And while we are chanting to these filthy fellows, let us not despair, but commend ourselves to heaven, praying that it will so ordain that our country be soon rid of this scourge; for though these fellows make promises enough with their lips, their hearts are full of treachery."

Page 277

"Heaven help me!" exclaimed another, "for I am not accustomed to this punishment, and bear it with a tribulation I would thank heaven to be relieved from." In short, though they bore the punishment with remarkable fortitude, these ring performances were in no very high favor with them. Itching then for a chance to escape, and taking advantage of a moment one day when the "allied forces" (generals included,) were fast asleep, they clapped heels to their asses, and coursing down the road at full speed, were soon safe within the town, where high-mass was offered up for their deliverance, though not a word was lispd concerning the asses, which they wisely kept as an offset to their sufferings. And now when the allied generals awoke from their slumbers, and found the priests gone, they took it grievously to heart; for while they could ill afford to lose the asses, the priests would be sure to give the enemy such information as would be of great advantage to him.

A day passed and both armies were seen preparing for battle. But as neither had the smallest piece of artillery, and but a shabby display of cavalry mounted on lean asses, General Potter consoled himself that a victory could be gained without any great display of generalship: in short that, being commander in chief, it was only necessary for him to retire to a safe distance, where, like the famous Persian warrior, he could look serenely on while the armies battered each other to their heart's content.

It was early one bright morning then that a report spread through the allied camp, announcing the near approach of the enemy. True enough, the army was distinctly seen, advancing at a rapid pace, the King at its head, mounted on a mule, and surrounded by at least a score of priests mounted on lean asses. And so numerous was the King's army that the very hills around Nezub seemed black with moving figures. Seeing how matters stood the allied generals quickly mounted their steeds; and equally quick was the army in order and impatient for battle. And when the enemy had advanced near enough to let his teeth be seen, he halted. It was now evident that both army's were weighing the terrible consequences that were to result from this great battle, for they stood for some time making grimaces at each other, very like New York aldermen. Then sundry horns began to sound, and drums to beat. And this, strange as it may seem to those of my readers who may have admired the general good qualities of this singularly faithful animal, so disturbed old Battle's equanimity that he made several attempts to bring his master to the ground: indeed he became so fractious that the general again found it necessary to resign the honor of fighting this great battle to Don Perez Goneti, since the management of his horse was quite enough for the head of any one general. The reserve of the Kaloramas now appeared in the distance, emerging from every conceivable point, and sending up such

Page 278

yells as would have sent terror to the heart of anything but a vagabond army. And while the reserves shouted in the distance, the line opened fire upon the allied army, the generals of which were giving out such a confusion of orders as would have bewildered the most experienced soldiers. Not a hair did the vagabond army budge, but returned the enemy's fire with such vigor that his whole line was speedily in disorder. Charges and retreats were now kept up with wonderful spirit on the part of the vagabonds, though not a single dead body ornamented the field, which was saying no little, considering that this great battle was to decide the fate of a kingdom. And when I inform the reader that cries, groans, and piercing imprecations mingled with the clash of arms, and gave the conflict an air of ferocity it would be impossible to describe, the kindly feature of its result, which I am about to describe, will appear the more astounding.

Notwithstanding Commander Potter kept at a safe distance from the bullets, his horse, Battle, took it into his head to play him a very shabby trick, and which my love for the truth of history constrains me to record. Wonderful then as it may seem to those experienced in war, this little prank of the faithful steed ended the term of his own life and, as if by a miracle, gave the victory to the allies. And it was done in this manner. A bountiful providence, as if foreseeing the sanguinary character of the struggle that was to take place on this spot, had provided it with a quag-mire of considerable depth, and so covered its surface with soft, green moss, as to conceal its real character. It was on the margin of this mire then that General Potter took up his position; and just in the very hottest of the battle, a bee chanced that way in search of flowers, and lighting just under old Battle's tail, so goaded him with its sting that he sprang forward, and then halted with such a sudden motion as to vault the general over his head, and into the mire, his head and three-cornered hat only remaining above the surface. Having served his master this shabby trick, old Battle took to his heels, and dashing down the enemy's lines, sent such a thrill of terror to the hearts of the superstitious Kaloramas as made them scamper for dear life. In truth they fancied him the pale horse of the devil, so often described to them by the priests. Dashing onward with increased speed and wildness, the bewildered animal ran with great force upon the King's mule, prostrating animal and rider dead upon the ground, and, in sorrow and tears do I record it, breaking his own neck. Thus was the interposition of providence displayed in all its bounties, and an end put to a battle which, had it continued, there is no estimating the consequences. As it was, the King, old Battle, and the mule alone paid the penalty of their temerity, and lay dead upon the field. Thus ended the great battle of the Miracle.

CHAPTER LVI.

Page 279

Which relates several curious things that took place after the great battle of the miracle was decided; and also how A great quarrel arose concerning the government of Kalorama.

"Faith, gentlemen," said Commander Potter, as with a long pole, his attendants drew him, besmeared with soft black mud, from the frog-pond, "though I know not how the battle goes, and am not a bit bruised in my person, I am much concerned for the damage to my uniform. My horse I freely forgive, for he is really a trusty animal. Go then and bring him to me, for though he served me this dirty trick, my heart will not let me forget his past goodness." And while a messenger was dispatched in search of the wayward steed, the general was got to his head-quarters, where a change of raiment so altered his appearance that when his generals came to announce the result of the battle scarce one of them recognised him until he spoke. In truth he was quietly stretched upon a bed, with nothing on but his breeches, shirt, and night cap. But when they announced to him the manner in which this great victory was won, he sprang to his feet, and giving vent to his ecstasy, declared it nothing less than a miracle. "Faith of my mother!" he exclaimed, placing his hands to his belly and tossing his head, "now I know that my horse Battle was preserved to me for a great purpose."

"Aye sir, it is wise of you to say so," replied Broadbottom, taking him gravely by the hand, "but it is my melancholy duty to inform you that the poor animal is killed. But it may afford you consolation to know that he first killed the King and his mule." This sad news so affected the general that he could with difficulty restrain his tears. Indeed the words choaked in his throat for several minutes, and he seemed completely overcome with melancholy. "You must remember, general," replied Goneti, with a flourish of his sword, "that it is to this animal we owe the success of our arms."

"I am delighted with this excellent account of my horse," said the Commander, with regained cheerfulness. "It is true, an accident I need not describe here, deprived you of the great service I had intended to bestow upon this battle. If, however, it was by my horse, then by all all the rules of war, I am entitled to a large share of the honor. It was a miracle performed by him, gentlemen; and viewing it in that light, I am consoled for his death, and so peace be with him."

Broadbottom now stepped forward, in his uniform, and, with a twinkle of mischief in his eye, replied: "Our Commander has it exactly. And if it please him, we will have this battle called the Battle of the Miracle!"

Page 280

“Faith, general,” rejoined Commander Potter, “you have hit my way of thinking, exactly. Let Stoneheart appear, and I will instruct him how to record this great victory in the New York newspapers, so that the whole union be made to dance with joy when it appears.” Stoneheart was not long in appearing before his Commander, who at once complimented him, though in truth he was in no very sober mood, on his great proficiency at making the greatest victories ever won by mortal valor. And although it was said of this Stoneheart that he was nowhere to be found during the hottest of the fight, he was not a whit less than a general in his own eyes. Having been enjoined what to say by his commander, this good man and valiant soldier betook himself to the preparation of these grandiloquent articles. As for the commander, he busied himself writing ponderous dispatches to Glenmoregain, who, satisfied that he had a perfect pearl of a Commander, as well as the kingdom of Kalorama safe between his thumbs, forthwith ordered the building of seven more steamships, since it was no small matter for a great merchant to go about with two or three kingdoms in his pockets, and not have a navy to protect them. In truth it must be confessed that Glenmoregain, although an excellent gentlemen and worthy citizen, was exceedingly loose in his discretion. Perhaps, however, it is charitable to say that a less credulous gentleman might have yielded to his enthusiasm under the same circumstances, for Commander Potter declared by the saints that not only had he been in the flame and fire of every fight, but killed with his own arm not less than six of the enemy’s best generals, whose heads he would send him by the next mail.

And now the allies having vanquished the poor Kaloramas, and put the priests to flight, betook themselves to rioting, and were so elated at gaining the victory, that they entirely forgot to take possession of Nezub, and indeed spent three whole days in such pleasant amusements as hanging the peasantry in the neighborhood, and pillaging such things as henroosts and beehives. And this strange apathy on the part of the allies afforded the poor Nezubians an excellent opportunity for burying their king decently; after which they vacated their humble homes, with no few sighs and regrets. In truth many was the heart that beat in sorrow as it passed some familiar object, and the eye that moistened with tears as it turned to look back upon those rude cabins wherein was stored all the recollections of childhood.

The generals having come to their senses on the fourth day, formed their army, and suddenly remembering that it would be in accordance with the usages of war to demand a capitulation, dispatched an officer with a flag of truce. But on entering the town he found it deserted, even to the dogs; while the priests, as if to leave traces of their mission along the lonely streets, had planted them with crosses. This state of things being reported, Commander Potter, for

Page 281

want of his favorite horse, mounted a well-starved mule, and placing himself at the head of his army, entered the town amidst the blowing of horns and beating of drums, which fully satisfied him that no greater, or more fortunate commander ever lived. But the army had not been in possession of the town more than an hour when a great quarrel arose between Commander Potter and Don Perez Goneti, touching the right to rule the kingdom. Both proceeded to take possession of the king's palace; both asserted their claims in language and demeanor unbecoming soldiers; and each ordered his followers to hang the other without judge or jury. And when they were about putting an end to this dispute with their drawn swords, (having given the army an incentive to disorder,) Stoneheart interposed for peace, proposing that they both consider themselves sovereigns until such time as a board of generals could be called to settle the question.

I ought to mention that Don Perez Goneti asserted his claim on the ground of having first conceived the project of getting the kingdom out of the king's fingers. Further, he bid the great Potter bear in mind that he was invited into the country, merely as an auxiliary to the carrying out of a great undertaking. But this only served to increase Commander Potter's temerity, for he asserted with great force that every victory yet won was due to the army sent him by the New York gentleman, for whom he was to get the kingdom, to say nothing of what his horse had done. Like sensible gentlemen, becoming weary of the quarrel, they partook of a punch, went quietly to bed, and left this great question to be settled among their generals. But unfortunately their generals were not of a turn of mind to agree on anything; and after spending nine days in angry discussion, concluded with calling one another such names as-"robber," "ruffian," "coward." In fact each general had such a longing for the crown, and fancied himself possessed of such a rare talent for governing, that neither coaxing nor beseeching could have brought them to an agreement on this matter of the crown. And this was to be regretted, seeing that the priests were mustering the Kalorama army, and indeed giving various other proofs of their itching to recover the kingdom.

And now, when disorder seemed at its highest pitch, the allied army, with commendable good sense, and without paying the slightest heed to the quarrels of its generals, proclaimed General Roger Sherman Potter ruler over all Kalorama; and this was out of sheer respect to his humor, for the army held it good to be ruled over by a gentleman who could afford soldiers so much diversion.

Page 282

Be it known then that General Potter accepted this manifestation of popular favor, as homage paid to his great military skill, and having called his soldiers together, he made then a speech, in which he made promises to their satisfaction, declaring that he was more than a match for the duties of the office. "And now, gentlemen soldiers," he concluded, "since you have made me ruler over this kingdom, you shall see that I am not fresh in the business. I would have you recollect, also, that the man who seeks my overthrow must not take it amiss if he find himself dangling to a tree: it is enough for rulers to rule; and for what follows, let citizens look to their own doors." Whereupon there was great clapping of hands, and indeed such acclamations of joy as convinced General Potter that he was a ruler in every way worthy of their admiration.

After bidding his soldiers go and regale themselves wherever they could find wherewith to do it, (for as yet there was no plunder in the treasury,) the ruler had an account of this wonderful transformation of affairs forwarded to the newspapers, that it might be published to the world, which he knew in his heart felt a deep interest in all his movements. This done he set to work organizing his cabinet; but so jealous of Don Perez Goneti was he, that in order to be well rid of him he sent him (disguised in the garb of a priest) ambassador to Washington, where, he thanked heaven, the strangeness of his figure, as well as his extraordinary presumption, would be of great service in recommending him to our good natured president.

Feeling the kingdom safe in his palm, he called the members of his cabinet together, and addressed them in the following manner: "Although I have no mitre on my head, gentlemen, I am no less ruler over this kingdom. And as I am a man who loves peace, pray put an end to your disputes on the spot; for I intend that prudence shall mark my reign. Mark what I say then: he who wrangles for the small offices of this nation, had better look to his reason. I challenge no man for his reputation, for a public servant had needs take care of the little he has got; but if you would find favor with the people, and prolong the glory of my reign, let your thoughts turn on how you can best serve them. And as the nation is without a treasury, I make no doubt you will preserve your integrity, which, heaven knows, is more than most men do. But of all things, lend not your ears to every man's whisper; for if you do the nation will suffer most where you least think. I would also have you moderate your longing for higher office; for it is a thing that brings much evil to the nation. Above all, be mindful how you give rein to your conceits, since it is come the fashion for men to say fine things of you to your face, and send you to the devil with their thoughts. As for myself, there shall be so good an understanding between me and my people that no man shall speak evil of my reign. Truly, gentlemen, I hold it a pleasant thing to die and know the people will say: 'Well, Roger Sherman Potter was a good ruler.' And now, let every man to his office."

Page 283

With this model address, the like of which is not to be found in any history heretofore written, the great Potter dismissed his cabinet.

The members, on consulting among themselves, came to the very sensible conclusion that as their ruler had failed, in his address, to throw any light upon the services required of them, the nation was well enough; and if let alone would take care of itself. They therefore betook themselves to a small cabin built of palm-logs and clay, where they spent the day in carousing; while the great ruler contemplated the majesty of his position, and the army roamed over the country in search of plunder.

And now, having spent one whole day in the mighty task of governing a nation, he was overtaken with one of the most remarkable reverses, which not only changed the whole face of affairs but came within a hair of costing him his life; as well as discovering to him the fact that no really great ruler was sure of his throne, even for a day. And this wonderful event, with all its serious results, the reader will find faithfully recorded in the next chapter.

CHAPTER LVII.

Treating of how the ruler was carried off into captivity on A mule, accompanied by divers priests.

When night was come, and disorder reigned throughout the camp of the allies; when both generals and men were making night jubilant with their carousing, a cry broke forth in Nezub that the town was surprised by the enemy. A scene of the wildest confusion now ensued; midnight was made terrible by the howling of dogs, the beating of drums, the tramp of horses, and the clatter of fire-arms. Suddenly it was discovered that the town was in flames; and such was the terror excited in the hearts of the allied vagabonds that they took to their heels and scampered away like sensible men.

And here I am constrained to record, without the slightest disparagement to my ruler, that having drank three punches before he retired to bed, he was disturbed of his slumbers by seven priests, who came rushing into his chamber, and without so much as giving him time to put on his breeches, dragged him forth in his shirt, and having mounted him on a mule, hurried him out of town at full speed. "The fates have gone against me," said General Potter, musing to himself as he rode silently along on his mule, accompanied by the priests, similarly mounted, but not in their shirts. "But a few hours since, I was measuring the exact dimensions of my glory. Faith of my father! I felt the kingdom as safe between my fingers as need be; and here I am riding a mule for the diversion of these fellows in black gowns; which is an unparalleled discourtesy to a ruler of my standing." Turning to the priests, he addressed them thus: "As you are good and holy men, may I pray that you will respect my

Page 284

position as ruler of this kingdom. Nor do I think it becomes you to trifle thus with my dignity: therefore give me one of your gowns, for the curious figure I am cutting becomes neither of us. And as you owe a duty to heaven, give me raiment, and tell me whither you carry me." The priests made no answer, but whipping up their mules continued on their journey until they reached a grove of palm-trees, some four miles from Nezub, where they halted. And having lighted torches, which threw a curious glow over the foliage, and invested the scene with an air of deep solemnity, they put General Potter on his trial, preparatory to which he was ordered to sit upon the ground, while the most aged of the priests took a seat upon the trunk of a tree.

First, they inquired of him what he had to say touching their punishment in riding the asses in the plaza, which grievously wounded their feelings. "As to the asses, gentlemen," replied Ruler Potter, "they, I take it, are emblematic of penitence, which I am sure your reverences ought not be ashamed of, since if my memory serves me right, (and it is good enough to trust on such matter,) I have read somewhere in Scripture that the apostles rode asses, and were not ashamed."

"Aye," replied the venerable priests, "but that was so long ago, and bears so little resemblance to our case, that it will not serve as a precedent. Heading a band of vagrants in pursuit of plunder, you have overrun our country, caused the death of our good king, and made the priesthood to be scoffed at, which is a crime meriting death. Having set yourself up for a ruler adds no small injury to the insults you have already inflicted upon this kingdom; we therefore condemn you to death, and are resolved to see you hanged on one of these trees at six in the morning." The general essayed to speak in reply to this sentence, but the priests bid him hold his peace, and join them in preparing his soul for heaven. And forthwith they commenced chanting prayers over him; but as their prayers were in Latin, not one word could he understand. Instead, however, of bemoaning his fate, as the reader may be prepared to expect, the condemned betook himself to mourning the loss of his kingdom, and devising means to regain it. He was also not a little puzzled to know what road his graceless army had taken, for he knew in his heart, they would lose no time in getting safely out of the country. In truth he began to curse the day he took command of Glenmoregain's army; for though he might have been a good enough gentleman himself, and have a praiseworthy liking for kingdoms, his army was made up of arrant rascals, who treated their commander as if he were a fool, had no fear of the devil, and deserved hanging.

Page 285

While then the priests were chanting prayers for his soul, his mind was also occupied with these lines: "The funeral train, with the ruler came, And passing slowly through the grove; Dropped tears of sorrow As honored they lay him in his lonely grave." Then the priests became oppressed for want of sleep; and in short were so overcome with the fatigue of their ride that, having tied their mules to trees, they stripped off their gowns, and, convinced in their own minds that the prisoner would not attempt to escape in his shirt, (or if he did, that his want of raiment was proof against any one taking him in), they stretched themselves down upon the ground, and were soon fast asleep.

Now, notwithstanding General Potter still fancied himself ruler over Kalorama, he felt that his head was quite as well on his own shoulders, for there was his wife Polly, and three children, who, for aught he knew to the contrary might stand much in need of a portion of his spoils, which as yet had been small indeed. He therefore got quietly up, and habiting himself in the hat and gown of a priest, mounted the fleetest mule of the lot, and reaching the high-road, in breathless anxiety, set out at full speed toward Jolliffee, confident that he would overtake or get some tidings of his straying army on the road. When he had got some three miles over the road, he turned in his saddle, listened with great caution, and said: "To the devil with you, Mister Priests, for General Potter owes you no thanks, and can take care of himself. See what it is to leave until morning a job you should have done at night!"

CHAPTER LVIII.

In which the reader will find much that is curious and interesting.

When morning came, and the priests were awakened by the singing of birds and the chattering of monkeys (as if in derision at their sloth), they no sooner discovered their great loss than they set to berating each another right soundly; not because they cared a whit for what evil the fellow could do, but that, having set their hearts on the hanging, it only grieved them to find that they had lost so excellent an opportunity of thus skilfully paying the scamp off for his tricks. "Let us preserve peace between us, for perhaps it is ordained of heaven!" said the venerable priest, with great solemnity of countenance. "And remember, brothers, we have made Jose Farino king, and have much need to join him, and lend him our aid in driving these vagabonds out of the country." Much debate was had on this question, which, however, resulted in an agreement to first pursue and recapture the condemned. So after they had refreshed themselves, and offered up prayer for the success of their undertaking, they mounted their mules and set off at full speed. But as is too often the case with them when over-anxious to get sinners to heaven, they forgot to look for the footprints, and galloped their mules in the wrong direction, and there we must leave them.

Page 286

Being scrupulous of the character which my hero shall maintain for strict honesty, I here enjoin the reader to remember the circumstances under which General Roger Potter, ruler over all Kalorama, was constrained to commit a theft so small as that of the mule and the priest's gown. Life is sweet with the greatest heroes; and let no man question the means by which they seek to preserve it until he has felt the halter about his own neck.

Know then, that while the priests were pursuing their blind way, eager for a victim, the retreating ruler, being hungry and anxious, was entering the cabin of a poor peasant woman, having travelled some twenty miles on the road without stopping. No sooner did the poor woman see him than she fell upon her knees, crossed herself and began saying her beads. In short she paid reverence to him in so many ways that he became alarmed lest she go mad with joy; for being clad in the garb of a priest, and in his bare feet, she mistook him for one of those good and holy men who go over the country renouncing the vanities of the world, and setting an example to others by the terrible penance paid with the soles of their feet. And when she had paid him reverence to her satisfaction, she bid her children provide fodder for his mule, for she saw the animal was in a lather and seriously jaded. "Madam, I am General Roger Potter, ruler over this nation. Being in pursuit of my army, pray tell me if you have seen it straying this way;" spoke the general, with becoming courtesy. But as neither could understand a word the other said, matters became singularly confused, and to all the general's questions, the good woman would answer by placing her hands to her bosom, looking heavenward with appealing sweetness, and whispering: "Holy virgin!"

"Faith of my mother!" exclaimed the general, as he concealed the condition of his legs with the priest's gown, "I am not the person she takes me for-that's certain!" Soon she brought water and washed his feet, combed and perfumed his beard (which was excessively dirty), and indeed bestowed so many little kindnesses that his heart was moved, and he not only shed tears, but said within himself: "Honestly, it is better to have peace and comfort in a cabin like this (for the smiles of this good woman seem to have much of heaven in them), than to rule king over a nation, and live in a palace when there is no safety against being hanged. Truly, I begin to feel that my ambition has made me a great fool." In washing his feet, the good woman discovered the true condition of his raiment, though it was by the merest accident. The good man, she said within herself, has in his anxiety to do penance forgotten to arrange his robes. In the tenderest manner, then, she brought him the breeches and doublet of her dead husband, for whose soul she beseeched him to pray. The application of the garments he readily understood; but for the prayers, the good woman had to accept the will for the deed.

Page 287

To afford his reverence an opportunity of arranging his clothes, the good woman proceeded to the garden and filled her basket with plantain for his breakfast. Much as the general stood in need of shoes, he sat himself down for a most fortunate gentleman in being able to procure even such raiment; for, said he, what a figure I would cut entering Jolliffee on a mule, and in the hat and gown of a priest. When, therefore, he had breakfasted on plantain and yams, to which a dish of coffee was added, he returned thanks to the good woman, and fearing the priests might be in pursuit of him, bid her an affectionate adieu, mounted his mule, and proceeded on his journey.

Travelling all day under a burning sun, he found the priest's hat of great service in protecting his brain, which otherwise would have dissolved. When night came he was more than six leagues from Jolliffee, and his mule being much jaded, and himself fatigued, he drew up by the road-side, in a grove of palms, beneath which a spring of crystal water gushed forth and rippled away over the pebbly bottom. The mule having quenched its thirst, the general seated himself beside the spring; and when he had refreshed himself on some crusts and water, gave himself up to contemplation. And the perfect stillness that pervaded the grove (for not a sound was heard, and even the mule seemed to have an instinctive knowledge of his master's musings, for he baited cautiously of the young grass) gave to his revery a melancholy turn. His forlorn condition; the many sudden and unforeseen misfortunes that had come upon him; the narrow escapes for his life; the many times he had almost dangled at the limb of a tree; and the unnumbered batterings and bruising he had got while displaying his "military valor"-all flashed across his mind, as if stretched upon a clearly defined panorama, and caused him to heave a deep sigh. What compensation had he got for all these sufferings, which were the result of his ambition? And the answer came to him with the suddenness of lightning-"Ruler over Kalorama, for a day." "Heaven be with me," he sighed; "for now my poverty is perfect. And who would envy my fate, here in a desert, without a friend, and in the raiment of a priest, which if I cast off I shall look like a clown, which will not do for the man who has ruled a kingdom. Therefore, I say, seeing that it is good to be an honest man, that if heaven spare me and get me safely out of this snare, I will go to my home, and there live so good a man that the neighbors shall say, Roger Potter is a Christian. Faith of my father, I begin to have a hate for these rogues of rulers, and would give a dozen kingdoms of the size of Kalorama to be safe beside my good wife Polly. And resolved am I to get to her, so heaven favor my inclinations, and let not death overtake me on the way. As for my employer, if he still persist in gratifying his love for getting kingdoms, why, he can get him another general, for there is no lack of them. Truly,

Page 288

I have had trials enough in his service, and if he say I have not killed enough of the enemy, I can tell him that the commander who can boast of his clean sword is your true hero. I confess, he sent me rascals enough to destroy the morals of a dozen kingdoms or more; but what matters that when I have not a dollar in my pocket to buy shoes to my feet; and even the paltry sum he promised has never seen the way to my pocket. I swear, then, to give up all these longings, and, though stripped of my coat, get speedily to my home, comfort my family, and live like a man."

The forlorn general was interrupted in these reveries by a rustling noise in the bushes. And fearing he might have been discovered by robbers (for he knew they infested that part of the country), he drew up his mule and was about to mount and be off. But a female voice suddenly struck up a song, which rang silvery through the grove, and in such sweet cadences that the very trees seemed enchanted. Pausing, the general stood as if bound in admiration, whilst the priest's gown dropped from his shoulders, unfortunately leaving him in his doublet and breeches. Looking in the direction of the music, he espied emerging from a cluster of bushes, and tripping gaily towards him, two young persons he would have sworn were lovers, for the man had his arm about the waist of the damsel, a girl just in the bud of womanhood, who looked lovingly into his face, as she sang for his entertainment. I may mention that she was of what novel-writers call medium size, with features exquisitely regular, eyes ravishingly black, and a deep olive complexion, which though charms enough for one, were enhanced by tresses of black, silky hair, that fell down below her waist.

The touching sweetness of the song cheered the general's heart, and was like a gleam of sunshine lighting up the dark and adverse events of his life. The singer and her companion suddenly stopped, and as the thrills of her song died away among the whispering branches, they stood gazing fixedly at the newly discovered object in the grove. As the man was not dressed in the garb common to the country, General Roger Potter resolved within himself not to give way to his fears, as perhaps he might be a soldier of his retreating army. While the lovers, on the other hand, were not a little puzzled as to the true character of the strange figure before them; for while he wore on his head the hat of a priest, his breeches and doublet were those of a mountebank. "Heavenly, stranger, if you be not an enemy, you can render me great service. And as I stand in much need of food and raiment, draw near that I may commend myself to you ;" spoke the general. And so perfect was the stillness of the grove that the words were distinctly echoed to the lovers. Indeed, the man was seen to express surprise and astonishment. But if he was astonished, the general stood confounded when he saw his arms fall from the damsel's waist, and heard the echo of these words, in return: "Heavens! if my ears do not deceive me, it is our general's voice."

Page 289

"Aye, I am General Roger Potter, recently ruler over this kingdom," returned the general, in a trembling voice, for he was still more bewildered.

"And yet," rejoined he with the damsel, "it cannot be our general, for he is dressed in the garb of a clown; and may the devil get me if I think he would dress in that style, though it were to get him safe out of the country." Having said this, he was seen to leave the girl sitting upon the trunk of a tree, and to advance a few paces towards the figure in the strange dress. He then paused, and after a searching glance, quickened his pace, and then at the very top of his speed, ran into the other's arms, crying, "general! general! my good master, let our meeting here be set down for a miracle, for I have much need to ask your forgiveness."

"Faith of my father!" exclaimed the general, releasing his hold of the mule and embracing the stranger, "Tickler, my faithful secretary! is it you?"

"Me, and nobody else!" rejoined the stranger, who was no less a person than the lost secretary. History affords no record of a greeting between a great general and his secretary half so enthusiastic as that which took place on this occasion. Both were nearly affected to tears; and so anxious were they to relate what had befallen them since they parted, that it seemed as if they could not wait another minute. In short, when one began to speak the other would interrupt, impatient lest he forget something of particular interest. Like sensible gentlemen, feeling that they were too much overcome by the meeting, they agreed to postpone the account of their exploits, and proceed at once to the house of Angelio's parents; for that was the name of the damsel who accompanied Tickler through the grove. "It is but half a league from this," said Tickler, "and as they are poor, but honest people, you will be welcome under their roof, and get such refreshment as I see you stand much in need of." Seeing this friendly meeting between her lover and the stranger, Angelio tripped lightly to where they stood, and with a smile of childlike innocence lighting up her sweet face, held out her hand in token of her friendship. And when the general had acknowledged this with his usual courtesy, she blushed, and shook her head, and placed her right hand to her heart, which was her mute but forcible reply, for not a word of the tongue in which he spoke could she understand.

"And now, general," spoke the critic, "let me lead the mule, and do you accompany Angelio, for I remember your gallantry." Just as this was bringing to life all that vanity for which the general has distinguished himself throughout this history, Mr. Tickler continued: "But pray, how comes it that your excellency is dressed in this strange garb?" Suddenly discovering the condition he was in, he picked up the gown, had it about him in a trice, and was for offering no end of apologies, which Tickler put an end to by assuring him, that although Angelio's blushes were all the results of innocence, she was by no means prudish. And now, having got himself safely rolled up in the priest's gown, the general gallantly proceeded with Angelio to her father's house,

followed by the critic, leading the mule. And for what took place when they arrived at that humble abode, the reader is referred to the next chapter.

Page 290

CHAPTER LIX.

Which relates A curious conversation that took place when they reached the house of Angelio's parents.

As it would be impossible to describe, within the limits to which I am bound as writer of this history, the many curious things that took place when they reached the home of Angelio, I must content myself by stating that the general was cordially received by her aged parents, who set before him the best fare their humble condition afforded, such being the custom of the country. They also hastened to provide for his mule. In short, nothing was left undone that could in any way add to the comfort of man and beast; and though their cabin was built of logs and reeds, more perfect happiness was not to be found under any roof. When then, the general had refreshed himself, Angelio sung to him, brought him flowers, took his hand in her own, and so cheered his drooping spirits that he forthwith commenced, and gave Mr. Tickler an account of all that had befallen him since they parted, not even forgetting to mention the death of old Battle, and the wonderful exploit by which it was brought about; all of which has been truthfully recorded, and need not be repeated here. And when he was finished, he requested Mr. Tickler to give him an account of how he came to be so comfortably situated. "Honestly, your excellency," replied Mr. Tickler, "though it cannot be said of me that I have faults as a critic, I confess to have weaknesses which are strong in the nature, as it is called; and these weaknesses run to making love, which is a passion with me."

"Pray, sir," interrupted the general, with a nod, "remember that men of your profession cannot lay exclusive claim to this, for it is common to the soldier, and indeed the very best proof of his gallantry."

"That may be," resumed the critic, "I know but little of soldiering; though give me the pen and I can fight a good stroke. Seeing that you were bent on having a war, which I saw would result in no end of bloody battles. 'Orlando Tickler,' said I to myself, 'to them that likes with the war, and do you keep at a safe distance; for when swords are clashing there's no knowing one minute where a man's head may be the very next.' So while your excellency was surrounded by your generals, and had all your thoughts fixed on conquering the kingdom, I rode my mule into the very grove where we met, intending there to spend the night, proceed to Jolliffee in the morning, and seek my way home as best I could. In truth, I felt my poverty pinching, and I was hungry."

"Two human ills no amount of courage can overcome," rejoined the general, with a patronizing bow.

Page 291

"It was midnight when I fell asleep, having quenched my thirst, at the spring; but the thought of home seriously disturbed my slumbers. However, as morning advanced, I got into a deep sleep, from which I awoke when the sun was up; and hearing the voice of Angelio, which floated soft and sweetly through the grove, as she sang a plaintive song, I fancied myself transported into a fairy land. Now, I must tell you that this innocent girl, as I am told by a priest, and know of myself, had a lover who died not long since, and was buried in this grove, at the foot of a palm-tree. And so strong was her affection for him, that she regularly paid her devotions at his grave. The hour chosen for giving this proof of her grief being early morning, she would pluck wild flowers, fresh with dew, and scatter them over his grave, which was all that heaven had spared to heal her wounded heart. She was on one of these errands of devotion, then, when we met. And here I must tell you, that notwithstanding my mule was gone, she was so surprised at seeing me, that to preserve her innocence she would have run terrified to her home, had it not been that I made such signs as convinced her I was no enemy. As her courage returned, I approached cautiously, and soon had the satisfaction to see her sit down upon the trunk of a fallen tree, where we met as hearts moved by true sympathy only can meet. As she spoke in Spanish, I could not understand a word she said; nor could she understand me; but as kindness begets kindness, it soon came to pass that our affections flowed in one stream; and though the gushing was rapid, it seemed as if the fountain would never dry.

"It may surprise you not a little that this was brought about so suddenly; but if your excellency was as well skilled in these love affairs as he is in directing a great battle, he would have no trouble in understanding it."

"Faith! and I have had some experience in these matters, as my wife Polly can tell you."

"Well," resumed Tickler, "I wiped the tears from her eyes, kissed and kissed her blushing cheeks; and, in truth, offered her so many proofs of my sincerity, that she returned it with three-fold interest. Then she led me to the cabin of her parents, who gave me a warm welcome, and have ever since strove to make my happiness complete. And now, to shorten the story, I will just tell your excellency, that having given such proofs of our affections as none could mistake, a priest was called in, and we were married on the very next morning. And as you will see that Angelio is possessed of charms no critic could possibly resist, I will say here, that from that hour nothing has occurred to mar the bright stream of our love, except that Angelio still continues to strew the grave of her first lover with flowers."

"Upon my honor, as a soldier, sir, I never was more delighted in my life. And as the word of a critic is not to be doubted, I take what you say for truth, and am not surprised that you choose this delightful enjoyment in preference to mixing up in the affairs of war," spoke the general, as Mr. Tickler concluded his story. "But pray tell me, sir, have you no tidings of my army?" the general inquired, in a manner so confused as to show

that his thoughts had been wandering to his military exploits. “Having lost my kingdom, it would be some relief to know which way my army has strayed.”

Page 292

"That I was going to speak of, but it escaped me. You must know, then, that a priest came in a few days ago, (and he is no liar!) and reported that 'these vagabonds,' meaning your excellency's army, were scattered all over the country, and were in a sad plight, many of them dying of hunger."

"Good enough for them!" replied the general, to Mr. Tickler's utter astonishment. "And if every general be not hanged before he gets out of the country, then you may set it down that the devil is on their side; for it was by their disorders I lost my kingdom."

"What! and has your excellency given up the command of his army?"

"Honestly, friend Tickler, though I have a rare talent for commanding, I would defy the devil to keep order in this army sent me by Glenmoregain. As for the kingdom, I resign that like an honorable man: and if this ambitious gentleman wants it still, let him employ another general, for I am resolved to get home where peace reigns, and I can go to bed without fear of being hanged in the morning. Yes, sir, I am resolved to wash my hands of all these vanities, and employ whatever means will carry me quickest out of the country."

"By the saints, general, it has never been my good fortune to hear you talk so sensible. And if you will just come into the garden you shall know more of my inclinations in this matter." They now sallied out into the garden and took seats beneath some pomegranate trees, the night being clear, and the moon shedding a bright light over the landscape. Feeling sure no one would overhear him, Mr. Tickler said to the general: "I would have you know, sir, that nothing would so grieve me as to break faith with my Angelio. But how can a man brought up to the excitements of New York life content himself in a desert, where there is neither opera nor balls to go to? And though my love for Angelio knows no bounds, there are damsels at home for whom I have a curious longing. Since, then, you are resolved to get out of the country, I will give it out that I am resolved to accompany you to Jolliffee, promising to return when I have seen you safe on your journey. And when we are there, seeing that it will be no difficult matter for Angelio to get another lover, I will keep your excellency company to New York."

"Honestly, friend Tickler," replied the general, "I see you are a great rogue, and no exception to your calling. Albeit, if you choose to leave so kind a damsel, and have no fear of her heart and your own reputation, why, so let it be." And now, scrupulously as I respect the high honor which rules among critics in general, my love for truth constrains me here to record, notwithstanding it may do serious damage to the literary reputation of this history, that this colloquy ended with arranging a plan by which Mr. Tickler was to betray Angelio, and leave her the wreck of a broken heart.

Page 293

For three days, then, did General Potter enjoy the hospitalities of this humble cottage, Angelio cutting up the priest's gown and making it into raiment, which she saw he stood much in need of. She likewise busied herself in preparing food for their refreshment on the road, for the husband in whom she placed so much trust, and whose promise, as conveyed to her by the priest, she held as sacred, had discovered to her his intention to bear the general company as far as Jolliffee. Early on the following morning, then, having completed their arrangements, Mr. Tickler kissed and took a fond leave of his Angelio, mounted his mule, and left her, never to return. In another minute they were coursing down the road on their journey, Angelio and her parents offering up prayers for their safety.

CHAPTER LX.

The last and most curious chapter in "This eventful history."

Many strange and unforeseen events have overtaken and seriously damaged the prospects of various great monarchs, and indeed nipped their career in the very bud. At least, so it is written in history. But I venture to assert, that never until the history of General Roger Sherman Potter was given to the world, could there be found any record of a great monarch who had ruled supreme over a kingdom, won battles such as mankind never had dreamed of, and indeed gained so much glory that every general in the nation was envious of it, escaping, on a mule, from the country he had conquered, and leaving his army to the devil and the enemy. Your exacting critic may say, there is Napoleon! But I would have him bear in mind, that while Napoleon sent terror to the very heart of nations, the presence of General Potter was a sign of feasting and merriment, which things are blessings, mankind stand much in need of.

But why do I thus give way to my giddy brain? Why, too, should I thus rudely abandon my hero when on his return to the land where he drew his first breath, carrying with him no less than a multitude of laurels? Nay! though my few remaining locks are silvered with the frosts of four-score winters, and my almost palsied hand refuses to render me further service, I will not thus leave him to his fate. Having been ruler over Kalorama, I am sensitive of his virtues, and would give the world rather than have him damage his reputation. To enter New York, then, with his glories yet moist upon his garments, and give himself up to the follies of those who follow the trade of setting up heroes, would be to consign himself to an oblivion no man need envy. Being of a humane turn, I am resolved this shall not be, though it were necessary to invoke the power of the saints to prevent it.

Page 294

In resuming, then, I will merely mention that General Potter and the critic arrived safe at Jolliffee, the former feeling a regret now and then for the loss of his kingdom, and the latter scarcely giving a thought to his Angelio. And, as heaven favors the vanquished, so they found in the harbor of Jolliffe a brig, which had therein sought shelter from a storm. Taking advantage of this fortunate circumstance-for the brig was bound to New York-they sold their mules, and with the price nicely in their pockets, proceeded on board and demanded passage for charity's sake. And when they discovered what manner of men they were, the captain treated them with great consideration, and not only gave them of his best cheer, but was delighted at the chance of doing so kind an act as that of rescuing them from the clutches of the enemy and conveying them safely to their homes. He also shared his wardrobe with the general; but all his efforts to cheer his drooping spirits failed. The loss of his kingdom was no trifling matter; but the sufferings he had endured cured him of his ambition for worldly glories. And although the passage to New York was long and tedious, he would sit for hours, alone, and without exchanging a word with any one. Then again he would mutter to himself, "Worldly grandeurs-oh! what are they? God disposes all things! perhaps I did not deserve the kingdom; and so His will be done." Again he would sit gazing for hours at the stars, and sigh as if the cares of his forlorn heart were too heavy for him to bear.

I remember that once, during one of these reveries, he called Mr. Tickler to him, saying, "Remember, my trusty friend, I do not mourn the loss of this kingdom because I am weak at heart, but that it is natural for a man to reflect on his losses. All I now ask is that heaven will save me from a watery grave, and see me safe home to my wife Polly."

When they arrived at New York it turned out that divers newspapers had made great victories of all his reverses. And this so delighted his whole host of admirers that no sooner had the news of his return got noised about than they ran mad to meet him, discharged numerous cannons, and indeed made so many demonstrations of joy that the whole city was on tip-toe to see him, and not a few otherwise sensible persons would have exchanged all their worldly goods for even a thread of his garments. A committee of faded heroes and highly flushed aldermen rushed to the Battery to pay him homage, and would have had him drawn through the city by the lean horses I have before described. But unlike another great hero I have in my eye, he yielded to the promptings of his modesty, took leave of Mr. Tickler with tears in his eyes, and with a little bundle under his arm, landed and walked quietly away. In fine, (and with reverence do I record it here to his credit) he shook his head, and when the committee of honor pressed upon him and seemed resolved that he should undergo no few ceremonies,

Page 295

he turned and addressed them thus: "Let me to my peace, gentlemen, for I am no fool. And if you be good and honest men, disturb not the peace of the community in this manner, but get to your homes; and if you cannot comfort your families, give what you can to the poor, and heaven will forgive you for your follies." Indeed, so firmly was he resolved to wash his hands of the world that no force of argument could have induced him to call upon Glenmoregain, whom he felt in his heart would be grievously disappointed that he had not returned with his pockets stuffed full of kingdoms.

And now, at early dawn of a November morning, a short, fat man, in tight-fitting garments and the hat of a priest, might have been seen stepping from on board a small schooner just arrived at Barnstable. His face was covered with a thick, coarse beard, his countenance wore a dejected air, and his raiment, if the hat be excepted, was shabby enough for a professional mountebank out of business. A chilly wind and a drizzling rain filled the heavens with gloom; mist-clouds rolled over the land; a gray fog trailed lazily along the harbor; the scudding clouds vaulted along the heavens as if driven by the furies; and, indeed, the drenched earth was bespread with a pall of gloom.

The dejected man-for such he seemed-adjusted the little bundle under his arm, looked confusedly upon each object that met his eye, and then picked his way, shivering, over the muddy road into the outskirts of the town, which was yet in a sound sleep. He was soon wet to the skin, and the great rain-drops that fell from his broad-brimmed hat added to the forlornness of his condition. The ducks by the roadside ran to their ponds quacking as he approached; and even the geese seemed to pity his condition, for they awoke to gabble him out a salutation, and having shook their feathers, they would sail in the same direction, so long as there was water, and then take leave of him with a loud gabbling. But this homage brought him no consolation: indeed, the bleak earth seemed sending a deeper chill to his heart; and the brown leaf that hung twirling and dripping from the almost naked tree by the roadside, invested his feelings with a deeper melancholy, for in it he read the sorrows of a dead summer.

Halting at the door of a little house, the roof overgrown with black moss, the windows filled with rags, and poverty written upon every shingle, he stood for several seconds hesitating and shivering. Now he fixed his eyes upon the ground and seemed giving his thoughts to the music of the rain-drops; now he turned his eyes sorrowfully upward, as if contemplating the driving clouds. And while I assert that not even the most keen-eyed observer of human things would have detected in this forlorn sojourner a professional warrior returning from the scene of endless victories, and now out of business, the reader, I am sure, will not be surprised when I inform him that this drenched traveler was no less a person than General Roger Sherman Potter, commonly called Roger Potter, the like of whose exploits modern history bears no record.

Page 296

Having done ample penance in the storm, he shook the rain from his hat and knocked timidly at the door, to which he placed his ear and listened, as if counting with great exactness every second that intervened between its opening. Presently a little window at the side opened and a lean but well-browned face, framed in the grim border of a dusky night-cap, protruded. Then a sharp, shrill voice inquired, "Who's there?"

"Heaven be blessed, Polly, it is your husband Roger!" replied the traveler, as the words faltered in his chattering teeth. Exclamations of joy so various that they have entirely escaped the writer of this history, followed this glad announcement. Thrice the good woman invoked the blessings of the angels; and, in truth, so bent did she seem on going mad with joy, that it was not for several minutes that she bethought herself of opening the door. But when she did, not a second elapsed until they were in each other's arms, unburdening their affections in kisses and such other tokens of the deep seated love they bore each other, that for minutes, and even hours, it seemed impossible they could survive their joys, which I here confess (lest some critic set me down for a malicious writer,) ran into tears, such being the most pious proof of perfect happiness.

When, then, they had wiped away their tears of joy, and were more composed, the good woman, having bid Roger be seated, said, "A merciful providence, dear Roger, must have hovered over all your undertakings, or you could not have gained them kingdoms you described in your letter-"

"Umph!" returned Roger, hanging down and shaking his head, "the kingdoms would be well enough if they did not slip so easily through one's fingers. And what is more, dear Polly, I have come to know that there is only one kingdom an honest man need have a longing for, which is the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, I am resolved for the rest of my days to covet no other."

"But you talk strangely, husband; for I can vow of my own knowledge that you would not have conquered all them kingdoms without bringing home cart-loads of gold. We have had a terrible struggle for bread, dear husband!"

"You surprise me, Polly! did I not send you a purse full of doubloons not long since?"

"The one you sent it with must have mistaken the road, husband, for he has not showed his face here."

"Here's where the kingdoms pinch," muttered Roger to himself; while at the same moment a little boy unrolled himself from the covering of a bed on the floor, and crying "father! father!" ran to the general, threw his little arms about his neck, and kissed him, and fondled over him, like one whose love knew no bounds. And these caresses the father returned with great paternal tenderness; but he was too much dejected in spirit to

offer the child those merry tokens of his attachment which had so often amused him in days gone-by.

“Though I have conquered kingdoms enough, Polly,” said the general, his eyes moistening with tears, “I am none the better for them now. In truth, I have nothing but the clothes I stand in; and having resolved that it was best to be an honest man, I was glad enough to get safely home, and wash my hands of these kingdoms, which I have left behind for them who have a turn for such things.”

Page 297

"Indeed, husband, I will think no more of these riches you promised me, if you will stay quietly at home, assist me in getting an honest livelihood, and give your thoughts to God and the church. But how comes it that you are in the hat of a priest?"

The forlorn general picked up the hat, and having eyed it distrustfully, said in reply: "You must know, dear Polly, that though I gained some fame as a politician; that my valor as a military man no man ever dared doubt; and that no really great man ever had more undertakings; this hat is the only trophy left to me. And though my melancholy put a quick end to the rest of my days, I am resolved to preserve this relic of my lost kingdom, so that when my enemies scoff and say, "all the wonderful things that were written of him had no truth in them, except only as they appeared on paper, I can, pointing to this hat, say: 'here's the ducat!'"

"You are dearer to me than several kingdoms would be, dear Roger," resumed the honest woman, kissing him affectionately.

"And now, Polly," he rejoined, "give me an account of your trials and struggles during my absence, for I see care has written the history of many of them in your face."

The good woman immediately drew her chair beside him, and commenced giving an account of the many troubles and trials she had undergone; but so numerous were they, that it would be impossible to recount them all here. The little pictures which gave such a martial air to his home had been sold to get bread; death had kindly stepped in and relieved the mother of one daughter; the other was out at service. In short the forlornness pervading each object that met his eye, told how hard had been the struggle for bread. As she continued recounting her trials his grief deepened; but when she came to the death that had carried away his favorite child, his head dropped, and burying his face in his hands, he gave vent to his feelings in sobs and tears. "Heaven give me strength," he sighed, "that I may retain her sweet face in my memory." This was indeed a misfortune that seemed to shut the past from his thoughts, and to increase his sufferings as the future appeared to him in all its loneliness. And when he had partially recovered from this shock of grief, the good woman brought him food, for he was hungry; and also procured him a change of raiment from one of the neighbors, there not being a shred of his own in the house. And when he had satisfied his appetite, he turned to his wife, saying; "As these misfortunes which have overtaken me are incident to the lives of all great men, I hold it good policy that we mourn them not too long, but set to loving one another, that we may be cured of the sins of this world when death calls us away."

Page 298

Polly at once fell in with this opinion; but being a sensible woman, was careful to add a clause stipulating that Roger give up politics and return to the making of shoes, at which employment there was some chance of getting food to maintain the body, without which there was no knowing what would become of the soul. His sword being in the possession of the priest, there was no immediate danger of a return of his military ardor. As for governing, he made up his mind that the most worthy man in that line was the shepherd who provided well for the lambs of his own flock. "For truly," said he, "I have gained the applause of millions; but it has not saved my family from want." And with these salutary resolutions, he sought and obtained employment in the town; where he lives much respected by his neighbors, who, I must add, were not a little disappointed that he returned so unexpectedly and shabbily, for they had read in the newspapers that he was a great ruler, which, however, was strange enough, for they knew in their own minds that he was dull of intellect, and in truth had a disordered brain.

Many years after his return he went about seemingly much dejected. Indeed, he would avoid even his best friends, and go straight into a melancholy mood if in a merry moment any one ever touched upon his past career, though I ought to mention that he rarely appeared in the street without being saluted by little Barnstable, who would gather about him, and persist in offering him that species of homage it was accustomed to pay him in years gone by. But even this failed to excite the slightest love of adventure in his bosom; and the star of his glory sank to rise no more.

And now, the stream of my compassion having run out, I have felt myself at liberty to desert many of the characters who figured so conspicuously in the early part of this history; and, indeed, to leave them in that state of glorious uncertainty for which critics have a perfect madness, since it furnishes their bountiful pens with means to show the greatness of their wisdom. But if any of these good natured gentlemen critics call me such names, as: "simpleton," "a fool and don't know it," "an idiot making an ass of himself," which exquisite expressions I have selected from the sayings of critics at this day, I would have them beware, since if I am old, my heart is none the less given to mischief, and I have a rare knack for cracking the pates of those who say aught disrespectful of my books.

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Page 302

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Page 303

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Page 304

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