

THE LOVER'S TRIALS;

OR, THE

DAYS BEFORE THE REVOLUTION.

BY

MRS. MARY A. DENISON.

"Ruth's face, in contrast to the dead black of her garment, seemed like marble of the purest, clearest lustre. No trace of color—almost no trace of life. Never once were her blue eyes lifted; the long lashes seemed as if glued to the cheek. With folded hands upon her bosom, and glittering wavy hair flowing, in token of humiliation, so woe-begone she looked, and yet so saintly, that as she moved along the aisle, sobs sounded all over the house. But when Ruth had gained the stopping-place, and turned towards the pulpit, half her anguish was gone. It must have been that some supporting angel held an arm beneath her, for now the sweet features seemed as calm, even as firm as sculptured marble; the eyes were nearly closed, and a light as from heaven appeared to glorify her face and her fair shining hair. Her hands were raised a little, and tightly locked together, as if in supplication," etc.—See page 197.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE sun shone broadly over the waters of Boston harbor. Shouts and huzzas rang from the wharves and all the streets adjacent. Glittering as it came nearer and nearer, the governor's barge drew close to Boston pier. Sir Edmund Andros sat unconcernedly in the stern talking with his officers. His secretary, a gay, handsome man, occupied the seat at his left. The crimson show of the British uniforms, the inspiring music, and the gay attire of town and country people, conspired to make a somewhat imposing spectacle.

Following the barge came several boats filled with soldiers. These, as they leaped ashore, formed into rank and file, and amid the wild shouts of the younger towns-people, began their march. A splendid carriage had been in waiting for Sir Edmund. Entering it with his secretary and two others of his suite, he was rapidly driven to what by courtesy was called Government House.

Sir Edmund had been absent for some weeks, visiting New York, which city had been recently added to his government. To judge from the appearance of the people on this day of his return, as the splendid cortege wound among the narrow streets, the governor was not a favorite.

To be sure, there was some trimming of tavern-windows, little boys and large made bluster and show, but many of the staid citizens moved sturdily along, not deigning even to raise their hats or turn their heads. There were bonfires in the evening also, and illuminations, but only in the houses of the wealthier and more special friends of his excellency.

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R. L. Douglass
Nov 6 1878

THE LOVER'S TRIALS.

Chapter First.

LETTER FROM GODFREY LAMB, BOOKSELLER, TO HIS WIFE IN
LONDON.

DATED BOSTON, Feb., 168—.

MOST DEARE WIFE :

I haste to tell thee of my arrival in this outlandish porte. Noe misfortune happened to our vessel, though I heare that ye "Three Polly's" hath made shipwreck of my goods—bad luck to it. But better that I didn't go in it, as I fully intended.

Nowe for this same citie of Boston!

It bids fair to be verie goodlie. 'Tis builded on ye south-west side of a bay, in ye w'h five hundred ships might anchor. Ye buildings are handsome, joyninge one to another as in Lunnon—ye streets are of good size and manie of them paved with cobble-stone. Ye towne is not divided into parishes, and hath a pleasant mingling of trees and field, and a beautiful outlook upon divers islands on w'h I am told are gardens and fair farms. Toe-day ye governor arrives from New York, w'h is now added to hys care. Ye people here made as great a time at ye proclamation, as most of them do toe-day.

I stop at ye present at a famous good tavern cailed ye Red Lion. Mistress Bean, ye landlady, is a clever sort of bodie, verie accommodating and tidy. She hath a little maid in her house about whom there seems to be some commotion at this time. A pretty maid it is—her name Ruth—and a shame that they should be for persecuting her! But these American Cromwells have no mercy.

I had a hint ye last night from Mistress Bean (who seems sorry for her little maid), that when ye captain of ye "Prudent Sarah" hears of it, he will take ye matter in hand. By w'h I should judge that ye handsome young mariner hath his eye turned towards this star, whose light shineth now more clear than usual.

Ye little maid, Ruth, hath just brought me nice luncheon. For all ye world she looks like thy fair neice, Mercy Apricot. Just ye same soft locks curling in ripples over a fair white forehead. Her eyes verie sorrowful and drooping, and a hopeless look spread over her sweet features. She is soe handsome that even her grief maketh dimples—sad ones.

"So, my maid," I said, wishing to have some converse with her, "ye house is verie full."

"Yes, sir, verie full," she made reply in a low voice.

"I suppose ye captain of ye 'Prudent Sarah' stops at this tavern," I added, to see what effect. Well, ye red color came like a swarm of crimson butterflies—fluttered all over her fair cheeks—and up to ye verie roots of her golden hair.

Ye young mariner, they say, is ye most beautiful man in Boston. It is made no secret that a noble lady, of ye name of Bellamont, is verie much in love with him. He knows it, of course—as how could he help it? About ye little maid I will tell thee more in my next.

I have been introduced to manie persons here, and expect

shortly to dine wi' ye governor. Attended worship in ye Towne Hall last Lord's day. Ye Reverend Parris Aldrich officiated. He is by marriage related to ye governor. Ye people, of course, hate ye English service—they be soe afraid of Popery! Verie well! Sir Edmund will learn them a lesson or two.

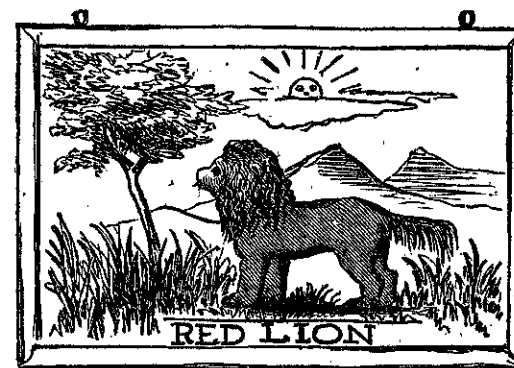
By ye way, mie trunk with ye black silk velvet small-clothes got badlie wetted with ye salt water. I have had to furnish myself with a new suit.

I walked abroad last night. Ye town seemed to me to be verie rich and populous. On ye south there is a small but pleasant ground, called ye Common, where ye gallants a little before sundown stroll with their marmald maidens, as we do in Morrfields, till ye nine-o'clock bell rings them home—when presentlie constables walk their rounds to see good order kept, and to take up loose people.

I smile to think how easily a bodie may here get lost. Yesterday, on asking a man where I was—bewildered—(a common fellow) he answered, "In Puddinglane." Truly it did transport me back to Lunnon. Write me soon—dear heart.

Thy

LAMB.



Chapter Second.

THE TWO CAPTAINS.

A FULL moon lighted up the waters of Boston harbor. Here and there the land jutted out, running low and shelvingly into the liquid tide, and covered to its borders with what had been summer-verdure, now brown and dry. A thousand little ripples hummed ceaselessly along the shore. Here and there boats were hauled up in the shadows of the wharves, and the town, looking from this stand-point, seemed a fairy mass of silvery roof-tops, so strong were the beams of the December moon, so bright and dancing were the little flames in all the windows.

The islands in the far distance, the ships at anchor—the white wake of glistening light coming from a remote point, widening and glaring, made a fair picture—especially as the stars, unusually thick and brilliant, were everywhere reflected in the great ocean-mirror.

A sound of oars, striking rapidly, broke the deep stillness. Presently a boat rounded from a near cove, and was guided fast and vigorously towards the land. Five men composed the boat's complement—one seemed from his manner to be the commander.

Cautiously nearing Boston Pier, they gazed on all sides, and very slowly and with extreme quiet, the men and their captain landed.

The latter stood in a careless attitude, gazing townward,

one foot on the wooden coping of the wharf. He was plainly dressed in the sea-garb of that day, heavy trunk-hose, and dark small-clothes, added to which he wore a cloth cloak, and an ordinary cap that seemed to have seen much service. Upon his face the moon shone, revealing a thick beard that appeared to be artificial, for once or twice he pressed it on more securely with his hand. He had a dark, handsome, but evil face, and wore his hair longer than was the fashion; but it was curious to see, as he removed the cap, the curling tresses rise with it, revealing a mass of very thick, short curls. He spoke hastily:

"Now men, two of you—Ned and Jo—carry the boat over to Winnissimmet, and keep her quiet unless you hear my signal. You, Abe and Hatch, stop at the Red Lion, and gather what news you can respecting the Prudent Sarah. Be particular and find out whether any of the passengers have left their traps aboard, as I suspect they have. I shall be busy to-night. Perhaps you may hear of me somewhere about two or three, and I may give you news sooner."

"Ay, cap'n!" answered the men, severally, lifting their woollen caps.

"There's nine!" exclaimed the captain, as a bell from the nearest belfry rang out. "That will send the people hence. Their rejoicings over the governor's return hasn't cost 'em much, I should judge; its pretty still, anyway. That's a nice looking craft, in this light," he soliloquized, turning bayward as two men sprang into the boat in obedience to his orders. "I'd like that fine fellow in an open sea," he continued, "with plenty of pickings afloat."

The Kingfisher, a fifty-gun frigate, lay at anchor not more than half a mile from the shore. Her rigging looked drift-white, and the red mouths of her port-holes were

burnished into a fiery glow. Softly, a thousand slender threads of rippling light, as if drawn by invisible fingers and luminous needles, worked a delicate netting at the place where her dark hull rested on the water. Now and then sprays of soft gleams crept suddenly up her bulky sides, and flashed down again seemingly quenched in the tide.

Captain Bill, as his men called him, moved rapidly up the wharf and disappeared. By this time another boat was seen quickly and boldly winning her way towards the place where the captain had so lately stood. Six strong arms rowed her, and in the stern-sheets sat a young man with a cloak folded about him. He too sprang out, as his predecessor had done, but with a different mien. He spoke in loud, hearty tones, and seemed glad to feel the shore. He lifted his cap, but the slightly curling locks that just touched the handsome neck were his own, and no unduly heavy weight of hair disfigured his face.

"Well, men, it's a sharp night, and you have rowed well," he said, drawing from his pocket some coin. "Here is something with which to drink confusion to the governor. Duke, don't you get tipsey, my good fellow."

This he said addressing a small, loose-jointed man, who, in his heavy woollen roundabout and red skull-cap, stood balancing his money on one of his fingers, and who now presented a keen, cunning countenance, his one eye almost lost in the habitual wrinkles of a habitual wink.

"Cetch Catchcod, Duke of Marma, to spend his money for what steals the brains, as the poet says. Brains is a scarce commodity, and I ain't got any to spare except what I hammer into this shape;" and pulling at his front-lock, he exclaimed, in a sporting tone—

"Thank ye, cap'n, thank 'e kindly—
And I'll try and not go it blindly;
For shillin's isn't always to be had,
And when they are——"

he scratched his head, crying, with a look of perplexity—"I can't think of any rhyme but bedad! and I don't know how to bring him in."

"That will do, Duke;" said the captain, smiling. "You can stop at the Red Lion if you wish, with me, or go with the other men to the Blue Anchor"—laughing again at Marmaduke Catchcod's original poetry, showing his white teeth, his splendid face proved the assertion that he was the most beautiful man in Boston. Browed though he had been by the impartial sun—the elegance and regularity of his features—the soul-light sparkling in his eyes—the dimples nestling in either cheek, the dainty brown whiskers, made him most unexceptionably handsome. It was no marvel that he was admired as much by the men as the maidens, wherever he went.

The man who had improvised the noway remarkable verse of thanks, was an original phase of the Jack-tar genus. The sailors had dubbed him "Catchcod, Duke of Marma," and he was in no way displeased with the title, but rather liked it. Originally picked up in the by-streets of London by Captain Cameron, rescued from beggary if not starvation, Marmaduke was pledged body and soul to his kind master. On board ship, he was in many respects Captain Cameron's right-hand man, proving himself serviceable in all things. The captain had taught him to write, and as he was remarkably apt, after a time he became equivalent to a secretary—copying the log and otherwise turning his talents to account. He was an indefatigable reader, catching up every thing that came in his way that promised a story.

In the rough draught he was also something of a genius, and in fact he made himself of service wherever he was.

Leaving one man to take the boat back to the vessel, Captain Cameron bent his steps towards the Red Lion.



Chapter Third.

TAVERN GOSSIP.

IN all the windows of the Red Lion tavern flickered lights, some burning with a full bright flame, others far spent and dying. Without, the noise of laughter, conversation, and the clinking of glasses, fell on the ear. In the streets all was still, save here and there some weak-headed reveller unconsciously disturbing the peace, and preparing himself for a night of inglorious confinement.

The captain entered. Mistress Bean bustled into the hall. She was a short, firm-visaged personage, her jetty locks escaping from a full English cap, her gown of red stuff tucked up at both sides over a black petticoat. Her cheeks were apple-red, plump and round, her eyes black and restless.

"Why, captain," she exclaimed, "I'm master glad to see you; why didn't ye come before?"

"Business, Mistress Bean, business! Well, I hope you are prospering."

"Yes, middling—more since the governor's come," said Mistress Bean, setting her arms akimbo, while the muslin-like ribbons of ruddiest cherry gave a brighter color to her face. "La! you should have seen the sights this afternoon; training ain't nothing to it, I do assure you. It was a master-fine show. The procession went a'most to Flounder-lane, with sights of soldiers and music and shouting. I just got

the least bit of a glimpse of the governor, and I assure you he looked as big and stately as King James himself. Come, captain, do go into the parlor and take somethin', won't ye? There's a good fire there."

Mistress Bean panted and puffed; she was almost out of breath.

"No, thank you, mistress," replied the young shipmaster; "I'll step in the keeping-room." As he entered, his fine, dark eyes roved from side to side, as if in search of some missing face, even while he received the congratulations of those whom he knew.

Groups of townsmen, drinking and discussing the movements of the day, nearly filled the long, low-ceiled room. A few were tossing off strong potations at the famous bar of the tavern, and were already in a state that required some attention; but still there did not seem to be any manifestation of riotous feeling.

In a rude way, this common apartment was decorated with flags and candles, and pieces of pine and hemlock trees. A picture of King James, whose swollen cheeks suggested the possibility of a royal toothache, hung conspicuous over the wide mantle, dressed in evergreen. In the enormous fireplace, great logs sent out hissing flakes of flame, and the fire of itself was no mean illumination. There were prints of ships, in manifold colors, hung here and there; the floor had been sanded, but the rough heels of the townsmen's shoes had made all manner of hieroglyphics in the once clean powder that grated under foot.

Bar-maid Molly, a dashing specimen of a Cockney-English girl, seemed the focus upon which the glances of the young men were concentrated; and her very conscious manner, and briding vanity, gave her a coarse individuality. After Captain Cameron came in, she had eyes for none

beside him. Repeatedly, in her nervous haste, she poured liquors out of the wrong bottles, and as often was taken to task for not making the right change; while the smile went round—in some, envious—in others, sheer impertinence.

In one corner, perched upon a stool, a green-baize bag dangling from his shoulder, a fiddle held in his arms, as one would hold a child, sat "Long, Loose Benjamin," the ubiquitous. He had already been in every tavern in Boston.

At the eleventh hour he entered the Red Lion; and after playing the doleful ditty with which he always preluded his entertainments, had set them all to dancing, inside and out—for there are some men who, though they think it a deadly sin to dance, go through all the motions, to themselves, at the sound of a merry tune.

But the bell had rung nine—the authorities allowed nothing of the kind after that hour; so long, loose Ben, a steeple of bones six feet and more, sat hugging his fiddle.

The other personages who merit a particular description stood, two of them together, busily talking.

One was a keen-eyed old man of seventy, with hair white as the driven snow, and shining as silver, braided with a long cue adown the back. He stood bent over somewhat—though his natural attitude was perfectly upright—his hands crossed on the silver head of his cane. His name was Comstock—commonly he was called Father Comstock. He was a bookseller, at the sign of the Blue Glove, in Union-street, and a most devout as well as capable man. The other was a restless-eyed, excitable elderly man, a bricklayer, and well known and esteemed for his zeal, both in state and church matters. To these two men the young ship-master first spoke.

"Ah me!" and Father Comstock shook his head, after the salutations were passed, crossing one leather-breeched leg

over the other—"It's great times we're having now in this town—great times. The governor can't even come from New York, but he must have a reception. The Lord save us! He alone knows what'll come of it!"

"I s'pose thou'st heard," cried Gaffer Scates, with the eager air of a man anxious to impart the first news—"I s'pose thou'st heard that the new rector, as they church-folk call him, the minister Aldrich, read prayers out of the book in the town-house last Sabba'-day."

"Yes, and with a popish gown on, all full of pleats and divers needlework. Ah me! in what a guise comes the evil one sometimes," added Father Comstock.

"And that bodes no good, you think," said the captain, with a manner as if he would be interested, yet watching the door narrowly. As he spoke, two sailors entered, and went directly to the bar.

"No good! Why, our liberties are in danger, dost see!" exclaimed Gaffer Scates, with an authoritative gesture. "I should think, truly, it boded no good. Hither comes a tool of the governor, from England, three days ago, in the frigate Kingfisher, and brings a new charter, with which to cut down our freedom. Soon will there be such multitudes of taxes, that we poor craftsmen can neither live nor die decently."

By this time the sailors had taken their refreshment, and were cautiously edging round to where Captain Cameron stood listening, with that strange, far-off expression on his face.

"Then there seemeth to be a stir about witchcraft. Even one of thy passengers reported foul doings on board the Prudent Sarah, during thy passage from England," said Father Comstock.

"Aha!" exclaimed the young shipmaster, his face tak-

on some interest; "so that old royalist is brewing mischief! Well, let him try it—he'll find that I don't fear him."

"Why doth he bear thee such spite, master?" asked Father Comstock, deliberately buttoning his old claret coat. "They say he hath maligned thee to the governor."

The two sailors, evidently spies, came still nearer, and while they appeared to be intent, one upon packing down the tobacco in his clay pipe, the other deliberately surveying a coarse print, representing a sailor in a new fit-out (a compromise between a tarpaulin and roundabout and a gentleman's broadcloth, in which poor Jack looked terribly uncomfortable), they still—now and then exchanging glances—listened, with wide ears, to every word that was spoken.

"Why does he bear me spite? Because we disputed about Kirke, the governor, that was to be, of these Colonies, and I called him a bloody rascal—which he is!" The captain brought one hand down into the palm of the other with tremendous force. "He being, as I have understood, a relative of that accursed hound, took me to task and insisted on fighting me. To this I would not consent, stating as a reason that my principles forbade my duelling. He then gave me a violent blow, which I resented sailor-fashion—that is, I floored, or rather decked the gentleman, whichever you will, and tied him till he promised submission, and, I doubt not, himself vengeance. The old fellow embarked in England with the intention of remaining in Boston, but he swears now that he will not stay in a country where such cut-throats as he is pleased to call me have the rule—so I expect to take him back again. He declares, however, in his rage, that he shall return to England in the Prudent Sarah, but under another captain—with such threats he thinks to intimidate me. I declare that he shall not. If it had not been for one thing more than another, I'd have

pitched his old carcass, trunks, boxes, and all out of my vessel, and sent them ashore; but I want to convince the man that the *people* can do something in this country—we are the king here;” and he drew his handsome figure proudly up.

“Hush! hush!” said Gaffer Scates.

“Hist! hist!” cried Father Comstock.

“Don’t be afraid, friends, I understand myself perfectly,” said the young shipmaster, turning round and seeing no one near, for by twos and threes the people had dropped out, leaving long lean Benjamin asleep in his corner, his nose touching the bridge of his fiddle. “He would take the law on me in a moment, but he knows it wouldn’t do for him. Two other passengers saw the whole thing, and that he offered the first assault. One of them—a book-merchant of the name of Lamb—said that he should have slightly amended my act; that is, he should have thrown him overboard for the fishes. I told him I had too much pity for the poor things,” he added, laughing; “they never would have digested his tough old English hide.

“It was all true, then,” said Gaffer Scates, hat in hand, “that when Monmouth was defeated, this Kirke hung men drinking healths to the king.”

“Ay! was it true,” replied the shipmaster, his brilliant eyes flashing, “thirty of them—ten turned off in a health to the king, ten to the queen, and ten to that accursed Jeffries, who may some rascal do the same service by.”

“Thy tongue is somewhat too free for thine own good, young man,” said Father Comstock, gently; “curb it a little—not but what thou art right—righteous indignation is not forbidden by the scriptures, I take it, and it gladdens my old heart to meet with one who loves his country as I am sure thou dost—and whom the constant contact with other nations doth not in the least prejudice against his

own. But Goody will think me lost if I do not open her front-door by the stroke of ten. Let us hope that our governor will rule well and justly—alackaday! if that may be—but Heaven forbid that he turn out a Papist, as has been hinted.”

“The governor!” cried the young captain, with a sneer; and setting his lips firmly together—“he would do Kirke over again, give him but the opportunity. It’s my opinion that we don’t need these royalists to rule us. Why can’t we choose our own rulers? What do we, a people able to maintain ourselves and our laws, want of these princely tools of the king, with their guards, their liveried servants, their black-hearted secretaries, their red-coated, inso——”

“I do wish the maid would come!”

At this pettish voice quite near him, the handsome young captain changed color, and apparently forgot his speech.

“Is it Ruth you speak of, Mistress Bean?” he asked.

“Yes, the child was called to a council and had to go alone, as I was overmuch busied with seeing to the strangers.”

“Called to a council! What council?” cried the young shipmaster, in a tone of strong surprise.

“A church council,” was the reply. “Of course you have not heard of it. It’s some doings of that Lady Anne, who, with her fashions and her extravagances, is always getting poor folks into trouble,” said the landlady, now intent upon shaking into consciousness long lean Ben, who, with a most perverse pertinacity, only hugged his fiddle the closer and snored the louder.

“That Lady Anne doeth our young people much harm,” said Father Comstock, laying his hand on the latch of the door. Almost at that instant the door was pushed open from the outside.

Chapter Fourth.

COTTON MATHER AND THE MAID RUTH

THE new comer was of kindly yet austere presence. He was dressed in the precisely-fashioned garments of a clergyman, and bore in one hand a stout cane. Following him closely, came a timid, beautiful young creature, her eyes downcast, her head somewhat bent, her delicate lips curved with the impress of a great sorrow. For a moment she stood dejected, silent, her arms folding her thick cloak about her in such a way that her hands pressed against her heart, as if to keep down its heavy pulsations.

"Doctor Mather!" exclaimed Father Comstock, a blending of humility, reverence, and affection in his manner; and with low bendings of the body, both worthies shook hands with their minister.

"Mistress Bean," said Doctor Cotton Mather, turning to the hostess, who in some confusion was striving to hide the snoring fiddler, by the disposition of her portly body to that effect, "I have brought home thy little maid in safety. We have been dealing with her as shepherds who watch for souls. Thou wilt see that she hath proper time for meditation and prayer, and as much as thou canst spare to her. We find her very penitent, but not over-easy to be entreated."

The young shipmaster had all this while stood quietly by, striving by every mute endeavor to catch the downcast eye of the sorrowful, beautiful girl, who still maintained an atti-

tude of the deepest dejection. Now his eye flashed as he exclaimed, with a sailor's abruptness—

"Of what crime, reverend sir, does this maiden stand accused?"

For the first time the young creature looked up, and encountering the passionate gleaming of the master's eye, a deep, hot crimson rushed over cheek and brow, and releasing her hands, she turned away and bent her face within them.

"Young sir! thy manner savors of more irreverence than we could wish in one of thy age addressing a senior," said Doctor Mather, in a low, silken voice, and with unblanched dignity. "We did not speak touching any crime, if we remember. We said we had been dealing with the maiden, but made no allusion to any accusation whatever."

"Oh, your honor—your reverence, I mean, will excuse me for not introducing this young gentleman," said Mistress Bean. "Master Cameron, Doctor Cotton Mather, our good clergyman of the new church."

The young shipmaster bowed stiffly, while the doctor standing yet more uprightly, exclaimed,

"Have we here the commander of the ship Prudent Sarah?"

"That is the name of my good vessel," replied the captain, promptly.

"We have heard of you," said the doctor, with another rapid but more suspicious glance. "You brought passengers some of whom we have seen."

"Yes, sir, five passengers, four of them gentlemen and one a knave," said the young man, bluntly.

The reverend doctor glanced first at the undaunted captain, then at Mistress Bean, then towards the two worthies by the door, as much as to say, "What kind of a fellow have we here?"

"We know not to whom thou alludest," he answered, slowly; "we ourself have met but two, a young merchant by the name of Lamb, and an elderly gentleman who calls himself Obed Bentley, jeweller to the king."

"Jeweller and lickspittle, you might add, saving your reverence," said Captain Cameron, almost fiercely. "That man is a toad and would be willing to be trodden upon by a king's toe."

Father Comstock and Gaffer Scates looked aghast at this inconsiderate speech, and Doctor Cotton Mather stood for a moment, his eyes riveted upon the beautiful, haughty face, wreathing all over with indignation, with its shining eyes, broad, proud brow, and its lips curved scornfully.

"May the Lord give thee a more Christian spirit," he said, gently, so gently that the young man changed color, and became instantly as meek as he had before been defiant.

"I ask your pardon," he said, frankly; "these things only concern myself, and I am to blame for my rashness."

At this most awkward moment, long lean Benjamin, who was probably dreaming of sundry promiscuous parties at which he had acted as fiddler, struck up "Johnny Lowrie's Jig," one of the most lawless of Bacchanalian tunes, full of intricate turns and alternating in a most riotous manner from the shrillest treble to the lowest bass.

Mistress Bean looked ready to fall. The reverend doctor turned towards the intrusive sounds with frowning brows, and the worthy townsmen each laid violent hands on the door-latch. Captain Cameron, laughing in spite of the assembled dignity, sprang to the old musician's shoulder and shook him with a strong hand. The fiddle fell to the floor, and the cavernous jaws of the affrighted fiddler opened with his dull eyes.

"Pick up your fiddle, man, and go home," said Cap-

tain Cameron, sternly; "it's a wonder it isn't broken to pieces."

"Isn't any one goin' to dance?" asked the man, stupidly. Then hearing the great clock in the corner strike ten, he lifted himself with a great shake, picked up his fiddle, placed it in the bag, and shuffled out after the doctor.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, Ruth, who had hitherto had no chance of leaving the room, glided out like a ghost. Not unobserved, however, for Captain Cameron turned at the moment from the outer door at which he had wished them all good-night, and seeing the retreating figure, hurried after her.



Chapter Fifth.

RUTH'S GREAT TROUBLE.

"RUTH! Ruth!" he cried, softly.

She did not answer.

"Ruth, you will at least speak to me. Wait a moment, only a moment,—come in here,—there is a light. Ruth, you will give me one minute."

"O Captain Cameron!"

Ruth said this in a distressed way as she paused. His imploring tones moved her heart to its very depths, and yet that heart was almost breaking because of her grief, because of him. How could she face him in the darkness of the anguish that had been thrust upon her?

"Ruth, will you not tell me what the trouble is, me who have a right to know and a will to counsel? You are suffering, suffering alone. I must believe you are innocent, Ruth, whatever imputation they cast upon you."

"Oh, bless you for that! bless you for that!" she cried, eagerly, excitedly, clasping her small hands together.

He led her tenderly into the parlor. A neglected candle was burning quite close to the candlestick, and the guttering tallow streamed in all directions along the burnished side of its supporter. Ruth sat listlessly by the table, and again covered her face with her hands to hide the tears that would come. Her bosom swelled with suppressed sobs.

She had taken her hood off, and now Captain Cameron stood stroking, as with a woman's gentle hand, her soft golden hair, and waiting till she should speak.

At last she checked the tears and the pitiful sighs, and resting her bended brow on both hands seemed gathering courage to speak.

"It all happened last week."

This was the way she commenced, and in a voice so low and sad that the handsome young captain thought to himself it was like the wailing undertone of the first sound of a storm just breaking over the deep.

"Had not Lady Anne Bellamont something to do with it?" asked Captain Cameron, seeing that she could not bear to speak again.

"Yes, for one of them," she replied, mournfully; "there are two indictments. I went to help her sew," she continued, brokenly. "She was arranging some plays for the entertainment of her company. One afternoon she asked me to read one of the parts, and she said I succeeded so well that I must take the character. I don't know as there was sin in that"—the innocent eyes glanced up for one instant, then suddenly fell again—"but I consented more readily that I was unhappy, and I felt reckless and like flying to any thing that would amuse me. I did not know the church would be so angry with me."

"And is it for *that* they hold a council?" the voice of the young man was full of passion. "For such a trifle as that would they deliberately injure the character of a defenceless girl? More than ever am I incensed against them, a set of long-eared Puritans!"

"Oh, don't speak of them so, please," cried Ruth, lifting an imploring glance to his face again: "they are good and holy men—don't speak of them in that way."

He caught his breath as that lovely, tearful face was upturned, and gazed with eyes full of worship upon her.

"Ruth! my darling!" he murmured, in a voice subdued, but full of feeling.

Instant the short-lived quiet died out of her manner, and her head was bowed again—she struggling with her tears.

"Come, now, tell me, what was the other accusation? Was it as terrible as this?" he asked, in a bantering voice.

"Oh! I cannot! I cannot!" she cried, writhing; "and yet you must know—you will hear—everybody will hear and talk of it—and I shall die—I shall die of shame!"

She said this in such utter agony of tone and manner, that the young man stood gazing upon her in astonishment.

"Why, Ruth! is it so serious as that? Has any one dared to cast an imputation on your good name? Because if so!"—his lips came together again, his eyes were full of indignant fire.

"It happened—it *did* happen—I did meet him—he did kiss me—it is true—all true, but——" she drew one heavy breath, shuddered from head to foot, and the broken, sobbing voice was silent.

"*He!* who? Kissed *you*, did you say, kissed *you*, Ruth—you, Ruth?"

There was power like that of the heavy-toned thunder in the man's suppressed voice. He stood off at arm's length, looking at her from under his knit brows.

"It is true," she answered in a faint voice, from which all freshness, all elasticity, had gone. "O Captain Cameron—you, too, will no longer be my friend, for I cannot tell even you."

"Cannot tell! What does it mean, Ruth? only tell me what it means," he asked, going towards her—"you say you met *him*; met *who*, Ruth?"

She shook her head; scalding tears fell over her cheeks, but did not disfigure the pure, beautiful face.

"I cannot tell you any more than I could tell the council—that if they would have patience—only have patience—for what time I knew not—they should learn every thing," she said, as if she accepted his mistrust meekly: "it is no use to ask me; I must die before I tell."

"When did you meet this man?" asked Captain Cameron, with forced calmness.

"Last week—last week on Tuesday night," she replied.

"Night! Tuesday *night*!—and where did you meet him?"

"At the end of Boston Pier."

"Ruth! Ruth! alone, and at night!—that was unmaidenly, Ruth!" His handsome face lost color, and starting from her he walked back and forth, struggling with the demon her words had raised.

"You would not blame me if you knew," replied Ruth gently, yet with a moan in her voice. "I suffer enough," she added, rising as she spoke; "I have enough before me to suffer. Let me go; it is very late. Oh! thank God! I have Him to go to!"

"Ruth!" as he pronounced her name steadily, he took her cold, trembling hands in his, and bending forward gazed as if longing to read a refutation of his doubt in her clear eyes, till they sank under his look.

"I see nothing like guilt there," he murmured; "and yet—at night—a kiss too! O Ruth! I could almost risk my salvation on your truth to me. I never knew until this moment how absolutely dear you are to me. Don't let me love you despairingly, Ruth."

"I cannot tell you—not now—perhaps not ever; God knows. You must believe my simple word—I am innocent of any evil intent—of all thought of guile."

"Yes, yes, Ruth," he exclaimed hurriedly; "yes, I believe you—I *do* believe you—I *must* believe you," he added, yet with something of struggling grief and doubt in his words.

"But what are they going to do with you in the church?"

"I don't know," she said slowly, almost losing her self-possession again.

"But you surely will not allow them to inflict—any—punishment on you, Ruth!"

"I have done wrong," she said meekly.

"A thousand thunders! wrong!—you just told me you were innocent!" cried the captain, passionately.

"Wrong, I mean, in consenting to take part in the play; it is against the rules of the church."

"Yes, but that simple thing."

"Nothing is simple that draws the heart away from God," she answered in her sweet, low voice.

"You little Puritan!" exclaimed the captain, half-laughing, half-incensed. "If any of them, the Reverend Cotton Mather himself, were only half as good and pure as you are, they would have little to answer for, I'm thinking."

"Don't say that!" she cried with a deprecatory motion. "They are holy and blameless men—he is a minister of God. Don't for a moment compare me with them."

"Well, then, my beautiful little batch of sin, confessed and unconfessed—what am I to think of you?" His bantering tone evidently pained her.

"Perhaps it would be better not to think of me at all, Captain Cameron. Perhaps I am not worthy"—her voice broke again, a little—"I am poor, dependent, suspected—oh! it would be better for both of us if you never thought of me at all."

"But what if I can't help it?" asked the captain, vexed at her quiet way (he thought it quiet) of speaking with

reference to a love in which his whole soul was bound up. She looked so pure! so perfect in all the faultless contour of her form and face! He longed to clasp her to his bosom—to tear her from all adverse influences—to make her his wife. But alas! how cold upon his glowing heart fell the shadow her own assertion had made! the meeting! the kiss! at night—her half confession.

"Ruth!"

She looked up at him as she was moving towards the door. He stood there just beside her—a mournful smile adding new beauty to his splendid face. A dangerous moment was that!

"Ruth, have you told any one of our engagement?"

She shook her head, blushing a little.

"Come here, my own Ruth," he said pleadingly, holding forth his arms; "don't be afraid of me, dear one—none but God can see us. There! it is very sweet to feel your head upon my shoulder."

He kissed her upturned brow.

"Ruth, what would you say if I asked you, for my sake, to have nothing more to do with the church?"

Starting, as if stung, Ruth tried to free herself from his arms.

"Stop, Ruth—hear me out. I am a proud man, Ruth—in spite of my uncertain lineage, and the circumstances in which my childhood was passed, I am very proud. You have told me of an imprudence—nothing more, I am bound to believe—committed by you; and you say there is neither guilt nor the shadow of guilt upon your soul. Well, I must, because I *will* trust you. In my eyes, you are heaven's holy truth itself. I know that nothing false has ever passed these lips—nothing. But those stern churchmen do not know you as I do. They think you a poor, frail girl—as

they pass judgment, I fear, upon all women," he added bitterly. "It is a part of their creed to believe everybody evil, somewhere, and it makes them uncharitable to the weak, as they call your sex. Weak! I wish to heaven men had your moral strength!

"Well, Ruth—a little moment more—if they should do by you as I have seen them do by others, I fear I should fly to the uttermost ends of the earth, and never come back again. I couldn't bear it; here I confess my inferiority, my weakness, in contrast to your strength—for I believe that with the heroism of an Indian devotee, you would walk on burning coals, if they commanded. O Ruth! do not let them put this indignity on *me*; for consider, Ruth, in what relation I stand to you. Leave them, Ruth—leave them and go with me. Let *me* be your religion, Ruth!"

She had disengaged herself from his arms, and stood, pale as death, listening and shuddering. To her awakened consciousness there was an awful presence in that room, over which the black shadows reeled with every motion of the bending flame—even the spirit of demoniac darkness. She felt, as it were, the hot breath of his burning lips, as the words fell from those of her captain-lover.

"Save me, Lord, from this new temptation!" was the wild prayer that went up from her shaken soul.

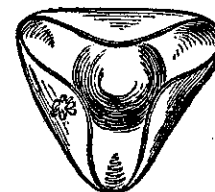
"Captain Cameron ——!" she paused for a moment, there was such a tumult going on within her; "not even for love such as yours, would I give up my faith in the visible church. No!—if I am to walk the path of my life alone, suspected, and neglected, so be it—it is my Father's will. If they—the good, the pure, the tried—think it necessary to my salvation that I should drink the cup of humility, I am willing—even to the dregs. Let me—go, now, Captain Cameron; I am dizzy—blind—bewildered—I——"

"Go!" he said, in a voice cold, sharp, and clear as a bell in a winter's night—neither moving nor looking towards her.

That tone! it fell upon her gentle heart like ice. She gave one yearning look—she could not help it—no more; but she said not a word—only turned, slowly, as if it were a pain to move—groped to the door—opened it—shut it.

Captain Cameron stood there alone, with folded arms. The light, as the door went to, gave one frantic leap up towards the darkness, then expired.

And the light of that heart, that had steeled itself so—had that, too, gone out?



Chapter Sixth.

AN INTRUDER AT THE GOVERNOR'S LEVEE.

ALTHOUGH the streets and the taverns were unusually quiet, after a day of so much excitement, there were many private houses from which sounded yet inspiriting music and the mirth of revelry. In the windows of such, the more expensive tapers yet illumined the dimness of a clouded moonlight, while over splendid curtains, shadows of fairy figures could be seen flitting back and forth.

A dark form stood opposite the governor's mansion. The night was very chill, and he wrapped his cloak closely about him. The naval band sent forth inspiriting strains of old English melodies, and now and then light, laughing voices mingled in. The house stood a little way back from the narrow street. It was built of a grayish stone, and with its deep copings, iron chains that run from post to post at the door, heavy mouldings on the windows, and massive lion guarding its portals, presented a grand appearance. There was wide space of garden-land on either side. Great trees, bare of verdure, flung their naked arms up into the cold night. Through their branches flashed innumerable lights, —every window was ablaze.

Captain Bill—for the stranger was none other than he—stood silent, as if in deep reflection. Then he walked slowly across the narrow street, and entering the gate, which swung noiselessly open, moved deliberately around the building,

making a narrow survey of all the premises, which the strong light enabled him to do.

Through the thin curtains he could see the cook flying from point to point, round the great kitchen. The glowing fire, surrounded by smoking dishes, gave indications that a grand supper was in process of preparation, while the savory smell, that came through subtle openings, made the atmosphere redolent of luxury.

The captain, with much deliberation, watched the hurrying to and fro of the well-fed servants, and muttered to himself—

"That's a goodly turkey he takes from the spit, brown and juicy. I warrant me the table will be spread with all manner of delicacies—plenty of the choicest wines, too. What's to hinder me from making one at the feast? I've as good a right. Might count the silver, too; nothing lost by being careful. Well, sweet uncle (looking up to the parlor windows), I wish you joy of your reign. I can at least *smell* your royal dainties. But stop, lean on your oars, captain, and reflect. None of this choice company would know me, save one, possibly two, neither of whom would dare to expose me. I have it! The dishes are being carried to the table—I'm a wine-merchant, just off the Rose frigate. I bring news to his excellency that the Prince of Orange landed the day—let me see, on the first of last month—that will do. So, so, I'll get a sup and a taste, see the goodly company, and, maybe, my witching little cousin Eleanor; taking care to leave my adieus in time to avoid any particular scene that might possibly occur, if it should be ascertained that my frigate and my occupation are both fabulous."

While saying this he had taken from a long, deep pocket in his cloak, a cocked hat, made of some pliable substance. Shaping it out decently against his knee, he carried the cap

with the curls attached to the same receptacle, and made ready to ascend the stone steps.

The ponderous knocker swung to some effect. A servant in splendid livery of scarlet and black came to the door. The gold lacings, cords and tassels that depended from his gay habiliments, flashed out on the night, and made the opening from the street radiant, like a view into fairy land.

Captain Bill stood there, cocked hat in hand.

"Can I see his excellency?" he asked, with cool effrontery. "I bring important news from England."

The servant, with an obsequious bow that had followed the first, supercilious glance, ushered him into a private room, in which, a few moments after, the governor made his appearance, attended by his secretary. The latter personage carried himself in a grand way. His manner was affectedly pompous, and his dress bore the marks of the profuse taste of a courtier of that courtly period.

The governor paused in the centre of the room, bowed with a stately air, came forward another step, gently moved into its place his massive sword, and bowed again.

"I know not what your excellency will think of me," said the new-comer, with most consummate coolness and a look of natural embarrassment; "but in my eagerness to be the first bearer of important news, I came ashore from the frigate *Rose*, now some three miles down the bay, without my documents, nor did I think of that most important mistake until I set foot upon the steps of your residence."

He stood the image of gentlemanly perplexity.

"The frigate *Rose*! did we hear aright? And what is thy news, sir?" The governor's tone was cold, and might have embarrassed an ordinary man.

"The Prince of Orange, your excellency, landed on the second day of last month, and declared himself king with

great state and pomp. On that very day, your excellency, the frigate *Rose* dropped out of the Downs, but not before news was sent on board. I should not be here in advance of the frigate, but with a heavy bribe, I procured the services of one of the sailors, and was boated ashore."

The governor bowed again, the news seemed not unwelcome.

"To whom," said he, with great gravity, "are we indebted for this information, and why have we not heard the guns announcing the arrival of one of his Majesty's ships of the line?"

"My name, may it please your excellency, is Brentworth; I am a wine-merchant of London, of the firm of Brentworth & Battersea. I am well aware, your—"

"Mr. Brentworth," said the governor, smiling graciously, thrown off his guard by the frankness and naturalness of the new-comer, "we are happy to welcome you, sir; your name is a passport anywhere. It is probable that we shall not hear the guns of his Majesty's frigate until morning, when she anchors in the harbor. We beg, Mr. Brentworth, that you will consider yourself our guest to-night. Supper is just being served, we should be happy if you would bear us company to the room where our guests are assembled."

"A thousand thanks!" exclaimed the stranger, rising with a well-acted confusion; "but I am just from the vessel, your excellency is aware, and the duties of the toilet—"

"Tut! tut!" exclaimed the governor, smilingly, "we will hear no excuses, and overlook all disarrangement. Thy name is sufficient to cover such minor incongruities, and thine errand motive enough for haste. Andrew, wilt touch the bell?—my servant will relieve thee of hat and cloak. And now, sir, this way."

Captain Bill bit his lip, on which lurked the shadow of a

sarcastic smile, but seemed no ways undaunted as he followed the governor into a room, blazing with a hundred lustres, pendent from the great English chandeliers, and reflected innumerable times in the long, gilded mirrors.

It was a scene of gay enjoyment upon which he was ushered. The flower of Boston beauty and nobility were congregated there, and the rustling and flashing of heavy brocades, the waving of floating plumes, the lightning-like glitter of precious stones, vied with the radiance of youthful loveliness—the murmur of silvery voices.

For one moment, only one, the adventurous deceiver trembled as he looked, for some of that brilliant company, it was just possible, might know the great wine-merchant, whose reputation was princely in its way.

None, however, seemed inclined to dispute his veracity, or to claim him as an acquaintance, as is sometimes done by would-know-everybody individuals; and as the news spread, and the *élite* dallied it on aristocratic lips, he felt his courage mount, and grew certain that his assurance would carry him over all difficulties.

His boldly roving eyes followed the imposing pageant until they rested upon two young girls, nieces of the governor, and cousins, who sat in an alcove talking with two or three fashionable young men, who, in gay-colored small-clothes of velvet, and diamond buckles, stood near them.

Margaret, the elder, pale and elegant, her manner giving evidence of that inimitable repose that marks the high-bred woman, was attired in robes of sparkling blue satin, whose crisp, broad folds fell in a large gleaming circle around her feet. At the entrance of the reputed wine-merchant, the sentence she was forming hung suspended from her lips, and a deadly paleness overspread her face, while her motions became embarrassingly nervous. Her dark eyes and per-

fectly moulded brow grew troubled, but the excitement that ensued prevented those around her from marking her excessive agitation.

Eleanor Saltonstall, her cousin, had one of those faces that always seem looking at you with a laughing menace, however brief may be their glance. Pert, piquant, glowing, versatile in expression, her charming little countenance was now ruffled with mock displeasure, anon all geniality and rippling smiles. She was like a marvellous book, that as you read you wonder what romance is coming next.

Near the two girls stood the Rev. Parris Aldrich, the rector, as he was called by his own people. His parish was exceedingly small, but influential, inasmuch as the governor was at its head. His wife, a delicate, interesting woman, very much younger than himself, leaned on his arm. The rector wore a look of quiet sadness. His luminous eyes seemed always glancing beyond the object they sought. His head was slightly bald, adding to the expansiveness of a white, broad brow.

At some distance from this group, surrounded by her own circle of admirers, the Lady Anne Bellamont sat, radiant in jewels. She was perhaps the only woman of (so called) noble birth in Boston. No other lady in the room wore ornaments as valuable or garments as rich. Her robes were of exquisitely lustrous velvet, of a clear ruby color, while on her neck and her splendid arms sparkled every tint of the rainbow. Lady Anne was—nobody knew how near forty—and strangers thought her not many years beyond her 'teens, so young, fresh, and beautiful she contrived to make herself appear. She was admired and feared, for she had a way of saying things both wittily and woundingly.

A close observer might have noted, that while Lady Anne Bellamont displayed her dark beauty and keen intellectual

powers so lavishly to the multitude, the rector's wife, fragile Mary Aldrich, gazed anxiously towards the bold, handsome vision, and then, with a sigh, drew closer to her husband.

"Uncle Parris," said Eleanor the gay, touching his arm, "something hath disaffected Margaret; she seems ill."

"Margaret, my daughter!" exclaimed the rector hastily, and with some alarm in his countenance, as he bent towards her; while her young stepmother hurried to her, displaying the most affectionate solicitude.

"I feel ill, father—very ill."

Her ghastly face gave evidence of her sickness or perturbation.

"She was well enough before yonder stranger came," said Eleanor, with solicitude in word and manner; "I think she hath taken a spite against the Prince of Orange."

Pale Margaret had arisen, and leaning on the arm of her father, her mother clasping one of her hands, the three moved towards the door.

Chapter Seventh.

THE GOVERNOR'S SUPPER.

As they neared the hall, the governor stood directly in their way, talking with more than his wonted affability to the pseudo-merchant, whose keen dark eyes were fixed upon the face of Margaret Aldrich. He paused in his conversation as the clergyman came towards him, and not noticing the altered countenance of his niece, exclaimed with some abruptness—

"Brother, a pleasant chance hath thrown one of our English citizens upon our courtesy. Let me present to thee Mr. Brentworth, who, thou art aware, has brought us news of much import."

The introduction was conducted on principles of the strictest etiquette, the clergyman waiting out of respect till the ceremony was accomplished. Meanwhile, Margaret's cheek grew more bloodless, as the stranger, with a singularly mocking smile, fixed upon her a searching, significant glance. She trembled so violently, and her weight grew so heavy upon the rector's arm, that the latter was forced to apologize, and conducted his daughter rapidly from the room. The young girl was borne fainting to her chamber, and her stepmother remained with her, administering such remedies as the case seemed to require.

Meanwhile, as Lady Anne watched the scene, the counterpart of Captain Bill's sardonic smile flitted over the glowing face of her ladyship.

"Our young friend seems indisposed since the new arrival," she said, a touch of irony coloring her voice.

All eyes were turned towards the retreating figure of Margaret.

"I noticed she grew pale the moment he entered," added Lady Anne, lightly. "I have heard she hath had two or three affairs of the heart, which turned out very unluckily. Still, if this had been a lover, the governor would hardly treat him so cordially, since he thinketh only a prince worthy the regards of his fair niece. I hear his judgment broke off the match between Sir John Wyllie and herself. Mr. Carlton Ross," she cried, turning suddenly to a tall, dark, dignified young man, whose countenance told that he read the malice in her speech, "thou must take it for the theme of thy new poem. Hearts and darts, blisses and kisses, sorrows and borrows and morrows, would come in to very pretty advantage. Thou wouldst, I am sure, do the fair subject justice."

"Your ladyship is only jesting, I would fain believe," said the young man, in a voice of such stern rebuke (there was anguish also in its tone), that the color mounted higher through the delicate rouging, and her eyes flashed angrily: evidently she felt reproved, but her keen retort was interrupted by a summons to supper.

The drawing-room was soon deserted, and the long dining-hall filled with the bright faces and brighter costumes of the gala-guests. The governor's lady had not participated in the festivities, a sudden indisposition, though not a severe one, confining her to her room.

The reputed wine-merchant was given the first seat at the right of his excellency, in honor of the importance of his mission, and the rest of the company were ranged according to their rank, Lady Anne Bellamont and the governor's re-

lations taking the precedence. Justice was done to the goodly repast after the grace had been asked, and a grace in those times was not an affair of a moment. Men leaned on their chairs, humbly looking down and wishing the devout rector left-handed blessings, while fair ladies hid their faces behind their fans, and yawned more than once before the conclusion. But it was over at last, and snugly ensconced in antique chairs, they attacked the feast merrily. Richly wrought glasses shooting from tubes of exquisite workmanship began to blush crimson, as the lips of great, shining flagons, after the manner of ancient customs, filled them to the brim with winey kisses. The tinkling touch of meeting crystal preceded its passage to mouths as sweet and ruby, and there was brave talking among the gentlemen, and the musical laughing of silvery voices.

None of them all were in better spirits than our bold interloper. His eye regarded, with appreciative admiration, the splendid service of silver plate. The wine unloosed his tongue, and he acted well the character he had chosen. If now and then there were slight, and occasionally serious defects, in the grammatical construction of his sentences, it was agreeably passed by, for only the clergy and the learned professors thought much of such matters. To be sure it was noticed by more than one, but it was scarcely the man, it was the wealth they excused.

"Dost recognize this wine?" asked one of the guests, smacking his lips over the peculiar flavor.

"I thought it was first cousin to some I have at home in my vaults," said the captain, with a knowing wink.

"Ay! but how didst thou feel when news came that the Dutch sailing-master, deputed to bring thy wines to this colony two years ago, was captured here, right on the coast? We did not get the news till the brig was burned

and the men released. By our faith! but we owe Captain Bill a hangman's rope for that feat."

"He deserves it," replied the new-comer, with unabashed effrontery. "I lost a nice little sum by the rascal."

"Ay! the vessel was thine, I believe."

"The vessel was mine," returned the other boldly, sipping from his goblet hastily, to hide a cunning smile.

"By God's mercy!" cried the governor, impetuously, "it is a monstrous pity that the fellow goes unwhipt of justice. We shall make it our special duty to find him out as soon as the winter closes. I cannot think the wretch hath the hardihood, and yet some say he is lurking still on our coast. He, with his double—what is the fellow's name? ah! 'Red Hand,' they call him—have scourged our waters long enough. We'll break up their piratical nest, if God spare us till spring!"

"The play grows serious," thought Captain Bill, nevertheless betraying nothing of the uneasiness he felt. "It is time for me to be thinking of lodgings. Now, trusty Bill, keep thy wits about thee."

As if responding to the thought, the governor spoke:

"You will remain with us to-night," he said; "our mansion is not in the order we could wish, owing to the capricious health of our lady, but we have a room at your service."

"A thousand thanks!" replied the *pseudo*-merchant. "I accept your offer."

"To-morrow, early, we will cause the news to be proclaimed to the townspeople" ("the deuce you will!" thought the pirate captain). "They are always glad of a holiday. We will also accompany you on board the frigate, as we expect dispatches of some importance touching our office."

Another moment and the interloper had disappeared.

Hurrying down the broad staircase, he directed a servant to bring him his cloak and hat, and before any one had thought of missing him, the massive door had closed upon him.

"Ha! old fellow, I've got a supper out of *you*!" he ejaculated, chuckling to himself. "A pretty fair operation I call that, though a ticklish one," he added, laughing, as he replaced the cocked hat in the pocket of his cloak, and drew the cap with its false curls over his brow.

Walking with a firm but rapid pace, he directed his steps towards Boston Pier. The moon was now nearly gone, and the wind in gusty snatches piped of a coming storm. Higher and higher the thousand tongues of water lapped the slimy piles at the wharf, and the low, deep, but trembling bass of the further sea came through the curtains of a dense fog that was apparently rising from the islands in the harbor.

But voice of breeze or sea had little to do with the thoughts of Captain Bill. His preconceived signal given, he waited impatiently for company.

"Here you are!" he exclaimed, as the two sailors emerged from behind a pyramid of lumber; "I thought perhaps you would stay in some tavern."

"What's the use of paying a shilling for a bed, when a pile of boards answers the same purpose?" asked the foremost sailor, in a gruff voice.

"True enough, my stingy hearty!" said the captain, laughing. "Well, boys, what about the 'Prudent Sarah'? Did you hear any thing?"

"Yes, sir, we did," exclaimed the two men in chorus, the first speaker adding—"We learned that Obed Bentley, jeweller to the king, he calls himself, is ashore—that he has had a flare-up with Cameron—that he returns soon, and in the mean time will not allow his traps—gold, money, and all—to be carried from the vessel."

"That is brave news, my men!" exclaimed Captain Bill, in low tones of exultation. "We'll be sure to patronize the king's jeweller to an extent he little dreams. We shall be his best customers—eh? what say, boys?" and rubbing his hands he asked, "when does the ship sail again—and who has she on board?"

"I judge she sails in a month's time," responded the foremost speaker; "but that we can easily find out. The first-mate and three or four of the men are always aboard."

"Humph!" said Captain Bill; "and didst see the pretty little flower of the town—the coy, dainty, touchy, heavenly little personage they call Ruth, my men? No? If 'twas not for 'Red Hand,' she should have been *my* ladybird before now," he muttered more to himself. "But the boat comes. Remember, men, that for to-night's service I will reward you handsomely; and in the booty of yonder vessel, if you behave yourselves, we go shares."

So high was the tide by this time, and the force of the waves so strong, that the little boat leaped along almost to the edge of the wharf, and Captain Bill needed not to use the slimed steps by which he generally ascended. Rowing cautiously outward, they shot from the harbor, steering directly for the island where their rude habitation was concealed from curious eyes. But of this spot we will speak hereafter.

Chapter Eighth.

LETTER FROM GODFREY LAMB, BOOKSELLER, TO HIS WIFE, IN
LONDON.

DATED BOSTON, Feb. 168—.

MOST DEARE LADIE:

Everie hour seemeth now a day that I am separate from thee. Mie affaires goe well, soe far, and I think I redeem mie time. I yesternight spent a pleasant evening with ye godly Cotton Mather, whose sire, Mr. Increase Mather, I consider ye first metropolitan clergyman of ye times and ye countrie—master of a mightie stock of learning, and, I am told, a verie eminent man in other affairs, such as it strikes me be not essential to ye office of a clergyman—I mean politics. With ye greatest amount of difficulty ye latter is set sail for England, to adjust some matters with ye king, pertaining to religious tolerance. I heare that ye reverend gentleman had some difficulty in ye going, as he has made himself enemies among ye magnates by his verie stiff-neckedness, and violent opposition to ye surrender of ye charter. There was a forgerie in ye affair, Mr. Mather being supposed to write a letter slanderouslie, w'h while on its way to Amsterdam, was intercepted. Mr. Randolph, ye governor's secretary, of whom thou knowest, and who is verie sweet on ye governor, got ye letter in his owne hands and made bad use to it. Mr. Mather immediately charged Mr. Randolph with being ye forger, w'h so incensed that gentleman (who, I must

say, is in verie bad odor with ye people here) that he bro't action of slander against ye clergyman, laying his damages at five hundred pounds. In ye trial but verie recentlie, Randolph lost his case, and commenced ye action anew, sending men for ye reverend gentleman for to arrest hym. But he was protected by God and his own friends, who secreted hym safely and got hym aboard ye ship that was prepared for hym. So he is bound for England, and mie dearest wife may meet hym there.

Mr. Cotton Mather lives like a gentleman, and hath ye best-stocked library I have seen out of England. His home is exceeding comfortable, though he liveth not in splendor, yet one may tell that he hath no low or common tastes. He showed me some of his manie labors, one of them he entitleth "Magnalia Christi Americana," which surelie will be a goodlie, learned, and voluminous task, w'h I would rather to his doing than mine own.

Ye little maid Ruth, of whom I told thee, is still seeming verie wretchedly unhappie. She hath so sweetlie touching a beautie, as if she were bearing some yoke for ye Lord's sake, that one cannot judge her guilty of anie serious naughtiness.

I spoke of her but yesterday to ye Reverend Mather, in whose church she hath been a chosen lamb. He seemed to pitie her verie much, but he is a man whom—should I dare judge—would cut off his very right hand, or pluck out his most precious eye, did he deem it but duty. He says, "if she will not confesse, she *must* be punished; and that were it his own child, he should feel the same toward," which I make no doubt he would. From some hints, ye handsome captain hath resented ye prettie Ruth's attachment toe her church—perhaps also mingling some small jealousie with his feelings. I did not think it in his brave soul so to doe, but all men have their weaknesses.

I have not yet told thee, heart of mine, what a right pleasant companie I met at ye governor's but lately. I went with a friend, who had a ready hand in ye affair. Trulie it was a courtlie gathering, there being much show of splendor even to some of ye ladies wearing trains and jewels that would have seemed fitting to ye queen's drawing-room. I suppose thy womanlie curiositie (not that thou hast more than any man—that will I not concede) would be gratified did I tell thee of the company assembled. Well, soe will I doe—and in conclusion write thee something that mayhap may set thee to laughing.

First should be noticed, on account of her rank, ye lady Anne Bellamont, a notoriously (perhaps ye word is not much amiss) fashionable woman, of exceeding great beautie—though there is that in her countenance and in her pointed tongue that pleaseth me not. Perhaps she deemed herself ye star of ye companie. I did not so. By ye way, I have heard pieces of strange rumors, w'h, when tacked together, as ladies sew bits of calico to form curious figures, make a strange rumor concerning her and ye rector, Parris Aldrich, ye Episcopal, of whom before I made mention to thee. He hath been here now somewhat of four years, and hath taken a prettie little wife, a great deal younger than himself, being his second lady.

Then there were ye governor's stately niece, Miss Margaret Aldrich, daughter to ye minister, and a little Eleanor Saltonstall, whom some call ye rose of Boston, with beautie of fair and sprightlie degree. Little Miss Eleanor and Miss Margaret have been in ye colony some time. I hear it rumored that as ye governor's lady is invalided, ye two prettie nieces will stay at government house awhile, to do ye honors.

There were other ladies of note there, but it would take

me much time to remember their charms; I leave that for you to infer—namely, that they were all of a sorte, verie good-looking.

But ye thing I was to tell thee is what follows. A fellow came demurely to see ye Governor, saying that important news was brought by him. I myself wonder at ye obtuseness of his Excellencie, in listening to one who brought no good evidence with him, but so it seems ye Excellencie was taken in and done for by this knave.

A right, brave time did my gentleman have, telling of ye Prince of Orange—for do you think he said ye Prince had landed in England and proclaimed himself King.

My master-knave represented himself as ye great wine-merchant, Brentworth. And I spoke to one of the company, saying—"Sir, I once saw ye brother of this Brentworth, who is most worthy magistrate of ye County of Suffolk, but never did I note such a difference, for his eyes were blue and his hair and beard red, while ye face of this man is wondrously dark complected."

Still, how could I tell?

Very well, after supper it seems ye Governor tendered him a chamber in w'h to pass ye night, which he accepted, and then played him a verie mean trick.

Prettie soon his Excellencie misses ye great merchant, and thinks him perhaps gone to his chamber—sends a servant to make things comfortable for him, but lo! and behold—noe marchant there. Well, he waited, and nothing come of it. So then he sent in different ways about ye house for information in ye matter, and one lackey sayeth to ye Governor, who comes down ye stairs to see in his anxiety, "Was it ye man who was so dark and brought over ye Prince of Orange?"

"Confound ye Prince of Orange!" said his Excellencie—

then added, quite hastily, "God bless me!" for you see he began to think that all might not be so right, putting this and that together. Well, the lackey made reply that ye *gentleman* came down asking for his cloak and hat, and when they were brought to him he laughed in a strange way and went out. But ye best of it was ye testimony of another lackey who had much ado to keep his face straight. He said that going out to fasten ye blinds of ye lower windows, he of necessitie heard ye man mutter something derogatory of his Excellencie—saying that he was an old fellow, and he had got a supper out of him, or something to that purpose. Upon w'h, when he saw ye effect upon ye Governor, he added—"and he put his hat in his pocket, and put upon his head a cap from which long curls did hang after ye fashion of some of ye young gallants."

Never did I see man in worse taking than was his Excellencie.

"We have been deceived!" he cried, hastily taking tremendous steps to and fro in ye hall, and darting flashes like lightning from his eyes; and he would see no more of ye companie, but straightway went to bed.

Since then there hath been great exertions made to find out ye knave, but all to no purpose. Ye Governor is still very angry about ye matter, being a person of great dignity, and very sensitive to ridicule. It hath been ye talk of ye citie, and—

But I forgot to mention that on ye entrance of ye stranger, ye niece of his Excellencie had like to faint away. Thy woman's wit may see somewhat in that to make romance of. I confess it did look strange, altho' belike ye gentlewoman had over-fatigued herself by ye doings of ye day.

But I am making too long a matter of this writing; yet

methinks, dear heart, I am talking to thee. I kiss thy miniature (which I always wear next my heart) manie times a day. Farewell. In my next I hope to be able to tell thee something satisfactorie, touching ye little maiden Ruth, in whom I take lively interest, as also in ye Captain, who is as passionately fond of his countrie as Junius Brutus, and ye famous Scaevola among ye Romans.

Truly, your loving
LAMB.

Chapter Ninth.

THE OLD WITCH OF BLACK HORSE LANE.

BLACK HORSE LANE!

A collection of incongruous-looking houses, motley in color, diverse in age—some inclining forward as if they had practised the trick of peering into the lower windows of their opposite neighbors until it had become chronic; some in their efforts to preserve a stately equilibrium leaning the other way; others shrinking together as if collapsing with perpetual cramp—rough, rude hovels intermixed, gardens here and there, or spots where they should be—cows chewing patiently—hens clucking, dogs-domestic howling. Just as the lane had been laid out and peopled by the first settlers of Boston, so it was now.

In old times there was a tradition of this same zigzag thoroughfare. On sunny afternoons the quaint dames sitting in the doorway told it to the children—old dames with bleached faces, and lines like tiny rivers meandering within the framing of those ancient frills of quilled white linen.

They had seen the black horse. On still, moonlighted nights when the trees held wealth of silver in their tops and their spread hands were gloved with leaves, and the streams shone white and lustrous, they themselves, sitting at their little cabin-windows, had seen the spectre of the great black horse.

"For 'twas high as a house, dearies!" cried the ancients,

"and it always came in one place, opposite the stunted, blasted, pear-tree that stood in Goody Shrimp's front yard." At that suspicious place, strange to say, it always disappeared, and sank without noise in the ground.

On such story-pap were our infant ancestors fed.

Yes, opposite Goody Shrimp's two little front-windows, looking so strangely dark under the overhanging story above, the crime must have been committed.

A gentleman who had in some manner incurred the anger of the Indians, brought his beautiful young English wife to this country. So one day, as he often did, he took her to ride with him. Here, where there was then but a trampled path among the bushes, they were overtaken. She doubtless shook her bright curls to the wind, and laughed like a girl, over this, to her, novel style of equestrianism. In England she had been accustomed to her own milk-white steed; now she clasped the stalwart form of her husband with her slender, snowy arms, and the great black horse, the handsomest steed in all the country, bore them safely on, until—

She was, perhaps, just nodding to the wild roses that crimsoned like her cheek, and saying how fragrant the sweet-brier made the air, when, whiz, a dozen fatal arrows flew from the thick bushes, levelling the proud husband and the bonny, gay young English wife. Poor, loving hearts! The cruel red-man scalped his victims and fled after the furious black horse. Away he went through thickets, over fields; and tradition sayeth that living man never caught the black horse of Brittany, and that years after a spectral steed and spectral rider were seen in the pass that was afterwards called Black Horse Lane.

Where the blasted pear-tree grew, there lived weird, old, Goody Shrimp. She was a singular and single woman, of striking presence, tall, angular, and hook-nosed, with an eye

like that of a hawk, intensely black and piercing. Goody Shrimp might be called well to do in the world. The tenement she occupied was her own, the gift of a seafaring brother long since dead. A valuable piece of pasture-land was also in her possession. Her little house was black for want of paint, and in some places the clapboards were falling off. The Goody occupied the first or ground floor. This room was the length and breadth of the house, and used as kitchen, parlor, and bedroom. Ancient keepsakes cropped out everywhere, and the furniture was, technically speaking, as old as the hills. The four-post bedstead of solid mahogany (it would have blushed at a hint of veneering), had been in use a hundred years in England before it was brought to America. The very hangings were stained with age, for they had seen service almost as long as the bedstead. The high chairs, whose carved backs were equal to a man's stature, were worn white with constant usage. Every thing, from the massive andirons to the great clock ticking with a funeral solemnity and a magisterial dignity, had its history. Did one know it, the old room was a museum of facts and fossils.

One cloudy, rainy evening when the fine drops of moisture kept the fire singing and spluttering, Goody Shrimp, on supper intent, bustled about her room with a very busy air, now puffing at the flame with the leathern-lunged bellows, now stirring something that stewed in an iron skillet that sat on a heap of live coals, and from whose clattering lid issued a savory steam.

Though the rain drizzled down the chimney, the draught was good, and the clear, clean flame shot up, up, and spent itself in smoke that mingled with the watery vapors above.

A lone woman!

There is pathos in the words. No mother to toil for—no sister to aid—no brother to bring glad tidings. Pity them—

the lone women of this world. They are like pillars standing desolate among the ruins they once helped support. They are like withered tree-trunks, bearing only the mockery of dead verdure. There must be special blessings if not special promises for them. God help them!

It was true, strange as it might seem, that old, withered, ay! and sour-looking crone, had marched once from chair to chair, patting the strong leathern seats with dimpled, blossom-pink hands—making that sweet music that comes from pattering feet, from clinging fingers, and from baby-lips. Not here, but in a happy English home she had grown up light-hearted. Famous for her beauty, she was called, when a maiden, the little witch of Cumberland—now, in a strange country, decrepit, disappointed, unhappy, and alone, she was nicknamed the old witch of Black Horse Lane.

A loud, quick rap at the door made Goody Shrimp's brows draw together ominously. She started, cast a look at the one broken teacup and the small loaf on the stand at her side, another at the skillet, and hastened forward at the sound of a quicker and a louder thump.

"Good sakes, man! what for do you rattle a woman's house down over her head?" she exclaimed, in her habitually hoarse, masculine voice. "Don't ye know better manners than that?"

"Manners! Goody Shrimp, manners!" and Marmaduke Catchcod rolled into the room, shaking the wet drops off at every step like a great, shaggy dog, and snuffing the savory atmosphere. "Catchcod, duke of Marma, is above and beyant any institution of that kind, let me tell you, Goody Shrimp," he answered, throwing his cap down and familiarly seating himself at one end of the blazing woodpile. "I come, firstly and foremostly, to inquire after your excel-

lent health, and secondly and hindmostly, to ask if you want to insult the stars to-night."

"Stars!" cried the old woman, pointing up the chimney; "they're all shooting stars to-night—they've got their great-coats on for fear of being wet—he, he."

"Why, Goody Shrimp, I thought you could always see 'em even in the daytime, with your superior eye-sight," exclaimed the sailor, putting up first one heavy boot, then the other.

"Yes, I can see some kind o' stars," replied Goody Shrimp, shortly; "you ain't one."

"Lord bless you, no; there ain't no kind of shine about me," said Marmaduke, good-naturedly; "but I tell you what, I guess the young gallivanders of your day used to see stars in your eyes, didn't they? come now—wern't you a pretty hansum girl, Goody Shrimp?"

"Well, they called me so," said Goody Shrimp, her manner becoming a little more agreeable; "but what's your errand?"

"Why, my errand, Goody, is to give you just, as, many, shillin's, as, you'll, see, stars;" saying which he cocked his head on the side of his one eye, and looked as coaxingly out of it as he knew how.

"What do ye want told about? Don't you know, Mr. Mather says, I've got an evil eye? ain't you afraid of me?"

"I've seen too many sights to be afraid of an old woman, a young woman, a middle-aged female, a crying baby, or Mr. Mather to boot," replied Marmaduke, shaking his head and his long cue solemnly. "I saw the devil in the Indies, and a paddygody in Chinees, where they briled such poor wretches as you and I; and I'll tell ye, Goody," he added, slapping his knee, and delighted at the prospect of a listener for his marvellous stories, "I'll tell ye how I got clear from being briled myself."

"It must have been because you were so humly, you

frightened the salvages off from it," said Goody Shrimp, looking towards him with some interest.

"Well, I'll allow that's a pretty fair guess," said Marmaduke, rolling his eye, "but you're wide of it. When I saw 'em at their infernal stewing, I said, what a pity it was they didn't know how to make a *mungy-pungy broth*; that was my kind o' Chinese, d'ye see. Well, one of them as understood enough of English, wanted to know how 'twas made, and I told 'em if they'd let me off, I'd show 'em a stew that'd beat any thing they'd ever eat; so they agreed. Well, I went to work, never asking no questions as to whose body and bones I was cuttin' up, and I made a deuce of a stew with about an ounce of striknum in it, to put the heathens into a comfortable sleep after they'd dined, ye see. Well, it fixed 'em."

"I should think it might," said the old dame.

"Yes, and some plaguey mean folks as is unwillin' to give a body credit for any thing, has gone so far as for to doubt that story, and even ask how I come to have striknum in my pockets, 'way off in Chinees. I never condescend to explain any thing to no such folks as them," he added loftily.

"Then there's the time," he continued, not seeing that Goody Shrimp was vexed with his waiting, "that I got left on them bloody Fejee Islands with a Jew's-harp in my pocket. The only way I could save my life was to keep Jew's-harping and dancing. It tickled 'em so that they had a notion to keep me at it all night; and if there hadn't been an eclipse of the sun that sent 'em howling, I might a bin dancing there to this minute. Perhaps you havn't read the old English poets that writ verses in examiners. I've composed it since with a vast deal of pains, and nothing would have give me greater satisfaction than to have sung it to their copper-colored faces. This was it:

"You heathens! you scoundrels, you bare-
Legged ruffins of salvages!
I wish I had a gun and a good lot
Of powder and balls into it,
I'd soon fix your stringy, tough, leathery
Cheeks, you raw-looking canibles,
I'd tear your old—"

"Lord! what's that?" and with a yell he sprang from his seat.

Something had come scrambling down the chimney, and settled with a death-grip on his shoulder; while at the same time he felt warm breaths on his cheek, and heard a noise like low-muttered thunder close to his ear.

"Nick—good fellow! Why, it's only Nick, my black cat Nicholas," cried Goody Shrimp, with a shrill laugh, as the frightened animal flew to the opposite corner of the room and took refuge under the bed. "He always comes down the chimley that way—I'm used to him. Come here, Nick—here, poor Nick;—he's the only thing I've got to love me," she added.

"Old Nick, you'd better say," cried the frightened sailor, coming back, puffing, and blowing, and wiping his face very hard. "I've heern tell that a black cat is the Evil One himself, and I b'leeve it. That's bad luck for me, Goody Shrimp. Drat it! I was born for misfortin'; and it's all come o' knowing too much. Them whom the gods loves, ither dies young, or or'to. Why wasn't I carried off when a baby, in one fell scoop, as the poet has it?"

"Come, if you want me to tell you any thing, you'd better be spry about it," said Goody Shrimp, impatiently; "my gallimaufry's a'most done, and I want my supper."

"Gallimaufry!" exclaimed Marmaduke, his powerful mind immediately concentrating on the sublime art of cookery, as he snuffed the air. "Let me tell you, Goody Shrimp, that

gallimaufry without inguns is a mistake. I take my pepper and salt, my odds and ends, my——”

“You may take yourself off as soon as you please,” cried Goody Shrimp, more sharply than before. “If you want me to tell you any thing—I’m in a hurry; I can’t wait all night for my supper.”

“Well then, Goody, I’ve dreamed a dream,” said the sailor, brought to terms by her shrill, angry tones, “and I reckon it bodes no good. ’Twas a queer mixer—all about Captain Cameron and little Miss Ruth, and you and I, and the gov’ner, and all creation in a hubbub gen’ly. Now, I wants ter know what that ’ere dream means.”

“I reckon you’d been drinkin’,” said Goody Shrimp.

“So I had, aunty—that’s good for a guess!—drunk the town-pump, up in Cornhill, a’most dry, and then went to bed to take a sweat; consequently which durin’ the night I dreamt visions and see dreams. That’s accordin’ to natur’; natur’s a powerful dreamer.”

The old dame, who never missed the opportunity of earning a shilling, pulled her scraps of curtains down, shut the heavy inner blinds, walked twice in a circle, and then, without speaking, took a key from her pocket, applied it to a lock that seemed to be inserted in the wall, turned it, and open flew a door.



Chapter Tenth.

CONSULTING THE FAMILIARS.

THE superstitious sailor sat awe-struck, wondering what was coming next; his hands clasped between his knees, his chin protruding, his eyes staring.

“You must promise never to tell a word of it,” she said, turning her keen, witch-like face, which had grown sterner, towards him.

“I’ll take a solemn swear,” was his response, and still he gazed and gaped. Forth from its receptacle, the old witch of Black Horse Lane drew a box, a circle of wood marked with red and black lines diverging from its centre, a little bag of gunpowder, and a book.

The fire had almost spent its strength, and now burned dimly. The candle-end made small show of light, but displayed a twisted wick, black and smoking—a few crawling sparks dying on its tip.

Suddenly the room seemed to grow darker. The burning brands hissed, as the rain, now falling heavily, plashed upon them. The wind roared louder in the narrow lane. It rattled the blinds—it shook the windows—it rocked the house—it blew the ashes over the hearth. Marmaduke began to wish he had staid at the Anchor Tavern, with his jolly mates, instead of putting himself in the power of this ghostly woman, who stood so straight and stern, her scant garments falling about a thin, ungainly form, her eyes glowing spectre-

like. When she proceeded to light a little lamp which burned with a small blue flame, he started up, exclaiming—

"There! no more o' that! I'm clean gastered out o' my wits now."

"I thought you'd seen worse sights than this in the Indies," said the old Goody, a mocking smile playing over her features, that in the blue light gleamed horribly.

"Yes, but that's witchcraft, *sure!*—that's more nor I can stand. Lord! we shall both be taken to jail, and then the devil—he won't know us; that's the way with such critters."

"Hush!" exclaimed the woman. Her hoarse voice silenced him, and he sank back moodily in his chair. The little ball was sent rattling round the circle. A few grains of gunpowder were sprinkled over it. First the Goody would consult her book, then round went the bullet, and she, mumbling, traced it till it stopped, repeating, "Black or red, black or red. Black! black!" she muttered; "it always stops at the black. Woe in high places, before long—woe in high places! Some of the gentry is going to die; mayhap in government house itself——"

"Gentry, you said, gentry!" cried Marmaduke Catchcod, his teeth chattering; "that don't mean me, then. I ain't nothin'—I ain't nobody, if they do call me Duke of Marma. O Lord! can't you stop the thing?"

"Silence!" said Goody Shrimp, flashing her two fires of eyes into his white face.

"It's all a bad future,—very bad," she muttered; "it may be for you, or for him; it may be for all of us—I can't tell. You'll be whipped if you ain't hanged, and I shall be hanged if I ain't burned; and there's misery enough in store for all of us."

"Bother the thing! ain't you done yet?" cried Marmaduke, shaking from head to foot.

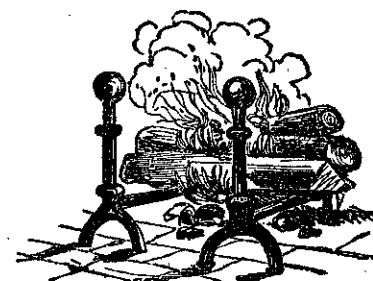
"No, I ain't done yet; you wanted to hear me, and you shall hear me out. There's Miss Ruth—pretty Ruth! dainty Ruth!—she's got to come to trouble about some galliard that's bent on doing his worst by her; there's a great lady making sorrow for her, too. I think your master better get his ship off to sea,—I think so; tell him so from me."

"I'll tell him any thing—only let me get clear from this; any more news from the—from that thing there?" asked the sailor, recoiling, as the monstrous black cat came slinking from under the bed, and purred against his leathern breeches.

"Come here, Nick," said old Goody Shrimp; adding, dryly, "thou'rt not afraid of *him*, art thou? He hath seen far worse sights than thee, in the Indies."

"No, Goody, I'll take it all back," said Marmaduke. "Shiver my timbers if ever I spent a harder 'our than this. Arter to-night, the Chinese may cook me in their paddygodies, and the cannibals may eat me—Lord bless me! I ain't got no heart in me."

So saying, he lifted himself from the leathern-back chair, and plunging his hands into his pockets, brought out two silver shillings, and tendered them to Goody Shrimp. She received them with a grim smile and a stiff courtesy, and he went out into the storm, fully assured that Goody Shrimp had proved her title to deal in witchcraft.



Chapter Eleventh.

THE CAPTAIN CONSULTETH THE WITCH.

THE old woman chuckled as the door closed on Catchcod, duke of Marma, and brightening the fire, laid her tools of pretended necromancy aside. She next poured out her gallimaufry, or stew, and ate her supper, stopping many times to throw her withered old head aside and laugh.

"What a witling!" she ejaculated. "I could ha' made him believe what I would, the brave carlet! Ha! the more I see of men, the more I think that if nature didn't make 'em fools, she made 'em dreadful soft. I'm glad I ain't got one. There's another galliard come for his fortune. It's well if they don't git me into the hands o' the clargy, or into the ling o' the fire."

Again the knock sounded.

"Oh! bang till you're tired, dear; I shall bide my time," said the Goody, taking a last mouthful. "Seems to me it's more than usual for me to have such a many visits—my reputation's getting up, and there must be trouble a brewing."

The knock was once more repeated, and by this time the Goody had gained the door, which she threw open. In stepped Captain Cameron, with a salutation. He was dripping with rain—his face worked uneasily—his eyes were heavy and red, as if for want of slumber. An expression of haggardness detracted from the remarkable beauty of his face.

"Well, and what can I do for you?" asked Goody Shrimp, adding grim smile and respectful courtesy.

"Give me a seat by your fire for a moment, I'm wet through," was his moody answer.

"Eh, goodness! it can't be the rain that's made you that ringing!" exclaimed Goody Shrimp.

"No, not exactly the rain, but something very like it, the water," replied Captain Cameron. "I rowed from Charles-town to Flounder-lane, and by some stroke of bad seamanship, upset myself under the mill-bridge up here in Hanover-street. The consequence was a ducking. However, no matter about that, it isn't the first time. I've come here to consult you upon several matters. You know, Goody, how it has been between Ruth Margerie and me, and I fear the girl will fail me now. Mistress Bean has never been over-particular with her, but for all that she has seemed to me like an angel of goodness and purity. Now she's up before the church on something very near a charge of immorality, and what they'll do with her, God only knows. I'm half distracted when I think of it, Goody, and I havn't anybody to talk to about it that would listen to me with patience, and so I've come here, knowing that your poor brother, Captain Shrimp, was a good friend to me."

He sighed heavily as he added, "I expect I talk and act, and for that matter look like a zany. I havn't been rightly myself since that night—I mean the night the governor came from New York. Then we had words, no—not we—I—I was angry, very angry—she is never heated—oh, no! too cold! like a pure beautiful statue—and—I believe I am dazed! She is too pure for passion—I will not say *was*, for I must, I *must* believe her. But, oh! this suspicion is an ugly thing! It would turn to poison even the very mother's milk!"

He paused after this rapid, incoherent speech, paused and looked fixedly into the fire, but in a moment spoke again.

"To-night I saw her. /She was in keeping with one of those icicles in broadcloth—one of those long-faced sanctimonious elders. He may be a canting hypocrite, he may not; I don't know him. I thought it must be her, I flashed my lantern in her face as if by accident. Yes, I should have known her by the fashion of her start. Would she start so if she were innocent, do you think? Poor thing, poor little thing! there was the grieved look I last saw. I wish I was cooler, I wish I had the temperament of some of those puritanical old fellows—but I haven't. I'm a flash of lightning! I'm a clap of thunder! and I always strike somebody."

Goody Shrimp waited kindly upon his mood. She raked the dead coals in which her gallimaufry had stood, into the living embers, swept up the broad hearth, and tucking her black short-gown further under her girdle, sat complacently to hear him out. The flush of the fire colored his cheek; his eyes shone with the brilliancy of fever. He kept biting his nether lip and passing his hands uneasily across his knees.

"Goody!"—he turned towards her, scanned her face rapidly, then fronted the fire again, the red spot deepening like a hectic on either cheek—"you once told me you knew things concerning the past. I believe—perhaps—one may tell something of that; but of the future—never! There is a rumor concerning the maid Ruth; oh! no, a bitter certainty; I had it from her lips. Yet, Ruth! poor little Ruth!—I love her so." His voice deepened to a woman's tenderness. "I must believe that she is spotless as the driven snow; but—but"—he brought his hand down heavily upon his knee; his face worked with internal agony—"she confesses—confesses."

Rapidly he told the old woman of his last interview with Ruth, then added—

"Now, Goody, can you, by the aid of any art you have, tell me the man who kissed my Ruth? If you can, I'll give you two gold sovereigns."

The eyes of the old crone glistened; avarice was her besetting sin. As he paused, the young shipmaster breathed hard, and awaited her reply half fearfully.

"I can tell thee something that will enable thee to know the man," she said, putting on an oracular air.

"In the first place, I must consult my charm, and in order to see rightly" (she threw some powdered brimstone on the logs; its blue ghastly flame leaped wide, causing the captain to spring backward with an exclamation), "I must bring fire to bear upon it. But thou knowest, captain, that I place myself within reach of the extremest laws by what I do to-night. It is hardly worth while, after all, to risk my life for paltry gold. Now, if this should go forth, or reach the ear of the godly Mathers, I am ruined."

"I pledge you my word it shall never be known to living mortal;—did the outer door open?" he asked, as a cold breath of air rushed in through some crevice, and bent the whole body of fire-flame to the hearth.

"No, the fire obeyeth me; it boweth towards me," returned Goody Shrimp, artfully taking advantage of every trifling circumstance. At the same time the captain thought he detected an unusual stir and rustle about the room; but willing to admit that every thing in this hour was connected with the supernatural; he soon ceased to regard it, so intent was he upon the business upon which he had come.

By this time Goody Shrimp had twice gone the round of her imaginary circle, had unlocked the little closet, and brought forth her pretended implements of magic.

"It is passing strange!" she cried, and was evidently in earnest; "which way soever I throw the ball, it stops at the black. There is surely trouble brewing," she muttered under her breath.

As she stood there, Nicholas ran up her dress and seated himself with grave deliberation upon her shoulder, as if it were an accustomed place. If there had been wanting any thing to perfect the weirdness of this reputed witch, the cat supplied the demand. Even the young shipmaster, strong and brave though he was, felt himself shudder as he gazed upon the picture. The woman with her searching eyes bent on the board, the cat perched knowingly by her ear, as if to whisper the suggestions of the evil one.

"Hold! hold! not now!" shouted a shrill voice.

"Yes, yes, off with the beldame, the witch, the emissary of Satan!"

"A warrant! a warrant!" cried another, waving the instrument above his head.

"The Lord defend us all!" shouted Gaffer Scates, lifting his lantern; "you here, Master Cameron?"

"So you see," replied the young man coolly; "what, under heaven, are you going to do?"

"Take the cat, too—the cat! cat!" shouted the man who acted as leader.

They had all come in, a dozen of them, with such fearful speed that the young shipmaster had hardly raised himself in his chair before they were upon him. Goody Shrimp stood as if paralyzed, still holding the suspicious board in her hands. Nicholas had sprang at the first onset, and disappeared up the chimney.

"Gentlemen, what is this all about?—how many of you does it take to apprehend one old woman?" the captain asked indignantly.

"Oh! mercy, mercy! gentlefolks, on a poor lone woman?" cried poor Goody Shrimp, now weeping.

"Ask mercy of your master!" gruffly cried the sheriff, coming towards her with a courage that it could be easily seen was assumed. "Call on the devil in the day of your need."

"It astonisheth me much that thou shouldst see her practise her ungodly necromancy," said Gaffer Scates, still speaking to Captain Cameron, who was trying to still the clamor.

"And I am astonished, Gaffer Scates, that a man of your years should be led to place any belief in witches and the powers of necromancy. The woman was doing no harm; she is old and childish. What do you trouble her for?"

"Indeed, then, captain, did I not see the devil talking with her?"

"You saw a harmless cat, all the pet the poor creature has to cherish, and to love her—a harmless black cat. You are too old, I hope, to be afraid of a cat," returned the captain. "As to my coming here, it was a foolish, desperate humor, and if it has got this poor old creature into trouble, I shall never forgive myself."

"Oh! what will become of me; oh! oh! what shall I do?" cried Goody Shrimp, twisting her hands and rocking her body; "good gentlefolks, take my house, take my medder land—it brings three pound clear a season—take every thing I have, gentle folks, but spare my old life. It won't last long."

Her cries were pitiful, but reached no heart save that of Captain Cameron. He stood flushed and pale by turns.

"This is one of her infernal machines," said the sheriff, holding the board at arm's length by the finger and thumb, as though fearing contamination. Captain Cameron took it

from his hand, and smiling disdainfully, exclaimed, "Why, this is an old orrery, a planetarium for exhibiting the motions of the planets. There's no more witchcraft about it than there is about you."

The sheriff, an ignorant fellow, nodded his head significantly, as much as to say, "You may tell me that till you're black in the face, I shan't believe it."

"And what is this?—gunpowder! balls! Now do I verily believe and certify that she hath doings with the devil," cried Gaffer Scates. "Confess, woman, confess, and save thy soul from damnation! Thou dost stand charged now with bewitching old Gaffer Garland, just gone with the gout, so that he cannot sleep o' nights. Mistress Barnes certifieth that thou gav'st a bolus to her little child, infant in arms, who hath not ceased to suffer since with fits. Madam Tryon is sure thou hast cast an evil eye upon her, since the hard dispute between thee about a pig; and there are numerous indictments for which thou must answer. What say you, friends, shall we take her to the Reverend Cotton Mather? If she be indeed a witch, she cannot bear the sight of that godly man."

"Oh! I pray you, I pray you, good gentlefolks, I am an old woman, a very old woman, and I suffer with the rheumatics. It is a bad night; don't take me out; wait till the morning, wait till the morning!" cried Goody Shrimp, in tones of the shrillest, wildest anguish.

"Ay, and give you a chance to make off with your master, the devil—that is he! that is he!" cried several, as the black cat, driven by the rain and hoping for shelter, came scrambling down, and hearing the many voices, turned and sprang up the chimney again.

"Didst see his eyes? they were verily blazing fire!" shouted the sheriff.

"Fools!" muttered Cameron under his breath; then added—

"Be merciful; don't take the poor woman out in this storm, which increases every moment. Set a watch and let her rest till the morrow. She is old, too old to be tormented."

"She tormenteth others," replied the sheriff, "and my orders were to bring her before the Reverend Cotton Mather, and from thence take her to the justice. So, old witch, on with thy traps."

"Inhuman!" cried the shipmaster, while his eyes glittered. The Goody turned weeping to obey the brutal order, while the narrow entry was besieged with the inhabitants of the lane, who had come to see the old witch taken off.

And thus in pleasant New England did superstition run riot, sparing neither gray hairs nor bending bodies, tearing the wife from the husband, the aged crone from her fireside corner, and mocking at tears and holy grief.

As the young shipmaster, disgusted and heart-sick, left the scene, he heard the Sheriff mutter—

"We'll have him next, if he isn't careful; they say there were strange doings on board the Prudent Sarah."

With an execration in his heart, the captain walked out and on through the sleet and the driving storm.



Chapter Twelfth.

RUTH BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

THE young shipmaster was right. It was Ruth he met walking with one of the deacons. As the lantern was flashed in her face, Ruth Margerie started, catching a glimpse of the passing figure. Her heart told her whose impulsive hand had prompted to the action, and the knowledge only made her young spirit the heavier.

Silently they plodded through the rain, the stern old elder and the shrinking girl, until they reached their destination.

An hour after, there were assembled in the light and cheerful study of Cotton Mather several elders and some of the leading members of the South church. The room was a handsome one, set round with dark carved panels that glistened in the ruddy light of the great fire. Easy-chairs, abundantly capacious, with cushioned arms and backs, were drawn up to the massive table of mahogany, on which were piled some ancient books, the old board-covered, silver-clasped Bible taking the lead in size, as well as conspicuous position.

Around three sides of the room extended the library—a calf-skin frescoing, presenting colors not so beautiful, but far less perishable than the dainty tinting of the pencil—inside of which scores of the dead-great held intercourse with the living through the deathless medium of the pen.

Most of the easy-chairs (if such their leathern coverings entitled them to be called) were occupied by men stern and thoughtful, whose iron-gray hair and deep-seamed brows gave token that they were past the prime of their manhood, and verging on to old age.

The only youthful personage in the company was the young poet, Carlton Ross. He sat by the side of Cotton Mather, and our readers will remember him as the man who dared to rebuke Lady Anne Bellamont, at the governor's drawing-room. He was one of Cotton Mather's favorites, had been by him advanced to the position of "clark," and was considered a very devout Christian for his years.

It was observable that an unwonted care sat on the brow of the reverend doctor, as he questioned his deacons, and nodded his will to his secretary between whiles—the absent, preoccupied expression, not natural to him, making his usually sedate, but kindly countenance, almost austere.

"We have, I believe, come to the bottom of the affair, as far as it is possible to probe it," he said, still sitting as he spoke. "Mistress Barton is suspended for continuing, in spite of our warnings, and, at last, our ministerial injunction, to decorate her person with vain, quilted petticoats, displaying all the colors of the rainbow, in a glaring and unseemly manner; and for wearing broad bone-lace, while it is well known her income hardly exceedeth a hundred pounds. This discipline we do with much sorrow of heart, feeling constrained thereto by the love we bear our most divine Master, who hath enjoined upon us, through His word, to attire ourselves with humility and plainness, as beseemeth sinful mortals. Goody Shaw is also under censure for speaking profanely of dignitaries; and our old brother Radcliffe, wine-cooper, who, though he be verging on to his hundredth year, doth still persist in troubling Mistress Bean, the good hostess of the Red

Lion, who hath complained to us bitterly about his often entreating her to be his wife, when she hath decisively told him nay. Verily, our white-haired brother had best think of the grave as his spouse."

The elders all bowed their venerable heads and looked exceedingly troubled.

"We have another painful duty to perform, from which our heart shrinks as the nerve from the cautery, inasmuch as the offender hath hitherto been a cherished lamb of our fold. Mr. Ross will see that the maiden is led into our presence."

The young man, with a motion of extreme reluctance, left his seat and the room. Not many moments elapsed before he returned, followed by the gentle, blue-eyed, modest Ruth Margerie. She came forward so slowly! looking as pure as a snow-flake before it has touched the earth. The plain dress of dark cloth, some gray shade which her own hands had woven, sat closely to her sylph-like form, save where it sloped and fell in graceful folds from her maidenly zone. Her face was all calm, save the tremulous quivering of her childlike lips. As she first entered, a tinge of brightest scarlet suffused her cheeks and brow, but, soon receding, left her still, white, marble-like in beauty as she had been before. Her hands were clasped in a way that told the gentleness and sensitiveness of her sweet spirit—sometimes they trembled, but otherwise she was very calm.

The old men looked towards her—not with severity—no one could do that—but seemingly with Christian pity. The young man thought she stood there, a finished poem—a creation of blended beauty and harmony.

"My child," said the minister—and that he was much moved might be readily perceived—"we have given thee three separate opportunities to explain for, and justify thyself

before us. To-night we have decided, as those who care for thy soul—for the feeding, chastening, and saving thereof—that, unless thou dost explain the circumstances by which thou art environed, we must pass judgment upon thee. Again, as thou art before us for the last time, we do most solemnly adjure thee to confess, promising to look upon whatever error or sin Satan hath led thee into, with all the clemency in our power, as a minister and church of the holy God—knowing that manifold temptations do besiege us all, and promising thee assistance and succor by our prayers, and otherwise in all ways in the which our Lord may enable us. Sister Ruth Margerie, what hast thou to say for thyself?"

There was a silence that seemed unusually long and impressive—then the grieved lips parted—the soft eyes were unshadowed by their long lashes for a moment—and the low, sweet, tremulous voice, made answer:

"I cannot confess more than I have told already; my lips are sealed."

"Daughter," said the minister, in a startling voice, "fear not us, but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body."

Ruth's small fingers moved more rapidly—cheek and brow grew white. She cast a rapid, troubled glance upon the iron-like faces surrounding her. Her eye fell upon the pitying young secretary, and seeing that a tear hung even on his lashes, she gave way for a moment to a natural grief, threw her hands to her face, and, after a few quick sobs, cried, almost passionately—

"That I am guilty of nothing wrong, I call heaven to—"

"No more!" exclaimed Cotton Mather, in tones of awful depth. "Add not to thy sin that of blasphemy. Would we could say, as did Christ to the evil spirits—'come out of her'—for surely a demon possesseth thee. Thou hast not

denied that the charges brought against thee are true, so far as they go. Wretched maiden! we cannot forgive—regretfully do we add, believe thee—till thou makest full and free confession. Once more we give thee an opportunity; it is the last time.”

Again that hushed silence reigned throughout the room. As if in the deepest humiliation, Ruth had hidden her face, and, with countless sighs stood drooping, swaying before her persecutors. Some of the elders bowed their heads upon their hands, and their lips moved in prayer. The young secretary had grown very pale, and his eyes rested on the book beneath his hand. Cotton Mather, with knit brows, kept his glance fastened upon her, as if he had done with all tenderness, and stood ready to be her accuser and her judge.

The heavy tick of the clock never sounded more solemnly, and in the deep hush, the wail and rattle of the storm driving down the street seemed fraught with a thousand sounds of woe.

At length slowly and firmly the maiden lifted her head. Another change had passed over her sweet face,—a quiet, resigned, and holy look. The clear eyes met the dark glance of her minister undaunted, and as she spoke her voice was the very pathos of melodious sound.

“I am ready for my sentence.”

Doctor Cotton Mather was discomposed. He moved uneasily, and sought for the sympathy of his elders by look or sign. One of them, rising with measured dignity, exclaimed—

“It seemeth to me that in this case our duty is clear. And yet it moveth me to think that one so young, and heretofore so spotless, should resist the authority of those who are placed as watchmen and shepherds of her soul. Satan hath clearly gained a foothold here, and it behooveth us to spare not even

to the plucking out the right eye. To my thinking, the maiden deserveth to suffer the full penalty of our church-laws, even to wearing the garb in which the fallen confess themselves.”

A short, sharp cry of anguish came from the maiden's colorless lips, then all was still again.

The young secretary turned red, then pale, seized his pen, replaced it and moved half sideways from the white face—the beautiful, angelic countenance of the suffering girl.

“We here do condemn you,” said the Reverend Cotton Mather, and even his deep, firm tones trembled, “to stand facing the pulpit at the end of the middle alley of the church, wrapped from head to foot in a black garment, emblematic of the sackcloth of the Jewish penitents, that all in the congregation may see and pray for thee.”

There was one piteous appeal from those large, meek eyes, then a quiet submission seemed to take possession of her frame. She folded her hands, and, sorrowfully escorted by the young secretary, she left the room.

“It grieveth me much to discipline so meek a spirit,” said the Reverend Cotton Mather, sighing heavily. “I know not what to think of the maiden. She hath a strange contrariety of manner, sometimes seeming of lofty courage and heavenly innocence, at others pressed down with guilt. I love the lamb, and fain would save her: but I cannot do God's work. Who else have we here? There is much confusion in the outer room. Go see, good Ross.”

Chapter Thirteenth.

THE WITCH AND HER ACCUSERS.

A CLAMOR of tongues and stamping of feet succeeded the noise in the hall near them.

Presently up came the secretary to say that they had brought in a witch, and wanted an audience with the minister.

"Let them come up—nay, stop, we will not have our sacred places defiled by such unworthiness. Truly we tremble for the land and the people thereof. Thou canst use thy judgment with regard to 'companying us,' he added, turning to the elders, most of whom followed him into the room below.

At the entrance of Cotton Mather, the hubbub, if it did not altogether cease, was toned down sufficiently to admit of a hearing. The poor witch stood in the centre of the group, all bedraggled, her hair and clothes awry, her piercing glances shooting an angry defiance. A most forlorn and pitiable presence she made, bearing, as Elder Scates solemnly assured his minister, the mark of the beast in her forehead.

The sheriff was busily untying various knots of an expansive handkerchief, into which he had carefully inducted the planetarium and other marks of the black profession. He tugged and elbowed, muttering that he was desprited afraid his arm would break before he arrived there, for the bewitched articles grew so heavy in his grasp that he thought belike

the devil was trying to get them away from him. All over the deal floor were marks of the sloppy streets, and mire bespattered the garments of the men, but literally covered the clinging gown of poor old Goody Shrimp.

"What hast thou here?" inquired Cotton Mather, fixing his deep-set eyes upon the old crone's blanched, but energetic and angry face.

"Good sir, protect a poor, lone woman!" cried the accused, plaintively. "Take pity on a friendless creature that never sought to do harm. Oh, pity, sir, pity! don't let them take me to jail!"

"This woman is a witch," said the sheriff, "as can very shortly be proved, if ever Satan will let me get these knots undone. We here, are witnesses of her infernal dealings this very night, having found her practising her arts, while the devil, in the supernatural shape of a great black cat, was perched upon her shoulder and talking to her. I will avow, as will also these present, that his nose was placed at her ear. Now that this cat was, is, and could be no other than the devil, these people (flourishing his hand around the circle) will testify, for they as well as myself saw him vanish in a cloud and blue fire up the witch's chimney." Thus saying he made a majestic pause.

"Yes, we'll testify to that," said several voices.

"Then, reverend sir, you will also see by these tokens of the black art, that she was practising sorcery of the deepest dye—red and black, your reverence," he added, a little waggishly. "Here also are gunpowder and balls, the rattling thereof of which reached our hearing as we were concealed in the entry."

"Dost say, good sheriff, that she was practising this art as thou didst go in? On whom—with whom?" asked the reverend doctor.

"One Captain Cameron, reverend sir," replied the sheriff. "He himself is not above suspicion; and if he's not careful, I'll hold a warrant for him, as I hold this for her."

"I have heard of the man," said Cotton Mather, a look of doubt crossing his features.

"Oh, good people, pity my age! give me a seat—indeed I am overmuch tired—indeed I am!" cried Goody Shrimp.

"Call thy master, the devil; he will hold thee up," said the sheriff, coarsely, as young Ross went to procure her a seat.

"Thou fellow! this is thy spite, then," shouted Goody Shrimp. Her shrill voice—the lean, long forefinger shaken in his face—the fierce, bright eyes snapping, made her seem indeed a spirit of evil.

"This is thy spite," she continued. "Thou coward, thou craven, thou poltroon-callet! This is thy spite, because I took the place of thy wife—who is a monstrous evil like thyself—at the christening of Mistress Mallet's child. I would that I *was* what thou callest me. I'd roast thee over hell-fire, thou pitiful, chalk-faced, bone-gusseted knave."

The vindictive spirit of the old crone, now that her temper was roused, was a fearful sight to behold.

"That's right, mistress, hang thyself with thy tongue," muttered the sheriff.

"Ye call me a witch, do ye?" she continued, as, her fury passing all the bounds of restraint, she used hands and head in defiant gesture. "Ye call me a witch—a woman old enough to be your mother, and the grandmother of some, and gray hairs enough to call down the malediction of heaven on ye for your baseness, when He tells ye to respect old age. God's curse on ye *all*, ye black revilers—and had I the power, I'd send ye all to——"

"Silence!" cried Cotton Mather, shocked at this exhibition of passion in one so old.

"No! I won't silence—and beware, man of the gospel—I tell ye, beware how ye persecute the friendless, young maid or old."

"Woman, avert your eye!" exclaimed Cotton Mather, stepping hastily from before its malignant fire.

"So *you're* afraid of me, are ye? Why, look on me, men. I'm an old woman; is there any thing wrong in that? because if there is, blame Him who made me so. Do you know God made me?"

"And the devil tempted thee," muttered Gaffer Scates.

"And He gave me these wrinkled cheeks—He gave me this white hair. Now laugh at God! Now curse God!"

"Impious wretch!" cried Cotton Mather, unable to keep down his strong indignation; "thou art made a wreck by that wicked one; thou art given over—cursed—anathema! What saith the Scriptures—

"'Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.' Take her away, brothers."

At this moment the door opened, and a face peered in shaded by a long, slouched hat, that shed water with every motion.

"I say, have you got my master Cameron mixed up with any of these here witchcraft? Hallo, old lady, h-a-l-l-o!" he shouted, saluting Goody Shrimp with a duck of his cap, at which a young shower fell, and a wink of his one comical eye. "Want to know if that's you? such a night as this, too! I say, Auntie Shrimp, a part of your talk's come true, ain't it? There's trouble, trouble, bubble, bubble, as the poet says in the play about the witches."

"If this fellow heard what he repeats, he'll make an important witness," said the sheriff in an undertone, nodding towards Gaffer Scates.

"Thou had'st better shut the door and go, good man,"

said Doctor Mather, who was impatient to resume his authority over the witch.

"Certainly, sir. I expect from the cut of your jib you're the parson, Mr. Cotton, ain't you? I knew a man by that name in Lunnon. Poor chap! he was hung. I saw him turned off, and says I—

Poor Jack Cotton,
Dead and forgotten;
Soon you'll be rotten,
You thief John Cotton.

I profess poetry, sir, although I can turn my 'and to a'most every thing, as my master Cameron can testify. Well, I'm glad he ain't here. I heard tell he'd been taken up for witchcraft; but, says I, 'Lord, there ain't nobody such a fool as to do that.' Good-night; don't look so down in the mouth, Goody, it all comes o' knowing too much. I shall be whipped if I ain't hanged, and you'll be hanged if you ain't burned—consid'able of a ch'ice I take it, that take neither," and so saying he disappeared, leaving the people wondering.

Those remaining consulted together, and came to the conclusion that the Goody had better be carried to the magistrate and lodged in his house till the morrow.

"Poor Nicholas," murmured the forsaken old creature, wiping her eyes, which shed human tears after all, "thou'lt get no breakfast."

"The devil always takes care of his own; he's got one good quality, if *that's* one," responded the sheriff, pompously; at which the desperate woman shook her bony fist in his face, and more dead than alive was carried, nay, rather dragged to a magistrate, while the zealous doctor Cotton Mather went up-stairs to his snug, warm study, to indite matter with his secretary.

Chapter Fourteenth.

THE HOME OF THE OUTLAWS.

A NIGHT in March.

There was no moon. Over all the water hung a mantle of cloud. A light snow was falling. The harbor had begun again to show flakes of ice, thin and easily displaced by the keel of a boat, but it was evident that the forces of winter were nearly broken up.

Apple Island, once a famous resort for the town's-people, and a pleasure-ground for the dignitaries, had been for some time looked upon with suspicion by the good citizens of Boston as a very "uncanny" place. It was some three miles from Boston harbor, and originally, when it received sufficient care from the authorities, was as blooming as a garden. But of late years, several untoward circumstances had conspired to give the ocean soil a disreputable name. First, a murder had been committed there—cause sufficient, in those times, to curse the ground. Then it had been said that pirates made it their resting-place; and, finally, strange weird sights had been seen, and stranger noises heard by old fishermen, until the island had fairly earned the reputation of being haunted, so that it was a terror and a dread, and utterly neglected.

Trees, that had been fine producers, grew thickly there, and there were curious upheavings—natural mounds, form-

ing a sheltered hollow in the centre, in which a small army might be effectually concealed.

At one time a few Indians had been located on this island, from which they came in the spring to sell the result of their winter's industry, in the shape of baskets and mats, but they had long since left, bearing stories of a most marvellous nature to the good folks in the town. It took but slight cause in those days to establish a ghostly reputation for whatever came in bad odor. So, as I said before, the beautiful island was declared to be haunted.

And it was!

A path beaten through the bushes, led to a rough, log house, located in the deepest corner of the dell. Trees and bushes, artfully trained, concealed it from sudden view. Only one who was familiar with its site could approach it directly to its entrance. It had been, long ago, a pleasure-house—a pretty habitation, set in the midst of roses and beautiful shrubbery, while thick clusters of the wild purple-grape fell over its side; but since its desertion, other and less disreputable islands had come into favor. Conant's Island was the especial pet of Governor Winthrop, who made its walks fragrant with flowers, and planted it with many choice trees.

On the night of which we speak, the wind blew gustily around the jutting headlands; the waves sprang with a sullen dash along the base of the island, and the leafless trees and frozen ground were wrapped in a vestment of pure white snow. The rough house—two windows of which looked out upon the waters, when the inmates so desired—was apparently inhabited. Lights were in the windows, perhaps to guide some one thither, and smoke issued from its one low chimney.

Within, dressed in a hunting-suit, and lying at full length

on a rude bed, reclined the stalwart form of Captain Bill. He lay in a musing mood, watching the movements of a deformed negro, who was setting out some planks contrived for a table, with supper. A fire of logs, fresh hewn, burned brightly on the great clay hearth. A goat, lean and shaggy, but with full udders, lay comfortably asleep, tied to the wall by a strong hempen rope; and before the fire, on a square of hazel-wood, some cakes were browning. From a dilapidated kettle jetted forth clouds of steam, and the comfort and even cheerfulness within, contrasted strongly with the burly breeze and driving snow without.

"How much more of that last deer left, Carbuncle?" asked Captain Bill, watching the negro as he drew forth the crackling, crimson coals, and prepared to lay a venison steak thereon.

"Whole haunch, massa," replied the black, placing the last steak to his satisfaction, and lifting a huge pine-knot, which he disposed against the chimney.

"Put on one of the fine cloths, and fix us up a little," said Captain Bill, with a grim smile; "I want to see how we should look if the house had a mistress, as I'm not sure but it will before long."

"And the carpet?" queried Carbuncle.

"Yes, the carpet," returned his master. "We'll have things in style for once. Bring on what silver there is; to-morrow, mayhap, we'll have a splendid new service."

The negro, grinning with delight, disappeared, but soon returned with a large roll under his arm. It proved to be a square of magnificent Oriental carpeting. This he spread, and capered about it with infinite satisfaction, while the splendid colors glowed and deepened in the light of the blazing fire.

"That was intended for the honorable, the councillor of

our loyal Governor-general Judge Walley," muttered Captain Bill to himself; "but, by some strange mischance—ha! ha! it never got there. They missed it, somewhat, I reckon, as well as the wine. By the way, Carbuncle, bring out two bottles of that royal port with the London mark. My interesting friend and coadjutor, John, alias 'Red hand,' is late to-night. Ho! here he comes! just in time for a sup, my hearty," he cried, as a small, lithe, restless-eyed man entered, and, throwing a parcel in the corner, stood gazing about him.

"What's all this finery, Bill?" he asked, at length.

"Why, you see, John, I took it in my head to fancy, lying there, that the house had a mistress—that the mistress was my wife—and that my wife was—little—"

"Hold!" shouted the other; "don't you mention her name to me, if you know when you're safe. You know what I think of that matter, Captain Bill—knew long ago. I won't hear of it."

"But for the ten thousand! only think of it! Ten thousand pounds. You could live like a gentleman in some far-off country, reform your ways, and grow pious in your old age—ha! ha!—while she—well, I solemnly promise I wouldn't *compel* her to marry me."

"Never mind—we won't talk of it now," said the other, evasively. "I'll confess, the money is a temptation, and some other time—but we're going to put away that little package to-night—you'd better go early—they'll be likely to set a watch after nine."

"Yes," replied Captain Bill, evidently more satisfied with his comrade's manner than his words. "While we eat supper, Carbuncle, prepare the dark lantern and a brace of pistols. It is almost time that the other men were back. Whether they bring good news, or no news at all, I shall go. It's just the night. Where did you put the black box, boy?"

"In the hole, where you tell me, massa," replied the negro.

"Very well; in case I take it, you can get it ready, can you?"

"Yessir," replied the negro.

After eating supper in silence, but with a relish and heartiness that proved them both lovers of substantial food, Captain Bill and his companion drew on their shaggy overcoats, and thick skull-caps of fur, then, taking a dark lantern, prepared to encounter the night and the increasing storm. As they stood on the beach, the lights of the far-distant city shone faintly through the haze—the vast expanse of waters spread out on either side in unbroken blackness. Presently there was a sound of oars, and the grating of a boat's keel; two men stepped out on the narrow strip of beach, over which the waves were washing.

"Well, boys, what news?" cried Captain Bill.

"Confound it," replied one of the men, "there's a large party on board, and they won't break up till midnight, and likely enough they'll stay, all of them, till morning."

"Is Captain Cameron there?" asked Captain Bill, suppressing an oath.

"Yes, we heard Cameron's voice," responded the other sailor, who was busy securing the boat. "I tell you what, it's cold work, sitting still, and colder watching, especially when you can hear the glasses clink, and smell the good things. I'm as hungry as a bear."

"Go to the house, and Carbuncle will cook you some venison," said the captain. "I'll stay here by the boat, and when you're through, I want you. I've some work to be done."

"What's he after now, I wonder?" asked one of the other, as the two men hurried to the house.

"Up to burying that money, likely as not—he's been mighty shy of it since he went to the city last. I guess he heard bad news."

Meanwhile, Captain Bill and his companion walked back and forth, talking over their plans, counting up their ill-gotten gains, and waiting impatiently the return of the two sailors. They soon came, bearing between them, according to instruction, a small, but very heavy black box, and some tools. These they conveyed into the boat, asking no questions. Then they entered, followed by their leader, and, gliding quietly round the western side of the island, they struck out silently, but rapidly into the harbor.

The lamp was hidden, and the oars were muffled. It was not without difficulty that they managed the little boat, for the wind raised the waves to a formidable height; but, directing it towards a large track of low land on the left, they plied their task laboriously.

Silently they wound up through the little estuaries and narrow creeks, where the red man had often guided his canoe. It was very still in the lull of the high wind, save the occasional crash of some dead branch that had been heavily smitten by the storm.

In summer it must have been a pleasure to glide among the emerald banks, and the richly-sloping heights, of Winnissimmet (picturesque name of a race who were gifted with musical tongues), but it was lonely and bleak enough now. The thin ice cracked sharply, as the boat pressed against it, and the snow fell so thickly, that the men were covered with its crowding flakes.

Captain Bill spoke but once, only to remark that if the "Prudent Sarah" did not set sail soon she would be frozen in again, and then wished devoutly that she might be.

At length they reached a small, natural landing, which

the men had named "Captain Bill's Wharf," in honor of their commander, and leaving one of the crew in charge of the boat, the captain and two others, each provided with a pick and shovel, proceeded along the level ground till they came to the base of a somewhat commanding height, called Powder-Horn Hill.

There was not a dwelling between them and the sea. The place seemed a desolate, howling wilderness, and the hill rose up bleak and bare, save that it was lightly coated in some places with soft, drifting snow. They did not fear that the sound of their footsteps would be heard, for, in all probability, in that part of the little town human feet beside their own never sounded, except in the warmest summer months, during the season of berries, with which the woods abounded. The solitary baying of some watch-dog in the far off farm-house was all the sound that greeted their ears, save the crisp rattle of the frozen ground beneath their feet.

The wind blew bleakly, with now and then a hollow moan in its voice; and now and then an impatient, shrieking sound, as if in anger at being foiled in its attempts to root up the strong trees that bent their naked branches humbly before it. They were now close upon the hill, and began to ascend its steep sides, first going round a gentle acclivity.

"We need not bury deep, men," said Captain Bill. "I shall be along here some time in the summer, and besides, the ground is frozen too hard. A couple of feet down will be all that is necessary."

They gained midway of the hill, where, from the land around its base, could be seen a peculiar swell of the ground the size of an ordinary grave, and whose verdure in summer (as it does to this day) always appeared brown and dead in

contradistinction to the bright living green on every other part of the hill.

"This is the spot," said Captain Bill, leaning against the trunk of a huge tree, branchless at the top, and that seemed to have been scathed by some lightning bolt. He set down the dark lantern, turning it till the light fell only on that spot. The light reddened up the snow, crimsoned the swart faces of the sailors as they threw off their outer coats and went laboriously to work.

Twinkling lights shone faintly here and there through naked branches, showing that the homes of the villagers were cheery with the fire blaze. The swell of the waters sounded drearily along the shore. It was a fitting hour for deeds of darkness.

"Now, men," said Captain Bill, when they had deposited the treasure in the hole prepared for it, and carefully covered it and marked the spot, "row me over to Boston Pier and then you can return or not, just as you please. The oath, men!"

They joined hands and repeated terrible words, to the effect that if either of them should divulge the secret of the buried booty to one or more outside their band, he should forfeit his life, and be liable to be shot, hung, burned, drowned, or otherwise disposed of at any moment. Retracing their steps they were soon on board the boat, and pulling lustily for the shore.

Chapter Fifteenth.

THE DISCOMFITURE OF A NOBLE LADY.

THERE was illness at Government house, and some whispered likely to be a death. The wife of the Governor-General had drooped like a fading lily at the first breath of our ungenial New England winds, and had not since been well enough to attempt the voyage back to England.

Since the levee held on the Governor's return from New York, she had failed rapidly, until the doctors were quite decided that she could not live.

Notwithstanding the storm, Lady Anne Bellamont, worn out with *ennui*, drove to the governor's mansion, and spent a pleasant evening with Margaret Aldrich and Eleanor Saltonstall. They sat in the long drawing-room, which was lighted as brilliantly as if for a party. The governor, penurious in other things, had a *penchant* for lamp-light.

It was nearly ten o'clock; a footman announced that her ladyship's carriage had come.

"I have spent such a very pleasant evening, my dears, that I should say, if it were not for the sickness of my friend up-stairs, it was the pleasantest of my life," said Lady Anne, with the laugh and tripping measure of a young girl.

"Oh, Lady Anne, you will be sure, very sure to intercede for that pretty Ruth Margerie, won't you?" exclaimed Eleanor, touching her ladyship's full-rounded arm.

"Certainly I will, my dear." A cloud rested for a moment

on the haughty face, in another, however, it was lost in smiles. "Really it is very kind-hearted in you to take so much interest in the poor thing. I am so afraid, however, she is not quite what she should be;" a smile was thrown in with this.

"You could not persuade my father so," said Margaret, pointedly.

"Oh! absurd! really absurd, my dear; the importance he attaches—the importance you all attach to the likes and dislikes of a baby like Imogene," said Lady Anne, her eyes flashing more than she chose should be seen. "An extraordinary child, to be sure, very beautiful, and all that, but not quite infallible. However, as I told you, I'll do my best, of course. Carlton Ross told me all about it—the council, that is—and I declare to thee it was very affecting, how she looked and spoke and all. Besides that, he gave a most curious description of an old witch, who it seems has been found practising her sorceries upon divers people. Oh dear! what is the world coming to? Just suppose they should accuse thee, Maggie, or myself of witchcraft."

Margaret was looking fixedly at her ladyship, who laughed lightly as she drew on her fur mantle. Margaret, on the contrary, shivered.

"Of course you'll have some of the officers here from the frigate; and I suppose Sir Edmund will give much heed to the news, having been before so grossly deceived. Has Sir John Willie called yet?"

Margaret's cheeks and lips had grown like coral red.

"I believe Sir John is a *friend* of yours, Miss Margaret," Lady Anne said again, as her question was answered in the negative, and she turned her snapping eyes on the young girl, who was both red and confused.

"Oh yes! my cousin has been for a long time acquainted

with Sir John," Eleanor replied for her, with a dash of impatience in her voice, as she marked Lady Anne's evident satisfaction with herself for embarrassing Margaret. "He is an acquaintance of mine also."

"Ah! indeed," said Lady Anne, shortly.

The door opening at that moment, prevented a rejoinder as short, for the fire had flashed up in Eleanor's face; but the entrance of the rector, with his young innocent-looking wife, put an end to the conversation.

"Are you going, Lady Anne?" asked the minister, in a voice and with a manner of the most studied politeness.

"Yes, it is later than I thought." It was observable that Lady Anne averted her eye as she spoke; his glance was severe. "How did you leave Lady Andros?"

"Very ill, very ill, indeed," replied the rector. "I read prayers and she made the responses feebly, which proves that she yet retaineth her mind."

"That sweet little Imogene! I have not thought to ask after her; is she well?"

"Quite well," replied the clergyman, exchanging a meaning glance with his wife.

"Although she hath no liking to me," continued Lady Anne, somewhat through her teeth, yet striving to make her voice as silvery as usual, "still I think her a very wonderful, beautiful child—quite an angel."

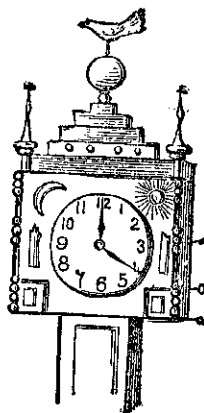
"Won't you bring her up here soon, uncle?" asked Eleanor, coaxingly.

"She shall come with me as soon as Lady Andros is better," spoke up Mrs. Aldrich. "You know," she added, smilingly, "we never trust her out of our sight."

"I suppose the mysterious loss of—" the lady quailed beneath the look the minister gave her. For once her bold front failed her, and stooping, she pretended to straighten

the thick fringe of her shawl. Almost without an effort, however, she recovered her self-possession, and turning to the rector and his wife, in the blandest voice offered them seats in her carriage.

They declined, however, and with stately manner, Lady Anne bade them all good-night, and swept out of the room. Eleanor accompanied her into the hall. To her astonishment the front door was wide open and unguarded, the snow was driving in, and on inquiry it was found that the porter had been entertaining his friend, the coachman, with cakes and ale down stairs. Reprimand was useless. Occupied with the attention his sick wife needed, the governor had scant time to see to his domestic affairs, and when the house-keeper was from home (the case on this particular evening), the hired servants cared very little for the authority of either Margaret or Eleanor.



Chapter Sixteenth.

A STRANGE DISCLOSURE, AND A CHAPTER OF OMENS.

THE rector and his wife had gone, Margaret and Eleanor sat alone in the long drawing-room.

Eleanor drummed with her milk-white fingers, and hummed through rosebud lips. She seemed thinking, when all at once she broke out with, "I cannot, cannot like that Lady Anne! What can be the reason I feel so strong a repugnance towards her," she added, moving a crimson lounge nearer to the fire, and seating herself near Margaret. "Oh! the way in which she spoke to you of Sir John Willie! She always seems to be flinging at you, Margaret—why is it?"

Her cousin smiled a little as she replied, "I am sure I cannot tell you, unless it is that she passionately loved my father when he was a young man, and when he was married to another she had a dreadful sickness. Some say the disappointment turned her brain. Some of her actions, indeed, give evidence either of insanity or demonism, I don't know which."

"Loved—your—father! loved Uncle Parris! I never heard of such a thing; what! twenty-five years ago? What canst thou mean, dear Margaret?" And Eleanor's eyes dilated.

"I never heard *all* about it till last night," returned Margaret, "though I have gathered considerable—from here and there a hint. Little step-mother told me, then, at least all

she knew. It is very curious—Lady Anne must be nearly forty years old.”

“Bewildering! positively!” cried Eleanor, still all astonishment. “I never thought much to be sure about Lady Anne’s age, but I never should have guessed her thirty, never!”

“It is very astonishing how she contrives to look so youthful; but, nevertheless, she does,” responded Margaret, folding and refolding the long sash-ribbon that hung from her queenly zone. “I could hardly believe it, but little step-mother assures me it is so. And, oh! Eleanor”—her tones grew lower, “she has been a very wicked woman.”

“Why!” Eleanor started, “you don’t think—you *can’t* think she loves him now!”

“I don’t know, of course, exactly what to think, I only know that papa is entirely unlike himself before her, as you must have noticed, quite stern and dignified; and step-mother always seems to feel uneasy, if not unhappy, in her presence. You have seen sometimes in church, perhaps, how strangely her black eyes are fastened on us, and dear little Imogene can never speak of her but as the dark lady with the snake.”

“I heard her once,” said Eleanor, growing more and more interested; “pray tell me what she means. She has so many allegorical sayings, however, that I am always wondering at her.”

“She gave her that name the first time she saw her. It was at church. They met one day after Lady Anne had returned from her annual visit to England. Lady Anne, as is the way with every one who sees her for the first time, was struck with Imogene’s remarkable beauty, and instantly bent down to caress her. I never saw such a look of horror pass over any mortal features as crossed Imogene’s face, and

though it was in church she screamed, ‘O mother, the great black snake!’ pointing to Lady Anne’s head.”

“Strange,” murmured Eleanor, her cheeks growing quite pale, “but what a fearful child that is. I’d no more dare to go near her if I cherished wicked feelings in my bosom, or had committed a sin, than I would dare to go near an angel.”

“Imogene is a wonderful child,” said Margaret softly; “and yet you would not think there was any thing unusual in her character. She’s not in the least forward, knowing, or old—only that, what shall I call it—prescience, wisdom—it seems neither, and yet it is both.”

“What, pray, did Lady Anne say to such a welcome?” asked Eleanor.

“Actually, she instantly clapped her hand to her head. I verily believe she thought for the moment that the child saw a reptile there. But she only said, ‘you foolish little creature!’ and turned away, her eyes blazing with anger. Since then, Imogene, though ordinarily the gentlest darling in the world thou knowest, has shown the same repugnance to speaking or even looking towards her.”

“How very singular!” said Eleanor, thoughtfully; “and didst remark, also, that Lady Anne began to say something to-night, but Uncle Parris gave her such a look! and how suddenly she seemed to wilt and grow dead pale?”

“Yes, I saw it all—and—I don’t know as I should tell even thee—it is not whispered out of my father’s home—but Lady Anne Bellamont stole, or caused to be stolen, my father’s first son—a babe scarcely a month old.”

A cry of horror escaped Eleanor’s lips. She was very white.

“She! nobly born! a lady of the realm—she a child-stealer—oh! horrible! horrible! It cannot be—why! is it not a crime punishable with death? Margaret—I declare

thou dost frighten me, cousin. I am sure I shall not dare to look in her terrible, beautiful face again."

"The crime was traced unmistakably to her, and serious consequences might have resulted, only the child was conveyed back again, and in consideration of her rank, the affair was kept as secret as possible."

"Shameful," murmured Eleanor; "a poor woman would not have escaped so."

"But I have something more to tell thee. When I was a very little child, a plague raged in London, and among its victims was my mother's own cousin, Lady Emily Randall. With a strange fatality, it swept away every member of her family—her mother, her sisters, brothers, husband, and all the children but a babe a few months old. This child my mother took for the sake of the great love she bore Lady Randall; they had always been as sisters together. She grew to love it with a passionate fondness, so my father says, that seemed stronger than the affection with which she regarded her own children."

"This little, beautiful babe, so helpless, also disappeared when it was but a year old. It was forcibly taken from the arms of its nurse when she was walking out with it; it has never been seen since."

"But, Margaret Aldrich, thou canst not surely mean to say that Lady Anne stole *that* child, also—she could not be the fiend," cried Eleanor.

"My father is almost certain of it," whispered Margaret, fixing her dark eyes on her cousin; "but no proof has ever been found. Every inquiry was set afoot that could possibly be suggested, and Lady Anne was even accused—but she had powerful friends—nothing could be done. The worst of it was, my dear mother, being in delicate health, was so seriously affected by this last shock, that a sickness ensued

which cost her her life. Thus I am motherless. My poor brother!" her lip quivered—then she suddenly added, "do you wonder my father keeps strict watch over little Imogene?"

"I have wondered very often," said Eleanor, gravely and with blanched cheek; "but I never shall again. Oh! that frightful woman! I shall always see the snake when I see her. But Maggie, darling," she said again, after a pause, "you spoke of your brother; hast ever seen him since he went away?"

"I cannot answer thee," said Margaret, almost gasping, and losing all color, she caught at Eleanor's hand.

"What, darling?" queried her cousin, startled at her manner.

"Didst hear a voice, Eleanor—or steps?"

"No dear—nor would it be strange if I did; there's nothing but a dog howling. Wretched creature! he's just under the window; the moon, if there was one, might feel complimented at that bay. If I could but take my shoe off in time, and smite my right hand with it, he would desist; but my shoes are laced, unfortunately, and I'll not go to the trouble."

Margaret listened tremblingly, but apparently not at that; her eyes were fastened on the door.

"Dost think our aunt will die?" asked Eleanor, in a solemn voice, that sank into a whisper.

"I do, of a verity," answered Margaret, as solemnly. "I have heard and seen that which indicated as much—and my dreams in particular have tended that way. Last night, for instance, I thought I saw, in the centre of the room, a hearse filled with mourning plumes. While I was wondering how it could have been brought in here, our uncle appeared at its side, his forehead bowed on his hands, and methought

his bright uniform was covered with bands of crape. I certainly hear footsteps somewhere near," she added, looking nervously up and down the room.

"Let us go and get Mowbray to sit with us," said Eleanor.

"Oh, no; it is a warning,—nothing else," replied Margaret, sadly. "Poor aunt! I hope it is not so bad—and yet I fear. Some one called me thrice, a week ago, and according to the declaration in the house, nobody spoke my name. Thou know'st, Eleanor, no servant would call me 'Margaret,' so it must have been the grave-call of Aunt Andros. — And now I think of it, the candle-wick hath burned every night into a winding-sheet, and——"

"O Margaret! in pity,—in pity *do* let us talk of something else. I shall dream of nothing but hobgoblins, if I hear much more of this dread talk: why, it chills me. It may be that our aunt will live to return to England,—and then how I will laugh at thee! I wonder who the frigate hath brought, beside Sir John. If it were not for the sickness, I warrant we should have a gay time with the officers."

Margaret's face lighted anew for a moment. A smile parted her lips, passed, and she grew pensive again.

"Our gay dresses, too," cried the more volatile Eleanor, "those beautiful rose satins with the point lace and ruby zones! Dost know I tried mine on to-day? I hardly liked the fashion of it; the waist is like that of a petticoat, and there is scarce a finger's length from that to the belt. But the train is splendid! Should you wear feathers, Margaret?"

"Wear what?" Her cousin wore an absent look.

"Feathers; plumes in your hair, dear,—those long, drooping black ones aunty bought in Paris. She gave them to us, thou knowest."

"Oh, perhaps—yes."

"I asked young Mr. Ross, the last night he came here, if he thought we ladies dressed too finely. Thou must know I deemed him a bit of a Puritan."

"What said he, dear?"

"He said not for his liking; but then added, with that rare smile of his,—and how rare 'tis!—'if they can but afford it.' That comes of the strictness of his church laws; I should die to be under them. Dost not *thou* think he hath a sweet smile, Margaret? Ah! I know he liketh thee," she added, her bright face growing grave.

"Nonsense, cousin," said Margaret, quietly.

"There is no need to say, nonsense," replied Eleanor, resting her fair cheek on one hand, looking intently into the fire, and sighing once or twice. Rousing herself in a moment after, she exclaimed, "Margaret, I am not sleepy; art thou?"

The bright eyes that glanced quickly up, made answer with their own speech.

"I will tell thee, then. Let us get our 'broidery frames—our pink-satin quilts, thou knowest, and sit up till the verge of twelve. Then, by reciting some lines that I will tell thee of, and speaking nothing after, we shall see in our dreams those who are to 'company us through life. Come, I like not to go up into our chamber alone, and the servants are asleep; let us go together. It is too late for company, and we may get a brave show alone. I have just commenced my peacock—such beautiful colors!"

Margaret smiled, but seemed willing to fall in with her humor. She arose, and shaking down the dark tresses from which she had just taken a comb, stately in size, and elaborate in workmanship, she followed her cousin, leaving one wax taper on the table, lighted.

Chapter Seventeenth.

THE HIDDEN INTRUDER.

THERE were footsteps sounding in the room again, but not theirs. Some one moved to and fro. The candle was put out with thumb and finger, and the flickering fire-light alone remained to make ghastly images on the walls. Till within a few days a recess in the room had been appropriated to the use of the governor's wife, who, with the capricious notions of an invalid, desired to be taken thither. Before this recess curtains of rich stuff had been hung to keep out the draughts, and they were not yet removed. Now in the dimness they rustled strangely, swaying in and out, sending a long swell of chill air towards the embers, which glowed again with momentary brightness.

Then it was quite still.

In a few moments the cousins entered again—Eleanor loaded with the huge embroidery frames, while Margaret carried the candles and a swinging basket. These latter she placed upon the table, Margaret starting as she exclaimed,

"Did we not leave this candle burning?"

"I thought we did," replied Eleanor, letting fall the frames that seemed too heavy a burden.

"Strange!" whispered Margaret. "I am certain we did, for I looked back and saw it quite bright and cheerful. Alas! that is but another sign," she added, "and ominous of death."

"Ominous of the wind, rather, I imagine," replied Eleanor, lightly; "as we went from the room, the cold air blew it out. The night seems more chill, I will draw the screen up," she added.

They then fell to work, choosing and comparing the bright colors. Up-stairs the governor dozed, in dressing-gown and easy-chair, while two attendants kept constant watch over the sick lady, sleeping uneasily, and frightened at every motion. For over an hour the young girls plied their pretty task unweariedly, talking softly of many things, while the rustle of the stiff satin under their fingers varied the conversation. At last Eleanor exclaimed—

"There! I have twice broken my silk; I'm tired and sleepy too, I do believe, while your eyes, Margaret, look as sharp as needles. I'm going to lay down; wake me when it nears twelve;" and so saying, she moved to the farther end of the room with a languid step, and threw herself, wrapped in a shawl, on one of the couches, her feet towards the recess.

Margaret snuffed the candle, laid by her embroidery frame also, took from her bosom a locket, looked at it intently, kissed it, then diving into the deep work-basket by her side, drew forth a book.

She sat in a large easy-chair of a crimson color. The dress of some bright brocade she wore, well became her stately beauty. She had placed herself before the table, the masses of her dark hair, drawn tightly back by her hands, fell on each side and between the wide draperies of her sleeves in wavy curls. Her elbows rested on the table, her book before her; thus she read quite absorbed for nearly another hour.

A shadowy figure at the end of that time loomed up gradually from the outmost verge of the room, and for a

moment stood dimly defined against the sombre panelling. Then it made a motion, as of weariness, and the slight form of Eleanor, with its piquant face blanched of its roses, stood before the table in front of the reader.

"Cousin Margaret."

The other gave a frightened start, which sent the book to the opposite end of the table, from thence to the floor.

A laugh, strangely hollow and constrained, burst from the lips of Eleanor Saltonstall.

"Why, coz, did I frighten thee?"

"Indeed thou didst, cousin Eleanor,—thou always dost come so silently! Thou art a very shadow, I believe, for motion."

"Something like, since I follow my shadow," replied Eleanor, in the same metallic-sounding tones. "Pray what book is this that is so absorbing?" She stooped and picked it up.

For the first time Margaret looked full in her cousin's face. The look was prolonged to a wondering stare. Why were the cheeks and lips of her merry cousin blanched to a deathly white? Why, although her tones were loud and clear,—perhaps louder and clearer than usual,—did the muscles of her face quiver as she spoke? Why were the white teeth buried in her lips?

"Ah! I see," said Eleanor, trembling visibly; "a story of castles, of haunted rooms, and hobgoblins. Strange taste! I wonder not I frightened thee. But one need not fear ghosts," she added, with an impressive look at Margaret, who sat wondering if her cousin was growing mad.

"Now here is a beautiful passage. How fine a description of the ancient castles—the thick ivy creeping to their tower tops." And pushing the book before her cousin, the latter saw several lines written in pencil, in an uneven hand, on the

broad margin, which, when she made them out, ran thus:—*"There is a man in this room, and I suspect, armed. He is concealed in the alcove behind the drapery. What shall we do? Say something when you have read this, to prevent suspicion."*

"A beautiful passage, indeed," replied Margaret, calmly; but when their eyes met, there was white terror in her face, also. The girls had reason to be alarmed, whether the man were a burglar or assassin; for the present condition of the household,—sickness, weariness, and insubordination of servants,—in a greater or less degree made such an invasion peculiarly formidable.

Margaret sat still, pale, but outwardly composed, thinking as well as her state of bewilderment would allow; while Eleanor, clasping her little hands tightly, sent imploring glances towards her elder cousin.

Margaret seized the book again, and wrote rapidly, *"Behave your best. Go presently to our uncle. I will stay here alone—there is no other way."*

"It is very late, is it not?" she asked in a careless tone, as Eleanor laid down the book and seemed quite undecided.

"Yes, hark! the clock says twelve. Uncle would be angry of a certainty if he knew that we were up at such an hour," replied Eleanor.

"Thou wilt go first, then, Eleanor. I pity thy weary eyes. I will follow as soon as I have finished this chapter."

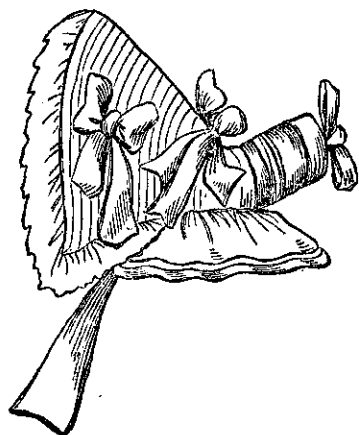
Still Eleanor seemed irresolute. In truth, she dreaded to go through the house by herself, now especially as her cousin would be left alone with the intruder.

"I will follow immediately," Margaret repeated, making rapid gestures for her to go.

Eleanor, taking up a little night-lamp, with a shaking hand, turned to leave the room. Her firmness was rapidly

deserting her, while Margaret, though as fully alive to the danger, seemed to gather strength and courage as the moments passed. This she evinced by beginning to sing a light, merry ballad when the door shut on her cousin, though she kept her glance fastened on the spot where the curtains that hid the object of their alarm, fell moveless.

Not long did this suspense remain, however; for while she hummed, listening painfully, all her powers suspended, there came a quick, sharp rataplan of the grim, lion-headed knocker. Suppressing a cry of relief, the brave girl sat still, in uncertainty, till she heard the slow steps of the porter, roused unwillingly from slumber, nearing the hall door.



Chapter Eighteenth.

SIR JOHN WILLIE A PRISONER.

THEN followed the tread of feet along the passage. Presently the servant ushered in the governor's sheriff, and following him came a face whose recognition almost made her heart stand still.

"Sir John!" she exclaimed, then advanced straight towards him with outstretched hands, while her cheek glowed with some sudden, pleasant emotion. The sheriff had glided off, and now sat at some distance, awkwardly crossing his legs and holding his three-cornered hat carefully under his arm.

"I beg you will pardon this unseemly entrance at such an hour as this, but you will perceive that I am here under arrest;" this he said somewhat haughtily, relinquishing the hand he had held in both of his.

"Under arrest!" exclaimed Margaret, indignantly; "is it possible? Pray, by whose order?"

"By order of the governor-general, Sir Edmund Andros," he said, bowing low and almost mockingly.

Again Margaret's color mounted, and she was so confused and distressed by the various excitements of the hour that she could say not a word, but stood spell-bound before him.

Steps were heard again. The door opened, and appeared first the governor in his dressing-gown and night-cap, a

candle in one hand and a musket in the other. Following his excellency came the white charming face of Eleanor Saltonstall, while making up the rear were three or four servants, sleepy and looking bewildered and frightened.

The new-comer stepped back for a moment with a glance of scorn.

"Where is this intruder? Halt, sirs! By my halidame! but this seems to be Sir John Willie. Well, sir, so you are the gallant who frightened our fair nieces nearly out of their senses!"

Eleanor whispered to him. Sir John looked on in indignant surprise, as he answered—

"Your excellency must know that I did not come here of my own good will. I had the honor of finding your sheriff at my lodgings, waiting for me as I came home from the house of a friend. That, your excellency, must surely be sufficient apology for my late appearance."

"Very well, sir, very well, sir," exclaimed the governor, with choler in both manner and voice; "we will attend to your case presently. Meanwhile we offer you the courtesy of our house. Be seated, sir."

The gentleman preferred to stand, as he signified by another haughty bow, and by remaining on his feet.

"Now, men, take your guns to the back of the room and stand guard; we are four in all, and each able to engage with a man singly."

"Sir, do you insult me?" asked the young man with heat, thinking these preparations were made on his account.

"By God's mercy!" cried the governor, "can we not do our will in our own castle, without being called to account for it? This warlike array hath nothing to do with thee." The governor's voice grew stern as he added, "Concealed by yonder curtain at the extremity of the room a villain stands,

who hath entered our domain surreptitiously. Take aim, men. Now, fellow! come forth and lay down your arms, or be shot like a dog."

An awful silence! Sir John Willie had stepped back, looking with fixed eyes and puzzled brow on the governor. The sheriff gazed on the scene, quite terrified. Margaret, white as death, pressed her clenched hands to her bosom. Eleanor cowered against the wall, holding her hands over her eyes, while the servants thus adjured presented arms, ready for the word of command.

"When we count three," said the governor, in a low voice, "fire! If our niece was mistaken, there will be but the need of a little repairing in the arras. If there be an assassin concealed there, his blood be upon his own head."

"Uncle, uncle, the noise will kill aunt," said Eleanor, in a hoarse whisper.

"Silence, niece—there will be no need for me to fire," replied the governor, aside, to her.

"Now, men—one—two—"

Just as the fatal word was about to be pronounced, an impatient movement was heard. A hand pressed aside the curtains, and Captain Bill came defiantly forth—throwing his weapons upon the lounge.

Margaret, as she saw him, gave a low cry of terror, and fell fainting upon her seat.

"Eleanor, attend to thy cousin," said the governor; "we had thought her of better metal than to faint at such a time as this. Well, knave"—going forward, he recognized the man by whom he had been so grossly deceived. His countenance changed to a fierce, red wrath.

"So—by God's mercy! this is our wine-merchant, come back again! Well, knave, thou *shalt* room with us to-night, whether or no. Thy insolence shall be dearly paid for, I can

tell thee. What was the motive to-night, fellow—theft or murder? Confess, or we may give thee a taste of powder yet!”

The man frowned—drew up his tall form, and was silent.

“Sullen, ha! very well; we’ll lodge thee to-night, for sake of the satisfaction of feeling safe with thee under our roof. ’Tis not worth while to call our guards from the fort for such small game. Mr. Sheriff, we will see thee early to-morrow. Meantime, Sir John, we consider you a prisoner; you will therefore remain here to-night. Men, carry this fellow to the tower-room at the top of the house,” he added, pointing to Captain Bill, “and, if he makes the least resistance, shoot him down.”

Captain Bill was accordingly escorted to his lodgings, while the governor remained with Sir John Willie. Margaret had been led, long before, to her chamber.

Chapter Nineteenth.

LETTER FROM GODFREY LAMB, BOOKSELLER, TO HIS WIFE IN LONDON.

[Many letters were written by “ye merchant Lamb,” between the last date and the present; he, as we understand, making a dally journal of them for the pleasure of his wife. We choose from the originals only those that have the most direct bearing on the subject of our story.]

Dated Boston, March, 168—.

MY SWEETEST PERFECTION:

Doubtless thou dost look anxiously for news from me. Sometimes I have ye pleasant opportunity of sending several ye same month; and ’tis sad to think how long it taketh toe get a word to thee. But all in God’s time—so, do not fret, mine ladie bir l.

Why give I such advice? Thou didst never fret. Never saw I a frown on thy fair forehead—never a shadow of displeasure in thy dear eyes.

Now, let me consider what news to tell thee. There is much in my brain that calleth for release, and I will try to release it, and send it to pleasanter quarters.

First, then—until within a few weeks, we have had terrible winter weather. Ye famous harbor hath been so constricted as to shut in several small vessels, among ye w’h is ye “Prudent Sarah.” Her captain is under no great obligation to go to sea, inasmuch as he owneth ye greater part of his ship, and is wealthie enough to do as he pleaseth. However, ye weather is bettering now, although a thin coat makes nearlie everie night w’h ye sun thaws at mid-day.

Thou speakest kindly of the little maid, Ruth, dear wife. Of a veritie, I am in great trouble about her. She hath to bear manie suspicious glances, and manie hard wishes. Even ye landlady of the Red Lion tavern, at which I drop in at times, though the maid hath been as a daughter to her, seems toe take up with ye general feeling. It appeareth to be understood that she is to do some sort of public penance, of w'h I think verie unkindly. Ye young ladies at ye governor's mansion have taken great interest in her case, and have so far offered her protection as to propose her coming in ye familie of the Episcopal rector—ye reverend Parris Aldrich, whom I do confess hath taken mie mind sweetlie. They do not at all believe that she is in any wise guilty—onlie placed in some misfortunate circumstance which cannot presently be explained. But, to go there will necessitate her giving up her church, w'h she loves heroically, and will not. Ye Lady Anne Bellamont seemeth to have much to do in ye matter—at one time to certain persons giving a favorable report of ye maid's character—at another putting out hints that do her injury, to certain of other parties.

It appeareth a pitie to me that she doth not accept ye clergyman's verie generous offer, but she is a conscientious maid, and even for ye favor of Captain Cameron (who, I do believe, loves her to distraction, but yet will not countenance her fanatics, as he calleth them), she will not diverge from ye straight path.

I will tell thee ye reason why ye Episcopal is so zealous in her cause. Ye reverend man hath one pet lamb whom he calleth his "New England Token." Surelie one would not wish a lovelier token in anie countrie. Thou must not laugh at what I write, for it is gospel-truth, strange as it will doubtless seem. It is said ye little one hath some miraculous gift, so that she readily distinguisheth ye approach of anie

thing evil—likewise of virtue. She having been born with a double caul over her face, seemeth to be in mind and disposition of a different mould from all other children. Shall I tell thee that hearing so much of this strangely gifted creature, I dreaded my first sight of her, albeit I felt bold in ye conviction that I had done no deadlie thing to anie one. But thanks to her little ladyship, Miss Imogene received me verie kindly. Is't not a prettie name?

Well, I hear that ye maid was brought to this deare little child (a verie cherub in appearance), and instead of shrinking or turning away, ye little flower of New England goes up to her, and straightway sweetlie caresses her as one would a bird. That was proof conclusive in ye minds of that familie, that ye maid Ruth was innocent as an angel.

As I said before thou may'st smile at this, but would not, saw ye the child. I cannot describe its beauty to thee more than if it was a seraphim on ye wing. Oh, ye bright, bright hair! ye golden-waving, sunshiny hair! soe long, soe finely spun! Never, never saw I aught like it. Oh, ye holy blue eyes, changing into a deeper color as some prettie childish imaginig comes up in her wise little brain! And ye brow! I can compare it to nothing earthlie; ye cheeks like lilies near roses, faintlie reflecting their blushes. I confess to thee that I rhapsodise, and that I cannot find ye language in which to dress her beautiful baby-lips. Ye child is onlie nearing to five years, and to my mind ripe for ye kingdom of heaven that is of such, for it seemeth to me as if none but our blessed Redeemer ever had such spotless infancy.

But I may tell thee more of her anon. I expect thou wilt already say that New England must be a place of verie wonderful attractions. Well, so I do confess it to be. If I had but my own deare wife here.

I have some sad news to tell thee concerning poor Lady

Andros. She is verie ill—it is thought to her death. Ye people, I can see, do not like their governor. He burdens them with taxes, and even I say he doth not behave himself generously. His disposition seemeth grasping in ye extreme, and he seemeth to desire homage due only to ye king. Ye young captain being verie plain-spoken, talks about him so that it hath got to ye governor's ears, and they say it will breed trouble for him. It is verie evident that onlie ye sickness of Lady Andros keepeth ye popular ferment down, and if she dies, there will come trouble.

I have nothing more to tell at present, save I love thee, dearest. No Englishman hath a more beautiful or worthy wife than

Thy

LAMB.

Chapter Twentieth.

IN WHICH MISTRESS COMSTOCK GIVES A TEA.

A PLEASANT room facing on the street, the sunshine streaming in, and Mistress Comstock knitting by her cheerful fire. A happy and serene woman looked Mistress Comstock, and it seemed as if the shining furniture reflected her placid, handsome old face. Handsome, because the royal stamp of goodness made it so. The sunshine of her youth lingered yet on the hill-top of old age. Every thing seemed as blessedly content as herself. A tabby cat—coat yellow, and luxuriating in most masculine whiskers—lay purring and blinking on the ruby-red hearth. The very logs in the great fire-place seemed happy, because permitted to burn, and each flame appeared striving to overleap its predecessor.

Comfort blithe, comfort snug, predominated. The moon-faced pewter dishes over the chimney-piece—the bright, blue tiles, portraying a pleasant Scripture story—the quaint little *buffet* in the corner, holding its small store of china-ware, very precious and very old—the brass-polished candlesticks—the well-waxed floor, and the goodly black, round, three-clawed table, glistening in its nook—every thing seemed well satisfied to be worn out, if need be, in the service of the inestimable Mistress Comstock.

"'Tis time the child was come," she murmured, setting her needles and smoothing down her well-plaited cap. "Poor dove! I know not how to comfort her, but she shall see that

there is no difference in my feelings," she added giving a little sigh.

The words were scarcely spoken before a low rap sounded at the door, and as the cheerful old woman cried, "Enter, dear," Ruth Margerie came in. Her eyes looked heavy, and her sweet young face a little care-worn, but as she sat down in a little chair at the feet of Mistress Comstock, the genial fire drove the cold from her cheeks.

"Mistress Bean sent me round to say, with her compliments, that she cannot come to tea this afternoon; she would, but that her many duties forbid," said Ruth, carefully pulling off her white wool mittens, and holding forth her hands—very delicate, pretty hands they were, the old lady thought, as the fire flame gave them pink outline and transparent flush.

"I'm sorry," returned Mistress Comstock, placidly; "but *thou* canst stay, cosset," she added, with a questioning, sympathizing glance at the young girl who sat watching the fire-play, so mournfully.

"Oh! if you will let me," cried the girl, bowing her head impulsively on the lap of the kind-hearted old dame, and sighing heavily, almost sobbingly.

"Let thee, dear lamb? why shouldst thou make a speech like that to thine old friend?" asked Mistress Comstock, looking grieved and tenderly forcing her bended head upwards till she saw the tear-filled eyes.

"Because—oh! because everybody treats me so coldly! so almost unkindly—yes, yes, I will say it—so cruelly now; what will it be after—after the sabbath?"

She shuddered from head to foot.

"My poor cosset!" cried Mistress Comstock; "if thou must bear the cross, bear it bravely, even as He did who is our salvation."

"But it is heavy—heavy!" sobbed poor Ruth.

"Thou shalt find peace with me, dear child!" said Mistress Comstock. "Stay here, if thou wilt, even till thy trial is through. I doubt thee not, cosset; never, never have I doubted thee—nor has good man Comstock. 'Twas only yesterday he spoke nobly in thy cause to the young captain."

"Captain Cameron?" asked Ruth, hastily, her cheek paling.

"Yes, that hasty, impatient, but brave, honorable young man."

"Ah! brave, honorable!" echoed Ruth; "and he, too, noble as he is, doubts me—despises me. Well, I will try and bear it," she added meekly.

"He spoke of thee almost as if he were a lover of thine," said Mistress Comstock, giving Ruth a searching glance. The young maid had turned her head a little away; she made no answer, but her cheek felt the burning of a tear, that was silently wiped away, and the click of the needles went on.

After a moment, Ruth slowly took off her outer garments, and hung them up in the little passage between the lean-to and the family room. While she was smoothing back the curls that the high wind had disarranged, in came Mistress Scates, with much stamping of the light damp snow from her moccasins. Mistress Scates was a comfortable woman, fat and forty. Her fair round face abounded in dimples; her mouth and brow indicated great decision of character. It was three by the old-fashioned clock between the windows, yet Mistress Comstock reproached her friend with being "so late!"

With fewer apologies than are fashionable to-day, the plump visitor emerged from her envelopes, bestowed a hearty kiss on the cheek of Ruth, because, "poor child!" she said in her heart, "she had no mother to kiss her in her trouble;"

and very soon the two dames were as busy with their tongues as they were with their knitting.

"Will you give me something to do, Mistress Comstock?" asked Ruth, whose restlessness would not allow her to keep unemployed, as her nervous manner gave token.

"Child, there is nothing but what I can do myself," answered the good woman.

"Well, then, let me do what you could, please," coaxed Ruth. "Are there no cakes to bake?—no biscuit to make? There is the tea to draw and the table to set. Why won't you sit still and let me work?—it will make me happier."

"Well, cosset, have thy way. The dough is ready for the bread, and the oven is hot. Thou may'st do all, if it will please thee, child, and I'll play lady for once," returned the good dame. "The damask cover is in the top drawer of the chest, where also thou wilt find six spoons of silver. Would I had more, but we home bodies can use the pewter. In the second drawer, cosset, is my chiny tea-caddy. Three tops to a drawing, dear; it is not often that we have tea, and we must make it of the strongest. Thou wilt find cream and sugar in the buttery—the sugar in a strong box, which may tax thy strength to open, as father and I never eat it. The butter, in which I had very good luck this morning (a beautiful churning, Mrs. Scates), in the pantry in the stone jar, and my preserves thou knowest about."

Ruth, trying to remember her instructions, went into the lean-to, or kitchen, and was soon busy with the biscuit, while Mistress Comstock and Mistress Scates gossiped to their heart's content.

"Never pitied I poor maid so thoroughly," said Mistress Comstock, softly.

"It is all very sad," replied the other, shaking her head

till her double chin quivered. "Our good minister told me that he knew not what to make of the case."

"Depend upon it, the poor maid is innocent," replied the first speaker.

"Ah! Mistress Comstock, I think so too; but it's a wicked, wicked world—a very wicked world;" and the double chin quivered again, but this time with a wise and long-drawn sigh.

"Dost thou know aught of the shipmaster, Cameron?" inquired Mistress Comstock.

"I have seen him. He hath the usual vanity of man," was the reply.

"He is very comely."

"And must pay some penalty for being handsomer than others," responded Mistress Scates. "He is greatly talked about, the young man is. Some say he is indebted to the Evil One for his extraordinary good looks, having made a league with Satan. 'Tis certain he could not easily be a handsomer man."

"Now if ever!" cried Mistress Comstock, straightway dropping a stitch in her astonishment, and suspending her knitting. "I thought him so good and worthy a young gentleman, and invited him to our tea, seeing that father thought highly of him. Well, well, I hope no harm will come."

"And again it hath been rumored that he hath bewitched the poor maid Ruth, and—" Here she leaned forward and whispered in the ear of her friend.

"The Lord have mercy!" ejaculated Mrs. Comstock, lost in wonder. "The poor maid!"

"Thou must not tell for thy life, remember," added Mistress Scates, cautiously. "I had it direct from Goody Prescott, who lives in Gossip Lane, and she had it from a sister-

in-law, whose husband's niece worketh plain sewing for Mistress Mather. I'll not say that it's true, but she obliged me not to drop a word to any living soul, and I would not, only to thee. I have the greatest confidence in thee that thou wilt keep a closed mouth upon it."

"Most surely," replied Mistress Comstock; "but—well, it really beateth me! He is such a fine-favored young man! so handsome in his ways—he might easily bewitch a poor young body."

"The talk is about so now, that they say he will surely be taken up for witchcraft sooner or later. The jeweller who hath arrived here with very precious freight, sayeth that he misses a valuable case of the finest stones, and chargeth it, of course, upon the captain. Besides this, it is said he was found practising witchcraft with Goody Shrimp when she was apprehended."

"The Lord preserve us!" cried Mistress Comstock, aghast.

"And long, lean Benjamin the fiddler, who hath not very strong wits, thou knowest, sayeth that the captain did throw down his fiddle once, in the Red Lion tavern, breaking it into a hundred pieces; but, as he took them up, they instant changed into a whole fiddle, which, on the moment, began to play of itself. Didst ever hear of such a thing?"

"The Lord have mercy!" cried Mistress Comstock, whose ejaculations could find no other expression, as she listened with fascinated interest. "I shall of a verity send for our reverend minister, to purify mine household with prayer, on the morrow," she added, her hand trembling, as she commenced at the seam again. "Dost know," she asked, presently, "what will be done with poor Goody Shrimp?"

"I hear that sentence is passed to give her thirty lashes at the cart-tail; and, if any more complaints are brought against her, she shall be burned for a witch."

"Dear, dear! it behooveth us to live like good Christians—to take heed that our feet stumble not," said Mistress Comstock. "The prince of the power of the air hath many and great resources. He is truly a raging and a roaring lion, who worketh his will in darkness. May the Lord keep us!"

"Amen," said Mistress Scates—and put up her knitting.



Chapter Twenty-First.

THE OLD PSALM-SINGER.

"SHALL I set the table, now, Mistress Comstock?"

Ruth looked like her own lovely self, as she put her bright face in that moment. The pretty cheeks were flushed with exercise, and the flush brightened the blue eyes. Mistress Scates thought it couldn't be time and then exclaimed, as she saw the hand of the clock pointing to five, that she had not deemed it scarce an hour since she sat down.

The table soon stood in the centre of the company-room, as it was called in those times, and Mistress Comstock's array of china made a fine show on the damask cover. An ordinary June rose would have filled either of the red-tinted cups, while a moderate handful of rose-buds might have brimmed the quaint sugar-bowl, as assuredly half of that quantity would have run over the top of the tiny creamer. The cream, however, stood near, in a homely jug of brown delf. Scarcely was the table finished, and Ruth in the lean-to, preparing to take the smoking cakes from the oven, when in came Father Comstock with a stranger, followed by Gaffer Scates, and Captain Cameron.

Ruth heard the latter voice—she started, and her face assumed an expression of deep distress. She had not dreamed of seeing him—had avoided him since their last painful interview. "Oh! if I had but known!" she repeated to herself, standing there, undecided what to do. In her despera-

tion, she would have thrown on Mistress Comstock's old hood and cloak, and fled from the house; but, at that moment, the old lady herself came into the lean-to.

"Oh, do they know I am here?—because, if not, let me go home at once!" cried Ruth, while her disordered manner struck the good dame unpleasantly, and she answered, almost sharply—

"Of a surety they do, child, for I just now said to father, that Ruth had been kind enough to serve me, and would bring in the tea soon."

"Can't I stay here—won't it be better? Don't ask me to go in; I can't face the—the—gentlemen."

"Why, Ruth, that would look like guilt, surely," said Mistress Comstock, in a voice sterner than was her wont, and with a grave, suspicious countenance.

With her usual habit of meek submission, when counselled by her elders, Ruth dried the tears on her lashes, and, calling up all the resolution she could command, went, with down-cast eyes and blushing cheeks, into the room.

"She never looked so pretty in all her life," said Mistress Comstock to herself, "and how little she knows it."

Captain Cameron started, and his chest began to heave with long breaths, while his eyes followed her,—and Mistress Scates afterwards averred that he clenched his teeth hard.

Ruth, with a graceful courtesy to the company (though her sight was dazed, and she really saw no one), vanished again into the kitchen. Then the captain's senses seemed to return, but not his wit and brilliancy. Through the whole tea-time (Mistress Scates again) the captain kept looking towards Ruth, though exactly like a man who was not conscious of what he was doing; and sometimes Ruth was rosy, and sometimes pale.

Goodman Comstock and Master Lamb, both in the same business, held an edifying discourse on the book trade, Gaffer Scates putting in his protest every few moments against the governor for *op-pressing* the people of New England (Gaffer Scates made the pun very gravely), by appointing his secretary, a hateful and hated man, licenser of the press. For his part, he thought a man might as well cut out his tongue or cut off his hand, if he must be obliged to do the will of that abominable fellow. He would not stand it—no, not even if the man were appointed by the king.

"You'll have to stand that, and more too," said the young shipmaster, in his blunt, yet not wholly ungraceful manner. "I hear that the governor is determined to have his priests' book read in one of your churches, and that he will use candles and perform popish ceremonies."

"I'll be hanged if he does," cried Gaffer Scates, growing as red as a peony, "in *our* church! I keep the key, and I ring the bell, and no popish ceremonies are carried on there, if Gaffer Scates, bricklayer and honorable member, can prevent it. Does the man think to ride rough-shod over us?"

Captain Cameron smiled. He liked to see a daring exhibition of spirit in any one, and a thousand times a day he blamed his heart for obstinately loving tame Ruth Margerie.

"Ay!" he said to himself, "tamer than even the despicable worm, that turns if he is trodden upon."

"I don't boast," said Gaffer Scates again, growing heroic, "but if I had my way, I would let his excellency know—"

"Gaffer, Gaffer, hold thy tongue," cried his wife sharply. Mistress Comstock looked up in mute horror. She would as soon have died as issued word of command to her good man.

"Mistress Scates, if I want my tongue held, I'll get thee

to do it," retorted the bricklayer. "I say it is a tyrannical deed, and one that no good governor would attempt," he continued, growing more excited. "Here is Mr. Lamb; I hear that he is writing a book. Suppose he goeth to Cambridge with it, all ready for the press, when up comes this secretary with his pomp and ruffles, and says with swelling voice, 'I have liberty to read this from the governor;' and then looking here and there, 'thou must strike this out, and that; thou must not say such a thing in that place; thou must not, in fine, publish thy book unless it pleaseth me!' I know not much about learned men, of a verity, but it strikes me I would pull at one of his ruffles, or perhaps it might be his worshipful nose."

And puffing a little, his face growing redder and redder, Gaffer Scates swallowed his tea too hot, which caused a wry face, and sank back in his chair, satisfied that he had made an impression. Captain Cameron laughed heartily, so did Mr. Lamb, while Father Comstock smilingly added, "the Gaffer is right."

In consideration of his eloquence, Gammer Scates overlooked the sharp retort her loving spouse had given her, and smiled complacently upon him.

"I must go now," said Ruth, as the candles were lighted.

"On no account, cosset," said Father Comstock, passing his arm tenderly about her; "we promised Mr. Lamb, here, some music, and thou must stay and help us out."

Mistress Comstock had forgotten her recent suspicions; the tea and the pleasant talk had made her, if possible, more cheerful than was her wont. Ruth looked disturbed, but knew not how to disappoint the good old man, while yet she was unwilling to stay. It was not good for her peace of mind to remain near Captain Cameron, especially as it was

doubtful how he felt towards her. She was, however, decided by the—

"Ruth, thou must not go," of Father Comstock. "And little Ruth, I said once I would give a pound any day to hear thee sing that little roundelay I taught thee. Good mother, get me my flute; she is one of my pupils, sir," he said, with an air of pride, turning to Mr. Lamb.

"Father Comstock," said Ruth, softly but firmly, "I cannot sing alone to-night."

Mistress Comstock added a mute entreaty that he would not urge her, as she handed him the old black flute.

"Well, then, we won't urge thee, cosset; give us the books, and our friends will join us in some psalmody. We all know—

'Save me, O God, from waves that roll,
And press to overthrow my soul;
With painful steps in mire I tread,
And deluges o'erflow my head.'

You, Ruth, will take the air, mother sings counter, and Gaffer Scates, tenor; you, captain, must throw in the good broad bass, with a back-bone to it, and Gammer Scates will help us in the second. The rest, of course (looking over his spectacles), will sing as they please."

The round table was drawn up. Father Comstock had adjusted his huge horn-rimmed glasses, with a look of great importance (for he was the chorister and player of the bass-viol at church, and the only singing-master in town), unscrewed the first joint, touched it gently with his tongue, screwed it on again, moistened the second joint; then puffing out his reverend cheeks, blew a shrill blast from scale to scale, ascending, descending, trilling, quivering,—preparatory to giving the key.

Ruth, quite unnerved, sat by his side, her head bent

very much more than was needful to see the words—words, so applicable to her present situation, and which, if Father Comstock had thought for a moment, he would have avoided for her sake.

Captain Cameron was unconsciously worshipping the sweet guileless face, that he could not couple with guilt, however much his suspicions were roused; and shaded his brow from the heat of the fire (perhaps that he might watch her the more unobserved). Mr. Lamb, amused at the quaintness of the simple people, listened to their numerous "ahems" and torturing throat-scrapings with the grave philosophy of a gentleman.

Presently, at a signal from Father Comstock, at it they went—Ruth's clear silvery voice trembling a little, and by so much enhancing the beauty of the performance, while Gaffer Scates, in pompous attitude, beat time, as if he were trying to demolish it. The third and fourth verses were gone through very creditably, but poor Ruth's voice had faltered more and more, until they came to the following stanza—

"Reproach and grief hath broke my heart;
I look'd for some to take my part,
To pity or relieve my pain;
But look'd, alas! for both in vain."

Here the sensitive girl broke quite down, and hiding her face in her clasped hands, sobbed aloud with the passionate abandon of a child, until, rising in the now deep, sad stillness, she hurried into the little lean-to—the good mother Comstock following her, wiping the tears of sympathy from her honest eyes.

Chapter Twenty-Second.

THE VISIT OF A POMPOUS GENTLEMAN.

CAPTAIN CAMERON rose hastily, and was for plunging into the kitchen after them. His handsome lips quivered, and there were tears, if not in, at least very near his dark eyes. But a loud important rap at the outer entrance arrested the general attention. Goodman Comstock hurried to the door, and presently returned with some haste, ushering into the room no less a personage than the stately haughty secretary of his excellency Governor Andros.

Bestowing a formal salutation on the company, most of whom had arisen at his entrance, and stood now, a little awed perhaps at his velvet and finery, his glittering sword-handle and golden chain, his embroidered waistcoat and ruffled sleeves, he turned himself about, saying, as he addressed the bricklayer, "This is Gaffer Scates, I presume?"

Mistress Scates bridled and wished that Mistress Comstock had been there to see the honor!

Gaffer Scates, notwithstanding his brave speeches, made a most humble bow.

"I am deputed by his excellency the governor-general," said the secretary, "to say to thee, it is his wish that thou dost deliver to him the key of the South church, that he, in company with the many of his like faith in this town, may have services read there on the ensuing sabbath."

Gaffer Scates turned white, then red, and again in his perplexity he seemed of a blue color.

"I—I—know not, your honor, that—that I have the authority," he stammered.

"That matters not, good man," replied the secretary, losing a tithe of his condescending exterior, and giving fuller tone to his voice. "It is for thee to do the will of his excellency without demur, but in due humility. He being the representative of majesty, hath of course unbounded right to make what demands pleaseth him."

"I question that!" muttered Captain Cameron, his eyes flashing; upon which the secretary gave him a frown of awful portent, which was returned with full interest.

"Is it the governor's wish or command?" asked Gaffer Scates, gathering together his scattered wits.

"It maketh small difference, since in a ruler's vocabulary the one is but the echo of the other," was the lofty answer. "I come here ex-officio,—at his wish, however."

"Wilt thou say to the governor, that I must first see some of the officers of our church?"

"No, I will say no such thing. I demand from thee the key."

"Insolence!" muttered Captain Cameron, in a contemptuous voice.

"Thou'dst better hold thy tongue, sirrah!" exclaimed the secretary, a tremor of passion running through the calm of his tones. "Already thou art an object of very marked suspicion; we have heard no good of thee."

"I'm not the tool of a tyrant, whatever I am," thundered young Cameron, stepping out with a face so white with defiance, that the secretary fell back a step or two, and thrust his hand under his starched ruffles. His face was also white with passion.

"Thou may'st repent thee that speech, young sir," he said. "Be assured I shall forget it not. His excellency hath sent the sheriff after more than one free-lipped subject since he hath been here."

"Gentlemen! gentlemen!" cried Father Comstock, holding forth both hands between the two angry men; "let there be no violence in this household. Good sir, you came while we were singing the praises of the Most High, and it becometh us not to revile in such presence. Touching the matter of the key, I am free to uphold my worthy brother Scates—he taketh, to my thinking, the right disposition of the case. The church is a government subjected to rulers, and we are only the humblest of its subjects. It seemeth not to me, therefore, right or proper to give up that which is entrusted to our keeping. Indeed! to go farther, I should be loth to see our good church entered for any such purpose, though the governor headeth it." There was warmth even in his gentle tones. "I say this kindly—I have no ill-will towards your worshipful self, only be pleased to bear back to his excellency, the governor-general of this colony, that we are not the proper persons of whom to ask request touching a matter of such magnitude."

"Magnitude! forsooth!" muttered the ireful secretary; "one would think the nails of thy church were of solid gold."

"Nay, but our principles are something more solid than that; ay! and infinitely more precious," returned Father Comstock.

"Very well; we do not threaten," said the secretary; "but if harm come to thee, remember it might have been averted."

So saying, he strode indignantly from the room.

"Truly, what a fine brave-looking gentleman!" exclaimed Mistress Scates, her weak eyes dazzled by his pompous ap-

parelling. "And so soft spoken, too; it seemeth a pity to refuse him."

"Refuse him!" cried Gaffer Scates, stepping out valiantly to the exact spot where the secretary had stood; "if I had not been a member of the church, which forbids fightings, I warrant me he would have measured his length on the floor."

"The poor gentleman," said Mrs. Scates, her voice taking a shade of sarcasm, as she glanced from head to foot of her husband's small body; "what a strait he had been in then."

Mistress Comstock entered and spoke, in a low voice, to her husband.

"Is Miss Ruth ready to go?" asked Captain Cameron, divining her errand; "because if she is, I will see her to the Red Lion."

There was no answer. The two women exchanged meaning glances, and Father Comstock said, after a long pause, during which the captain was putting on his overcoat, "Perhaps it is the maiden's wish—"

"I shall see her to the Red Lion," said the captain, with emphasis, breaking in upon his sentence, and there were but few words spoken till after the two were gone; for Ruth, in fact, was allowed no choice. Then—*perhaps* there was a little scandal.

Chapter Twenty-third.

IN WHICH CAPTAIN CAMERON SHOWS HIS TENDERNESS AND HIS TEMPER.

CAPTAIN CAMERON strode on in silence with his precious charge, till they had nearly reached the tavern. He held her arm with an unconscious grasp that was almost pain to her, and as they neared the house, he said in tones in which fear, passion, and hope were blended—

"Ruth, stop a moment—I have a word for you."

They paused just beyond the door-stone.

"Ruth, I have been unhappy since I spoke harshly to you; Ruth, will you forgive me?"

"I do forgive you, Captain Cameron." The low, smothered voice gave token that she had suffered too.

"And, Ruth, one word more—a request—a prayer if you will—oh, darling! will you be my wife, to-morrow?" he asked, rapidly, still retaining her arm; "let me protect you, Ruth; let this accursed trial stop where it is! There! now I have frightened you by my vehemence."

"Captain Cameron—" she caught her breath, and leaned heavily on his arm as if she were losing strength.

"Oh, my love! my darling! my beautiful, beautiful darling!" he cried, in hurried words of passion that seemed to burn his very voice, so intense they were. "O Ruth, let me give you strength, protection. You are not fit to battle with this rude world alone, Ruth; you, with your tender, gener-

ous, confiding heart. Let me fight for you, darling; let me hurl your enemies to perdition, if need be. Ruth, I cannot live without you! I cannot leave you here! Cling to me, Ruth, as the moss clings to the rock, my heart is a true and a strong heart. Don't let me go without you, already I have delayed my vessel longer than I should, because I could not tear myself even from the town where you live. If I have seemed harsh, it was because my soul was tormented to see you in trouble. Only say yes, Ruth, we will be married to-morrow—to-night; or go with me from the country, and I will set sail to-morrow."

"No, no, because I could not tell you then, with this cloud upon me. Never, never," sobbed Ruth.

"Oh! my God!" groaned the young man. The anguish of his voice made her heart throb with terror. "You know not what you doom me to, Ruth Margerie, when you say never. Take care, Ruth; more than you reck is in your hands—hangs on your decision. Ruth, if my *life* depended upon it, would you do what I hear they have commanded you?"

"You are putting the drop too much in my cup of sorrow, Captain Cameron," wailed Ruth.

"And have you no spirit?—no womanly pride?"

"Alas! too much of both," was the sad reply.

"Pride! spirit! and consent to stand like a puppet, disgraced, reproached; to bear the finger of scorn and the tongue of pity—I tell you, you shall *not*, Ruth Margerie."

"Captain Cameron," pleaded the broken voice softly; but passion mastered him now. His heavy breathing, quivering frame, and deep-toned voice, whose vibration shook her as he spoke, were evidences of no ordinary emotion.

"No!" was his fierce reply, "you shall *not*; by heaven you shall not, if I die for it," he repeated.

Ruth grew chill and frightened.

"You are mine, Ruth. I call God to witness that you are mine, before Him. The words have been spoken that you dare not recall. All the minions of church and state shall not tear you from me; no, nor all the devils in hell! As your affianced husband, I declare that you shall not submit to this indignity."

"Captain Cameron, you are presuming too much," said Ruth, in a clear firm tone. Her spirit was roused.

"I shall presume just so much, Ruth Margerie, and I repeat it, if it is in my power to prevent it, you shall not be thus disgraced. Good-night"—(more gently)—"Forgive my vehemence, but remember, I have declared what I will do, and it *shall* be done." And with these words he left her.

Walking rapidly from street to street until the fever of his mind was soothed, he directed his steps towards the most aristocratic quarter of the town, and soon entered the thoroughfare named in honor of Queen Anne. Here stood the substantial and often elegant dwellings of the more wealthy inhabitants.

The young man paused before a mansion whose imposing portals were guarded by great lions in bronze, and gave a resounding stroke of the knocker. A footman in handsome livery appeared, recognized him, and held the door wider for his entrance.

"Is Lady Anne in?" he asked.

"Yes, sir, the jeweller is with her now; please walk into this room." And he opened a door leading to a private parlor. Here a warm, sweetly odorous atmosphere greeted him. From the carved ceiling hung a large lamp, suspended by silver chains. There was no carpet, but the floor was beautifully polished, and ornamented with curious little mats

of the richest colors, laid at equal distances. The scroll couches, then fashionable, and covered with many a quaint device in the way of ornament, invited to agreeable lounging. The graceful hanging shelves, gilded elaborately, and inlaid with rare West Indian woods, held a choice collection of costly annuals and illuminated books of art. A richly chased silver foot-stove sat on the hearth, in front of the luxurious easy-chair, occupied now by a very beautiful, but exceedingly lazy pet poodle.

A mellow light diffused over all by the cheery fire and soft lamp-flame made the pleasant room a place to be coveted by the weary, a retreat to be desired by the thoughtful and imaginative.

"Humph! the jeweller is with her, the king's jeweller, as he calls himself," muttered Captain Cameron. "A precious lot of poison he'll pour into her ears about me, thinking to prejudice her ladyship, as if that could be! Let me see—how long back do I remember her? I must have been a boy of twelve when she took me under her protection—twelve—twenty-two—that's ten years ago. Faith! she's been a good friend to me—would be more—people say so."

He shook his head, saying with emphasis as he looked straight into the fire—*that* could never be, now! O Ruth Margerie (truly I am in thrall if ever man was), I'll have no wife but you, if I live till a hundred years bleach my hair and bend my body. Ah! here is her ladyship!"

"Naughty man!" she advanced with a light tripping tread, both exquisitely white hands held forth, a smile showing pearls of teeth and beds of rose-dimples; "naughty, naughty man, to come so seldom, so very seldom, when you know how glad I am to see you. Only twice since that long voyage; for shame!"

"I crave a thousand pardons, Lady Anne," said the young

captain, watching her teeth and dimples as he smiled, his beauty so far excelling her own as to show the sweet, ingenuous expression which made it more than handsome.

So Lady Anne gave the pet poodle a satin cushion at her feet, and drew her easy chair up to the fire. She looked more than usually lovely, and there was a flush on her cheek that denoted the hurry of an unusual preparation to meet him. Her suit was of the richest silken velvet; plain gold bands adorned her wrists, confining the sleeves that showed the perfect outline of her arms, and thence over her hands wide, sable laces fell. Her hair was drawn back in a quaint fashion, confined by diamond-headed pins, and thence hung in many gleaming rings on her rarely white throat. The short waist, then in fashion, bore a brooch, chain and pin all intermixed with diamonds; on her fingers flashed precious stones. The ivory whiteness of her brow was enhanced by a cunning square of jetty plaster, and her cheeks and lips were tinted with such art that they seemed the freshness and brightness of healthy childhood.

"You are looking remarkably well to-night, Lady Anne," said Captain Cameron, admiring her sincerely.

"Thou flatterer!" exclaimed the lady. She seemed in exuberant spirits.

"Nay, we of the sea practise none of the words or arts of fashion," replied the captain. "I am but a plain sailor-man."

"*Plain* sailor-man!" exclaimed Lady Anne, her face breaking into a mischievous smile; "we ladies might dispute that. But tell me what thou thinkest of my new purchase." And she touched the golden ornament with her finger.

"I know little about such things—yet they become you bravely," replied the young captain.

"I shall not let thee off with that: look closely, pr'ythee, at this brooch; one cannot see its beauties at a glance."

At this the captain was compelled to bow his head very near to the fair neck of the enchantress,—in fact, so near that the bright curls, by a little skilful management (pardon me, ladies), swept over his cheek. He drew back, blushing like a girl, and saying that it was indeed a rare thing.

"Observe the rings, also," she said, extending a fairy-shaped hand, which of course he felt compelled to take in his, in order to examine the jewels.

"They are of very fine workmanship," he said.

"Exquisite! Think you I gave too much for them? They came from on board the *Prudent Sarah*; therefore I set a somewhat greater store by them. The Jew merchant sold them to me for two hundred pounds."

"Indeed! I know not the value of such things," said the captain, yet astonished at the extravagance of his lady-patron.

"They are very pure," was Lady Anne's rejoinder, "and I thought well worthy the price. But why that abstraction? Thou art not looking as well as usual."

"In truth, my mind is on somewhat else," replied the captain. "I came to see if nothing can be done for the little maid, Ruth Margerie. Your ladyship has great influence, and might make some appeal, that in her case would commend her to the mercy of her church. I like not the despotic power of these institutions," he added bitterly.

During this brief speech, and while the captain's eyes were fastened on the fire, the countenance of Lady Anne had worked strangely. Her glance was riveted upon that nobly beautiful face. The gleaming chestnut curls thrown heavily back, the dark, liquid eyes lighted up with the mind that worked under them,—all the *personnel* of the man, looked regally handsome.

"Thou seemest to take a great interest in this low-bred girl," said Lady Anne, and her tones were so altered that Captain Cameron turned about in extreme surprise. "Tell me, is it—*love* for her? It shall make a difference in my interest," she added, her voice still unusually bitter.

"You have divined my secret, Lady Anne," replied the captain. "I love that girl, humble though she is, better than my life."

"It cannot be—it *must* not be," cried Lady Anne, with a vehemence so unusual, that her listener started bolt upright.

"I pray thee, Captain Cameron, consider the difference in her station and thine. As my *protégé*, thou hast risen to a goodly rank, while she is little better than a scullion in a road-side tavern."

"Stay, Lady Anne!" cried the young man, impulsively; "such names I cannot hear applied to one like her. Though her parentage is obscure (and in what better strait there am I than she?), Ruth Margerie is nothing common, either in beauty, manners, acquirements, or virtue."

"Some things have yet to be proved," replied Lady Anne, shutting her voice in. "Virtue! when she hath a polluted kiss upon her lips."

"Lips that I never dared to kiss," thought the young man, writhing at her words. "Who makes such a villanous accusation?" he asked aloud. He started to his feet, his eyes darting an angry fire.

"We will attempt to prove nothing now," answered the lady haughtily. "Sit down, Captain Cameron—sit down, and listen to reason. Dost not know," she added, manner and voice changing to a marvellous tenderness, "that thou art in a fair way to mate with one whom many a high-born gentleman might covet?"

"I have no wish to marry out of my station," replied the

young man coldly, yet seating himself in the chair which she had drawn nearer to her own.

"But I know one who loves thee, who hath both rank and fortune." She cast her eyes modestly down. "To be sure, she is somewhat older than thyself. Of her personal attractions,—being so near a friend,—it becomes me not to speak; but she hath been said to possess beauty of no ordinary character."

"I am very much honored by her preference," rejoined the young captain, somewhat confusedly; "but I did not know there was any lady of rank in the town beside yourself."

Raising his eyes after this blunt speech, he saw that Lady Anne was crimsoning to the very roots of her hair.

"It cannot be," he thought to himself, while he felt a sudden and strong aversion towards her, "it cannot be that she is pleading her own cause! O Ruth!—though humbly born, above all such chicanery—such boldness as this! To such a confession thy noble spirit would never stoop!"

"We will change the subject, if it please thee," said Lady Anne, not well knowing how to undo the unfavorable impression she saw plainly she had made. "Pardon me—that I am a weak, fond woman." And there was such real distress in her manner,—in the eyes rapidly filling with tears,—in the quivering chin,—that the noble-hearted young man pitied her.

"Lady Anne, pray what have I to pardon?" he asked gently. She hoped he had not understood her. "Believe me, your kindness towards me is not unappreciated. I'd go on my knees to serve your ladyship. I owe all I am to your ladyship's interest in me. Ask me what favor you will—I'll do all in my power to please you." There might have been a slight accent on the words, "in my power;" if there was, it was intentional.

"Mate not with that ignoble young maid," cried Lady Anne; adding, as the glow faded from his face, and he shrank coldly away, "at least promise me that if I bring proofs that she is unworthy of thy love, thou wilt forswear her."

"I will not promise; but if you should bring complete, incontrovertible proofs that Ruth Margerie is other than I have thought her, then farewell to all fair-seeming in woman."

"I would ask thee to receive no other. Meantime, if I fail in convicting her in the thing whereof I am suspicious, I promise to use all my influence to clear her character from aspersion. But bear in mind," she added, as he caught her hand with many thanks, "thou knowest they call me here, already, half a Roman. I have an altar in my chamber, and it hath gone forth to the clergy. Consequently, they will give little heed to what I may try for the girl."

"And that reminds me," said the captain, "that it is in contemplation by his excellency to use one of the churches for his Episcopal service. I supped with a friend to-night, in whose dwelling the key of Doctor Mather's church was demanded. The governor's secretary, a man whom I dislike and abhor, called for it, and gave me some insolent language, also, for which I'll make him pay, some day."

"Why dislike him?" asked Lady Anne.

"Because he is not a true man—because he is a minion of royalty," replied the captain.

"What! art thou, too, tinctured with the free notions that are spreading somewhat among the people?—art thou not friendly to the king and government?"

"I hate the office of the one, and would overthrow the other if it were in my power," said the captain moodily.

"Thy tongue is a bold one; I have heard somewhat of these things concerning thee lately."

"And you may hear more. Yes, Lady Anne, my tongue is the tongue of a bold man who dares declare that he hates tyranny in any and every form, whether of the church, the state, or the individual. This bold man has bold thoughts, also, Lady Anne, and dares say bold words, even to the declaration that there will come a time in these colonies when the king's commands will be as if written in water, and the king's threats will make no man tremble. Do you believe it?"

"Never!" exclaimed Lady Anne, indignantly; "perish the thought!"

"Ay, but thought don't perish," returned the captain, "and 'tis thought will work it out. No, Lady Anne, the only absolute, earthly government that I would and do favor, is the government of a man over himself; the control of passions, the correction of vices, the thou shalt and thou shalt not of stern, uncompromising virtue. That is the government that will do away with the *need* of kings."

"What! thou would'st have *no* king!" cried Lady Anne, with horror. Her face had grown pale under her rouging, as if there were elements at work within her heart at variance with the young captain's nobility of speech.

"Yes," he said, an inspired light shining from his eyes—and he pointed solemnly upward—"there is my King! and if men were what they should be, they would be content with no inferior majesty in his tinsel robes and often in his dotage. There sits the monarch who makes no royal favorites to tyrannize over lesser subjects. Now compare my King with yours."

"Thy talk, though very lofty, is treasonable," said Lady Anne, fearfully.

"Ask your own heart whether treason takes this color," said Captain Cameron. The question was innocently put.

The lady started. A look of terror overspread her features, and she turned paler yet. A servant entered hastily.

"There is a man in the kitchen, and wishes to see the captain, he says, life or death," articulated the man, thickly.

Chapter Twenty-fourth.

THE "DUKE OF MARMA" WARNS HIS CAPTAIN.

CAPTAIN CAMERON arose and followed the lackey. Lady Anne in her extreme apprehension hurried after them. Standing all in a tremor of agitation, a profuse perspiration drenching his hair, forehead, and beard, was Marmaduke Catchcod. His clothes were bespattered, as if he had run haphazard over field and lane, and he panted like a frightened animal beset by hunters.

"O Master Cameron! fly, fly, is the cry of Catchcod, and never say die."

"Why, what's the matter?" asked the shipmaster, coolly.

"Run! run!" shouted the sailor, catching his breath, and adding force to his words by a droll shaking of arms, head, and body.

"I say, run for your life! In a man's extremity, legs—legs is better than a wife!" the sailor shouted again, his excitement causing him to measure his words to an awkward rhyme.

"Duke! will you be sensible, man! Be sensible, I tell you; I shan't stir till I know what you mean."

"Oh! sir, dear captain! the witches; I mean the men that are after the witches—are after you. They'll play the very diphthong with you, so I heard. First they went to the Red Lion, then to old Comstock's, where they're singing songs.

like nighting-birds, and now they're up to the King's Arms, and next thing they'll be right upon you."

Lady Anne sent the wondering servants off with a look.

"Do you think they've a warrant, Duke?"

"Sure they have; for you and for me, likely, for Mistress Bean said so, and the poor little maid Ruth went out of the room with a pale face. I warrant she'll remember us in her prayers. They say the governor's master's mad with us: can't you git aboard and *put* before daylight?"

"Captain Cameron, you must remain here; I'll protect you," said Lady Anne.

"Yes, oh! do, good Captain, for it seems as if I could hear their pesky iron heels a clattering against the stones. As for me, I'll be a dog to your ladyship, if you'll put me into any ill-convenient place, and keep me till the officers git by!"

"If I boarded the ship, it would be no gain," muttered Captain Cameron; "they'll probably go off to her before I could muster my men and get under way. I don't care about falling into the hands of the rascals, and I suppose at any rate they'll confiscate the ship."

"Confiscate the ship! O Lord! confiscate the Prudent Sarah!"

'The prudent Sarah she is staunch,
The prudent Sarah she is bold;
Her decks are manned with good sailor-men,
And such a cargo as she will hold,"

cried Marmaduke, all in a breath. "It would go nigh to break my heart to have that ship obfusticated; but Lord! they'll obfusticate us if they find us. My lady, won't you be pleased to let me consider myself a dog?" he asked, anxiously.

"I was thinking," she replied, "you might go in the cel-

lar, and I'll double-lock the door; and thou, Captain Cameron might go in my devotional chamber, unless the sight of the altar will shock thee." So saying, Lady Anne led the way for the fugitives. Duke was made exceedingly happy by becoming a dog to her ladyship, and kennelling in the cellar, while Captain Cameron very unwillingly followed her up the stairs.

Chapter Twenty-fifth.

IN WHICH THE GOVERNOR COMMITS AN OUTRAGE ON LIBERTY
AND GOOD MANNERS.

WE left the governor-general in conversation with Sir John Willie at Government house.

Sir John Willie had been a freeman of Boston for some six years. On coming to the colonies, he had invested his money in cloths, and by the aid of good business talents, energy, and shrewdness of calculation, he had amassed a large fortune in a very brief period of time.

On the death of the first Mrs. Aldrich, the governor, then childless, begged to take Margaret to his own home, and her father, acceding to his wishes, gave her in ward to her uncle. On the introduction of Sir John Willie to Margaret, both had felt an unusual interest in each other. The interest ripened into strong friendship, and finally into love, which, when the governor was apprised of the fact, he thwarted, presuming to dictate in the matter, and deciding that his niece should not marry a man who had made himself a commoner. Sir John, being in politics what would be called a republican of the present day, was another and a greater obstacle to the union. So Sir Edmund laid every hindrance in the way, and finally forced upon him a commission to England, which would occupy some three years, and that time had now expired.

Sir John Willie was a prodigious favorite with the people

of Boston. His embarkation for the old country was quite a little triumph, and at his return no less an ovation was offered him, especially as it was known that he brought news of importance to the colonies.

The governor-general, on being left alone with his unwilling guest, strode up and down sundry times, apparently very impatient with his own hot temper, or else at the calmness of Sir John. The young man was of slight stature, though admirably formed, while his excellency inclined to be portly. Both were fine-looking men, although the silken night-cap askew, with its dangling tassel hopping and bobbing about the governor's nose, detracted something from the dignity of his appearance.

Presently he stopped, and in a voice abrupt, yet intended to be calm, and a manner that, to say the least, was imperious, he put several questions to Sir John, all of which were quietly and respectfully answered.

"We understand that you caused this declaration to be printed in order that the people might first be served," the governor said at last, with more heat.

"I certainly did get it printed for the people," said Sir John; "but I am not aware that I had any choice as to its first disposition. I would as soon your excellency had seen it as they."

"As soon! as soon!" cried the governor, exasperated. "By God's mercy! do we hear aright? Thou hadst *as soon* perhaps the people had obtained the document!"

"Why not, your excellency?"

"Why not! atrocious! Are we to be classed with the commonalty,—with shopkeepers, with cartwrights, with tailors, with triphammer mountebanks? As soon! forsooth! pray dost thou put thyself on a level with us?"

"I am well aware that the office of your excellency should

be esteemed of much account. I am also as well aware that *vox populi vox dei*."

"We want none of thy Latin scraps!" exclaimed the governor, passionately. "We wish to know why your knightship, or shopkeepership—which?—did not first bring *us* news of the royal proclamation?"

"I was not aware, your excellency, that it was customary for passengers to do so," said Sir John, commanding his voice and his temper; "neither did I ever hear it was any man's duty so to do, unless he felt inclined."

"By God's mercy!" cried the governor, "but thou art impertinent, sir!"

"It was not my intention, excellency."

"We command thee to give into our hands the declaration of which we have heard!"

"I decline to do so, excellency."

"Sir!" cried the governor, his temper completely gaining the ascendancy, "thou art a saucy fellow! a scurvy fellow! a God-forsaken fellow! We will see if we are to be treated with contempt by a clothier. Sir! thou art a knave—a blockhead—a disgrace to thy ancestry!"

"Excellency, you are the governor, that title commends you to my respect, at least in action," was the quiet reply.

"By God's mercy!" cried the governor, "if our guard were here thou shouldst be carried into the fort and dieted. Thou art crazy, thou loon! To-morrow we will send thee before the magistrates. We'll see what can be done *sub colore juris*."

"Your excellency may call this right, but remember that 'summum jus summa injuria.'"

"We will see—we will see," spluttered Sir Edmund, "who and what has the right. *As soon*—by God's mercy the fellow hath put contempt upon us."

"Perhaps, your excellency," said the other, with a touch of pique, "the townsmen may see this matter in my light."

"And what care I? A fig for the townsmen!" and he snapped his fingers contemptuously. "Are they not our subjects by virtue of his majesty's commission? Let them open their mouths about it if they *dare*. I'll gag them."

"Governors are but flesh and blood with the rest of us," replied the cool young man.

"By God's mercy! force us not to extremities, or we may forget our dignity and collar thee. I have told thee once, thou shalt have the courtesy of our house as far as food and shelter go!" exclaimed the governor, irritated beyond measure, yet keenly feeling the calm superiority of the man he would have cowed if he could. "My servants will show thee to a chamber," so saying, he pulled a cord near him, and a sleepy porter soon appearing, the room was left deserted.

Chapter Twenty-sixth.

THE UNACCOUNTABLE RELEASE OF CAPTAIN BILL.

CAPTAIN BILL, in the interim, had been conducted to the top of the house into a bedless, fireless room, which had been made as secure as a prison years before. More than once had disloyal subjects been in confinement there, among them a noted pirate and murderer, who for a long time was the terror of the coast and the scourge of the town, and two or three rebellious Indians who had been held as hostages.

As the door was barred and locked upon him, the prisoner began walking back and forth hurriedly.

"To think," he muttered, "that I have laid my plans so clumsily! so like a fool! Here's a pretty state of affairs, and the Prudent Sarah within a week's time of sailing! Confound it! I've lost the greater for the smaller prize. I had silver enough; oh, maledictions!"

In a few moments, with an imprecation, he flung himself on the floor, swearing that now he was in for it, he was not going to be broken of his rest. "Shouldn't wonder if Mag comes up," he muttered, "she's such a soft-hearted chicken. Poor Mag! that's the second time I've made her faint away, deuce take it. Now, gentle sleep and good angel, come, no matter what shape thou takest, only release thy servant of servants, be thou of heaven or hell. So, Captain Bill, good-night and pleasant dreams."

Slowly the hours of the night tolled on. The clock was

striking three in the morning when Margaret lifted herself in bed, and listened to make sure that her cousin slept. In the dim light, how wildly shone her eyes! Her heavy hair hung unconfined, her cheeks were blanched and haggard.

Finding that Eleanor slept soundly, she arose, folded a quilted dressing-gown around her, and with list slippers in which to walk without noise, left the chamber, light in hand. Dreary looked the dark, low-ceiled corridors, the frowning doors, and ghastly niches, as she flitted by, pausing every moment to listen; and then like a spirit gliding on—on—till she reached the topmost stair. There she stood silent as death, and almost its image, her eyes starting, her head thrown forward. A sound like a man in heavy sleep, reassured her. Again she stepped cautiously forward, saw the porter extended in a torpid slumber along the floor, and entering one of the chambers she sat the lamp down, trembling the while so that it was an effort to stand upright. Her indecision lasted but for a moment. Going towards the end of the room she pushed aside a small sliding-panel, used for the purpose of conveying food within. This done, she whispered, hoarsely, "Wilfred! Wilfred!"

There was a stir, the man sprang up with a low "Who's there?"

"It is I, Margaret," said the girl, striving for composure; "speak low."

"Maggie—oh, yes—I'll be there. I knew you'd come—I knew you wouldn't desert an unfortunate fellow in his time of need."

"Wilfred! Wilfred! I'm afraid you'll kill me!" she cried, in a low wailing voice.

"Now don't be foolish, Mag," said the young man, carelessly stretching his handsome figure till it seemed in the shadowy light to loom to a majestic stature.

"Why *did* you come here, Wilfred? of all things—here!"

"Can't I wait on the governor, if I please? isn't he *my* uncle as well as yours?"

"Wilfred, don't talk that way! oh, to come like a thief! a common housebreaker!"

"Look, now, Maggie, you know me of old; and you *know* there's no earthly use for you to palaver in that manner. The fact is, I was aware our dear uncle the governor, who will hang me if he gets a chance (and hang me if he does!) had an overabundance of silver plate, and I thought I would relieve him of a superfluity; that was all, my precious child."

"Wretch!" said Margaret, her eyes flashing, "thou deservest the fate I have not the courage to doom thee too. O Wilfred! that I should have lived to hear thee talk in that way! Thy poor father! little he dreams!"

"Talk just as I think, and just as I mean," responded the man, coarsely. "I'm a villain, Mag, there's no rubbing that out, and I'm willing to own up. If it carries me to the hangman's hands—be hanged be it."

"O Wilfred! Wilfred! thy talk is so cruel! Our father's white hairs will be brought down in sorrow to the grave!"

"Well, I say, Maggie, for the sake of the old man, can't you get me out of this? The fellow on guard snores and dreams, and if you don't, I tell you I shall be hanged."

"Wilfred, I don't know what to do," said Margaret, sobbing.

"Do! why let me out, and I'll make no more trouble, of course; but if you don't choose to, why make a clean breast of it; tell the governor I'm your poor, unfortunate scamp of a brother. How would that work upon his sensibilities? Only think of the honor of having a nephew hanged, to say nothing of a brother, eh, Mag? I shall be sent to England

too, among our noble relations. It's well for his pride, and yours too, that he don't know it. Come, Mag," and he changed his tones from banter to entreaty, "don't sob so, girl, but remember the charge of our dying mother."

An allusion to the mother so worshipped! so early lost! was all that Margaret needed. She had not thought he would dare take that sacred name on his polluted lips, but since he had, she could deny him nothing that he asked in her name. More than once she had privately sold her jewels to provide him with money when he was yet a mere boy, and she was willing now to risk even life for him, if life was required. The words of her mother rang through her brain, "Save my poor, wayward boy."

Again she went outside the door. The keeper was sleeping so soundly that a clap of thunder would scarcely have awakened him; and fortunately his position was such that the young girl, with her agile movements, could easily get by him. Nerved to desperation, she essayed three times to move the ponderous bolt. The third time it rattled out of its fastenings with a noise so sharp that her heart nearly stood still as she turned in terror to the sleeping guard. He still slept on, however. He had drank deeply of ale during the first part of the evening, and to fortify himself, previous to becoming a watch on the prisoner, had sipped rather less than a wine-glass full of strong French brandy. His stupefaction was, therefore, so complete that nothing had any longer power to awaken him, and it was in so remote a part of the house that Margaret hardly feared for the other inmates.

The next thing was to find the key. That was an easy matter. Looking about, she saw that it had fallen from the porter's hand, and possessing herself of it, she applied it to the door. It opened softly and easily.

"Thanks! thanks! my beautiful sister," said the young man in a reckless bravado tone. "Now I will off with my shoes and step down softly. You are sure nobody is up."

"For the love of heaven be careful," whispered Margaret; "Aunt Andros is mortally sick, and there are nurses, perhaps servants about."

"Is that so? Then I'll possess myself of this trusty staff" (taking the porter's ponderous walking-stick at the head of the landing); "let any one cross me now, he tempts his fate."

"Wilfred, you surely would not murder!" cried the young girl, trembling. Her voice was hoarse, and scarcely to be heard for her emotion.

"Which is worse, my sweet, for a man in my situation, to kill or be killed? But come, you're not sorry you let me out, are you? How sound that man sleeps! That's it; put the key near his hand; clever, by jingo! I'll draw the bolt. How, in heaven's name, will they think I got clear? Hist! now, softly. Go to your chamber, Mag. I'll find my way out."

"But, Wilfred, oh! thou wilt not rob the house *now*?" She laid her shaking hand on his arm; a fiend could hardly have resisted the pleading glances of that lovely face.

"Dost think I'm a fool, Mag? More pity for me that I'm not, perhaps you'd say. Now, go to thy innocent bed;" his voice changed and his features worked, as he added, "and thank heaven it *is* innocent. Don't fear for any thing. I have *some* gratitude, I hope—don't know how long it may last, though;" and more dead than alive the poor girl crept to her chamber and lay down, nearly heart-broken, beside her cousin, conscious that she had done a great wrong, and yet willing to excuse herself for her dead mother's sake, bewildered, repenting, trembling, doubting. On that same

night, Ruth Margerie could not sleep for thinking of the coming Sabbath; and it would be difficult to judge which was the most wretched, the maiden in the stately household of the governor, or the tearful, worse than orphaned girl in the little chamber of the humble tavern.

Chapter Twenty-Seventh.

CONSTERNATION AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

SIR JOHN WILLIE, by order of the governor, breakfasted in his own room. His excellency, with his two nieces, sat at their table, and were quietly sipping coffee, when a servant-girl entered, white with dismay, and following her, the stately body of Mrs. Martha Clough, the housekeeper, a genial Englishwoman, her cap-frill flying back on her portly head.

"Oh! if you please, sir, the great silver flagon is gone, and all the spoons, and some of the best linen and tankards, and the creamer and sugar, and the Lord knows what all!" she cried, wringing her hands.

Margaret, who had forced herself to assume a cheerful deportment, grew cold with terror from head to foot at this announcement.

"I hope your excellency won't blame me nor hany of the servants," put in the tall, broad housekeeper. "With these here very keys (displaying a huge bunch),—as I were very prompt to do since I were with your excellency—with these very keys I locked up hevery thing, and now I find that hall is gone, savin' and acceptin' which were up 'ere in the 'all closet. There is been thieves in this 'ouse, your excellency."

The governor was astounded. Margaret trembled as she

cried, with a terrible agitation in her voice, "Why, Clough, who could have done it?"

Instant search was made, however, and other pieces of plate were missing. Where was the thief? and who? The house had been thoroughly searched on the previous night. Of course attention was turned to the prisoner up-stairs. The porter was sent for and smartly interrogated. He left the man asleep, he said, so hearing no noise, and supposing the governor did not want him disturbed, he did not open the door to reconnoitre.

The porter was a coward.

"Here comes the sheriff," responded the governor; a loud, official rap sounding. No one noticed Margaret, who, pale, fearful, trembling, retired to a window and strove to subdue the beating of her heart, which was all the sound, it seemed to her, that could be heard.

The sheriff, who had ushered in Sir John Willie the night before, entered, accompanied by a brother officer, and the governor briefly related the circumstances in which he found himself placed.

"We left him quite secure, your excellency," said the pompous little Jeff Sherlock, the governor's sheriff, a man short to dumpiness; his hair a touchy red, and curled so tightly that it looked like one huge knot. "Did your excellency take charge of his weapons?"

"Yes—they are—by God's mercy! we placed them here on this mantel last night!" he cried, seeing that the shelf was quite empty. "This is of a certainty, a mystery. Margaret, have any of the servants removed them? No, of course, they are too well trained for that. Mistress Clough, I gave in thy keeping a package that evidently was some of the fellow's belongings. Get it quickly."

The housekeeper soon returned with a roll of paper. Un-

tying it, there fell to the floor several rolls of black crape. Even the governor was somewhat startled. Margaret gave a low cry, and the housekeeper stood aghast, pouring voluble interjections from her English tongue.

"What did the fellow want of that?" muttered his excellency; "but we waste time. Take it back, Mistress Clough, mayhap there will be use for it," he added, the tenderness of the husband welling up for a moment. Then turning, he inspected the place from which the weapons had vanished.

"There seems to be a paper rammed in this opening," he said, pointing to a crevice in the panelling. "Margaret, thy fingers are smaller than mine, try if thou canst dislodge it."

Margaret came forward. All eyes were fixed upon her, for the rigidity of her muscles, in her efforts to appear composed, and the extreme pallor of her usually pale countenance, were obviously marked. For a moment she worked at the paper; it loosened and came out, and upon unfolding it were found these reckless words written in pencil:

"Tell the governor he may go to grass, is the message of Captain Bill."

"That thief of a pirate captain!" exclaimed the sheriff; "for two years I have been on his track—I didn't dream it was him."

The governor turned pale. "By God's mercy!" he cried, "did we not cage that villain? What, twice foiled? We had him safe enough the last night—locked, bolted, and guarded. There is some conspiracy here; Margaret—"

She started, almost sprang from the place where she had been standing, and turned a rigid face towards him.

"Ring the bell; we will summon our varlets." The porter came at the call.

"Lead to the prison-room," said the governor.

The man obeyed with trembling. Things looked "mighty mysterious," as he had declared in the kitchen.

"It's wondrous still here," said the sheriff, as they gained the topmost stair and glanced at the musty walls, where in the corners hung the blurred webs of octogenarian spiders.

The porter, declaring that the key had not been out of his hands, no, not for a single moment, turned it in the lock, remarking, as he did so, "They do say that some of these wicked folks do have familiars to help 'em off, sir; and I don't doubt it be so, for—"

"Unbolt the door!" said the governor.

"Nobody here! This is outrageous! this is damnable! By my life! I will find out the knave who hath done this! Twice hath this fellow escaped us—John," turning sternly to the porter, "*I hold you accountable for this man's escape.*"

"Oh, your honor! oh, your excellency!" cried the poor porter, falling on his knees, his white face terror-stamped; "oh, good master! for Polly's sake don't suspect me—me, who has grown up with your excellency, and was the son of your father's porter. I did my duty, I didn't close my eyes all the blessed night; and if he went, he went by the devil. I do assure your worship, that there was a smell of brimstone here this morning—"

"Get up, knave!" cried the governor, cutting short his language; "into the chamber, varlet. I shall lock thee up, and then if thou wilt escape by the same means, we will throw away all suspicion of thy doings, and thou shalt hereafter be placed in a gilded box, to be labelled and carried about the streets, that men may see what good service the devil doeth those who serve him."

"Oh, good master! oh, merciful excellency!"

The door was shut on his pleading, and the just was left

to suffer for the unjust, a thing that is not so unusual that it should excite our unbounded astonishment.

While the governor was giving directions, concerning Sir John Willie, to the little sheriff, his secretary entered, bringing in a sweet perfume that exhaled from his dainty locks and his embroidered 'kerchief. His sword and chains rattled as he walked, and his miraculous shirt-frills, newly starched, glistened in advance of him. The governor greeted him, waiting impatiently for what he had to say.

"Your excellency will doubtless be astonished to hear," he began, with a flourish intended for a bow, "that the knave of whom I demanded the church key, in your excellency's name, did refuse it with sundry impertinent speeches, and also that your humble servant was openly insulted through one Master Cameron, beggarly captain of a small ship which hath laid out in the harbor for nearly two months. The said master did pour out vile detraction upon the name of your excellency, setting at defiance the threats of your humble servant, and laughing to scorn your excellency's government, calling it tyranny and sundry obnoxious epithets."

"By God's mercy!" exclaimed the governor, in low, fierce tones, "what manner of people are we among? Why didst thou not immediately put this saucy knave under arrest? It is time some examples were made of this scurvy free-tongued set."

"I did send men as soon as possible after him, your excellency, and spent the greater part of the night in vain attempts to bring him to justice. Even now the officers are on his track, and I hope to inform your excellency that he is safe in the common jail;" so making a very low bow, he stood upright, while the governor, with knit brows and eyes bent on the floor at his feet, muttered, "That maketh two varlets whom we will have to justice. By God's mercy! but we will subdue this rebellious people!"

The thoughts of vengeance that lurked in the governor's breast were, however, put to a speedy flight by a sound that seemed for the moment to strike his heart to stone. It was Eleanor flying down the stairs—flying into the room—her eyes streaming with tears, as she cried, "O uncle! uncle! my poor aunt—dead!"

Chapter Twenty-eighth.

THE GREAT FUNERAL OF THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE, CALLED BY THE PEOPLE PAPISTICAL.

THE bells tolled heavily. People moved around, solemn in face, serious in talk, telling those they met that the governor's wife was gone. The whole town seemed suddenly to have fallen into a grave-like quiet.

Dead!

The wife—she who fills so large a space in the domestic heaven—she so busied, so unwearied! Bitter, bitter is the tear that falls on her clay.

Stand beside her grave and think of the past!

It seems an amber-colored pathway seen beside these dull drapings, this cold, white outline of a soul, where the sun shone upon beautiful flowers, or the stars hung glittering overhead.

Fain would you linger there. No thorns are remembered above the gentle dead, save those our own hands have unwittingly planted. Her noble, tender heart lays open to our inmost sight. We think of her as all purity—all beauty.

But she is dead!

The dear head that has so often lain upon your bosom rests now on a pillow of clay. The hands that ministered so untiringly are faded, white and cold beneath the gloomy portals. The heart whose every beat measured an eternity

of love, lies under your feet. No white arm over your shoulder now!—no speaking face to look up with that glance of love—no trembling lips to murmur the words that no one else could say so sweetly.

The matter of Sir John's offence was left to rest for the present.

"I tell thee what," exclaimed Gaffer Scates to Father Comstock, as the two stood on the church steps, "we shall see Popish ceremonials to-day, or something as like as can be," and he shook his head sadly. "Belike poor Boston hath seen her best times. Dost remember minister's awful sermon of the last Sabba' day?"

"For verily," said he, "a heavy judgment impendeth over Boston that will soon be executed. This people is a languishing, if not a perishing people, and about to fall into very great distresses, from the wrath and sudden judgment of the great God Almighty." Truly it did make the very marrow of my bones to ache, hearing of him. My hair stood on end, and my heart quaked. Surely sinners must have trembled and felt an awful dismay."

"But what hath this thou sayest to do with Popish ceremonials?" asked Father Comstock.

"Dost thou not see the people coming hither with candles and cloths?" queried Gaffer Scates; "and here enter the heathen women, six of them, dressed in black from crown to sole. I call them heathen women, because the custom is a heathenish one, and much to be condemned in a Christian country. Surely," he added, looking gloomily about, "the weather accordeth well with the prospects of this people; the day is more like the coming on of night, and there are tokens of a heavy storm in the air."

It was unusually dark; the atmosphere was close and sulphurous, and the clouds had threatened rain since morning.

Within the church the bier stood before the railing of the altar. Inner and outer blinds were closely drawn, candles were lighted, and flaring torches affixed to the railing of the galleries. Workmen were busy also hanging a great show of black crape, in festoons and otherwise, around the sounding-board, the pulpit, the pillars and niches, what few there were, and dressing the pew in which the governor's family were to sit. The six mourning-women, before mentioned, and who were hired for the occasion, sat in front of the alley with bowed heads, awaiting their time.

Soon the church was one glare of light, and the men engaged in the decorations, being by no means particular, jested over their work, thus presenting an incongruous spectacle.

"There come the soldiers," said Gaffer Scates, who stood watching with much interest; "their uniforms are the only things that look bright to-day."

Came on the still air a strain of solemn, martial music. As they neared the meeting-house, the soldiers fell into line on each side and presented a brilliant appearance, as they stood quietly marking time. The people, attracted by this unusual display, gathered about the church in crowds, and the men employed to keep order made a great noise and much ado in forcing the populace back from entering before the burial procession came.

Burst after burst of solemn funeral music! Now and then the low booming of the cannon from the frigate in the harbor, whose colors were half-mast. No shops were allowed to be open: it seemed like a general mourning.

At last away in the distance was heard the sound of slow-rolling wheels. The soldiers reversed arms; the solemn trumpet-tones wailed with increasing sadness; the muffled drums throbbed heavily.

First came the hearse, drawn by six white horses, their proud heads streaming with scarfs of crape and nodding funeral plumes. The hearse itself was a clumsy but splendid affair, covered with black streamers and nodding sable feathers.

"Hats off!" cried a man in authority. Instantly every hat was in hand.

"Look you, who gets out of the first carriage?" whispered Gaffer Scates, as the massive silver-handled coffin was borne into the gloom-lighted interior of the church.

"'Tis the governor, poor man! It behooves us all to pity him now," said Father Comstock, his tender old heart giving sound to a great sobbing sigh, as his excellency passed with bowed forehead, his fair nieces wrapped in long mourning veils on either side.

"Saw ye ever such a show? 'Tis like the king were here!" indignantly muttered Gaffer Scates. "I like not their taking our meeting-house—it augurs no good that the priest-and-bishop people should hold a funeral here."

"Hush, Gaffer!—hush! we must have respect to their misfortune," replied Father Comstock.

"Now look at them—the crowd presses forward to catch a glance at her ladyship—the Lady Anne Bellamont," he added; "a fine, high, brave form she hath, but I like not her stately walk, as if she would lord it if she could."

"And there, too, cometh that strange child of the Episcopal priest," eagerly whispered Gaffer Scates; "what a marvellous pretty face she hath! and how she walketh!—surely with no childish gait; and—truly as thou livest, following after her, that suspected maid, Ruth Margerie! Why, how is this?"

"I heard she had been sent for to take charge of the little child, while her parents are busied with the funeral," replied

Father Comstock, while Ruth passed modestly by, never lifting her eyes.

"And there is the priest himself, and his wife—and following, the learned Doctor Bullivant, who hath attended the governor's wife. The next is Mr. Foxcraft—truly, he hath the craft and subtlety of the fox. What a devilish eye hath that Master Randolph, the secretary!—all his show of sorrow cannot hide it. Dost understand he has caused a writ to be issued on young Master Cameron, who, if he gets in his power, he will hunt nearly to the death?"

"Yes, yes, I know," said Father Comstock hurriedly, his whole attention being taken up with the show.

"These gloves and scarfs are all given at the governor's expense, I'll warrant me," continued Gaffer Scates, whose tongue nothing could silence. "I hear they will have wine and meats at Government house, on their return. A pretty show this!—as near the Papists as they could reasonably come."

"There go the last of the crowd—now let us enter. I am curious to see these ceremonies," said Father Comstock. "It may be this death will soften the governor's heart, and make him willing to 'bate some of his oppressions. Verily they fall heavily upon the people."

It cost them a hard struggle to gain an entrance, even on the outmost verge, but they managed to obtain a standing place in the crowd. A smoky heat filled the church—odorous of burning perfume. The great flames of the torches swept waves of light from end to end of the building, swaying and jetting to and fro; and in the farthest distance, the candles completely inclosing the coffin, made the glitter of its rich adornments painfully conspicuous.

Lustres of white marble, called lychnites,—of a peculiar transparent icy whiteness,—were held in the hands of the six

mourning-women in front of the bier. The veils of these hired weepers swept the ground, and under them their faces seemed like misty, ghastly images.

The church people were reciting the funeral anthem as they entered, and their united voices sounded more solemn than the dirge outside. Father Comstock, whose nature was peculiarly impressible, listened throughout the whole with tears, which broke out afresh at sound of the solemn psalm sung by the congregation:

"The life of man does quickly fade,
Hys thoughts but emptie are and vaine;
Hys days are like a flying shade,
Of whose short stay no signs remaine."

"I would have liked to play my flute there," he said, as they emerged in the open air.

"And I my fiddle," squeaked a small voice.

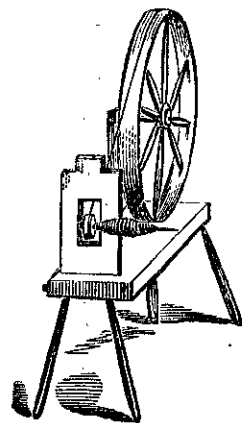
"Get thee gone, thou long, lean limb of sin!" exclaimed Gaffer Scates, and Benjamin the fiddler disappeared.

Through the long files of soldiers the hearse moved again. The thrilling dirges sounded through the murk and smoky air, and the corpse of the proud lady was borne to the churchyard, there, in the long time to come, to be forgotten.

Forgotten!

'Tis a sad word—no sadder in the language. At its mention come visions of neglected graves, where no foot has pressed for many years; and we watch the chisel of some old Mortality, fondly gliding over the hamlet's humble names, and sigh at the thought that the eye wet with tears, when the words were freshly graven, and the stone glistened new from the hands of the artisan, now smiles at another shrine, and the first love is forgotten.

'Tis a desolate word! and it haunts old garrets where dust covers many a canvas, whose soft eyes, and lips that spoke loving words, and tresses that laid over manly bosoms, gleam out mournfully from the rubbish of the home that was. Where the spinning-wheel stands beside the broken chest, once full to repletion with the webs that woman's hands wove patiently. Where bunches of old love-letters, tied with long-faded ribbons, tell of hopes, joys, passions, once living, breathing, triumphant!—now cold, dead, forgotten!



Chapter Twenty-Ninth.

LETTER FROM GODFREY LAMB, BOOKSELLER, TO HIS WIFE IN LONDON.

DATED MARCH, 168-.

DEAREST :

Thou seest I am determined to write thee everie day, and so make as it were a diary of mie letters, which thou must keep, sweet, till soe be I return back to England.

Ye troubles of this goodlie land seem toe thicken, though in consequence of ye death of ye governor's wife, there is a short lull in ye present.

I hear she died a good Episcopal; that her faith leaned somewhat to ye Roman, and that though at ye last it was verie sudden, yet they have great hope of her as always being a ladie of much Christian virtue, which is all one would wish said.

She laid in state for four days, and I with ye crowd went in toe see her. It was a worn and sharpened face; must once have been verie beautiful; but ye dress was of costlie white satin, and much store of roses laide all around her, arranged in ye form of a crosse upon her breast. I saw that ye people looked frowning upon that, and heard much talk of it afterwards. Ye room was also darkened from ye light of day, and profusely candle-lighted. It did look somewhat popish to see ye extraordinary array of candles placed about her coffin.

And I must tell thee a most sweet thing did befall me, the like I think I never saw or heard.

While I stood there, and all had gone out of ye room of mourning but myself, there forthwith came in ye reverend Parris Aldrich, bringing with him that heavenlie-faced child of his. Her eyes did verilie look in ye gloom like gates of shining stones that would presentlie open into her soul.

"My little child, wilt thou see thy aunt?" asked her father, and that instant there came stealing over ye innocent face a most unchildish—perhaps I should rather say, unearthlie look—and at ye same time beautiful, most beautiful! Ye child did not immediately answer, but forthwith commenced smiling, and just after, she raised her beaming eyes to ye top of ye coffin, and smiting her two rosy palms together, cried, in a voice broken with verie delight—

"O father! ye angel! ye angel!"

"What seest thou, my daughter?" said her father, saddie but tenderlie (for I am told he taketh noe pleasure in this gift of his child, if gift it is, thinking it to presage early death).

"Ye beautiful bright angel! now see, it smiles to me, father!" she cried, more delightedly than before, her voice purest melody. "Oh! I will have a coffin too," she added exultantly, "if ye angels will come down to watch it."

A sigh broke heavie from ye father's Leart, and he lifted ye little one toe look within. But now she kept her shining glance on whatever it was she saw, and whispered, "Is that sweet angel my aunt, now?"

To see a babe like that look forward to death! It is of a certainty an astonishment to me, who fear ye grave noe little. Ah! she seeth heaven in her sweet, her holy-spirited faith. She seeth ye clear lustre of ye sea of glass; she discerneth ye rich gleams of light streaming from ye gates

of pearl. Its undying tints color her verie visions. To hear her talk, one would think her years beyond her age, although it doth not seem in ye least painful. To see her face light up at ye name of our Lord Saviour, is better than to studie the rarest work of art. Christ is, after all, ye matchless sculptor, who can eliminate ye softest shades in human character, and ye most exquisite images of beauty.

And now for other news: let me see. Things remaine in a standing state with regard to ye little maid Ruth Margerie, only I hear her penance is to come off on ye next Sunday, when be sure I shall be there to report matters to thee. I fear ye young captain is in a verie bad way. His ship, ye Prudent Sarah, hath been seized, by command of ye governor, who began quite too soon after his lady's funeral to give such orders—ye captain himself being not yet found. Ye officers are turned out of ye vessel who belonged to her, and a guard hath gone down from ye fort to take charge of some very valuable jewelry. I hear they have turned verie steadie men out, and put in those who are somewhat dissolute in their ways, drinking and so forth. Of ye old jeweller, who hath taken such spite against Captain Cameron, I have told thee before. But I said nothing concerning ye rumpus that is likely to ensue by ye governor's confining a young man held in high repute here—a baronet in England, which countrie he left to cast his lot in this. He bringeth news of what is not unlikelie to me, and yet, once ye governor being deceived, it maketh him hot-headed, and he inclines to disbelieve. If they do imprison ye young man, which is thought likely, I know not what will be ye consequence. This is a slow people, but mightie determined when once they make up their minds.

Yesterday I visited ye collidg at Cambridge. 'Tis verie curious to see ye two cages used to pen wild Indians in. It

is feared that this collidg in so untutored a place, may afford manie seismatics to ye church, and ye corporation as manie rebels to ye king. *Free thought is ye order of ye day too much!*

In this queer town they fine you two shillings and sixpence, shouldst thou gallop through ye streets.

I told thee once, dear heart, about ye situation of Boston. It hath manie really beautiful lands under good cultivation, the best one of w'h is Allen's farm-house, verie famous, and where I have tasted ye finest butter and cream. But what think'st thee another English friend sayeth, who hath just joined me here? After this fashion sayeth he:

"To ye glory of religion and ye credit of ye towne, there are churches built with clapboards and shingles, after ye fashion of some of our meeting-houses, which are supplied by four ministers: ye one a scholar, ye second a gentleman, and ye third a dunce, and ye fourth a clown." Heard ye ever such scandal?

"Tell her," says this complayner, "that in Boston are more religious zealots than honest men. More parsons than churches, and more churches than parishes. Ye inhabitants seem verie religious—but interest is their faith, money their God, and large possessions the only heaven they covet."

Much more of this slander, w'h I think verie wrong, doth he say, 'specially that "ye men have got ye hypocritical knack of screwing their faces into such puritanical postures that thou wouldst think they were always praying to themselves, or running melancholy mad about some mysteries in ye revelations." He thinks the women verie handsome (ye way with such knaves), but ye men he calleth ye homlies of what tribe he saith he knows not.

But enough of this—onlie he is in some things a naughty slanderer.

They whipped ye poor old witch, Goody Shrimp, at ye cart-tail. I protest—the thought (I would not have seen ye brutish sight for untold gold) nearly set me out of my wits. After it, I hear she did behave with so much spite (and no wonder), that they remanded her back to ye jail, where she lieth now—poor soul!

To-morrow I write thee again. Meantime, I am mindful of thy requests, and will attend to them all.

Most tenderlie,

THY LAMB.

Chapter Thirtieth.

THE CAPTAIN WEARY OF SILKEN BONDS.

THE shreds and patches of an ancient faith were strewed about the walls of what Lady Anne was pleased to call her "Orient Chamber."

A freely colored painting of the Madonna and child, a small crucifix, and several pictures of Romish significance, hung near the little altar, which was fancifully trimmed with flowers and fringe, and tarnished lace of gold. A luxurious couch, upon which were thrown two or three silken pillows, served as a bed, and thereon slept Captain Cameron through several dreary nights.

With her own fair hands did Lady Anne bring him his meals, and when he protested against this servility, answered that she dared not trust the maids, who, though pledged to her, might yet be tempted, if they were reminded of his location too frequently, to betray him for a bribe.

The handsome young shipmaster was restless in this forced captivity. Though his bonds were silken, they were nevertheless bonds. His active mind brooded over indignities—over wrongs that had touched not only his manliness and hampered his independence, but threatened to destroy the country of his love. Another reason had not a little weight with him to make him desirous to change his place of shelter, and that reason was—Lady Anne.

Whenever she entered his presence, she, by word or look

betrayed her preference,—sometimes in an unguarded moment, taking advantage of trifling expressions of gratitude, to respond in language that seemed to lay him under obligations to her ladyship. His proud soul spurned such advances; and yet she was his benefactress,—the best friend he had ever known, and one to whom he mainly owed his position in life. How could he treat her with entire indifference?

The funeral of Lady Andros took place on a Friday. It was the first day that Captain Cameron had passed entirely by himself, and he could not but enjoy his freedom, though it gave him leisure for much gloomy thought. Lady Anne had left him with the impression concerning Ruth, that if she had not been fully exonerated, at least her punishment was commuted to some trifling penance.

As I said, the attentions of Lady Anne were most unwelcome. Grateful as he was, he could not love her, nor could his straightforward soul make any feint of gallantry, even had his life been the forfeit. She, thinking to propitiate him by a show of her domestic qualities, had caused a fire to be built in a room adjoining, on Saturday morning, and had there prepared breakfast for herself and the captive captain. But, sad to say, the chimney was out of order, and, as if in revenge for the invasion of its long repose, sent down clouds of choking smoke, which penetrated eyes and nostrils, and left a stinging sensation behind, that was any thing but comfortable. Besides which, the lady lost her patience and her temper to boot, and said some things which would have sounded quite *mal apropos* even in the mouth of a scullion.

It was nearing midday. Twenty times had the young shipmaster paused in his impatient walk to and fro, before the meek face of "Lady-mother," whose smile grew more and more meaningless, and whose chubby baby reminded him

more of a Chinese doll than any thing else he could think of. Twenty times had he "pshawed!" at the few relics, the altar and its laces, and he felt like giving welcome to the officers who were on his track, and who, perhaps, before any ship sailed in which he might escape, would have his precious person in their charge.

Lady Anne had left the room, but her tambour-frame remained for a reminder. She had gone to order her spinnet brought into the "Orient," that she and the captain might sing duets together; how could he, the prisoner, say no? And yet music might as well have been dinned into the ears of the wildest savage, in the state of mind he then was.

"I' faith! we are really on a very amiable footing," he muttered, as she shut the door behind her, and he heard her retreating footsteps through the hall. "Quite man-and-wife-fashion. I really feel uneasy about it, for I have a fancy that it is pleasant to own one's self. The spinnet, the embroidery, breakfast, and, I suppose, it will be dinner and supper here next! If ever man was so beset! What, I wonder, do the servants say? Lady Anne exposes herself needlessly to gossip."

He walked towards the window that overlooked the harbor. The sun was making triumphant marches over the water and every inch of the yielding pathway seemed scaled with gold.

"There's the poor Prudent Sarah!" he said, and it was as if a groan had broken from his heart. "But for this wild, yearning, crazing love," he added, almost bitterly, and after a long pause, "I might have given myself to the winds and waves again. I might have trodden the deck of my noble little craft, a free man! But there's no use in repining," he braced himself as he spoke, "I'll bear it as well as I can, and it may be that good in some way will come of it. One thing

I know, I have learned to love liberty, yes, almost to its license. These gewgaws (types of soul-bondage), the insolent authority of that brilliant puppy Randolph, the governor's secretary, the homage which his excellency *compels*, all incite me to rebellion. Besides, I can see how the screw is turning. The people are bearing the pressure with more willingness than I could wish; but by-and-by there'll be one turn too hard, and then comes freedom!"

"I say, cap'n!"

The young shipmaster turned astonished at sound of the familiar voice. A short man in a long gray coat and beard stood before him.

"For heaven's sake, Duke, how came you here? and in this disguise?"

"Why you see, cap'n, after I'd tired of being her ladyship's dog, and thought I might about as well be my own master, I got leave, with a good sharp bark or two, to undo the hatches and set myself adrift. But mind ye, cap'n, her princess-ship told me I musn't come back again under no consideration. Well, you see one of the maid-servant gals, what brought me down my grub, took a sort of shine to me—guess it's the fashion of the house, ain't it, cap'n?" he asked, grinning slyly. "Ladies is wery considering when poor chaps ain't got no wives nor sweethearts. So after I'd made some poetry on her curl-papers, which I called ringlets, and sung her a song or two, she brung me vittles from the first table, and I tell you they was relishing."

"But I've got ahead of my story. Well, I went off, and promised her ladyship that I'd stay away, saying (so't she couldn't hear me) till I git ready to come back. So last night I got all ready, and this gal as likes me, as soon as she got over her scar't and recognized me, let me in the back door, and gallivanted me up the back staircase into this

next room, where you had the grand smoke-out this morning. Whew! I had to strain all my timbers to keep from coughing."

"What! have you been here all night?"

"All night, cap'n. 'Twas pretty hard to stan' the rattlin' of the dishes, with such an appetite as Catchcod, Duke of Marma, inherits from his daddy, whoever he is; but never mind, I can hold on till I git out o' this, if it's any time 'twixt now and sunrise."

"Here's a sovereign," said the captain, "and what's the news?"

"Thank ye, captain, you're as generous a master as sails the wide sea, and blowed if I don't stick by ye, through thick and thin. Well, the news is considerable; pr'aps a little more so. They've sent some bloody red-coats aboard our ship, and I expect them obfuscated fellows have confiscated her awfully. Then there's the governor's wife, dead an' buried; you knew that, in course. And to-morrow, bein' Sunday, they're going to put the maid Ruth in black, white, or red petticoats, I don't rightly know which, and stand her up like a mannikin at the top o' the church. I'd like to make the minister stand on the steeple while the bell's a ringing."

Captain Cameron held his lips together with a strong pressure, and his face grew stormy.

"She told me that she had interceded, and the punishment was commuted," he muttered between his teeth.

"What! Lady Anne! She's a thunderin' liar! Jest tell her so from me. But there! she's got that thing to go to," pointing to the altar. "Lord! don't I wish I was a Catholic! I've told twenty-two round bouncers for you; counted 'em up on my fingers this morning. And says I, as I stood in that musty old closet—

"I'm afraid I'll never'll be forgiven,
I'm afraid I'll never go to heaven;
Seeing such heaps o' sin I've gone and done,
All for the sake of Cap'n Cameron.

Good enough to be printed, ain't it?"

Captain Cameron was plunged in moody thought. At last he asked—

"Do they suspect I'm here, Duke?"

"Well, I expect they do suspect; though out of respect for her ladyship, they mayn't sarch the house till the last thing. That's what I mainly come to tell ye. I declare! it goes to my heart to see that beautiful hair of your'n neglected. If I only had my tools here. It hasn't been touched by the shears for a month."

"It will do very well, good Duke," said the young ship-master, throwing back the heavy locks with a nod majestic, "very well for me to make my escape in."

"Your escape! and where'll you escape to, cap'n?"

"I don't know. I'll go to Mistress Bean's first, and if she won't take me, I'll off to Mistress Comstock's. I'll get a night's lodgings somewhere. To-morrow I've got work to do!"

He said this with the air of a man who has no more controversy with himself—a decisive spirited voice folding over the words.

"The Lady Anne is coming; go back to your closet, Duke. This evening I'll manage it so that we can escape together. Quick! back to your closet!"

Chapter Thirty-First.

IN WHICH RUTH PREPARES FOR HER PENANCE.

ALAS! for gentle Ruth Margerie!

The struggle between duty and inclination had grown very bitter. It was the more sorrowful, the more heart-breaking, that it had to be borne alone. There was no father's arm to sustain that shrinking form, or to declare that his delicate woman-daughter should not pass that dread ordeal.

Dear, timid Ruth! It was not her privilege to murmur that word of undying beauty—mother. Mother! In all the world is there a habitable spot where the music of that holiest name has not sounded! By the golden flow of the river—by the crystal margin of the rock—under the leafy shade of the forest tree—in the hut built of the bamboo cane—in the mud-thatched cottage—by the grand peaks of the heaven-kissing mountains—in the wide-spread valley—on the blue ocean—in the changeless desert, where an angel came down to give the poor parched lips the sweet waters of the wilderness—on the altar, where a father stayed the downward stroke of the sacrificial knife—between the billows, that, like solid walls of ruby, threw their crimson on the swarthy brows of Israelitish men, and brightened the dark eyes of the women—under the white tent of the Arab—in the bark covered wigwam of the Indian hunter—wherever the pulse

of a human heart beat quick and warm, or float feebly down the current of failing life, there is that sweet word spoken—a universal prayer.

Yet Ruth wore the martyr's great endurance on her soul's front. It is not cowardice to shrink from danger, if, though still with shrinking, it is met. It is not weakness to dread ridicule and the world's scorn, if, though still dreading, both are borne and nobly conquered. Ruth had lived so entirely within herself, that she was neither understood nor appreciated. While yet a little child, she whom she called mother was killed before her eyes. No wonder the shadow that fell on that sweet face haunted it forever after.

Ten years before, a woman whose name was Faith Margerie, hearing that a favorite brother was ill in a place some six miles away, took her little daughter by the hand, and essayed to walk the long distance. It was the spring-time of the year—very early on a Sabbath morning. It appears that the reverend Increase Mather warned her not to travel on the Lord's day, but her anxiety for her brother prevailed over his councils. It was a time of peace. The last great war with the Indians had been some time concluded, and she, being a very courageous woman, felt no fears. They had gone five of the six miles, and the little maid, only seven years old, complained that she was weary. Her mother bent forward to lift her in her arms, when a fatal whirling shivered the air, and with the death-shriek the poor mother fell backwards, her blood sprinkling Ruth from head to foot.

It was the murderous work of a savage, whom two years before Mrs. Margerie had driven with unkind words from her door, and who, with a bloodthirsty spirit characteristic of his race, thus avenged himself. Leaving the dead body, he lifted the horror-stricken child, who neither wept nor spoke, bore her

to the outskirts of the town, and left her to find her way as best she could. This was the orphan whom Mistress Bean, a widow, took to her dwelling, and to the heart that, though moderately warm, knew yet no mother throb.

She grew up lily-like—yet outwardly quiet and sensitive. The delicate beauty of her infancy, the eye of heaven-blue, had never changed. There was always that pure whiteness, like ivory, that no sun-ray could tint with aught but a rosy flush. Her hands and feet were exquisitely shaped, and in her manner, for one not educated in refined society, a singular grace and dignity were charmingly blended.

The influence of the warning her mother had not heeded, grew in importance as she grew in years. To her, he who said those words, seemed not an ordinary mortal, but a prophet of the Lord. While very young, she gave evidence of unusual spirituality, and early became a communicant of the church over which Doctor Cotton Mather had charge.

To her innocent comprehension, all ministers were holy men—their mission made them seem divine. How often their dreadful warnings were fulfilled! Simply because—as we see it now—they were ministers of terror more than of love—conscientiously believing that to be the true way of saving men; and it is hardly to be wondered at, that some predictions must come to pass, where not a Sabbath closed without them. Had Ruth's faith been Roman Catholic, she would have been a devoted worshipper of the priests and their ceremonies, and very probably a nun. Treated only with moderate affection, her heart had never been quickened to any thing like passion. She never knew or dreamed what love was, till she saw the young shipmaster, who, in his fresh, rare, manly beauty, stood revealed to her, a new vision—a wonder—a demigod! The barrier of coldness once let

down, with a glad and rapid singing the torrent of love flowed into her heart, filling it to the brim. In her new and delirious life, for awhile she seemed to need no other help than that afforded by mortal aid. The spiritual and the mental forces retired for awhile into the shadow, and the fervid, the emotional, displaced them with warmer and more genial impulses. Imagination, long slumbering, awoke. All menial duties seemed to clothe themselves in rich garbs, whose joyous colors never wearied her eyes. Then she first realized that she was beautiful, for his eyes were her mirrors. Then began the hair to flow in softer and more shining waves, and hope painted the cheeks. When she looked for his return, every passing footfall glorified her face. When he had gone, the light of memory gilded it. One year of more unshadowed happiness, one year of intenser delight, perhaps it was never the lot of any woman to experience. Every thing yielded to this influence. Her little Bible was not opened as frequently; her prayer hour sometimes became one of dreamy musings, from which she was suddenly awakened by one rude blow.

It was that unmaidenly meeting with a strange man—that anguished night-conference, watched by jealous eyes, for which she was now on trial. Yes, this shock opened her eyes (as she deemed it) to reason. With dizzy head and trembling hands she lifted herself up from under the gate of agony, saying, "I am punished."

Then the past love seemed idolatry. Then she wept in bitterness of spirit, willing to endure the world's scorn and heaven's anger for what she called her sin—nay, eager to expiate it.

The trust that had been given her that moonlight night she would never betray—never! They might do with her what they would, think of her as they listed—she would

strive to trample the heart worship under her feet—would bear any cross, make any confession but that. Yes, she would even renounce the love that she feared had led her away from God. She promised herself that (knowing not the life-strength of that love), with her little Bible in her hands, weeping hot tears upon it. She who had professed Christ, had made a failing fellow-creature her dependence; it should never be again, if God would but forgive her.

So she rose up, cold and statue-like, and tried to steel her heart. Both honor and a guiltless shame united in aiding her to keep her secret even from him who had been her second self. No wonder her brain reeled sometimes under the effort—no wonder her heart almost stood still with doubt and apprehension when she met him. For she foresaw it would take a great while to crucify that love; she knew it. It might even hang bleeding on the cross of her anguish till her last drop of heart's blood should grow cold. Yet with a Roman firmness she had said it—

"I will suffer! I will make reparation!"

All that she now feared was, that he might be implicated with her. Oh! if he had only been away when this trial came! If he would only trust her truth now, and leave her! People were so ungenerous, so lavish of their doubts! so willing to suspect!

Already, though she knew it not, it was whispered that young Master Cameron might tell, *if he would*. So splendid, ay, and wealthy a man would never go to a road-side tavern for his wife—for *his wife*, mark you. And the pale cheeks were gossipped over, as pale cheeks will be to the end of time, with all sorts of uncharitable words.

"It will all be over, by and by," thought pale, patient Ruth in her agony. "If I die in this sharp trial, I will leave it in writing, and then perhaps some will be sorry.

If I live and suffer years on years, God will still know what my heart is, and with what trials surrounded."

Of late, Captain Cameron had not been near the Red Lion. Uncertainty with regard to his fate was added to her other griefs, and so she had a double sorrow to bear.

Chapter Thirty-Second.

RUTH CALLED TO THE PARSONAGE.

MISTRESS BEAN, with the rest, had seemed cold to poor Ruth, of late. She had formerly obtained much of Master Cameron's patronage, and some presents that were valuable. Since the outbreak between Ruth and him, he seldom came to the tavern. The general suspicion that prevailed had reached at last even her mind, and found a scandal-corner in which to lodge it.

She had never loved Ruth very deeply or tenderly, partly because the child had been so shy, so undemonstrative, that perhaps it was not possible, and partly because she herself had never felt emotion of any kind that reached the entire depth of her heart. Besides, she had always been so indefatigable a worker that she had no time for caresses.

Ruth had come home very early on the morning of Saturday. Mrs. Bean hastened up to the little chamber of her foster-child. Ruth was at prayer, but she quickly arose at sound of the voice of her foster-mother. There were tears in her beautiful blue eyes, and Mistress Bean seemed touched at sight of her meek sorrow.

"Ruthy dear," she said, sitting down and looking anxiously towards her, "this is going to be too much for you, child."

"God will help me!" responded Ruth, with an upward, fervid glance.

"Ruth—I—perhaps I haven't said much—I'm—so used

to giving you your own way—but—but child, I feel for you. I'd do any thing in the world if I could help you,—my poor lamb!"

"O mother—mother!" Ruth was overcome, and cried sobbingly, "Give me only your love—your love, mother, and I can bear it. That is all I crave—both before and after; *do* love me—don't, *don't* doubt me."

"I won't, Ruth; I'm sure I try to believe you are innocent."

Ruth fell back—the fountain of her tears was dry; her heart grew cold again. She wanted free, unbounded love and trust—or none.

"I came to tell you, child, that Mistress Mather has sent for you—perhaps to try on the mantle, and get used to it like."

Ruth shivered from head to foot.

"It is not that I mind so much," she said a moment after, almost in a whisper, "nor the standing up, nor the people—but—" She compressed her lips and was silent; then turned with a shiver again, to prepare for her visit to the Mathers.

From the way she walked in the street, one would imagine that she thought herself an object of suspicion. How was it possible, indeed, to be otherwise? Who so well aware as she, that cold eyes scanned and colder tongues canvassed her daily? It was sorrowful to see her in her young beauty, gliding along as if she would fain hide from the sight of even the glad, blue sky above her—her eyes bent to the ground—her slight figure shrinking if even a stranger passed her.

The Mathers lived in a handsome and substantial house near the Red Lion, and Ruth had not many steps to take or many streets to cross. Arrived there, she was ushered im-

mediately into the presence of Mrs. Mather, who sat surrounded by her little children. The latter moved back respectfully as their mother arose, but it was evident that their gentle whispers and modestly averted glances had reference to the poor young maiden.

Such remarks as, "She is to be published to-morrow!"—"She is to wear the great cloak!" gave evidence that in those days children knew of passing events, and felt as much curiosity concerning them, as the boys and girls of the present. At a word from Mrs. Mather, the little ones moved decorously and silently to the door, made each a low reverence or courtesy, and left the room.

"My child, I thought mayhap it would comfort thee to come here and listen to Christian counsel. Though thou hast decided not to lessen the severity of thy service by confession, yet I doubt not thou art willing to hear prayer and kindly advice."

"Oh, most willing, dear madam!—if only—" Here Ruth choked. Her quivering lips formed in vain to finish what she had undertaken to say.

Mistress Mather longed to fold the suffering maid to her bosom, but Ruth's timid shrinking and extreme sensitiveness repelled her sympathy.

"Thou wilt stay with us to-night," she said tenderly; "it is better for thee. I will have a room made ready in which thou canst meditate, and none of the family need interrupt thee. Doctor Mather said it might be better for thee, seeing that the church is much nearer this house than thine."

Ruth felt an indifference as to her location, which she did not attempt to conceal. She was weary of thought—almost (though she dared not confess it) of life itself. One place was as pleasant to her as another, yet as her minister had expressed the wish, or rather the suggestion, she would stay

Mistress Mather led her into a little room, and there spoke many comforting words to her—prayed for her, and left her calmer and more composed. All that weary night she lay scanning the cold white stars that shone through the window. By a slight movement, she could look down on a small grave-yard, and the few white stones that glistened in the moonlight. How she longed to lie there! She, not eighteen summers yet, fair as the fairest lily,—gentle as the balmiest zephyr—innocent, as far as mortals may be, of evil thought or intent—loved as but few may hope to be loved,—she longing to die!

And there are many to-day, as beautiful and gentle as she, who, unappreciated, if not unloved, veil their hearts from the world's cold glance, and fold their hands firmly over the cross that has been given them to carry. Shrinking from the rude shocks of life with tearful eyes, the strong and eager lovers of the earth jostle them by—or, if they look, mutter, with a sneer, "spiritless!" It would be nearer the truth, if they said, "hopeless!"

Chapter Thirty-Third.

RUTH STANDS BEFORE THE CONGREGATION, AND CAPTAIN CAMERON REDEEMS HIS PROMISE.

THE church of the Mathers could boast of but little architectural beauty. Its material was of wood, and it stood squarely and sturdily upon a mossy lawn. No sculpture relieved its rude portals, nor stained glass let in the many-colored rays. Trees whose roots were untwined from the mould, for the planting of this old oak of Christ, let their leaves softly in between the hot light of day and the quiet sombreness of the sanctuary. Its steeple was square and devoid of all pretension to elegance, but the true-tongued bell that hung up in its tower, often—

"Swung out and swung aloud,
Telling to the village crowd
Standing by the open grave,
God recall'd but what he gave;
Sang, swinging free and wide,
Joyous pæans for the bride;
Called from their dwellings lowly
Maidens fair and old men holy."

The choir-gallery, with its broad, brown moulding, was placed opposite the pulpit. No damask curtains concealed the rosy faces of the choristers. There what triumphs did Father Comstock achieve with the ungodly "bass-fiddle," which some of the over-strict but good and conscientious deacons were "very much set against."

Glorious sounded kingly "Old Hundred," and noble "Cor-nth"—airs made sacred by the heart-worship of centuries.

On the Sabbath morning of which I write, the few singers assembled slowly and with downcast faces in their accustomed seats. Father Comstock, chorister, met them all without his usual smile. The old man's spectacles seemed dim, for he took them down to wipe them oftener than was his wont, and it was noticed that he frequently gazed at the place where Ruth's sweet face had always before met him, for Ruth was head singer in the church of the Mathers.

"Who's to take Miss Margerie's place, to-day?" asked a broad-faced, cherry-cheeked girl, thoughtlessly.

"Nobody!"

The old man had turned to her as if stung, and his mouth opened and shut mechanically, as he repeated in a sharp, curt tone, "Nobody!" So there stood her empty seat, and there laid her book, with the narrow blue mark hanging from between its leaves as she had last used it. And when some one came in and would have appropriated it, the old man, without a word, laid his yellow, sinewy hand tenderly upon it, and gave his own book to the stranger.

It was nearing the time for service. Now and then some bent and aged body crept down the alley and into the humble pew. In fact, they were all humble. Only the morning-sun laid its crimson over their backs. The pauper who hobbled from the near "work'us," knew that his hob-nailed shoes rested on no softer surface than those of the well-to-do merchant at his elbow.

Above, the trunks of trees, but rudely squared, crossed their huge beams, and roughly folded in their massive grasp the walls that years had not yet worn gray. The windows, very high, and set in deep embrasures, seemed dim for the loss of dear forms that could gather no more light from

them, save when the red day let golden arrows on their graves.

Over the pulpit swung the old sounding-board, that gave to the thunder of the voice-denunciatory, a far-sounding echo. Under that, the right hand struck the strong desk, and thumped the board-covered Bible, giving emphasis to truth:

Without was the hush of the Pilgrim Sabbath. A little twittering bird-music, such as we often hear when the ground is white and the snow-bells ringing, sounded among the leafless branches, and river and vale gathered together their precious incense and offered it up to God. From dwellings far and near came all who were able to leave their homes—and, as on extraordinary occasions, a church is always full; so, perhaps, a few rheumatics found it possible to limp out, and here and there a feeble sister kept up her strength and spirits along the road by anticipation.

Sometimes they came in twos from a distance, the goodwife on a pillion behind her husband; and as they dismounted and tied the old horse where he could leisurely browse, they made a brave show. Generally those who rode were of the wealthier class, and wore golden buckles, flowing wig, shining knee-bands, and the costliest of cocked hats, while the goodwife displayed a silken gown trimmed with modest ruffles, and sported enormous bows on her deep bonnet. Entering, the women and girls filed off to their seats, while in an opposite direction the men and the boys established themselves, both sexes looking so demurely down that one would have thought they feared a smile as they did a pestilence.

The minister was a man of too much stateliness and consequence to enter the same door with the people. When, therefore, he came in, near his pulpit, escorted by the sexton, every face looked in expectation to see Ruth. It was

with a shrinking, grieved glance with most, especially the elder part, of the congregation. In some of the youthful, curiosity was not unmixed with satisfaction. Their more common minds had not comprehended the beauty of her character, and hence they were not sorry to see the universal favorite and moral pattern humbled.

The minister's wife came in—and—there too came Ruth. Poor, pale Ruth! sustaining herself with difficulty, so much did the long, flowing black garment impede her movements. Slowly—and oh! so white! so bowed! so utterly overwhelmed!

Her face, in contrast to the dead black of her garment, seemed like marble of the purest, clearest lustre. No trace of color—almost no trace of life. Never once were the blue eyes lifted; the long lashes seemed as if glued to the cheek. With folded hands upon her bosom, and glittering wavy hair flowing, in token of humiliation, so woe-begone she looked, and yet so saintly, that as she moved along the alley to take the position of the penitent, sobs sounded all over the house. White-headed men bent low over their staffs; children wondered and grieved; tears rolled down the cheeks of maidens, and old Father Comstock sat all gathered in a shrinking heap, his face buried in his hands, and trembling from head to foot with his sorrow and his sympathy.

But when Ruth had gained the stopping place, and turned towards the pulpit, half her anguish was gone. It must have been that some supporting angel held an arm beneath her, for now the sweet features seemed as calm, even as firm as sculptured marble; the eyes were nearly closed, and a light as from heaven appeared to glorify her face and her fair shining hair. Her hands were raised a little, and tightly locked together, as if in supplication.

Perhaps when the psalm was sung, especially the verse—

"Lo! I am treated like a worm,
Like none of human birth;
Not only by the great reviled,
But made the rabble's mirth"—

her head sank a little lower, and there was a shining circle around the bright edges of her lashes, but it was only for a moment. She had borne the heaviest of the cross—she was resting now, while for her sorrow even the great bass-viol, touched by trembling fingers, seemed to sob and groan. Reverent as were the people on their pilgrim Sabbaths, there never was such a hush—such a palpable spirit-awed silence as on that occasion, especially the second preceding the opening of the paper, Ruth's confession, which Cotton Mather held in his hands with all due seriousness.

At that moment the young shipmaster entered; noiselessly and almost unobserved, he glided to a seat near where Ruth stood. There was lightning in the eyes that glanced with such defiance in their sweep around the congregation. There was a nameless something, a terrible expectancy, resting on those firm, beautiful features. The hair was tossed angrily back. The broad chest rose and fell, and swelled like the waves of the sea in a great storm. The lips were not set, but clenched together, and the right hand worked convulsively.

In a loud and sonorous tone the minister began:

"I, Ruth Margerie, do hereby, in ye presence of Almighty God and ye people here assembled, declare and make my confession unto this church, that I took part in a profane play, thereby bringing scandal on ye church of Christ. Alsoe, I did—"

"Hold!" cried a voice whose tone sent thrills through every heart in the assembly. It startled Ruth out of all composure. Her pale cheek flushed, and she glanced from

right to left, frightened and trembling. The minister paused, rested both hands on the pulpit, that he might speak with the energy needed for the occasion; but quicker than thought the young shipmaster started from the place where he stood, almost shaking with the tumult of his soul, gained Ruth's side, laid one hand firmly on her shoulder, with a dexterous movement unwound the odious garment from her person, and gathering it up in his hands, said wildly, as he hurled it down the middle alley—

"I fling the lie into the teeth of this church, as I fling the garment of your miserable superstition to the ground. Who dare accuse Ruth Margerie of wrong?"

The whole congregation had sprung as one man to their feet. Some looked up to see if instant thunderbolts would not descend to smite the profane wretch. Cotton Mather seemed like one petrified, the flame of outraged sacredness hot-leaping from his heart.

Ruth herself, with a low moan, had sank to her knees, and was weeping tears of fright and grief.

"Wretched, perfidious young person!" shouted Cotton Mather, lifting his arm, "know'st thou not that the vengeance of God will fall upon thine accursed head for this daring desecration in these courts of the Lord's house?—for this insult to his ministering servant? Maiden, I do command thee, take up the garb of thy humility, and clothe thyself in it anew."

"She shall not!" cried the shipmaster; "I have sworn it," as lifting Ruth, now nearly unconscious, in his strong arms, he bore her rapidly from the house, loosened the bridle of his horse, and springing on to the saddle with his burden, rode to the door of Mistress Bean, and while the good woman shrank from him in horror, told what deed he had performed.

"But mayhap you've done a greater harm to the maid in the eyes of the people," she said, her voice unwontedly stern. He had not thought of that. The delirium of his passion—in truth it was partly directed towards Ruth herself—was passing now. He hurried from the house, leaped into the saddle, and was arrested long before the sun had gone down, though not until after a desperate resistance. Another inmate was added to the jail.

Chapter Thirty-fourth.

THE PHTHISICKY SCHOOLMISTRESS.

It may well be supposed that the city was in convulsions of gossip on the Monday following. Never, they said, was such a sermon preached by mortal man as Cotton Mather preached that Sabbath morning. His maledictions were sublime, his gestures unapproachable, and the congregation dispersed, but not yet to talk the matter over among themselves on that day. No profane speaking, no attempt to give opinions were held allowable in the times of those Sabbaths. The literal "not thinking thine own thoughts nor speaking thine own words," was enforced to the letter, as far as the thing was possible. The little children, poor lambs, sat with folded hands and stooping backs in the tomb-like silence of their homes. The very kittens folded their paws and contemplated string and ball with the gravity of deacons. Scarcely a word above a whisper was spoken by anybody; and if one chanced to smile, there was a hearty God-forgive-me penitential look following on the heels of his offence. About the house the movements were stealthy and cat-like. Lost in heavenly meditation, the old men sat in their easy-chairs. Perhaps their eyes were closed sometimes under the great bandannas, so that little brown-haired pets, looking askance, might venture to make-believe whistle, or even inaudibly tattoo a profane tune with their toes on the carpetless floor, while they ached out the Sabbath.

But lo! Sunday gone—Monday come! The latchets of every tongue were straightway loosed, and from every family circle went up clouds of ejaculations, wonderments, and questions.

"Well, good man, I'm very sorry, very sorry the matter wasn't allowed to take its course," said Mistress Comstock, as the two sat together at breakfast. "Now, thou seest, the people will be charging the fault upon poor Ruth, and say it is all her contrivance, or else (it hath, I fear, been already whispered), they will infer that there is guilt between them. For my part, I did not take it that Master Cameron would do so rude a thing."

"I am sorry myself, dame," replied Father Comstock, as well as he could for a mouthful of muffin; "but it can't be helped now. For my part, I am not so much inclined to blame the young man, for truly it was the saddest, most grief-provoking sight, these eyes ever saw. I question if my handkerchief be dry even yet, for I blubbered like a girl. O wife, someway there was that about her that would have made an angel weep. Yet am I sorry that Master Cameron behaved so hastily. As thou sayest, the world is ever prone to judge unkindly. But let us not be among the number of its fault-finders."

"And the poor young gentleman is in prison!" said Mistress Comstock, pathetically.

"Yes, 'tis said he was secreted for some days by the Lady Anne Bellamont,—and, by the way, good dame, I hear that some think he is her son."

"Now, God forbid!" cried Mistress Comstock, as she arose from the table. "Not to say," she added, inquiringly, "that the noble lady hath ever been married?"

"It is very well known she hath not married," said Father Comstock.

"That is very serious news, provided it be true," said his wife; "but oftentimes rumors of the kind are false, and while the people feel this indignation towards the governor, they have not any too favorable opinion of the nobility. Look forth—is not that Goody Grouse, schoolm'am? Yes, she comes this way."

"Oh, dear sakes!" cried the new-comer, pantingly; "oh, mercy deliver us! my phthisic! 'tis so bad this morning! and I've had so much on my hands since I got up! O Mistress Comstock, how do you do? Have you heard—Oh, my phthisic!—that the governor has ordered that fine young man, Sir John, to jail—and that other young captain? Oh, my phthisic!"

"Yes, we have heard. So you're no better, Goody?" said Mistress Comstock.

"Better—oh, dear, dear!" cried the dame, querulously, and quiveringly. "If you had to scream *all day* to twenty-five children (two new ones this morning), I guess you'd think you wasn't better. Oh, my phthisic! Besides that, there's knitting, hemming, overstitch, and sampler—two pence more a week, so that it takes all one's time to look after matters, and keeping them well whipped. 'Spare the rod, and spoil the child,' you know, Mistress Comstock. Now if I only had pay for every whipping I give 'em, which wouldn't be no mor'n right, considering how it hurts my feelings, I should have enough to keep me in good Souchong tea, which I haven't—and an old body, with the phthisic, needs it, you know. But, Father Comstock, I've got something to tell *you*, and I musn't forget my errand!" cried the hard-featured, thin-visaged, hook-nosed, military old woman.

Father Comstock was just taking his cocked hat from a handsome mahogany box. He had already drawn on his overcoat, whose immense pocket-flaps nearly half covered the

skirts, and was, if truth must be told, hastening to tear himself from the newly-arrived feminine tongue, that seemed as if it would bear down all before it.

"What is't you want of me, Goody?"

"Oh, to tell thee that Master Whiting has arrived from Connecticut. He stops with my brother, and as he is a learned man and deep-read, I thought, mayhap, it would please thee to see him. So as my brother has invited some several gentlemen to meet him to-night, he desired me to come in and bear his message. Oh, my phthisic!"

"Thank thee, Goody—Master Whiting is not ill-known to me. I shall be very happy to meet with him."

"And I must be away to my school. Ah! such unseemly urchins! Mistress Comstock, thou mayst be thankful that thou hast none to rule. A good morning to thee. Oh, my phthisic!"

Mistress Comstock smiled and sighed, as the aged spinster went out. The sigh was to the memory of a sunny-haired boy, who had been precious dust for thirty long years—the only child she had ever been blessed with. The smile in recollection of sundry bright-eyed little children, who daily passed her window, the roguish boys making doleful faces, puckering their lips as they cried out in the well-known tones of Goody Grouse, "Oh, my phthisic!"



Chapter Thirty-fifth.

WHAT SATAN WAS IN ANCIENT TIMES.

As soon as Captain Cameron had released Ruth, in the presence of Mistress Bean, the maid hurried to her own chamber, away from the curious eyes that met her everywhere. She had barely strength to reach her little couch and throw herself upon it, listening, as she did so, to the retreating sounds of Captain Cameron's departure.

Then she groaned in newer, deeper anguish, "Everybody will despise me now! Me, that have thought so much of a Christian character! that have shrank so from the voice of censure, that I would almost rather die than have one light word spoken. Father! have I been unduly proud of my good name, that this great woe is thrown upon me? oh! why? why am I singled out to be as the hymn truly said, this morning, 'Made the rabble's mirth?' He knew not what he did, and yet I cannot blame him! My God! my God! forsake me not! forsake *him* not!"

Rising, she bathed her burning face, and taking her Bible she strove to find consolation. In vain! The sweet words were there, but their spirit and their comfort seemed gone. To her tortured apprehension, God, as well as man, had forsaken her. She was in the deep waters—would she ever reach the shore again?

Laying the Bible aside she strove to think. In vain all her efforts! She heard only the awful tones of Cotton

Mather, denouncing the man she loved. A curse for *him*! from God's anointed! She trembled from head to foot. Why, when she had passed the worst, and felt, or fancied she felt, heaven's approving smile, did Satan send her another bitter draught? Must she fight yet longer with the invisible power who strove to wrest from her, her salvation? And who could tell but what, as she had sometimes heard it whispered, the arch-fiend had taken the form of the young shipmaster, and endowing him with supernatural beauty, thus sought to enslave her powers and lead her captive at his will? For his arms, during that short ride, had been a sweet resting-place. Half unconscious though she was, the wild heart-throbs she felt beating against her, filled her with a strangely intense joy. Could they then have fled together, she would have gone with him—to the remotest ends of the earth—anywhere! but to be with him.

The devil, in those days, was no myth, but a torturing fiend, black, and horned, and cloven-hoofed, and sulphur-breathing; coming hot, reeking, murderous, from the flames of hell. It was no small thing, then, to fear the enemy of man. He took divers shapes. Sometimes, it was said, he smiled in the face of an innocent babe; sometimes, leered in the faded eyes of an old crone, whose toothless mouth uttered hideous things. The cat, sleepily winking at the fire-flame, might be his emissary. The rearing horse whose flaming eye told of insubordination, was peradventure his satanic majesty.

Bewildered by these thick-coming fancies, half crazed to think that, perhaps, she had forever lost the confidence of her minister, doubtful whether the young shipmaster, whose lighted glance had power to stir her heart to its depths, was man or fiend, it is no wonder that to Ruth earth and heaven seemed alike covered with gloom.

When she essayed to go down into the presence of Mistress Bean and the servants, her courage failed her again. It was not heightened by the cold demeanor of her foster-mother, or the pitying, even contemptuous, looks of the kitchen-maids. So, for days, she moved like a stranger among them, bearing taunts and coldness, never dreaming that the shipmaster had been thrown into prison (for they had the humanity to keep that knowledge from her), but tortured that he never came near, or sent any message to her. Meanwhile she heard more of ill than she wished or could well bear. Minister Mather had judged her very harshly, and his wife with scarce less severity. Father and Mother Comstock were the only persons in her church from whom she received any favorable message. Tears wet her pillow through the night, and though she bravely suppressed all traces of suffering during the day, yet there was not a moment in which the wound in her heart did not rankle. At length she said, with a decision foreign to her usual manner, and an eye that kindled with outraged dignity—

"I will bear this no longer! I will not remain where I am only distrusted, suspected, and insulted. Is this kind? Is this religion, to forsake me when I am in sorrow—even in disgrace? Have they given me over? Do they think my soul so little worth saving? Would Christ forsake me, if even I had committed sin? would He pass me by with averted looks? Oh, would Christ do this?"

The cry ascended out of the anguish of her soul—the soul that was feeling its way from the blindness of superstition to the light of the charity of God!

Again she said—

"Whatever it cost me—I will go from here!"

Chapter Thirty-sixth.

IN WHICH THE GOVERNOR IS WARNED.

SCARCELY a month after the death of his wife, the governor held an important meeting. He was closeted with the commissioners, his secretary, Judge Dudley, Doctor Bullivant, the clerk of the council, and some gentlemen visitors, most of whom were in league with him in his attempted tyranny over the people. The governor-general seemed to bear the loss of his wife with the most Christian equanimity. Except that his apparel was somewhat relieved of its gayer tints, he looked in noways bereaved.

On a little side-table stood decanters of choice wine, and glasses out of which one or the other of the honorable company sipped frequently. The room was small, but of comfortable dimensions, and lined with tapestry which his excellency had brought from England. In the open fireplace gleamed a ruddy fire. A small piece of choice carpet covered the centre of the floor, to the extent of some four feet square. The table at which they sat with their books and papers, was round, polished, and claw-footed, partaking of the solid character of the furniture of that period.

Noways abated in his vanity, the secretary sat, bearing himself proudly by his excellency, looking now and then complacently down upon his ruffles and shining chain, and occasionally puffing forth a small volume of showy but shallow words.

The governor had been speaking for some moments. He continued—

"Our plan is, gentlemen, to grant ourself the titles to estates, receiving whatever fees in our good judgment may seem proportionate to the action."

"Your excellency has undoubted right," said the doctor; "the people of this town, deserve little consideration at your excellency's hands."

"We show our great consideration of them and of their estates, which are surely forfeit," interrupted Sir Edmund, haughtily. "In the case of our pursuing this policy, what shall be our most direct mode of procedure, Mr. Clerk of the Council?"

"To serve out writs of intrusion against the chief landowners, your excellency, I should think; and then, if they demur and petition for patents, your excellency could in like manner demand what fees you please."

"I hear that the townsmen already pay quit-rents to the king," said the deep voice of a man who sat in the shadow; "would not your excellency distress his majesty's good subjects by such stringent measures?"

The governor turned about with a frown, as he said sharply—

"We would distress them more were we able, for they are a stubborn, perverse people, some of them having the conceit to think they could rule the country without our interference. Ay, and by God's mercy! we would have had troops here before this, had the king but listened to our entreaty. Armed patrols should have lined our streets, and levelled the first man who attempted disloyalty. On all sides we hear protestations—ay! and even threats. The very school-boys are giving their tongues (which we would force down their throats, were our will our hands) license to speak unbecom-

ingly of government. We have sent for troops again; and if, by God's mercy, they are provided to us, we know men who will hold up their rebellious heads,—not on shoulders, but on musket-points."

"That is a strong saying, excellency," uttered the same deep-toned voice.

"Yes, Master Whiting, we generally make strong sayings; nor are they idle ones,—if they are not over-polished. We have little recourse to the dictionary, good Master Whiting; though, perhaps, did we revive our youthful knowledge, we might contrive to measure our Latin with thee, somewhat. Thou comest from Connecticut, and canst not know the deep-seated disloyalty that hath attacked some of our people. By God's mercy! it rageth like small-pox."

"And is more fatal," said the renowned Master Whiting, in the same quiet undervoice.

"To them—yes," returned the governor, casting a quick, suspicious glance on the person who had just risen.

He was a tall, slender, firmly built man, and every inch an old-time pedagogue. From the carefully combed locks, changing fast into gray, and braided behind in a long cue, whose end was fastened with four black silken bows, to the very heels of his shoes, whose silver buckles sat squarely over the instep, he was that symbol of old-fashioned rule, dignity, and scholastic lore, a thorough, self-sustained, outspoken, and (when in his desk) domineering dominie.

But though counted strict, he was a model of deportment. His manners were formal with the stiff coloring of old-school etiquette, but no one knew better than he the polished graces of society. He had studied and travelled much; and in his heart he cherished some of those living seeds, that, nursed and warmed by zealous spirits, germinated at last in the century flower of the new world—American Independence.

"Epidemics, excellency, have no preferences. If a crowned head comes within their province, that head must bow."

"Dost mean to insinuate that the people meditate an insurrection?" cried the governor, sternly.

"Your excellency will remember that I arrived but yesterday within the borders of the State—consequently, I am a stranger here," replied the schoolmaster, with a courtly bow.

"In consideration of that fact we pardon thy remarks, which might easily, in a townsman, be construed into treason."

"Of which, I trust, your excellency will never find me guilty," said the master. "I have the honor to wish your excellency a good afternoon." And straightway lifting his tri-cornered hat, he passed out.

"A pleasant gentleman," said the governor; "but, with the rest of these people bred and born in the country, he maketh too free with his tongue. Dost hear, Mr. Clerk of the Council, how Sir John taketh his imprisonment?"

"Very coolly, your excellency. I am told," replied the clerk, "he hath for company, one old Goody Shrimp, a witch, who hath already borne one whipping; also, a Master Cameron, whose tongue doth not follow reflection, but blurteth out on the moment."

"Ah, the dog!" exclaimed the secretary. "Excellency," turning to the governor, "he deserveth hanging; for he would seemingly move heaven and earth, wherewith to find terms in which to execrate your excellency and also the king. He hath the most God-forsaken tongue, I think I ever heard. I saw him to-day in the prison, and to hear him cry out—

"The governor hath no bottom to his chair! Impertinent rebel! I would I could shoot him with mine own hand."

"Did he say so?" exclaimed the governor, his face growing dark; "we will teach him before we have done with him. By mercy! what was that?"

The window-pane, near which his excellency sat, was shivered in a hundred atoms by some heavy missile, which had been thrown at, but yet did not penetrate the glass. One of the gentlemen immediately hurried out on the street, and returned, holding a singular roll of paper in his hand, which he had picked up under the window. He laid it on the table, and they crowded round to look. Meanwhile, the governor had sent a soldier, who happened to be in the room below, to find the first suspicious-looking man he met, as he thought the perpetrator of the deed could not be far distant.

Chapter Thirty-seventh.

RUTH SEEKS FOR REST AND SYMPATHY.

"It is but a pebble wrapped in paper," said the doctor, touching it with his forefinger.

"Art thou frightened at a pebble?" asked the governor, meaningly; smiling to see the caution with which he handled it.

Upon this, Doctor Bullivant, turning very red, rapidly unrolled the paper. Two or three bullets dropped upon the table—from thence to the floor, and a rough stone which had been painted of a blood-red.

"Canst make these hieroglyphics out?" asked one of another.

"Thou hast it upside down," said the secretary; and taking the paper, he reversed it.

"What dost thou make of it?" asked the governor.

"In this first division," said the secretary, pointing to the rudely drawn figures, "one man stands aiming at another an arrow, set in a bow."

"There are words underneath," said the clerk of the council.

"Yes, I am making them out," replied the other, reading thus, after a pause:

"*This for the papist funeral!*"

The governor moved a step nearer, with clouded brow.

"The second device is the man still standing, and the

arrow half way between him and the other figure, as if he had just let it fly."

"And the words under that!" cried the clerk, quite excited, putting his head forward.

"Yes, yes!"

"*'This for demanding the church key!'*"

"The third device," continued the secretary, "represents the man shot at, lying on his back, an arrow in his heart; and underneath, the words,

"*'This for imprisoning Sir John Willie, the pattern of citizens and most honorable of merchants!'*"

The governor listened, greatly agitated, and exceedingly pale.

"I advise your excellency to apprehend the families of Mr. Comstock, the bookseller, at the sign of the 'Bible and Three Crowns;' and Gaffer Scates, bricklayer, both of whom promptly refused me the key," said the secretary.

"We will see," replied the governor, thoughtfully. "To-night we dine with the magistrates at the State-arms. Say nothing of the paper," he added, uneasily. "Yonder comes my soldier, dragging a God-forsaken wretch along. I trust he has the right one."

In the drawing-room, on the same afternoon, several ladies sat engaged with their needles and embroidery-frames. It was a pleasant group, gathered in the spring sunshine; the two cousins, Mrs. Aldrich, and the minister's little token child, pure, heaven-favored Imogene. She, with her bird-like laughter, and simple, childish sayings, had made them all happy, until the Lady Anne was announced, and entered before Mrs. Aldrich could leave the room with her child. Lady Anne still sat in her splendid furs, not caring to stay,

because of the child, who, as she came in, had retreated, with a grieving lip, to the side of her mother, where she sat clinging to her dress and partially hiding her face. Margaret was very pale, and sat in an invalid's chair. She had been ill since the night of Captain Bill's liberation, but by the unwearied care of her step-mother she was convalescing rapidly.

Lady Anne had striven to occupy herself with giving the details of the young shipmaster's escape from her house, but it was evident that Imogene, looking at her with those deep, haunting eyes, troubled her; and at last she said, almost angrily,

"I don't like the way you encourage your child to treat me."

Mrs. Aldrich, smiling a little, said quietly, "Imogene, you make the lady feel unpleasantly; won't you go and speak to her?"

"Please not, mamma," said the little one, in a mournful voice, her large eyes growing darker with gathering dread.

"My dear, mother wishes you to speak to the lady," said Mrs. Aldrich, with more firmness in voice and manner.

"Please not, mamma;" and the voice quivered and dropped, and tears came, filling the beautiful, plaintive eyes to the brim.

Mrs. Aldrich was troubled, but at last she said, kindly, "Lady Anne, my little girl always has a sufficient reason for not complying with my wishes; when she does not, and that is very seldom, I do not encourage her in any impoliteness, but I cannot force her to do what is disagreeable to her. Pray excuse her to-day."

"I will not stay, then!" exclaimed Lady Anne, her eyes flashing anger, her lips trembling and paling. "Eleanor, I

have somewhat to say to you; may I go up-stairs into your room?"

"Certainly," was the reply, and the two left the apartment. Then Imogene came from her mother's side like one coming out of a trance; stood looking at the door, as if to be certain that the evil presence had vanished; her eyes sparkled; her little frame dilated; the color came into her cheeks, and she went singing about her play.

"Strange, is it not?" asked Margaret.

"Very;" replied Mrs. Aldrich. "Imogene, come to me."

The child flew like a very bird, and laughing a musical laugh, sprang lightly into her mother's arms.

"Imogene!" she forced herself to look sternly—"why did you not speak to the lady at mother's command?"

The child placed her dimpled hands on each side of her mother's brow, and gazed long and eagerly into her eyes. Then she kissed her forehead, and with a heavy breath, like a sigh, nestled down close to her heart.

"Answer me, Imogene!"

"Something over her shoulder, mother; it was black, and it frightened me."

"And what did it look like, dear?" The mother was pressing her lips to the saintly brow all the while she talked, just as the wind when its whispers bends the flower.

"It looked *wicked*, mother!"

Again she clung to her, hiding her face, till Mrs. Aldrich, with many pleasant words, reassured her, and soon she was dancing and singing about the floor again.

A servant entered, and going towards Margaret, spoke low, listened to her reply, nodded, and went out again. In the ante-room sat Ruth, in her little straw hat and close brown pelisse. She felt wretchedly sad and forsaken, bearing her fate though she did, with heroic calmness. Yet it

seemed to her as if she would give worlds for one heartfelt smile, free from suspicion. Now Nancy, Margaret's dressing-maid, came towards her, saying:

"Miss Margaret wishes you to come into the drawing-room; she is not well enough to come out here."

So Ruth, lifting herself weariedly from her seat, entered the bright room. Little Imogene was dragging a string, after which a milk-white kitten ran, frolicking. She did not look as the door opened, and pallid, suffering Ruth stood within, but almost in a second she dropped her plaything, and with her half-flying step, bounded over to Ruth and held up both dimpled arms, lovingly. Ruth sank down beside her, powerless to restrain her feelings, crying out almost with a shriek—

"Angel! little angel! you are the first one who has given me a free, heavenly welcome! Oh! beautiful child, God forever bless you!"

"Don't you cry—Imogene loves you," said the little creature, wiping the tears away as fast as they flowed.

"Oh! I can't help it—you dear little angel! my heart would break if I did not. Please forgive me," she sobbed, striving to smile as she glanced towards Margaret and her step-mother, whose eyes were moist—"but I have suffered so! suffered most of all by the unkind words and cold looks that met me everywhere; suffered till my head and heart felt so strangely numbed and dead. Oh, if you knew how I have longed for a precious word—only a word of love! Imogene, let me stay with you, and never, never leave you again!"

The bright head was bowed; she was sobbing, while the child fluttered now on this side, now on that, distressed at her tears, yet smiling, striving to make her smile—brushing away the curls so near the color of her own; touching her

forehead—in a restless, happy worry to hear her speak again, and every few moments putting her arms around her, or her red lips to her forehead.

“Do I understand that you would still like to stay with us, with little Imogene?” asked Mrs. Aldrich, as soon as she could command her voice.

“If you will only take me,” said Ruth, by one great effort subduing her sobs, rising, and moving till she stood, in her fair, modest beauty, before Mrs. Aldrich. “If you will let me” (her voice grew sweet as music), “I shall some time, perhaps, be happy again. For the first hour since my great trial I feel faith in myself. Yes” (hope rippled through her voice and gave a new brightness to her eyes), “the very touch of this dear little child seemed to give me new strength. My heart beats since like a living heart, not a machine, heavy and passionless. Will you let me stay with you? And please forget that I refused your kind offer. I was blinded then and miserable, bound soul and body in a strange, faithless dream, from which I am awaking. I will try and not abuse your trust. If I know myself, I want to be pure and holy in my thoughts and actions, that I may not tremble in the presence of an innocent child.”

She looked so bashfully pretty! the tears, that could not disfigure her face, dropping heavily, like full round jewels from her blue eyes—the lips trembling, yet curving with hope and love—that Mrs. Aldrich forbore to answer for a moment, that she might feast her eyes upon so sweet a sight. Then she said:

“Imogene, should you like Ruth to stay with you, darling?”

“I love her *dearly*—kiss me,” said the child, her face all a glow—radiant with a more than mortal beauty.

Ruth stooped to kiss her. The child's white arms were

clasped together about her neck, and the fresh, fragrant lips touched hers—when—the door opened. Lady Anne stood on the threshold aghast! The light faded from Imogene's face, and tremblingly she moved to the protection of her mother's side.

For one moment a look of intense hate darkened the face of the Lady Anne. The next, with an abrupt farewell, she had closed the door and hurried through the hall.

Chapter Thirty-eighth.

IN WHICH MARMADUKE CATCHCOD IS INTRODUCED INTO
HIGH SOCIETY.

A SOUND of shuffling feet, an oath or two, and before the porter had opened the front door for Lady Anne, it was pushed inward by a soldier, dragging a man after him, who caught at every available thing within his reach.

"Wretch!" gasped the lady, as her fair robes felt the clutch of his rough fingers.

"O Lady Anne! kind and good—it's I—I, Catchcod, Duke of Marma, who was your ladyship's dog, you remember. I pray your ladyship to intercede for me. This man is taking me before the governor, and the Lord knows my wits are in a state of scatteration more unpleasant than agreeable."

To this speech, the lady made no reply, but swept indignantly from the house.

"Now, Catchcod, be a man!" said the poor fellow tremblingly; "you're going before the governor—be a man! conscious of a clean shirt, if dirty boots. Toes out—elbows square—head up. One, two, three! march on, red-coat, follow your nose; I've taken ballast aboard."

And that was the way Marmaduke Catchcod entered the presence of his excellency.

The soldier gave him a jerk that sent him stumbling on to the secretary's toes. That worthy functionary stabbed

him with his eyes, and cursed him with his tongue, besides giving him a nudge, as he placed his hand threateningly on the hilt of his sword.

"Ah! Lord—I'm always gettin' on the horns of a dilemma," muttered Catchcod, wofully looking round upon the company.

"I warn you that in this austere presence you must tell the truth!" said Doctor Bullivant, pompously.

"I always tells the truth, whether in an oyster presence or otherwise not," replied Catchcod gravely, taking courage as he stood there.

"Man, fellow, do you know me?" frowned the portly doctor, putting on his most o'ertopping dignity.

"Ay, ay, sir," returned the sailor quietly; "thou rememberest I bought two ounces of senna and manna at thy shop but yesternight, for a sick messmate at the Three Anchors. I'll answer for your medicine, doctor—good and fresh—good and fresh—and—gripping."

Even the governor joined in the smile that went round, at the doctor's expense.

"And my master, Cameron, hath often filled his medicine-chest at thy store," added the sailor.

"Thy master the devil!" muttered the secretary.

"I don't know that—I never saw his horns, but they do say that sometimes the devil standeth next to a man; I hear that he wears a sword, too," innocently added the sailor, with a most unconcerned expression, considering no other person in the room was so near him as the secretary, who moved back with a vengeful frown.

"Touching this indignity which hath just been perpetrated," said the governor, turning to the sailor, who stood perplexed at the size of his words; "how didst thou dare, villain, do so foul a deed?"

"Meaning me, sir?" asked the sailor, with a scrape, looking straight at his excellency.

"Sir! *sir!*" thundered the governor; "dost thou dare to 'sir' me?"

"I always take a bull by the horns, governor," remarked the sailor quietly.

"Is this man knave or fool?" said the governor, stepping back a pace.

"Something of both, I think," remarked the clerk, a smile curving the corners of his mouth. "Fellow, do you know that *gentlemen* call the governor, *excellency*?" he added.

"Well, I ain't a gentleman," replied Catchcod; "I'm a plain sailor-man, but I'll try to remember. Excellently—governor," he said, ducking his head and pulling at his front lock.

"Fellow! answer truly, and no more of thy talk; why didst thou throw this paper and this stone, and at whose suggestion? If thou wilt tell, we may release thee; if not—we will hang thee."

"O Lord!" cried Catchcod, now terrified, "I don't know the difference between a rock and a catfish—I assure you—your—blame me!—your influenza," he cried in jerks, looking all the perplexity he felt. "I never threw paper nor stone—nor any thing else—I declare to your—ec—ecclesiasticus—if that's the darned thing! I never saw it before; and I'm willing to take my honest *swear* to it, there."

The governor frowned—the gentlemen burst into a roar of laughter.

"We must commit this fellow to jail for contempt," he said, angrily.

"Oh, your exodous! oh, your execration! your explosion! hang it, what's the word? oh, your extension—your—your—good Lord, governor, *Mr.* Governor, don't take me to jail

—I've just escaped by the skin of my teeth;" and managing to fall on his knees, he held up his hands in earnest, but ludicrous supplication.

Nevertheless, he was committed, and accompanied by a guard he walked wofully off.

These were the words written at the bottom of the paper, which the gentlemen puzzled over long, but which standing as they did,

"LLIB NIATPAC,"

taxed their ingenuity to the utmost.

"Its neither Latin, French, nor Choctaw," exclaimed the doctor, quite out of patience.

"We will take it to Master Whiting," remarked the clerk, which they did; and he having the sagacity to read it backwards, the name stood thus:

CAPTAIN BILL!



Chapter Thirty-ninth.

LETTER FROM GODFREY LAMB, BOOKSELLER, TO HIS WIFE
IN LONDON.

DARLING!

I wrote thee yesterday a description of ye strange trial of ye maid Ruth, and w'h, I doubt not, will make ye tears start to thy sweet eyes. Natheless, I have somewhat better to tell thee, that ye poor, tormented maid hath gone to ye familie of ye Reverend Parris Aldrich, which was advised to her some time agone; but of w'h she did not see fit to take advantage.

Last night I dined at ye State Arms, with ye governor and ye goodlie magistrates. Trulie, it would please thee to see here hotels called of ye first class, but w'h is noe better than manie of our countrie inns on ye outskirts of Lunnon. But I will say nothing against whoever will well treat me, as by soe doing I should show ingratitude, w'h God forbid.

C—— F—— hath not yet done raving about ye towne. He can find nothing fit to look at, eat, feel, nor smell; and everie other moment he saith—"Ah! that I were in Lunnon agen!"—w'h I take as an unfavorable sign to his disposition. Toe hear him laugh at ye streets and lanes—many of w'h truly are but ye tracks of browsing cows, going home from their pastures.

Last night we had some fiddling. Ye magistrates gave way for once from their strict decorum,—a poor, daft fiddler, whom they call long, lean Benjamin, begging for a little

victual and drink thus melodiously. And long, lean Benjamin he was, with a vengeance! Such a shanks never have I seen out of England. He hath a bodie like thy good aunt's favorite knitting-needle, which thou knowest she prefers a little bent. Now fancy ye needle elongated to six feet ten—and hang ontoe it a niddy-noddy head, never knowing on w'h shoulder to settle, or whether to settle at all. Joint to it, verie loosely, two arms, with five darning-needles at ye ends for fingers—likewise two others for legs, to w'h fit, or rather fasten, a pair of brown breeches—then tie him into a coat and waistcoat, in ye sleeves of w'h he might verie easily turn his body (I hear it was a fat man's suit), and thou hast ye picture of long, lean Benjamin, excepting ye fiddle and ye sack, w'h seem to stick mysteriously to his fingers and his shoulder.

He hath also a verie laughable peculiarity, w'h is, that when he commenceth to play, it is always one love-lorn dittie—soe sick! soe drawlie! soe scrawnie! soe bothersome, woe-begone, that it seemeth scraping onto a man's very crazy bones; and he will hold his teeth till it be through with. Nothing will make him forego this—threat nor money. Poor Ben! even he hath his little history, having been crossed in love quite early; and 'tis told, he wore ye ribbon she gave him, on his cue, till it dropped into pieces, and ye pieces he keepeth yet about his bodie.

There are ye strangest punishments in this place I ever heard of. I saw yesterday a person for whom I felt some compunction,—a poor woman; no wonder she was downcast. Having been found guilty of improper conduct, she is obliged to wear on her right arm, perpetual, a figured Indian, cut out of some red cloth. It is a shame to look at it, making ye poor creature rudely to be so exposed; but a greater shame is ye sin!

Tell my good father-in-law that I have not yet entered ye collidg, being minded to do that same some time this week; but for thy benefit I will rehearse what I saw this morning. It was a school for children, taught by one Goody Grouse, a spinster lady. I found ye teacher to be about sixty-nine—mayhap seventie years of age—a tall, hook-nosed madam, grenadier-like, and taking snuff wofully. She sat in an old arm-chair, her lungs rattling with ye phthysic—in one bony hand a small book, from w'h she was bawling out letters to five or six scared urchins, who dodged at everie word, and kept their fearful eyes fastened to ye rod standing perpetual sentrie in ye other hand, right over their heads.

On high chairs, and low—some on benches, some sprawling on ye floor—sat others of ye hopeful children, both sexes; but all, with scared looks, ever and anon turned towards ye Goody's rod, w'h I make no doubt she often useth. Some of ye girls were sewing right industriously on cloth and samplers, and round ye room were hung specimens of their skill, w'h, taught by such a teacher, must be vastlie great. At last, looking so much at ye straight, stout rod uplifted in ye teacher's hand, I came to fear it myself, and fancied it following me about ye room, like an ogre, without the fabled eye, but plentie of power.

I should question, myself, putting a child into an old woman's hands, had I not been taken by a friend to another school, kept by a Mistress Kenedy, widow. She may be old, but her heart, at least, hath not a wrinkle in it. She hath but few scholars, for she will not use anie rod, and therefore hath not ye like confidence of ye people as hath Goody Grouse—but such charming faces as clustered around her, I seldom see.

To drop this subject: I am sorry to tell thee that ye people of this town doe manifest a most unseemly feeling

toward their lawful sovereign, ye king. Such looseness in talk! such threatening faces, and bearing of independence, looks ill in so dependent a colony. I am told that in other towns ye feeling is quite as bad; and it would not surprise me to see ye people rise—against what, I hardly know, nor, do I believe, do they. It is said that ye governor hath importunately sent to his majesty for soldiers and arms, ye w'h I doubt not. 'Tis certain that his excellency hath an armed guard always in attendance of late, and that he is loth to go out in his carriage of evenings. Besides this, threatening letters and speeches are sent him, stones thrown into his windows, and everie means taken to convince him that he is unpopular. Some night ye last week, I forget w'h, ye governor's secretary, Randolph, came home, it is said, in a sad plight, having been thrown by some unknown hand in ye mire of ye gutter, there held, and thoroughly rolled, after w'h ye perpetrators escaped.

I close this letter in haste, having just heard that ye ship Prudent Sarah, in w'h thou knowest I sailed from London, hath been robbed two nights ago, and two poor soldiers murdered. It seems they two were unwisely left alone, the rest taking boats, against orders, for a pleasuring party ashore. It is horrible, and ye whole town is in uproar about it. Ye robbers have had plenty of time to escape. Some say a pirate, known as "Red Hand," formerlie ye terror of ye whole place, and on whose head a price hath been set, is again on ye coast, and that, in league with ye renowned Captain Bill, of whom thou knowest, he is devastating the sea in these parts. Whichever it is, if ye people find either, they will, I am sure, hang them up themselves, and so rid ye world of such villains. To-morrow I will write thee more particularly.

Thy devoted, LAMB.

Chapter Fortieth.

IN WHICH LADY ANNE SHOWS HER REGARD FOR THE
COMFORT OF CAPTAIN CAMERON.

IN whatever scheme she undertook, Lady Anne Bellamont seemed doomed never to succeed. Captain Cameron in prison—leaving her by stealth, and of his own free will—Ruth, whom she hated, in the bosom of a family from which a little child excluded her, and the people throwing incensed glances towards her wherever she encountered them, and sneering at her liveried footman and her gilded coat of arms.

Jacobs, her footman, richly deserved the contempt with which he was regarded, for he had insulted more than one honest laboring man in a way which they could not overlook, and forthwith he was marked for popular vengeance.

"I will leave this wretched country forever!" she muttered in her loneliness. "I will leave Cameron to his fate, since he is thus ungrateful—he may drown, hang, or burn!" Then clasping her hands, folding them over and over, seeming to be lost in regretful thought, she cried, in low, passionate tones, "O Cameron! how I have loved thee! even with a wilder love than I bore *him*!"

Throwing her curls spitefully back, she murmured, "Oh! I hate my beauty! It has served me for nothing of hope, love, or even utility! I am tempted to wish I might fade—might find silver hairs amid these night-tresses—perhaps then these sometimes struggling thoughts of good—these wild yearnings to be what I seem, might take root, even in

my hard nature, and grow into good purposes and deeds! But no! *no*! not while I have the power to torment *him*! not while that child lives, the ugly little imp! To me, with all her vaunted beauty, she is repulsive; my soul recoils from her very glance! They say she feels the approach of evil. Well, she may, in me. I never saw her but I wanted to destroy her, and her milk-faced mother! How could—how could Parris Aldrich marry such a woman? Was it for that fabled gentleness, of which he sometimes spoke? A poor, faded, passionless creature like her, to hold the key of his heart! Oh! oh! if it were not for hope of vengeance, some day, I should kill myself!" she cried, starting up in sudden and hot anger, her face the impersonation of a fiend. "But, patience! patience! that will come soon enough! When he finds his *son*! his son!" she continued, with bitter earnestness, "a pirate, and companion of pirates, then his proud heart will bow—and I—shall I be satisfied then? No! nor never!" she added, huskily.

She began a hurried walk to and fro across the room; but suddenly paused, summoned a servant, ordered him to take candlesticks and candles, to pack up a few mats, a desk, writing materials, a silver goblet, some rich cake, and a store of other articles, for the comfort of the outer and inner man. Then she directed him to call a cart and send them to the prison, he himself to accompany them, and deliver a note which she prepared.

Meanwhile, although not reconciled to his loss of liberty, Captain Cameron was by no means as much cast down as might have been expected. Having found congenial friends, even within the confines of a jail, his imprisonment was less dreary, especially since, through the means of some kind gossip, he had heard of Ruth's safe instalment in the family of the minister, Aldrich, where he had before entreated her to go.

The jail was a plain building of brown stone, and repulsive in appearance to the last degree. There was scarcely any glass about it, and the wind and sleet found free ingress—hence it was wet and disagreeable within.

Instead of separate cells, there were several rooms in which five and six prisoners were confined together. Captain Cameron had been placed in the best of these, where, for a consideration, the jailor had allowed a fire to be built. Lady Anne's servant was readily admitted, on his showing a pass from the governor, into the apartment wherein was the captain, Sir John, and two other prisoners, who were smoking in the corner of the blackened chimney.

Goody Shrimp, in consequence of the hard pleading, and even bribing of the young shipmaster, had been allowed a seat by the fire to warm her withered old body. If before her appearance had not condemned her for a witch, it surely might now. Her face had grown hideous from the constant exercise of her evil passions, greatly augmented—in truth, diseased—by her brutal treatment. Her cap was black, and set awry; her hair hung in matted gray skeins over her high, narrow forehead, and streamed down to her shoulders. The dress she then wore was the same in which she had been punished, and was repulsive to the last degree. From her bleared eyes, so really fine and piercing when she entered, there came only occasionally a faint ray of intelligence, and she moaned and muttered, muttered and moaned, sitting with elbows on knees and wide-spread palms held up to the smoky blaze.

A man in the middle of the room, imprisoned for debt, was roaring out in a not unmusical voice:

"Don't you remember,
The fifth of November,
The gunpowder treason and plot?"

Sir John Willie had just finished shaving (a gentleman will be a gentleman, even in jail), and Captain Cameron, book in hand, was in the midst of a tirade against the governor, when the entrance of a man borne down with bundles, put a stop to all conversation.

Goody Shrimp turned once, with difficulty (for her poor old back, lacerated with stripes and stiff with rheumatism, would scarce allow a motion unattended with pain)—muttered, with a leer, that they needn't come there to free her, she wouldn't be free if she could; then, as the man began to unpack, she faced the fire again, all curiosity dead within her.

"Well! really this is kind of her ladyship!" said Captain Cameron impulsively, not without a little pride; "we shall be comfortable here, after a little. See these beautiful candlesticks! of chased silver, as I live! And this strip of carpet! The writing-desk is invaluable—just what we were wishing for, Mr. Willie. Didn't I tell you I was a lucky fellow? Always was lucky—even in jail;" he added, laughing. And, upon my word, if here aren't cushions and pillows and lots of traps—see! a fine dressing-gown. Why, I shall look like a lord! My good lackey" (to the servant) "I wish I had some change!" Sir John laughingly handed him a half-crown, which the captain readily received. "Give my thanks to your lady," he added—"but stop! as Catchcod says, I must write 'a varse'"—so, finding pen, ink and paper, he wrote a few lines, gave them to the man, and turned to survey his treasures again.

"You'll not complain of the backache to-morrow," said Sir John, admiring the articles.

"One back, at least, shall be the better," said the captain, softly, as the man passed out. "See here, Goody," and he hurried towards her—"soft pillows! beautiful plump pil-

lows! for *you*, Goody—sent for you (since she will have them," he added, *sotto voce*).

"To me—to me!" she articulated thickly. "Oh, how nice! how soft! my poor sore back! Well—but, have *I* a friend in the world?"

She looked up so sorrowfully that tears came to the captain's eyes. "To be sure you have, Goody; some very kind friend, too. Look, how fine is this linen! and the ruffling, I think they call it. And Goody, here's a capital gown, rather gay, but then so much better than this old rag! Won't you wear it to-morrow, for the sake of this kind friend, you know? And look at this; a strip of real carpet—woollen—for your feet when you get up in the morning" (she grasped it with a childish eagerness)—"soft as the pillows, almost. I'm sure you need never say, after this, that you're forgotten."

"Oh! the carpet! the carpet is very warm—yes, so nice and warm!" she repeated, the old fire for a while blazing in her eyes.

"These too; you need not mind that they are men's hose—they will be all the warmer for that, you see. How fresh, and new, and white they look!"

She glanced up, with a flash of intelligence, into the beaming face so lighted up with the pleasure of a good deed.

"Did *you* give me these?" she asked.

"The—the hose?" he said, momentarily confused; "yes—I gave you *those*—I had enough, you see."

"And *you* have given me all—I see it now—yes, yes, I see it now. They were sent to *you*, and *you* came and gave them to the old woman,—the old witch," she cried, brokenly.

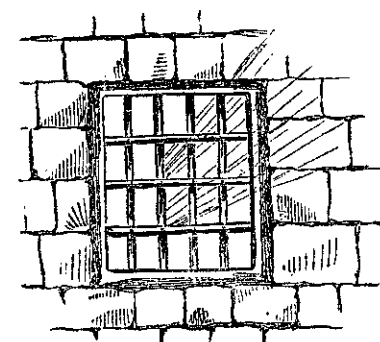
For a moment she paused, and then exclaimed solemnly—

"Oh, may you *never* be cold!"

It was a simple wish, but the deep earnestness of its utter-

ance made it affecting, and the smokers in the corner smoked hard and winked vigorously.

It was some time before he could prevail upon her to take what he wished, but he finally effected his purpose. As he turned away, vexed that he had not managed the affair with more tact, he was met by Sir John Willie, and an audible "God bless you, Cameron!"



Chapter forty-first.

VISIT OF THE SCHOOLMASTER.

AGAIN the nail-studded door opened, and the jailer ushered in Master Whiting, whose very tall, slight, straight, and dignified form seemed strangely out of place in such an atmosphere.

"As I live! Master Gamaliel Whiting!" cried Sir John Willie, hastening to greet him.

"I am, I was going to say, happy to meet thee," said the courtly old schoolmaster; "yet" (looking around) "I can scarcely find it in my heart to give thee such greeting," he added, in slow, precise language.

"But I am truly happy to see thee here, my kind preceptor; and as for this light imprisonment, it is a chance that hath happened to many a better man."

"That sayeth not the town—Sir John (allow me to use the title—I have been accustomed to it), that sayeth not the town. Never saw I men so incensed at any act of tyranny before.

"'What! imprison our beloved citizen!' they cry; 'we will tear down the jail if he is not released within seven days.'"

"I hope they will commit no act of violence," exclaimed the young man, earnestly. "I would not for the world the town were embroiled on my account."

"I fear embroilment will come; I think the cost is

counted, and men have made up their minds," replied the schoolmaster. "It needs but the lighting of a match, and the heaped-up combustibles will give forth a vengeful flame. Only to-day I was with the governor—"

"Pardon me—but did you see any of the ladies?" asked Sir John, eagerly.

"I did not, my young friend. I inferred, however, from something I heard passing, that one of the household had been ill—I remember not the name." He paused to think.

"Was it Margaret, or Miss Aldrich?" inquired Sir John.

"Ah! Miss Aldrich—that was the name. A fair-faced young maid came in and asked for her."

"Ruth, I'll bet," muttered the captain, interested, though his eyes were fastened on the book.

The schoolmaster turned, but hearing nothing further, conversed for some time with Sir John. As he was leaving, the latter introduced him to Captain Cameron.

With a kind "I have heard of thee, young sir," the stately pedagogue shook his hand warmly.

As he spoke a groan sounded near him.

"'Tis a poor wretch convicted of murder," said Sir John. "He sleeps sometimes during the day, and must have been napping; otherwise he would have filled the hour with his constant complaints."

"And thou art placed among thieves and murderers," said the old man, pitifully, "thou son of my dearest friend. For murder—that reminds me that I have not told thee the news. A dreadful deed has just been committed in the harbor. Much valuable treasure is stolen from the vessel, and two of His Majesty's soldiers killed."

"Valuable property—he can't mean the Prudent Sarah!" exclaimed Captain Cameron, a look of the deepest anxiety overspreading his features.

"That is the vessel's name, young man."

"And he is her commander," said Sir John.

"Was, you mean," replied the young captain, mournfully, his countenance changing. "Murder aboard—poor, ill-fated ship! I shall begin to think she was bought with the wages of crime."

Chapter Forty-second.

SHOWS THAT A JAIL IS NOT A PLEASANT PLACE TO DIE IN

THE echo of Master Gamaliel Whiting's footsteps had scarcely died away, when the door creaked on its massive hinges again, and crestfallen Marmaduke Catchcod, protesting, shuffling, swearing, was pushed within. At sound of his voice, old Goody Shrimp lifted her head. Captain Cameron cried pompously—"Oh, my duke! how hast thou fallen!" laughing loudly the while, and the old Goody muttered—

"Ay, my poor house! I'll warrant left desolate for dust and cobwebs to gather and cover. Has't seen my cat?" she screamed spitefully.

"No! blast thy cat!" cried the Duke of Marma, kicking off his only shoe (the other had been lost in his frantic endeavors to clear himself). His clothes were torn, and his false beard of a light tow-color, had shifted over his nose.

"I say, blast thy cat!" he cried out again, stamping. "If I had never seen thee or thy cat, I had been better off. 'Taint so much coming to jail," he cried out again, stamping, "as 'tis coming against one's will, and at the beck and force of that bloody redcoat, as takes me down. Hang him, though, I pulled his nose, I pinched his ears, I slapped his mouth, and give him a kick for a parting blessing. I guess he'll remember Marmaduke Catchcod. He said he would, and sez I, 'I meant ye should.'"

"Welcome, welcome, valiant Duke of Marma!" cried Captain Cameron, still hilarious.

"Faugh! what a dirty, disgusted place!" cried the sailor. "The forecastle of a Chinese junk ain't nothin' to the smell. I broke my shins over them confounded stones coming in. Ugh! what a gloomy place! Ain't got no winders, eh! no winder-glass, I mean; nice temperament of h'-air for a March day! I've been composing a varse as I came along, atween fighting and running, and I'll say it here; for I might forget it, and there's important sentiments a running through it, like a worm through a skull-bone, which I couldn't afford to lose:

"Lord! what a place is Boston town;
I wish I wasn't in it;
And *if*—I *had*—the governor here,
I'd kick him in a minute."

Suiting the action to the word, as he shouted the last line with emphasis through his teeth, he bestowed a tremendous kick on the thin partition. It was answered by a groan louder than the last. Marmaduke, quite startled and confounded, stood attentively regarding the place he had struck, as if he expected to hear it speak.

"You must be cautious here, my duke—walls have not only ears but tongues," said Master Cameron, laughing at his blank look of astonishment. "Come, sit down here and tell us your adventures."

"Ventures! I've been through enough to reel a yarn that would reach across the Atlantic and double over. Faugh! what a rotten place! It don't matter so much for me, but to put gentlemen here! It's *scandaverous*! But I'll tell you what, now—they're going to kick up a mighty muss in this little town, you may depend on't. The governor

nd his big-bugs—or, p'raps I should say, his ecclesiastics, and their ecclesiasticusses, starched as they look, 'll have to sing small by considerable and considerable less, as the poet says. Then, they've been and gone and done a murder 'board that confistigated ship o' yours; spoze you heerd though, seeing the very walls know how to talk—jest about such things as I should think such walls would like to talk of, too. Don't matter much, though, they were red-coats, and I'm spited against red-coats."

The old woman in the corner began to rock and moan. Cameron went up to her.

"What's the matter, Goody—what is it?" he asked.

She looked up helplessly. 'Twas pitiful to see great tears running along her channelled cheeks, and to hear her cry like a tired child—

"Oh, I want to go home! I want to go home. There's no kith nor kin to welcome me there—but it's home—home. Oh! take me home!"

"You poor old soul!" exclaimed the young captain, deeply affected at her grief, "I'm no better off than you are. I wish to heaven I *could* take you home, or had one to go to myself."

"Oh, 'twould be better to die there," she sobbed, still rocking herself—"better to die *there*! My mother slept on that bed; and 'twould be sweet to lie down on it once more O mother! mother! mother! mother!" she cried, at each mention of the name her voice growing more shrill. "I want to go home—I want to go home!"

"There's a singular look come over her," whispered the captain, turning awe-struck towards Sir John Willie. "I wish you'd step this way. I don't like that glare of the eye."

"So much for their infernal superstition!" he added, almost furiously, as his friend came near; depriving an old

helpless creature like that, of a home that's her own, dooming her to lose her reason and perhaps her life, within these accursed walls. What did you say?"

"Put the pillows down," whispered Sir John; "she seems near falling. It'll be easier if she lies down, perhaps."

They laid her down—for her strength had deserted her—as if it were the form of an aged and well-loved mother. And tears fell upon her pale brow; tears of sympathy for the poor soul who had no kith nor kin to meet her.

"She'll have plenty where she's going, I'm thinking," said Captain Cameron, solemnly. "Is it best to call for help?"

The other shook his head.

Once more the dim eyes opened—the withered fingers came together; she muttered grievingly: "I want to go home." Then, the quiver of the lip was over; the face began to assume the immobility of death. She had gone; the old witch had died in jail.

"I'm glad she had the pillows," said Cameron, drawing a long, heavy sigh. "To think! that hearty-looking woman wasted in that way, and only a few weeks! The whipping did it—the whipping broke her heart. Depend upon it, Willie, there'll come a time when men will look back and blush with indignant shame over these deeds of darkness! Poor old soul!"

"Lord—to think!" said Marmaduke, watching from a distance; "the last time I saw her she was making galimaufry."



Chapter forty-third.

A MEETING, AT WHICH THE GOVERNOR'S SECRETARY HEARS SOME HARD SAYINGS, AND WANTS THEM BOOKED.

As full of a curious importance as a nut is full of meat, Gaffer Scates hopped about from street to street, speaking to this one, nodding to that, with odd winking, blinking, and shoulder-shrugging. Now he would stop a staid, sedate, puritan old gentleman, whisper a word and be gone, then take by the button some dapper, free and easy politician, give him a word and a wink, chuckle, and whiz off like a cannon-ball that knows just where to go.

Plainly speaking, the respectable little city of Boston was in a hubbub. Up the steep hills, and round the winding lanes—at the sign of the "Blue Dog and Rainbow," "Dog and Pot," "Cabinet and Drawers," "King's Arms"—in all the alleys—at all the grocers, haberdashers, linen-drappers, &c., &c., men, women, and children were talking, talking, talking.

A murder! such a shocking murder! right in the harbor! close under the walls of their very houses! And a sight it was, to see the poor things, covered with bloody flags, carried up Hanover-street—over the swing-bridge—down Prison-lane—a great rabble after them, moving noiselessly along, in the direction of the fort, where the bodies were finally deposited.

As usual, in such cases, there were all sorts of rumors

afloat. Some said that the young Captain Cameron had freed himself, and determining to get possession of his vessel, had gone out and killed the soldiers—they not reflecting that it would be rather difficult to start a ship to sea without a crew. Others declared that the terrible "Red Hand," and other pirates, were right in their midst, and that life and property were no longer secure.

"Red Hand!" exclaimed a shrunken old man, very slow and infirm of speech, standing in the midst of a knot of women, who, in their blue short-gowns, red petticoats, high shoes, and snowy caps, made a picturesque group. "I remember me only thirty years ago he was the finest little lad I ever set my two een on. He's a young man yet, and capable of a master 'mount of mischief, if they don't take him."

"Ay!" remarked a woman; "and Faith Justin was a pretty lassie when he married her. Her cheeks were red as roses, and her eyes as bright as diamonds. Poor young thing! She's been dead now—how many years, neighbor?"

"Something like ten, I should say, mistress," was the reply.

"Well, it's better she didn't live, and get her heart broken. I'm sure the poor child she left—"

The noisy blast of a trumpet drowned the speaker's voice. A single horseman came galloping down the street. He sat a noble steed, whose gay caparisons, prancings and curvettings, together with the brilliant red uniform of his rider, commanded general attention and admiration. At every window, young and old flocked to see and listen.

"God save the king! Hear ye—hear ye!" shouted the man, for a moment reining in his superb horse.

"The governor proclaimeth that the service of the Church

of England, the true and lawful worship of a people, will be performed in the South Church, God willing, on the next Sabbath morning, at ten o'clock of the day. All true and loyal subjects of his majesty will accordingly meet at the time and place appointed. Hear ye! hear ye!"

A blast and flourish of the trumpet, loud and long—the handsome horse pranced proudly on, and soon, in a more distant direction, the stentorian voice was heard crying, "God save the king!"

"Now is not that too much for flesh and blood to bear?" asked Gaffer Scates, with purple-red face. "Three times have our people refused the key of our church; twice have committees waited upon his excellency, and yet, after this infinite fuss and pains, he taketh the matter out of our hands, by proclaiming, by this spurred courier, that he is lord and master, and the thing *shall* be done. Can flesh and blood stand so much?"

It was yet very early, and the morning was one of unusual loveliness. Blue and brilliant, the royal sky arched with the bend of a conqueror over the world, and the sun hung banners wherever he smiled. From the country, down the hilly, winding roads, came the loaded market-wagons. The air seemed almost as bland as the breath of summer, yet men appeared not to note how beautiful it was. Only careful women opened wide their windows, and hung out their household stuffs to be purified, and the tender laugh of babes who had been long housed floated out to the passers-by. Men met together in their places of business, not to talk of stocks, or the weather—but their faces were anxious and their voices suppressed. Ofttimes through the day the governor's secretary rode through the streets in his haughtily-defiant manner; but wherever he was seen, execrations were liberally bestowed upon him and the obnoxious power he

served. His name was coupled with those of Jeffries and Colonel Percy Kirk, monsters of cruelty and treachery, whose like could hardly be paralleled in centuries. But had he the power, said the people, he would prove to be just such another. They fully (and rightly) believed him their enemy in every thing, and if they had not, his overbearing and insolent demeanor, his contemptuous declaration towards tradespeople, his boastings of the consideration with which he had been treated by the king, and even of amours and intrigues which were a shame to decency, had made him an object of suspicion, and even of hatred.

It was plainly to be seen that he held the mind of the governor in his grasp, and partially moulded it to his will. Notwithstanding his foppish love of dress, and his arbitrary assumption of dignity,—with which he was wont to puff and swell, like the fabled frog,—he possessed the consummate art of the tactician. Seizing the opportunity at just the right moment of time, he managed so as always to secure the governor's hearing, and placed his reasoning in such a light as to make it seem the result of the thoughts and plannings of all the wisest heads in the colony.

So in different directions, this suspicious officer and Gaffer Scates spent the day, apparently in electioneering for their separate purposes.

Meanwhile Mistress Bean was engaged to get up a plain supper at the Red Lion. It was not an unusual thing to prepare feasts and collations, but on this day every thing seemed to go wrong with Mistress Bean. In truth, she felt uneasy on Ruth's account. By cold looks and cold speeches she had driven her away, and Ruth's quiet smile had, unconsciously to her, become indispensable. The house seemed colder, the maids crosser, the fires burnt more faint, the viands did not suit, for Ruth, upon such occasions, had al-

ways been chief taster, and, according to her judgment, the spices and other condiments were mixed. So the hostess sent for Mistress Comstock, and the two worked and worried together.

The supper was to be laid at nine, in the dining-hall, and previous to that the company were assembled in the large back-parlor—the front-parlor having been secured, as Mistress Bean said, by letter, for a select number of gentlemen, who were to be engaged in some town business. At eight o'clock both rooms were occupied. In the front-parlor were the governor's secretary, Doctor Bullivant, and other gentlemen. They had but one light, and that burnt dimly, apparently by design. At the end of the room, adjoining the back-parlor, was a closet, that had doors opening into both rooms. The upper half of these doors was of glass, shaded, but not concealed, by curtains of thin muslin. From the closet came one of the gentlemen, saying in an excited way—

"They seem to be all assembled now, and are beginning their talk. We can hear very plainly in the closet, two of the panes being broken near the top of the door."

"Let us go in, then," said the secretary; whereupon the rest hastily arose and stationed themselves in the closet. From that position might be seen a score of men seated about the great, round table, and on chairs at the sides of the room. Hanging from the walls, or perched on convenient places, were cocked hats, canes, and overcoats. Upon the centre of the table laid the great Bible, bound in boards, and clasped with iron. Conspicuous among the gentlemen were Doctor Cotton Mather, who had just read a chapter. Beside him sat Master Gamaliel Whiting, straight as if glued to his tall chair-back, whose gothic points sprang far above his head. His knees were crossed, and the silver buckles on his shoes sparkled in the firelight.

Father Comstock and Gaffer Scates sat side by side, and the rest of the company was composed of eminent merchants and townsmen of Boston.

The conversation, sustained at first by a few, began to grow more general. The clear sounds of Mather's abrupt and forcible English, taking precedence of all the rest, rang with a more sonorous tone than usual.

"It is hard, brethren, to see our dearly-bought privileges wrested from us thus, by the hand of an unscrupulous tyrant, whom the king hath sent to look out for our interests; but, nevertheless, God knoweth and judgeth also," he added, with strong emphasis.

"Is not that treason?" muttered the secretary.

"He looketh out little for your interests, methinks, brother Mather," said the schoolmaster. "I should say he thinketh little for any interests save his own."

"Truly!" cried Father Comstock, "and 'tis said he intendeth to make a new law concerning marriages—that no contract of that kind be considered valid, save it be solemnized by a minister of the Church of England. A pretty pack of heathens he would make of us. To think that I should wake up some morning and find that Mistress Comstock and I had been living in sin for forty years of our lives!"

"And I hear for the probate of merchant Dudley's will, he hath caused forty shillings to be exacted," spoke up Gaffer Scates.

"Is there no way to be rid of such abominable taxation?" asked schoolmaster Whiting.

"What are we to do?" exclaimed another. "He hath caused us to be deprived of our charter—he hath misrepresented us to the king—he hath abused his power and our confidence in many direct ways—he hath drawn his allies and parasites around him to keep him in countenance and

gag us. Thou seest he has sorely crippled us, Master Whiting."

"Thou canst tell me no new thing of Sir Edmund Andros," responded the schoolmaster, speaking with his usual deliberation. "I have not yet forgot his marching into Hartford, within these few months, with his sixty troops, and the time we had to lodge and victual them. I do believe it took all the provender of our poor little town, so that it hath not been so favorable in that way since. One would have thought our governor might have moved a strong heart, laboring to tell, almost with tears, how that we had been to so great and sad expense in planting our little colony. Thou shouldst have heard him that day.

"Your excellency," said he, to the proud governor-general, cannot tell with what tenderness we do look upon our little colony. We have defended it against savages and evil foreigners. We have spilt our blood like water—we have given up our moneys freely. We came as pilgrims, a little band, and tracked our very veins over the hideous forests that intervened between this and the soil we did first set foot upon. There were tender babes, and gentle women, willing to take their lives in their hands to the peopling of this then wilderness. Many of us knew not, even by word of mouth, the horrors of this travel before, but lived in our own beloved England in honor and affluence. But now the heaven was our roof, the stony and brier-strewn ground our floor, the rock our pillow; and we suffered from hunger, yea! from fear of Indians, from torn limbs, and aching hearts. Now that we have become a people, do not, I entreat your excellency, fail to consider with how much care and sorrow we have established ourselves; do not dissolve that with one word which we have been at such great pains in the building up. I myself, having taken no mean part in the for-

tunes of this little colony, do hereby declare that it will be like the plucking out of my right eye, like the giving up of my very life, to surrender the patent and privileges so dearly bought, and for fifty-one long and happy years thankfully enjoyed!"

"Master Whiting—thy hand again!" cried old Father Comstock, with enthusiasm; "didst thou verily hear and see the whole?" The old man trembled with excitement.

"I truly saw all that could be seen, for thou knowest there came a short period of darkness."

"How did our roaring lion of a governor listen?" asked Cotton Mather.

"Roaring lion!" hissed the secretary, in his dark closet, shaking with sudden rage. "Hear it! hast thy book with thee? Pencil it down, pencil it down, doctor. Roaring lion! ha!"

"He listened with the petty pompousness which he ever affecteth," replied the schoolmaster; "but he hath a hard heart. Sitting in his splendid uniform, his whelp beside him"—

("Oh, the pestilent knave!" cried the secretary, grinding his teeth—"that's me. Book it, doctor, book it!")

"Taking minutes—his officers glittering in red and gold—his guards of halberts and musketeers standing a short way off, he made answer with most insolent coolness, that all this eloquence was wasted on him" ("verily was it!" muttered Mather), "that he bore the king's commands, and must execute his majesty's orders. At this, I observed that whelp of his to chuckle."

"That's me again—book it, doctor, book it!" cried the secretary between his teeth, and pressing the shoulder of his friend heavily.

"He may chuckle on the wrong side of his mouth, yet," said Gaffer Scates, with valiant emphasis.

With constant reiterations to "book it, doctor, book it!" the secretary listened, his wrath increasing, and muttering ever and anon—"why doth not that hound of a sheriff come?"

"At length," resumed the schoolmaster, "evening came. The lights were placed upon the table, and the debate still went on, Sir Edmund never giving in an inch. I was there with ten of my lads, from fourteen to seventeen—my Latin class—they being impetuously angry at the doings, and wishing to rush in pell-mell, when the charter was brought; but that I would not allow. Our townsmen had assembled in great numbers, and one of them, a Master Wadsworth, commander of the Phoenix, a goodly ship, stood near the governor; and I did notice once or twice an expressive glance between the two. I confess I trembled for our poor charter, and would fain have snatched it from such power; but suddenly there fell a great darkness—every candle was put out. Never was I in such a solemn quiet as followed. Only the governor-general, after a moment, cried out—'by God's mercy!' and there was a rattle of muskets by the guards.

"Light!" cried the governor—and before the word had quite passed his lips, the candles were burning, and every man looked at his neighbor with an innocent amazement.

"But the charter was nowhere to be seen!"

A tear glittered through the smile in his eye, when, as the schoolmaster said this, every hand, as if by one impulse, came heavily down upon the table.

"My lads cried like babies," continued the master, "and I'm not sure but older eyes grew moistened. There was a

subdued joy, a mute huzza-like glance went from man to man. There was no need of shouts—the deed itself was a shout that has not been silenced to this day. Where the charter is, we know not—nor shall we know till this scourge be taken from New England.”

“This scourge! book that, doctor,” cried the secretary, growing every moment more furious. “Oh, what a precious case we’ll make for these rebels!”

“Well say’st thou scourge, schoolmaster,” exclaimed Cotton Mather; “he hath been indeed a scourge unto us, ’specially unto *our* family—tormentor of my father and myself in divers ways. On the Sabbath, he takes our meeting-house for his papistical ceremonies, for, like his master, we know he inclineth to the Romans. It is an outrage such as a people might feel justified in resenting—yet I tell my charge to quietly submit, for the great God will appear for us. These various imprisonments, taxations, and tyrannies shall be fearfully accounted for, as I am a minister of the Word. For truly that man hath been a curse to this country, since he first set foot on our soil. And of his secretary—I do hereby declare him to be a blasted wretch, who shall die, forsaken of God and man!”

The secretary at this was in such a tumult of rage that he nearly choked, and tore at his throat, gasping—then, half-drawing his sword, he would have rushed in upon the company, but the doctor prevented him.

“And now, friends,” said Cotton Mather, reaching for his hat, “I must be gone. I would stay to the supper, but business calls, and Mr. Ross will be in waiting for me.”

“Stop him! oh, for one minute,” groaned the governor’s minion; “the sheriff must be here, even now. I am certain that is his step.”

“I meant to talk over touching the affair of Sir John

Willie, but I leave the matter to thy discussion,” added Cotton Mather, quietly. “I would only advise that, for *the present*, ye bear with the ills which may shortly be put a stop to by the people of—”

“Treason!” cried a smothered voice.

“We have listeners here,” said the minister.

Chapter Forty-fourth.

THE SECRETARY'S PASSION, AND THE ARREST.

THE closet-door burst open, and the secretary appeared, with features convulsed and clothes disarranged. He sprang towards Cotton Mather, who, with calm dignity, kept his ground, while the company rose to protect him.

"You called me a whelp, braggart!" shouted the secretary, flashing his anger upon the statue-like face of the reverend man.

"Yes, I called thee lion's whelp, if I remember aright," said the undaunted Mather. "I beg thy pardon; I used the wrong terms, and in my revision, I denominate thee—whelp and child of Satan."

"Thou foul-mouthed charlatan, dost thou not know that thy contemptible life is in my power?" foamed the angry man.

"Thou poor son of perdition!" said Cotton Mather, half-pityingly, half-contemptuously, "go home to thy chamber, and get on thy knees—and God help thee to repent. Gentlemen, I wish you good evening."

"Stay, I arrest thee!" shouted the secretary.

"Where is thy authority?" asked Cotton Mather, with his cool smile.

"The king! in his name I arrest thee."

"I fling thy authority to the winds!" saying which, with

the most provoking blandness, Cotton Mather bowed to the company, and left the room.

"Oh, gentlemen! gentlemen!" said Mistress Bean, now making her appearance with Mistress Comstock; "I hope there will be no trouble in my house. Noble sir," courtesying to the secretary, "I am honored by thy presence, surely, but I did not think there would be a difficulty. I hope you will let these gentlemen come in to their supper."

"Let them! let them!" cried Father Comstock, flushing, while as he lifted himself, Gaffer Scates crept to the further end of the table.

"Ay! let them! she hath the right word, old white-crown, and yonder comes my power to let or no!" cried the secretary, choked with his passion. "Lead them all to jail, Mr. Sheriff, every mother's-son of them—lead them off."

"I demand the reading of the warrant, first," said the schoolmaster, facing the red-eyed secretary.

"No warrant shall be read; off with them—I say, lead off."

"Thou dost exceed thine office, good man," said the master, his eyes beginning to blaze, though their deep depths had been kindling some time.

"Good man! thou tape-worm! thou knitting-needle! Don't *good man me*, or by the heavens—"

"For mercy's sake, gentlemen!" screamed Mistress Bean, as the secretary drew his sword, and the schoolmaster brought from his heavy cane a long stiletto-like blade; "oh, help! help! we shall have murder here."

Instant confusion reigned. The gentlemen of his party held the schoolmaster (who had measured weapons before), and the doctor and his friends restrained the secretary; both sides talking fast and furiously.

"Show thy warrant, officer! show thy warrant!"

"Does he think to bully us?"

"Remember, we are Christians!"

"Gentlemen! the supper! the supper is laid hot—come to the supper—forbear fighting!" were exclamations that sounded out of the uproar, while the sheriff mounted the table and shouted, rather than read, the warrant. Then order was restored sufficiently to make out that only eight of the twenty were under arrest, for misdemeanors that savored of treason. Among them were Father Comstock and Gaffer Scates, but the schoolmaster was not included.

"Go, man," said Mistress Comstock, who had stood pale, but tearless, at the widow's side; "go, man, and die in jail ere thou abatest one jot or tittle of what thou hast said!"

"Bravo!" cried the prisoners.

"Silence! thou white-headed granny!" cried the secretary.

"*Thou* couldst not buy my silence!" retorted the dame, with spirit; "I am but a weak woman, but rather than surrender my free speech to thee, I'd go to the gibbet!"

"Bravo!" they cried, again, clapping; while Gaffer Scates wiped a miserable tear from his cheekbone, as he muttered, "I would that *my* mistress might see me."

"Off with the prisoners," said the secretary, pretending not to listen; "I would I could see the beggarly crew all hung," he added, as he prepared to go. Then turning, with an insulting reverence, he added, "I wish you much joy of your supper, gentlemen, *and* ladies—stay just one hour longer, and I'll find you lodgings with the rest."

"O thou viper!" cried Mistress Comstock, who like most persons of mild temperament, was a brief tornado when roused. "This imprisonment shall bring all Boston about thine ears—mark what I say. Good man, keep up thy courage—I'll pray for thee," she added, firmly, yet tenderly, as the old man placed his lips on her still fair brow.

The supper was scarcely tasted by those who remained, and the two women, assisted by the servant-maids, cleared off the table with lugubrious faces, Mistress Bean lamenting over this and that trifle, which after all their pains was not to be eaten. The schoolmaster and one other gentleman remained sitting by the fire in the back-parlor, talking over the events of the evening.

Chapter Forty-fifth.

RUTH IN HER BEAUTIFUL HOME, BUT CALLED TO ANOTHER TRIAL.

"COME, dance with me, Ruthy."

"I don't know how to dance, darling."

"Oh, it's easy—just go so, and so, and turn so and so," and the fairy-like little body tripped and whirled—flitting now to shadow, then into the sunshine, and back again into Ruth's arms almost before she knew it—then off again with breezy, noiseless motion, till the young girl gazed breathless, fearful that the beautiful thing would vanish.

"Now you'll come and dance with me—I've teach'd you." And a glad laugh broke forth. "Sing again—come."

"My darling, I should only be clumsy and throw you down; besides, I love to look at you."

"Then sing *to* me; sing that pretty little tune!" And the child dropped on her knees, folded her white arms over Ruth's lap, and raised her haunting eyes, so bright and beautiful that Ruth almost lost herself looking at them.

"Yes, I'll sing for you," murmured Ruth; "now listen:

"I have found a little jewel,
Heaven-white and heaven-blue;
I will wear it in my bosom,
As the stately maidens do.

"No, not as the stately maidens,
With their pride of glass and gold;

For their richest, rarest baubles,
Are not half so rich and old,

"As my iris-color'd jewel:
From God's hand its beauty grew;
His own lightest breathing made it
Heaven-white and heaven-blue.

"So I'll wear this precious jewel—"

Here little Imogene chimed in, her pretty hands keeping time as they were folded over Ruth's lap—

"Wear it ever till I'm old;
'Tis a drop of heaven's glory,
Set in heaven's unfading gold!"

"I know what it is—I know what it is—its *truth!* you told me so," cried the child, clapping her little palms.

Then she laid her head down softly, and was very silent. Hearing Ruth sigh, she looked up hastily.

"Have you got the heart-ache again?" she asked.

Ruth, sighing, had told her half playfully, one day, that she had the heart-ache; and at every cloud that saddened her face, the question was repeated.

"Oh no, darling! but why did you sob so this morning, and why did you tell me such a terrible story?"

She held her caressingly with one hand, and touched the golden curls flittingly with the points of her fingers, as if they were sacred and to be handled with reverence.

"Because"—that distant, awe-filled, visionary look came over the childish face—"because I saw the wicked man—and he tried to take you away from me."

"How did he look, darling?"

"He had great, long curls," said the child, stretching out one of her own bright ringlets; "and he looked like the dark lady. Oh! I guess he *was* the dark lady's father, for"

(she stooped forward, her eyes dilating) "there was something wicked over his shoulder!"

Ruth felt a shiver at these words. She did not doubt the child had seen what she said.

"You won't go away with the dark man, and leave Imogene—go away on the great water—will you, Ruthy?" she cried, with most impassioned earnestness; then, with her usual flitting, springing motion, she was now on this side of Ruth, now on that,—patting Ruth's forehead, patting her cheeks, kissing her, smiling, humming, dancing.

The room was square, of large dimensions, low-ceiled, and tastefully furnished. A warm-looking carpet, with bright red tints showing everywhere—cut into strips by her mother, and woven by an old Scotch weaver in Pudding-lane—quite covered the floor. It glowed now under the light of the crimson sunshine, as well as the cheerful hickory fire. In a recess at one end stood a low bed and a child's crib. The latter was no longer in use, for Imogene had outgrown it. Since Ruth had come, she had slept in her arms, her little head pillowed on her breast—over her heart.

The minister and his wife were in character of the true, spiritual type—following their Master blamelessly, *practising* as well as preaching His precepts, loving every manifestation of His perfect love. So, on all sides, Ruth was surrounded by the most gentle beings. It was a household of love; and Ruth would have been happy, but for the knowledge of Captain Cameron's imprisonment—but for the apparent stain upon her hitherto unspotted reputation.

Even Cotton Mather felt that Ruth was no longer to be considered one of the "household of faith." Why had she gone over to the Episcopalists? Why did she not apply to him and to his family, in her trouble? He did not dream that Ruth was afraid of him—that his awfully severe denun-

ciations had made him seem to her something too sacred for common mortals to approach. He did not dream how she trembled—loving him in her fearful way though she did—when he approached her. Yet he was not, in his home, a stern or a harsh man. He had a gentle soul and a tender spirit; but from a mistaken sense of the greatness of his mission, he clothed himself in a dignity and severity that were appalling to the timid, and made even the men of vigorous intellect bend with a conscious humility and a something very like dread in his presence.

Those glorious old-time preachers of the Word! Perish the pen that would do them dishonor! but, had they studied Christ more, and creeds and the fathers less, surely their hearts had been filled with the love of God; and their gentleness might have constrained maids like Ruth to sit—with reverence, not with terror—in their presence.

Minister Aldrich, in spite of many troubles, was a cheerful man; and his wife scarcely spoke without a sunny smile. She, in the long evenings, sang to the music of the spinnet, and sometimes Ruth sang. They said she had a wondrous voice.

Since the imprisonment of Sir John Willie, Margaret and Eleanor came oftener to the parsonage. The young secretary of Cotton Mather—or, as he was called in those days, "the clerk"—frequently made one of their number. Of late, the sunbeam face of Eleanor Saltonstall—with its rippling smile and curls, its changeful, gleeful light, its blooming cheeks—seemed to have a new attraction for him. Seeing this, perhaps, rather, *feeling* it, Eleanor grew more radiant, more charming.

Margaret always sought Ruth out; and the two would talk together of indifferent things, till, edging around all the streets of Boston, they made a full stop at last in Prison-lane

before the stone-jail, when both would enter: and henceforth it was not Ruth, the portionless orphan, with the governor's stately niece; but Ruth the suffering, the loving—Ruth the sister, made so by the sacredness of affection.

On that beautiful spring morning, Ruth heard the trumpet and the tramp of the warrior-horse. Little Imogene was wild at the sight of the soldier and his bright uniform. Ruth stood with the eager-eyed child, whose curls the light breeze blew all over her milk-white forehead, at an open window. The crowd was gathering, hurrying by on the sidewalk—children, men, and women—the townsmen sometimes lifting their hats at the shout—

"God save the king!"

Suddenly a hand was upstretched from the crowd, and a rough brown paper fell within the window, at Ruth's feet.

The sensitive child turned quickly towards Ruth, who had picked up and now held the paper in her hand. Imogene had seen neither the movement nor the missive, but all the glad light faded from her face. She said sadly, as her lip quivered and her eyes filled with tears—

"Take me down."

Then she clasped Ruth's gown tightly, and followed her everywhere, with troubled glances; nor could Ruth find a minute to read the paper until she left the room.

At the sight of the writing, her heart beat almost to bursting; and through hot, anguished tears, she traced the rude writing. Thus it read:

"Ruth, come again; only once more, between nine and ten. Come to the little cove next to the wharf where the ferry-boat lies, Ruth; for God's sake, Ruth, don't fail me. They don't ferry over after six; so there is no danger of your being seen, if you are careful. Ruth, I shall never see you again—this is my last prayer. O Ruth, don't fail me!"

"Another bitter, bitter trial!" issued from Ruth's pale lips, as she sat white and nerveless—sat without moving, till the sweet, silvery voice of Imogene was heard, calling her.

"I'm coming, dear."

She could not meet the calm, questioning eyes of the little child, so she smiled without looking at her, and finding an opportunity, slipped the paper in the flame. But her sad face betrayed her every moment. She tried once or twice to break the unnatural hush of the room, for Imogene never spoke, but hovered near with many a little noiseless caress, and seemed not to care to play at all.

A note came near night, informing Ruth that the minister and his wife would not be home till ten o'clock, perhaps later, and charging Ruth to look after Imogene. They had been gone all day on some important business connected with a will that had lately been submitted to a contest in England.

"Worse and worse," murmured Ruth, almost wringing her hands. "I must not leave *her*—I must see *him*. "But she will be here—safe, sleeping; and I shall never see him again. Oh yes, I must! I *must* go; he will keep me but a moment, when I tell him what I have left. I must go, and trust her to God!"

Chapter Forty-sixth.

IN WHICH RUTH HAS A TERRIBLE CONVICTION FORCED
UPON HER.

By every little artifice that Ruth could think of, she tried to lure Imogene to her bed. The child had never before shown so strange a contrariety. She refused to have her clothes removed, though in her own sweet, coaxing way, and still sat by the fire, her great, unearthly eyes fastened upon Ruth.

"I don't want to sleep—you'll go with the naughty man," she said, as again and again Ruth importuned. At last Imogene compromised. "You may put my bed-gown over my frock," she said, "if it will make you feel better; but I mustn't go to sleep—I *must* keep wide awake!"

And certainly her spirit-like eyes justified the assertion, for they looked, indeed, as if they were compelled to keep wide awake. But long after the usual hour, the little creature began to grow weary. Her dear head fell over on Ruth's knee; and there they sat, Ruth scarcely daring to breathe, while a sweet slumber gained upon the weary, watchful Imogene.

"God has sent you for my good angel, sweet darling!" murmured Ruth, taking her up tenderly and laying her on the bed. Imprinting a kiss upon the dewy lips, she knelt down, asked God to forgive her, if in what she was doing there was aught of wrong. Then, tying on her bonnet, and folding a large shawl about her, she left, without speaking to the

servants, by a back entrance, saying to herself, as she drew the door to carefully, "I will certainly be back so soon, nobody shall miss me."

There was a moon and a cloudless sky, so that the streets looked very light. But few people were abroad; but, in hastily turning a corner, Ruth came in contact with a gentleman, so that he caught her to save her from a fall.

"Ruth!" he said, sternly—for it was Cotton Mather, on his way from the Red Lion; "unhappy girl, why do I find thee here, at this late hour?"

"I—am—going"—murmured Ruth, faintly, overcome with her confusion.

"Alas! I fear going that road from which no prayers can bring thee back. Miserable child! can nothing save thee? Art thou lost, lost—forever lost?"

There was fever in Ruth's veins, fierce fever on her cheek. She could have dropped there, and sunk into the earth before him! Oh, to be thought of as she knew, by his words, his manner, what he must think, and she powerless to defend herself—it was agony! She tried to pass him.

"My poor maid," he said, and it seemed as if there were tears in his very voice—"I mourn thee as a shepherd would mourn a lost lamb; but I fear Satan hath possession of thee. Go, unfortunate; but when, in the misery to which, sooner or later, sin must bring thee—when even those who smile on thee leave thee to the torture of the undying worm, then send for thy minister, whose counsel thou hast set at naught, and he will gladly come and kneel by thee, and commend thee to Heaven's mercy."

It seemed to Ruth as if she was turning to marble, as he spoke thus. Her tongue felt palsied, or she would have cried out what her heart wailed: "Oh, my God, has no one mercy on me?" For a moment she stood where he had left her—

her head like one burning coal, her feet chilled as the stones they pressed—her hands, ice. But this was no time for tears, for regrets—I will not say for a guiltless shame—that had permeated every fibre of her frame.

"He thinks me lost, he despises me. Oh, to bear *this* also!"

A few hot tears fell to the ground, a few sighs ascended to the pitying Deity, and she hurried forward, meeting now and then some suspicious loiterer, who stopped to look, but soon went on his way. Nearly breathless, and no little frightened, she gained the place she sought, a sheltered point of land, running out far into the water, and made secluded by the thick trunks of a few trees on one side, and a pile of rough lumber on the other. Here she sank down, literally speaking, nearly dead—for her fright, her meeting with Cotton Mather, and the secrecy were too much for her; and, with her hand held against a heavily beating heart, she listened for coming footsteps. She had not to listen long. A man emerged from the shadow, very cautiously, and, in the moonlight, appeared to her excited imagination of gigantic height and dimensions.

"Is this Ruth?" he asked, his voice issuing thickly from under the cloak in which he was muffled.

"You wished to see me; speak quickly, for pity's sake. Here is a little money—not so much as the last time, but all I have. Take it, if it will aid you, only let me go—don't keep me. Good heavens, you are not he!" and Ruth, springing to her feet, stood ready to fly.

"He is very sick—dangerously so," said the man, softening his tone; "desperately hurt, and the poor fellow calls you from morning till night."

"Where is he?" Ruth asked, trembling from head to foot.

"On one of the islands not far out in the harbor. My boat will be here presently."

"You cannot think"—Ruth's voice was nearly lost in her terror—"you cannot think I would go with—a—stranger." A wild, indefinable dread filled her heart—she stepped back a pace or two.

"If you would see him in this world, you must go with me; it will not take long—only an hour. I will bring you back immediately. Poor soul! to hear him cry for you! to hear his voice—so piteous! to see him hold out his hand for a grasp of yours—I say, it's a sorrowful sight. I shouldn't wonder if there's something on his mind he wants to tell you before he dies."

"Before he dies!" echoed Ruth, in a low, awe-struck tone; "oh, is it so bad as that? What shall I do? How did it happen?" she asked, tearfully, a moment after.

"It happened last night—no matter how," was the answer.

"Was—was he—fighting?"

The words struggled out of her mouth—a thrilling horror veiled them.

"He got a devilish bad cut," said the man, muttering to himself.

"And—who are you?" asked Ruth, her terror increasing, and nearly mastering her.

"I—why—I'm nobody you need to be frightened at. If you—~~it~~ it a secret, I'll let you into an item or two regarding myself. I'll whisper to you that I'm the governor's nephew. What do you think of that? I'm the brother of handsome Margaret Aldrich; what do you think of that, too?"

At that moment Ruth caught sight of his face and grew faint. A bold, defiant face it was—but its beauty was reckless and sensual, and as his cloak flew open, he stooping towards her, she saw a long beard and curls of a jetty black hanging over his collar.

Imogene's vision—Imogene's terror flashed over her soul. She did not breathe for a space, so appalled was she by the remembrance of the child's words—the child's watching care. The man stood impatient, ready to spring towards her, watching her with a tiger-like glance, ready also to spring towards the boat, over whose tardiness he muttered many an imprecation.

"Maybe you doubt me," he said, taking a position to intercept her if she should attempt to escape. "Maybe you don't want to go with me."

Ruth's faculties were widely awake now.

"Oh yes, I do," she lifted her pale face—in her soul she prayed to be delivered from this great danger; "yes, you say he calls for me, my place is at his side—oh, if but this moment I were there!"

"You'd hardly know him," returned Captain Bill, now quite reassured; "cut all to pieces—the fellows fought like demons," he muttered to himself in low, excited tones.

Suddenly, with an awful distinctness, like a cold, sharp blow from some unseen hand, it flashed over her that here was one of the murderers of the poor soldiers on board the Prudent Sarah. She remembered how the awful news was told—that the men must have made almost superhuman efforts to save themselves—that the deck was slippery with blood. It chilled her heart to the very core—she grew too faint to support herself, and sank down upon a chance seat—a drifted log covered with dried seaweed. Had he who sent for her borne a hand in that night's hellish work? Then would she steel her heart against him forever.

She looked up; Captain Bill was watching her keenly. Regaining her presence of mind, she folded her hands together, exclaiming with no simulated anguish, "Will the boat *never* come! oh! how long!"

The man was thoroughly deceived by her words—her manner.

"Wait," he said, "I have not dared use it, but I have a whistle here. I'll just go to the corner—you sit where you are—and in less than five minutes, I'll warrant we have the boat."

In less than five minutes, Ruth fell like a stone within Mistress Bean's kitchen.

Chapter Forty-seventh.

IMOGENE LOST AND RESTORED.

THE poor widow, what with her fright previously, and the altogether unexpected entrance of one whose absence she had been lamenting all day, knew hardly which way to turn—whether to fly from, or to take charge of, the terrified, half-lifeless creature at her feet.

Mistress Comstock, however, acted with greater energy, and while the widow stood wondering and lamenting, she had forced a few drops of brandy between her pale lips, and Ruth could support herself.

"Who will go home with me—who?" she cried, wildly. "I must fly this moment—for I left her alone."

"Don't think of going out, to-night, Ruth," said Mistress Bean; "you must stay here. You look like a ghost, child, —where have you been? what frightened you? Ruth Margerie, whatever are we to think of you! what a strange being you are!"

"I know you feel so—I know others feel so," replied Ruth, forcing herself to be calm. "I have borne enough already to wish myself in the grave beside my mother." She sobbed, woefully—but in a moment dashing the tears from her eyes, she cried again, "Is there no one to go home with me? They left little Imogene in my charge, and her parents will come back, and if *they* find me missing—" she wrung her hands, "then I shall have no friends—no more—forever."

"There's the schoolmaster," suggested Mistress Comstock; "I'll go ask him;" and away went the motherly old soul. When she came back to help Ruth, to place her bonnet more evenly, to pin her shawl more closely, she pressed her trembling hands.

"Always remember that *I* don't think ill of thee, cosset," she said, passing her arm around the little frame that trembled so.

"Oh, thank you! thank you!" sobbed Ruth. She was so grateful for a kind word.

The old schoolmaster was quite willing to accompany Ruth; and she, as she leaned on his arm, thought how beautiful it would be! how it would brighten her path with sunshine, if she had only a father like him!

Alas! with that thought came the keenest pain of her life!

Thoroughly wretched, Ruth hastened to her room, and had but just placed her things away, when the minister and his wife came in. Ruth stood smoothing her hair at the mirror, wondering what they would think of her pinched, white face, when Mrs. Aldrich entered with a light step.

"O Ruth!" she said, in her sweet, cheerful way, "I was going to tell you—" then came a pause followed by a quick, piercing cry—

"Where's my child?"

Ruth flew to the bedside. The clothes were thrown back, the pillows disarranged—there was nobody there.

"My God! where's my child?" cried Mrs. Aldrich, frightened at Ruth's fearful face, and so loudly that Mr. Aldrich came hurrying in.

Ruth neither spoke nor moved.

"My child! my child! Parris," cried the mother in the same hollow, muffled voice, "go look! go in the ser-

vants' rooms—in our room—everywhere. Ruth Margerie, look!—why don't *you* look? Did you leave the room? Speak, girl!—or have *you* stolen my precious babe?"

But to all these passionate cries Ruth could make no answer; she could not speak. A dull, roaring sound, a distant, deadened rumbling, as if she heard the tumult of far-off waves, was all she was conscious of. Mrs. Aldrich seemed frightened for her, and, pushing her a little, made her go backwards until she came to a chair, where she sat her down. Forever and forever that ringing in her ears—that cold, passionless, stony feeling! Was this eternity?

One hour went by—two hours. She had not moved, not so much as an eyelash—when, with a flash of light, as if the heavens had opened, there stood Imogene; then she was on her lap, fondling, murmuring, kissing. This was so strange! It was something to make one laugh—and she did laugh, oh, how long! wildly! madly! Laughed till everybody cried, and Imogene ran to her mother, grieving.

That awakened her to consciousness. The bewilderment faded slowly; and she saw, standing very near her, a man, roughly garbed, who was looking from her to Imogene, apparently wondering what it all meant.

"You see, sir," he began telling his story, "Marchant Stokes hired me to watch outside o' his shop—this here murder here making folks suspicious. So, as I stood there—it might be nigh ten, or so—I sees something that made my flesh creep, come round the corner. I thought it was a spirit, with its white dress, and long, dancing hair; and I holds my breath with mortal fear, as it comes on. Presently, I felt a little cold hand tetch me; and even then I wern't sarten whether it were flesh and blood, till a little voice says—

"Please, carry me home."

"Then you *are* a mortal being," says I—for the face was

so onearthly, especially with the moon shining on it, that I thought maybe 'twas an angel. Says she—

"I'm Imogene, and I've been looking for Ruth—won't you take me home?"

"Says I, 'Where's your home, little one? and who is Ruth?' and I begun to remember then who it was.

"I'm little Imogene Aldrich," was the reply; and I never see nothin' of that bigness look so womanly. 'Ruth takes care of me,' said she, 'and I waked up and Ruth wasn't there—so I came to find her; but Ruth's gone home now.'

"I declare t'ye, I begin to feel my flesh creep agin and my hair rise; for I'd heered that the child was uncommon—so I jest took her up, and she put her arms round my neck, and lay like a little dove cuddling down to my bosom while I brought her. Well, sir, p'raps I may look a little soft-hearted, crying here; but I had a child, sir—gone to heaven, now—that used to cuddle jest so. But *she's* mysterus!" he added solemnly; "I hope you'll keep her."

When Ruth came to entire consciousness of the past—of the present—the man was gone. Mrs. Aldrich was weeping tears of joy over the child, who had fallen into a sweet slumber.

"I wonder how far she had been in the dark night," she murmured, laying the little one in her bed, with many a silent kiss. "And what went you for, Ruth? We trusted you so entirely," she added, in a regretful voice.

"Ruth can clear herself, I know," spoke the minister, with confidence.

And Ruth did clear herself. In a low, tearful tone—trembling like a leaf as she talked, interrupted often with gushing tears and sighs of heart-anguish—Ruth *did* clear herself, triumphantly.

"My poor maid!" cried the rector, in pitiful accents, taking the burning hand in his; while gentle Mrs. Aldrich threw her arms impulsively about the neck of the harshly censured girl, and kissed her forehead; and the minister said—

"I will inform the magistrates, to-morrow."

Chapter Forty-eighth.

IN WHICH THE GOVERNOR GOES MORE THAN A STEP TOO FAR.

It was a strange sight for the Puritan Sabbath! Impatient groups stood on the corner of the street leading to the church of the Mathers. Mounted men, who had come from a distance, not having heard the tyrannical edict of Sir Edmund Andros, reined in their impatient steeds while they heard the explanations and regrets of indignant townsmen, who gesticulated with more violence than grace, and shook their heads in a way that betokened deeply-outraged feelings. Men and women regarded the closed doors, some with tearful eyes and flushed faces, as they thought of the sacrilege (to them) permitted in the house of God. Ever and anon sounded on the air sonorous responses and solemn chanting. Close to the church stood soldiers on guard, ranged along each side, bearing themselves with a proudly regal air. In the centre of the yard, the governor's equipage—a high barouche, to which were harnessed two superb English stallions, a man in splendid livery on the box—glistened in its gold and varnish and burnished coat of arms. More and more restless grew the excitable groups, and steadily the street filled up. The threatening voices sounded louder, and the low hum kept swelling to a deep, ominous thunder, and subsiding only to break out into a fiercer depth.

Still, straight and stern stood the governor's guard, looking neither to the right nor the left, scanning the faces

directly before them with that same immobility of glance with which they would have regarded an advancing army.

"Saw you the strange lights in the heavens last night, Master Ross?" asked an old man, who, with folded arms, had seemed more quiet than the rest.

"Ay! did I—the broadsword descending directly on this doomed town, and the blood-red flame, that covered the sky like a mantle dipped in gore. It was a frightful spectacle, good-man Browne, and did make my flesh creep."

"They say there was a horseman seen in the west, with a cross underneath him," added a young man, eagerly. "The papistical worshippers may well tremble."

"The vengeance of the Lord!" muttered a stately-looking personage with a long cue and a flowing beard. "Oh! would that this right arm was that of a Moses! Then would I smite the father of tyrannies."

"And my poor man lying in jail!" muttered Mistress Comstock, pulling nervously at the strings of her great calash. "Well, it would mightily grieve him to see this sacrilege, I'm thinking."

"Turned out of the very house of God!" cried Mistress Scates, with angry gestures. "I would Scates were here!—bless me! how he would storm! I would that I might see this governor caged like a wild beast!"

"Hear their popish chanting!" they muttered, growing more and more restless as the minutes went on, and swaying towards the meeting-house.

"'Tis an hour past the time," said the schoolmaster, lifting his cocked hat and baring his broad brow to the wind.

"Let us enter and compel them to vacate," cried a hot-blooded youth, who had for some moments been striving to overthrow the equanimity of the British guard, by prancing up and down so near them that the horse's hoofs almost touched the line made by their feet.

"Yes, we can bear this outrage no longer," came up from all parts of the vast crowd. "Are we dogs, to be trampled upon?"

"To the meeting-house! to the meeting-house!" was the subdued, but fearful cry. The soldiers stood still, straight and stern as ever, but a slight rattling sound was distinguishable, running from end to end of their ranks. The crowd pressed together more eagerly yet—men, women, and even the children, seemed animated by the desire to defend their inalienable rights.

"Woe to them—woe!" cried the old man with white, waving locks, whose long beard and thoughtful face gave him a prophet-like dignity; "woe unto them that oppress my people, saith the Lord God."

An attack now seemed imminent. Defiance and religious zeal gloomed fiercely in the faces of the people. The rattling ran along the line of soldiers with a louder ring, and for the first time there was a slight movement perceptible in the persons of the guards. They seemed preparing for action, and grim smiles flitted across their faces.

When it seemed, at last, as if the whole force would swarm together (while the lolling coachman, the insolent footman, and one of the governor's servants, vexed them with silent but expressive taunts), and smite down the closed doors of their own beloved temple, a loud, deep voice was heard, saying:

"Be strong and courageous; be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him. For there be more with us than with him."

"With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles!"

Almost instantaneously a hush fell upon the people, as they heard the beloved tones of their pastor; and Cotton Mather appeared in their midst, his face shining as if fresh

from the baptism of prayer. They made no more threatenings while he was with them; and presently the carriage of Lady Anne Bellamont appearing, the church doors were thrown open, and the governor-general, bowing haughtily right and left, appeared with his secretary and the dignitaries of state. These were allowed to pass quietly—the guard drew into marching order, the secretary rode by his excellency's barouche, the soldiers glittered into rank and file, and the people entered their meeting-house, expecting, almost, to see the *mene, mene* of the former sacrilegious gathering upon its walls.

A gloom had settled over that body of religious worshippers. Their rights had been wrested from them—their protests treated with contempt; while the absence of certain resonant sounds from the choir-gallery reminded them that in the pestilent jail were incarcerated some of their most worthy brethren; and an unuttered, but not unregistered vow, went up to heaven. Another thing had grieved them. They had seen Ruth Margerie among the Episcopalians; the pale Ruth, who, at the cold, averted looks cast at her from all who had gathered there, held down her burning face, clinging only the more devotedly to the dainty, ungloved hand of Imogene, who, in a sweetly-serious way, smiled on the threatening faces about her, even as she drew closer to Ruth as if to protect, and to be protected. Not one of all that company professing Christ, save, perhaps, Mistress Comstock, had either charity or compassion for Ruth. In their suspicious eyes, she was marked as plainly as if she carried the badge of disgrace upon her brow. "And oh! pity," they said, "she had gone from the Church of her fathers to the ceremonials of a papistical service!"

So Ruth was quietly, and without compunction, made over to the devil.

Chapter Forty-ninth.

TRIALS AT COURT, SERIOUS AND OTHERWISE.

RETURN we to the jail, where the remains of old Goody Shrimp having been interred (decently or not, none knew), the inmates awaited their trials before the magistrates. The people were waiting, perhaps more impatiently than the prisoners. Several of the wealthiest citizens were eager to offer bail to any amount for Sir John Willie; and, on the day of the trial, as many as could enter filled the court-room (which was none of the most spacious), where, robed as became their dignity, sat the magistrates, stern and solemn.

Among the spectators who sat near the bench, were the governor's secretary, and one other obnoxious individual, who, it was evident, intended to enjoy the discomfiture of the accused—for they well knew what law would be dealt out to them. Returning the frowning looks of the people with contemptuous smiles and haughty gestures, the secretary would sometimes speak with his companion in words so loud and so insulting, that they roused an honest indignation in every manly breast.

The schoolmaster was in attendance, indicating to a stranger who sat near him the different personages in office.

"That man," he said, pointing slightly with his cane, "is Justice Bullivant. Is there not an evil spirit perched in his bushy eyebrows, that seem to have the faculty of sight equally with his eyes? He is the steadfast friend of the gov-

ernor, or of any who have either rank or money. Thou mayst see he is fond of good living by his capacious waist. The next is Justice Foxcraft—a cunning gentleman, subtle and deep read in the law. The next—but here come the prisoners. I judge, by the manner in which they are brought, they think to dispatch them quickly.”

The preliminaries of the court were lagged through, the justices not feeling their position a very agreeable one. The first man put on trial was Sir John Willie, who asked respectfully to be allowed to choose his own justice. Of course, a flat denial was the answer. His papers were demanded, previous to the business being commenced; but, with cheek and brow resentfully flushed, he refused to deliver them. He was then charged with bringing into the country a traitorous and treasonable libel, and, after an apology of a trial, and a short, unjust speech, ordered to prison, notwithstanding he offered them two thousand pounds, and friends doubled the amount. The court was resolved to punish him for his obstinate adherence to his indignant protest against right of search. At this, one might have seen written on the white faces, gleaming eyes, and set lips, a determination that boded no good to the justices assembled; but they were occupied in their own schemes, and the prisoner was led away.

Father Comstock, Gaffer Scates, and their aiders and abettors, were next dispatched, with as little ceremony, for several months' imprisonment—and with less show of law or even of dignity. Master Cameron and Marmaduke were called up. The circumstances connected with them—the deep mystery of the recent murder on board of the “Prudent Sarah”—the quaint, half-foolish, half-frightened face of Marmaduke, with its one eye—sufficed to give a greater interest to the proceedings.

After the captain was arraigned for witchcraft, the witnesses were called, and the examination proceeded. The principal testimony brought against him was that of the jewel-merchant, who brought forward some ridiculous evidence with regard to the delay of the vessel, its supernatural motions, the disappearance of certain articles, and their mysterious reappearance. The young shipmaster's eye would occasionally flash, and his free, indignant spirit break out into words of defiance, for which he was severely reproved. During the course of the examination, several old women of haggish appearance were summoned to testify that the young master had bewitched them. Had they been younger by some scores of years, there might have been a show of truth in their assertions. One of the crones averred that her son had lately died of a strange disease, having been a foremast-hand on the Prudent Sarah; and that he declared, with his dying breath, that Master Cameron had bewitched him.

This, to the sage wisdom assembled in the body of the justices, was triumphant evidence, especially as two of the old beldames confessed that they had once had dealings with the devil, and knew all the signs.

“Abominable liars!” cried the captain, at last losing all patience, as they proceeded to relate some matters for whose details they were indebted solely to imagination.

“I'll back him up there!” muttered Marmaduke Catchcod.

“Silence!” cried the justices, angrily.

“Yes, you would silence me, perhaps, as you have silenced that poor old creature whose body, but three days ago, was taken from the jail—a monument of your unparalleled superstition,” shouted the captain, his splendid eyes lighted with a fire that made his accusers tremble.

“Darest thou, rash young man, to call *that* superstition

which Holy Scripture declareth to be of the devil?" demanded Justice Bullivant, his little black eyes twinkling wrath in mimic flashes into the face that awed even him, so severe was its beauty. "Then thou art an infidel, and deservest no mercy. In our minds thy case is clear, thou God-forsaken man! We have already sufficient evidence to commit thee to the flames or the rope; but will, in consideration of thy youth, remand thee to prison, there to await another trial."

Up spoke a wizzen-faced old man, who passed for a lawyer:

"Perhaps, your honor, the maid called Ruth Margerie could tell thee more of yonder devil's dealings. I have heard that she doth confess to being bewitched by him."

"It is a lie—a naked and infamous lie!" cried the captain, turning white.

"We fine thee one hundred pounds for contempt of court, and order that the maid Margerie be summoned before us as soon as she may be found," said Justice Bullivant.

Captain Cameron straightened himself—bit his lip; while quivering chin—maddened brow—burning cheeks, purple where they were white before—gleaming eyes, full of vengeful flame, told how fearfully he was shaken at this outrage. But he was powerless, *as yet*—with all his strength, courage, and anger, he was powerless. Meantime it was suggested that the sailor be called upon the stand. Catchcod felt in his generous breast a glow of sympathy—a strong indignation, that made him, for the time, fearless and reckless of his own safety.

"Come hither, man. Who art thou? what's thy name?"

"Name, may it please your big-wigs," said the man, conscious that he must address them by some title commensurate with their dignity, "is Catchcod—commonly called Catchcod, Duke of Marma."

"Lower thy tone, man," said the chief-justice, frowning as he spoke. "What is your trade?"

"Trade! Lord love you, I ain't got no trade in particular; but I can curl you, cut you, shave you, trim you, pill you, book you, and cook you."

"Be careful how you answer for sport, fellow," said one of the justices, seeing the people, so quiet and threatening before, began to laugh; "confine yourself to the questions asked. I wish to know in plain terms if you're a sailor, and if so, in *what* have you sailed?"

"Am I a sailor? Yes, your big-wigs, I *are*" (with emphasis); "and as to what I has sailed in" (here he took a deep breath), "I has sailed in a snow—a ketch—a 'oy—a buss—a scow—a h'ark, that's a bloody man o' war, mind ye," he added, talking as fast as he could rattle, his one eye on the ceiling; "a gig—a funny—a dingy—a bumboat—a cobble—a punt—a coy—a kedge—a out-nigger catamaran,—gracious! you ought to see Catamaran Jack. Whiz and splash and he's flip-flop—clean into your decks—any thing but clean, though, come to think on't. Then there's the furrin things in outlandish ports, sich as the f'ist—the kick [caique]—the galley f'ist—the dagger—the howker—the—"

"Silence!" thundered the justice, annoyed at the open laughter all over the room; "witness will stop. Witness will continue on the stand," he added, as Marmaduke, thinking the word an order to take his seat, was backing out with dexterous movements.

"I'm bang up, your honor," replied the sailor. "By the jumping Jupiter! this is worse nor being in the Indy's a eating glue."

"Why dost not answer more tersely?" asked the chief-justice, with authority.

"Tersely! that's a sentence I'm onacquainted with," mut-

tered the prisoner; "but if I understand you right, I don't burn a candle at both ends—that ain't my way."

"Why don't you talk common sense?" asked one of the lawyers.

"Rats in the upper story, sir," he answered, tapping his forehead in such a ludicrous way that an explosive laugh sounded all over the room.

"We must do something to bring the prisoner to proper respect, your honor, or this trial cannot progress. I—"

"Tide it over, judge! tide it over!" cried Marmaduke, winking his one eye, thinking it fine sport to set the people laughing.

"The constable will put this man in the stocks immediately," said Justice Bullivant, his face growing red. "There shall he remain twenty-four hours for contempt of court."

"Lud, sir!" cried Marmaduke, startled into sobriety; "I thought I was talking as fine as a carrot. I'll double my marrow-bones t'ye, sir, if that'll do any good. I don't want to be stockined, sir—what'll it boot?"

But Catchcod was promptly taken off, and hurried to the stocks.



Chapter fiftieth.

CAPTAIN CAMERON FREE BY THE LAW OF FORCE.

THE justices did not altogether like the appearance of things. The expression of every countenance in the room was a riddle they could not solve; it seemed like that of one man—and he, determined, defiant, but forbearing. Captain Cameron writhed in his seat as Ruth was ushered into the crowded court-room. The secretary had been playing with the hilt of his sword, occasionally, however, pausing to address his friend with a smile and a shrug. His insolence was palpable, and though Captain Cameron had scarcely thought of him before, he shuddered now as he gazed that way. Oh, to bring that rare beauty before the corrupt gaze of the boastful, licentious secretary! Oh, to have her modest, ladylike bearing made the subject of his free scrutiny! It fired his blood and maddened his brain. He grew sick and dizzy as he saw how quickly the bold eye lighted with admiration—marked her every movement—heard him whisper his coarse approval of her looks.

It was very evident that the governor's secretary was astonished, not only at Ruth's loveliness, but the perfect ease and dignity with which, after the first few moments, Ruth accommodated herself to the circumstances in which she had innocently been placed. The blush still dyed her cheek, her eyes were downcast and veiled by their long lashes (they had fallen at first sight of the captain), but she did not falter in a

single reply, until one of the insolent lawyers propounded such questions that embarrassed her by their coarseness. Then she clasped her hands together, and with a sweet, piteous look appealed to every man before her; saw no mercy in their case-hardened faces, and hid her burning blushes, while her frame shook to falling.

"In the name of God and humanity!" cried Captain Cameron, springing to his feet.

"The young woman is ill," said a voice in the crowd; and cries of "shame! insult!" and words of deeper, darker portent fell from the lips of the crowd. The storm was ready to burst. Secure as they imagined themselves, the justices dared not go on; for of late there had been so many threats and rumors that they could not but see which way the tide of popular feeling was turning. Therefore they released the half-fainting girl.

But what was the horror of Captain Cameron to see the secretary, after a few whispered words, rise and leave the room the moment Ruth was led out. The sight nerved him to desperation. He was ready for an outbreak, and he saw encouragement in the knit brows and firm lips that surrounded him. He determined at that moment to achieve his liberty. He was remanded back to jail, but the hearing of the next and last case was scarcely begun, when the officer in whose charge the captain had been placed, rushed into court bruised and bloody, and yelling out—

"The prisoner! the prisoner! please your honors, has escaped, and left me with these marks."

There was instant commotion all over the room.

"He knocked me down and ran, and not so much as one lifted a hand, though many of the townsmen saw it!" cried the constable.

"That's the way to do it," said a sharp voice.

On that, every spectator sprang to his feet; then the crowd, giving one wild shout in defiance of the rules, and to the consternation of the assembled dignitaries, began their comments, talking fast and furiously, while the justices, shocked at this new sign of insubordination, vociferated in vain for order. The court broke up in the most reckless confusion.

Chapter fifty-first.

IN WHICH CATCHCOD DIGNIFIES STOCK-HOLDING BY HIS PHILOSOPHY.

WHEN it was known that the stocks, of late unused, were to be put in requisition again, a rabble crowd collected speedily. Children and half-grown lads followed the jolly sailor, who, now that he was fully committed, gave his lively tongue and his livelier fancy as much scope as he pleased.

"Here goes Catchcod, Duke of Marma, to be stockinged!" he cried, half turning to the grimacing, shouting procession. "Look here, mister," he added, as the people pressed closely, "don't you call this taking to one's heels? Sho! I'm clean gastered; I'm running away from the devil, and his imps are after me."

He was fastened in the instrument with considerable satisfaction by the constable, who, as he came round, grinned at the figure he cut—his head and hands thrust through corresponding holes, his one eye leering shockingly, his hair sticking like splinters to the wood.

"Well," said Catchcod, "you like it, don't you? I'm patience kicking on a monument. It's all very well—only I'd like something softer to kick—say you, Mr. Constable."

At this all the little boys roared, and took off their caps with unbounded respect for the plucky prisoner.

"This is a nice place to take an observation," cried Catchcod; "a werry nice place to see stars," he added trying to

lift his head. "Come, you varlets" (as his humorous fancy took a rebound), "here's a pig in a poke—going cheap—who'll buy? Fits like a glove, don't it?" he asked innocently, of a portly personage who stopped to examine the instrument. "Say, do you know why I'm like a man beginning in business? 'Cause I'm just sot up, and got a good deal on my hands likewise."

In a few moments the governor and his suite passed by. Having heard about the tumult, they were on the way to the court-house. His excellency paused a single moment, curious to see who was undergoing punishment. His face lighted up as he recognized the man.

"Hulloa! Rustycuss!" cried Catchcod, depending on his treacherous memory—spasmodically shutting his fingers as if pulling his forelock, and ducking his head to the best of his ability—while his one eye rolled unceasingly. "I hope your exodus is particlarkly well. I'm agreeable, except I ain't used to a fancy dress in public, and its 'noying to a modest man. I say—influenza—won't your ecclesiasticus libertize a poor sailor-cuss, as has did duty on the ocean over ten years? I always helps a lame dog over the fence, guv'ner."

"Silence! you fool," exclaimed one of the governor's suite, as his excellency strode haughtily away.

"You shet up!" was the independent rejoinder.

The children, little and large, stood by, grinning in delighted admiration, that was heightened to intense enthusiasm when the imprisoned man began to crow with stentorian lungs—making each "cock-a-doodle-do" to rival its predecessor in ear-splitting sound. Presently one would have thought the street full of bantam-roosters, for what Catchcod begun, the little urchins kept up indefatigably, while Catchcod laughed till the tears ran out of his one

queer eye. Adapting his versatile genius to successive imitations, he not only crowed, but barked, mewed, and roared, till the vicinity of the stocks seemed converted into a vast menagerie more noisy than musical.

Suddenly Catchcod paused, and with a look of the deepest solemnity said, slowly, and with an elongated countenance:

"I don't never recollect 'aving my 'ands occupied that my nose didn't itch. It's always sure to be so. Will that ar' little boy with the smock-frock and knees on both patches, scratch my nose for me?"

A yell followed the delivery of this sentimental speech, and the prisoner was assailed with a dozen hands, all ready to perform the agreeable office with more unction than was required, and which now he was powerless to prevent. They climbed upon the stocks—they shouted in his ears—they pulled his hair until he begged for mercy.

"Avast there—that'll do—avast! fall back, and I'll sing ye a song—fall back, if ye want to hear me sing."

The crowd stood off for a moment, waiting with looks of expectation, while Catchcod, "humming" innumerable times, and taking the pitch in as many keys, broke out in the following admirable impromptu:

"I'm a-going away,
Far over the sea,
And the country I sail for,
It is Amerikee.
But now I've anchor'd here,
"I wish I was away,
For a pesky mean place
Is Amerikay.

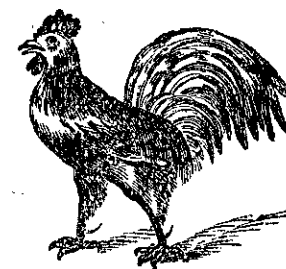
"If a man says a word,
Why they'll put him in the stocks—
A very queer thing
That the constable looks;

And the governor he looks
Like aristocrackit cur,
And he won't let his subjee
C—all him sur.

"So I'll call him the great
Ecclesiasticuss,
Who, for a little thing,
Makes a mighty big fuss;
And if there ain't in pickle
For him a big rod,
Then you may call me every thing
But Duke of Catchcod!"

"If I didn't know he was in court, I'd be bound to say there's Master Cameron making off down there. Hurrah!—cry out, little boys—its him; he's free!—he's free! Hurrah! hurrah!"

The rabble, not understanding him, were making preparation to coerce him into singing another song, by initiating sundry moves towards his nose, which bore marks of rude handling—when the constable appeared, and, with a long, flexible ratan, dispersed the children, who took their several ways for home with great reluctance, throwing back, by way of a gentle remonstrance, bits of earth and splinters, that were some of them so unfortunate as to come in contact with Catchcod's hardy face.



Chapter Fifty-second.

THE SECRETARY PUNISHED FOR HIS UNTIMED GALLANTRY.

FOR the present, the measures for arresting the murderers were abandoned. The people had evidently borne all the indignities they could, and with what patience they were able. The insubordination at the town-house was but the beginning of hostilities. A revolutionary spirit pervaded all classes of society. Justice Bullivant was meditating a voyage to England, to escape the trouble that was evidently brooding—the governor himself began to have secret fears for his life. Almost every day came threatening messages, demanding the liberation of Willie. Had this request been acceded to, it is probable that the townsmen would have felt better satisfied; but Sir Edmund possessed the narrow spirit of a tyrant and the obstinacy of a bigot. He doubled his guard, and assumed a yet more royal aspect whenever he went abroad. Dislike grew to hatred. The court attempted to sit again; but the wrathful people, pouring in, forced them to fly from the town-house. On every hand they met faces full of rage, and threats of defiance. The governor's secretary still bullied, still carried a bold front. He did not dream that the thing was other than a farce—a very broad farce, he said, that would end in crying, perhaps.

He prophesied.

"Now Heaven forgive me, child!" said Mistress Comstock one day, as Ruth stepped from the little entry into the

keeping-room, "if I wish ill to the governor. Didst say, Ruth, that they drove the justices from the town-house?—dear! dear! I hear no news since my good man is taken. Well—and the captain has got his liberty, too; wonderful! And thou wert coming by?"

Ruth repeated what she had seen, while Goody Comstock busied herself in pouring some savory mess into a deep kettle; and then securing the lid, she handed it to Ruth.

"God bless thee, cosset!" she said. "And tell me again that thou dost not fear. That pleasant minister!—surely, I can think no evil, even of an Episcopal, if he hath such a heart as thou sayest. How kind to get a permit of that bad man, the governor!"

"Ah! my poor goodman Comstock! I warrant thee he has not relished one mouthful of his food in that terrible place. Tell him his old mistress sent him a chicken-pie, and took master pains in the making of it; for she felt as if he was forsaken-like." The dame faltered, and put her check apron to her eyes for a brief moment; then threw it down again, and smiled through her tears.

"I don't think they'll harm him, cosset, otherwise than that damp place may bring on his rheumatics. Dost hear what a rumpus, child? Where can all the people be going to? See, there passes Governor Bradstreet—dear, saintly old gentleman!—he hath seen near a hundred. Do look again, Ruth! The boys have red ribbons in their button-holes, and carry clubs. Thou dost not think there will be open fighting? Dear, dear! I am loth to let thee go."

"Don't fear for me, mother—I have the governor's writing here, you know," said Ruth.

"Ah! but, cosset, the governor's writing may not be worth a fig. He hath so belittled himself. Well, go, cosset; with God's blessing—go."

Without fear, Ruth stepped out of the narrow little entry into the brilliant sunlight. The hurry and excitement pleased her for awhile, and covered the care in her heart. A tread too close to her own caused her to turn her head. Near by her side strode the governor's secretary, with burning glance intent upon her. With a familiar "good-day," he walked confidently along; and, whether she slackened or quickened her pace, he resolutely accompanied it.

"Let me carry thy burden, my pretty little maid," he said, holding forth his hand for the kettle; "thou art too ladylike for such servile business."

Ruth stopped, amazed.

"I do not know you, sir," she said.

"Don't know *me*, my dear?—don't know the governor's secretary? Why, yes—if thou chooseth, thou dost know me. Thou art a beautiful little maid; I have heard of thee—but of a surety the half hath not been told—no, nor the tenth part of thy sweet loveliness," he added, with a bold, admiring glance.

Ruth looked around, hoping to see some aid—but the crowd had passed, and the streets, save only the noise of the distant shouts, were still.

"Will you let me go my way, in peace?" asked Ruth, once more searching his face with her child-like, imploring gaze.

"Not in peace—unless—by heaven!" (he stepped resolutely forward), "there is no one here. Now just one kiss, my beauty—one kiss from those red lips! I swear thou art the brightest, the sweetest little maid! come—"

He was in the act of passing his arm around the shrinking girl, when a blow, dealt by a powerful hand, laid him senseless for the moment, and Ruth felt herself hurried along till a more public street was gained.

Not till he was leaving her did she see through the disguise he had assumed, the eyes, the features of Captain Cameron. It pained her heart to think that he had not so much as spoken with her; that his look was stern—while his grasp upon her arm reminded her of that never-to-be-forgotten night at the tavern—and he was armed.

"Alas! he will never be to me again what he has been," sighed poor Ruth. "Let me only get home to my Bible and my little Imogene—they will never desert me. Nobody can take her love from me, thank God!" and as she hurried to and from her mission, tears ready to fall, but nervously restrained, stood in her eyes.

She found Imogene watching at the window—watching with abstracted look for her father's return. Every little while the child would turn from her self-imposed task, and repeat in a tone of entreaty, "Please send for sister Maggie! do go for Maggie! My father must come home and go for Maggie!"

"Parris," said Mrs. Aldrich, as the rector came in, "there is trouble at the governor's house—or going to be."

"Trouble at the governor's? Nonsense, little woman. I just met his excellency on his way to the fort, in high spirits."

"I can't help that, Parris; Imogene is restless about them,—that frightens me. She has been talking of your going after them all day; and you know—"

Her looks expressed the rest.

"Yes, I know that when she is anxious, there's something going wrong. Well, dear, get me a cup of tea as quickly as possible, and I'll go over there as soon as I have drank it."

Imogene bounded away from her standing-place, and without saying a word went merrily at her play. One would have thought as she sang and danced, flitting from space to

space, as was her wont, that her little life had never been troubled even by a tear.

Neither Ruth nor the rector spoke aught of the tumult that had raged without. Occasionally Mrs. Aldrich would exclaim, "It seems to me there are unusual noises abroad," when the report of a gun was heard, or a distant huzza. Other than these occasional sounds, there was nothing to attract attention. The feelings of the populace were deep—in many cases too deep for any thing less than action.

Chapter Fifty-third.

IN WHICH THE TOWNS-PEOPLE TAKE JUSTICE INTO THEIR OWN HANDS.

MR. ALDRICH had said truly that he met the governor in his carriage riding towards the fort, but he little dreamed under what circumstances.

On the afternoon of the day on which Imogene seemed so much impressed, several personal friends of the governor waited upon him. They found him moody, and chafing under the indignities he had lately felt, but only very recently understood.

"Your excellency is not safe here," they said; "you must go to the fort. The populace threatens."

"What! shall we make ourself a prisoner? No! by God's mercy, no!" was the defiant answer. "Let them come, we'll treat them to powder and shot."

"That's just what we wish to do," they replied; "for that reason we suggested the fort. There your excellency has troops and cannon, and can soon put down this rebellion."

"By God's mercy!—hath it reached to that? Have the people taken up arms?"

The governor grew pale. He remembered that the townsmen had been wantonly provoked in too many cases.

"We regret to say that they have, excellency," replied the spokesman; "and we would take it upon ourselves to urge haste. Even now our movements may awake suspicion. I

hear they have taken solemn oath not to commence hostilities till to-morrow; still, I depend not on them."

"But our nieces?" exclaimed the governor, unwontedly agitated and looking helplessly about him as he walked hastily to and fro. "They are not here. I am told they are gone to ride with Lady Anne Bellamont. I cannot leave them."

"We will return for them, excellency. Every moment that passes as the twilight draws near, places a bar in the way of your escape."

"I have thy word that thou wilt return for my nieces," he said, pausing in his furious walk.

"We will."

"We are reduced to a pleasant strait!" muttered the now coward despot. "By God's mercy! I like it not," he added, drawing back; "am I not governor-general of this colony? I cannot—I cannot, gentlemen," he said, his white lips trembling; but by force of protestations and urging, he at length entered the vehicle prepared for him, and soon drew near the fort.

The carriage had not long been gone from government-house when the splendid equipage of Lady Anne dashed up to the door. The horses, hot and reeking, trembled so that they were managed with difficulty. Mud thrown hap-hazard, disfigured the panels, entirely covering the crested coat of arms; the windows were stained with the same foul matter.

Lady Anne sprang out first—her face discolored, her eyes blazing with passion.

"The wretches—the vipers!" she cried; "they shall pay dear for this. Were I the governor, I'd order them all shot down—insulting commoners!"

"O Lady Anne! shall we ever live through this day!"

cried Eleanor, her voice dry and hysterical; and Margaret, pale as a corpse, tearful, but speechless, followed the others into the drawing-room.

"I shall die of fright," moaned Eleanor, throwing herself on the first couch. "Oh! to see them surround the carriage! their awful blackened faces! their horrid masks! To hear their frightful talk about uncle! O Margaret, I'm afraid they'll kill him!" and bending her head, she sobbed convulsively.

Margaret was calmer. She rang for a servant. The gray porter came.

"John," she asked fearfully, "where is the governor?"

"I'm sure I don't know, my lady," said the man. "He went off in a carriage with several gentlemen."

"Who were they—enemies or friends, John?" cried Margaret, clasping her hands, her tones husky with terror.

"They was friends, my lady, but they all acted mighty mysterus. Mrs. Clough hath gone and left, saying that the house is bewitched—and likewise many more of the servants took it into their addle-pates to leave this afternoon."

"O Margaret, Margaret! worse and worse! Where shall we go? Shall we be safe at your house, Lady Anne?"

"There's no safety there," said her ladyship, pinning up her disordered tresses. "I had warning to leave this morning. I laughed at the threat then—but now I think it not idle."

"Shall I get supper, ladies?" asked the porter. "I can put on the cold meat and—"

"O John, for heaven's sake don't mention supper. We shall all be murdered!"

"I hope it isn't so bad as that, my lady," said the porter anxiously.

"There is no danger, Eleanor—only be calm," said Mar-

garet. "The people would not, I am sure, injure defenceless women."

"The young clerk of the South Church called not long ago," said John; "he left word that he would be here by seven."

It was astonishing how quickly Eleanor's tears grew dry upon this information.

"We shall not be wholly without protection, then," she said, her face brightening. "It is now past six—I would I were not so nervous."

"There seems to be an unwonted light in the streets," remarked Lady Anne.

"And shouts—I certainly hear fearful shouts!" cried Eleanor.

For many moments they listened, trembling. Yes, distant shouts were heard—they sounded nearer and yet nearer.

"For God's sake, John, go and see what it is!" cried Eleanor, whose excessive fright had robbed her face of every trace of color, and whose nerves the riotous assemblage of the afternoon had seriously shocked.

The man went out, but hardly a moment had elapsed before he returned, saying that the people were rising, that the jail had been forcibly opened and all the prisoners set free. They had torches, he said, and were singing revolutionary hymns, and out doors it sounded awfully. The old man looked as thoroughly bleached as his white locks, and it was evident that he had made up his mind to leave the house.

"Oh! my uncle!" shrieked Eleanor. "Margaret, we are powerless—let us fly."

"Why had we not wit enough to drive to your father's, Margaret?" asked Lady Anne.

"Oh, no—I'm glad we're here," returned Margaret; "if my uncle comes, perhaps we might protect him."

"Oh! the horrible wretches! Are they wild beasts?—hear them howl!" cried Lady Anne. "Well, God have mercy on us!"

"Do you think they'll fire the house?" cried Eleanor, starting up. "See the frightful glare! I shall die! I know I shall die of fright! Will nobody come? will nobody save us?" she wrung her hands piteously.

By this time the excited populace were nearly at the gate. Their cries sounded terrific. Eleanor hung upon her cousin, nearly fainting, quite helpless. Margaret had sufficient presence of mind to lock the door—now she approached the fire and lighted several candles.

"Margaret—are you mad, girl?" cried Lady Anne.

"No; I am proving my sanity," was the almost calm reply. "If they found the house dark they would think it was by design, and try all the sooner to enter it."

"The governor! we want the governor, and the governor's right hand!" (meaning the secretary,) resounded through the streets. Hoarse and unnatural were their voices with long shouting, and the multitude of torches gave to the night a look as if the world were on fire. Their resinous smoke penetrated even the closed windows. All manner of imprecations attended the cry.

"What shall we do?" whispered Eleanor, faintly; "they will force the door."

Margaret was unloosing the soft stuffs of which the curtains were composed. The mob evidently saw her, for they were quiet. In spite of Lady Anne's wild protests, and Eleanor's cries, the dauntless girl stood on the balcony alone. A great shout went up—men admire bravery in a woman—then it was still again.

"Gentlemen—the governor is not at home," she said, tremulously, but so that she could be heard.

"Don't believe it," said a coarse voice in the crowd—and up went the roar again. Nearly fainting, Margaret hurried within. Her father stood back in the shadow, and, flying towards him, with a low cry she fell into his arms.

"The crowd was ahead of me," he whispered; "I could not get here before. As it was, I gained the back entrance with the greatest difficulty. Do not be frightened, I entreat you, they will not harm *you*. Sir John is among them—you can hear him now, giving orders. They respect him—they obey him like children. He will see that no trouble comes to any of us."

They could distinctly hear a familiar voice expostulating.

Presently a single knock sounded at the door. It was opened. Sir John Willie, very pale, very earnest, but smiling, entered alone.

"The ladies can pass out," he said, "provided they go singly. I have secured a conveyance for you, of which Mr. Ross has charge. It stands on the street below, and some of our best men will escort you through the crowd. Be brave, ladies, there is no possible danger. Captain Cameron is at the door, with two good citizens and old men, Comstock and Scates."

"Will they let *me* pass, do you think?" asked Lady Anne, in a scornful voice.

"I have their word, that *all* the ladies can pass—and they are becoming impatient—they wish to find the governor; I don't think they'll harm the premises. Now is the time."

Eleanor was ready first. She went out, and her strength failed her at sight of the glowing faces, the red torches, the lurid atmosphere. But it was very evident that she was no man in disguise, so the great crowd gave a lusty cheer, and made a passage for her, respectfully commenting on her beauty.

When Margaret ascended, a louder and yet more enthusiastic cheer greeted her, and she too was led without difficulty to the carriage.

Then came Lady Anne. As she stood there, so defiantly dark, so stormily beautiful, not a voice was lifted—a low, angry murmur ran from lip to lip.

"O Cameron, I fear those dreadful creatures," she said, on recognizing him—"protect me."

"With my life!" exclaimed the young man, and, taking her hand, they descended together, amidst an ominous silence. It was well his manner spoke determination; for, as it was, he was obliged to exert his authority to protect her from insult. Only the few most bitter, most rabid, in their hatred of all kingly authority, however, attempted such an indignity. At last came the rector, Aldrich. An audible sneer sounded—the words "pope," and "Rome" could be distinguished; but Sir John Willie, in his calm voice, exclaimed, "Gentlemen, this is a preacher of righteousness—he is under *my* protection. As you value my esteem, let him pass in safety."

Again arose the cry, "the governor, and the governor's right hand!" As the clergymen followed the ladies, a rush was made for the governor's mansion.

Chapter Fifty-fourth.

IN WHICH IMOGENE PAYS NO REGARD TO ETIQUETTE.

IN silence and in safety, the ladies, with the rector, were driven to the parsonage. Mr. Ross there gave up the reins, and, finding Eleanor, together the four entered the cheerful sitting-room, where they saw, quite unexpectedly, Randolph, the governor's secretary, who, full of rage and unquiet, strode from end to end of the well-lighted apartment, only stopping to bow haughtily, and cast a sour look at Eleanor, who had, more than once, treated him with marked dislike.

The little group sat near the fire, filled with sad forebodings, when Mrs. Aldrich came in, followed by Ruth and Imogene. Ruth flushed as she met the now shamed face of the detested secretary. Imogene, in her childish joy at sight of her sister and cousins, flung back her floss-like curls, and, her blue ribbons fluttering, she flew towards them; but, meeting the basilisk gaze of Lady Anne, she started, stopped, and clung irresolutely to her mother's side. It was at that moment she encountered the glance of the secretary, who had never been able, with all his blandishments, to lure the child to his side. Straightening her little form, she turned, with childish grace and dignity, and, walking towards the door, she said, with an earnest voice, "Ruth, please let me out."

The lip of the black-hearted man curled with anger and scorn; for, in his soul, he knew that his nature forbade the approach of any thing pure and heavenly.

"Imogene, darling, we haven't seen you yet," pleaded Margaret.

"*You* come, too—and Ruth, and Eleanor, and mamma," said the child, in a distinct voice, with an impressive manner, and a nod towards each; then repeated, with a gentle authority, "Ruth, please let me out."

"Go, Ruth—I hope you will excuse my child," said Mrs. Aldrich, in some confusion, turning towards the secretary; "she is at times a little wilful and peculiar."

The secretary resumed his walk, and Lady Anne replied, or rather retorted, with a very unpleasant laugh—

"To be sure, we are all aware that Imogene is famous for her incivility. When she grows older, mayhap, she will not turn so readily from the gentlemen. Sir Secretary," she added, "is it your intention to remain here to-night?"

"Not if I can get away," he replied, in a voice scarcely above his breath.

"And what think you of this new freak?"

"Damn 'em!" was all the answer. The man caught his breath fiercely, and clutched at the hilt of his sword.

The rector turned towards him with unwonted sternness.

"I think," he said courteously, "these walls have never been witness to an oath before."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the secretary, though every word seemed bitten by his closed teeth. "I also beg pardon of the ladies, and—the walls."

Whenever Lady Anne looked towards the minister (she seldom spoke to him), his pale cheek brightened, while her face took on a passionate, vengeful expression.

The conversation, low and subdued, turned upon Captain Cameron.

"I could not see him, to-night," said Eleanor; "at least, not very plainly—only a pair of dark and brilliant

eyes. I have, however, heard so much about him, that I am curious; they say he is the handsomest man in the colonies. Who is he?"

Again that singularly low and unpleasant laugh from Lady Anne, as she glanced over at the rector, who sat quite straight and pale, his very white, partly bald brow and slightly curling locks giving him a saintly bearing.

"Do you know *who* he is?" asked Margaret, turning to Lady Anne, and for the moment forgetting her anxiety.

"I have told thee once, Margaret—a *protégé* of mine. I saw him when quite a lad; and his very uncommon beauty made an impression on a heart not naturally impressible" (here that low, wicked laugh again), "and I, after a fashion, adopted him. I do not think I ever saw a face so beautiful, except it was thy first lady, Mr. Aldrich—Margaret's mother."

It was so strange! so almost monstrous!—this allusion to the dead—at least to him, that the rector started and flushed, turning his deep, mild eyes upon her, as if they would search her through. But she was looking down, apparently lost in thought.

Mrs. Aldrich arose and left the room.

"How long is it, reverend sir, since thou hast seen thy son?" asked Lady Anne of the rector.

Again he flashed an astonished look at her; then, seeming to restrain himself, replied calmly to her question—

"It is now twelve years since my poor boy left us. Would to God I knew whether he were living or dead!"

Margaret turned aside, much agitated.

"Lady Anne still kept her veiled eyes lowered, and once again that painfully malicious laugh sounded. Then Margaret, conquering her emotion, gave one imploring glance at Lady Anne; and going to her father's side, she placed one

arm around his neck, and laid her cheek against his soft gray locks. This little attention seemed for a moment to affect him powerfully. He clasped her hand, kissed it fondly, then, rising, sought his wife.

"Thine is the kingdom!" lisped the child Imogene.

She knelt before her mother, repeating her evening prayer, —darling little Imogene!

"Surely, of *such* is the kingdom!" thought the fond father. The sight of the pure face—its beautiful eyes, filled with heaven's own radiance—the sound of the childish voice, so more than earthly sweet at such times, soothed his spirit. The white-robed angel, with open arms, sprang towards her father; the mother sat movelessly, gazing at the pretty vision; and the intense love the rector felt, while she nestled close to his heart, absorbed all other feelings.

"I *do* love you so dearly!" she cried, her voice all music, pressing her little cheek against that of her father. "I wish that bright spirit would let *you* come, too."

"What does she mean?" cried the father, a sharp pang shooting through his heart.

Mrs. Aldrich shook her head; her whole form drooped—tears filled her eyes.

"I have not dared to ask her; she has been talking about it, more or less, all day," she said, with a sad voice.

"Imogene!"

He gazed yearningly into the great, spirit-like eyes, and shuddered with a secret fear, as he had often done while striving to interpret the meaning that lay hidden there.

"Dear father—*dear* papa!" she repeated, in tones of unutterable love, laying her damask cheek to his—smiling, while her lip grieved at his earnest glance.

"Imogene,"—his voice faltered—"what spirit, love?"

"The angel that is coming for me, father. It will be in

the morning, dear father—by daylight, so that you can *all* see me go."

The bright, expectant look on her young face, was dimmed for a moment by a shadow, as she marked the anguish that overspread her father's features. He gave no vent to his sorrow, however, but held her fondly, tenderly, till—often opening her eyes to smile, and lifting her little hand to his lips to be kissed—she fell into a sweet sleep.

Then he said, sorrowfully—his voice surging out from a troubled heart—solemnly he said it—

"God's will be done! I, of all men, should hold my treasures lightly."

"Is Lady Anne intending to remain here, Parris?" asked his wife, without looking up.

"I know not where else she can go," replied the minister. "She would not be safe in her own house—and yet," he added, in an energetic tone, "I had rather give shelter to a viper."

"It seems to me as if she brought a curse with her. Is it wicked in me to dread her so?"

"It is natural," replied her husband; "but we must even love those who do us despite, according to Bible rule. Still there is a lurking dread of her evil arts; I am afraid for Imogene. If she would confess what she knows concerning the poor child lost to me so mysteriously, I might look upon her with less severity. I fear her—I fear her!"

"Do you think Imogene is in danger while she remains?" asked his wife, alarmed. "See, the dear child smiles as she sleeps!"

"Imogene is in higher care than ours," said the minister, solemnly; then added, as he bent over her, his lip grieving and trembling, "He hath given His angels in charge concerning her. I always feel a singular awe as I stand where

hands?" asked the insolent secretary, changing color, as he heard the sounds of distant tumult.

"By the word of a man who never insulted an unprotected woman on the street!" exclaimed Cameron, with an eye of fire, and moving steadily towards him.

"Ha! you are he, who—" but he quailed before the incensed gaze of the shipmaster, and, without wishing a good-night, or making a reverence, he stalked from the room.

Ruth's heart had been swelling with love, pride, and grief, as, from her corner, she looked on during this conference. What was her astonishment when the young captain, pausing at the door, said—

"By your leave, friends, I would speak with the maid Ruth, a few moments, on my return."

"Certainly," said the minister, while Ruth's cheeks felt hot, as she bore the scrutiny of the assembly, and Lady Anne's direful glance filled her with dread.

An hour had passed. Noisy throngs filed by, but, obeying some mysterious signal, they had not paused at the house. Lady Anne, complaining of a headache, retired—her chamber was an adjoining room. Margaret and Eleanor sat, sleepless, in their apartment. Only Ruth was left in the drawing-room, whose walls were gilded with dissolving, though brilliant pictures, painted by the fitful fire on the hearth.

Restlessly waiting and watching, Ruth looked for the reappearance of young Cameron. Eleanor, on leaving the room, had playfully thrown a long, blue silken scarf over her shoulders, and she had not removed it, for it was a novel thing to feel the light pressure of rich vestments. It formed a beautiful contrast to the pretty crimson merino, and certainly became her well. She looked in that soft light as if it was fitting for her to wear costly robes. A little maiden pride (and surely maid so beautiful never harbored less) had

Chapter Fifty-fifth.

THE SECRETARY PROVIDED FOR—AND RUTH'S PEACE TURNED
TO ASHES.

SOME one waited at the door. As the prayer was ended, Captain Cameron came in. The secretary made feint to draw his sword—but the young shipmaster only smiled as he said—

"I have no particular desire to save your life, which is worth but little at the best; but, in consideration towards the ladies of this household, I give you fifteen minutes in which to reach the fort. If you do not avail yourself of this opportunity and my protection, the mob will be upon you, and I question if you will find any mercy at their hands. You may already hear their shouts bearing this way."

The secretary, as had the governor, stood irresolute. Life was dear, and, as the young man had said, he had no reason to expect mercy at the hands of the people. Yet it was humiliating to be served thus, and he could not forbear his spite, as he exclaimed, "I like little to be indebted to a jail-bird for my life."

"No insinuations, if you please," said Captain Cameron, sternly. "Before many days pass, you, too, may pace the stone floors of a jail. It becomes not tenants of brittle houses to cast stones. I tell you to hurry for the sake of the women," he added. "After the appointed time, even I cannot save you."

"How do I know but you will deliver me into their

she sleeps. There is other presence than ours here, dear wife." His voice sank to a whisper. "Some soul, mayhap, it hath been given her to snatch from the burning; then, her heavenly mission done, He who gave will take her back—surely; He hath right to her," he almost sobbed.

"O Parris, I cannot, I cannot give her up," cried the mother, weeping convulsively.

It was as if they already stood above their dead.

"It is well she hath prepared us," murmured the minister, brokenly; "otherwise this blow would have crushed my heart. Now I will try to say—Thy will, O Father—not my own!"

The bell rang for evening prayers, and the father left the room. Mrs. Aldrich lingered for a moment, went with unsteady step to the table, where rested an antique casket. This she opened, and, with many a motion of dread, lifted a silken cloth. It seemed as if she dared scarcely look, while she unfolded it.

"'Tis a foolish superstition, doubtless," she murmured; "still, I would fain see if it is broken. They tell me that when death is near, 'twill be either broken or discolored. Oh, thank God! now that I have looked, there is not a flaw—not a change from its transparent gold. Precious veil," she added, "it covered the features of my babe;" and laying the caul carefully away, with a lighter heart she went into the drawing-room.

It was passing strange! None uttered the responses more sonorously, more apparently devoutly, than the governor's secretary and Lady Anne.

movea ner to unloosen her bright tresses from their prim bandings. The locks thus falling, did not exactly curl, but they fell in lustrous undulation, sweeping over her shoulders, and mingling with the glistening fringe of the fair mantle. The fever of expectation gave a fervid rose-tint to either cheek, and her lips were brighter than usual.

It was very quiet abroad. The old reverence for staid rules and particular hours, did not break through the custom of the homeward path by nine. At every slight noise, however, Ruth's heart beat faster and louder—nor did its pulsations lessen as a wondering servant ushered in young Cameron. For a moment she stood too much amazed to speak. He wore a long military cloak, which, when he threw it off, displayed a splendid uniform that made his beauty quite magnificent to a timid little Puritan maid like Ruth. The cap he laid on the table glittered with broad gold bands and a cockade, and from its sable summit hung gorgeous plumes of red and black.

"I am in borrowed feathers, Ruth," he said, gravely; "some of my fellow-townsmen expressing a wish that I would equip myself in this suit that belonged to his excellency, out of pure good-humor I assented. This," he said, smiling, laying his hand upon the hilt, "is the secretary's sword. I trust I shall not disgrace the property of so gallant a gentleman," he added, with another smile. "And you, Ruth!—what transforming touch has been busy with you? Why, you look charmingly, my Ruth!"

She, blushing, essayed to throw aside the shining scarf—but he would not allow it, saying, "We'll play at nabob for awhile; 'tis but nonsense, you know."

"Ruth, other lips have told you that you are very lovely," he continued, after gazing in her sweet, downcast face for a moment, a slumbering passion lying along his voice—"but

not with the heart intent that I say it. O Ruth, I have had tormenting, maddening doubts. It seemed as if all who saw must covet you. I could not understand your penitence—for no guilt that you had done; I cannot comprehend that humility that others have praised in you; but oh, Ruth, in spite of my cruel doubts, in spite of rumors, of the strange words that have fallen from your own lips—I love you—God above knows how dearly.

"And I come to-night" (he took her unresisting hand), "to hear from your dear lips all doubts removed—for they linger in spite of me. O Ruth, love me to-night; let *me* love you as in the sunny time. To-morrow there may be bloodshed, and who knows but I may be the first to fall!"

With as pure a passion as man ever cherished, he held the trembling girl to his heart in a long, sweet fold, and for the second time in her life, she rested there as if the rest were heaven.

"I know you will tell me all, Ruth. I am certain you can have no sin to confess," he added, looking down on her now pale face. "Come, my darling; who has so sweet a right to know your heart's most precious secrets as I?"

"Yes, you have the right," murmured Ruth; "but"—she looked up with that innocent, appealing look—"it may cost me your love."

"Never, Ruth—my *love*! never, Ruth! You are more precious to me to-night than I can hope to tell you. Don't fear me, darling."

"Do you remember once you told me you were proud?"—she shuddered—pressing her hands on her face, now crimson.

"Yes, Ruth, and I was proud—but do you know I have never forgotten that saintly figure standing so meek and white at the head of the church alley! I tell you, Ruth,

with all my human revenge making my soul almost a hell, at that moment I thought of our blessed Saviour, and you seemed to me holy, like Him."

"Oh no—no." Ruth shrank away.

"Since then, in the darkness of my prison-nights, at noon-day, wherever I have been, that veiled form has risen up before me, checked my passions, softened my rashness, rebuked my pride. O Ruth—your calm eyes, your noble meekness on that sacred morning made me, I sometimes think, another man. I did not see it then, but I do now. If I was proud then, I have lost that kind of pride now—if I know myself. Sit down, darling, you tremble."

He waited. Many times she opened her lips to speak, but the words would not come. Perhaps, if he had lost pride, she had found it—for never did duty agonize her so. The dread that he would be so shocked as to betray a feeling it was hardly in the nature of man to suppress, kept her tongue silent.

"My Ruth!" he pushed the mantle aside, and the beaming smile with which he regarded her made her courage falter the more.

"Ruth—Ruth are you afraid of me?"

"No—oh no—but it is hard to tell—to—" emotion choked her voice; she could not proceed, but turned her face away.

"Listen, Ruth—to-morrow I shall be in deadly peril, if things take the course for which they are shaped. But that is not all, Ruth; if I escape then, I have still another dangerous duty to perform. I tell you these things, my darling, not to make you suffer, but because I know you would not send me from you, perhaps for the last time, feeling you had denied me the confidence I have a right to claim—yes, a right"—his voice lingered fondly over the word. "A cer-

tain place in the harbor is suspected. A gang of dangerous men—pirates, Ruth—are living there, sheltered by the ghostly reputation of the place. It is more than likely that among them are the murderers and plunderers of whom the town authorities have been in search. These men, since the apprehension of the governor, I have sworn to find—and thus, you see, danger attends me for the present. Ruth! Ruth!" he added, in a tone of consternation.

She had grown paler and paler: now she turned towards him with glassy eyes.

"The island!" she cried, brokenly—"then you may take him—and, oh! he is already wounded—dying, perhaps. Captain—Captain Cameron," she cried, incoherently, her eyes still painfully and glaringly distended—"you yourself have sealed my lips. If I could not tell *then*—I dare not now. I must not interfere with your sacred duty. And if you knew!—*justice* must overtake them" (she clasped her hands wildly)—"and *then* you could not—O God, help me!" she sank crouching to the floor.

With knit brows and shut lips, Captain Cameron looked down upon her. Was the rumor—the fearful, maddening rumor, true? Had he been doubly deceived? The old, stormy suspicion, shook him from head to foot.

"You are only trying me, Ruth" (and his voice shook with his frame)—"come—come, and tell me what you mean."

"Ask me nothing," Ruth said, lifting herself, growing suddenly, strangely calm and cold. "If you can believe my assertion, that in nothing I am guil—"

The young man stamped his foot.

She dared neither speak nor move, his face was so fearful.

"One word! only one word!" he said, thickly. "Answer me, yes or no, as you value your soul's eternal salvation.

Have you ever seen a man, called by the people Captain Bill? Either yes or no—no more.”

“Yes—I—”

“That will do. Now, yes or no again—and *if* not *no*—God have mercy on you! Did you ever *meet* him at night?”

His steel-like glance was a horrible fascination. She never moved her fearful eyes from his face, as she replied—

“I will tell you the truth. I have—but it was—”

“Silence! Oh, my brain whirls! Silence! open but your lips, and God knows whether my reason will hold! It was told me!” he cried, striding in his hot wrath to the table—clutching his cloak—his hat. “Yes, and if it had been a man had so insulted me by such suspicions, I should have run him through. As it was—I gave the lady the *lie*! In spite of her rank, I insolently answered her—’tis a lie! If she were here” (he laughed bitterly) “I would ask her pardon on my knees, as some gallants, they say, make love.”

At that moment Lady Anne came in—her hair unconfin’d—a shawl thrown gracefully over her demi-toilet. She started as naturally as if she had not been an eaves-dropper—said she had left something which she wished to find—but no matter. She knew not that any one was there.

“See—wait!” Captain Cameron knelt on one knee before her. “I ask your pardon that I doubted you, when you told *the truth* of her. Before you—I abandon her—now and forever.”

Saying this, like a whirlwind he hurried from the room, leaving Ruth (faint, tearless) and Lady Anne standing opposite each other—both trembling at his vehemence—one almost broken-hearted. Both were startled at his passionate voice—one, exultant—both loving—and but one innocent.

Chapter Fifty-sixth.

LETTER FROM GODFREY LAMB, BOOKSELLER, TO HIS WIFE,
IN LONDON.

MY VERIE SWEET WIFE—

There are prettie doings going on in this independent town, I can tell thee. It has come out, as I said, ye people are determined to prosecute ye governor, and they do it with a will as stubborn as that of any sturdy British clown, driving his plough through stones and all. Heavens! what a racket is going on! Spinning-wheels are suspended. To be in ye town is to be in Bedlam. Even ye housewives are so much excited, that ye soups are burned and ye cakes come broken-hearted out of ye oven. Brooms seem flying about of themselves, and never were soe manie dishes broke. I was out this afternoon to see ye fun (for, though sympathizing verie deeply with hys excellency, as a good British subject, I delight, thou dost know, in ye sound of a tumult). Ever since I once like to have had my head cracked for firing an arrow at a soldier whom I thought my country's enemy (I was ten then), has my heart leaped at ye sound of a gun, and nothing pleaseth me so much as to see men look fierce at each other. “A verie low taste!” thou wilt say, to w'h I plead guilty.

Here cometh a curlie-headed youngster—hark!

“I is ye governor, Will, and here's ye fort,” says ye first

named, springing behind a chair. "Now you take ye fort, bang it all down—and then shoot me to death."

Soe Will, a sturdy fellow, goeth at it pell mell, knocketh ye chair over ye other's head and giveth him a most tremendous pummelling, making him to roar most lustily, which may be significant of ye governor's defeat. I'll not pretend to prophesy.

But I do tell thee, in confidence, that living with such hearty spirits—hearing them talk as they dare, for what they call right, giveth one a certain republican feeling that onlie a voyage to old England, and a look at ye splendors of Lunnon, can dispel.

I was, of late, at ye jail where certain free spirits were in bondage, and (whisper it not in Gath) I worked wi' ye best of them. They did demand ye key—w'h not getting, they straightway burst open ye jail-doors and brought out ye prisoners of mark, Sir John Willie, Capt. Cameron, Father Comstock, and one other, upon their shoulders. Whereupon they went at ye head of ye crowd, and soon, by their firm spirits, reduced them to order. Their first feat was to rescue some of ye ladies of his excellency's household (among them was Lady Anne Bellamont), whom they found surrounded by a mob of such as have felt themselves aggrieved by her haughty manner towards them. Ye people were holding ye frantie horses, and talking with much hot gesture. Some of them threw mire shamefully, at which I could have shot them. Lady Anne did not seem intimidated to ye extent I should think of one in such peril, but continued to call them cowards and rebels; her beautiful face looking like a raging demon; her black eyes shooting such flashes as I would not like for to see in anie wife of mine, or in anie near vicinity. Ye governor's nieces were deadly pale and entreated her to desist; but she was shaking angry, and I think had a pis-

tol been put at her head, she would not have stopped her tongue.

Ye town is in extreme confusion. Everywhere men are cleaning up ye deadly weapons, and ye powder-stores has been besieged. Ye queen's arms that have been rusting in garrets, have put their murderous faces in at parlor doors; and swords, pistols, daggers, and even great burly meat-knives, all have, or will come into duty.

Ye maid Ruth I have not seen of late, but heare she is doing well, though sorry I am to find that ye general opinion is against her. For my part I keep silence—and will stop till my suspicions be more confirmed—for ye w'h I pray God, not. Meantime ye young shipmaster hath proved himself as superior for his wisdom as for his splendid beauty. It seemeth to come natural for him to take command. Ye governor, I hear, is verie uneasy at ye fort, and roareth like a caged lion. There hath just gone up ye lane, his former excellency, Governor Bradstreet, a most noble, Roman-like old man, with ye Reverend Cotton Mather, who mixeth greatly with ye wordy fight that is all ye time going on. They take direction to ye court-house, whither I shall now speedily find them. I lay down my pen, dear-heart, to resume it on ye morrow. I will onlie add, that they say ye Jew merchant hath gone crazy over his loss aboard ye Prudent Sarah. Doubtless they will yet find ye thieves and murderers. In haste.

I remain thy

LAMB.

Chapter Fifty-seventh.

IN WHICH THE SECRETARY THROWS CARE TO THE WINDS.

THE fort was situated on an eminence, called in the old annals Corn Hill. It was on one of the highest points of land overlooking the harbor, the islands, the ships that came gallantly in from the open sea, and many of the neighboring towns. It occupied the most prominent point on the hill. There were two divisions—one called the lower, the other the upper sconce; but both were connected by covered passages. A few stately houses, built in the Elizabethan style of architecture, and surrounded by beautiful gardens, stood here and there to the right and left of the fort. In these resided men of wealth and influence.

The fort was a substantial building, well provided with officers, and securely palisaded. The artillery was of good force, well mounted, and the particular pride of old gray-headed Tony Butt, the gunner—who often declared, looking along the circular front, that the harbor could be scoured the full length of their shot on every side.

Here the governor, compelled by circumstances over which he had no control at present, breakfasted on the day after the demonstration at his house. He had sent wary spies, since daylight, to reconnoitre; but they invariably returned with tidings not calculated to elevate the spirits of his excellency, or the gentlemen who shared his durance vile. They reported that the military were out the people armed and

gathering. Fiercest denunciations were heaped upon the governor, and some of the townsmen were for executing instant vengeance. His effigy had been made of straw, and was already on its march through the streets, preparatory to being burnt on the Common. The river was filled with boats on the Charlestown side, and the people there could be seen in crowds, waving and shouting defiance.

"Would we could sink them," muttered the governor.

Then came sounds of tumult—increasing, subsiding, again seeming to approach, then to sink into comparative silence.

"Let the crows caw!" cried the secretary; "I shall enjoy my coffee none the less. Come, gentlemen—we could hardly have a better appointed breakfast, even in a statelier mansion. Yonder see the bright eyes of Mistress Polly Colman; upon my word, I do believe, had she the power, she would release us. Come, gentlemen, don't let this little breeze ruffle your appetites. We have friends in the town, surely, who will not see us come to harm, whatever happens."

They drew up to the table. The governor sipped his beverage with a clouded brow.

"His excellency will bear in mind that I have endeavored to impress him with the importance of making an example of some of these leading rebels," said the secretary, shortly after. "For instance, had that dog of a Willie been shot, and that coward of a captain hung, and two or three heads placed upon spikes before a window, the rabble townsmen might have been frightened into submission. His excellency, in the great goodness of his heart, hath been too lenient."

"By God's mercy!" cried the governor, frowning, "dost throw blame on me?"

"By no means, excellency—by no means. I was only thinking of a little feat that Jeffries managed—managed

capitally, by Jove! There was a man among his party who showed symptoms of rebellion. A soldier's first duty is towards his superior officer. He had, I think, a wife—these common soldiers have no right to such luxuries—and a very beautiful daughter. The name of the latter was Eunice, and she was called the pretty Nice. Jeffries had before been suspicious of this man (there goeth a pop-gun); so, when the pretty Nice came to the camp one day, and implored that her father might go and see his wife, who, mind thee, she pretended was ill and dying in a near town, Jeffries refused. That night the soldier and his daughter were found a mile from the town. He meant to go (so he said, mind thee), and return by the morning.

"Well, as it was a clear case of desertion, he was brought before Jeffries, and without a word, a shot was fired that found a warm bed in our soldier's heart. As for the daughter, the pretty Nice (doctor, take a sandwich), she never returned to her mother. Old Jeffries had an eye for fine girls—ha, ha, ha!"

The governor pushed back his chair—his thoughts were still pre-occupied. Some of the gentlemen smiled at the story, others frowned.

"I think we had best send a message for the ministers—they have great influence with the people," said the governor, nervously: "what is the crowd, yonder?"

"They are forming a sort of guard," replied the secretary, scanning the outposts. "To the guns. Order the soldiers to blow them to pieces!"

Justice Bullivant arose: "That would be madness," he said, speaking hurriedly. "Before night the town would be overrun with the people from the country, and they would take a full vengeance. Boatfuls are setting off from Charlestown now."

A soldier entered. The captain of the frigate in the stream would send a boat to the rescue of his excellency as soon as he could, without exciting the suspicions of the people. Meanwhile they were using all dispatch to get ready to sail.

"Then let us enjoy ourselves," said the secretary, with assumed courage, "and the first opportunity that occurs we will write this treachery in their blood—to perdition with 'em. Now, then, I'm ready to please you; what shall it be, a song? This is a fine thing—listen:

"ULDEBRAND.

"Come from thy rest, my lance—
Come from thy rest;
Strike where the white swords glance—
Yon coward breast.
Hark! 'tis the battle-cry;
Glory I'll win, or die!
Banner'd by royal sky,
By valor blest.

"Come to the field, my steed—
Come to the field;
Fly at the shout of need,
Scorn once to yield.
See, o'er the serried lines,
Bronze-red the war-sun shines,
Pouring his burning wines
On sword and shield.

"Farewell all honey-sips,
Sweet Eoline;
Farewell thy ripen'd lips,
Thy voice divine;
If mid the trumpet's din,
One leaf of bay I win,
Thy hand shall twine it in
These locks of mine.

"But should a sadder note
Come tolling by,
As wounded sparrows float,
Tremulously,
Say, with thy lifted hand,
'God keep thee, Uldebrand!
Who saveth father-land,
Never can die!'

"A right good song I call that, and a spirited air, too. One should hear the lady Anne sing it! one should see her eye flash over it! What a splendid soldier was lost in her ladyship!"

"Did not the young poet Ross compose it?" asked Justice Bullivant.

"Yes, when there was spirit in him, before he took to the pulpit, as they say he has—a fool! What is there in these clarks and clergymen that takes the women so? I have always seen how the maid Eleanor liked him," he added, between his teeth.

"This is no time to talk of cooing and love-mating," said the governor, turning from a narrow slip through which he had been reconnoitering; "but, by God's mercy, before our niece should marry that white-faced knave, we ourself would cleave his silly heart. Hark! what is't the rebels say?"

"They are shouting. They have captured the captain and master of the frigate; old Tony says they are dragging them into the town—that the frigate hath put out all her flags and pennants, and opened all her ports," said a soldier from the outside.

"Thank God that we have some friends, though they cannot help us," said the governor with new energy.

Still another messenger arrived. The ministers all declined to come, he said; they did not think it safe for them, as the hearts of the people were bent on justice.

"Justice!" growled the pallid governor between his teeth.

Thus there seemed at present no possibility of escape. The star of freedom and equal rights was in the ascendant. It shone with a faint, unequal ray, however, for the clouds of a kingly rule veiled its lustre; but those clouds were destined soon to break away, and leave burning on the throne of the heavens the regal planet of Independence, studded about with jewels richer than ever flashed on a royal front.

Chapter Fifty-eighth.

THE PEOPLE CATCH A CAPTAIN.

"HANG him up!"

"To jail with him!"

"Gentlemen! I entreat you to remember—"

"We remember too much! Off with him to the common."

"Gentlemen! I am in his majesty's service; and—"

"We are majesty now. Off with him!"

"I have a rope!" shouted one.

"Let's hang him!"

"We have good guns!"

"Let's shoot him!"

"Gentlemen!" persisted the naval captain—"I appeal to—"

"We ain't gentlemen!" yelled a voice that sounded marvellously like Marmaduke Catchcod's; "and you don't think so, neither, in your gold bands and buttons—only you're afraid for your tarnal head. T'other day you called Boston a cage of unclean birds, and we're going to peck ye for it. We've give his execration and their ecclesiasticusses a taste of prison, and we don't want to be partial. Heave ahead there, mates!"

"Yes—off with him!" and taking the captain by the collar the crowd dragged him along, shouting and screaming. As they were passing the jail they paused, in doubt

whether to lodge the captain there, or to yield to their thirst for revenge by hanging him on the spot, in lieu of the governor. At that moment they were met by Captain Cameron and Sir John Willie, who had just breakfasted. All hats were off on the instant.

"Who is this?" asked Sir John.

"Well, master, we be here to-day and gone to-morrow, as it were," said Catchcod, with a mock disconsolate bow. "Here's this jolly captain of the frigate—yesterday he could put his foot on the neck of a hundred tars (provided they'd let him)—but to-day Catchcod catches him. And this here be the master. They came for to save his salutation, there, in the fort, there—but we took the boat and all that it therein did contain, as the lawyers say, and very politely told his execration that we wouldn't put him to any trouble—so his extenuation turned and went back to the fort. I don't know how he bore it in the face, but his back looked mighty disappointed—the very coat-tails had wrinkles in 'em. Well, no sooner does the lieutenant, which is aboard the frigate, see what we had done, but he puts out all the flags and pennants, and pouts them ugly mouth-pieces at us. Then I composed a varse; ses I—

"When thundering ships like them is sassy,
'Twon't do to show 'em any marcy;
For if—"

"That will answer, Duke," said the young captain. "Men, march your prisoners down to the Red Lion; you have done well. The ship must be surrendered before to-morrow at noon. No violence, men; remember our resolutions of last night. Meantime we are going to the town-house, where the troops will assemble, and by four this afternoon we intend to demand the fort, and make his execration, as Catchcod rightly calls him, a prisoner of war."

At this declaration up went three deafening shouts; and obeying the will of a superior mind, the crowd turned and hurried off in the direction of the Red Lion, much to the relief of the persons they held in charge.

"You look fatigued," said Sir John Willie, as they walked towards the court-house.

"I passed a sleepless night," replied the young man, evasively.

"You say you saw the ladies after I went from the parsonage: how did they bear themselves?"

"Oh, bravely!" cried the captain, in a tone so loud, and of such bitterness, that his friend looked at him perplexed. The young captain had not seemed like himself all the morning—and his demeanor was usually so frank and open that he knew not how to interpret the present mood.

The state of Captain Cameron's mind was not an enviable one. Stung to madness by the thought, that what he had treated as the taunts and suggestions of jealousy, had proved in any measure true (how far he dared not think, having already blamed himself for his precipitancy on the previous evening), calling Ruth first an angel and then a fiend—he was so stung and tortured that he could hardly keep his strong mind in equipoise, and he longed to plunge into the excitement of battle, if need be.

"I find myself in no mood," he said, as Sir John and himself loitered on the steps of the court-house, "to enter and hear all this speechifying. I must act—thinking is death to me now—and I will take advantage of the present lull to perform a duty that devolves upon me. If you please, do you go in the court-house, and then you can report the doings to me."

Companies of soldiers were now defiling to the square. Spirited music and the no less spirited shouts of the people

accompanied them. They were followed by men in plain citizens' dress, whose stern faces betokened their determination to be free. A select number of men preceded them, among them the ministers—Cotton Mather and his secretary—old ex-Governor Bradstreet, and others of mark and merit. The captain watched till he saw the door close upon this latter company, then walked rapidly down the street.

Chapter Fifty-ninth.

A VISIT TO THE OUTLAW'S CABIN.

As he walked by the door of the Red Lion he met Catchcod, who scratched his head and balanced his one eye, looking as if in doubt whether to address his captain, so suddenly grown famous, in the manner he was wont.

"Go and hire me a boat, Duke," said Cameron. "I want some one to row me out to the ship."

"Lord! master, ain't you afeared of them frigateers?" cried the man dubiously.

"What! a man think of that who has just captured a captain? I'm astonished, Duke. However, they'll not interfere," he added calmly. "I'm master of my ship once more, thank God! let them fire at a freeman if they dare!"

Catchcod, still fearful that his services would be required, hastened to the pier, where Cameron found him in waiting.

"If you're afraid, Duke, I'll hire a boatman," he said.

"Afraid!" exclaimed the man; "Catchcod, Duke of Marmara ain't afeared of any thing but what's spiritual. Show him a ghost and he gets shaky in the legs;" saying which he sprang into the boat, fearful of only one thing, and that was, that his trepidation might be apparent to the clear-sighted captain. They boarded the Prudent Sarah without any opposition from the red-coats, who were thoroughly subdued by the success of the rebels—as they considered them. Once more the captain trod the deck of his own ship, but

not with the proud, free step of yore. Bitterness was mingled in his cup of blessings. The girl he loved and could have died for, had abused his trust. While thinking of her as the most innocent of created beings, he had by her own confession proved her treachery. He reasoned that a woman, fair and young as she, who would on any pretext allow the polluted lips of such a villain as the pirate-captain to touch her own, and that, too, in the darkness of the night, away from her home, must be, indeed, lost not only to honor but to decency. Yet, wherever he turned—skyward, landward, or seaward—he saw only the touching, pleading face that had appealed to him in vain.

The trim little vessel had been kept in tolerable order. None would have thought that on those clean deck-boards men had so lately struggled—frantic for life; that the deadly knife had gashed with frightful celerity the bodies of the two poor soldiers till the scuppers were brightened with their blood.

"Men," said the captain, "I think you will soon be relieved of this duty, as in a week's time, if affairs look favorable, I intend to sail again. In the mean time, whatever takes place on shore, you are protected while you remain here. You had better not go to the frigate, as we may have occasion to rake her fore and aft with hot lead. Now, Duke, off and away to Apple Island."

The man was panic-struck. "Lud, sir," he cried, "they say there's pirates there!"

"I know it, and that's the very reason why I'm going. Come, never mind 'they say,' here are two extra pistols; now show your pluck and push off. I tell you I'm going to the island, and you go with me—so no muttering."

Sullenly, Catchcod descended to the boat and rowed swiftly for the island. The place, as they approached it,

looked desolate enough—its grim, gray rocks striking out on all sides, its beach washed by the action of the waves continuously—a low, sullen murmur echoing from point to point. A boat lay on the shore; it seemed out of repair. The gnarled, neglected apple-trees spread their brown, verdureless arms over the crusted earth. Not a sound save the voice of the sea could be heard.

The captain and his man gained an eminence, and there saw something like a thin, blue smoke, curling lazily upward.

"There must be a path," said Captain Cameron, "and I'm bound to find it. There's a fire, too, that's evident enough."

"Yes," said Catchcod, sententiously, "there's always a fire where there's a smoke—and we may see fire and smoke that we don't care about."

After going many times over the same ground, they succeeded at last in coming upon the path. It was but faintly marked at first, but after awhile it grew broad and distinct, and at the termination of what seemed nearly half a mile, they came in sight of the rude hut. Catchcod paused, really in fear.

"I'm mortal afraid," he said, his teeth almost chattering, "not because there might be danger, but then there's on'y two of us, and the rascals may be somewhere round. There's a groaning going on. Lord! if there's a ghost there—preserve Catchcod, Duke of Marma!"

"Hold your tongue! be sensible, will you?" queried Captain Cameron, listening.

"I'm agreeable," muttered Catchcod, tremblingly.

As they drew nearer to the threshold, the sounds of intense anguish were repeated. Cameron peered through every crevice, and satisfied at last that there was nothing to encounter, entered. A pair of blood-shot eyes were pite-

ously raised, as Catchcod, looking everywhere, and Cameron intent upon the sight before him, stood within the door. The face of the prostrate man was yet unlined by age, but it seemed worn literally to the bone, and permanently distorted by pain. His arms, throat, and chest were rudely bandaged, and his lips moved with a dry, sucking sound, as if parched for want of water.

"Hasn't she come yet? *won't* she come?" he asked in a wailing voice that went to the heart, broken and hoarse though it was.

"Hasn't *who* come, my poor fellow?" asked Cameron, who, though he felt that before him laid one of the perpetrators of a loathsome crime, was yet moved to pity by his loneliness and suffering.

"Hasn't Ruth come yet? Isn't she coming?" he articulated, exhausted by the effort.

"Who is Ruth? Who are you? What is Ruth to you?" asked the captain, harshly.

The man gazed at him. It was a long, troubled gaze; then turned his eyes and his bandaged neck, wet with the fresh blood. Presently he looked up again.

"Is your name Cameron?" he asked.

"My name is Cameron," was the reply.

"I tell you what!" muttered Duke, who had been eyeing the sick man intently; "he's blackballed, or my name ain't Catchcod—reg'larly going to pot; no mistake about that."

A groan of anguish burst from the laboring bosom, but to all the captain's inquiry about Ruth he would answer not a word, only shake his head.

"It's my opinion," said Captain Cameron, "that you had a hand in that murder and robbery in the harbor. Is it so? You, as a dying man, ought to tell me, and put me on the

track of the other criminals. It's the only reparation you can make. Are you alone?"

"Yes—they are gone off to the ship—he's buying provisions—they left me alone."

"Who is he?"

"Carbuncle—black cook," gasped the wounded pirate.

"And how came you in this condition? You have needed a surgeon. Are your wounds painful?"

"God knows!" groaned the man, a tear or two creeping down his hollow cheeks, his lips grieving like a baby's.

"Pickins' dry as a mummy's bones," said Catchcod, who had been poking about in a closet secured by a canvas-door.

"I'm a dying, ain't I?" the man muttered. "Yes, I know I can't get up agin. Well—but supposin' I should? You shan't know—I ain't a going to hang myself for anybody. I've always told 'em Red Hand John would be neither shot nor hung. Oh!" and a sharp cry of pain closed the sentence.

"Very well, if you *can* die with the sin upon your soul, die, and so go before your Maker. But if you tell me, and should get well, I pledge you the word of an honest man you shall not suffer for it."

"Shan't I? Well, that's comforting. Yes, I helped 'em," he added, after a moment of thought—"have to tell you quick—breath hard to draw. We went about nine. 'Twas moonlight, but a little cloudy. We got alongside—under them—then scaled. They was in the cabin, drinking—only two of 'em—rest gone away—we knew that. We took 'em by surprise—done for *me*, you see, with their bloody knives. Got off after a hard fight—left 'em stone-dead—took jewelry—buried it.

"And where are you comrades?"

The man shook his head.

"Is Captain Bill among them?"

He nodded an affirmative.

"Will they be back soon? Come, you might as well make a full confession."

"Oh! I've found a bottle of wine!" cried Catchcod (*sotto voce*), who, on his hands and knees, had part of his body down a rude sort of trap-door.

"We've made arrangements for capturing them, at any rate, only your information will hurry matters," said the captain. "We shall doubtless take them all, but we will treat you kindly and carry you ashore, where you can be placed in better quarters, and taken care of."

"My brain is weak," muttered the man; "they haven't treated me right, but I'll act honorable. If I've got sense enough left to keep in about 'em, I will—I will. Oh dear! 'two days at the most,' they said—'two days at the most'—and they went yesterday."

This was all the information the captain needed.

He called Catchcod, who came towards him rubbing his lips and smacking them—took the wine, mixed a weak beverage, and gave the man to drink. A strange sound the liquid made going through his wounded throat.

"You won't tell me why you spoke of Ruth?" said Cameron, fixing his eyes searchingly upon the ghastly face.

"No—no; Captain Bill—he, perhaps, might tell you. He wanted her to come here, but she ran off."

It seemed a terrible agony now for him to speak, though the wine had brightened his eye, and he signified by gestures that he could not any longer make the effort.

"Captain Bill—Ruth—Ruth Margerie!" muttered Cameron to himself. "O heaven! that I could solve this mystery!—my very brain reels."

This much he had gathered. In two days the rest of the

company would return, and that Carbuncle, the cook, had probably gone to procure provisions for a cruise at sea. He had little fear that the sick man would communicate his visit to them, for, from present appearances, he did not doubt but that his last hours were very near. Leaving him, therefore—he could do nothing for him except to replenish his mug of water—he entered the boat again and put off for Boston.



Chapter Sixtieth.

THE GOVERNOR IN THE HANDS OF "YE COMMONALTY."

STEPPING on Boston pier, he was hailed by friends on the watch for him.

"We were only waiting for you," said one, "to march to the fort. The declaration of our independence of Andros-rule was sent in to-day, and received with indignation and oaths. That bullying secretary even went so far as to return a contemptuous note to Governor Bradstreet, and it hath filled every honest heart with indignation."

The governor, who had been watching uneasily at his accustomed window, felt some relief at sight of a messenger bearing a paper. He opened it eagerly, and reading it through, with a fearful imprecation flung it to the ground, and was in the act of placing his heel upon it when the soldier, with a quick movement, snatched it up.

"By God's mercy!" shouted the governor, white with passion, "are they fools! Did not his majesty send us? Have not the people confirmed us? Is this honor? Is this allegiance? Let them send us to England to receive our judgment there. We will not be held to account by the rabble. Go tell them for us that they are a pack of hell-hounds, and we will see them all hung before we do what they require."

"Your excellency will allow me," said Justice Bullivant, very much agitated—"we are prisoners, and therefore at the

mercy of the towns-people. Had not your excellency better use more conciliatory language?"

"Damn 'em!" muttered the secretary, as he walked to and fro, and that was all he could say, for he had taken large draughts of wine to fortify his failing courage.

"Conciliatory language!" returned the governor; "read for yourself;" and he motioned the soldier to hand the note to him. It was thus couched:

"AT THE TOWN-HOUSE IN BOSTON, {
April 18, 168-."

"TO SIR EDMUND ANDROS:

"SIR—Ourselves and manie others, ye inhabitants of this towne and ye places adjacent, being surprised at ye people's sudden taking up of arms,—in ye first motion whereof we were wholly ignorant, being driven by ye present accident,—are necessitated to acquaint your excellency that for ye quieting and securing of ye people inhabiting in this country from ye imminent dangers they manie ways lie open and exposed to, and tendering your own safety, we judge it necessary you forthwith surrender and deliver up ye government and fortifications, to be preserved and disposed according to order and direction from ye crown of England, w'h suddenly is expected may arrive,—promising all security from violence to yourself or anie of your gentlemen or soldiers in person and estate; otherwise we are assured they will endeavor the taking of ye fortification by storm if anie opposition be made."

To this document were signed fifteen names, that of the venerable Bradstreet heading the list.

"I see not but this is very fair," said Bullivant, his hand trembling so that the paper shook, for he did not want the governor to refuse.

"Fair!" shouted the governor. "By God's mercy! fair! Shall we be made a laughing-stock by this accursed, low-born commonalty? Tell the persons who sent that document that we say *no*!" and rattling out his sword, he struck it flat-bladed on the table before him. The soldier hurried from the presence of the insulted dignitary, who, hot, not only with passion, but with wine, poured forth volley after volley of curses and reproaches; stamping, shaking his clenched hands, condensing his passion into terrible eye-glances, with which he regarded those about him, till even the half-drunken secretary seemed ashamed of him.

The message was delivered, and excited the citizens to such a degree, that they were ready to storm the fort; some even prepared chains and cords with which to bind the deposed man. Governor Bradstreet, seeing the crowd congregated—their furious gestures and angry faces—conjured them, in a short speech, not to do violence, but to let the news go to England, how courageous, firm, and yet generous they could be. Every man looked capable of taking the lead, yet the selection fell on Sir John Willie, who declined in favor of Captain Cameron. He placed himself at their head, and thus, silent but determined, they marched directly to the fort.

"So, the rebels are coming!" cried the governor, his bravado silenced.

"O excellency! the whole town is here," cried one of the soldiers, almost beside himself with fear.

"And where are the men-at-arms—where are the men upon whom I depend for protection?"

"They are here, excellency," returned the trembling soldier.

"What! in this building? By God's mercy—have they not remained to give the rebels a broadside?"

"They did not have orders, excellency, and—" the words were stopped by a blow on the mouth from the enraged governor, who proceeded to the door, and finding his men assembled, dealt them strokes right and left till they crowded back and fled from his murderous weapon.

"They turn the guns upon us!" cried the secretary; "they have possession of the fort—will the wretches murder us in cold blood?"

The governor sank on a seat. His frantic rage had spent itself, and now came fear, mixed with regrets. If the citizens were in the mood, what would be easier than to shatter them all to pieces? And he knew in his inmost heart that they had been tortured into this rebellion. How ominous the silence that followed! Only a low murmurous whisper penetrated the walls of the fort, until another messenger came. Captain Cameron, with a quiet, gentlemanly dignity, presented himself.

"It is needless for me to say to you that the fort and yourselves are in our possession," he said. "It is decided by a large majority, all ayes and no nays, that Sir Edmund Andros is no longer governor-general of these colonies. As a prisoner, then, I respectfully ask you to walk out with me. The towns-people are quite willing that for the present you should retire to a private dwelling-house, under a guard; but your secretary and the other"—he made a full pause—"and the gentlemen of your party," he added, "are to be lodged in jail."

Randolph turned towards him. His eyes glittered snake-like—a whiteness mounted slowly from chin to brow, as he felt for his sword. It hung, however, by the side of Captain Cameron.

"It would be madness in one of you to resist," said the latter, quietly, returning the glare of the secretary so un-

flinchingly that the eye of the latter fell. "They stand by the guns outside, ready, on the slightest provocation, to let them blaze. Are you ready? I cannot wait longer."

Utterly humiliated and crestfallen, the governor, striving to collect himself, longing to perish by his own hand, but lacking the Roman hardihood to do the deed, and equally unwilling to be blown in atoms, lifted himself from his seat, and striving to assume a lofty air, but utterly failing, he moved outside the fort. To their credit, be it said, the towns-people did not triumph with wild huzzas over a fallen foe. With much decorum, the military surrounded the governor and his colleagues; a drum and fife were sounded, and thus they accompanied the baffled tyrant to the place which had been assigned to him. There he was met by Margaret and Eleanor.

Till towards night, the city seemed relapsing into its usual order. The soldiers and officers at the fort were under arrest—the streets were still. But the quiet was ominous, and destined soon to be broken into a wilder confusion than had yet reigned. By all the avenues leading to the country, bands of armed and angry men were marching into town. Every moment some new accession was made. Farmers, mechanics, tradesmen, doctors, soldiers, teachers, lawyers, harangued together. The substance of their cries and exclamations was, that they wanted the governor, and would have him. In vain did the men in authority repeat their advice, their warning; all entreaty was wasted upon them. The crowds grew so clamorous that the whole city was in alarm.

"He is not safe enough where you have placed him. We must see him—we must chain him. He must go either to the fort or to the jail. Give us the governor! the governor!"

The mad cry went up appallingly—gaining in strength, swelling even to the ears of the fallen man. The bells were rung—cannon thundered on the twilight air—and to the governor's name were added the names of the captain and master of the frigate. Nothing would satisfy them; and as they surrounded the house, threatening to level it if the tyrant did not give himself into their hands, he was forced to appear, trembling now like a leaf, while his nieces uttered despairing cries.

The scene was fearful in the extreme. Shouts grew to howlings—excitement overruled reason. The war-spirit was in the ascendancy, and would vent itself in piercing sounds and lawless tumults.

"I fear we shall have trouble in earnest," said the school-master, stopping a moment by the side of Sir John Willie, who looked on uneasily, having no influence over this outbreak.

"It looks so!" said the young man: "see, they are tying his hands—oh, shame! I like it not," he added, with indignant emphasis, a glow of mortification mantling his cheeks.

At that moment, a man, athletic and middle-aged, stepped out from the crowd. His manner riveted attention, much more his startling voice, his determined gestures, as he yelled, "Give the prisoner into my hands, gentlemen. Two years ago this devil caused my father to be falsely imprisoned in England. Falsely, mark! The poor old man laid his white hairs upon the stone floor, and there died of grief. 'Tis not the only one he has done to death; the slow murder of a poor, helpless, old gray-haired woman, this very month in yonder jail, calls for vengeance. Now, I wish to have the *pleasure* of taking this ex-governor by the collar of

his coat, as I would take a beast by its halter, and lead him to jail."

Up went an exulting shout.

"To the fort, rather," cried several voices.

"Very well—to the fort, and, after that, to the jail!" cried the athletic man, taking the governor with a rude jerk by the collar. Thus, with jeers and derisions, was he led along.

Chapter Sixty-first.

GOLD COMES OUT OF THE FURNACE PURE—SO DID RUTH.

THE work was not yet finished. Returning, after the safer deposit of the ex-governor, they demanded the captain of the frigate. He was brought from the Red Lion, a woe-begone image, expecting insult, perhaps death.

"He must surrender his ship!" shouted some one.

This was worse than even death to the captain.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen!" he cried, "don't deprive us of our wages; ask any concession, and I'm bound to do your will, and sail off as soon as possible for England."

"We'll give you better wages," they shouted; "hurrah for the British captain who don't want to lose his wages!"

"Go strike your top-masts, and bring the sails ashore," said Captain Cameron.

"Good!" cried the multitude, and hurried to send the captain to his ship. This action diverted their minds, and made them better-natured. In a short time the captain, well guarded, was on board his vessel, actively giving directions, and very soon the people on shore had the pleasure of handling the abstracted sails, and of seeing that their orders were fully obeyed.

In the mean time, many a fugitive had been diligently hunted up. Young men scoured the country far and near; and when they found any one who had taken measures with the government, he was forthwith imprisoned.

Captain Cameron had now some chance for a breathing-spell. He had been fearful that Lady Anne's name would have been mentioned, and he powerless to save her; but it did not appear that she occupied the minds of the people, so much were they incensed against the governor and his vile secretary.

The governor's house had been thoroughly ransacked, his carriage rendered useless, his horses appropriated, and every thing belonging to him treated with contempt. His excellency was led out of the fort on another forced march, and left finally within the odious jail-walls, his glory all departed.

Not long could Cameron remain inactive. He determined, therefore, to busy himself about the capture of the pirates. He had, accordingly, procured an armed force, and all things were prepared with the greatest secrecy, so as to surprise and overpower the murderers and their abettors. The young man was restless, and had grown pale with loss of sleep, but he could not allow himself to be idle for a moment.

He ascertained that Margaret and Eleanor were still at the parsonage, that Lady Anne was ill, and that Ruth had been called to the Red Lion, upon which latter information he muttered—"So, the delicate Episcopalists have deserted her." He would, in all his torment, have given much for a glimpse of Ruth's sweet face; but, at the same moment that his heart bounded tenderly towards her, he said, "Let her suffer. I will not redeem her!"

His hands were full—he could not be idle if he would. There was his ship to superintend, hands to find to man her, and cargoes for her lading. So he allowed himself no time to think; only when the curtain of the night fell over him, that one face—that sweet, white, pleading face, was ever before him, and would not let him sleep.

And now fared it with Ruth? Well!

The trial of her faith and love had not left the maid either despairing or desponding. For awhile it seemed as if all the waves of affliction were gone over her—that she should never, never emerge from their encompassing depths, or see even the upward light that the sun sent shivering through their surface. Therefore she waited patiently, with bowed head and clasped hands, till an arm stronger than hers lifted her out, and she stood on firm land, her garments shining with the waters, and the warmth of God's smile penetrating her chilled heart. Through this dread experience she was not passing in vain. She did not look back upon her suffering or its authors with angry thoughts, or even an emotion of indignation. Her constant model was the "Man of sorrows." She had always been remarkable for humility and religious zeal, but she had never entered so deeply into the experiences of Christian life as now. It was a small thing to her to be judged by man's judgment, standing as she did in the light of the smile of God's countenance. Her heart was divested forever of its creed-garments, and man-worship; she had learned that God judges by the life—the "whatsoever ye do"—and by the inmost emotions, impulses, and desires of the spirit.

Ruth was eminently one of those whom Christ honored, when he said, "Blessed are the *pure in spirit*, for they shall see God."

Thus she did see God, even in this sore trial, and the glory that illumined his countenance gave her strength and joy. In every thing—everywhere—she was privileged to behold that Being who ever reveals himself to the innocent, and who is encompassed in clouds and thick darkness only to the vile, the earthy—which clouds and darkness are theirs, not Deity's.

Towards Lady Anne Bellamont, Ruth was conscious of a singularly repellant feeling. It was not anger, dislike, or any thing that had its source in a desire to retaliate—it was dread. It might be that not only the words and manner of Captain Cameron had inspired her with this aversion to be in her society, but the constant language of Imogene, who stopped her childish play whenever the "dark lady" entered, and assumed a demeanor, which, though painful to all concerned, it was very evident she could not help.

To Ruth's eyes, Imogene was more than mortal. Her words were treasured—her singular revealings listened to as from heaven. Even the ringlets of a rare gold-color were to her different from the locks of any other child she had ever seen; and the sweet English beauty of little children was not an unfrequent sight then.

Paler, but with a countenance more serene, Ruth went about her duties. She was in just the home her bruised heart needed. She saw the rector, always gentle, always forgiving, cheerful, and devout. She learned that in some terrible way he had been deeply injured by Lady Anne, but she also witnessed the "do good to them that despitefully use you," carried out to the full extent of the divine command. His genial, kindly manner towards Doctor Cotton Mather, whose imperious though devout spirit sometimes led him to use the strongest expressions concerning those who differed from him, impressed her yet more favorably. To be sure, much of this was chargeable to the rector's calmer temperament, whose deepest passion was but as a glow-worm heat to Cotton Mather's lightnings; but it was very evident that he walked humbly, with his hand in that of his Master.

As I hinted before, Ruth had been called to the Red Lion. Mistress Bean had contracted a severe cold, and needed her

services. At about the same time was Lady Anne violently indisposed. None of the family thought that her sickness was more than the commencement of a fever, destined, they judged from the symptoms, to have a long and severe run. What was the consternation of the household when informed that it was no other than the then scourge of horrors, the small-pox!

It was extremely fortunate, that with her characteristic pride and wilfulness, Lady Anne had allowed none of the family to come near her. Preparations were immediately made to remove from the infected house. Every face was blanched by terror. They were to depart early on the morning after the news was imparted to them. Every precaution was taken to exclude the foul air from the rooms where Imogene slept. Still, a deadly terror weighed down their hearts. The mother took Imogene into her own bed, clasping her close to her bosom, as if she feared her idol might be taken from her loving arms.

That night, when the household had lost, for a brief time, their overwhelming trouble in sleep, as the clock struck twelve, and the last vibration rang out, Mrs. Aldrich opened her eyes, conscious that the privacy of her room was invaded. Sitting upright in bed, what was her agony to see, by the dull flame of the night-lamp, the tall form of Lady Anne—in her face a red heat, in her eyes a humid brilliancy—bending down towards Imogene's lips. Twice she called out before the power of motion came back to her; and then the glittering eyes and shining face almost stopped the beating of her heart.

Raving incoherently, and laughing to herself as she rolled her wild eyes, Lady Anne glided, in her long white night-robes, to the opposite side of the bed, and stretched out both arms, as if to snatch something that laid before her—starting

back, however, as the thrilling cry resounded through the rooms—the shriek of the half-distracted mother.

That cry awoke the rector, and brought in the attendant, who must have been sleeping when his charge escaped.

"Three times she touched my child with her deadly lips," cried Mrs. Aldrich in frantic tones. "Why did you let her come here, Parris?—had you not warning enough? Why did she enter the fold of my poor little lamb? Oh, my Imogene!"

Lady Anne was secured and carried back to her chamber, but there was no more rest for that household. The rector and his wife both seemed to feel that the veil of the dark angel overshadowed them, and eager as the minister's wife had been to fly to a refuge with her child, she would not now consent, her only reply being—

"It would be of no avail—we should only carry death elsewhere." And she kissed the child with a solemn tenderness, as the little one asked, thinking it perhaps a dream—

"What did the dark lady come in the night for—to carry me off?"

With his own hands the minister nailed the red cross to his door.

Chapter Sixty-second.

IN WHICH RUTH IS ACQUITTED.

RUTH heard daily reports of the progress of the terrible scourge. With Lady Anne it was frightful. Both mind and body suffered torments independent of each other. With the child it had assumed a different form—milder, more painless; and strange to say, the hideous mask had only covered portions of her fair body—the face, the sweet and holy face, it touched not. It seemed as if the destroyer were loth to mar such loveliness.

No other member of the family had taken the infection, and it did not seem likely that they would.

It was a gentle March morning. Captain Cameron had gone on his dangerous expedition to the island. Madam Bean, after imparting this information to Ruth, seemed to treat her with more consideration—a bitter pill, a little sugar after it. Ruth was restless; an undefined fear possessed her, out of which coming sorrow was shaping itself. Mistress Bean, on the contrary, just ill enough to sit comfortably ensconced in white pillows propped on all sides of the great bed-chair, was exceedingly chatty, firing whole volleys of questions concerning the circumstances, habits, tempers, and means of the "Episcopals."

"And isn't it dreadful," she cried, "to think that the poor creatures are afflicted so! I wonder if it is some special judgment? Well, well, what strange things happen! Here's

the governor in prison with his fine-dressed secretary; Lady Anne and that little token-child both like to die; Father Comstock, poor man, sick on his bed from fatigue and worry, and Cameron gone after pirates. Didst ever see such a come-together state of affairs?"

Ruth had no heart to answer. The long day dragged wearily away, and towards evening, as she stood at a window, her thoughts reverting to Imogene, she gave a low, painful cry, that startled the widow, and even brought her to her side.

"Mercy deliver us, child! What hath happened? Two men stretched out; pray God one may not be the captain."

"But it is, it is!" moaned Ruth.

"And those savage-looking creatures!—they must be the pirates! How the soldiers watch them! Well, they stop here. The poor captain!—but I had rather they went elsewhere."

"You will not send him away!" cried Ruth hollowly, laying her hand on the widow's arm.

"Why, child! dost think I have no heart? Here comes the chambermaid. Two beds, Temperance—get thee two beds ready," said Mistress Bean, hastily, "and put them both in the large chamber leading from the first flight. Is the captain badly hurt, Temperance?"

"They say they can't tell, ma'am," replied the girl; "they've sent off for the doctor."

"Go with her, child, if you want to," said the widow. "I would, but I fear the draughts." Ruth, striving to calm herself, followed the girl. They entered the room. The men had preceded them, under the directions of another chambermaid, and were placing Captain Cameron on one of the beds. He was very faint and quite helpless, while one arm hung like a stiffened limb at his side. He saw Ruth—

saw her troubled eyes fastened upon him filled with grief. He shuddered, meeting her gaze, and turned his face to the wall. The sight of her seemed to give him pain, and she instinctively shrank back, and stood as much out of the way as possible while the other body was being brought in. It was but a body, for as they laid it on the bed, the lank jaw fell and the eyes were glassy.

"I thought he couldn't live to get here," said one of the men compassionately; "poor fellow!"

Ruth was looking on, her hands clasped tightly, a portion of her dress gathered in them. She, stooping forward, caught sight of the rigid features of the dead, and, with a cry that was heart-rending, exclaimed—"Oh! my poor, poor father!" and sobbed wofully at the bedside of the corpse.

"Oh! you have suffered—you have suffered!" she murmured, kneeling, and scanning closely the worn and channelled face. "This—this is sorrow! to know what he was, and to see him thus!"

Great tears fell down her cheeks; sobbing, she buried her brow in her hands.

"That beats all," said one of the men in an undertone; "that must be Red-hand John—Jack Margerie—he that was dead long ago, I thought;" while Captain Cameron, under the influence of strong excitement, raised himself in bed, clutching at the edge to keep himself upright, and looked in wild amaze. At last he sank back again heavily. The men, respecting Ruth's grief, left the chamber, telling each other that strange things happened now-a-days.

"Ruth!" cried the captain, in a weak voice.

She came slowly towards him, and falling on her knees by his bed, still kept her sorrowful face hidden; still sobbed pitifully.

"Ruth—is this so?" Oh, you should have told me!

Ruth, have I been thus unjust to you? My poor child! God forgive me if I have. I see now—you are a noble girl, Ruth Margerie! a noble girl, my Ruth!"

"Yes, I will tell you now," she said, in a voice of sad music, as by a strong effort she checked her tears. "*He* was my poor father. It was he I met on that first night. I had thought him dead, so had others; and that, with the sudden shock of meeting him—" she paused; conquering herself again, "He exacted a solemn promise from me that I would not let a living soul know that he was on the coast. 'He yearned to see me,' he said, and wished he was a better man, for my sake. He said that 'if the people thought him alive, they would never rest until they had hunted him to death, and he was sick—not able to go to sea.' I was frightened, and repeated the words of a solemn oath after him; then how could I tell? For his sake I have borne,"—her voice faltered—"what, perhaps, I could not bear again; but oh! the hardest of all was the loss of your confidence."

"Noble Ruth—noble Ruth!" said the self-convicted man, trying to place his hand upon her head, but could not. "I see it now—God forgive me! What right had I to doubt?"

"He promised me," murmured Ruth's soft voice, "that he had done with evil deeds; and if he might only be confided in by me, his innocent child, he said, it would help him to be a better man. So, though I shrank from him—I—I could not help it. He kissed me; he was my *father*, you know."

She added this so mournfully.

"Blessed Ruth!" murmured Captain Cameron.

"And it seemed to me that I might save him," she continued, sobbing a little. "Oh, I thought how glorious it would be! worth bearing all my humiliations for—oh! yes,

and more, much more. And I have prayed for him night and day; and when I stood there, before all the people, I seemed to hear a voice whispering to me—'It is not all in vain, Ruth!' and it made me happy!—so happy!

"But when I was called again in the same way, I did not see him—but—that other—that wicked captain; and from him I learned what otherwise I could not have dreamed, that my poor, guilty father had once more stained his hands with blood. Oh, this was the hardest of all to bear!"

"Yes; and *if* you had gone with him, Ruth! I have heard a fearful plot revealed. The villain gloried in his shame. You would never have seen your father; their piratical craft lies miles from here, where no human ears could have heard your cries. Great God! I thank thee!"

He wiped the cold dew from his forehead with his free hand, then said, tremulously, as though he feared the favor he was asking might be too great:

"Ruth, you will stay by me?" his voice was failing. "The ball entered my right side; I cannot tell if it may not be fatal; they are coming—stay by me—stay by me till the last, Ruth."

The doctor and several gentlemen entered. Their expressive silence and concerned looks spoke more eloquently than words. The ball was quickly extracted; one sharp cry of pain had gone to Ruth's heart—then they sent her for lint and bandages. It was well they did; for she was faint and sick with apprehension.

Chapter Sixty-third.

LETTER FROM GODFREY LAMB, BOOKSELLER, TO HIS WIFE
IN LONDON.

DATED BOSTON, March, 168—.

MY DARLING:

As I was getting readie to have my luggage carried on board ye Prudent Sarah, news came to me that ye captain was desperate wounded; and so, of course, ye matter had to be put off for ye present.

That was four weeks ago, darling, w'h time I have been off far in ye countrie prospecting, and only returned two days agone, so fatigued that I could not put pen to paper before. Well, ye governor and his party are safe in jail. I have been to see his excellencie, and he is very much changed—quite submissive. Alle his proud bearing seems gone, while Randolph manages to keep wine by him, and sings songs desperately. I cannot help thinking ye people have acted out their honest convictions; and I should not be much surprised if, at some future time, ye colonies should rule themselves. There is wide water between ye two countries, w'h adds to making it probable.

Ye young captain is now recovering, and handsomer than ever; and ye notorious Captain Bill is safe lodged, though I know not of ye safety, for they say hardly any jail will hold him. Wouldst ever think of it! It is said this bad man

is ye very own son (who went off so many years ago) of my friend ye Reverend Parris Aldrich. That maketh him nephew to ye governor, thou knowest. And what doth give coloring of probability to ye affair is, that Miss Margaret Aldrich hath been now expressly to see him several times. There's no accounting for tastes. I would disown a pirate,—but there! I am not a woman. They have not let ye minister hear about it, he having had sore sickness in his family—yet God spared ye little maid Imogene.

And I do so hate to tell thee (and at the same time am glad, for now all ye mystery is cleared up, and Ruth acquitted), still I dread to tell thee—it hath come to light that a dreadful pirate, worse even than ye other, and who died recently, after his capture, was her own father. To be sure, she has had nothing to do with him these ten years, believing him dead. Oh, to think yet! and she so different! so slight! so graceful and ladylike! I can hardly comprehend it. Thou wouldst not think her low-born—no, not even for a moment.

Three days later.

I threw up my cap with the rest. So William and Mary are crowned—joy to them. Long be their reign! We are having bell-rings, firing of cannon, processions, and great companies of horse and foot from ye cuntry parading. Poor old governor! how bad must he feel in that nasty jail! They are serving wine to ye soldiers. All sorts of foolerie is going on.

Thou wilt laugh when I tell thee that, as a freeman, I attended ye training on ye field called Commons. It is customary here, for all that can bear arms, to go out on a training-day. They asked me what I would choose to carry, and thinking a pike best for a raw soldier, I took that. But with

all my love of such things, I declare I knew not how to bear it, and they told me I held it upside down. I felt mighty foolish. Well, well, it was ye first time I was ever really in arms, and I knew no more how to shoot off a gun than a wild Irishman. Neither was I conscious of being guilty of ye knowledge of military discipline in ye least. Notwithstanding I went, and never was I so astonished as to see ye captain, solemn as a minister, call us into close order, and then—*went to prayer*—praying, by my watch, twenty minutes, and with ye sun beating on us. And when our training was over, then ye captain prayed again. Surely, he must be a verie godly man. No such thing was ever done, I think, out of New England.

I will only add, that 'tis rumored Sir John Willie will shortly be married to Miss Margaret Aldrich, and Miss Eleanor to Master Ross. I believe that is all. Soe good-by, dearest.

Thy

LAMB.

Chapter Sixty-fourth.

A PROPHECY AND—NOT A DEATH, BUT A TRANSLATION.

MISTRESS COMSTOCK was busy in her little lean-to. Father Comstock sat, quite an invalid, in a black-leathern chair that seemed not unacquainted with centuries. In came the schoolmaster, without ceremony; he was a privileged visitor. He smiled as he saw the crutches on one side of the benevolent chair-back—the old bass-viol on the other—the old bow across the old, wasted knees.

Then in came Cotton Mather.

"Sit down, sit down; I'm right glad to see thee," said Father Comstock, a smile lighting his withered face, that, like a dry branch, was all the brighter when it kindled. "I'm feebly, I thank thee, feebly"—(they all shook hands), "pretty near the edge of the narrow river; but I don't dread it. The people are gay."

"Yea, truly; carried away with the excitement," said the schoolmaster. "William and Mary are good enough, I suppose. I hope they may send us something that will set better on our stomachs than Sir Edmund did."

Father Comstock looked upward. The dim blue eye brightened again. He tapped one twanging string of the old viol. Pretty soon he came down from his vision.

"While the Jews were contented with God alone for their ruler," said he, "the Lord took care of them; but when they prayed for an earthly king, he gave them over to hard-

ness of heart. Since then"—the blue eyes travelled from face to face, impressively—"have kings been a curse to any nation!"

'Twas a bold speech, but it found echo in the hearts of the two men opposite—the schoolmaster, gray, Cotton Mather in his prime.

"Our brother is right," Gamaliel spoke, nevertheless he pulled his long vest nervously.

The blue eyes gazed dreamily upward again. Was it a halo about the old man's white brow, or the level sun-rays touching the silver crown of age?

He spoke.

"There is a strange feeling come over me. My dreams of late have impressed me beyond what is palatable for my mind's digestion. Shall I say it? We shall yet be a people without priestly or kingly rule. The mountains are the Lord's, the little hills are the work of His hand, and on both do the rains, the dews, and the sunshine fall equally, according to their bigness. So it shall be with this people. Great and small, high and low, shall alike taste the sweets of a God-fearing liberty. Look—do you see?" The old man pointed his sinewy finger prophetic—they saw nothing.

"Palace-homes rise along the thronging highways, but not for oppressors. They who build them are as good as they who live in them. Cities stretch far and wide. Great plains are filled up—forests teem with human voices. The sea is full of ships"—(his voice sank to a whisper)—"they carry the colors of no king. Everywhere beauty, plenty! Everywhere love, hope, happiness—but no allegiance to any foreign power. God speed the day!" he added, his face grown sublime. His listeners nodded their heads. Cotton Mather took (mentally) notes for a sermon.

"Yes, it will come—it will come," said Father Comstock,

solemnly; "a hundred years may roll down the great steep of time—but it will come, as surely as I go down to the grave."

"It was the jail, gentlemen—the damp, wet, nasty jail," cried Mistress Comstock, entering with a posset, and who had caught only the last words; "I knew he could not stand the damp and the cold, and he nigh on to seventy! It was not likely but his rheumatics would come upon him to the extent they have. Alas, I feared it!"

A modest knock at the door, and in glided Ruth. Her rose-tinted face made the room more cheerful even than before. It was strange to see in how many little delicate ways Dr. Cotton Mather showed his contrition for the past. He had acknowledged that his suspicions were unfounded—wrong—and that he was sorry now that they had ever mastered him as they had—very sorry. He had said this to Ruth plainly and freely, like a great-hearted man. It was but natural that some should sneer at her connection with the notorious pirate, and others express their grief; but there were none but heartily rejoiced that there was no longer any shame attached to her fair fame.

"Are you better to-day, father?" she asked—it was Ruth of old who spoke—the bright-eyed, cheery Ruth, as she parted the silver locks gently.

"He leads me carefully down, daughter," replied the serene old man, tenderly, as was his wont. "I have hung my harp up, cosset—up high upon the willows, and nobody plays on it now, unless, mayhap, the angels. I would we could sing the songs of Zion once more, but I fear it may not be. Are you not going to stay, daughter?"

She shook her bright tresses. "I wish I could, Father Comstock, but the little Imogene grows worse, and they have sent for me."

"Is there no danger?" asked the old man.

"Oh, no; the disease left her days ago, and since, they thought her recovering; but I believe she is taken very weak again."

"Then go, child, go; thou art always doing some deed of mercy," said the old man, kissing her fair cheek. "God grant thy trials may be over."

"Is it true that the Lady Anne hath been carried to her own house?" asked the schoolmaster.

"They tell me so, sir," answered Ruth.

"Dreadfully disfigured—horribly changed," said Cotton Mather, thoughtfully. "So perisheth the beauty of this world—but that of the pious soul groweth more and more into perfectness. I would not judge any too harshly, but it seemeth to me that God hath punished this whited sepulchre for some hellish iniquity."

Ruth smiled a little as she turned aside at this *mild* judgment, then, gracefully taking leave of the goodly company, she hurried, with a beating heart, towards the home of the "Episcopals."

It was true that Lady Anne had been removed to her own mansion. When she was well enough, she asked for a mirror. They dared not resist her imperious will, and handed her one. Then the shriek that rang through the house was most direful. She had totally lost her beauty—and, alas! what had she in head or heart to take its place? Then she immediately insisted on being carried where none could see the ravages of disease, and, covering her from head to foot, they complied with her wishes.

In Imogene's case the sickness took a favorable turn, and for some days her parents were delighted to find her apparently recovering. But this improvement lasted only a few days. She grew wan, white, and unearthly, and, like a fad-

ing flower, drooped till the little frame could no longer sustain itself. Laying along the pillows like a thin sunbeam, her eyes gradually taking on an unearthly tinting, her features every way moulded into heavenly fairness, she both distracted and filled with unutterable love the hearts of those who bent above her.

They made the room beautiful with roses. In each of the four windows, the white light came, making arabesque sun-paintings in a golden shimmer on the snowy wall—streaming over the spotless counterpane, brightening up the soft abundant tresses.

Ruth had not looked to see a thing so ethereal, so heaven-pure! More than ever before did it seem as if she would dissolve within her sight. And oh! how enraptured was the child to see Ruth again! She had said (so wonderfully acute had grown her sense of hearing) that "there was Ruth!" when none of them heard the outside door open.

She threw her almost transparent arms, that fell like the folding breaths of two opposite currents of air, over Ruth's neck, and when she released her, she said:

"Your mother came in with you—what a pretty angel!"

Ruth looked up inquiringly.

"She sees, or thinks she sees, some attendant spirit with each one who enters," said the tearful mother, softly. "Either her vision is singularly refined, or God gives her inner sight."

"She is there now; she is over your right shoulder. She is kissing you. Oh, how bright! *don't* you see her?" and the thin hands came together with a rapturous clasp.

Ruth was awe-struck, but managed to ask, "Who does she look like, darling?"

"She looks as you do—some—her hair is like the sun! the sun!"

"My mother had black hair," murmured Ruth to Mrs. Aldrich—then turned to the child again. The soft eyes were lifted no longer—there was only a natural light in them now.

She smiled as she met Ruth's glance, said brightly and quickly, "She's gone!" smiled again, and, placing one hand under her cheek, lay gazing at Ruth.

"Sometimes there's ever so many of them here," she murmured calmly, as if it were only a natural and customary sight. "When I was well, the little children never came—such pretty ones!—but they love me now, because I can't get up, and walk and play. They're not frightened a bit, either, when papa or mamma come in; they fly all round mamma, and sometimes kiss her, just as if she belonged to them; but when *some* people come—oh, they *do* go so quick!"

"Do they?" asked Ruth, involuntarily glancing upwards.

"Yes"—she hummed the yes, and nodded her head;—"but I'll tell you when they come," she added, her eyes lighting with a supernatural splendor. "Only"—a little shadow crossed her pure face—"they won't talk to me; but they sing sometimes—sing so sweetly! But papa says maybe that's the way they talk in heaven." The bright smile came back. "I wanted mamma to hear them yesterday; I guess she did—she wouldn't say no."

Ruth felt every nerve creep, as the beautiful child lay regarding her with those eyes full of mystery. From the blue-veined brow to the foot-shape under the graceful bed-drapery, she seemed only a spirit—ethereal as air, lovely as light! Would *she* need to die?

"Do you feel sick, darling?" asked Ruth.

"No—only I can't get up. I'm waiting for my angel; when she comes, I think I shall go with her—up to where Jesus lives."

Her simple faith made her eyes lustrous again. Mrs. Aldrich turned from the bed, but somehow her sigh seemed to speak of resignation as well as sorrow.

So there, for a time, was Ruth's post—in the company of that spirit passing heavenward, and the angels. Imogene wanted her always, she said.

Ruth's watch was a hallowed one. Henceforth, sin of thought, or word, or deed, would seem frightful to her; henceforth it would be a solemn, yet a beautiful thing to live; henceforth life would never seem short—never. It appeared sometimes as if the atmosphere of that room was full of celestial brightness; its light fell over the face of Imogene (perhaps over her own), bathing it in a clear, spiritual lustre. Oh! surely, if it was not hers to see, she heard the faint rushings of wings; harp-airs fell on her inner ear—her soul was lifted, and heaven not far off.

One day Imogene said to Ruth—

"When I *go to sleep*, will you be my mother's child? Yes, you will—won't you?" she added, seeing Ruth's lip quiver; "you will stay here, and lie in my bed, and sit in my chair—and I will come sometimes and kiss you."

"We shall always love Ruth because you love her, as well as for her own sake," said the minister, much moved. "Yes, Ruth shall be to us as a daughter."

"O father!" and the little hands smote joyously together, "when you said that, came that beautiful angel that looks like Ruth. O father! say it again," cried the child, in an ecstasy.

Mr. Aldrich repeated his promise, and the child lay like one in a delighted trance, only murmuring, "It is so bright!"

Old Doctor De Bow was the family physician. He was accounted the most skilful medical practitioner in the colonies, and his services were sought far and near. Generally,

he was a coarse, unchristian man, speaking lightly of death and eternity; but before Imogene, he held his peace. The grim old atheist was either afraid or ashamed in the presence of this revelation.

When the old man came quietly in, instead of bustling about in his usually pompous way, with his cocked hat under his arm—on the day that Ruth returned—said the child, laying her feverish little palm in his great, sinewy hand—

"That ugly black cloud over your shoulder grows lighter every time—and I just saw a dear little round face, just like a baby's, peep out of it."

"Oh dear!" cried the old doctor, dropping like lead into a chair. Strangely enough, he had that morning lost a beautiful little grandchild—his only one. Would *that* lead him to the kingdom?

"Is she no better, doctor?" cried the suffering mother, as she followed the usually morose doctor to the door.

"Better! I wish to heaven I was as well!" His voice was choked. "Madam, you nor I, nor any other mortal being deserves such a child as that! Child!—she's a seraph. I tell you, she couldn't grow up here. The air isn't pure enough." He faltered again as he added: "She wants—a change of climate, and she will have it soon."

"She will have it soon!" How the words rang in the ears of the waiting, watching group! She, on her part, waited more patiently than any of them. The visits of angelic beings—to her apprehension—became more frequent. She would break out into low, musical laughs in her sleep, and beat time to some strain of heavenly harmony. When she awoke, she looked about for a moment bewilderingly, as if she found herself in the wrong place—and so she did; but she waited.

One day—it was not long after the sun had risen—she said suddenly—

“I’m going, Ruth—mother—papa!”

A sweet smile trembled along her lips, but from them the faint scarlet was gradually dying out. Her eyes were fixed, but not on the cold, white wall, where little curious beams quivered and glittered.

She was repeating something in a whisper. The father, who had been called, bent, hushing his grief, close to her mouth. It was a little psalm she had learned long ago, and thus it ran:

“God shall charge his angel legions,
Watch and ward o’er thee to keep;
Though thou walk through hostile regions,
Though in desert wilds thou sleep.”

She attempted another verse, but seemed not to have the strength, so lay silent for awhile; then cried, with a sudden, triumphant smile—

“They’re all here, mother; I’m going—good-night.”

Ruth was weeping, but so quietly that she disturbed no one. “Good-night!”—oh, that it were *but* good-night!

They stood moveless around her. They knew she was gone, but could not bring themselves to signify the fact to each other. The white fingers just met over the unmoving breast. But, oh! it was hard to see the beautiful eyes glaze—so, with one deep sob, the minister held his hand over them; then gently, gently pressed the white lids down.

O God!—that hush!

Who has not felt it? To Ruth it seemed as if there would never more come angels around her; and if this had happened in the time of her desolation, she would have prayed to lie down there beside her, and die too. Now it

was a mournful pleasure, but still a pleasure, to fold the hair back (looking brighter than ever were the silken curls, in contrast with the death-whiteness of cheek and brow), and to sit there and think where she was.

When the first bitter pang was over, thus wrote the rector to England. Yes, this now time-stained, almost illegible paper, felt the hot tears of a father’s grief. I copy it word for word:

“DEARE MOTHER:

“Alle is over. Ye angel thou didst wish to see hath gone to her Father in heaven. O mother—mother! I am desolated—oh! I am broken in spirit. Would thou wert not so far away! Pitie me: ye strings of mie heart are all snapped in sunder.

“She lies before me now; and, suffering as I am to ye soul’s centre, couldst *thou* look on this sight! and could I see thy deare smile but once to beam on this sad, tear-wette face, my sore anguish would be lightened. There is a white rose in her hair—oh, that precious hair! breaking out in shining filaments under her grave-cap!

“Thou rememberest ye cross, with white stones, thou didst send her from England. That same cross is in her hand. Oh, ye waxen fingers soe slender!—oh, ye *whole* of my darling!—my darling! my dead! my living! my mortal! my angel one! I write in ye agonie that must surelie have veiled ye spirit of Mary, when her most divine Son did lie in all ye cerements w’h eyes look last upon, and w’h eyes loathe with unavailing bitterness.

“I often say, what came she for,—she that was so different from all ye children of earth that ever I have seen? Not unawares have we received an angel. From ye first hath she been a mysterie to me. She never was alone but she was

smiling upwards at something in ye air. When we spoke not to her she answered, making an unearthly feeling to run through alle my veins. On whoever came to us she pronounced judgment soe wise that we trembled, and were constrained to walk uprightly before her. She was like a vase of chrystal. Ye wicked feared to encounter her as if she were some great judge with unlimited power. Truly, how should I thank God with trembling, that He hath entrusted me with a pearl from among His crown-jewels. Yes, I will be resigned. Perhaps ye same angels who talked with her are near me now.

"O heaven! I thought I saw a smile on her lips, but 'twas only fantasy. Sometimes I think ye cross moves—I go and listen at her lips—or that ye eyelids open—'tis all, all fantasy!"

With the solemn service of the English Church the precious body was consigned to dust. Ruth returned home with them. She trimmed the portrait of the child with flowers instead of crape, and gathered up the relics the dear fingers had made holy. Once, long after, Mrs. Aldrich gave Ruth the key of the casket containing the caul, telling her if it was changed or broken she need not speak. Ruth gave a mournful glance and was silent, but her eyes swam in tears.

The death of Imogene, the little New-England Token, as she was called, gave sorrow to the whole city. Cotton Mather, overlooking all scruples, attended the funeral; so did all the clergymen, even from the adjacent towns. Her life was the theme for sermons, of poems; and babes were hushed to sleep by sweet stories of the holy little New England child, who was so innocent the angels came to play with her. A celebrated English artist, then sojourning in Boston, ob-

tained her picture, a remarkably accurate likeness, and copied it with the beautiful eyes uplifted, and airy, almost unpalpable forms of winged seraphs floating above and around her.

According to the records of her life, this was not a case of precocious intellect, nor of forced religious training. "I never taught her," said her father, "but instead took lessons from her. She was always cheerful, gentle, playful, but heaven seemed to have entrusted her with a singular and superior power. I shall know why, when I meet her up there!"

Chapter Sixty-fifth.

LADY ANNE'S CONFESSION, WHICH EXPLAINS ALL MYSTERIES.

THE jail was more comfortless than ever. Sir Edmund occupied the room in which Sir John had been so lately imprisoned. Let me describe it. Fourteen by twenty, walls unplastered, window-holes crossed by rough iron bars, two wooden bedsteads and five or six shake-downs (piled against one side of the wall in the daytime), floor of rough stone partly, partly the ground, a fireplace, black-jawed and given to smoking, a few stools, a few chairs, and one rickety bench that answered for a table, completed the inventory.

Not a luxurious lodging, this, for one whose brow had been fanned by the airs of affluence. Not a pleasant exchange, these foul wooden stools, for couches of silken velvet—or the discolored walls and blackened spider-hangings for tapestry, paintings, and statuary. Add to this the groans of the sick—of whom there were a few, uncared for, unattended to—the noisome smells of neglected offal within and without, and it will readily be believed that the governor and his secretary were discontented with their lodgings.

To add insult to injury, Captain Bill had been placed among them. This pseudo wine-merchant and redoubtable thief was not a welcome addition to their company by any means, especially as he attempted familiarity.

"Well, governor, so we're all jail-birds together!" was his

first salutation. "Well, it's a decided relief to get into good society. Oh, come man, don't be uppish. This is no time to put on airs, especially with relations. Let me condole with you, most honorable uncle, for notwithstanding I, like yourself, have the misfortune to be kept at my country's expense, I am your own dear nephew, the run-away son of the parson, Parris Aldrich. I hope my very much respected father is well."

"We have no wish to know you," replied the governor, after a glance of haughty contempt. "You are a notorious liar, thief, blackguard, and pirate."

"Well, that's cool! thank you, uncle," was the reply.

"You will desist from using our name with familiarity," said the governor, highly exasperated.

"Shall I chastise this fellow, excellency?" queried the secretary, with knit brows.

"Try it, you puppy!" shouted Captain Bill, springing from his seat, his athletic arms extended, his hands grappling the air. "If I am to hang," he added, ferociously, "I should like the pleasure of twisting your neck first, and putting your black heart where no embroidery would cover it for one while, unless they have such luxuries in *hell*!"

The secretary had retreated to the farthest corner of the room, crying that here was a madman, and shouting for the keeper. There would, undoubtedly, have been trouble but for the entrance of the jailor, followed by Margaret Aldrich.

"Ha, Maggie!" exclaimed Captain Bill, putting off his belligerent attitude, "I knew you'd come. I knew you wouldn't desert your poor devil of a brother in the time of his trouble."

The governor and his secretary looked on in astonishment. Would she recognize him?

Yes, she walked directly towards him, and with tears in

her eyes and anguish in her voice, she said, "O Wilfred! Wilfred! my father would die if he knew of this."

"Niece, do we dream?" queried the governor, sternly. "Are thy senses gone, girl, that thou canst stoop to this felon—this pirate?"

"Uncle, he *is* my brother," was the only reply; "and though I fear lost to all virtue, I cannot desert him. For years I have known this, and striven to save him, and though my prayers and entreaties have been of no avail, I will not disown him now."

"There's the girl for my money!" shouted Captain Bill, and common as the expression was, tears stood in his eyes.

"Yes, now I see how the wretch was liberated from our dwelling. Girl, *I* disown *thee*! Thief, where is my silver?"

"Where you and I are going pretty soon,—under ground," composedly replied Captain Bill.

On her way from the jail on a subsequent visit, some two weeks after Imogene's death, Margaret was overtaken by one of Lady Anne's maids, who gave her a note to her father. The superscription was in the round, bold hand of Lady Anne.

Margaret found her father sitting dejectedly by the fire-side. Ruth was reading aloud, and Mrs. Aldrich, very white and nearly ill, occupied a couch drawn up on the hearth. None of the little family had learned in what connection the pirate-captain stood to them. It had been carefully kept from their knowledge, even by the townsmen, who respected the sacredness of the rector's great grief.

Margaret handed her father the note, fearful that its contents would be prejudicial. It begged him to come to her without delay, as she had something of the utmost importance to communicate to him. His hand shook like a leaf as he read—so many bitter, anguished reminiscences did this

handwriting recall. He determined to go, however; and as soon as he had calmed himself sufficiently, he set forth.

The note said three o'clock. It was nearly that hour when he stood upon the steps of her mansion. From the drawing-room he was conducted to a darkened chamber. Shades were placed before the windows, and Lady Anne lay upon a couch, almost entirely concealed by a canopy of thick glittering stuff, which she had caused to be constructed. Only one hand was in sight, but it was covered with a glove of delicate white kid.

At the foot of the bed sat Captain Cameron, who seemed astonished to meet the rector. His handsome face was troubled. Neither was he permitted a sight of Lady Anne, whose studious anxiety was now as much to hide her face, as she had before been eager to display its proud beauty.

Pen cannot paint the mingled emotions that assailed the heart of the minister, as he solemnly took his seat in the silence of the tomb-like room, and awaited her errand. When he had last seen her he was a happy father; he could scarcely realize that this woman had embittered his whole life. He had met her first under the roof of an uncle, with whom he spent one of his vacations. He was then but nineteen, with a refined, poetic face. She was high-born, beautiful, and notorious for her coquetry—but she loved the student, and because he would not return her passionate advances, her unregulated, undisciplined life, was thenceforth devoted to revenge. All the past he saw in review as he sat there, waiting for her ladyship to speak, and last, but not least, came the conviction, that through harboring her he had lost Imogene.

The silence was broken.

"I sent for you both to come and see me," she said, in a voice terribly agitated; "but I would not have you *see* me

for the world. If it will be any satisfaction to you, in view of the many wrongs I have inflicted, know that I am permanently disfigured."

"God keep me from cherishing revenge!" said the minister, after a short struggle for composure. "I am sorry for you, Lady Anne."

"I have given up the world forever," she resumed; "not because I am tired of it, but I could not mingle with those who have seen me in other days. I have sent for Captain Cameron, as you see, to engage passage with him to London; there I shall enter a convent, and devote myself to religion."

"It is my unalterable decision," she added, in reply to some gentle, Christian remonstrance. "A convent will be my final destination. But before I shrive myself at the feet of some holy father, I must make my confession to you—to you, against whom I have sinned so deeply"—her voice faltered. The minister bent his head on his hand. Captain Cameron looked on amazed, and would have gone, but she commanded him to remain.

"This humiliation I could not undergo (it has cost me many a struggle), but for nights I have seen your little child in my dreams, and I could not bear the reproach in her face."

She was weeping. The head was withdrawn for a moment. The minister still sat with his face hidden.

"I have requested Captain Cameron to remain," she said, "because what I have to say concerns him as well as yourself. And oh! God grant that thus I may partly expiate my sin."

"Amen!" responded the rector; adding quickly, "may God for Christ's sake forgive you!"

"You know, already," she continued, "that I caused your

first child to be taken from you. *That* you traced to me—but I returned"—there was a long pause—"another child, dressed in its garments."

The minister lifted himself with a convulsive effort.

"Woman!" he exclaimed, drawing his breath in gasps.

"No—it was not your son Wilfred—the children were so young no one could have told, especially after a week's absence. Even the mother of the other child, a handsome German girl in my employ, did not know. From that time to this—now nearly twenty-three years—I have followed the fortunes of those boys. Your son, or he whom you thought your son, has proved his lineage. His father was a ruffian, and—you know, of course—Margaret has told you—"

There was silence. Then the minister said, as if coming out of a trance, "I am bewildered—Margaret has told me nothing: to what do your words tend?"

"It will do no harm to tell you, then," continued Lady Anne. "I am prepared for your harshest censure—it is deserved. He—the babe your wife nursed and loved—who despised your authority, and left his home when a lad—he has grown into the lawless pirate and murderer they call Captain Bill."

"No—it cannot be!" The minister arose from his seat, and staggered a few paces back and forth. The veins stood like knotted blue cords on his pale temples—drops of anguish beaded the veins. "For God's sake don't torture me," he said hoarsely; "I can illy bear it now. Tell me, where is my son, if he be living?"

"Before you!"

The answer was brief—given in a tear-veiled voice—but oh! how much it involved! Captain Cameron started to his feet now, turning in bewilderment from the couch to the almost petrified form of the rector.

"I solemnly affirm, and am willing to take oath, that this man, whom you have all known as Captain Cameron, and who has begged me countless times to clear the mystery concerning his parentage, is your lawful child and heir. I have done him no harm, but rather good, though his own noble nature hath aided him most."

"I cannot realize this great blessing, my dear sir!" exclaimed the young shipmaster tremulously, overjoyed. "But oh! if I am not in a too happy dream, I thank God for a father!"

"And I for a son!" sobbed the rector, falling within the young man's arms, completely overpowered.

The gloved hand was invisible for a time—there was a sound of soft weeping under the curtains. Doubtless, the tears that streamed down the disfiguring channels of that face were the first drops of true penitence that had ever fallen from her eyes.

At length the voice said again, "Have you any questions to ask? I could not blame you for doubting me."

The minister lifted his head, turned the manly young face before him to the light, pressed back the clustering curls, and replied in a tone of triumph, "Not one! The features of his sainted mother convince me. And if it were not her likeness I look upon, the thrill that springs from vein to vein, as I hold him to my heart, would be sufficient proof. O Lady Anne! from this time I forgive you every thing!"

"Wait!" said Lady Anne, impressively; "I have not yet done. The loss of the little Lady Emily Randall is yet to be accounted for. Be seated again, and hear me with thankfulness, for I solemnly assure you, that if the hand of the Lord were not laid upon me thus, you should never, *never* have listened to these disclosures. As much as I loved you, I loved your son better—and he—has proved himself incor-

ruptible. And he shall not, as I have said before, marry a poor, and birth-stained girl. Hear me! In the abduction of the little Emily, her own nurse was my accomplice."

The rector gave an exclamation of horror.

"I know all you would say—that you placed the greatest confidence in her—but she was heavily bribed. I made her fortune for her. I look for nothing but your greatest abhorrence!" she cried, impulsively; "for I have long abhorred myself—therefore do not be astonished that I tell you these things so calmly. It is something I have made up my mind to—for I am no longer as one in the world. To my confessor I shall disclose these long kept secrets, as I have to you.

"As I said, her nurse was my accomplice. The child was disguised, hidden—and I waited my time to bring her to this country. Finally, I embarked in as much secrecy as possible, and escaped detection only by stratagem. The babe was cared for by a girl in my employ, who went as a steerage-passenger. During the voyage I saw much of a pretty little English-woman, who was going to America to rejoin her husband. She had a babe six months old, of whom she was very fond, and I was trying to plan how she might also take charge of the Lady Emily—when, suddenly, her infant died.

"You draw away—I do not blame you; but oh! your suspicions are very, very unjust, if you think I did aught of harm to that innocent child. No, no! I am guiltless of such a crime.

"I never saw a human being suffer as that woman did. Her husband would be expecting to see the babe, she said. It was born three months after he went away; and how could she meet him. He would blame her—hate her. From what she said, I judged he was a cruel man; and it

required but little persuasion to induce her to take the high-born babe, especially as I told her it was an orphan. That woman's name was—Margerie.”

Captain Cameron kept silent; but his heart bounded, his eye and his cheek glowed. He cast an expressive glance towards his father, who had scarcely taken his eyes from his face, and who sat close beside him, fondly holding his hand.

“Margerie proved to be a wicked man. He had gone to America, because his desperate habits were more than suspected; and for many years he has been a terror to the coast. Therefore—you know what I would say.”

“He was not dear Ruth's father!—oh, this is too much happiness for one day!” cried the captain.

“And is Ruth—is this beautiful child-woman the daughter of my wife's best friend?” exclaimed the minister, tears running, unwiped, along his cheeks. “What Ruth—little Ruth—Lady Emily?”

The gloved hand disappeared once more; then was held forth again. Within its clasp was a box of green morocco.

“You can recognize these jewels,” said Lady Anne; “the sleeve clasps, the gold pins, and her initials in a little brooch that confined the sash she wore.”

The minister opened the box nervously. It was all as she had said.

“And now I have done you justice,” said Lady Anne. “Captain Cameron—nay, I must teach myself to call you Captain Aldrich—will, I am sure, bear testimony that I have ever acted towards him the part of a benefactress.”

“You have, Lady Anne—you have,” cried the young man, forgetting all the vows he had registered against her, and pressing the fingers of the little gloved hand.

“I could not neglect him,” she continued to the rector, “hard as my heart seemed towards you, and capable of doing

you unlimited mischief as I felt myself. Nor did I entirely forget Ruth; but—must I confess it?—I hated her saintliness. The beautiful uniformity of her character was a living gospel—a steady rebuke to me; and when she was in disgrace, I exulted. Despise me if you will—but oh! remember, it is not the proud, baleful Lady Anne who speaks to you now, but a sad, erring, repentant woman, whom God has delivered from a bondage that was leading only to despair. I cannot see, from this stand-point, how I have ever endured the suffering my complicated machinations have brought upon myself. Oh, how much easier had I lived if I had only done right!”

There was a sob or two as she finished the sentence. The minister, in his mild way, tried to soothe the unhappy spirit. For a long while he talked; nor would he leave her until she professed to feel comparative peace.

Chapter Sixty-six.

IN WHICH LADY EMILY RANDALL SUPPLANTS RUTH MARGERIE.

Two happier men never passed over the threshold of a pleasant home, than the minister and his newly recovered son. Even the death of their angel Imogene, and the circumstances leading to it, seemed now a divine providence to the mind of the minister.

But how to address Ruth!

For some time the matter was debated; and at last they agreed to treat her with the deference her rank exacted for some time, without informing her of her new standing and peculiar dignity.

"She will be more astonished than she hath astonished me," said the minister; "for it always did astonish me that she, amid such surroundings, should be so gentle, refined, and ladylike. Poor child! she hath suffered much. I have the means of recompense, at least in a small degree. The fortune of her father has just been declared in England. So many and contrary heirs have claimed it, that the will has been disputed several times. Now it is to revert to me, as the nearest of kin, unless the missing child be found. Surely, in the midst of my afflictions, God *has* remembered mercy!"

They entered. Tea was on the table, and Mrs. Aldrich expecting them. Ruth's eye kindled as she saw who accompanied the minister.

"I have brought a friend who I am sure is welcome," said the rector, controlling his emotion; yet, nevertheless, looking a little wild. Then, turning to Ruth, he said: "Your ladyship is looking uncommonly well this evening."

This would do for a jest—so Ruth thought, wondering, by the way; for he had left them in extreme depression, and was not in the habit of speaking lightly. But when he exclaimed again, with that peculiar smile and almost distant manner—

"Will your ladyship deign to sup with us?"—she was so much astonished that it confused her, especially as the young shipmaster hardly took his eyes from her face, but seemed to answer that half-mocking smile.

Mrs. Aldrich noticed the peculiar manner of address; for a moment it occurred to her that the death of Imogene had affected his brain.

"Will you pass these sweetmeats to her ladyship?" asked the minister, this time smiling; but the sensitive girl burst into tears, and hastily rising, left the table.

"Ruth—dear child! forgive me!" said the minister, springing forward and passing his arm about her. "See, my daughter—my Imogene's most loved friend—I have something that belonged to thee when thou wast a little babe."

"To me—to *me*—these beautiful things?"

She lifted the trinkets wonderingly.

"And now, my wife, come here; I have something to tell thee. This is no longer Ruth Margerie, but the Lady Emily Randall, and my adopted daughter; while this, thank God, is my long-lost son!"

Sitting there, with an arm around each of the bewildered women, he told the wonderful story. Ruth could not at first believe it. She started back—fearful, amazed, aghast, at the perfidy of which, for the first time, she had heard.

Trembling, wondering, tearful, grateful, she was led into another room, for her nerves were unsettled, and she longed to convince herself that she had not really changed into somebody else, which puzzle it needed a little reflection to solve.

To be sure, it had run to the very limits of the city by the next day. At an early hour, Mistress Bean, Mistress Comstock, and Gammer Scates formed themselves into an investigating committee, pretty much as some ladies do now-a-days, and waited upon the minister, to be convinced—which they very shortly were.

"To think," cried Mistress Bean, lifting hand and eyes in astonishment, "that I should have been taking care of a born lady all this time! Dear, dear! I wish I had done my duty by thee better, my lady."

To this selfish wish, Ruth (I am unwilling to relinquish that sweet name) made a gentle and suitable reply.

"Well, I'm sure *I* did as well by thee as I knew how, cosset," said Mistress Comstock; then adding: "Oh, dear me!" turned very red.

Her hand was caught by Ruth, who bent forward and kissed it, thereby causing a twinge of jealousy to stir the heart of Dame Bean.

"Surely, she should be the same!" cried the independent Gammer Scates. "Why shouldn't she? What is the difference of a little money and a title to one's name? Ruth will be Ruth all her life—that I know—and she couldn't be better," she added bluntly.

And now, reader, I suppose thou art ready to ask me all manner of well-meant, but gossippy questions; which allow me to answer beforehand, by placing before thee a very minute account, by one Mrs. Lamb's "own special correspondent"—after which expect to hear no more from me at present.

Chapter Sixty-seventh.

LETTER FROM GODFREY LAMB, BOOKSELLER, TO HIS WIFE IN LONDON.

MY FAIR LADIE:

It seems almost laughable when I think that mayhap manie of these letters will go with me, and thou wilt have the pleasure of reading the same with thy Lamb meekly sitting as thine opposite. I have everie day new astonishments and new surprises, so that if I do not make haste to go from this enchanted land, I know not what may happen to myself. And I am very sure I have told thee nothing quite so strange as that I have to tell thee on this sheet.

It seemeth, then, that ye Lady Bellamont, by reason of a visitation from God (small-pox—I dared not tell thee till ye danger was over), hath been brought to her right mind, and hath made a strange and terrible confession, though resulting in good to her own soul, it is to be hoped, also to ye souls of others.

I will not here enter into minute particulars, which I must say I loathe too much to write down, but which will escape in the breath of air with which I tell thee on my return. Suffice it; that our gallant Captain Cameron hath proved to be ye son of ye Reverend Parris Aldrich; and, greatest wonder of all, ye sweet little maid Ruth is really a lady by birth,—ye Lady Emily Randall. If thou dost remember, I told thee of the sad loss that befell ye reverend gentleman

in his earlier days; well, it turneth out that ye maid Ruth is ye lost little lady, so there is great rejoicing, as much as is consistent to ye recent death they have had in their midst.

I know not that I shall rightly describe ye wedding.

"Wedding!" criest thou.

Yea, verilie! Ye Lady Anne hath made ye young captain her heir, so that he had a fit fortune to be married with. In consequence they had a verie great time at ye house of ye Reverend Cotton Mather, he desiring, almost insisting, that ye wedding should be solemnized there; and it was also Ruth's choice. I must call her still by that prettie name. And such a companie as was gathered! Ye verie best of ye land. Dr. Cotton Mather was never so jolly or so jovial. Ye bride was dressed (can I remember) in satin, a lace veil, and beautiful pearls, familie pearls, verie costlie. Ye saintly look she hath not lost, but, I think, is rather gained on her.

Among the companie were all that I have before spoken to thee about; all the humble folk, also, among whom Ruth hath been, even to long, lean Ben ye fiddler, and a genius whom we call Catchcod, Duke of Marma, who recited, amid much laughing, some original lines, which were hardly fine enough to send thee.

Ye good old father Comstock, of whose fiddling and psalmody I wrote thee, was not able to be there on account of illness, from which he will likely never recover. He is a good old man.

Meantime, ye governor hath nearly made his escape twice, and they watch him closely, both him and his secretary. Ye poor miserable pirate, when told how affairs was, took sullen and lost all hope. He made certain confessions as to ye whereabouts of buried treasures, and hath not spoken since. It is said he depended upon ye governor and

his connections to get him clear. He will now be sent to England to be hanged.

They say that one time ye governor escaped quite a distance in a womanish disguise, but having passed two sentinels, ye third looked rather narrow at ye shoes, which were too clumsy for a woman, and so detected him.

And now on parting, let me tell thee (pen parting) that we too must surelie return and live in this pleasant countrie, —far more pleasant in manie respects than England, which believe me, thou wilt not long regret. That is ye intention of ye captain.

I do not think there is a happier couple in ye wide world than Captain Aldrich and his beautiful wife, whom he still persisteth in calling Ruth.

So, my darling, no more at present from thy

LAMB.



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