

THE
CONVENT'S DOOM:

A TALE OF
CHARLESTOWN IN 1834.

—ALSO—

The Haunted Convent.

BY CHARLES W. FROTHINGHAM.

FIFTH EDITION.

GRAVES & WESTON:
OFFICE, "AMERICAN UNION," 36 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON.
1854.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1854, by GRAVES & WESTON, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

The extraordinary success of the Stories published in this little book—of which more than 40,000 copies were sold, within ten days after publication in their original form—can only be accounted for, by the peculiar feeling which just now agitates the community at large, and from the fact that the leading story gives a history of the causes which led to the burning of the Nunnery at Charlestown, in 1834. The concluding story, by the same pen, is of a far more exciting and humorous character, and will deeply interest every reader. The book has been carefully revised and corrected by the author, who has not drawn upon his imagination for facts. Having had a sister, (who is now a Roman Catholic,) in the Convent at Charlestown, he has the best possible means of knowing the truth of every statement which he gives his readers. In answer to heavy orders from the trade, and to meet the wishes of the reading community, this Fifth Edition of two of the most successful Convent stories of the day, is now presented to the public, in an improved form, by

THE PUBLISHERS.

THE CONVENT'S DOOM.

TO THE
K. N. FRATERNITY
THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES, THE FOLLOWING SIMPLE BUT TRUTHFUL SKETCHES FROM REAL LIFE, ARE
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED, BY
THE AUTHOR.

CHAPTER I.

THE DYING FATHER.

In a room, richly furnished, in the town of Charlestown, some time during the year 1834, an old man was seated in an easy chair, gazing with eyes that were dimmed with age and sickness, toward a huge building, which was situated on an eminence, and overlooked the town. There was an air of gloom about the place which caused the old man to sigh, and he turned away his head, murmuring—

‘No, no, Helen must not go there; her young heart would break before three months; yet—’

‘What was yee spaking about, sir?’ asked a stout, vulgar-looking woman, whose accent proclaimed her Irish.

She had been busy making the invalid’s bed, but the instant she heard his voice murmur some indistinct words, she had quitted her work and stole, unperceived, to the back of his chair to listen.

‘Nothing, Bridget; I did not call you. I was but looking at the Convent, and thinking what a gloomy aspect it wore. Not a soul is to be seen, yet this bright afternoon should tempt many into the open air.’

‘Ah, and isn’t they much better employed, sure, in their devartions and larning, than to be

running round, bringing scandal on the holy church. Sure, it’s the next world where they’ll have the fine times, with St. Patrick, and other blessed saints, for companions.’

‘Bridget,’ said the old man, turning his head, and endeavoring to get a look at the girl’s face with his dull eyes, ‘Bridget, I took you from the Convent as my nurse; you have lived there many months, and should know whether the inmates are happy.’

‘Happy is it, ye mane? O, ye should see the ladies when they are at their devartions! Sure, not one of ’em would lave the place. And then they have the tachings of the good priest, Father McCaley; oh, he’ll be a saint in the next world!’

‘Yes, yes, Bridget,’ cried the old man, uneasily; ‘I believe him to be a good man, and on his recommendation took you for my nurse; but he wants me to send my daughter to the Convent, when she no longer has a father. I am failing fast, Bridget, and I must soon make up my mind.’

‘Sure, sir, she could go to no better place. Mr. McCaley would indade be a father to her; and then the blessed Father Inghasa—the same one who has jist come over, at the holy Pope’s request, to see that everything is correct—would see that she was fitted for the next world.’

The old man did not reply, but leaned his head back against the pillow the watchful Bridget

had just smoothed for him, and for some moments remained in thought. At length he asked—

'Where is Helen?'

'Sure, you told her she had better walk out for a time, and she hain't returned. It's little she thinks of her father when she's with her lover.'

'She has been very dutiful, but I thought her cheeks were growing pale, so sent her to take the fresh air. She has been engaged to Henry for nearly two years; but they must forget each other.'

'Of course they must, sir, because it will benefit her entirely. O, wont she be happy when she jines her sisters in the Convent?'

She would have spoken more, but as she turned round, she caught a glimpse of two stern looking men standing at the door, listening to the conversation. In an instant, she bent her head, made a sign of the cross on her forehead, and then exchanged rapid signals with them.

The old man remained unconscious of the presence of visitors, and still sat with closed eyes.

The visitors, after answering Bridget's signal, walked slowly into the room and seated themselves, one on each side of the invalid's chair. They were dressed in black, and looked as solemn as mutes at a funeral. Neither spoke, but each cast his eyes around the apartment, as though considering how much the furniture would bring at a forced sale.

The sick man at length opened his eyes, and as he did so, his glance encountered that of one of the men, who apparently was studying his character by his face.

'Ah, Father McCaley, I am glad you have visited me, for I feel very low in spirits and health,' and the invalid extended his hand and pressed that of the priest with great cordiality.

'The holy church can give relief to the spirit, but not health. We make death no longer terrible, but we cannot prolong life,' the priest answered, laying his soft hand on the withered wrist of the old man, and suffering his fingers to feel the pulse which scarcely beat beneath their touch. The two visitors exchanged glances, when Father McCaley said—

'Mr. Herring, you have often heard me speak of Father Inglasa, when I have visited you. This is the gentleman. He is just from Rome, and many times has seen the head of the Catholic church, the Pope, whom God preserve,' and both priests devoutly crossed themselves, and repeated the pater noster.

'And you have seen the Pope then?' cried Mr.

Herring, suddenly aroused to new life, and turning to Father Inglasa.

The latter priest was a tall, dark featured man, with piercing black eyes, and thin lips, which closed over a mouth denoting firmness and resolute will; yet when he smiled there was something very fascinating in his face, and those in his presence forgot that he was a priest, and looked upon him as a very genial companion.

'Frequently have I seen the holy Father and head of the Catholic church. He is accessible to his children, and they love and worship him as a saint. He is void of all affectation, and when erring children have been converted to the true faith, he is the first one to hold out his hand and welcome them, and heap honors upon them. We Italians are enthusiastic in our attachment to the church, and do not stop to deliberate as you cold-blooded Americans and Englishmen do.'

'No, no, Father, I am not cold-blooded, but I wish to be convinced before I die in your faith. Besides, I have a daughter to provide for, and as yet she has shown no signs of leaving the Protestant religion.'

'Let her enter the Convent of the blessed Saint Ursuline, and if she does not wish to remain after completing her education, why of course she can return to the world and its vanities,' said Father Inglasa, smiling sweetly, and gently pressing the old man's hand.

McCaley looked at his associate with astonishment, and would have spoken; but Inglasa made a sign for him to remain silent.

'But I thought Helen would be obliged to remain for life if she once entered the Convent, and I appointed Father McCaley her guardian.'

'You must have misunderstood him. There are no such rules in force. The inmates can go or stay at all times—there is no compulsion; be they poor or rich, all fare alike.'

McCaley looked more and more astonished, but was too much under the influence of the Italian to speak.

'If those are the rules, I shall not feel such reluctance in consigning Helen to the Convent for a short time—at least, until she is ready to marry.'

'She is engaged, I believe,' said the Italian, with a slight scowl.

'She has been engaged to a very worthy young man for more than a year, but he is one whom your church calls a heretic.'

'But that need not alter your arrangements for your daughter. We have nothing to do with affairs of the heart, and shall hold your property

in trust for her when she returns to the world,' and the Italian looked towards his friend and slightly smiled; but it was a different smile from the one he turned and bestowed upon Mr. Herring.

'Well, on those terms I consent to constitute Mr. McCaley guardian for Helen, and shall in the course of a few days draw up a will to that effect. I am weary now, and feel like sleeping,' and the old man closed his eyes as though to slumber.

McCaley was about to rise, but on a sign from the Italian he kept his seat.

'There is no time to be lost, sir, when once an affair of importance is resolved upon. I am something of a lawyer, and will, under your direction, instantly proceed to make out the papers,' and without waiting for an answer, the Italian went to a table where writing materials were, and proceeded to draw up the forms of guardianship, while McCaley busied the invalid with conversation concerning his future state.

'Here,' said the Italian, at length, 'is a paper which but requires your signature to give it effect. It constitutes my brother, McCaley, your daughter's guardian, with discretionary powers regarding the property you leave; and here is another paper which gives the whole of your fortune, provided your daughter dies without issue, to the Convent, which she is to enter for a short time as a novice. But if she chooses to mingle again with the world, upon her marriage, all the property held in trust shall be returned to her, whether she marries a member of the Catholic church or a Protestant. Does that suit your mind?'

'Yes, yes, I think that is what I wish, but I grow weak. If I sign the papers, can you promise me a happy hereafter?' and the old man, who was in his dotage, looked with anxiety at the Italian to see if he could promise that.

'Do not fear—sign the papers, and Father McCaley shall instantly give you absolution, and masses shall be said, even in St. Peter's at Rome, for your soul,' and the Italian placed a pen in the old man's trembling fingers, and then brought a small table for him to lean upon so that he could affix his signature.

'Wait one moment, sir,' said the Italian, hastening to the bell-rope, 'we need witnesses. I shall answer for one, and your nurse for another. He rang the bell, and in a second Bridget entered, having been waiting outside to be summoned.

Mr. Herring, as soon as he saw the nurse enter,

bent over the table, and with much difficulty affixed his name to the papers, and then the Italian also signed them as a witness. After he had done so, he handed the pen to Bridget.

'But, plaze yer rivirince, I can't write,' the woman said.

'No matter—here, take the pen in your hand—place it on the paper. There, that will do. Now begone.'

'But, plaze yer rivirince, I jist see Miss Helen and her feller coming toward the house.'

'We are ready for them. Now, McCaley, give him the last rites of the church before they arrive; be quick about it.'

'I believe, sir,' said Mr. McCaley, 'that he does not need them, for he is dead,' and he raised Mr. Herring's hand and then let it fall heavily. The old man died as soon as he had signed the papers.

'He has saved you some trouble then. I will take those papers in charge for the present,' and the Italian placed them in a pocket-book, and looked towards his companion with a smile.

'I cannot see that they are of much use,' McCaley said.

'You may not, but I do; does it not give us control of the immense property he has left?' the Italian asked, with a sneer.

'Yes, but the lady can have it again when she leaves the Convent, and I, as her guardian, will be obliged to restore it.'

'Was there ever anything so simple; I am almost sorry that I admitted you to our glorious order, which once was the most powerful in the world, and will be again. The Jesuits have but few like you in their ranks,' and the Italian looked coolly at his brother priest.

'I will do all I can for the order, although I admit that I am an unworthy brother, and not suitable to sit at the feet of one like yourself. Still I am an obedient member, and if I cannot plot I can work,' and McCaley looked at his superior for a smile of approbation, but he did not get it.

'The girl will enter the Convent as a novice, but shall never leave it. Once there, with no relations to inquire after her, what is she to do but devote herself to Heaven, and her property to our society. You can comprehend me now?'

'Yes, I understand your plan; but if the authorities of the town should interfere, or her lover create a disturbance, what then?'

'What then? Do you not know that there are those powerful in position who would protect us. Because America is new, you must not think we

have neglected her. Our society can count its thousands here, and in a few years the General of the Order will make this country his headquarters instead of intriguing at Rome. If the lover sighs, a letter will be sent to him as though emanating from her, and he will have no cause to rejoice after receiving it. My hand can counterfeit as fast as she can write.'

'And all the property goes to the Order?' asked McCaley with a sigh.

'All comes into my hands, as I am your superior in this country, but it will be used to advance the order. Hush! I hear steps. Down on your knees beside the dead man and pretend to pray, and if you can shed a few tears they will not come amiss.'

McCaley had barely time to do as his superior ordered, before the door opened. A young girl, not over eighteen, came into the room, followed by a noble looking man not more than twenty-six.

The lady was remarkably handsome, and as she had just come from a long walk, the glow of exercise was on her cheeks, and health beaming in her eyes. Her dark hair fell in curls around her neck, where it had escaped from the fastenings when she took off her bonnet, while her full red lips covered a set of teeth as white as ivory.

Her companion was not what could be called a handsome man, but there was a look of good nature about his face which was far preferable to beauty, and the nobleness of his form, and high, white forehead and thoughtful eyes, showed that he was worthy of the young girl to whom he was affianced. There was a look of simplicity in his dress, and an air of good breeding about his movements, which showed that he was well born and used to good society.

CHAPTER II.

THE WORKINGS OF PRIESTCRAFT.

Helen, the young girl described in the preceding chapter, stopped suddenly, when she saw who were in the room, and then catching sight of the kneeling priest, and her father's motionless form, she sprang wildly to his side, and in an instant comprehended that she was an orphan. Luckily, her lover, Henry Morton, had followed her, and caught her in his arms as she fell. He then carefully laid her on her father's bed, and turned to ring for her maid, but she was already in the room, and proceeded to render such assistance as the case required; and Henry soon had the pleas-

ure of seeing the dark eyes of Helen open and seek his own for consolation.

In the meantime, the kneeling priest continued his prayers, and the Italian Jesuit, although pretending to be listening to his associate, was watching Helen and her lover, and thinking how he should commence a subject so disagreeable as it must be to both.

As soon, therefore, as Helen had declared herself better, the crafty Italian stopped his subordinate prayers, and sent him to condole with the lady, while he held himself aloof as one not acquainted with the family.

'Alas, young lady, you have indeed met with a loss, but you have cause to be thankful that your father died in the true faith, and his spirit is now in company with angels. The rites of the church were administered to him by myself and brother Inglasa. His last words were for you.'

Helen did not answer; with her face buried in her hands, she sobbed bitterly. Henry also was affected, but he was more composed, and asked:

'Did Mr. Herring die a Catholic?'

'He did, young man, and although I have witnessed many death-bed scenes in Italy, I never saw a man die more hopeful of a blessed hereafter than this lady's father,' answered the Italian, approaching the party.

Henry looked at the Jesuit. The latter bore his searching glance without changing a muscle of his features, but Morton took a dislike to him and from that moment they hated each other bitterly.

'It is but recently that Mr. Herring manifested symptoms of partiality towards your religion. I could have wished that some of his friends had been present at his death. Had we anticipated that his end was so near, his daughter and myself would not have left him,' and Henry turned to the weeping girl and whispered words of comfort.

'Her father was in good hands, Mr. Morton,' said the Italian, 'and spoke of the happiness his daughter would enjoy by contracting a marriage with yourself.'

'He did speak of that?' cried Henry.

'Certainly he did, on one condition,' answered Inglasa.

'One condition! name it, sir.'

'The deceased thought his daughter too young to marry, and in the absence of any female relatives, he directed that she should pass a year at Mount Benedict, with the understanding that the Lady Superior of the Convent would receive her. At the end of that time she was to be united to

yourself, provided you did not change your mind.'

'Enter a Convent!' cried Helen, suddenly raising her face; 'oh, no, my father could not mean that!'

'Do not fear, dearest,' said Henry, proudly; 'if you do not wish to go there, the gentlemen will find it hard to compel you to. We live under a free government, and papal power is harmless here.'

'You speak like a person who thought that we poor ministers of Christ had some object in wishing the lady to enter the home of the blessed Saint Ursuline. Here are her father's commands, and here is another paper, appointing my worthy brother, McCaley, her guardian. The papers were drawn by myself, but at his dictation. Look at them, young sir, and see if you recognize Mr. Herring's signature,' and the proud Italian handed the papers to Morton, who eagerly scrutinized them, and then, without a word of comment, passed them to Helen.

'Come, my friend,' said the wily Italian, who was a good judge of character, 'this is no place for us. If the child refuses to obey the last commands of a father, why should we feel aggrieved. We have the proud satisfaction of knowing we have done our duty and can do no more,' and the Jesuit, with a look of saintly meekness, moved towards the door.

'One moment,' cried Helen, suddenly, starting from her seat, and confronting the two priests; 'if I have refused to obey the last request of my father, do not attribute it to reluctance, but to the sudden affliction which has befallen me. As soon as the grave has covered him from my sight I will enter—nay, Henry, do not interrupt me,' she said, as Henry sought to speak; 'remember, it is my father's command. As soon, gentlemen, as the funeral services are over, I will enter your Convent for one year. At the expiration of that time I shall leave, and become my own mistress. Do not think to make a Catholic of me, for my mother instilled such principles in my mind that all the reasoning of a College of Cardinals could not change my faith.'

She ceased speaking, and exhausted by her efforts, sank upon the sofa, weeping bitterly.

'Alas, lady,' said the Italian, in a low, mournful voice, 'is our blessed religion never to be understood—are we always to be considered as mercenary and selfish? and yet daily are our lives perilled by visiting the sick and infected. Say but the word, and I will tear these papers to

pieces, and thus destroy all evidence of guardianship.'

'Tell him to do so, Helen—oh, tell him to do so!' cried the maid, a young American girl.

The Jesuit looked at the girl and smiled upon her, but she trembled violently, and declared that she felt as though she saw a snake.

'Helen,' cried Henry, 'if you bear me any love, tell these gentlemen to yield all claim upon you. Do not, for my sake, enter the walls of that mysterious abode, where no law is known, and none can reach you.'

'Henry, you have read the papers which my father signed, and can you ask his daughter to disregard his wish, even before his body is cold? Seek to sustain me, for, indeed, I have need of consolation.'

The two priests exchanged looks of gratification, and again the Italian spoke.

'Every rite consistent with the Catholic church shall be paid to the deceased, and my brother, Mr. McCaley, will officiate in person. Masses will be said for the repose of his soul in all the Catholic churches in the State, and even in Rome his name shall not be forgotten. We will now take our leave, and await your orders respecting the funeral,' and the two priests bowed their heads and left the room.

'She is ours, McCaley; I knew I could trust to the love she bore her father, and you see I was right. She is a lovely girl, and if I was not in orders I would make her my wife. As it is, why when she enters the Convent, let no one cross my path, for I have too much of the Italian in my composition to be baffled in an affair of love.'

'I certainly shall not; but the Lady Superior?'

'She is already mine, and belongs to our glorious Order. Let us to Saint Ursuline, and make ready for the reception of your charming ward.'

CHAPTER III.

THE MIDNIGHT MEETING.

Three months had passed since Herring died, and Helen entered the establishment of Mount Benedict. For the first few weeks Henry had received letters regularly from her, as he supposed, through the hands of Bridget, who, for a heavy bribe, took charge of the correspondence. But his letters never reached her, and the epistles he so joyfully kissed and read and re-read, were never penned by Helen's fair hand. She wrote

frequently and with great secrecy, but the treacherous Bridget, a tool of the Italian's, gave them to her master instead of Henry; and then the priest would forge a note so entirely different from the one Helen wrote, that Henry at last was obliged to believe she was gradually changing her religion for that of the Convent. The uneasiness and anxiety he suffered, he tried to conceal from every one; but his failing health and pale face showed what was passing within, and his friends gravely shook their heads, and whispered in low tones their dread of what might happen should Helen never leave Mount Benedict again to mingle in society, which she was so well fitted to adorn.

Morton's family were rich and influential, and the young man enjoyed a large fortune in his own right; but he felt that riches were useless, unless shared with the one he loved.

One day, after receiving a letter from Helen, through the hands of Bridget, in which Miss Herring spoke with more than usual seriousness of her intention of assuming the black veil at the end of the year, and the happiness she enjoyed in communion with the sisters of the Convent, Henry could bear no more. He mounted his horse, and with reckless haste rode to the Convent. He walked with a firm step and thoughtful brow to the gate, where the porter's lodge was placed, and rang the bell.

A long time elapsed before the porter unbarred and unlocked the gate; but in the meanwhile, Henry was aware that his person was sharply scrutinized from a small window, and not until a signal passed between the keeper of the lodge and the man at the window, was the gate opened a few inches, and then held in its place by a strong chain.

'What is wanting?' demanded the porter, a huge, six foot fellow, with a repulsive face.

'I wish to see Miss Herring, a pupil in the Convent,' Henry answered, politely.

'Well, thin, you can't see her; men are not allowed within the walls.'

'But I must see her; I am—'

'Am you a relation, sure?'

'No, I—'

The gate was dashed violently to, and the Irishman retired to his lodge, growling at being disturbed.

Twice that day did he strive to see Helen, and as often was he baffled. He offered a purse filled with gold to the porter, but the Irishman laughed in his face, and threatened to set his bull-dog on him if he ventured there again, and completely

disheartened, he knew not what course to pursue. He wrote a long and affectionate letter that day to Helen, and with more gold in his pocket to bribe the treacherous Bridget, he again mounted his horse and galloped towards Mount Benedict. It was past ten o'clock when he crossed Charlestown bridge. The night was dark, and threatened to be stormy; but it was little heed he paid to the weather. It was the evening he was to meet Bridget, and fearful of being late, he spurred his horse on at the risk of breaking his neck; and although people wondered what could cause his haste, he paid no attention to them, and only checked his steed when he was within a few rods of Mount Benedict.

He dismounted and hitched his horse to a tree, and then in the darkness and falling rain, stole forward to the spot where he had been accustomed to meet the nurse. She was not at the rendezvous, and anxiously he gazed towards the Convent to see if he could discern her form coming along the path.

Not a soul was to be seen; all was quiet, except the pattering of the rain as it fell in large drops on the gravelly path or long grass. The wind sighed mournfully through the trees, and the gloomy Convent with not a light to be seen, reminded him of some haunted castle that she had read about, or called to his memory the many stories he had heard, when a boy, about deserted dwellings, and the freaks and fancies of ghosts.

Bright streaks of lightning darted through the air, and occasionally a distant growl of thunder gave tokens of the coming storm. Still Henry stood his ground, and although wet to the skin, as long as there was a chance of meeting Bridget he determined to endure the exposure. At this instant the town clock struck the hour of eleven, and with a sorrowful heart he gave up all thoughts of seeing Bridget that night.

He quietly stole back to his horse, and the animal welcomed him with a low neigh, but still there was an affrighted look about him which Henry could not account for, and at each flash of lightning he saw that the beast's eyes were dilated and his ears drawn flat to his head. Morton spoke, and gently patted his neck, and in a few minutes all appearance of restiveness was gone. Placing one foot in the stirrup, he sprang on his steed's back, and turning his head in the direction of Boston, lightly touched the brute with the spur. The horse snorted, bounded wildly aside, and then reared violently; at the same instant a bright, dazzling flash of lightning revealed to Henry a gigantic man, who had seized

his bridle with one hand, while he held an enormous bludgeon in the other.

The giant's face was concealed by a slouched hat, but the thought instantly struck Henry that he was confronted by the Irish porter of the Convent.

Rendered desperate at the thought of what his fate might be, alone and unarmed as he was, he drove his sharp spurs into his horse's side, and then aimed a violent blow at the man's head with his riding-whip.

The brave steed reared on his hind legs, fought wildly with his fore feet, but the giant kept a grasp like iron on the rein, and once more the noble brute came to the ground, trembling in every limb, and completely conquered by that giant's arm.

'Release my horse's head,' Henry said, at length.

'Dog!' cried an unknown voice, 'have I met you at last! for this have I prayed, but with no hope that my prayer would be answered.'

'You are mistaken in the person,' cried Henry; 'I know you not, and never harmed you. Release my bridle, and let me go on my journey.'

'Accursed priest, do you pretend not to know the brother of Alice! Liar that you are, dismount or I'll tear you from your horse and strangle you before you have time to mutter a prayer,' shouted the stranger in a rage.

'You are mistaken, sir,' Henry said. 'I am no priest, but suffering like yourself from their artifices.'

'Ah! are you not Inglasa, the confessor of the Convent?' the giant said, still keeping his hand on the bridle, and holding his bludgeon ready to strike if hostile demonstrations were made by Henry.

'Inglasa! Me Inglasa! Curse him and all his tribe of priestcraft. Here, at the next flash of lightning, look in my face and see if I resemble the Jesuit,' Henry said.

He had scarcely done speaking, when the heavens were illuminated by a vivid flash of lightning and a heavy peal of thunder broke over their heads, shaking the ground on which they stood, and then the sound gradually died away in the distance and all was dark and still again, except a convulsive sob which Henry heard at his side.

'Are you satisfied?' Henry asked at length.

He felt his bridle free of the iron grasp but he did not urge his steed on, for in that sob he thought he recognized one who was bound to him by a bond of suffering.

'Go your way, Mr. Morton,' the giant said

at length. 'In the dark I took you for the Jesuit. Would to God you had been, then I should have been ready to die in peace.'

'You know me, then?' Henry cried in surprise at hearing his name.

'Yes, I have seen you before, and know what attracts you to the Convent. Go home to your bed—in a few months you will feel as I now feel.'

'How do you know my private griefs?'

'No matter how. The time may come when you will wish to learn more. You are not ready for revenge yet. Good night.'

'Stay,' Henry cried. 'You who know so much should know that I am ready now to revenge myself on the accursed order, who, by their arts have turned the heart of a pure girl and wedded her to their mummeries and superstition.'

'How know you that the girl has changed?' the giant said, again returning to the side of Morton's horse and laying one huge hand on his arm, as though to command attention.

'By letters from the lady herself, in which she requests me to forget her as her heart is turning to the blessed life in the Convent.'

'Did the letters come openly or secretly?' the stranger asked in a musing tone.

'Secretly of course. I have bribed one of the servants to bring and carry letters so that no eye except my own and Helen's could peruse them.'

The giant laughed scornfully before he replied:

'Oh! deluded young man! did you once think your letters reached her, and that the ones she wrote ever came direct to you?'

'Of course they did. I have them here, in her own hand writing. The proof is conclusive that they are—'

'Forgeries!'

'Forgeries!' cried Henry. 'No, no, you are mistaken. The priest, would not resort to such a trick as that.'

'They would resort to anything to obtain possession of the two hundred thousand dollars your intended is worth. Ay, they'd even resort to worse tricks than forgery to accomplish their ends. You do not know the priests as I do, or you would suspect them of every crime that bad men are capable of conceiving or executing.'

'You have suffered by their arts then?'

'I have, but I cannot bear it tamely. I have sworn an oath on the Bible which my mother gave me on her death bed, to be revenged on yonder accursed Convent and priests, and I'll keep

my oath, though all the Jesuits in the State kept guard over the place.'

'Why not apply to the authorities of the town for redress?' Henry asked.

'And do you think I should obtain it? I am a poor man and Jesuit gold is powerful.'

'But if you have been wronged they would institute a search in the building or have the one who injured you, arrested.'

'Of course they would,' the giant answered with a bitter laugh, 'but word would first be sent to the Convent that a party intended to visit the place and do you suppose they have no secret chambers to hide those they wish to conceal. I have tried it, and was treated like a madman because I dared to bring charges against the pious monks of St. Ursuline.'

'Can it be possible?' Henry asked.

'Well may you inquire if such things are possible. Do you suppose our fathers fought on yonder hill to give their country to priestcraft and nunneries?'

'No, they thought not that within sight of Bunker Hill, where the blood of heroes flowed, a Convent would be established, and their granddaughters become its inmates,' Henry said, looking in the direction of the hill, which became visible as a flash of lightning darted through the heavens.

Both remained silent for a few minutes. The rain had ceased falling, and the dark clouds overhead had broken away and given place to starlight. By this Henry examined the gigantic man at his side. He was tall, with shoulders like a Hercules, and as he removed his hat and shook the rain from his clothes, Henry saw that he was good featured and blessed with an excellent head of hair, which fell in a mass down his stout throat, and gave him a wild, singular appearance. A coarse, common frock, such as are usually worn by teamsters, was confined to his waist by a broad belt, the skirt falling to the knees. Henry had barely time to complete his survey of the man, when he asked,

'Have you any objections to hear how I suffered by priestcraft?'

'You appear to know how I have suffered; there is a bond of sympathy between us, and perhaps by relating your case we may devise some means of retribution,' Henry answered.

'Then dismount from your horse and seat yourself on this rock. I will not be long relating my wrongs, because I am a man of action not words.'

At this instant the town clock struck twelve.

'What name am I to call you while we converse?' Henry asked as he dismounted.

'There is no occasion for a name, but for the want of a better, you may call me the 'GIANT TRUCKMAN.''

CHAPTER IV.

THE BROTHER'S WRONG.

'One year ago, Mr. Morton,' said the Giant Truckman, 'there were few happier families in Charlestown than the one which looked to me as the head. My father died three years since, and left a younger sister and my mother to support. He also followed the occupation of a truckman, and when I was old enough I engaged in the same business and soon raised sufficient money to buy me a span of horses and a truck. I was fortunate, but the whole burden of taking care of my mother and sister fell upon myself, as my father was addicted to the use of stimulating drink, and when he saw that I could and was willing to provide for the house, he seldom troubled himself about coming near us.'

'When he died, however, we rather felt relieved as from a burden; although we mourned for him sincerely. Yet during the last years of his life he had not seemed like a father to me or Alice, my sister.'

'I worked hard, and felt happy, when the day's toil was done, to sit of an evening and talk with my sister and mother about the future, when Alice would marry some good man and I could go and live with her. The future is different from what we anticipated and my dreams were fancies to be blown aside by the first selfish feeling of love.'

'After my mother died, Alice kept house for me. She had grown singularly beautiful, so much so, that I almost wished she was married and out of danger; yet, when I alluded to the subject, she would laugh my fears away, and declare that I was getting tired of her company. I tired of Alice, whom I loved better than anything in the world, and she knew it, only she liked to plague me with her pranks.'

'Fearful that my sister would not acquire a good education, I sent her to a school in this town, and it was while acquiring a knowledge of books that she learned she had a heart.'

'She had frequently told me of a dark, gentlemanly man, who had walked by her side when she returned from school, but she could not learn

his name or occupation; and although I watched time after time to catch him when he spoke to Alice, yet somehow he never appeared when I was on the lookout, and I at last began to think she was teasing me to make me jealous.

'I will not tire you by relating everything which came to my knowledge, during six months, and how I at last discovered that the man who had made himself so agreeable to my sister, was Inglasa, a Catholic priest and a Jesuit. I taxed Alice with her imprudence, but she only laughed and declared that she knew he was a priest, and had no regard for him whatever—that I need give myself no uneasiness, as she would not see him again.'

'I rested easy upon this, for Alice had never told me a lie; but, O God! she already loved the Jesuit better than her brother, and to screen her from my rage, she did not scruple to utter a falsehood.'

One night I come home from my work, tired and hungry, and was thinking of the warm welcome Alice would give me. As I neared the house I was surprised to see no lights gleaming from the windows as usual, where they had always been welcomed by me with as much joy as a sailor welcomes the light which he knows indicates the port where safety is to be found for the tempest-toss'd bark.

'Surprised and alarmed, I hurried into the house and found it deserted. I called for Alice, but received no answer. I lighted lamps and looked in every room, but Alice was gone, and left a letter saying that she bade me good by, and hoped I would not grieve for her, as she had long contemplated entering the Convent at Mount Benedict, and that she had only waited till she was of age, to accomplish her object.'

'In the first moments of my wrath, if I could have reached her, I should have strangled her, even if it had been at the foot of the altar; but reason came to my assistance, and I determined the next day to apply to the authorities to recover her, although I hardly expected she would be as pure as when she left her home; but I still loved her, and love her yet.'

'The same night I went to the Convent, but was refused admission. I told who I was, but was still denied, and then I became furious. I dashed in the doors with a huge log, and although half a dozen strong men tried to bar my way, I cleared them from my path, and at last reached the hall where the nuns were at their devotions, and the accursed Jesuit, the Italian priest, was saying mass. Among the girls I recognized my

sister with the fatal white veil on, and frantic with rage and grief, I rushed towards her, begging she would accompany me home, and that all would be forgiven.

'To my surprise she answered me coldly—told me I had violated the sanctity of the Convent, and that I must instantly retire. I tried to reason with her, but she waived me off, and as I turned I caught sight of the face of the Italian, as he stood at the altar, dressed in the robes of the church. I would have killed him then, but I hoped he would get terrified at my proceedings, and send the girl home.'

'Finding it useless to endeavor to persuade Alice to return, I slowly left the hall. But the Italian had been busy while I was pleading with my sister, and a dozen officers threw themselves upon me. As fast as I shook off one, another took his place, until wearied with the unequal combat, I submitted, and was hurried along in triumph to jail on a charge of making an assault on the members of the Convent, and for attempting to abduct one of the nuns.'

'I lay for a long time in prison, but when I had my trial and the facts became known, I was acquitted, although the expenses obliged me to sell my horses and truck, and I emerged from the dungeon penniless.'

'I quickly found work, however, and once more applied myself to my avocation, but not with the same spirit that formerly animated me. I will not detain you by telling how one night I returned home and found Alice there, ready to ask her brother's pardon for the injury she had done him, and to tell him of all the indignities she had suffered at the hands of the Italian, until rendered desperate, she had burst her bonds, and was free; no longer the same artless Alice, with a spirit pure and true, but a ruined woman, plotting revenge for her injuries.'

'She has been with me more than a month, and from her I learned the means employed to make Miss Herring believe you was engaged to another lady, and had forgotten her, while all letters you receive are full of praises of the Convent of St. Ursuline, and no encouragement is given to your passion.'

'By Heaven!' cried Henry, starting to his feet, 'this is infamous, and shall be exposed. I will at once lay my complaint before the authorities, and have the affair investigated.'

'Softly my friend,' replied the Truckman, 'was you appointed guardian of the lady?'

'No, but I am her affianced husband.'

'And she is bound to stay there one year. At

the end of that time, if she is still alive, you can claim her,' the Truckman answered composedly.

'If still alive!' cried Henry with amazement, 'is there any danger that she will not live through the year?'

'My young friend,' answered the Truckman, rising from his seat, and laying his huge, bony hand on the impatient young man's arm, 'I have it direct from Alice, so there can be no mistake in the matter. Your intended is pining for the want of fresh air and happy faces; in that gloomy building a heavy penance is inflicted if the inmates indulge in a smile, and how long, think you, can Miss Herring live in such company?'

'Poor, dear Helen,' said Henry mournfully, 'can nothing be done to get you from amongst such a nest of serpents! Let them take her fortune, but restore her to me in all her purity, and the gold may go and welcome. I have enough for both.'

'Do not hope too much for the latter—remember there is an Italian Jesuit in the Convent, and think of the wrongs of my sister, and then wonder whether Miss Herring can hope to escape.'

'Truckman!' shouted Henry, 'you'll drive me mad with your suspicions. Show me a way of saving Helen, and name your reward.'

'I want no reward—I want revenge, and that I'll have. For four weeks have I lingered around this Convent during the night, in hopes of seeing the seducer of my sister, but without success. To-night I thought God had heard my prayers, and placed him in my power; but I find I came near slaying you instead of the priest. Now, a new idea strikes me. Let us exterminate the brood and light up such a fire, that priests hereafter will point in terror to Mount Benedict, when a Convent is named.'

'Can I save Helen by the means?'

'It is the only means we have to save her. Strike fiercely and suddenly, or we lose all hope for revenge. A failure would be fatal, and Miss Herring lost to you forever.'

'Then I join with you heart and hand, and pledge my fortune and best energies for the accomplishment of our object.'

'Good. I'll work also, and as long as one stone remains upon another, my revenge will not be satisfied.'

'Here,' cried Henry, drawing his purse filled with gold, which he had intended for Bridget, 'use freely of this, and when it is exhausted,

come to me for more. 'Do not scruple,' he added, as the Truckman put it back with his hand, 'remember, it is for our mutual revenge.'

'For to promote that I take it. Now, I have another piece of news for you. To-morrow night is appointed for the meeting of a secret society to which I belong. The object is the downfall of the Convent, and no one can become a member unless he has suffered by priestcraft. There are but eleven of us, yet by their means, I intend to astonish the world. Would you like to be present? I will take the responsibility of introducing you. Believe me, your name is frequently mentioned at our meetings, for we keep an account of every one wronged.'

'I will be present. Where shall I meet you?'

'Near the square; at ten precisely.'

'I will be there. Hark, the clock is just striking two,' said Henry, mounting his horse.

'And it's time I was home. Alice will be concerned about me. Good night. We'll not go together for fear of being observed.'

'Good night,' answered Henry, and he dashed his spurs into his horse's sides and rode home, happy to think that Helen would soon be free.

CHAPTER V.

THE SECRET SOCIETY.

The old town clock struck the hour of ten, the next night, as Henry paused in his hurried walk across the bridge, and gazed along the nearly deserted streets for the Truckman; but shortly after the clock struck, the burly form of the man he had met the preceding night on Mount Benedict, emerged from an alley and stood beside him.

'You are punctual, Mr. Morton, and that argues favorably. Are you of the same mind you were this morning at two o'clock?'

'I am more eager now than I was then, because I have pondered on the subject all day, and it is the only course left for me to pursue,' Henry answered.

'Then follow without delay,' replied the giant, leading up a street in the direction of Mount Benedict, and although Morton was a smart walker, he found he was obliged to run or lose sight of his new friend.

To Henry's relief, however, he at length stopped before a large, old-fashioned brick house, and then, carefully looking up and down the street, to see if they were watched, the Truckman

opened the door, and bidding Henry follow, entered, and closed it after him.

There was no light in the entry, nor any appearance of the house being inhabited, but the Truckman raising his foot, struck four distinct times with the heel of his heavy boot upon the floor. As the last sound died away, the faint gleaming of a light at the head of the stairs in front of them, proved that they had awakened some one.

'What's wanting at this time of night?' cried a shrill voice.

'Come down, Adam, if thou wert the first man,' replied the Truckman, as he saw an old man peering over the banister, endeavoring to get a look at those beneath him.

'Ah, is it you, giant that you are? Come up, I have a few friends who are anxious to see you.'

The Truckman made no reply, but followed by Morton, ascended the steps and stood before the old man, who held his light up to Henry's face, and then looked inquiringly at the Truckman.

'It is all right, Adam—I'll vouch for him and give the reasons.'

'We can't be too careful, you know, and remember—'

Here the old man whispered something in the ear of the Truckman, the latter bending his huge body to listen, and then Morton heard the giant mention his own name, and the old man cast an approving glance at Henry, as he muttered,

'I am glad to see him here; but he must wait. You know it's against the rules.'

'Mr. Morton, you will be obliged to remain in a room alone for a short time,' Mr. Adam said, and he led the way to a chamber handsomely furnished.

Henry bowed and seated himself, and the old man leaving a light, hurried out of the room and closed the door. There was a number of paintings hanging on the wall, and Morton, wishing to pass away the time, took the lamp and proceeded to examine them. The first one he came to was the portrait of a young girl, so beautiful, that Henry almost forgot he was looking at a piece of canvas, and thought he was standing in the presence of an angel. As he moved the lamp back and forth to get a nearer view, he saw a piece of paper fastened to the frame, and on it was written,

'DEAD—ENTERED A CONVENT.'

Morton started back in horror, and as he did so, he perceived that the old man had entered the room, and was calmly looking at him.

'Can it be possible one so young and lovely, entered a Convent?' Henry asked.

'She did. Through the accursed arts of a priest, I was rendered childless. But come; they are waiting for you, and it will not do for me to talk about my injuries.'

Morton followed the old man up another flight of stairs, and then his guide stopped at a door and knocked. A short delay, and the door was opened, and Morton found himself in a room, with ten resolute looking men sitting at a long table, and two vacant chairs.

'Welcome, Mr. Morton,' cried the President, as he arose and motioned to a chair; and as Henry passed along, hands were thrust out and smiling faces greeted him.

'We will now come to order again.'

In an instant, there was a breathless silence, when the president said—

'Gentlemen, you know the object of our meeting. We are pledged to combat priestcraft, and to ensure fidelity, no one is admitted to our order but those who have suffered by their arts. Not one of us but could relate a tale of wrong. Yonder old man, our host, has seen an only daughter incarcerated for life—this honest man on my right has a sister's virtue to revenge—I mourn for a wife—another brother sees his betrothed hurried from his presence, and lost to him forever. We have applied for redress, but there is no law to help us, and now I think the time has come for us to help ourselves. For four weeks has the Truckman waited night after night near the Convent walls to get sight of Inglasa, but without success. This he has done on his own account, and without the sanction of the society. We wish to accomplish our vengeance openly, and the Truckman is now willing to join with us and lend his influence. The society is willing to hear the views of its members.'

The president sat down, and then the Truckman slowly rose, and said—

'The reason I wished to take the law in my own hands was because I thought you had grown lukewarm in the cause; but now that I find myself mistaken, I am ready to be guided as the society may see fit; only let me inform you, Mr. President, there is no time to be lost. The people are impatient, and will not wait long.'

'There is a new member to be initiated, Mr. President,' said the gentleman who sat next to Henry.

'I am aware of it, sir, and now we will proceed to that duty. Mr. Morton, you have suffered from the effects of priestcraft?'

'I have,' Henry answered.

'Do you solemnly swear, then, to use all your influence, and to combat Catholicity wherever it may rear its head, and to preserve strict silence in regard to all doings of this society, and to give freely of money when you may be called upon, and to do in your power to relieve a brother when in danger?'

'I swear.'

'Then, with the power which the constitution of this society invests in me, I declare you a member of our order.'

More business was discussed, and it was a late hour when the society broke up. Each member had received his orders, and all knew how to act. As they were leaving the room, the Truckman suddenly turned to the president, and asked—

'What day of the month is it, sir?'

'It is the tenth day of August; why do you ask?'

'Then let the night of the eleventh of August, 1834, be a memorable one in the history of Massachusetts. Let a cry go forth which shall frighten priestcraft, and its echo even startle Rome from her slumbers, and all Protestant Europe will know we have not forgotten the lessons of our grandsires.'

'Amen!' cried every voice, and they quietly separated, Morton and the Truckman leaving in company.

'Be near Mount Benedict by eight o'clock, and above all things put on some old clothes and a slouched hat,' the Truckman said.

'And there is no prospect of a failure, is there?' Henry asked.

'Failure! I will bring men to-morrow night who would laugh at the idea. Twenty-four hours hence you will have Miss Herring in your arms, and I shall be avenged.'

The Truckman strode moodily away, and his giant form was soon lost in the darkness, while Henry thoughtfully wended his way home.

CHAPTER VI.

RETRIBUTION.

On the 11th of August, 1834, small parties of workmen were seen discussing some subject of great secrecy, in various parts of the city. The truckmen stopped their teams and conversed apart, and men were gathered around the engine houses, apparently in expectation of a fire, yet there was no alarm. All day long the huge

form of the giant, could be seen wherever there was a gathering, and his appearance was the signal for silence. The crowd would group round him and listen to his orders with the deepest attention, and then quietly disperse. Everywhere was he known—sometimes shaking hands with the rich banker on State street, and then grasping the hard fist of a coal heaver. It appeared to make no difference with the giant whether the man was rich or poor. He bestowed the same attention on one he did on the other. Sometimes mysterious questions would be asked the Truckman, and he would answer equally as secretly, and then pass on to some other part of the city.

The sun went down without a cloud to hide his blushes, and the stars came out one by one, and twinkled as though they were winking at the scenes of commotion below, and had agreed not to tell on any account.

It was near eight o'clock when Henry left his home in Boston, and walked briskly towards the bridge. He had been busy all day, and had had frequent interviews with the Truckman and other members of the secret order to which he belonged.

As he reached the bridge, he was surprised to observe the number of people crossing to Charlestown, and it was with difficulty he could urge his way along. Fearing to be too late he hailed a carriage. The driver promptly sprang from his seat, and asked for directions.

'To Mount Benedict.'

The coachman looked at him suspiciously. At length he asked—

'For or against—Protestant or Catholic?'

'Protestant,' Henry answered, remembering the instructions the Truckman had given him.

'Good! I was afraid you was going to stop the sport. I'll drive you there in a jiffy,' and the coachman sprang on his box, and with a yell to the pedestrians to clear his path, whipped his horses into a gallop.

Morton then for the first time remembered that he had forgotten to change his clothes as directed; but he consoled himself with the reflection that he wore a cap, and that would screen his features.

It was just dusk when the carriage stopped a short distance from Mount Benedict, and as Henry alighted he caught sight of his friend, the Truckman, talking earnestly to an old man, whom he recognized as the one called Adam, and the father of the beautiful girl whose portrait he saw in the chamber.

Henry paid the coachman, and he was about

to drive off, when he thought he would retain his carriage for the night, and the driver, nothing loth, readily agreed to place it at his disposal. A secure position being found, the man promised to remain there for further orders, and then Morton went in quest of his friend the Truckman, who was still talking with the old man.

'You are ready, I see,' the Truckman said, 'but it is too early to begin yet. Help me persuade Father Adam to return to his home. He is too old to be here.'

'I am old, and it does not need my weak and trembling hands to remind me of it, but aged as I am, I will assist in the great work, and try to release my daughter, and then once more I shall feel young, for I know that my only child will close my eyes and weep for me when I am gone.'

'Of what service could you be? You would be trampled under foot by the crowd. No, go home and leave the work to us young men,' the Truckman said.

'Truckman!' cried the old man, fiercely, 'on yonder height my father fell fighting beside Warren. He was as old as I am, but did he shrink from his duty? No, he wielded his musket until it broke into a hundred pieces, and then he died, and I can do the same!'

'But the case is different now,' Morton said; 'we do not come here to kill or wound. We wish to open the doors of a female prison, and let the inmates escape; for to do that there will be a sufficient number of us, but should we want re-inforcements we can call on you.'

'Well, well, you may be right; but who will look for my daughter?'

'I, or some of our order,' answered the Truckman; 'and if you will go to Mr. Morton's carriage, she shall be placed in your arms.'

This satisfied the old man, and with many promises that they would call on him if they wanted help, he entered the carriage, while Henry and his giant friend slowly walked together towards the Convent, where not a light was to be seen, nor any person in view near the building.

The crowd were receiving large additions every minute, from Boston and the neighboring towns, and as they arrived they would be formed in squares by some secret emissary and then wait patiently for the word of command.

The evening wore quietly away; but just as the old clock struck the hour of eleven, the Truckman placed a whistle to his lips and blew a shrill blast. In an instant it was repeated

from a hundred different directions, and as the answer was re-echoed, the Truckman seized a huge sledge which a man had brought to him, and bidding Henry to keep close to him, and on no account to separate, he advanced to the gates of the Convent—the same ones where Morton was repulsed a few days before.

The Truckman tried the gates, but they were fastened. Raising his heavy sledge, he dealt them ponderous blows, until at last they gave way, and the crowd rushed into the garden.

'Remember,' shouted the Truckman, 'no woman is to be injured. The man who wrongs a girl will answer to me. Light the tar-barrels, and give the signal that we have commenced work.'

'But the light will create an alarm, and bring the fire department,' Henry said.

'The firemen are with us heart and hand. Four of the members of our society are influential men, and hold high positions in the department. It is the signal agreed upon.'

As he spoke, a dozen barrels were set fire to, and the dark flames and thick smoke rose high in the air, and threw its gloomy veil over the face of the crowd. Still there were no signs of life in the Convent.

'On, Truckman!' cried a shabby dressed man, whom Henry knew belonged to the society he had met with the night before.

Onward swept the crowd, the giant leading the way, with Morton by his side. They reached the solid oaken doors of the building, but they were secured, and all the blows of the heavy sledge were powerless.

'Make way for the battering ram!' cried the crowd, and the giant stood one side, while forty stout fellows ran at the door with a large timber.

The shock was too much for the iron hinges, and with a loud crash the doors fell forward, and the entrance was free.

'Back, men!' shouted the giant, springing to the entrance, and raising his ponderous sledge in a threatening manner; 'you cannot enter here yet; the women must escape first, then give the building to the flames.'

Stationing a guard of twenty stout men to keep the crowd back, the Truckman seized a torch, and followed by Henry and another member of the society, rapidly darted towards the main hall, where they expected to find the inmates of the Convent. They opened the door and looked in, but all was dark, and they again hurried to other parts of the building; but nobody was

seen, and the party stopped to consider where they should next look.

'They have fled to the summer-house,' cried the Truckman's companion; 'there is an underground passage leading to the building, and there we shall find them.'

'Go then, and with a few trusty men take care that they come to no harm,' and the stranger darted off to fulfil his orders.

'Let us also hasten,' Henry cried; 'Helen may be there, and need assistance.'

'After I have examined the Italian's room; it is near at hand, and he may be there,' and the Truckman sprang down some stone steps, and after traversing a long passage, turned to the left, and stopped before a door.

The lock was tried, but it was found fastened, and at the same time a call for help was heard within.

'Down with the door—quick, Truckman! I know that voice—it is Helen's!'

The giant raised his sledge, and with one blow dashed the door from its hinges, and the two rushed in.

'Back, on your lives!' shouted a man in the chamber, and as he spoke, the report of a pistol was heard, but the ball whistled harmlessly past the Truckman, and lodged in the wall.

'By heaven, it is he we seek—it is the Italian!' cried the Truckman, and he threw himself on the priest, and dashed him to the floor as though he were an infant.

Henry had entered with his companion, but his eyes were in search of a different person. In one corner of the room stood a female, pale with terror. With an exclamation of joy, Henry sprang towards her, repeating her name; the frightened girl looked up, recognized him, and in an instant was sobbing in his arms.

'Has yonder villain dared—?'

He could not find words to convey his meaning, but his form trembled like a person with the ague as he waited for her answer.

'No, no, Henry!' she cried, as she buried her face on his bosom; 'no, no; but God be praised, you came just in time! The villain told me he would show me to a place where I could escape, and he brought me to his room,' and she clung to Henry in terror.

In the meantime, the Truckman was coolly examining the pockets of the insensible priest.

'Here, Mr. Morton,' the giant said, 'I have found the papers which gave these devils control of your intended. The rest I restore to him; our object is not robbery, but vengeance.'

There was a loud shout outside the building, and the trampling of many feet overhead. At the same instant a bright light shone along the dark passage they had traversed but a few minutes before.

'The Convent is on fire!' cried Henry; 'let us escape, or we shall perish in the building.'

The wood-work even then was cracking and burning, and the room filling with smoke.

'Away with you! Save the lady and yourself, and leave me to settle with the Jesuit.'

'Are you mad! There's no time to be lost. What would Alice do without her brother?'

'Right; but let me have a word with this devil. Dog that you are, do you know me?'

'Mercy! mercy!' groaned the Italian, who fully understood his danger, and knew that it would be better to be humble than proud in the present crisis.

'Do you deserve mercy at my hands!' thundered the Truckman.

'Alas, no, but I will make every atonement in my power. Spare me, and I will pray for you night and morn.'

'Dare to mention my name in your prayers, and I'll hurl you into the flames, hypocrite that you are.'

There was a loud crash overhead, and the roaring flames could be distinctly heard as they burst from the windows, and crept down the stairways and along the passages.

'Another moment's delay, and we are lost,' cried Henry, clasping the half unconscious form of Helen in his arms, and leaving the room.

'No, no, not that way, Morton—follow me as quick as possible,' cried the Truckman, darting from the room.

'But the priest?'

'He knows the way out, and if he does not, let him get a taste of what he is to receive hereafter,' the Truckman answered.

Henry glanced back, and saw the Jesuit watching them with great composure, and thought he knew how to provide for his own safety, and he did; for when the Truckman was out of sight, he darted to a trap-door and disappeared. That night he reached the house of a friend in safety, and took the first ship for Europe, perfectly convinced that this was not the country for building up the order of Jesuits.

The giant led the way for some distance along a narrow passage, and then emerged into a large square hall. The instant he opened the door of a room, a sheet of flames burst forth, driving him back with singed hair and scorched skin.

'There is but one retreat left for us, Morton,' and he drove off with her a quarter of an hour ago,' the driver said.

'Then there's no occasion for you to wait, and I suppose you have enough to say to each other without desiring the presence of a third party. Good night. My work will not be finished until only a mass of cinders shows where the Convent of St. Ursuline once stood.

Before Henry could reply, he had left them, and his tall form could be seen by the light of the burning building issuing directions to the crowd, and at last Henry gave the word for home, and had the satisfaction of placing the weeping Helen in his mother's arms; but her tears were those of joy, not sorrow, and in a few weeks she again shed tears when they called her Henry's wife.

The whole fire department were there with their engines, but the firemen were calmly looking at the burning Convent, and did not offer to check the flames.

'Follow close, Morton,' the Truckman said, and he led the way toward the carriage.'

The crowd opened to the right and left, and the Truckman with Helen in his arms, strode along without exchanging a word in reply to the cheers which greeted him, and only when he had reached the coach and consigned the girl to Morton's willing arms did he speak.

'If you can wait a few minutes I will return and find Adam's daughter, although I am afraid I am late.'

'If you mean the daughter of the old man you left in my coach, why they came and got him,

Father Adam recovered his daughter, and had the pleasure of seeing her marry the one who rescued her on that eventful night, while the Truckman who had refused to be called by any other title as long as his sister's disgrace was unavenged, once more assumed his proper name, and is again flourishing in his old business through Morton's means.

Father McCaley and the treacherous Bridget fled to Canada, where they entered a Convent in Montreal, and where they intend to remain, as they were too much frightened that night to ever return to the United States again.

THE HAUNTED CONVENT.

CHAPTER I.

THE UNSCRUPULOUS POLITICIAN.

The clock on the Old South Church struck the hour of eleven, and although the snow was falling fast, and the wind howled mournfully through the narrow, deserted streets of Boston, causing the shutters to groan and creak, and the slates on the roofs to work loose and dash on the pavements or sidewalks below, or else soar away on a voyage of discovery, and startle some half-sleeping invalid from a momentary forgetfulness of his misery, by crashing through a window, admitting a stream of cold air and drifting snow.

The sound of the clock striking, was heard by a man, past the prime of life, as he was seated in a library, handsomely furnished, in an old, aristocratic looking building, not so far from the church but that he could hear the sound of the bell, in spite of the wind, which was blowing a fearful gale.

There was an air of comfort about the room particularly pleasing on such a night. The grate was filled with burning coal, and sent forth a glowing heat, which penetrated to the most remote parts of the room, and the heavy window curtains were so arranged that not a breath of cold air could enter to cause uneasiness to the inmate of the library.

The gentleman, who was the owner of the mansion, and was seated alone in the apartment, laid down a letter he had been attentively perusing, and then arose and walked back and forth, apparently meditating on some subject which gave him trouble, for he would occasionally stop and mutter to himself, and then continue his walk, ever and anon listening, as though expecting a visitor; nor was he disappointed, for while his back was turned, the door opened noiselessly, and a pale, dark-featured man stood at the entrance, looking at the gentleman with a

pair of black eyes which fairly glowed like coals of fire. He did not speak, but waited there until the other person turned towards him, when he announced his presence by removing his hat and entering the room.

"Ah, Father McFaley, I am glad to see you. I was fearful you would not come, the night is so stormy. Let me take your hat, and now have a seat near the fire," the host said, shaking hands with the priest, and then, with officious zeal placing a chair near the grate.

"I thank you, Mr. Abbot, for your kindness. But to business. I received your letter this afternoon, and should have been here precisely at the hour agreed upon, had I not been called away to give absolution to a dying Catholic, and our religion will not admit of that duty being dispensed with," the priest said, seating himself, and then looking around the apartment as though watching for listeners; at the same time he was studying the expression of his host's face.

"Your religion is a noble one, Father, and I have often wished that I were a Catholic, but circumstances have prevented me. I remember when I was at Rome, with what devotion I kissed the toe of the blessed Pope, and with what paternal kindness he conversed with me," Mr. Abbot replied, seating himself opposite the priest, and endeavoring to read his cold, impassive face.

A glance, quick as lightning, expressive of the deepest contempt, passed over the face of the priest, when Mr. Abbot had removed his eyes, and then all was cold as before.

"In your letter you state that you wished to see me on particular business. If there is no one within hearing, I am ready to listen to it without further delay," the Father said.

"Ah, yes, I forget minor matters when talking with one of your faith. But as you say, to business."

Mr. Abbot arose, went to the door, opened it, and looked outside to see if any one was listening, then closed it, turned the key, and again seated himself opposite the priest.

"I do wish to see you on business, and that too, of the most particular kind. This letter informs me that I have received the nomination for Governor of this State, but at the same time it tells me that my election is considered very doubtful, unless I can secure the votes of foreigners. I need not tell you how anxious I am to be elected, nor the exertions I have made to get the nomination. I have been liberal with my money, and will be still more so, provided I can obtain the Catholic vote. You have been recommended to me as having a large share of influence with the Irish population, and therefore to you I confidently appeal to help me in my hour of trial. Will you do so?"

"And what am I to receive for my services?" McFaley said, without appearing in the least surprised at the proposition.

"If I am elected, name your reward," cried Abbot eagerly.

"I wish for no reward for myself. My object is to build up the Church of Rome in this country, and the sooner it is accomplished the sooner will the people reap the benefits of sound religious instruction."

"Then you will assist me?" cried Abbot, laying one hand on that of the priest, and drawing his chair nearer.

"Softly, my friend, I have not promised yet. If I do as you request me, I must have some surer guarantee than oaths. Besides, did you not once belong to the so-called Native American party, which flourished some years since?" and the priest drew a thick volume from his pocket, and scanned the names which were written therein closely.

"Yes, I did belong to that party; but I have bitterly repented of my folly, and let me hope that all is now forgotten," Mr. Abbot cried.

"You were the author of a string of resolutions, denouncing foreigners, and presided once over a meeting at Faneuil Hall, where the Irish were called brutes, I think," the priest said, still scanning the pages of the book.

"For heaven sake, Father, how did you hear of that?" Abbot cried in alarm.

"Because each priest in orders is obliged to keep an accurate account of the doings of the public men in the United States, whether for or against Popery. This book contains the names and doings of every man in this State who has held a public office, or made a public speech. I report to the bishop, the bishop to the archbishop, and from him we receive orders how to act."

"Then there is no hope for me?" cried Abbot, in despair.

"I did not say so; but I must have good security of your sorrow for the errors you have committed, before I should dare to gain the consent of the bishop to interest myself in your behalf."

"I will write a letter to the bishop, denying that I have ever been partial to the native cause."

"That will be useless. He has a copy of the book, and can see for himself."

"Then what can I do to secure your influence? Name the amount of money you wish, and it shall be yours. Do you want an office? say what one, and I will promise it to you or your friends. Command me in any way," cried Abbot, pacing the room, and then stopping to see what effect his words would have on the cautious priest.

"I have an office—it is the office of administering consolation to sinners, and do not care to mingle in earthly affairs; but I know many talented men of my country who would be glad to earn an honest livelihood by promoting the affairs of the State. Here is a list of them, with the office they wish opposite each name. Can you promise me they will be appointed?" and the priest watched the countenance of Abbot as he read them carefully.

"But here is a name I never heard of for the State Treasurer's berth."

"No matter; I know him to be a good man; besides, he is a cousin of the bishop, and you must conciliate him by any means."

"Then I consent; but there will be an awful uproar in the party," Abbot said, thoughtfully.

"Let them murmur until they are tired; you will be secure of your election, and can choose whom you please. Now for the other conditions: you will recollect that some years ago a mob of vile heretics destroyed the Convent of St. Ursuline, and every year we have petitioned for remuneration without success; you must pledge yourself to use all the means in your power to grant us a full equivalent for the losses sustained by the Catholics, and even sanction the building of another nunnery, should the bishop be so disposed."

"That I also promise; I have recently thought your order should be paid for the damage done on that occasion, and a nunnery will be useful as a place of education for young ladies. Were there one now, I would show my sincerity by sending my daughter, Agnes, to complete her education," Mr. Abbot said.

"It gives me pleasure to hear you say that,

and I will put your sincerity to the test. Send your daughter to the convent of the Bleeding Heart, in Montreal, until all of your promises are fulfilled, and then I'll set to work with energy, and do all in my power to secure your election," and the priest closely watched the face of Abbot, as he made the proposition.

"What! send Agnes to a convent? I shall do no such thing. It is no place for her," Abbot cried, with indignation.

"I understood you to say but just now that it was a very proper place for girls; but I may be mistaken," the priest said, drily, taking his hat from the table and buttoning up his coat preparatory to going.

"Do not go, Father. Give me but a moment to consider of the plan," and the miserable father wrung his hands in agony.

"There is not much time needed I should think," the priest said coolly.

"And how long would she be obliged to stay there before returning home?"

"Until after you are Governor of the State and all of your promises fulfilled. We claim her as security for your pledges."

"If I do so, can you warrant me an election?" Abbot demanded with trembling eagerness.

"I can and will do so. I will instruct every Catholic voter in the city to cast his vote for you, and in two months I shall address you as His Excellency. What prouder title can you desire?" the cunning priest replied.

"Then I consent, but oh! keep her not from me long, for I love her dearly, but alas, I love fame more."

The gale which had lulled for a short time, again commenced, and shook the old stone house to its very foundation as though it would have annulled the unholy compact entered into between the priest and father.

For a long time they sat there, the politician and priest, and when the latter rose to go, the Old South clock struck the hour of two, and Agnes' fate had been decided.

CHAPTER II.

AGNES AND HER LOVER.

All young girls have a beau, and Agnes Abbot, the handsome, graceful blonde, whose appearance on Washington street was the signal for every gallant to show off his best points, was no excep-

tion to the rule. She had long known a young man named Justin Peoples, and as his name denotes, he was a man of the people. Inheriting no property by the death of relatives, he had come to Boston when quite young, and bound himself an apprentice to a piano forte manufacturer, and when his time had expired he was taken into partnership by his old master, and all the business entrusted to his hands, and so well had he looked after the interest of the firm that they were enabled to build a large factory and employ hundreds of workmen, and he was soon accounted one of the most promising and prosperous young men in the city, until he fell in love with Agnes, and then he was observed to pay more attention to his dress and often to fall into fits of musing which were very unusual things for him.

Agnes went into his salesroom one day, to choose a piano, and whether she took a fancy to the young man that time or not, I can't say, but Justin was eminently well qualified to win a young girl's heart, for he had fine, regular features, and a well formed person, besides being provided with brains, and intelligence enough to converse on any subject. At any rate, Agnes did not find a piano to suit her that day and promised to call again, which she did, and then again and again, until the acquaintance was formed and they understood each other; and Justin only waited until he could find himself worth a hundred thousand dollars, to call upon the aristocratic Mr. Abbot and formally propose for the hand of his daughter—and get refused as all lovers expect to be.

Three days after the interview between Mr. Abbot and Father McFaley, the weather became pleasant, and Washington street was in a blaze with beauty. Justin had been expecting Agnes all the afternoon, and when he saw her handsome face, with her large blue eyes, which looked so pure and innocent, entering the store, he thought how very beautiful she was, and how happy he should be if he could become the husband of so much loveliness. He hastened to meet her and then conducted her one side to have a friendly talk, but before she spoke a word he knew that something was wrong, and he feared that she had received orders not to see him again.

"You have been weeping, Agnes," Justin said at length.

"And I have cause for my tears," she replied.

"Let me share your sorrow, Agnes," Justin cried, with an anxious look.

"I do not know that I should feel so very sor-

rowful, as I am to be benefitted, but then I don't wish to leave the city," Agnes said.

"You leave the city, Agnes?" Justin cried in astonishment.

"Yes, Justin, father thinks that my education is not completed and I am to go to Montreal and study for a few months. Do you think you shall miss me much?" and she looked in his face with a child-like simplicity and innocence.

"I shall die without you, Agnes. Banished from your presence I have no wish to live."

"Oh, but you'll soon see me again. 'Tis not like parting forever, and when I leave the Convent, I—"

"Convent!" cried Justin, starting back in astonishment.

"Yes, Justin; 'tis there where I am going to study."

"Then you are lost to me forever," he said mournfully.

"Why you silly man, I am not going to take the veil, but become a pupil, so that when you claim me as your wife, you'll have no cause to be ashamed of my ignorance. Don't you see the difference," and she became quite cheerful when she saw her lover would feel her loss so keenly.

"I can see nothing but your becoming an inmate of one of those institutions where every word and act is watched with jealous vigilance. Oh! Agnes, have mercy and give up this dreadful project. You will no longer be your own mistress, and I shall be forgotten."

"No, no, Justin, not forgotten, and I pledge my word that if you do not see or hear from me in two months' time you may come in search of me, like a knight errant of old, and if you find me and rescue me from the enchantment you are so much afraid of, I will reward you with my hand, if you think that is a sufficient recompense for your dangers," and she laid her small gloved hand in his own, and her large blue eyes looked more trusting and innocent than ever.

"Then there is no way of preventing this unfortunate journey, Agnes?" Justin said, glancing around the salesroom, and finding that no one was noticing them, he forgot to release her hand.

"I think not. I wish there was. There was a gentleman at the house last night, a Mr. McFaley, who speaks in the highest terms of the Bleeding Heart, and from him I am to receive letters of introduction to the lady superior. The Bleeding Heart! What a funny name. It is emblematic of yours after my departure, I suppose."

"Do not jest, dear, at my sufferings. The feel-

ing I manifest is sincere, and you will acknowledge it before three months have passed."

"I do not doubt it, Justin, but you look so woe-begone that I must laugh, although I felt more like crying when I came in here," Agnes said, her eyes filling with tears which she tried to hide by turning away her face.

"And when does your father propose that you leave, Agnes?"

"To-morrow."

"So soon?"

"Yes, Mr. McFaley says that there is no time to lose if I wish to enter for the winter term, and as father is very busy with politics he wants me out of the way. Only think, Justin, I may come back a Governor's daughter."

"Your father will never be Governor, Agnes."

"Why do you think so?"

"Because, dear, in his letter of acceptance, he extols the foreigners at the expense of Americans. That will ruin him."

"I should think from your remarks you had some secret method of ascertaining public opinion," Agnes said in a tone of pique.

"Perhaps I have, dear," he answered carelessly, "but that need not separate us. But tell me, what says your mother to this arrangement?"

"She is opposed to it, and has tried in vain to get my father to change his mind, but that McFaley seems to have more influence than my mother or myself."

"That McFaley you speak of, Agnes, is a priest and your father is only pandering to him to obtain the Irish votes. Shame on the man who would thus consign his daughter to a living tomb for the sake of power."

"Hush, Justin! remember 'tis of my father you speak, and I know you do him injustice. To me he has always been kind."

"Forgive me, dear, I will think well of him for your sake," and Justin pressed the hand that he still held, and wished the people who were in the salesroom to Jericho.

"I have already staid longer than I should," Agnes said, at length, glancing at her watch.

"To-morrow I leave under the care of a gentleman, an acquaintance of McFaley's, whom I now fairly hate. I will write to you regularly and you must answer my letters without a moment's delay. If at the expiration of two months you do not hear from me, then come and search for me. Now, good by," and she dropped her veil over her face and left the store, scarcely more affected than Justin himself. He tried to call her back, but his voice was drowned by the noise, and he felt

ashamed to run into the street with his eyes filled with tears. Sad, dispirited, and lonely, he went to his private room and tried to practice resignation.

CHAPTER III.

A YANKEE ABROAD.

It was mid winter. Snow covered the ground and gay equipages, with prancing horses and jingling bells, dashed merrily through the streets, the sleighs filled with happy men and laughing girls. Two months and more had passed away since Agnes left Boston, and not a word had Justin heard concerning her. The election had taken place, and, as Peoples had predicted, Mr. Abbot was defeated by an immense majority, although it was noticed as a significant fact that all the Catholic votes in the city were cast in his favor. Yet it was of no avail, and the proud ambitious man, who was willing to sell his State for foreign aid, retired from political life, and shut himself up in his room, with envy gnawing at his heart, and spite and malice working in his brain.

Justin, who had waited patiently for letters or some tidings of Agnes, at length concluded on going to Montreal and seeing if he could learn anything concerning her by inquiry, at the Bleeding Heart. McFaley had disappeared from the city after the election, or Justin would have endeavored to extort some information from him. Agnes' father he did not dare to intrude upon, so one morning he took the Fitchburg cars, and the next day was in Montreal, the city that contained all he held dear. He stopped at a hotel, and by pretending that he came on business connected with his own firm, managed to escape many questions.

The morning after his arrival, while seated at the breakfast table, he found he had for a neighbor a genuine specimen of the Yankee—one of the inquisitive, cunning kind, who find out all they can and tell nothing themselves unless so disposed. The Yankee eyed Justin keenly, and at last broke the silence by saying:

"I rather guess you're a countryman of mine, ain't you, Mister?"

"I am a native of Massachusetts, sir!" Justin said politely.

"Wall, that's near enough. I am a Vermonter, a State that can raise handsome gals and more horses than any other in the Union."

"I have no doubt of it, sir?"

"You ain't got any relations up in them parts have you?" the Vermonter said, still plying his knife and fork with a ceaseless energy.

"No, sir, I came on business."

"You didn't want to buy any skins, mayhap, did you?"

"No, my business is in a different line."

"Wall, I was going to say you'd get awfully cheated. I'm in that line myself, and I get sucked in some times, although I ain't slow at cheating, I ain't."

"I am glad to hear you make so honest a confession, because I might want to trade with you," Justin said, laughing.

"Wall, I'm ready for a trade or a swap any time. But you're a stranger in these parts, ain't you?"

"'Tis my first visit to this part of the country, and if it is always as cold as it is to-day, I hope my last."

"It's a fact, they do have some tarnation cold weather here, and no mistake. Freeze a man to death here in just about no time, and then they thaw them out in the summer as good as new. Fact—seen it done myself. You don't stay long in these parts, do you?"

"Not if you tell such hard stories."

"Wall, I'll be more careful, 'cause I like company, and if I can serve you in any way, jist say the word."

"You are well acquainted here then?" Justin said.

"I have bin dickering in furs here for the last ten winters, and I should think I had ought to know the place by this time."

"Perhaps then you can tell me where the Convent of the Bleeding Heart is?"

The Yankee laid down his knife and fork, and glanced anxiously around the room. The waiter was busy at the farther end of the table, and all the guests had eaten their breakfast and departed, excepting Justin and the Yankee, so no one overheard the question. The Vermonter after satisfying himself that nobody was listening, whispered, "If you've got anything to say or do with that ore establishment let me advise you to speak low, that's all."

"Why, what harm can there be in my asking such a question?" Justin demanded in surprise.

"Every man in these parts is a Catholic, and every stranger is watched. They used to watch me, but God bless you, they got tired of it at last."

"But I wish to see the Convent in question for something very particular."

"Then don't talk about it to any one but me. I'm to be trusted and no one else."

"But how do I know that you can be trusted. You may be a Catholic yourself," Justin said, laughingly.

"Look here, friend, did you ever hear of a Vermonter turning Catholic? Jist answer me that."

"No, I never did."

"Wall, then, don't wound my feelings by any such insinuation. But come to my room. There's something in the wind, and I'm the boy to lend you a hand," and the Vermonter, who was tall and lank, got up from the table and led the way to his apartment, where, after looking under the bed to see if there was anybody concealed, he locked the door, seated himself by the fire, and invited Justin to do the same.

"Now, then, stranger, let's know what's going on, and perhaps I can aid you?"

Justin thought for a few minutes, and carefully weighed the chances he had of obtaining an interview with Agnes, providing she was in the Convent, and then concluded to trust to the Yankee's sagacity to help him. He, therefore, told him the principal facts, and when he had concluded, he waited for advice.

"You've got a tarnation tough job before you, stranger, and no mistake. As for your trying to get a letter to her or thinkin' of receiving one from her, it's all gammon. They do things up different there, and if the gal has writ, why the lady superior has kep 'em back."

"But what am I to do? I shall go to the Convent and inquire for Agnes, at any rate."

"No you won't, 'cause that are would be useless. That's a tarnation pretty chain you've got. Is it real genuine gold or only plated?" and the Vermonter reached out his hand, and examined the fob chain which Justin wore, with great minuteness.

"I bought it for gold. But how shall I find out whether the lady is still an inmate of the Convent?"

"Wall, I reckon we can find means to get the information. What did you say your paid for that are chain?"

"Never mind the chain. If you can get news of Miss Abbott, I will make you a present of it," Justin said impatiently.

"You will? Then by hokey I'll do it; but let me tell you it's no easy matter. Howsever, I'm known as a buyer of furs, and sometimes I've bought them of the Convent's people. They drive an all-fired hard bargain let me jist tell you, but I can shave them a little; jist a little you know."

"Then for Heaven's sake go there at once," Justin cried.

"And you'll wait here without speaking to a soul?" the Vermonter demanded.

"Yes."

"Wall then I'm off, but let me jist have another look at that are chain. Its a real beauty, aint it? Good-bye, and mum's the word," and the Yankee pulled on his heavy bear skin overcoat, and strode away.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TWO GHOSTS.

Nearly three hours passed before Justin heard the heavy tread of the Vermonter ascending the stairs. He had become quite impatient at the delay, and was about to sally forth in search of the Yankee, when he recognized his footsteps, and with a beating heart resented himself, and waited for the news.

"Rather bleakish out, Peoples," the Vermonter said, as he entered the room and commenced removing his coat and leggings. "Rather coolish. This is one of them ere days I was telling you about, when a man would freeze in no time."

"Well, have you heard from the lady? Is she there? Is she well? Tell me something about her," Justin cried.

"I'll be darned to darnation, if you don't put me in mind of my gal that I've got away off in Windsor county. Ever bin there? Its a great county for fishing; one time I went, and I'll be darned if I—"

Justin was in despair, when he suddenly recollected the chain, and held it before him.

"Oh, yes, I'd forgot all about that ere chain. Wall, you may give it to me. The gal is there at the Bleeding Heart, and no mistake."

"Take the chain," cried Justin. "Now tell me, is she well?"

"Not over and above, I should reckon."

"How did you obtain your information?" Justin cried.

"Wall, you see," said the Vermonter, pretending to be attentively examining his chain, and looking sheepish, "I made love to one of the gals there, while the priest had gone to get the furs he wanted to sell. The way I talked the soft soap to her was a caution. She seed I was a good looking man, and kinder liked to hear me."

"Was she one of the nuns?" Justin asked, fearing to laugh.

"No, I guess not. In fact I rather think she told me she was the cook of the establishment. She said she hadn't seed a man inside the place there, except the priests, for six months. Say, if it wasn't for those priest fellows it wouldn't be a bad place to put a wife, in case you was going to be absent from her a long time, would it?"

"Tell me every word she said about Miss Abbot. Don't miss a syllable."

"Wall, she said as how Miss Abbot was dreadful homesick, and would have been sent to Boston hadn't it been for the arrival of a Father McFaley, who insisted that she should take the veil and remain for life, 'cause he said her father was rich, and when he died the Convent would come in for a pretty good share of money. That's all I larnt, for jist then the priest came back with a lot of furs, and I went to dickering for them."

"I am a thousand times obliged to you," Justin said, "but I have more favors to ask."

"Wall let's hear them."

"Miss Abbot must escape from the Convent, and this very night is the time."

"Whew!" whistled the Yankee. "It 'pears to me you are rather rushing things, ain't you?"

"Will you help me get her from the Convent?" Justin asked.

"There's considerable to be thought of before you could do that are," the Vermonter said, thoughtfully. "If I should assist in anything of that kind, I could never come back here to trade, and that you know would be quite a loss to me."

"But I will give you a thousand dollars the instant we cross the Canada frontier and enter Vermont, taking the lady with us, of course."

"Of course," echoed the Vermonter, and he remained buried in thought for a few minutes, during which time Justin studiously watched his face to see what effect the offer had on a man of his keenness.

"I'll do it, by Jerusalem," the Yankee said at length, "but you must promise to be guided by me, and pay me in good Varmount money if we succeed."

"I'll agree to all of your propositions; let me hear them," Justin said.

"Wall, then, in the first place we must go there as ghosts."

"As ghosts?" cried Justin in surprise.

"Yes, as ghosts! and to do that we shall have to borrow the sheets off of the beds, and I'm afraid they never will get returned."

"But why go as ghosts?"

"Because two or three old codgers killed themselves in the Convent, and three nuns choked

themselves to death with their garters. It's a fact. They couldn't stand the confinement and so the poor things up and done it. Wall, ever since then the Convent has been haunted, and devil a nun or priest dare show their heads out of their cells, unless they go in company of three or four. They have used up over a hogshead of holy water to make the nuns stay in the ground, but they won't do it."

"But do you believe such a ridiculous story?" Justin said.

"I didn't say I believed it, did I?" the Yankee replied, drawing out a long nine and lighting it at the fire, and then puffing away at the weed as though his life depended on filling the room full of smoke as quick as possible.

"Well, if we get the lady out of the Convent, how are we to escape without the aid of horses and a good sleigh?" Justin asked.

"You promised to leave all to me, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"Wall, then, do so; I ain't going to lose that ere thousand dollars, if thar is a chance of earning it. Yes, leave all to me, except paying the bills, and that I'll leave to you. When you come to pay your bill to night for board, you may as well settle mine, too."

"But will they not mistrust by our leaving in the evening?"

"Not if they see me going with you; I'm too well known to excite suspicion, and shall leave a few furs behind, and tell 'em I will call for 'em to-morrow."

"But how are we to enter the Convent?" Justin demanded.

"By means of that are cook," the Yankee said, slightly blushing.

"So you are going to make love on your own account?" Justin cried, laughingly.

"I've got to aim that ere thousand dollars some way or other, and the cook must help me. But I can't stay here talking all day, when there's so much work to do. Do you stay here, and say nothing to nobody. I'll have things fixed up all right," and the Vermonter put on his overcoat and stalked thoughtfully away.

CHAPTER V.

HOW THE TWO GHOSTS FRIGHTENED THE INMATES OF THE CONVENT.

The day passed slowly with Justin. He tried in vain to fix his attention on a book; but his thoughts would wander, and at last he threw the

volume down, and packed his carpet-bag ready to start at a moment's notice.

All day long was the Vermonter absent from the hotel, and the thought that his new found friend had played him false flashed across his mind; but Justin determined, if such was the case, to make the attempt at rescuing Agnes alone the next day.

At tea, however, Peoples was rejoiced to see the lank form of the Vermonter entering the dining-room, and proceed to eat his supper with the greatest composure and zest. Although anxious to learn the news, Justin did not dare to make a remark on the subject nearest his heart, and he watched with eagerness until he saw his friend swallow the last mouthful, and then make a sign for him to follow to his room.

"Well," cried Justin, "is all arranged? Are we likely to succeed in our undertaking?"

"There's no telling; I've done all I could, but still we may fail."

"Have you seen your friend, the cook?"

"Wall, I guess I have; she's all right, and has agreed to admit me at a small door at the north end of the building."

"Then our success is certain."

"It depends altogether whether our trick succeeds or not. If you play your part well, I reckon we'll do the job."

"When do we start?"

"Precisely at ten."

"And its only nine now."

"Zactly; you'd better go to the bar and settle the bills, and, if you like, pay for these ere two sheets I am going to borrow," and the Vermonter deliberately took the linen from the bed and rolled it up and thrust it in his wooden box, which he carried in place of a trunk.

Justin did as his friend advised, and merely telling the book-keeper he was going with the Vermonter to a neighboring town, no questions were asked, and almost before he was aware of it, the clock had struck ten, and at the same instant the jingle of bells were heard at the door, and the Yankee, with his wooden box and short rifle, descended the stairs, and declared their team was ready.

Drawing on his heavy overcoat, and taking his carpet-bag, Justin followed his friend to the team, at the door. Two small, hardy looking Canadian ponies were standing in front of the hotel, stamping the hard-trodden snow with their iron-shod hoofs, impatiently, while, perched on the front seat of a comfortable looking sleigh, well filled with buffalo robes and the skins of

foxes, sat a diminutive driver, muffled up to the eyes in a bear-skin over-coat.

"Jump in, Peoples," the Yankee said; "we have no time to lose," and as he spoke, he took the vacant seat beside the driver, and the spirited horses dashed down the street at a full gallop, turned a corner, and then stopped under the shadow of a huge tree, whose friendly branches completely hid the team from sight.

The night was bitter cold, with not a cloud to be seen. The streets had long since been deserted, and only a few lights gleamed from the dwellings. All was silent and still, as Justin followed his friend, after giving the driver orders to remove the bells from the horse's neck and await their return.

"Does the driver know our errand?" Justin whispered, as they walked along.

"Not he. I told him you was going to run off with a rich gal. If he thought it was one of them are nuns, he'd peach."

"But will he wait there until we return?"

"That ere fellow would wait all night for the twenty dollars I said you'd give him after the job's done. But he mustn't know we are after a nun."

A few minutes' walk brought them in sight of a dark, gloomy building, with not a light nor any sign of life within.

"That's what they call the Bleeding Heart. Don't it make your heart bleed to look at it, it's so solemn and melancholy like. I swan if I had a gal thar I guess I should try to get her out too."

Justin did not reply, but stood gazing at the Convent with feelings of awe. The huge stone building looked as cold and cheerless as the walls of a prison, and grasping the arm of the Vermonter he cried:

"Let us lose no time. Every moment Agnes remains in that place, is like years of misery and sorrow, and I fear to find her young heart broken."

"No fear of that, Peoples," the Vermonter said, as they moved forward. "Lord bless you, in my wild days, the gals used to say I should be the death of 'em, I was so awful cruel and cold. But some how they always got over it, and in a little while took another fellow. No fear of a gal's heart breaking, Peoples. It's all moonshine."

Justin did not feel in the vein for talking, and walked silently beside the Vermonter, who strode on a short distance farther and then stopped suddenly before a small iron door set in a high wall, surmounted with sharp steel pickets.

"Here we are, Peoples. Do you stand one side while I talk to that are cook, and get her to consent to let you in," and while Justin did as

directed, the Vermonter gave half a dozen light taps on the door, and then sent forth a low bark like the cry of a hungry fox.

Twice did he repeat the signal, and as the last sound died away in low, prolonged echoes, through the clear, cold air, a key was softly turned on the inside of the door, and a woman's head thrust out.

"By jingo, Dolly, I'm most froze, you kept me waiting so long," the Yankee said, edging his lank form in the narrow opening, and familiarly placing an arm around her substantial waist.

"Vot for skull you call me Volly, ven my name shall be Theresa!" the woman said, without making much resistance to his tenderness.

"It's all the same, Dolly. You is jist as handsome with one name as t'other. But I've got a friend here, and he must come in or I can't."

"Marie! Vot you bring von man here vor!" the Frenchwoman said, in her broken English.

"Don't get frightened, Dolly, he's perfectly harmless. I'll protect you if he makes an assault on your charms," and the Vermonter whispered something in her ear and stole a kiss at the same time.

"Well, den, let him come in," she said, "but you must be quiet, or de holy fathers vill hear you."

"We will be as quiet as two mice in a Vermont cheese," the Yankee said, beckoning to Justin to follow, and keeping close to the heels of the Frenchwoman, they passed through a narrow passage way and emerged into the kitchen, where a large fire was burning in the fire place, and the fumes of the contents of a huge iron pot were sending forth a delicious smell, which caused the Vermonter to snuff the air like a man who had lived on bread and water for a month.

"Say, Peoples," said the Yankee, "the old codgers know how to live, don't they? I'll bet there's a stew of chickens and potatoes and a slight sprinkling of inyuns in that ere pot, and I'm bound to try 'em," and without waiting for an invitation, the Vermonter seized a ladle and commenced transferring a portion of the contents of the kettle to a large tin dish, which he found lying on a table.

"Holy gracious," cried the cook, in alarm "vot shall the man be doing. Monster, 'tis for the holy priest's breakfast."

"And I'm going to take some for my supper, Dolly. It is as good for me as them. Say, Dolly," he continued, as he shovelled the boiling mess into his capacious mouth, "I should kinder like to be taster to this ere establishment and have you for the cook. Come, sit down, Peoples, and try a dish. It's devilish good."

"You is von brute and this skull be von shentleman. You no come here to eat," said the indignant cook, who found her charms were likely to be neglected by the ravenous Yankee, and therefore was inclined to listen to Justin, had he been so disposed.

"You make love to her, Peoples, while I do the eating, and after I get through with the contents of this pot, I'll take your place and give you a spell."

"Glutton!" shouted the indignant Frenchwoman, "vos it vor dis I stay out of bed all night!"

"Hush," whispered Justin, "I hear footsteps. Some one is approaching."

"The devil you do," cried the Yankee. "I suppose it's some of those jolly old ghosts wandering round. Perhaps they smell this ere stew and come to get a share."

"Fly, run, get away," said the cook in alarm, "it is one of the holy fathers. He vill be here in a minute."

"Thunderation! You don't say so. Where shall we go, Dolly, dear?" cried the Vermonter, dropping his plate, and seizing a small bundle he had brought with him.

"Leave de house—be quick."

"We will not leave the Convent until we have accomplished our purpose," Justin said firmly.

"No, Dolly, we cant leave yet awhile. Put us in a room where we'll be out of sight."

"Oh, dear, vot shall I do. Dere's no room but mine bed room, and you wouldn't go dare?"

"Wouldn't I! Just try me once," and the Yankee, sprang towards a door, opened it, and looked in.

"De man is mad," cried the cook in despair.

"Come in Peoples; it's all right—this is her room."

Justin did not wait for a second invitation, but darted across the kitchen and entered the small bed-room of the cook, just as a priest with a lighted candle, opened a door which led to the long hall above.

"I thought I heard voices," the Father said, as he looked around the apartment.

"Your reverence must be mistaken," Theresa replied, speaking in her native language.

"Perhaps I was; but why are you up at this late hour?"

"Cooking your reverence's breakfast. The chickens were so tough I was fearful they would not agree with you unless well boiled."

"The sacrilegious wretch who sent them shall do penance. But go, daughter, go to thy bed. I'll watch the stew."

"Oh, please your reverence, I couldn't think

of putting you to the trouble. No, I'll sit here and count my beads and meditate," cried the cook, who had no idea of going to her room while two men were there.

"'Tis well, daughter; but are you not afraid of seeing fearful sights? It is now the time when spirits are said to walk, and strange tales are told of the Convent."

"I have often heard strange noises, Father, but a good conscience makes me not timid."

"'Tis a good thing to have, daughter."

The priest stopped suddenly, for a slight noise was heard, and the cook's bed-room door slowly opened, and a tall, gaunt form, clothed in white, with a ghastly, pale countenance; noiselessly stalked into the kitchen, and then another being followed also looking like a corpse just risen from the grave.

"The Holy Virgin protect me!" muttered the frightened priest, and with a loud crash, the heavy iron candlestick which he bore, fell to the ground, and with trembling hands the Father sought his beads and tried to mutter a prayer, but his tongue was tied with terror, and with eyes starting from their sockets he gazed at that tall, gaunt form as it slowly and solemnly approached him.

Nearer and nearer came the spectre, when suddenly a jet of pale, blue flame, issued from the mouth of the first ghost, overspread his face and even gleamed from his eyes, which appeared to be sunk deep into their sockets.

"It is Satan! may the Virgin preserve me," and with a cry of horror down fell the priest in a fit.

In the mean time the smaller ghost, who was no other than Justin, had stood staring at the cook, uncertain whether she was terrified and going to faint, or laugh, but when the priest fell she started up and ran to his assistance, undismayed by the still gleaming phosphorus which the Vermonter had so plentifully rubbed on his face.

"Jerusalem! Wasn't the old fellow frightened," chuckled the Yankee.

"You be von brute. De holy father is dead," cried the cook with evident alarm.

"No, no, he has only fainted. Here, assist me to carry him to the cook's room," said Justin hurriedly.

The Yankee readily lent his powerful aid, and between the two the priest was safely deposited on the bed.

"Now tell me, Theresa," cried Justin, "where shall I find Miss Abbot? Speak quick, and here is a purse of gold for you."

"Thunderation! don't give it all to her. Offer her half first and see if she wont take it."

"You be von mean man," cried the indignant Dolly. "Give me de money and let me go too, and I vill show you where she is."

"Quick, then, for we have no time to lose," and Justin forced the purse into her hand and urged her towards the hall above.

"Stop till I lock this door," the Yankee said. "The Father may recover and raise a row."

As soon as this was done, all three started for the door, the cook leading the way with the candle the priest had dropped. The party passed up a flight of broad, oaken steps, and then turned an angle and entered the dining hall. All was quiet and not a sound was to be heard, except the beating of their own hearts.

"Dis vay, dis vay," whispered the Frenchwoman, ascending another flight of steps, and Justin and his friend, still clothed in the white sheets and the chalk un rubbed from their faces, followed close. She passed noiselessly and rapidly along a corridor, with small doors on each side, which entered into the rooms of the nuns. At one of these she stopped, and whispered to Justin, "Miss Agnes is dare. I go in and vake her, hey!"

"Yes, yes," cried Peoples, with trembling eagerness to think he was so near one he dearly loved. "Go and tell her that Justin has come in search of her, true to his word and vow. Bid her hasten for now there is an opportunity to escape."

The Frenchwoman smiled and then entered the room of Agnes and closed the door, leaving the two men in the dark.

"Thunderation!" whispered the Yankee, "it appears they aint much afraid of robbers, for the nuns don't even lock the doors at night. I'd like to see how one of 'em looked sleeping, and have a great mind to get got up a leetle fun on my own account."

"Don't move from this spot, if you do I'll write to your girl in Vermont and tell her of your doings."

"You wouldn't do that, would you?"

"Hush! I hear Agnes' voice!" Justin said, and he listened attentively.

"It is useless, Mr. McFaley, I can never consent to become a nun for life. Let me return to my parents and I will be grateful, but oh! urge me no more."

"She is dreaming," Justin said, "and thinks the villain is urging her to take the veil."

There was a breathless silence for a few minutes, and then a loud, piercing scream, startled the listeners and awoke the inmates of the Convent to life. Voices were heard in the different chambers and the tramp of feet proved that the Fa-

thers of the Bleeding Heart were awake and advancing to the rescue.

"The Convent is alarmed!" cried the Yankee, "and the old codgers will be around us like a flock of bees near two roses in the month of June. In, Peoples, and grab the gal. No matter if she is but half dressed. You are going to marry her you know, so it will be all right in the end."

Justin waited to hear no more, but dashing open the door, sprang into the room. The sight which met his eyes was well calculated to make him pause; but he did not. Agnes had, apparently, just awakened from a sound sleep, and began to comprehend the tidings which Theresa had to tell, and with her arms around the Frenchwoman's neck, she was sobbing with joy.

Luckily she was partially dressed; but when she saw a strange form enter her room, clothed in white, she released her arms from around Theresa's neck and buried her head in the quilts, and again uttered a scream which rang wildly through the corridor and was taken up and repeated by the nuns in the various rooms.

"Agnes," cried Justin, "'tis your lover. Be not alarmed."

"No time to lose, Peoples," said the Vermonter, who was peeping in at the door. "Here they come like hungry rats."

The Yankee spoke in as cool a tone as if he was at a ball waiting for a partner.

"Keep the coast clear and we'll baffle them yet. Agnes, in another moment we are lost. Pardon my want of ceremony," and without another word of apology he lifted her, quilts and all, in his strong arms, and followed by the Frenchwoman and the Vermonter, darted towards the stairway, down the steps of which he sprang with his now lifeless burden in his arms.

On he went, closely followed by the cook and Yankee, until he gained the secret passage by which he entered. He could hear the tramp of many feet overhead, and voices shouting directions, but still he fled swiftly onward and reached the small open door leading to the street. In another instant he stood outside the Convent walls, with the pure, cool air blowing on his heated forehead, and the happiness of thinking that part of the difficult work was done.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PURSUIT.

Justin did not wait for the Vermonter and Frenchwoman, but ran as swift as possible in the

direction of the sleigh, which he reached almost exhausted with his desperate exertions.

The driver still sat on his seat, and merely gave a grunt of satisfaction when Justin appeared, and while the latter was busy arranging the soft furs around Agnes, who still remained in a state of insensibility, the heavy tramp of the Vermonter was heard, dashing along at a slashing pace, but he was alone.

"Jerusalem, People's, am you alive and safe?" "Yes, but where is Theresa?"

"Dolly got caught. I couldn't save her, although I tried. But we'll talk as we go along. On, driver, give them ere hosses the string, and remember the reward."

"I'll double it if he crosses the river St. Lawrence in safety. The ice must be strong enough by this time to travel on. Urge your horses, man, and win your reward."

The Canadian needed no further inducements, but giving free reins to his hardy animals, they galloped along at a rapid rate.

Instead of following the direct road to the river, the driver, by the Vermonter's directions, pursued a northeasterly course by an unfrequented road, so as to strike the St. Lawrence about fifteen miles above Montreal, thinking by this to baffle pursuit.

Justin's principal care was to watch for the first signs of returning life in the young girl he held in his arms so tenderly, and he soon had the satisfaction of finding that she began to realize her situation.

"Do you know me, Agnes?" Justin whispered. He had taken the precaution to remove the chalk from his face, and cast aside the white sheet which he had worn when he so unceremoniously entered her room.

She passed her hand before her eyes, and rubbed them as though awakening from a deep sleep, and then realizing her situation, she started from the young man's arms, and gazed eagerly in his face.

"I know you now, Justin, and oh! how glad I am to see you once more. I was fearful I should never behold you again," and she laid her fair head against his breast, and wept like a child.

"You are safe now, Agnes. All the priests in Canada shall not tear you from my arms. But why, dear, did you not write to me?"

"I wrote every week, and my heart died within me when no answers came."

"And I, dear, never received your letters, and I thought Agnes had forgotten me, and was wedded to a Convent's life."

"I have thought of you, Justin, daily, hourly

I might say. But I would sooner have died than been buried in that gloomy Convent a year longer, and oh! I am so glad you came to save me. The priest, McFaley, made desperate attempts to force me to take the black veil, and even put me on a diet of bread and water to break my spirit, but I firmly refused, although at times I have been nearly starved."

"The villain shall suffer for that if I ever meet him in Boston. But are you not cold, dear?"

"No, I am quite warm. I have been doing penance for the last week, and was obliged to sleep in my clothes so that I could get up every hour and kneel on the cold stone floor, and say a certain number of prayers. But I always addressed my petitions to God direct and not to their virgins whom they worship."

"Pears to me you are getting along there mighty smooth, Peoples. I wonder what they'll do with Dolly?" the Vermonter said. He had mounted beside the driver when they started, and now turned to have a chat with Justin.

"The poor woman will have to suffer for assisting us. Could you not save her?" Justin asked.

"No, a big, fat priest grabbed her as she was going down the first flight of stairs. But I paid 'em for it."

"How?" Agnes asked, after Justin had, in a whisper, told her the service he had been to him.

"Wall, you see," and the Vermonter lowered his voice to a whisper, and nodded his head towards the driver, who still sat mute, urging his horses along at a rapid rate, "when I found it was a gone case with Dolly, I jumped down after you, People's, and seed you was all right, and then as quick as chain lightning I grabbed the big iron pot from the fire, and set it on the stairs. Jerusalem! didn't one of the old codgers how, when he came down in a hurry, and stepped his foot in the stew, and then the other, who was jist back of him, tumbled over the old fellow, and both rolled down the stairs with the pot; sometimes the pot would be on top, and then the priests, and betwixt 'em both I think they have had stew enough to last 'em for a month."

It was nearly daylight when they approached the banks of the St. Lawrence river, and the driver dismounted and went forward to examine whether the ice had formed thick enough to admit of their crossing in the sleigh. He soon returned, and reported that he thought they could venture, when the quick eyes of the Yankee caught a glimpse of some dark object rapidly advancing towards them over the road which they had just passed.

"There they come, Peoples," the Vermonter

coolly said, reaching down and carefully placing his rifle where it could be found if needed.

"You are right. 'Tis a four horse team and they are coming on like the wind. Up, driver, and urge on your beasts," Justin cried.

At that instant, Agnes turned to look at their pursuers, and in doing so she displaced the robes and the fatal black cross, worked in her dress, met the Canadian's eye.

"Wretches," he shouted, "you have stolen away a nun from the Bleeding Heart. Surrender, for here comes the Convent's team in pursuit."

"Surrender, did you say?" shouted the Yankee, "who ever heard tell of a Varmounter's surrendering when there was not more than ten to one?"

"Then quit my team, or I shall be eternally cursed," the man said.

"You'll be eternally cursed as it is, and I'll do the swearing, 'fore long, if you don't drive on," the Yankee replied, with perfect coolness.

The man did not reply, but sprang to his horses' heads to hold them. The Vermonter leaped lightly from his seat, and with one blow of his huge fist he struck the man senseless; then throwing him to the side of the road, he sprang into the sleigh, seized the reins, and with a loud cheer of defiance, started the horses into a run.

The Yankee's cry was heard by the pursuers, and they answered it with another shout of exultation at the prospect of soon overtaking the fugitives, and so near were the Convent's horses, they could be distinctly seen, with milk white coats, which rivalled the snow in purity.

"Do you know the road?" Justin asked, as they dashed down the banks of the St. Lawrence, and reached the hard, slippery ice, neither party gaining an inch.

"I reckon I can find it; I've bin this way 'fore," and the Vermonter coolly cast his eyes over his shoulder and measured the distance which separated him from the pursuers, as though he had other resources if they came too close.

"Do not spare the horses; Agnes must not fall into the hands of those priests again."

"God forbid that I should, Justin."

"Don't be alarmed, mum; we can take care of 'em if they come too close. Say, Justin, I'm going to sing out 'stew,' to make 'em mad."

"Say nothing, my good fellow, but urge on the horses."

"I rather calculate they is going some now; but here comes daylight, and those fellows are rather gaining, ain't they?"

"Faster, in mercy, faster!" shrieked Agnes, clinging to Justin; "see, there are five men in the Convent's sleigh, and one of them is McFaley."

The pursuers were indeed gaining on them fast. The stout ponies which the Vermonter drove were becoming fatigued with drawing so heavy a load, and their sides were bathed with perspiration, which quickly froze and glistened in the morning light like globes of crystal.

"Stop, sacrilegious wretches, and return the nun, Agnes, whom you have stolen!" thundered a voice in the pursuing sleigh.

"That is the voice of McFaley," Agnes said, with a shudder.

Justin started to his feet, and snatched at the rifle which lay beside the Vermonter; but the latter was too quick for him, and placed it beyond his reach.

"What would you do?" the Yankee asked, sternly.

"Shoot yonder vile priest!" Justin cried, fiercely.

"There's no occasion for murder yet. Here, take the reins, and if you wish the pursuit stopped, I'll do it at once, although I must say, I rather like this ere kind of sport."

Justin took the reins, and with a cry encouraged the horses to keep up their speed, while the Yankee coolly raised his rifle and fired.

One of the leading milk white horses of the Convent sprang suddenly one side, reared fearfully, and then with a loud crash, fell heavily on the inmates of the sleigh, breaking the vehicle into a thousand pieces, and badly injuring the pursuers.

"I hated to do it, 'cause I love a hoss as well as I can any beast, and they looked so kinder handsome, stretching out on a run. But it had to be done," and the Vermonter, with a sorrowful face, proceeded to re-load his rifle.

The pursuers raised a shout of vengeance, which the Yankee replied to, and once more taking the reins from Justin, he guided the wearied ponies up the banks of the river, and then, looking back, and seeing that the pursuers were attending to their wounded, he struck on a good road, and once more encouraged the horses to put forth their best speed.

CONCLUSION.

At the next village, Justin left the Canadian's team, and hired another. He merely stopped long enough to provide some refreshments for Agnes, and to obtain a suitable dress for her. All day long he continued his journey, and by obtaining fresh horses every few miles, he reached the frontier of Vermont just at sundown, and was no longer fearful of pursuit.

"I say, Justin, now that you've got the gal, what are you goin' to do with her?" the Vermonter said, as they were nearing a village in the Green Mountain State.

"Take her to her father, of course."

"Whew! yew don't say that?"

"That is what I mean to do."

"What, without tying the knot?" the Vermonter said, with a look of astonishment.

"What say you, Agnes, to our friend's question?"

Agnes looked up in his face with one of her child-like, innocent glances, and said nothing.

"Are you willing to marry me, Agnes?" Justin whispered.

"Yes."

"When, dear?"

"Whenever you think proper."

"Then to-night our wedding shall take place. Drive to a minister's house, Mr. ——— what shall I call your name? I have forgotten to ask."

"My name is Dana Amsden; I meant to have told you before. So she's consented, has she?"

"She has, my friend."

"Then, by Jerusalem, I'll pay the minister's fee out of my own pocket. Get up, ye tarnal critters—the gentleman is to be married, and is in a hurry," and with every expression of joy, Amsden drew up before a neat white house, and informed Justin that they had arrived at a preacher's.

It did not take long to perform the ceremony, and in a few minutes Agnes had bound herself forever to the man of her heart, while the Vermonter, with approving nods and winks, signified his approbation of the ceremony.

Justin and his young bride remained for nearly a week at the residence of the minister; and in the meantime, Agnes wrote to her father, acquainting him with her escape and marriage, and the next mail brought an answer, full of kind expressions, and a hope that she would soon be clasped in her parent's arms. Her father had been too much humbled by his defeat to cherish aristocratic feelings any longer, and he looked upon her marriage with one of the people as a blessing and not a misfortune.

The Vermonter still resides in Windsor county, where he has a farm, a wife, and two children. He often comes to the city, and when he does, he stops with his friend, Peoples, always sure of a warm welcome from himself and wife.

The priest, McFaley, had his collar bone broken by the horse falling into the sleigh, and for a long time he was a cripple, but finally recovered, and settled permanently in Montreal.