

Lionel Lincoln; or, The Leaguer of Boston, Volume 1

James Fenimore Cooper

Table of Contents

<u>Lionel Lincoln; or, The Leaguer of Boston, Volume 1</u>	1
<u>James Fenimore Cooper</u>	1
<u>PREFACE</u>	1
<u>PREFACE TO LIONEL LINCOLN</u>	3
<u>CHAPTER I</u>	3
<u>CHAPTER II</u>	7
<u>CHAPTER III</u>	15
<u>CHAPTER IV</u>	24
<u>CHAPTER V</u>	31
<u>CHAPTER VI</u>	36
<u>CHAPTER VII</u>	44
<u>CHAPTER VIII</u>	50
<u>CHAPTER IX</u>	57
<u>CHAPTER X</u>	65
<u>CHAPTER XI</u>	73
<u>CHAPTER XII</u>	80
<u>CHAPTER XIII</u>	88
<u>CHAP. XIV</u>	91
<u>CHAPTER XV</u>	100
<u>CHAP. XVI</u>	106

Lionel Lincoln; or, The Leaguer of Boston, Volume 1

James Fenimore Cooper

This page copyright © 2002 Blackmask Online.

<http://www.blackmask.com>

- PREFACE.
- PREFACE TO LIONEL LINCOLN.
- CHAPTER I.
- CHAPTER II.
- CHAPTER III.
- CHAPTER IV.
- CHAPTER V.
- CHAPTER VI.
- CHAPTER VII.
- CHAPTER VIII.
- CHAPTER IX.
- CHAPTER X.
- CHAPTER XI.
- CHAPTER XII.
- CHAPTER XIII.
- CHAP. XIV.
- CHAPTER XV.
- CHAP. XVI.

TO WILLIAM JAY. OF BEDFORD, WEST-CHESTER, ESQUIRE. –
MY DEAR JAY,

An unbroken intimacy of four-andtwenty years may justify the present use of your name. A man of readier wit than myself, might, on such a subject, find an opportunity of saying something clever, concerning the exalted services of your father. No weak testimony of mine, however, can add to a fame that belongs already to posterity And one like myself, who has so long known the merits, and has so often experienced the friendship of the son, can find even better reasons for offering these Legends to your notice.

Very truly and constantly, Yours,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

The manner in which the author became possessed of the private incidents, the characters, and the descriptions, contained in these tales, will, most probably, ever remain a secret between himself and his publisher. That the leading events are true, he presumes it is unnecessary to assert; for should inherent testimony, to prove that important point, be wanting, he is conscious that no anonymous declaration can establish its credibility.

But while he shrinks from directly yielding his authorities, the author has no hesitation in furnishing all the negative testimony in his power.

In the first place, then, he solemnly declares, that no unknown man, nor woman, has ever died in his vicinity, of whose effects he has become the possessor, by either fair means or foul. No dark-looking stranger, of a morbid temperament, and of inflexible silence, has ever transmitted to him a single page of illegible manuscript. Nor has any landlord furnished him with materials to be worked up into a book, in order that the profits might go to discharge the arrearages of a certain consumptive lodger, who made his exit so unceremoniously as to leave the last item in his account, his funeral charges.

He is indebted to no garrulous tale-teller for beguiling the long winter evenings; in ghosts he has no faith; he never had a vision in his life; and he sleeps too soundly to dream.

He is constrained to add, that in no "puff," "squib," "notice," "article," nor "review," whether, in daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly publication, has he been able to find a single hint that his humble powers could improve. No one regrets this fatality more than himself; for these writers generally bring such a weight of imagination to their several tasks, that, properly improved, might secure the immortality of any book, by rendering it unintelligible.

He boldly asserts that he has derived no information from any of the learned societies and without fear of contradiction; for why should one so obscure be the exclusive object of their favours!

Notwithstanding he occasionally is seen in that erudite and abstemious association, the "Bread-and-Cheese Lunch," where he is elbowed by lawyers, doctors, jurists, poets, painters, editors, congressmen, and authors of every shade and qualification, whether metaphysical, scientific, or imaginative, he avers, that he esteems the lore which is there culled, as far too sacred to be used in any work less dignified than actual history.

Of the colleges it is necessary to speak with reverence; though truth possesses claims even superior to gratitude. He shall dispose of them by simply saying, that they are entirely innocent of all his blunders; the little they bestowed having long since been forgotten.

He has stolen no images from the deep, natural poetry of Bryant; no pungency from the wit of Halleck; no felicity of expression from the richness of Percival; no satire from the caustic pen of Paulding; no periods, nor humour from Irving; nor any high finish from the attainments exhibited by Verplanck.

At the "soirées" and "coteries des bas bleus" he did think he had obtained a prize, in the dandies of literature, who haunt them. But experiment and analysis detected his error; as they proved these worthies unfit for any better purpose than that which their own instinct had already dictated.

He has made no impious attempt to rob Joe Miller of his jokes; the sentimentalists of their pathos; nor the newspaper Homers of their lofty inspirations.

His presumption has not even imagined the vivacity of the eastern states; he has not analyzed the homogeneous character of the middle; and he has left the south in the undisturbed possession of all their saturnine wit.

In short he has pilfered from no black-letter book, nor any six-penny pamphlet; his grandmother unnaturally refused her assistance to his labors; and, to speak affirmatively, for once, he wishes to live in peace, and hopes to die in the fear of God.

PREFACE TO LIONEL LINCOLN.

In this tale there are one or two slight anachronisms; which, if unnoticed, might, with literal readers, draw some unpleasant imputations on its veracity. They relate rather to persons than to things. As they are believed to be quite in character, connected with circumstances much more probable than facts, and to possess all the harmony of poetic colouring, the author is utterly unable to discover the reason why they are not true.

He leaves the knotty point to the instinctive sagacity of the critics.

The matter of this "Legend" may be pretty equally divided into that which is publicly, and that which is privately certain. For the authorities of the latter, the author refers to the foregoing preface; but he cannot dispose of the sources whence he has derived the former, with so little ceremony.

The good people of Boston are aware of the creditable appearance they make in the early annals of the confederation, and they neglect no commendable means to perpetuate the glories of their ancestors. In consequence, the inquiry after historical facts, is answered, there, by an exhibition of local publications, that no other town in the union can equal. Of these means the author has endeavoured to avail himself; collating with care, and selecting, as he trusts, with some of that knowledge of men and things which is necessary to present a faithful picture.

Wherever he may have failed, he has done it honestly.

He will not take leave of the 'cradle of liberty,' without expressing his thanks for the facilities which have been so freely accorded to his undertaking. If he has not been visited by ærial beings, and those fair visions that poets best love to create, he is certain he will not be misconceived when he says, that he has been honoured by the notice of some resembling those, who first inspired their fancies.

CHAPTER I.

"My weary soul they seem to soothe,
"And, redolent of joy and youth,
"To breathe a second spring."

Gray.

No American can be ignorant of the principal events that induced the parliament of Great Britain, in 1774, to lay those impolitic restrictions on the port of Boston, which so effectually destroyed the trade of the chief town in her western colonies. Nor should it be unknown to any American, how nobly, and with what devotedness to the great principles of the controversy, the inhabitants of the adjacent town of Salem refused to profit by the situation of their neighbours and fellow-subjects. In consequence of these impolitic measures of the English government, and of the laudable unanimity among the capitalists of the times, it became a rare sight to see the canvass of any other vessels than such as wore the pennants of the king, whitening the forsaken waters of Massachusetts bay.

Towards the decline of a day in April, 1775, however, the eyes of hundreds had been fastened on a distant sail, which was seen rising from the bosom of the waves, making her way along the forbidden track, and steering directly for the mouth of the proscribed haven. With that deep solicitude in passing events which marked the period, a large group of spectators was collected on Beacon-Hill, spreading from its conical summit, far down the eastern declivity, all gazing intently on the object of their common interest. In so large an assemblage, however, there were those who were excited by very different feelings, and indulging in wishes directly opposite to each

other. While the decent, grave, but wary citizen was endeavouring to conceal the bitterness of the sensations which soured his mind, under the appearance of a cold indifference, a few gay young men, who mingled in the throng, bearing about their persons the trappings of their martial profession, were loud in their exultations, and hearty in their congratulations on the prospect of hearing from their distant homes and absent friends. But the long, loud rolls of the drums, ascending on the evening air, from the adjacent common, soon called these idle spectators, in a body, from the spot, when the hill was left to the quiet possession of those who claimed the strongest right to its enjoyment. It was not, however, a period for open and unreserved communications. Long before the mists of evening had succeeded the shadows thrown from the setting sun, the hill was entirely deserted; the remainder of the spectators having descended from the eminence, and held their several courses, singly, silent, and thoughtful, towards the rows of dusky roofs that covered the lowland, along the eastern side of the peninsula. Notwithstanding this appearance of apathy, rumour, which, in times of great excitement, ever finds means to convey its whisperings, when it dare not bruit its information aloud, was busy in circulating the unwelcome intelligence, that the stranger was the first of a fleet, bringing stores and reinforcements to an army already too numerous, and too confident of its power, to respect the law. No tumult or noise succeeded this unpleasant annunciation, but the doors of the houses were sullenly closed, and the windows darkened, as if the people intended to express their dissatisfaction, alone, by these silent testimonials of their disgust.

In the mean time the ship had gained the rocky entrance to the harbour, where, deserted by the breeze, and met by an adverse tide, she lay inactive, as if conscious of the unwelcome reception she must receive. The fears of the inhabitants of Boston had, however, exaggerated the danger; for the vessel, instead of exhibiting the confused and disorderly throng of licentious soldiery which would have crowded a transport, was but thinly peopled, and her orderly decks were cleared of every incumbrance that could interfere with the comfort of those she did contain. There was an appearance, in the arrangements of her external accommodations, which would have indicated to an observant eye, that she carried those who claimed the rank, or possessed the means, of making others contribute largely to their comforts. The few seamen who navigated the ship, lay extended on different portions of the vessel, watching the lazy sails as they flapped against the masts, or indolently bending their looks on the placid waters of the bay; while several menials, in livery, crowded around a young man who was putting his eager inquiries to the pilot, that had just boarded the vessel off the Graves. The dress of this youth was studiously neat, and from the excessive pains bestowed on its adjustment, it was obviously deemed, by its wearer, to be in the height of the prevailing customs. From the place where this inquisitive party stood, nigh the main-mast, a wide sweep of the quarter-deck was untenanted; but nearer to the spot where the listless seaman hung idly over the tiller of the ship, stood a being of altogether different mould and fashion. He was a man who would have seemed in the very extremity of age, had not his quick, vigorous steps, and the glowing, rapid glances from his eyes, as he occasionally paced the deck, appeared to deny the usual indications of many years. His form was bowed, and attenuated nearly to emaciation. His hair, which fluttered a little wildly around his temples, was thin, and silvered to the whiteness of at least eighty winters. Deep furrows, like the lines of great age and long endured cares united, wrinkled his hollow cheeks, and rendered the bold haughty outline of his prominent features still more remarkable. He was clad in a simple and somewhat tarnished suit of modest gray, which bore about it the ill-concealed marks of long and neglected use. Whenever he turned his piercing look from the shores, he moved swiftly along the deserted quarter deck, and seemed entirely engrossed with the force of his own thoughts, his lips moving rapidly, though no sounds were heard to issue from a mouth that was habitually silent. He was under the influence of one of those sudden impulses in which the body, apparently, sympathized so keenly with the restless activity of the mind, when a young man ascended from the cabin, and took his stand among the interested and excited gazers at the land, on the upper deck. The age of this gentleman might have been five and twenty. He wore a military cloak, thrown carelessly across his form, which, in addition to such parts of his dress as were visible through its open folds, sufficiently announced that his profession was that of arms. There was an air of ease and high fashion gleaming about his person, though his speaking countenance, at times, seemed melancholy, if not sad. On gaining the deck, this young officer, encountering the eyes of the aged and restless being who trod its planks, bowed courteously before he turned away to the view, and in his turn became deeply absorbed in studying its fading beauties.

The rounded heights of Dorchester were radiant with the rays of the luminary that had just sunk behind their crest, and streaks of paler light were playing along the waters, and gilding the green summits of the islands which clustered across the mouth of the estuary. Far in the distance were to be seen the tall spires of the churches, rising out of the deep shadows of the town, with their vanes glittering in the sun-beams, while a few rays of strong light were dancing about the black beacon, which reared itself high above the conical peak that took its name from the circumstance of supporting this instrument of alarms. Several large vessels were anchored among the islands and before the town, their dark hulls, at each moment, becoming less distinct through the haze of evening, while the summits of their long lines of masts were yet glowing with the marks of day. From each of these sullen ships, from the low fortification which rose above a small island deep in the bay, and from various elevations in the town itself, the broad, silky folds of the flag of England were yet waving in the currents of the passing air. The young man was suddenly aroused from gazing at this scene, by the quick reports of the evening guns, and while his eyes were yet tracing the descent of the proud symbols of the British power, from their respective places of display, he felt his arm convulsively pressed by the hand of his aged fellow-passenger.

"Will the day ever arrive," said a low, hollow voice at his elbow, "when those flags shall be lowered, never to rise again in this hemisphere!"

The young soldier turned his quick eyes to the countenance of the speaker, but bent them instantly in embarrassment on the deck, to avoid the keen, searching glance he encountered in the looks of the other. A long, and on the part of the young man, a painful silence succeeded this remark. At length the youth, pointing to the land, said

"Tell me, you, who are of Boston, and must have known it so long, the names of all these beautiful places I see."

"And are you not of Boston, too?" asked his old companion.

"Certainly by birth, but an Englishman by habit and education."

"Accursed be the habits, and neglected the education, which would teach a child to forget its parentage!" muttered the old man, turning suddenly, and walking away so rapidly as to be soon lost in the forward parts of the ship.

For several minutes longer, the youth stood absorbed in his own musings, when, as if recollecting his previous purposes, he called aloud "Meriton."

At the sounds of his voice the curious group around the pilot instantly separated, and the highly ornamented youth, before mentioned, approached the officer, with a manner in which pert familiarity and fearful respect were peculiarly blended. Without regarding the air of the other, however, or indeed without even favouring him with a glance, the young soldier continued

"I desired you to detain the boat which boarded us, in order to convey me to the town, Mr. Meriton; see if it be in readiness."

The valet flew to execute this commission, and in an instant returned with a reply in the affirmative.

"But, sir," he continued, "you will never think of going in that boat, I feel very much assured, sir."

"Your assurance, Mr. Meriton, is not the least of your recommendations; why should I not?"

"That disagreeable old stranger has taken possession of it, with his mean, filthy bundle of rags; and "

"And what? you must name a greater evil, to detain me here, than mentioning the fact that the only gentleman in the ship is to be my companion."

"Lord, sir!" said Meriton, glancing his eye upward in amazement; "but, sir, surely you know best as to gentility of behaviour but as to gentility of dress "

"Enough of this," interrupted his master, a little angrily; "the company is such as I am content with; if you find it unequal to your deserts, you have my permission to remain in the ship until the morning the presence of a coxcomb is by no means necessary to my comfort for one night."

Without regarding the mortification of his disconcerted valet, the young man passed along the deck to the place where the boat was in waiting. By the general movement among the indolent menials, and the profound respect with which he was attended by the master of the ship to the gangway, it was sufficiently apparent, that notwithstanding his youth, it was this gentleman whose presence had exacted those arrangements in the ship, which have been mentioned. While all around him, however, were busy in facilitating the entrance of the officer into the boat, the aged stranger occupied its principal seat, with an air of deep abstraction, if not of cool indifference. A hint from the pliant Meriton, who had ventured to follow his master, that it would be more agreeable if he would relinquish his place, was disregarded, and the youth took a seat by the side of the old man, with a simplicity of manner that his valet inwardly pronounced abundantly degrading. As if this humiliation were not sufficient, the young man perceiving that a general pause had succeeded his own entrance, turned to his companion, and courteously inquired if he were ready to proceed. A silent wave of the hand was the reply, when the boat shot away from the vessel, leaving the ship steering for an anchorage in Nantasket.

The measured dash of the oars was uninterrupted by any voice, while, stemming the tide, they pulled laboriously up among the islands; but by the time they had reached the castle, the twilight had melted into the softer beams from a young moon, and the surrounding objects becoming more distinct, the stranger commenced talking with that quick and startling vehemence which seemed his natural manner. He spoke of the localities, with the vehemence and fondness of an enthusiast, and with the familiarity of one who had long known their beauties. His rapid utterance, however, ceased as they approached the naked wharves, and he sunk back gloomily in the boat, as if unwilling to trust his voice on the subject of his country's wrongs. Thus left to his own thoughts, the youth gazed, with eager interest, at the long ranges of buildings, which were now clearly visible to the eye, though with softer colours and more gloomy shadows. A few neglected and dismantled ships were lying at different points; but the hum of business, the forests of masts, and the rattling of wheels which at that early hour should have distinguished the great mart of the colonies, were wanting. In their places were to be heard, at intervals, the sudden bursts of distant, martial music, the riotous merriment of the soldiery who frequented the taverns at the water's edge, or the sullen challenges of the sentinels from the vessels of war, as they vexed the progress of the few boats which the inhabitants still used in their ordinary pursuits.

"Here indeed is a change!" the young officer exclaimed, as they glided swiftly along this desolate scene; "even my recollections, young and fading as they are, recall the difference!"

The stranger made no reply, but a smile of singular meaning gleamed across his wan features, imparting, by the moonlight, to their remarkable expression, a character of additional wildness. The officer was again silent, nor did either speak until the boat, having shot by the end of the long wharf, across whose naked boundaries a sentinel was pacing his measured path, inclined more to the shore, and soon reached the place of its destination.

Whatever might have been the respective feelings of the two passengers at having thus reached in safety the object of their tiresome and protracted voyage, they were not expressed in language. The old man bared his silver locks, and concealing his face with his hat, stood as if in deep mental thanks-giving at the termination of his toil, while his more youthful companion trod the wharf on which they landed with the air of a man whose emotions were too engrossing for the ordinary use of words.

"Here we must part, sir," the officer at length said; "but I trust the acquaintance which has been thus accidentally formed between us, is not to be forgotten now there is an end to our common privations."

"It is not in the power of a man whose days, like mine, are numbered," returned the stranger, "to mock the liberality of his God, by any vain promises that must depend on time for their fulfilment. I am one, young gentleman, who has returned from a sad, sad pilgrimage in the other hemisphere, to lay his bones in this, his native land; but should many hours be granted me, you will hear further of the man whom your courtesy and kindness have so greatly obliged."

The officer was sensibly affected by the softened but solemn manner of his companion, and pressed his wasted hand fervently as he answered

"Do; I ask it as a singular favour; I know not why, but you have obtained a command of my feelings that no other being ever yet possessed and yet 'tis a mystery, 'tis like a dream! I feel that I not only venerate, but love you!"

The old man stepped back, and held the youth at the length of his arm for a moment, while he fastened on him a look of glowing interest, and then raising his hand slowly, he pointed impressively upward, and said

"'Tis from heaven, and for God's own purposes smother not the sentiment, boy, but cherish it in your heart's core!"

The reply of the youth was interrupted by sudden and violent shrieks, that burst rudely on the stillness of the place, chilling the very blood of those who heard them, with their piteousness. The quick and severe blows of a lash were blended with the exclamations of the sufferer, and rude oaths, with hoarse execrations, from various voices, were united in the uproar, which appeared to be at no great distance. By a common impulse, the whole party broke away from the spot, and moved rapidly up the wharf in the direction of the sounds. As they approached the buildings, a group was seen collected around the man who thus broke the charm of evening by his cries, interrupting his wailings with their ribaldry, and encouraging his tormentors to proceed.

"Mercy, mercy, for the sake of the blessed God, have mercy, and don't kill Job!" again shrieked the sufferer; "Job will run your a'r'nds! Job is half-witted! Mercy on poor Job! Oh! you make his flesh creep!"

"I'll cut the heart from the mutinous knave," interrupted a hoarse, angry voice; "to refuse to drink the health of his majesty!"

"Job does wish him good health Job loves the king, only Job don't love rum."

The officer had approached so nigh as to perceive that the whole scene was one of disorder and abuse, and pushing aside the crowd of excited and deriding soldiers, who composed the throng, he broke at once into the centre of the circle.

CHAPTER II.

"They'll have me whipped for speaking true;
"Thoul't have me whipped for lying;
"And sometimes I'm whipped for holding my peace.
"I had rather be any kind of a thing
"Than a fool."

Lear.

"What means this outcry?" demanded the young man, arresting the arm of an infuriated soldier who was inflicting the blows; "by what authority is this man thus abused?"

"By what authority dare you to lay hands on a British grenadier!" cried the fellow, turning in his fury, and raising his lash against the supposed townsman. But when, as the officer stepped aside to avoid the threatened indignity, the light of the moon fell full upon his glittering dress, through the opening folds of his cloak, the arm of the brutal soldier was held suspended in air, with the surprise of the discovery.

"Answer, I bid you," continued the young officer, his frame shaking with passion; "why is this man tormented, and of what regiment are ye?"

"We belong to the grenadiers of the brave 47th, your honour," returned one of the bystanders, in a humble, deprecating tone, "and we was just polishing this 'ere natural, because as he refuses to drink the health of his majesty."

"He's a scornful sinner, that don't fear his Maker," cried the man in duress, eagerly bending his face, down which big tears were rolling, towards his protector. "Job loves the king, but Job don't love rum!"

The officer turned away from the cruel spectacle, as he bid the men untie their prisoner. Knives and fingers were instantly put in requisition, and the man was liberated, and suffered to resume his clothes. During this operation, the tumult and bustle which had so recently distinguished the riotous scene, were succeeded by a stillness that rendered the hard breathing of the sufferer painfully audible.

"Now sirs, you heroes of the 47th!" said the young man, when the victim of their rage was again clad, "know you this button?" The soldier to whom this question was more particularly addressed, gazed at the extended arm, and, to his vast discomfiture, he beheld the magical number of his own regiment reposing on the well-known white facings that decorated the rich scarlet of the vestment. No one presumed to answer this appeal, and after an impressive silence of a few moments, he continued

"Ye are noble supporters of the well-earned fame of `Wolfe's own!' fit successors to the gallant men who conquered under the walls of Quebec! away with ye; to-morrow it shall be looked to."

"I hope your honour will remember he refused his majesty's health. I'm sure, sir, that if colonel Nesbitt was here himself

"Dog! do you dare to hesitate! go, while you have permission to depart."

The disconcerted soldiery, whose turbulence had thus vanished, as if by enchantment, before the frown of their superior, slunk away in a body, a few of the older men whispering to their comrades the name of the officer who had thus unexpectedly appeared in the midst of them. The angry eye of the young soldier followed their retiring forms, while a man of them was visible; after which, turning to an elderly citizen, who, supported on a crutch, had been a spectator of the scene, he asked

"Know you the cause of the cruel treatment this poor man has received? or what in any manner has led to the violence?"

"The boy is weak," returned the cripple; "quite an innocent, who knows but little good, but does no harm. The soldiers have been carousing in yonder dram-shop, and they often get the poor lad in with them, and sport with his infirmity. If these sorts of doings an't checked, I fear much trouble will grow out of them! Hard laws from

t'other side of the water, and tarring and feathering on this, with gentlemen like colonel Nesbitt at their head, will"

"It is wisest for us, my friend, to pursue this subject no further," interrupted the officer; "I belong myself to `Wolfe's own,' and will endeavour to see justice done in the matter; as you will credit, when I tell you that I am a Boston boy. But though a native, a long absence has obliterated the marks of the town from my memory; and I am at a loss to thread these crooked streets. Know you the dwelling of Mrs. Lechmere?"

"The house is well known to all in Boston," returned the cripple, in a voice sensibly altered by the information that he was speaking to a townsman. "Job, here, does but little else than run of errands, and he will show you the way out of gratitude; wont you Job?"

The idiot, for the vacant eye and unmeaning, boyish countenance of the young man who had just been liberated, but too plainly indicated that he was to be included in that miserable class of human beings, answered with a caution and reluctance that were a little remarkable, considering the recent circumstances.

"Ma'am Lechmere's! Oh! yes, Job knows the way, and could go there blindfolded, if if "

"If what, you simpleton!" exclaimed the zealous cripple.

"Why, if 'twas daylight."

"Blindfolded, and daylight! do but hear the silly child! come, Job, you must take this gentleman to Tremont-street, without further words. 'Tis but just sundown, boy, and you can go there and be home and in your bed before the Old South strikes eight!"

"Yes; that all depends on which way you go," returned the reluctant changeling. "Now, I know, neighbour Hopper, you couldn't go to Ma'am Lechmere's in an hour, if you went along Lynn-street, and so along Prince-street, and back through Snow-Hill; and especially if you should stop any time to look at the graves on Cops."

"Pshaw! the fool is in one of his sulks now, with his Cops-Hill, and the graves!" interrupted the cripple, whose heart had warmed to his youthful townsman, and who would have volunteered to show the way himself, had his infirmities permitted the exertion. "The gentleman must call the grenadiers back, to bring the child to reason."

"'Tis quite unnecessary to be harsh with the unfortunate lad," said the young soldier; "my recollections will probably aid me as I advance; and should they not, I can inquire of any passenger I meet."

"If Boston was what Boston has been, you might ask such a question of a civil inhabitant, at any corner," said the cripple; "but it's rare to see many of our people in the streets at this hour, since the massacre. Besides, it is Saturday night, you know; a fit time for these rioters to choose for their revelries! For that matter, the soldiers have grown more insolent than ever, since they have met that disappointment about the cannon down at Salem; but I needn't tell such as you what the soldiers are when they get a little savage."

"I know my comrades but indifferently well, if their conduct to night be any specimen of their ordinary demeanour, sir," returned the officer; "but follow, Meriton; I apprehend no great difficulty in our path."

The pliant valet lifted the cloak-bag he carried, from the ground, and they were about to proceed, when the natural edged himself in a sidelong, slovenly manner, nigher to the gentleman, and looked earnestly up in his face for a moment, where he seemed to be gathering confidence, to say "Job will show the officer Ma'am Lechmere's. if the officer wont let the grannies catch Job afore he gets off the North End ag'in."

"Ah!" said the young man, laughing, "there is something of the cunning of a fool in that arrangement. Well, I accept the conditions; but beware how you take me to contemplate the graves by moonlight, or I shall deliver you not only to the grannies, but to the light infantry, artillery, and all."

With this good-natured threat, the officer followed his nimble conductor, after taking a friendly leave of the obliging cripple, who continued his admonitions to the natural, not to wander from the direct route, while the sounds of his voice were audible to the retiring party. The progress of his guide was so rapid as to require the young officer to confine his survey of the narrow and crooked streets through which they passed, to extremely hasty and imperfect glances. No very minute observation, however, was necessary to perceive that he was led along one of the most filthy and inferior sections of the town; and where, notwithstanding his efforts, he found it impossible to recall a single feature of his native place to his remembrance. The complaints of Meriton, who followed close at the heels of his master, were loud and frequent, until the gentleman, a little doubting the sincerity of his intractable conductor, exclaimed

"Have you nothing better than this to show a townsman, who has been absent seventeen years, on his return! Pray let us go through some better streets than this, if any there are in Boston which can be called better."

The lad stopped short, and looked up in the face of the speaker, for an instant, with an air of undisguised amazement, and then, without replying, he changed the direction of his route, and after one or two more deviations in his path, suddenly turning again, he glided up an alley, so narrow that the passenger might touch the buildings on either side of him. The officer hesitated an instant to enter this dark and crooked passage, but perceiving that his guide was already hid by a bend in the houses, he quickened his steps, and immediately regained the ground he had lost. They soon emerged from the obscurity of the place, and issued on a street of greater width.

"There!" said Job, triumphantly, when they had effected this gloomy passage, "does the king live in so crooked and narrow a street as that!"

"His majesty must yield the point in your favour," returned the officer.

"Ma'am Lechmere is a grand lady!" continued the lad, seemingly following the current of his own fanciful conceits, "and she wouldn't live in that alley for the world, though it is narrow, like the road to heaven, as old Nab says; I suppose they call it after the Methodies for that reason."

"I have heard the road you mention termed narrow, certainly, but it is also called *strait*," returned the officer, a little amused with the humour of the lad; "but forward, the time is slipping away, and we loiter."

Again Job turned, and moving onward, he led the way, with swift steps, along another narrow and crooked path, which, however, better deserved the name of a street, under the projecting stories of the wooden buildings, which lined its sides. After following the irregular windings of their route for some distance, they entered a triangular area, of a few rods in extent, where Job, disregarding the use of the narrow walk, advanced directly into the centre of the open space. Here he stopped once more, and turning his vacant face with an air of much seriousness, towards a building which composed one side of the triangle, he said, with a voice that expressed his own deep admiration

"There that's the 'old North!' did you ever see such a meetin'us' afore! does the king worship God in such a temple!"

The officer did not chide the idle liberties of the fool, for in the antiquated and quaint architecture of the wooden edifice, he recognized one of those early efforts of the simple, puritan builders, whose rude tastes have been transmitted to their posterity with so many deviations in the style of the same school, but so little of improvement.

Blended with these considerations, were the dawning of revived recollections; and he smiled, as he recalled the time when he also used to look up at the building with feelings somewhat allied to the profound admiration of the idiot. Job watched his countenance narrowly, and easily mistaking its expression, he extended his arm toward one of the narrowest of the avenues that entered the area, where stood a few houses of more than common pretension.

"And there ag'in!" he continued, "there's palaces for you! stingy Tommy lived in the one with the pile-axters, and the flowers hanging to their tops; and see the crowns on them too! stingy Tommy loved crowns, they say; but Province'us' wasn't good enough for him, and he lived here now they say he lives in one of the king's cupboards!"

"And who was stingy Tommy, and what right had he to dwell in Province-House, if he would?"

"What right has any governor to live in Province'us'! because its the king's! though the people paid for it."

"Pray, sir, excuse me," said Meriton, from behind, "but do the Americans usually call all their governors stingy Tommies?"

The officer turned his head, at this vapid question, from his valet, and perceived that he had been accompanied thus far by the aged stranger, who stood at his elbow, leaning on his staff, studying with close attention the late dwelling of Hutchinson, while the light of the moon fell, unobstructed, on the deep lines of his haggard face. During the first surprise of this discovery, he forgot to reply, and Job took the vindication of his language into his own hands.

"To be sure they do they call people by their right names," he said. "Insygn Peck is called Insygn Peck; and you call Deacon Winslow any thing but Deacon Winslow, and see what a look he'll give you! and I am Job Pray, so called; and why shouldn't a governor be called stingy Tommy, if he is a stingy Tommy?"

"Be careful how you speak lightly of the king's representative," said the young officer, raising his light cane with the affectation of correcting the changeling. "Forget you that I am a soldier?"

The idiot shrunk back a little, timidly, and then leering from under his sunken brow, he answered

"I heard you say you were a Boston boy!"

The gentleman was about to make a playful reply, when the aged stranger passed swiftly before him, and took his stand at the side of the lad, with a manner so remarkable for its earnestness, that it entirely changed the current of his thoughts.

"The young man knows the ties of blood and country," the stranger muttered, "and I honour him!"

It might have been the sudden recollection of the danger of those allusions, which the officer so well understood, and to which his accidental association with the singular being who uttered them, had begun to familiarize his ear, that induced the youth to resume his walk, silently, and in deep thought, along the street. By this movement, he escaped observing the cordial grasp of the hand which the old stranger bestowed on the idiot, while he muttered a few more terms of commendation. Job soon took his station in front, and the whole party moved on, again, though with less rapid strides. As the lad advanced deeper into the town, he evidently wavered once or twice in his choice of streets, and the officer began to suspect that the changeling contemplated one of his wild circuits, to avoid the direct route to a house that he manifestly approached with great reluctance. Once or twice the young soldier looked about him, intending to inquire the direction, of the first passenger he might see; but the quiet of deep night already pervaded the place, and not an individual but those who accompanied him, appeared in the long ranges of streets they had passed. The air of the guide was becoming so dogged, and hesitating, that his follower had just determined to make an application at one of the doors, when they emerged from a dark, dirty, and gloomy

street, on an open space, of much greater extent than the one they had so recently left. Passing under the walls of a blackened dwelling, Job led the way to the centre of a swinging bridge, which was thrown across an inlet from the harbour, that extended a short distance into the area, forming a shallow dock. Here he took his stand, and allowed the view of the surrounding objects to work its own effect on those he had conducted thither. The square was composed of rows of low, gloomy, and irregular houses, most of which had the appearance of being but little used. Stretching from the end of the basin, and a little on one side, a long, narrow edifice, ornamented with pilasters, perforated with arched windows, and surmounted by a humble cupola, reared its walls of brick, under the light of the moon. The story which held the rows of silent, glistening windows, was supported on abutments and arches of the same material, through the narrow vistas of which were to be seen the shambles of the common market-place. Heavy cornices of stone were laid above and beneath the pilasters, and something more than the unskilful architecture of the dwelling houses they had passed, was affected throughout the whole structure. While the officer gazed at this scene, the idiot watched his countenance with a keenness exceeding his usual observation, until impatient at hearing no words of pleasure or of recognition, he exclaimed

"If you don't know Funnel-Hall, you are no Boston boy!"

"But I do know Fanueil-Hall, and I am a Boston boy," returned the amused gentleman; "the place begins to freshen on my memory, and I now recall the scenes of my childhood."

"This, then," said the aged stranger, "is the spot where liberty has found so many bold advocates!"

"It would do the king's heart good to hear the people talk in old Funnel, sometimes," said Job; "I was on the cornishes, and looked into the winders, the last town-meetin'-da', and if there was soldiers on the common, there was them in the hall that did'nt care for them!"

"All this is very amusing, no doubt," said the officer, gravely, "but it does not advance me a foot on my way to Mrs. Lechmere's."

"It is also instructing," exclaimed the stranger; "go on, child; I love to hear his simple feelings thus expressed; they indicate the state of the public mind."

"Why," said Job, "they were plain spoken, that's all, and it would be better for the king to come over, and hear them it would pull down his pride, and make him pity the people, and then he wouldn't think of shutting up Boston harbour. Suppose he should stop the water from coming in by the narrows, why we should get it by Broad Sound! and if it didn't come by Broad Sound, it would by Nantasket! He needn't think that the Boston folks are so dumb as to be cheated out of God's water by acts of Parliament, while old Funnel stands in the dock square!"

"Sirrah!" exclaimed the officer, a little angrily, "we have already loitered until the clocks are striking eight."

The idiot lost his animation, and lowered in his looks again, as he answered

"Well, I told neighbour Hopper there was more ways to ma'am Lechmere's than straight forward! but every body knows Job's business better than Job himself! now you make me forget the road; let us go in and ask old Nab, she knows the way too well!"

"Old Nab! you wilful dolt! who is Nab, and what have I to do with any but yourself?"

"Every body in Boston knows Abigail Pray."

"What of her?" asked the startling voice of the stranger; "what of Abigail Pray, boy; is she not honest?"

"Yes, as poverty can make her," returned the natural, gloomily; "now the king has said there shall be no goods but tea sent to Boston, and the people won't have the bohea, its easy living rentfree. Nab keeps her huckster-stuff in the old ware'us', and a good place it is too Job and his mother have each a room to sleep in, and they say the king and queen haven't more!"

While he was speaking, the eyes of his listeners were drawn by his gestures toward the singular edifice to which he alluded. Like most of the others adjacent to the square, it was low, old, dirty, and dark. Its shape was triangular, a street bounding it on each side, and its extremities were flanked by as many low hexagonal towers, which terminated, like the main building itself, in high pointed roofs, tiled, and capped with rude ornaments. Long ranges of small windows were to be seen in the dusky walls, through one of which the light of a solitary candle was glimmering, the only indication of the presence of life about the silent and gloomy building.

"Nab knows ma'am Lechmere better than Job," continued the idiot, after a moment's pause, "and she will know whether ma'am Lechmere will have Job whipped for bringing company on Saturday-night; though they say she's so full of scoffery as to talk, drink tea, and laugh on that night, just the same as any other time."

"I will pledge myself to her courteous treatment," the officer replied, beginning to be weary of the fool's delay.

"Let us see this Abigail Pray," cried the aged stranger, suddenly seizing Job by the arm, and leading him, with a sort of irresistible power, toward the walls of the building, through one of the low doors of which they immediately disappeared.

Thus left on the bridge, with his valet, the young officer hesitated a single instant how to act; but yielding to the secret and powerful interest which the stranger had succeeded in throwing around all his movements and opinions, he bid Meriton await his return, and followed his guide and the old man into the cheerless habitation of the former. On passing the outer door he found himself in a spacious, but rude apartment, which, from its appearance, as well as from the few articles of heavy but valueless merchandise it now contained, would seem to have been used once as a store-house. The light drew his steps toward a room in one of the towers, where, as he approached its open door, he heard the loud, sharp tones of a woman's voice, exclaiming

"Where have you been, graceless, this Saturday-night! tagging at the heels of the soldiers, or gazing at the men-of-war, with their ungodly fashions of music and revelry at such a time, I dare to say! and you knew that a ship was in the bay, and that madam Lechmere had desired me to send her the first notice of its arrival. Here have I been waiting for you to go up to Tremont-street since sun-down, with the news, and you are out of call you, that know so well who it is she expects!"

"Don't be cross to Job, mother, for the grannies have been cutting his back with cords, till the blood runs! ma'am Lechmere! I do believe, mother, that ma'am Lechmere has moved; for I've been trying to find her house this hour, because there's a gentleman who landed from the ship wanted Job to show him the way."

"What means the ignorant boy!" exclaimed his mother.

"He alludes to me," said the officer, entering the apartment; "I am the person, if any, expected by Mrs. Lechmere, and have just landed from the Avon, of Bristol; but your son has led me a circuitous path, indeed; at one time he spoke of visiting the graves on Copps-Hill."

"Excuse the ignorant and witless child, sir," exclaimed the matron, eyeing the young man keenly through her spectacles; "he knows the way as well as to his own bed, but he is wilful at times. This will be a joyful night in Tremont-street! So handsome, and so stately too! excuse me, young gentleman," she added, raising the candle to his features with an evident unconsciousness of the act "he has the sweet smile of the mother, and the terrible eye of his father! God forgive us all our sins, and make us happier in another world than in this place of evil and

wickedness!" As she muttered the latter words, the woman set aside her candle with an air of singular agitation. Each syllable, notwithstanding her secret intention, was heard by the officer, across whose countenance there passed a sudden gloom that doubled its sad expression. He, however, said

"You know me, and my family, then."

"I was at your birth, young gentleman, and a joyful birth it was! but madam Lechmere waits for the news, and my unfortunate child shall speedily conduct you to her door; she will tell you all that it is proper to know. Job, you Job, where are you getting to, in that corner! take your hat, and show the gentleman to Tremont—street directly; you know, my son, you love to go to madam Lechmere's!"

"Job would never go, if Job could help it," muttered the sullen boy; "and if Nab had never gone, 'twould have been better for her soul."

"Do you dare, disrespectful viper!" exclaimed the angry quean, seizing, in the violence of her fury, the tongs, and threatening the head of her stubborn child.

"Woman, peace!" said a voice behind.

The dangerous weapon fell from the nerveless hand of the vixen, and the hues of her yellow and withered countenance changed to the whiteness of death. She stood motionless, for near a minute, as if riveted to the spot by a superhuman power, before she succeeded in muttering, "who speaks to me?"

"It is I," returned the stranger, advancing from the shadow of the door into the dim light of the candle; "a man who has numbered ages, and who knows, that as God loves him, so is he bound to love the children of his loins."

The rigid limbs of the woman lost their stability, in a tremour that shook every fibre in her body; she sunk in her chair, and her eyes rolled from the face of one visiter to that of the other, while her unsuccessful efforts to utter, denoted that she had temporarily lost the command of speech. Job stole to the side of the stranger, in this short interval, and looking up in his face piteously, he said

"Don't hurt old Nab read that good saying to her out of the Bible, and she'll never strike Job with the tongs ag'in; will you, mother? See her cup, where she hid it under the towel, when you came in! ma'am Lechmere gives her the p'ison tea to drink, and then Nab is never so good to Job, as Job would be to mother, if mother was half-witted, and Job was old Nab."

The stranger considered the moving countenance of the boy, while he pleaded thus earnestly in behalf of his mother, with marked attention, and when he had done, he stroked the head of the natural compassionately, and said

"Poor, imbecile child! God has denied the most precious of his gifts, and yet his spirit hovers around thee; for thou canst distinguish between austerity and kindness, and thou hast learnt to know good from evil. Young man, see you no moral in this dispensation! Nothing, which says that Providence bestows no gift in vain; while it points to the difference between the duty that is fostered by indulgence, and that which is extorted by power!"

The officer avoided the ardent looks of the stranger, and after an embarrassing pause of a moment, he expressed his readiness, to the reviving woman, to depart on his way. The matron, whose eye had never ceased to dwell on the features of the old man, since her faculties were restored, arose slowly, and in a feeble voice, directed her son to show the road to Tremont—street. She had acquired, by long practice, a manner that never failed to control, when necessary, the wayward humours of her child, and on the present occasion, the unwonted solemnity imparted to her voice, by deep agitation, aided in effecting her object. Job quietly arose, and prepared himself to

comply. The manners of the whole party wore a restraint which implied they had touched on feelings that it would be wiser to smother, and the separation would have been silent, though courteous, on the part of the youth, had he not perceived the passage still filled by the motionless form of the stranger."

"You will precede me, sir," he said; "the hour grows late, and you, too, may need a guide to find your dwelling."

"To me, the streets of Boston have long been familiar," returned the old man. "I have noted the increase of the town as a parent notes the increasing stature of his child; nor is my love for it less than paternal. It is enough that I am within its limits, where liberty is prized as the greatest good; and it matters not under what roof I lay my head this will do as well as another."

"This!" echoed the other, glancing his eyes over the miserable furniture, and scanning the air of poverty that pervaded the place; "why this house has even less of comfort than the ship we have left!"

"It has enough for my wants," said the stranger, seating himself with composure, and deliberately placing his bundle by his side. "Go you to your palace, in Tremont-street: it shall be my care that we meet again."

The officer understood the character of his companion too well to hesitate, and bending low, he quitted the apartment, leaving the other leaning his head on his cane, in absent musing, while the amazed matron was gazing at her unexpected guest, with a wonder that was not unmingled with dread.

CHAPTER III.

"From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,
"While China's earth receives the smoking tide.
"At once they gratify their scent and taste,
"And frequent cups prolong the rich repast."

Rape of the Lock.

The recollection of the repeated admonitions of his mother, served to keep Job to his purpose. The instant the officer appeared, he held his way across the bridge, and after proceeding for a short distance further, along the water's edge, they entered a broad and well built avenue, which led from the principal wharf into the upper parts of the town. Turning up this street, the lad was making his way, with great earnestness, when sounds of high merriment and conviviality, breaking from an opposite building, caught his attention, and induced him to pause.

"Remember your mother's injunction," said the officer; "what see you in that tavern, to stare at?"

"'Tis the British Coffee-house!" said Job, shaking his head; "yes, any body might know that by the noise they make in't on Saturday-night! see, it's filled now, with Lord Boot's officers, flaring afore the windows, just like so many red devils; but to-morrow, when the Old South bell rings, they'll forget their Lord and maker, every sinner among them!"

"Fellow!" exclaimed the officer, "this is trespassing too far proceed to Tremont-street, or leave me, that I may, at once, procure another guide."

The changeling cast a look aside at the angry eye of the other, and then turned and proceeded, muttering so loud as to be overheard

Lionel Lincoln; or, The Leaguer of Boston, Volume 1

"Every body that's raised in Boston knows how to keep Saturday–night; and if you're a Boston boy, you should love Boston ways."

The officer did not reply, and as they now proceeded with great diligence, they soon passed through King and Queen–streets, and entered that of Tremont. At a little distance from the turning, Job stopped, and pointing to a building near them, he said

"There; that house with the court–yard afore it, and the pile–axters, and the grand looking door, that's ma'am Lechmere's; and every body says she's a grand lady, but I say it is a pity she isn't a better woman."

"And who are you, that ventures thus boldly to speak of a lady so much your superior?"

"I!" said the idiot, looking up simply into the face of his interrogator, "I am Job Pray, so called."

"Well, Job Pray, here is a crown for you. The next time you act as guide, keep more to your business. I tell you lad, I offer a crown."

"Job don't love crowns they say the king wears a crown, and it makes him flaunty and proud like."

"The disaffection must have spread itself wide indeed, if such as he refuse silver, rather than offend their principles!" muttered the officer to himself. "Here then is half a guinea, if you like gold better."

The natural continued kicking a stone about with his toes, without taking his hands from the pockets where he wore them ordinarily, with a sort of idle air, as he peered from under his slouched hat at this renewed offer, answering

"You wouldn't let the grannies whip Job, and Job won't take your money."

"Well boy, there is more of gratitude in that than a wiser man would always feel! Come, Meriton, I shall meet the poor fellow again, and will not forget this. I commission you to see the lad better dressed, in the beginning of the week."

"Lord, sir," said the valet, "if it is your pleasure, most certainly; but I declare I don't know in what style I should dress such a figure and countenance, to make any thing of them!"

"Sir, sir," cried the lad, running a few steps after the officer, who had already proceeded, "if you won't let the grannies beat Job any more, Job will always show you the way through Boston; and run your a'r'nds too!"

"Poor fellow! well, I promise that you shall not be again abused by any of the soldiery. Good night, my honest friend let me see you again."

The idiot appeared satisfied with this assurance, for he immediately turned, and gliding along the street with a sort of shuffling gait, he soon disappeared round the first corner. In the meantime the young officer advanced to the entrance which led into the court–yard of Mrs. Lechmere's dwelling. The house was of bricks, and of an exterior altogether more pretending than most of those in the lower parts of the town. It was heavily ornamented, in wood, according to the taste of a somewhat earlier day, and presented a front of seven windows in its two upper stories, those at the extremes being much narrower than the others. The lower floor had the same arrangement, with the exception of the principal door.

Strong lights were shining in many parts of the house, which gave it, in comparison with the gloomy and darkened edifices in its vicinity, an air of peculiar gaiety and life. The rap of the gentleman was answered

instantly by an old black, dressed in a becoming, and what, for the colonies, was, a rich livery. The inquiry for Mrs. Lechmere was successful, and the youth conducted through a hall of some dimensions, into an apartment which opened from one of its sides. This room would be considered, at the present day, as much too small to contain the fashion of a country town; but what importance it wanted in size, was amply compensated for in the richness and labour of its decorations. The walls were divided into compartments, by raised panel-work, beautifully painted with imaginary landscapes and ruins. The glittering, varnished surfaces of these pictures were burthened with armorial bearings, which were intended to illustrate the alliances of the family. Beneath the surbase were smaller divisions of panels, painted with various architectural devices; and above it rose, between the compartments, fluted pilasters of wood, with gilded capitals. A heavy wooden, and highly ornamented cornice, stretched above the whole, furnishing an appropriate outline to the walls. The use of carpets was, at that time, but little known in the colonies, though the wealth and station of Mrs. Lechmere would probably have introduced the luxury, had not her age, and the nature of the building, tempted her to adhere to ancient custom. The floor, which shone equally with the furniture, was tessellated with small alternate squares of red-cedar and pine, and in the centre were the `saliant Lions' of Lechmere, attempted by the blazonry of the joiner. On either side of the ponderous and laboured mantel, were arched compartments, of plainer work, denoting use, the sliding panels of one of which, being raised, displayed a beaufet, groaning with massive plate. The furniture was old, rich, and heavy, but in perfect preservation. In the midst of this scene of colonial splendour, which was rendered as impressive as possible by the presence of numerous waxen lights, a lady, far in the decline of life, sat, in formal propriety, on a small settee. The officer had thrown his cloak into the hands of Meriton, in the hall, and as he advanced up the apartment, his form appeared in the gay dress of a soldier, giving to its ease and fine proportions, the additional charm of military garnish. The hard, severe eye of the lady, sensibly softened with pleased surprise, as it dwelt on his person for an instant after she arose to receive her guest, but the momentary silence was first broken by the youth, who said

"I have entered unannounced, for my impatience has exceeded my breeding, madam, while each step I have taken in this house recalls the days of my boyhood, and of my former freedom within its walls."

"My cousin Lincoln!" interrupted the lady, who was Mrs. Lechmere; "that dark eye, that smile, nay, your very step announces you! I must have forgotten my poor brother, and one also who is still so dear to us, not to have known you a true Lincoln!"

There was a distance in the manner of both, at meeting, which might easily have been imparted by the precise formula of the provincial school, of which the lady was so distinguished a member, but which was not sufficient to explain the sad expression that suddenly and powerfully blended with the young man's smile, as she spoke. The change, however, was but momentary, and he answered courteously to her assurances of recognition

"I have long been taught to expect a second home in Tremont-street, and I find by your flattering remembrance of myself and parents, dear madam, that my expectations are justified."

The lady was sensibly pleased at this remark, and she suffered a smile to unbend her rigid brow, as she answered

"A home, certainly, though it be not such a one as the heir of the wealthy house of Lincoln may have been accustomed to dwell in. It would be strange, indeed, could any allied to that honourable family, forget to entertain its representative with due respect."

The youth seemed conscious that quite as much had now been said as the occasion required, and he raised his head from bowing respectfully on her hand, with the intention of changing the subject to one less personal, when his eye caught a glimpse of the figure of another, and more youthful female, who had been concealed, hitherto, by the drapery of a window-curtain. Advancing to this young lady, he said, with a quickness that rather betrayed his willingness to suspend further compliment

"And here I see one also, to whom I have the honor of being related; Miss Dynevor?"

"Though it be not my grand-child," said Mrs. Lechmere, "it is one who claims an equal affinity to you, Major Lincoln; it is Agnes Danforth, the daughter of my late niece."

"'Twas my eye then, and not my feelings that were mistaken," returned the young soldier; "I hope this lady will admit my claim to call her cousin?"

A simple inclination of the body was the only answer he received, though she did not decline the hand which he offered with his salutations. After a few more of the usual expressions of pleasure, and the ordinary inquiries that succeed such meetings, the party became seated, and a more regular discourse followed.

"I am pleased to find you remember us then, cousin Lionel," said Mrs. Lechmere; "we have so little in this remote province that will compare with the mother country, I had feared no vestiges of the place of your birth could remain on your mind."

"I find the town greatly altered, it is true, but there are many places in it which I still remember, though certainly their splendour is a little diminished, in my eyes, by absence and a familiarity with other scenes."

"Doubtless, an acquaintance with the British court will have no tendency to exalt our humble customs in your imagination; neither do we possess many buildings to attract the notice of a travelled stranger. There is a tradition in our family, that your seat in Devonshire is as large as any dozen edifices in Boston, public or private; nay, we are proud of saying, that the king himself is lodged as well as the head of the Lincoln family, only when at his castle of Windsor!"

"Ravenscliffe is certainly a place of some magnitude," returned the young man, carelessly, "though you will remember his majesty affects but little state at Kew. I have, however, spent so little of my time in the country, that I hardly know its conveniences or its extent."

The old lady bowed with that sort of complacency which the dwellers in the colonies were apt to betray, whenever an allusion was made to the acknowledged importance of their connexions in that country toward which they all looked as the fountain of honour; and then, as quickly as if the change in her ideas was but a natural transition in the subject, she observed

"Surely Cecil cannot know of the arrival of our kinsman! she is not apt to be so remiss in paying attention to our guests!"

"She does me the more honour, that she considers me a relative, and one who requires no formality in his reception."

"You are but cousins twice removed," returned the old lady, a little gravely; "and there is surely no affinity in that degree which can justify any forgetfulness of the usual courtesies. You see, cousin Lionel, how much we value the consanguinity, when it is a subject of pride to the most remote branches of the family!"

"I am but little of a genealogist, madam; though, if I retain a true impression of what I have heard, Miss Dynevor is of too good blood, in the direct line, to value the collateral drops of an intermarriage."

"Pardon me, major Lincoln; her father, colonel Dynevor, was certainly an Englishman of an ancient and honourable name, but no family in the realm need scorn an alliance with our own. I say our own, cousin Lionel, for I would never have you forget that I am a Lincoln, and was the sister of your grandfather."

A little surprised at the seeming contradiction in the language of the good lady, the young man bowed his head to the compliment, and cast his eyes at his younger companion with a sort of longing, to change the discourse, by addressing the reserved young woman nigh him, that was very excusable in one of his sex and years. He had not time, however, to make more than one or two common-place remarks, and receive their answers, before Mrs. Lechmere said, with some exhibition of staid displeasure against her grandchild

"Go, Agnes, and acquaint your cousin of this happy event. She has been sensibly alive to your safety, during the whole time consumed by your voyage. We have had the prayers of the church, for a 'person gone to sea,' read each Sunday, since the receipt of your letters, announcing your intention to embark; and I have been exceedingly pleased to observe the deep interest with which Cecil joined in our petitions."

Lionel mumbled a few words of thanks, and leaning back in his chair, threw his eyes upward, but whether in pious gratitude or not, we conceive it is not our province to determine. During the delivery of Mrs. Lechmere's last speech, and the expressive pantomime that succeeded it, Agnes Danforth rose and left the room. The door had been some little time closed before the silence was again broken; during which, Mrs. Lechmere evidently essayed in vain, once or twice, to speak. Her colour, pale and immovable as usually seemed her withered look, changed in its shades, and her lip trembled involuntarily. She, however, soon found her utterance, though the first tones of her voice were choked and husky.

"I may have appeared remiss, cousin Lionel," she said, "but there are subjects that can be discussed with propriety, only between the nearest relatives. Sir Lionel you left him in as good a state of bodily health, I hope, as his mental illness will allow?"

"It is so represented to me."

"You have seen him lately?"

"Not in fifteen years; my presence was said to increase his disorder, and the physicians forbade any more interviews. He continues at the private establishment near town, and, as the lucid intervals are thought to increase, both in frequency and duration, I often indulge in the pleasing hope of being restored again to my father. The belief is justified by his years, which, you know, are yet under fifty."

A long and apparently a painful silence succeeded this interesting communication; at length the lady said, with a tremour in her voice, for which the young man almost revered her, as it so plainly bespoke her interest in her nephew, as well as the goodness of her heart

"I will thank you for a glass of that water in the beaufet. Pardon me, cousin Lionel, but this melancholy subject always overcomes me. I will retire a few moments, with your indulgence, and hasten the appearance of my grandchild. I pine that you may meet."

Her absence just at that moment was too agreeable to the feelings of Lionel, for him to gainsay her intention; though, instead of following Agnes Danforth, who had preceded her on the same duty, the tottering steps of Mrs. Lechmere conducted her to a door which communicated with her own apartment. For several minutes the young man trampled on the 'salient lions' of Lechmere, with a rapidity that seemed to emulate their own mimic speed, as he paced to and fro across the narrow apartment, his eye glancing vacantly along the laboured wainscots, embracing the argent, azure and purple fields of the different escutcheons, as heedlessly, as if they were not charged with the distinguishing symbols of so many honourable names. This mental abstraction was, however, shortly dissipated by the sudden appearance of one who had glided into the room, and advanced to its centre, before he became conscious of her presence. A light, rounded, and exquisitely proportioned female form, accompanied by a youthful and expressive countenance, with an air in which womanly grace blended so nicely with feminine delicacy as to cause each motion and gesture to command respect, at the same time that it was

singularly insinuating, was an object to suspend, even at a first glance, provided that glance were by surprise, the steps of a more absent and less courteous youth than the one we have attempted to describe. Major Lincoln knew that this young lady could be no other than Cecil Dynevor, the daughter of a British officer, long since deceased, by the only child of Mrs. Lechmere, who was also in her grave; and consequently that she was one to whom he was so well known by character, and so nearly allied by blood, as to render it an easy task for a man accustomed to the world as he had been, to remove any little embarrassments which might have beset a less practised youth, by acting as his own usher. This he certainly attempted, and at first, with a freedom which his affinity, and the circumstances, would seem to allow, though it was chastened by easy politeness. But the restraint visible in the manner of the lady was so marked, that by the time his salutations were ended, and he had handed her to a seat, the young man felt as much embarrassment as if he had found himself alone, for the first time, with the woman whom he had been pining, for months, to favour with a very particular communication. Whether it is that nature has provided the other sex with a tact for these occasions, or that the young lady became sensible that her deportment was not altogether such as was worthy either of herself, or the guest of her grandmother, she was certainly the first to relieve the slight awkwardness that was but too apparent in the commencement of the interview.

"My grandmother has long been expecting this pleasure, major Lincoln," she said, "and your arrival has been at a most auspicious moment. The state of the country grows each day so very alarming, that I have indeed long urged her to visit our relatives in England, until the disputes shall have terminated."

The tones of an extremely soft and melodious voice, and a pronunciation quite as exact as if the speaker had acquired the sounds in the English court, and which was entirely free from the slight vernacular peculiarity which had offended his ear, in the few words that fell from Agnes Danforth, certainly aided a native attraction of manner, which it seemed impossible for the young lady to cast entirely aside.

"You, who are so much of an English woman, would find great pleasure in the exchange," he answered; "and if half what I have heard from a fellow passenger, of the state of the country be true, I shall be foremost in seconding your request. Both Ravenscliffe and the house in Soho, would be greatly at the service of Mrs. Lechmere."

"It was my wish that she would accept the pressing invitations of my father's relative, Lord Cardonnel, who has long urged me to pass a few years in his own family. A separation would be painful to us both, but should my grandmother, in such an event, determine to take her residence in the dwellings of her ancestors, I could not be censured for adopting a resolution to abide under the roofs of mine."

The piercing eye of major Lincoln fell full upon her own, as she delivered this intention, and as it dropped on the floor, the slight smile that played round his lip, was produced by the passing thought, that the provincial beauty had inherited so much of her grandmother's pride of genealogy, as to be willing to impress on his mind that the niece of a viscount was superior to the heir of a baronetcy. But the quick, burning flush that instantly passed across the features of Cecil Dynevor, might have taught him, that she was acting under the impulse of much deeper feelings than such an unworthy purpose would indicate. The effect, however, was such as to make the young man glad to see Mrs. Lechmere re-enter the room, leaning on the arm of her niece.

"I perceive, my cousin Lionel," said the lady, as she moved with a feeble step toward the settee, "that you and Cecil have found each other out, without the necessity of any other introduction than the affinity between you. I surely do not mean the affinity of blood altogether, you know, for that cannot be said to amount to any thing; but I believe there exist certain features of the mind that are transmitted through families quite as distinctly as any which belong to the countenance."

"Could I flatter myself with possessing the slightest resemblance to Miss Dynevor, in either of those particulars, I should be doubly proud of the connexion," returned Lionel, while he assisted the good lady to a seat, with a

coolness that sufficiently denoted how little he cared about the matter.

"But I am not disposed to have my right to claim near kindred with cousin Lionel, at all disputed," cried the young lady, with sudden animation. "It has pleased our fore-fathers to order such

"Nay, nay, my child," interrupted her grandmother, "you forget that the term of cousin can only be used in cases of near consanguinity, and where familiar situations will excuse it. But major Lincoln knows, that we in the colonies are apt to make the most of the language, and count our cousins almost as far as if we were members of the Scottish clans. Speaking of the clans, reminds me of the rebellion of '45. It is not thought in England, that our infatuated colonists will ever be so fool-hardy as to assume their arms in earnest?"

"There are various opinions on that subject," said Lionel. "Most military men scout the idea; though I find, occasionally, an officer that has served on this continent, who thinks not only that the appeal will be made, but that the struggle will be bloody."

"Why should they not!" said Agnes Danforth, abruptly; "they are men, and the English are no more!"

Lionel turned his looks, in a little surprise, on the speaker, to whose countenance an almost imperceptible cast in one eye, imparted a look of arch good nature that her manner would seem to contradict, and smiled as he repeated her words

"Why should they not, indeed! I know no no other reasons than that it would be both a mad and an unlawful act. I can assure you that I am not one of those who affect to undervalue my own countrymen; for you will remember that I too am an American."

"I have heard it said that such of our volunteers as wear uniforms at all," said Agnes, "appear in blue, and not in scarlet."

"'Tis his majesty's pleasure that his 47th foot should wear this gaudy colour," returned the young man, laughing; "though, for myself, I am quite willing to resign it to the use of you ladies, and to adopt another, could it well be."

"It might be done, sir."

"In what manner?"

"By resigning your commission with it."

Mrs. Lechmere had evidently permitted her niece to proceed thus far, without interruption, to serve some purpose of her own; but perceiving that her guest by no means exhibited that air of pique which the British officers were so often weak enough to betray, when the women took into their hands the defence of their country's honour, she rang the bell, as she observed

"Bold language, major Lincoln! bold language for a young lady under twenty. But Miss Danforth is privileged to speak her mind freely, for some of her father's family are but too deeply implicated in the unlawful proceedings of these evil times. We have kept Cecil, however, more to her allegiance."

"And yet even Cecil has been known to refuse the favour of her countenance to the entertainments given by the British officers!" said Agnes, a little piquantly.

"And would you have Cecil Dynevor frequent balls and entertainments unaccompanied by a proper chaperon," returned Mrs. Lechmere; "or is it expected that, at seventy, I can venture in public to maintain the credit of our

family. But we keep major Lincoln from his refreshments with our idle disputes. Cato, we wait your movements."

Mrs. Lechmere delivered her concluding intimation to the black, in attendance, with an air that partook somewhat of mystery. The old domestic, who, probably from long practice, understood, more by the expression of her eye than by any words she had uttered, the wishes of his mistress, proceeded to close the outer shutters of the windows, and to draw the curtains with the most exact care. When this duty was performed, he raised a small oval table from its regular position among the flowing folds of the drapery that shrouded the deep apertures for light, and placed it in front of Miss Dynevor. A salver of massive silver, containing an equipage of the finest Dresden, followed, and in a few minutes a hissing urn of the same precious metal garnished the polished surface of the mahogany. During these arrangements, Mrs. Lechmere and her guest had maintained a general discourse, touching chiefly on the welfare and condition of certain individuals of their alliance, in England. Notwithstanding the demand thus made on his attention, Lionel was able to discover a certain appearance of mystery and caution in each movement of the black as he proceeded leisurely in his duty. Miss Dynevor permitted the disposition of the tea-table to be made before her, passively, and her cousin Agnes Danforth threw herself back on one of the settees, with a look that indicated cool displeasure. When the usual compound was made in two little fluted cups, over whose pure white a few red and green sprigs were sparingly scattered, the black presented one containing the grateful beverage to his mistress, and the other to the stranger.

"Pardon me, Miss Danforth," said Lionel, recollecting himself after he had accepted the offering; "I have suffered my sea-breeding to obtain the advantage."

"Enjoy your error, sir, if you can find any gratification in the indulgence," returned the young lady.

"But I shall enjoy it the more, could I see you participating in the luxury."

"You have termed the idle indulgence well; 'tis nothing but a luxury, and such a one as can be easily dispensed with: I thank you, sir, I do not drink tea."

"Surely no lady can forswear her Bohea! be persuaded."

"I know not how the subtle poison may operate on your English ladies, major Lincoln, but it is no difficult matter for an American girl to decline the use of a detestable herb, which is one, among many other, of the causes that is likely to involve her country and kindred in danger and strife."

The young man, who had really intended no more than the common civilities due from his sex to the other, bowed in silence, though, as he turned from her, he could not forbear looking toward the table to see whether the principles of the other young American were quite as rigid. Cecil sat bending over the salver, playing idly with a curiously wrought spoon, made to represent a sprig of the plant whose fragrance had been thus put in requisition to contribute to his indulgence, while the steam from the china vessel before her was wreathing in a faint mist around her polished brow.

"You at least, Miss Dynevor," said Lionel, "appear to have no dislike to the herb, you breathe its vapour so freely."

Cecil cast a glance at him which changed the demure and somewhat proud composure of her countenance into a look of sudden, joyous humour, that was infinitely more natural, as she answered laughingly

"I own a woman's weakness. I must believe it was tea that tempted our common mother in Paradise!"

"It would show that the cunning of the serpent has been transmitted to a later day, could that be proved," said Agnes, "though the instrument of temptation has lost some of its virtue."

"How know you that?" said Lionel, anxious to pursue the trifling, in order to remove the evident distance which had existed between them; "had Eve shut her ears as rigidly as you close your mouth against the offering, we might yet have enjoyed the first gift to our parents."

"Oh, sir, 'tis no such stranger to me as you may imagine from the indifference I have assumed on the present occasion; as Job Pray says, Boston harbour is nothing but a `big tea-pot!' "

"You know Job Pray, then, Miss Danforth!" said Lionel, not a little amused by her spirit.

"Certainly; Boston is so small, and Job so useful, that every body knows the simpleton."

"He belongs to a distinguished family, then, for I have his own assurance that every body knows his perturbed mother, Abigail."

"You!" exclaimed Cecil, again, in that sweet, natural voice that had before startled her auditor; "what can you know of poor Job, and his almost equally unfortunate mother!"

"Now, young ladies, I have you in my snares!" cried Lionel; "you may possibly resist the steams of tea, but what woman can withstand the impulse of her curiosity! not to be too cruel with my fair kinswomen on so short an acquaintance, however, I will go so far as to acknowledge that I have already had an interview with Mrs. Pray."

The reply which Agnes was about to deliver was interrupted by a slight crash, and on turning, they beheld the fragments of a piece of the splendid set of Dresden, lying at the feet of Mrs. Lechmere.

"My dear grand-mama is ill!" cried Cecil, springing to the assistance of the old lady. "Hasten, Cato -major Lincoln, you are more active for heaven's sake a glass of water Agnes, your salts."

The amiable anxiety of her grand-child was not, however, so necessary as first appearances would have indicated, and Mrs. Lechmere gently put aside the salts, though she did not decline the glass, which Lionel offered for the second time in so short a period.

"I fear you will mistake me for a sad invalid, cousin Lionel," said the old lady, when she had become a little composed; "but I believe it is this very tea, of which so much has been said, and which I drink to excess, from pure loyalty, that unsettles my nerves I must refrain, like the girls, though from a very different motive. We are a people of early hours, major Lincoln, but you are at home here, and will pursue your pleasure; I must, however, claim an indulgence for threescore-and-ten, and be permitted to wish you a good rest after your voyage. Cato has his orders to contribute all he can to your comfort."

Leaning on her two assistants, the old lady withdrew, leaving Lionel to the full possession of the apartment. As the hour was getting late, and from the compliments they had exchanged, he did not expect the return of the younger ladies, he called for a candle, and was shown to his own room. As soon as the few indispensables, which rendered a valet necessary to a gentleman of that period, were observed, he dismissed Meriton, and throwing himself in the bed, courted the sweets of the pillow.

Many incidents, however, had occurred during the day, that induced a train of thoughts, which for a long time prevented his attaining the natural rest he sought. After indulging in long and uneasy reflections on certain events, too closely connected with his personal feelings to be lightly remembered, the young man began to muse on his reception, and on the individuals who had been, as it were, for the first time, introduced to him.

It was quite apparent that both Mrs. Lechmere, and her grand-daughter were acting their several parts, though whether in concert or not, remained to be discovered. But in Agnes Danforth, with all his subtlety, he could

perceive nothing but the plain and direct, though a little blunt, peculiarities of her nature and education. Like most very young men, who had just been made acquainted with two youthful females, both of them much superior to the generality of their sex in personal charms, he fell asleep musing on their characters. Nor, considering the circumstances, will it be at all surprising when we add, that before morning, he was dreaming of the Avon, of Bristol, on board which stout vessel he even thought that he was discussing a chowder on the Banks of Newfoundland, which had been unaccountably prepared by the fair hands of Miss Danforth, and which was strangely flavoured with tea; while the Hebelooking countenance of Cecil Dynevor was laughing at his perplexities with undisguised good-humour, and with all the vivacity of girlish merriment.

CHAPTER IV.

"A good portly man, i'falth, and a corpulent."

King Henry IV.

The sun was just stirring the heavy bank of fog, which had rested on the waters during the night, as Lionel toiled his way up the side of Beacon-Hill, anxious to catch a glimpse of his native scenery while it was yet glowing with the first touch of day. The islands raised their green heads above the mist, and the wide amphitheatre of hills that encircled the bay was still visible, though the vapour was creeping in places along the vallies now concealing the entrance to some beautiful glen, and now wreathing itself fantastically around a tall spire that told the site of a suburban village. Though the people of the town were awake and up, yet the sacred character of the day, and the state of the times, contributed to suppress those sounds which usually distinguish populous places. The cool nights and warm days of April, had generated a fog more than usually dense, which was deserting its watery bed, and stealing insidiously along the land, to unite with the vapours of the rivers and brooks, spreading a wider curtain before the placid view. As Lionel stood on the brow of the platform that crowned the eminence, the glimpses of houses and hills, of towers and ships, of places known and places forgotten, passed before his vision, through the openings in the mist, like phantoms of the imagination. The whole scene, animated and in motion as it seemed by its changes, appeared to his excited feelings like a fanciful panorama, exhibited for his eye alone, when his enjoyment was interrupted by a voice apparently at no great distance. It was a man singing to a common English air, fragments of some ballad, with a peculiarly vile nasal cadency. Through the frequent pauses, he was enabled to comprehend a few words, which, by their recurrence, were evidently intended for a chorus to the rest of the production. The reader will understand the character of the whole from these lines, which ran as follows:
And they that would be free,
Out they go;
While the slaves, as you may see,
Stay, to drink their p'ison tea,
Down below!

Lionel, after listening to this expressive ditty for a moment, followed the direction of the sounds until he encountered Job Pray, who was seated on one of the flights of steps which aided the ascent to the platform, cracking a few walnuts on the boards, while he employed those intervals, when his mouth could find no better employment, in uttering the above-mentioned strains.

"How now, master Pray, do you come here to sing your orisons to the goddess of liberty, on a Sunday morning," cried Lionel; "or are you the town lark, and for want of wings take to this height to obtain an altitude for your melody?"

"There's no harm in singing psalm tunes or continental songs, any day in the week," said the lad, without raising his eyes from his occupation: "Job don't know what a lark is, but if it belongs to the town, the soldiers are so thick, they can't keep it on the common."

Lionel Lincoln; or, The Leaguer of Boston, Volume 1

"And what objection can you have to the soldiers possessing a corner of your common."

"They starve the cows, and then they wont give milk; grass is sweet to beasts in the spring of the year."

"But my life for it, the soldiers don't eat the grass; your brindles and your blacks, your reds and your whites, may have the first offering of the spring, as usual."

"But Boston cows don't love grass that British soldiers have trampled on," said the sullen lad.

"This is, indeed, carrying notions of liberty to refinement!" exclaimed Lionel, laughing.

Job shook his head, threateningly, as he looked up and said, "Don't you let Ralph hear you say any thing ag'in liberty!"

"Ralph! who is he, lad? your genius! where do you keep the invisible, that there is danger of his overhearing what I say?"

"He's up there in the fog," said Job, pointing significantly toward the foot of the Beacon, which a dense volume of vapour was enwrapping, probably attracted up the tall post that supported the grate.

Lionel gazed at the smoky column for a moment, when the mists began to dissolve, and, amid their evolutions, he beheld the dim figure of his aged fellow passenger. The old man was still clad in his simple, tarnished vestments of gray, which harmonized so singularly with the mists as to impart a look almost ethereal to his wasted form. As the medium through which he was seen became less cloudy, his features grew visible, and Lionel could distinguish the uneasy, rapid glances of his eyes, which seemed to roam over the distant objects with an earnestness that appeared to mock the misty veil that was floating before so much of the view. While Lionel stood fixed to the spot, gazing at this irregular being with that secret awe which the other had succeeded in inspiring, the old man waved his hand impatiently, as if he would cast aside his shroud. At that instant a bright sun-beam darted into the vapour, illuminating his person, and melting the mist into thin air. The anxious, haggard, and severe expression of his countenance changed at the touch of the ray, and he smiled with a softness and attraction that thrilled the nerves of the other, as he called aloud to the sensitive young soldier

"Come hither, Lionel Lincoln, to the foot of this beacon, where you may gather warnings, which, if properly heeded, will guide you through many and great dangers, unharmed."

"I am glad you have spoken," said Lionel, advancing to his side; "you appeared like a being of another world, wrapped in that mantle of fog, and I felt tempted to kneel, and ask a benediction."

"And am I not a being of another world! most of my interests are already in the grave, and I tarry here only for a space, because there is a great work to be done, which cannot be performed without me. My view of the world of spirits, young man, is much clearer and more distinct than yours of this variable scene at your feet. There is no mist to obstruct the eye, nor any doubts as to the colours it presents."

"You are happy, sir, in the extremity of your age to be so assured. But I fear your sudden determination last night subjected you to inconvenience in the tenement of this changeling."

"The boy is a good boy," said the old man, stroking the head of the natural complacently; "we understand each other, major Lincoln, and that shortens introductions, and renders communion easy."

"That you feel alike on one subject, I have already discovered; but there I should think the resemblance and the intelligence must end."

Lionel Lincoln; or, The Leaguer of Boston, Volume 1

"The propensities of the mind in its infancy and in its maturity are but a span apart," said the stranger; "the amount of human knowledge is but to know how much we are under the dominion of our passions; and he who has learned by experience how to smother the volcano, and he who never felt its fires, are surely fit associates."

Lionel bowed in silence to an opinion so humbling to the other, and after a pause of a moment, adverted to their situation.

"The sun begins to make himself felt, and when he has driven away these ragged remnants of the fog, we shall see those places each of us have frequented, in his day."

"Shall we find them as we left them, think you? or will you see the stranger in possession of the haunts of your infancy?"

"Not the stranger, certainly, for we are the subjects of one king; children who own a common parent."

"I will not reply that he has proved himself an unnatural father," said the old man, calmly; "the gentleman who now fills the British throne is less to be censured than his advisers, for the oppression of his reign."

"Sir," interrupted Lionel, "if such allusions are made to the person of my sovereign, we must separate; for it ill becomes a British officer to hear his master mentioned with levity."

"Levity!" repeated the other, slowly. "It is a fault indeed to accompany gray locks and wasted limbs! but your jealous watchfulness betrays you into error. I have breathed in the atmosphere of kings, young man, and know how to separate the individual and his purpose, from the policy of his government. 'Tis the latter that will sever this great empire, and deprive the third George of what has so often and so well been termed 'the brightest jewel in his crown'."

"I must leave you, sir," said Lionel; "the opinions you so freely expressed during our passage, were on principles which I can hardly call opposed to our own constitution, and might be heard, not only without offence, but frequently with admiration; but this language approaches to treason!"

"Go then," returned the unmoved stranger, "descend to you degraded common, and bid your mercenaries seize me 'twill be only the blood of an old man, but 'twill help to fatten the land; or send your merciless grenadiers to torment their victim before the axe shall do its work; a man who has lived so long, can surely spare a little of his time to the tormentors!"

"I could have thought, sir, that you might spare such a reproach to me," said Lionel.

"I do spare it, and I do more; I forget my years, and solicit forgiveness. But had you known slavery, as I have done, in it's worst of forms, you would know how to prize the inestimable blessing of freedom."

"Have you ever known slavery, in your travels, more closely than in what you deem the violations of principle?"

"Have I not!" said the stranger, smiling bitterly; "I have known it as man should never know it; in act and will. I have lived days, months, and even years, to hear others coldly declare my wants; to see others dole out their meager pittances to my necessities, and to hear others assume the right, to express the sufferings, and to control the enjoyments of sensibilities that God had given to me only!"

"To endure such thralldom, you must have fallen into the power of the infidel barbarians!"

"Ay! boy, I thank you for the words; they were indeed most worthy of the epithets! infidels that denied the precepts of our blessed Redeemer; and barbarians that treated one having a soul, and possessing reason like themselves, as a beast of the field."

"Why didn't you come to Boston, Ralph, and tell that to the people in Funnel-Hall?" exclaimed Job; "ther'd ha' been a stir about it!"

"Child, I did come to Boston, again and again, in thought; and the appeals that I made to my townsmen would have moved the very roof of old Fanueil, could they have been uttered within her walls. But 'twas in vain! they had the power, and like demons or rather like miserable men, they abused it."

Lionel, sensibly touched, was about to reply in a suitable manner, when he heard a voice calling his own name aloud, as if the speaker were ascending the opposite acclivity of the hill. The instant the sounds reached his ears, the old man rose from his seat, on the foundation of the beacon, and gliding over the brow of the platform, followed by Job, they descended into a volume of mist that was still clinging to the side of the hill, with amazing swiftness.

"Why, Leo! thou lion in name, and deer in activity!" exclaimed the intruder, as he surmounted the steep ascent, "what can have brought you up into the clouds so early! whew a man needs a New-Market training to scale such a precipice. But, Leo, my dear fellow, I rejoice to see you we knew you were expected in the first ship, and as I was coming from morning parade, I met a couple of grooms in the 'Lincoln green,' you know, leading each a blooded charger faith, one of them would have been quite convenient to climb this accursed hill on whew and whew-w, again well, I knew the liveries at a glance; as to the horses, I hope to be better acquainted with them hereafter. Pray, sir, said I, to one of the liveried scoundrels, whom do you serve?" "Major Lincoln, of Ravenscliffe, sir," said he, with a look as impudent as if he could have said, like you and I, his sacred majesty the king. That's the answer of the servants of your ten-thousand a year men! Now, if my fool had been asked such a question, his answer would have been, eraven dog as he is, captain Polwarth, of the 47th; leaving the inquirer, though it should even be some curious maiden who had taken a fancy to the tout ensemble of my outline, in utter ignorance that there is such a place in the world as Polwarth-Hall!"

During this voluble speech, which was interrupted by sundry efforts to regain the breath lost in the ascent, Lionel shook his friend cordially by the hand, and attempted to express his own pleasure at the meeting. The failure of wind, however, which was a sort of besetting sin with captain Polwarth, had now compelled him to pause, and gave time to Lionel for a reply.

"This hill is the last place where I should have expected to meet you," he said. "I took it for granted you would not be stirring until nine or ten at least, when it was my intention to inquire you out, and to give you a call before I paid my respects to the commander-in-chief."

"Ah! you may thank his excellency, the 'Hon. Thomas Gage, governor and commander-in-chief, in and over the Province of Massachusetts-Bay, and vice-admiral of the same,' as he styles himself in his proclamations, for this especial favour; though, between ourselves, Leo, he is about as much governor *over* the Province, as he is owner of those hunters you have just landed."

"But why am I to thank him for this interview?"

"Why! look about you, and tell me what you behold nothing but fog nay, I see *there* is a steeple, and *yonder* is the smoking sea, and *here* are the chimneys of Hancock's house beneath us, smoking too, as if their rebellious master were at home, and preparing his feed! but every thing in sight is essentially smoky, and there is a natural aversion, in us epicures, to smoke. Nature dictates that a man who has as much to do in a day, in carrying himself about, as your humble servant, should not cut his rest too abruptly in the morning. But the honourable Thomas,

governor, and vice-admiral, &c. has ordered us under arms with the sun; officers, as well as men!"

"Surely that is no great hardship to a soldier," returned Lionel; "and moreover, it seems to agree with you marvellously! Now I look again, Polwarth, I am amazed! Surely you are not in a light-infantry jacket!"

"Certes what is there in that so wonderful," returned the other, with great gravity; "don't I become the dress? or is it the dress which does not adorn me, that you look ready to die with mirth? Laugh it out Leo. I am used to it these three days but what is there, after all, so remarkable in Peter Polwarth's commanding a company of light infantry. Am I not just five feet, six and one eighth of an inch the precise height!"

"You appear to have been so accurate in your longitudinal admeasurement, that you must carry one of Harrison's time-pieces in your pocket; did it ever suggest itself to you to use the quadrant also?"

"For my latitude! I understand you, Leo; because I am shaped a little like mother earth, does it argue that I cannot command a light-infantry company?"

"Ay, even as Joshua commanded the sun. But the stopping of the planet itself, is not a greater miracle in my eyes, than to see you in that attire."

"Well, then, the mystery shall be explained; but first let us be seated on this beacon," said captain Polwarth, establishing himself with great method in the place so lately occupied by the attenuated form of the stranger; "a true soldier husbands his resources for a time of need; that word, husbands, brings me at once to the point I am in love."

"That is surprising!"

"But what is much more so, I would fain be married."

It must be a woman of no mean endowments that could excite such desires in captain Polwarth, of the 47th, and of Polwarth-Hall!"

"She is a woman of great qualifications, major Lincoln," said the lover, with a sudden gravity that indicated his gaiety of manner was not entirely natural. "In figure she may be said to be done to a turn. When she is grave, she walks with the stateliness of a show beef; when she runs, 'tis with the activity of a turkey; and when at rest, I can only compare her to a dish of venison, savory, delicate, and what one can never get enough of."

"You have, to adopt your own metaphors, given such a `rare' sketch of her person, I am, `burning' to hear something of her mental qualifications."

"My metaphors are not poetical, perhaps, but they are the first that offer themselves to my mind, and they are natural. Her accomplishments exceed her native gifts greatly. In the first place she is witty; in the second, she is as impertinent as the devil; and in the third, as inveterate a little traitor to king George as there is in all Boston."

"These are strange recommendations to your favour!"

"The most infallible of all recommendations. They are piquant, like savoury sauces, which excite the appetite, and season the dish. Now her treason (for it amounts to that in fact) is like olives, and gives a gusto to the generous port of my loyalty. Her impertinence is oil to the cold sallad of my modesty, and her acid wit mingles with the sweetness of my temperament, in that sort of pleasant combination with which sweet and sour blend in sherbet."

Lionel Lincoln; or, The Leaguer of Boston, Volume 1

"It would be idle for me to gainsay the charms of such a woman," returned Lionel, a good deal amused with the droll mixture of seriousness and humour in the other's manner; "now for her connexion with the light-infantry she is not of the light corps of her own sex, Polwarth?"

Pardon me, major Lincoln, I cannot joke on this subject. Miss Danforth is of one of the best families in Boston."

"Danforth! not Agnes, surely!"

"The very same!" exclaimed Polwarth, in surprise; "what do you know of her?"

"Only that she is a sort of cousin of my own, and that we are inmates of the same house. We bear equal affinity to Mrs. Lechmere, and the good lady has insisted that I shall make my home in Tremont-street."

"I rejoice to hear it! At all events, our intimacy may now be improved to some better purpose than eating and drinking. But to the point there were certain damnable innuendoes getting into circulation, concerning my proportions, which I considered it prudent to look down at once."

"In order to do which, you had only to look thinner."

"And do I not, in this appropriate dress? To be perfectly serious with you, Leo, for to you I can freely unburthen myself, you know what a set we are in the 47th let them once fasten an opprobrious term, or a nick name on you, and you take it to the grave, be it ever so burthensome."

"There is a way, certainly, to check ungentleman-like liberties," said Lionel, gravely.

"Poh! poh! a man wouldn't wish to fight about a pound more or a pound less of fat! still the name is a great deal, and first impressions are every thing. Now, whoever thinks of Grand Cairo as a village; of the Grand-Turk and Great Mogul, as little boys; or, who would believe, by hearsay, that captain Polwarth, of the light infantry, could weigh one hundred and eighty!"

"Add twenty to it."

"Not a pound more, as I am a sinner. I was weighed in the presence of the whole mess no later than last week, since when I have rather lost than gained an ounce, for this early rising is no friend to a thriving condition. 'Twas in my nightgown, you'll remember, Leo, for we, who tally so often, can't afford to throw in boots, and buckles, and all those sorts of things, like your feather-weights."

"But I marvel how Nesbit was induced to consent to the appointment," said Lionel; "he loves a little display."

"I am your man for that," interrupted the captain; "we are embodied you know, and I make more display, if that be what you require, than any captain in the corps. But I will whisper a secret in your ear. There has been a nasty business here lately, in which the 47th has gained no new laurels a matter of tarring and feathering, about an old rusty musket."

"I have heard something of the affair already," returned Lionel, "and was grieved to find the men justifying some of their own brutal conduct last night, by the example of their commander."

"Mum 'tis a delicate matter well, that tar has brought the Colonel into particularly bad odour in Boston, especially among the women, in whose good graces we are all of us lower than I have ever known scarlet coats to stand before. Why, Leo, the Mohairs are altogether the better men, here! But there is not an officer in the whole army who has made more friends in the place than your humble servant. I have availed myself of my popularity,

which just now is no trifling thing, and partly by promises, and partly by secret interest, I have the company; to which you know my rank in the regiment gives me an undoubted title."

"A perfectly satisfactory explanation; a most commendable ambition on your part, and a certain symptom that the peace is not to be disturbed; for Gage would never permit such an arrangement, had he any active operations in his eye."

"Why, there I think you are more than half right; these yankees have been talking, and resolving, and approbating their resolves, as they call it, these ten years past, and what does it all amount to? To be sure, things grow worse and worse every day but Jonathan is an enigma to me. Now you know when we were in the cavalry together God forgive me the suicide I committed in exchanging into the foot, which I never should have done, could I have found in all England such a thing as an easy goer, or a safe leaper but then, if the commons took offence at a new tax, or a stagnation in business, why they got together in mobs, and burnt a house or two, frightened a magistrate, and perhaps hustled a constable; then in we came at a hand gallop, you know, flourished our swords, and scattered the ragged devils to the four winds; when the courts did the rest, leaving us a cheap victory at the expense of a little wind, which was amply compensated by an increased appetite for dinner. But here it is altogether a different sort of thing."

"And what are the most alarming symptoms, just now, in the colonies?" asked major Lincoln, with a sensible interest in the subject.

"They refuse their natural aliment to uphold what they call their principles; the women abjure tea, and the men abandon their fisheries! There has been hardly such a thing as even a wild-duck brought into the market this spring, in consequence of the Port-Bill, and yet they grow more stubborn every day. If it should come to blows, however, thank God we are strong enough to open a passage for ourselves to any part of the continent where provisions may be plentier; and I hear more troops are already on the way."

"If it should come to blows, which heaven forbid," said major Lincoln, "we shall be besieged where we now are."

"Besieged!" exclaimed Polwarth, in evident alarm; "if I thought there was the least prospect of such a calamity I would sell out to-morrow. It is bad enough now; our mess-table is never decently covered, but if there should come a siege 'twould be absolute starvation. No, no, Leo, their minute men, and their long-tailed rabble, would hardly think of besieging four thousand British soldiers with a fleet to back them. Four thousand! If the regiments I hear named are actually on the way, there will be eight thousand of us as good men as ever wore "

"Light-infantry jackets," interrupted Lionel. "But the regiments are certainly coming; Clinton, Burgoyne, and Howe, had an audience to take leave, on the same day with myself. The service is exceedingly popular with the king, and our reception, of course, was most gracious; though I thought the eye of royalty looked on me as if it remembered one or two of my juvenile votes in the house, on the subject of these unhappy dissensions."

"You voted against the Port-Bill," said Polwarth, "out of regard to me?"

"No, there I joined the ministry. The conduct of the people of Boston had provoked the measure, and there were hardly two minds in parliament on that question."

"Ah! major Lincoln, you are a happy man," said the captain; "a seat in Parliament at five-and-twenty! I must think that I should prefer just such an occupation to all others the very name is taking; a seat! you have two members for your borough: who fills the second now?"

"Say nothing on that subject, I entreat you," whispered Lionel, pressing the arm of the other, as he rose; "'tis not filled by him who should occupy it, as you know shall we descend to the common? there are many friends that I

could wish to see before the bell calls us to church."

"Yes, this is a church-going, or rather meeting-going place; for most of the good people forswear the use of the word church as we abjure the supremacy of the Pope," returned Polwarth, following in his companion's foot-steps; "I never think of attending any of their schism-shops, for I would any day rather stand sentinel over a baggage-wagon, than stand up to hear one of their prayers. I can do very well at the king's chapel, as they call it; for when I am once comfortably fixed on my knees, I make out as well as my lord archbishop of Canterbury; though it has always been matter of surprise to me, how any man can find breath to go through their work of a morning."

They descended the hill, as Lionel replied, and their forms were soon blended with those of twenty others who wore scarlet coats, on the common.

CHAPTER V.

"For us, and for our tragedy,
"Here stooping to your clemency,
"We beg your hearing patiently."

Hamlet.

We must, now, carry the reader back a century, in order to clear our tale of every appearance of ambiguity. Reginald Lincoln was a cadet of an extremely ancient and wealthy family, whose possessions were suffered to continue as appendages to a baronetcy, throughout all the changes which marked the eventful periods of the commonwealth, and the usurpation of Cromwell. He had himself, however, inherited little more than a morbid sensibility, which, even in that age, appeared to be a sort of heir-loom to his family. While still a young man he had married a woman to whom he was much attached, who died in giving birth to her first child. The grief of the husband took a direction towards religion; but unhappily, instead of deriving from his researches that healing consolation, with which our faith abounds, his mind became soured by the prevalent but discordant views of the attributes of the Deity; and the result of his conversion was to leave him an ascetic puritan, and an obstinate predestinarian. That such a man, finding but little to connect him with his native country, should revolt at the impure practices of the Court of Charles, is not surprising; and accordingly, though not at all implicated in the guilt of the regicides, he departed for the religious province of Massachusetts-Bay, in the first years of the reign of that merry prince.

It was not difficult for a man of the rank and reputed sanctity of Reginald Lincoln, to obtain both honourable and lucrative employments in the plantations; and after the first glow of his awakened ardour in behalf of spiritual matters had a little abated, he failed not to improve a due portion of his time by a commendable attention to temporal things. To the day of his death, however, he continued a gloomy, austere, and bigoted religionist, seemingly too regardless of the vanities of this world to permit his pure imagination to mingle with its dross, even while he submitted to discharge its visible duties. Notwithstanding this elevation of mind, his son, at the decease of his father, found himself in the possession of many goodly effects; which were, questionless, the accumulations of a neglected use, during the days of his sublimated progenitor.

Young Lionel so far followed in the steps of his worthy parent, as to continue gathering honours and riches into his lap; though, owing to an early disappointment, and the inheritance of the 'heir-loom' already mentioned, it was late in life before he found a partner to share his happiness. Contrary to all the usual calculations that are made on the choice of a man of self-denial, he was then united to a youthful and gay Episcopalian, who had little, besides her exquisite beauty and good blood, to recommend her. By this lady he had four children, three sons and

a daughter, when he also was laid in the vault, by the side of his deceased parent. The eldest of these sons was yet a boy when he was called to the mother-country, to inherit the estates and honours of his family. The second, named Reginald, who was bred to arms, married, had a son, and lost his life in the wilds where he was required to serve, before he was five-and-twenty. The third was the grandfather of Agnes Danforth; and the daughter was Mrs. Lechmere.

The family of Lincoln, considering the shortness of their marriages, had been extremely prolific, while in the colonies, according to that wise allotment of providence, which ever seems to regulate the functions of our nature by our wants; but the instant it was reconveyed to the populous island of Britain, it entirely lost its reputation for fruitfulness. Sir Lionel lived to a good age, married, but died childless, notwithstanding when his body lay in state, it was under a splendid roof, and in halls so capacious that they would have afforded comfortable shelter to the whole family of Priam.

By this fatality it became necessary to cross the Atlantic once more, to find an heir to the wide domains of Ravenscliffe, and to one of the oldest baronetcies in the kingdom.

We have planted and reared this genealogical tree, to but little purpose, if it be necessary to tell the reader, that the individual who had now become the head of his race, was the orphan son of the deceased officer. He was married, and the father of one blooming boy, when this elevation, which was not unlooked for, occurred. Leaving his wife and child behind him, Sir Lionel immediately proceeded to England, to assert his rights and secure his possessions. As he was the nephew, and acknowledged heir of the late incumbent, he met with no opposition to the more important parts of his claims. Across the character and fortunes of this gentleman, however, a dark cloud had early passed, which prevented the common eye from reading the events of his life, like those of other men, in its open and intelligible movements. After his accession to fortune and rank, but little was known of him, even by his earliest and most intimate associates. It was rumoured, it is true, that he had been detained in England, for two years, by a vexatious contention for a petty appendage to his large estates, a controversy which was, however, known to have been decided in his favour, before he was recalled to Boston by the sudden death of his wife. This calamity befell him during the period when the war of '56 was raging in its greatest violence: a time when the energies of the colonies were directed to the assistance of the mother-country, who, according to the language of the day, was zealously endeavouring to defeat the ambitious views of the French, in this hemisphere; or, what amounted to the same thing in effect, in struggling to advance her own.

It was an interesting period; when the mild and peaceful colonists were seen to shake off their habits of forbearance, and to enter into the strife with an alacrity and spirit that soon emulated the utmost daring of their more practised confederates. To the amazement of all who knew his fortunes, Sir Lionel Lincoln was seen to embark in many of the most desperate adventures that distinguished the war, with a hardihood that rather sought death than courted honour. He had been, like his father, trained to arms, but the regiment in which he held the commission of Lieutenant Colonel, was serving his master in the most eastern of his dominions, while the uneasy soldier was thus rushing from point to point, hazarding his life, and more than once shedding his blood, in the enterprises that signalized the war in his most western.

This dangerous career, however, was at length suddenly and mysteriously checked. By the influence of some powerful agency, that was never explained, the Baronet was induced to take his son, and embark once more for the land of their fathers, from which the former had never been known to return. For many years, all those inquiries which the laudable curiosity of the towns-men and towns-women of Mrs. Lechmere, prompted them to make, concerning the fate of her nephew, (and we leave each of our readers to determine their numbers,) were answered by that lady with the most courteous reserve; and sometimes with such exhibitions of emotion, as we have already attempted to describe in her first interview with his son. But constant dropping will wear away a stone. At first there were rumours that the Baronet had committed treason, and had been compelled to exchange Ravenscliffe for a less comfortable dwelling in the Tower of London. This report was succeeded by that of an unfortunate private marriage with one of the Princesses of the House of Brunswick; but a reference to the

calendars of the day, showed that there was no lady of a suitable age disengaged, and this amour, so creditable to the provinces, was necessarily abandoned. Finally, the assertion was made with much more of the confidence of truth, that the unhappy Sir Lionel was the tenant of a private mad-house.

The instant this rumour was circulated, a film fell from every eye, and none were so blind as not to have seen indications of insanity in the Baronet long before; and not a few were enabled to trace his legitimate right to lunacy through the hereditary bias of his race. To account for its sudden exhibition, was a more difficult task, and exercised the ingenuity of an exceedingly ingenious people, for a long period.

The more sentimental part of the community, such as the maidens and bachelors, and those votaries of Hymen who had twice and thrice proved the solacing power of the god, did not fail to ascribe the misfortune of the Baronet to the unhappy loss of his wife; a lady to whom he was known to be most passionately attached. A few, the relicts of the good old school, under whose intellectual sway the incarnate persons of so many godless dealers in necromancy had been made to expiate for their abominations, pointed to the calamity as a merited punishment on the backslidings of a family that had once known the true faith; while a third, and by no means a small class, composed of those worthies who braved the elements in King-street, in quest of filthy lucre, did not hesitate to say, that the sudden acquisition of vast wealth had driven many a better man mad. But the time was approaching, when the apparently irresistible propensity to speculate on the fortunes of a fellow-creature was made to yield to more important considerations. The hour soon arrived when the merchant forgot his momentary interests to look keenly into the distant effects that were to succeed the movements of the day; which taught the fanatic the wholesome lesson, that providence smiled most beneficently on those who most merited, by their own efforts, its favours; and which even purged the breast of the sentimentalist of its sickly tenant, to be succeeded by the healthy and ennobling passion of love of country.

It was about this period that the contest for principle between the parliament of Great Britain, and the colonies of North America, commenced, that in time led to those important results which have established a new era in political liberty, as well as a mighty empire. A brief glance at the nature of this controversy may assist in rendering many of the allusions in this legend more intelligible to some of its readers.

The increasing wealth of the provinces had attracted the notice of the English ministry so early as the year 1763. In that year the first effort to raise a revenue which was to meet the exigencies of the empire, was attempted by the passage of a law to impose a duty on certain stamped paper, which was made necessary to give validity to contracts. This method of raising a revenue was not new in itself, nor was the imposition heavy in amount. But the Americans, not less sagacious than wary, perceived at a glance the importance of the principles involved in the admission of a right as belonging to any body to lay taxes, in which they were not represented. The question was not without its difficulties, but the direct and plain argument was clearly on the side of the colonists. Aware of the force of their reasons, and perhaps a little conscious of the strength of their numbers, they approached the subject with a spirit which betokened this consciousness, but with a coolness that denoted the firmness of their purpose. After a struggle of nearly two years, during which the law was rendered completely profitless by the unanimity among the people, as well as by a species of good-humoured violence that rendered it exceedingly inconvenient, and perhaps a little dangerous, to the servants of the crown to exercise their obnoxious functions, the ministry abandoned the measure. But, at the same time that the law was repealed, the parliament maintained its right to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever, by recording a resolution to that effect in its journals.

That an empire, whose several parts were separated by oceans, and whose interests were so often conflicting, should become unwieldy, and fall, in time, by its own weight, was an event that all wise men must have expected to arrive. But, that the Americans did not contemplate such a division at that early day, may be fairly inferred, if there were no other testimony in the matter, by the quiet and submission that pervaded the colonies the instant that the repeal of the stamp act was known. Had any desire for premature independence existed, the parliament had unwisely furnished abundant fuel to feed the flame, in the very resolution already mentioned. But, satisfied with the solid advantages they had secured, peaceful in their habits, and loyal in their feelings, the colonists laughed at

the empty dignity of their self-constituted rulers, while they congratulated each other on their own more substantial success. If the besotted servants of the king had learned wisdom by the past, the storm would have blown over, and another age would have witnessed the events which we are about to relate. Things were hardly suffered, however, to return to their old channels again, before the ministry attempted to revive their claims by new impositions. The design to raise a revenue had been defeated in the case of the stamp act, by the refusal of the colonists to use the paper; but in the present instance, expedients were adopted, which, it was thought, would be more effective as in the case of tea, where the duty was paid by the East-India Company in the first instance, and the exaction was to be made on the Americans, through their appetites. These new innovations on their rights, were met by the colonists with the same promptitude, but with much more of seriousness than in the former instances. All the provinces south of the Great Lakes, acted in concert on this occasion; and preparations were made to render not only their remonstrances and petitions more impressive by a unity of action, but their more serious struggles also, should an appeal to force become necessary. The tea was stored or sent back to England, in most cases, though in the town of Boston, a concurrence of circumstances led to the violent measure, on the part of the people, of throwing a large quantity of the offensive article into the sea. To punish this act, which took place in the early part of 1774, the port of Boston was closed, and different laws were enacted in parliament, which were intended to bring the people back to a sense of their dependence on the British power.

Although the complaints of the colonists were hushed during the short interval that had succeeded the suspension of the efforts of the ministry to tax them, the feelings of alienation which were engendered by the attempt, had not time to be lost before the obnoxious subject was revived in its new shape. From 1763, to the period of our tale, all the younger part of the population of the provinces had grown into manhood, but they were no longer imbued with that profound respect for the mother country which had been transmitted from their ancestors, or with that deep loyalty to the crown that usually characterizes a people who view the pageant of royalty through the medium of distance. Still, those who guided the feelings, and controlled the judgments of the Americans, were averse to a dismemberment of the empire, a measure which they continued to believe both impolitic and unnatural.

In the mean time, though equally reluctant to shed blood, the adverse parties prepared for that final struggle which seemed to be unavoidably approaching. The situation of the colonies was now so peculiar, that it may be doubted whether history furnishes a precise parallel. Their fealty to the prince was everywhere acknowledged, while the laws which emanated from his counsellors were sullenly disregarded and set at naught. Each province possessed its distinct government, and in most of them the political influence of the crown was direct and great; but the time had arrived when it was superseded by a moral feeling that defied the machinations and intrigues of the ministry. Such of the provincial legislatures as possessed a majority of the "Sons of Liberty," as they who resisted the unconstitutional attempts of the ministry were termed, elected delegates to meet in a general congress to consult on the ways and means of effecting the common objects. In one or two provinces where the inequality of representation afforded a different result, the people supplied the deficiencies by acting in their original capacity. This body, meeting, unlike conspirators, with the fearless confidence of integrity, and acting under the excitement of a revolution in sentiment, possessed an influence, which, at a later day, has been denied to their more legally constituted successors. Their recommendations possessed all the validity of laws, without incurring their odium. While, as the organ of their fellow-subjects, they still continued to petition and remonstrate, they did not forget to oppose, by such means as were then thought expedient, the oppressive measures of the ministry.

An association was recommended to the people, for those purposes that are amply expressed in the three divisions which were significantly given to the subjects, in calling them by the several names of 'non-importation,' 'non-exportation,' and 'non-consumption resolutions.' These negative expedients were all that was constitutionally in their power, and throughout the whole controversy, there had been a guarded care not to exceed the limits which the laws had affixed to the rights of the subject. Though no overt act of resistance was committed, they did not, however, neglect such means as were attainable, to be prepared for the last evil, whenever it should arrive. In this manner a feeling of resentment and disaffection was daily increasing throughout the provinces, while in Massachusetts Bay, the more immediate scene of our story, the disorder in the body politic seemed to be inevitably gathering to its head.

The great principles of the controversy had been blended, in different places, with various causes of local complaint, and in none more than in the town of Boston. The inhabitants of this place had been distinguished for an early, open, and fearless resistance to the ministry. An armed force had long been thought necessary to intimidate this spirit, to effect which the troops were drawn from different parts of the provinces, and concentrated in this devoted town. Early in 1774, a military man was placed in the executive chair of the province, and an attitude of more determination was assumed by the government. One of the first acts of this gentleman, who held the high station of Lieutenant-General, and who commanded all the forces of the king in America, was to dissolve the colonial assembly. About the same time a new charter was sent from England, and a material change was contemplated in the polity of the colonial government. From this moment the power of the king, though it was not denied, became suspended in the province. A provincial congress was elected, and assembled within seven leagues of the capital, where they continued, from time to time, to adopt such measures as the exigencies of the times were thought to render necessary. Men were enrolled, disciplined, and armed, as well as the imperfect means of the colony would allow. These troops, who were no more than the élite of the inhabitants, had little else to recommend them besides their spirit, and their manual dexterity with fire-arms. From the expected nature of their service, they were not unaptly termed "minute-men." The munitions of war were seized, and hoarded with a care and diligence that showed the character of the impending conflict.

On the other hand, General Gage adopted a similar course of preparation and prevention, by fortifying himself in the strong hold which he possessed, and by anticipating the intentions of the colonists, in their attempts to form magazines, whenever it was in his power. He had an easy task in the former, both from the natural situation of the place he occupied, and the species of force he commanded.

Surrounded by broad and chiefly by deep waters, except at one extremely narrow point, and possessing its triple hills, which are not commanded by any adjacent eminences, the peninsula of Boston could, with a competent garrison, easily be made impregnable, especially when aided by a superior fleet. The works erected by the English General were, however, by no means of magnitude, for it was well known that the whole park of the colonists could not exceed some half dozen pieces of field artillery, with a small battering train that must be entirely composed of old and cumbrous ship guns. Consequently, when Lionel arrived in Boston, he found a few batteries thrown up on the eminences, some of which were intended as much to control the town, as to repel an enemy from without, while lines were drawn across the neck which communicated with the main. The garrison consisted of something less than five thousand men, besides which, there was a fluctuating force of seamen and marines, as the vessels of war arrived and departed.

All this time, there was no other interruption to the intercourse between the town and the country, than such as unavoidably succeeded the stagnation of trade, and the distrust engendered by the aspect of affairs. Though numberless families had deserted their homes, many known whigs continued to dwell in their habitations, where their ears were deafened by the sounds of the British drums, and where their spirits were but too often galled by the sneers of the officers, on the uncouth military preparations of their countrymen. Indeed an impression had spread further than among the idle and thoughtless youths of the army, that the colonists were but little gifted with martial qualities; and many of their best friends in Europe were in dread lest an appeal to force should put the contested points forever at rest, by proving the incompetency of the Americans to maintain them to the last extremity.

In this manner both parties stood at bay; the people living in perfect order and quiet, without the administration of law, sullen, vigilant, and, through their leaders, secretly alert; and the army, gay, haughty, and careless of the consequences, though far from being oppressive or insolent, until after the defeat of one or two abortive excursions into the country in quest of arms. Each hour, however, was rapidly adding to the disaffection on one side, and to the contempt and resentment on the other, through numberless public and private causes, that belong rather to history than to a legend like this. All extraordinary occupations were suspended, and men awaited the course of things in anxious expectation. It was known that the parliament, instead of retracing their political errors, had imposed new restraints, and, as has been mentioned, it was also rumoured that regiments and fleets

were on their way to enforce them.

How long a country could exist in such a primeval condition, remained to be seen, though it was difficult to say when or how it was to terminate. The people of the land appeared to slumber, but, like vigilant and wary soldiers, they might be said to sleep on their arms; while the troops assumed each day, more of that fearful preparation, which gives, even to the trained warrior, a more martial aspect though both parties still continued to manifest a becoming reluctance to shed blood.

CHAPTER VI.

"Would he were fatter: but I fear him not:
"Seldom he smiles; and smiles in such a sort,
"As if he mocked himself, and scorned his spirit
"That could be moved to smile at any thing."

Julius Caesar.

In the course of the succeeding week Lionel acquired a knowledge of many minor circumstances relating to the condition of the colonies, which may be easily imagined as incidental to the times, but which would greatly exceed our limits to relate. He was received by his brethren in arms with that sort of cordiality that a rich, high-spirited, and free, if not a jovial comrade, was certain of meeting among men who lived chiefly for pleasure and appearance. Certain indications of more than usually important movements were discovered among the troops, the first day of the week, and his own condition in the army was in some measure affected by the changes. Instead of joining his particular regiment, he was ordered to hold himself in readiness to take a command in the light corps which had begun its drill for the service that was peculiar to such troops. As it was well known that Boston was Major Lincoln's place of nativity, the commander-in-chief, with the indulgence and kindness of his character, granted to him, however, a short respite from duty, in order that he might indulge in the feelings natural to his situation. It was soon generally understood, that major Lincoln, though intending to serve with the army in America, should the sad alternative of an appeal to arms become necessary, had permission to amuse himself in such a manner as he saw fit, for two months from the date of his arrival. Those who affected to be more wise than common, saw, or thought they saw, in this arrangement, a deep laid plan on the part of Gage, to use the influence and address of the young provincial among his connexions and natural friends, to draw them back to those sentiments of loyalty which it was feared so many among them had forgotten to entertain. But it was the characteristic of the times to attach importance to trifling incidents, and to suspect a concealed policy in movements which emanated only in inclination.

There was nothing, however, in the deportment, or manner of life adopted by Lionel, to justify any of these conjectures. He continued to dwell in the house of Mrs. Lechmere, in person, though, unwilling to burthen the hospitality of his aunt too heavily, he had taken lodgings in a dwelling at no great distance, where his servants resided, and where, it was generally understood, that his visits of ceremony and friendship were to be received. Captain Polwarth did not fail to complain loudly of this arrangement, as paralyzing at once all the advantages he had anticipated from enjoying the entré to the dwelling of his mistress, in the right of his friend. But as the establishment of Lionel was supported with much of that liberality which was becoming in a youth of his large fortune, the exuberant light-infantry officer found many sources of consolation in the change, which could not have existed, had the staid Mrs. Lechmere presided over the domestic department. Lionel and Polwarth had been boys together at the same school, members of the same college at Oxford, and subsequently for many years, comrades in the same corps. Though, perhaps, no two men in their regiment were more essentially different, in mental as well as physical constitution, yet, by that unaccountable caprice which causes us to like our opposites, it is certain that no two gentlemen in the service were known to be on better terms, or to maintain a more close and

unreserved intimacy. It is unnecessary to dilate here on this singular friendship; it occurs every day, between men still more discordant, the result of accident and habit, and is often, as in the present instance, cemented by unconquerable good nature in one of the parties. For this latter qualification, captain Polwarth was eminent, if for no other. It contributed quite as much as his science in the art of living, to the thriving condition of the corporeal moiety of the man, and it rendered a communion with the less material part at all times inoffensive, if not agreeable.

On the present occasion, the captain took charge of the internal economy of Lionel's lodgings, with a zeal which he did not even pretend was disinterested. By the rules of the regiment he was compelled to live nominally with the mess, where he found his talents and his wishes fettered by divers indispensable regulations, and economical practices, that could not be easily over-leaped; but with Lionel, just such an opportunity offered for establishing rules of his own, and disregarding expenditure, as he had been long pining for in secret. Though the poor of the town were, in the absence of employment, necessarily supported by large contributions of money, clothing, and food, which were transmitted to their aid from the furthest parts of the colonies, the markets were not yet wanting in all the necessaries of life, to those who enjoyed the means of purchasing. With this disposition of things, therefore, he became well content, and within the first fortnight after the arrival of Lionel, it became known to the mess, that captain Polwarth took his dinners regularly with his old friend, major Lincoln; though in truth the latter was enjoying, more than half the time, the hospitality of the respective tables of the officers of the staff.

In the mean time Lionel cultivated his acquaintance in Tremont-street, where he still slept, with an interest and assiduity that the awkwardness of his first interview would not have taught us to expect. With Mrs. Lechmere, it is true, he made but little progress in intimacy; for, equally formal, though polite, she was at all times enshrouded in a cloud of artificial, but cold management, that gave him little opportunity, had he possessed the desire, to break through the reserve of her calculating temperament. With his more youthful kinswomen, the case was, however, in a very few days, entirely reversed. Agnes Danforth, who had nothing to conceal, began insensibly to yield to the manliness and grace of his manner, and before the end of the first week, she maintained the rights of the colonists, laughed at the follies of the officers, and then acknowledged her own prejudices, with a familiarity and good-humour that soon made her, in her turn, a favourite with her English cousin, as she termed Lionel. But he found the demeanor of Cecil Dynevor much more embarrassing, if not inexplicable. For days she would be distant, silent, and haughty, and then again, as it were by sudden impulses, she became easy and natural; her whole soul beaming in her speaking eyes, or her innocent and merry humour breaking through the bounds of her restraint, and rendering not only herself, but all around her, happy and delighted. Full many an hour did Lionel ponder on this unaccountable difference in the manner of this young lady, at different moments. There was a secret excitement in the very caprices of her humours, that had a piquant interest in his eyes, and which, aided by her exquisite form and intelligent face, gradually induced him to become a more close observer of their waywardness, and consequently a more assiduous attendant on her movements. In consequence of this assiduity, the manner of Cecil grew, almost imperceptibly, less variable, and more uniformly fascinating, while Lionel, by some unaccountable oversight, soon forgot to note its changes, or even to miss the excitement.

In a mixed society, where pleasure, company, and a multitude of objects conspired to distract the attention, such alterations would be the result of an intercourse for months, if they ever occurred; but in a town like Boston, from which most of those with whom Cecil had once mingled were already fled, and where, consequently, those who remained behind, lived chiefly for themselves and by themselves, it was no more than the obvious effect of very apparent causes. In this manner something like good-will, if not a deeper interest in each other, was happily effected within that memorable fortnight, which was teeming with events vastly more important in their results than any that can appertain to the fortunes of a single family.

The winter of 1774–5 had been as remarkable for its mildness, as the spring was cold and lingering. Like every season in our changeable climate, however, the chilling days of March and April were intermingled with some, when a genial sun recalled the ideas of summer, which, in their turn, were succeeded by others, when the torrents

of cold rain that drove before the easterly gales, would seem to repel every advance toward a milder temperature. Many of those stormy days occurred in the middle of April, and during their continuance Lionel was necessarily compelled to keep himself housed.

He had retired from the parlour of Mrs. Lechmere, one evening, when the rain was beating against the windows of the house, in nearly horizontal lines, to complete some letters which, before dining, he had commenced to the agent of his family, in England. On entering his own apartment, he was startled to find the room which he had left vacant, and which he expected to find in the same state, occupied in a manner that he could not anticipate. The light of a strong wood fire was blazing on the hearth, and throwing about, in playful changes, the flickering shadows of the furniture, and magnifying each object into some strange and fantastical figure. As he stepped within the door his eye fell upon one of these shadows, which extended along the wall, and bending against the ceiling, exhibited the gigantic but certain outlines of the human form. Recollecting that he had left his letters open, and a little distrusting the discretion of Meriton, Lionel advanced lightly, for a few feet, so far as to be able to look round the drapery of his bed, and to his amazement, perceived that the intruder was not his valet, but the aged stranger. The old man sat holding in his hand the open letter which Lionel had been writing, and continued so deeply absorbed in its contents, that the footsteps of the other were still disregarded. A large, coarse over-coat, dripping with water, concealed most of his person, though the white hairs that strayed about his face, and the deep lines of his remarkable countenance could not be mistaken.

"I was ignorant of this unexpected visit," said Lionel, advancing quickly into the centre of the room, "or I should not have been so tardy in returning to my apartment, where, sir, I fear you must have found your time irksome, with nothing but that scrawl to amuse you."

The old man dropped the paper from before his features, and betrayed, by the action, the large drops that followed each other down his hollow cheeks, until they fell even to the floor. The haughty and displeased look disappeared from the countenance of Lionel at this sight, and he was on the point of speaking in a more conciliating manner, when the stranger, whose eye had not quailed before the angry frown it encountered, anticipated his intention.

"I comprehend you, major Lincoln," he said, calmly; "but there can exist justifiable reasons for a greater breach of faith than this, of which you accuse me. Accident, and not intention, has put me in possession, here, of your most secret thoughts on a subject that has deep interest for me. You have urged me often, during our voyage, to make you acquainted with all that you most desire to know, to which request, as you may remember I have ever been silent."

"You have said, sir, that you were master of a secret in which my feelings, I will acknowledge, are deeply interested, and I have urged you to remove my doubts by declaring the truth; but I do not perceive"

"How a desire to possess my secret, gives me a claim to inquire into yours, you would say," interrupted the stranger; "nor does it. But an interest in your affairs, that you cannot yet understand, and which is vouched for by these scalding tears, the first that have fallen in years from a fountain that I had thought dried, should, and must satisfy you."

"It does," said Lionel, deeply affected by the melancholy tones of his voice, "it does, it does, and I will listen to no further explanation on the unpleasant subject. You see nothing there, I am sure, of which a son can have reason to be ashamed."

"I see much here, Lionel Lincoln, of which a father would have reason to be proud," returned the old man. "It was the filial love which you have displayed in this paper which has drawn these drops from my eyes; for he who has lived as I have done, beyond the age of man, without knowing the love that the parent feels for its offspring, or which the child bears to the author of its being, must have outlived his natural sympathies, not to be conscious of his misfortune, when chance makes him sensible of affections like these."

"You have never been a father, then?" said Lionel, drawing a chair nigh to his aged companion, and seating himself with an air of powerful interest that he could not control.

"Have I not told you that I am alone?" returned the old man, with a solemn manner. After an impressive pause, he continued, though his tones were husky and low "I have been both husband and parent, in my day, but 'tis so long since, that no selfish tie remains to bind me to earth. Old age is the neighbour of death, and the chill of the grave is to be found in its warmest breathings."

"Say not so," interrupted Lionel, "for you do injustice to your own warm nature you forget your zeal in behalf of what you deem these oppressed colonies."

"'Tis no more than the flickering of the dying lamp, which flares and dazzles most, when its source of heat is nighest to extinction. But though I may not infuse into your bosom a warmth that I do not possess myself, I can point out the dangers with which life abounds, and serve as a beacon, when no longer useful as a pilot. It is for such a purpose, Major Lincoln, that I have braved the tempest of to-night."

"Has any thing occurred, which, by rendering danger pressing, can make such an exposure necessary?"

"Look at me," said the old man earnestly "I have seen most of this flourishing country a wilderness; my recollection goes back into those periods when the savage, and the beast of the forèst, contended with our fathers for much of that soil which now supports its hundreds of thousands in plenty; and my time is to be numbered, not by years, but by ages. For such a being, think you there can yet be many months, or weeks, or even days in store?"

Lionel dropped his eyes, in embarrassment, to the floor, as he answered

"You cannot have very many years, surely, to hope for; but with the activity and temperance you possess, days and months confine you, I trust, in limits much too small."

"What!" exclaimed the other, stretching forth a colourless hand, in which even the prominent veins partook in the appearance of a general decay of nature; "with these wasted limbs, these gray hairs, and this sunken and sepulchral cheek, would you talk to me of years! to me, who have not the effrontery to petition for even minutes, were they worth the prayer so long already has been my probation!"

"It is certainly time to think of the change, when it approaches so very near."

"Well, then, Lionel Lincoln, old, feeble, and on the threshold of eternity as I stand, yet am I not nearer to my grave than that country to which you have pledged your blood is to a mighty convulsion, which will shake her institutions to their foundations."

"I cannot admit the signs of the times to be quite so portentous as your fears would make them," said Lionel, smiling a little proudly. "Though the worst that is apprehended should arrive, England will feel the shock but as the earth bears an eruption of one of its volcanoes! But we talk in idle figures, Sir; know you any thing to justify the apprehension of immediate danger?"

The face of the stranger lighted with a sudden and startling gleam of intelligence, and a sarcastic smile passed across his wan features, as he answered slowly

"They only have cause to fear who will be the losers by the change! A youth who casts off the trammels of his guardians is not apt to doubt his ability to govern himself. England has held these colonies so long in leading-strings, that she forgets her offspring is able to go alone."

"Now, Sir, you exceed even the wild projects of the most daring among those who call themselves the 'Sons of Liberty' as if liberty existed in any place more favoured or more nurtured than under the blessed constitution of England! The utmost required is what they term a redress of grievances, many of which, I must think, exist only in imagination."

"Was a stone ever known to roll upward! Let there be but one drop of American blood spilt in anger, and its stain will become indelible."

"Unhappily, the experiment has been already tried; and yet years have rolled by, while England keeps her footing and authority good."

"Her authority!" repeated the old man; "see you not, Major Lincoln, in the forbearance of this people, when they felt themselves in the wrong, the existence of the very principles that will render them invincible and unyielding when right? But we waste our time I came to conduct you to a place where, with your own ears, and with your own eyes, you may hear and see a little of that spirit which pervades the land You will follow?"

"Not surely in such a tempest!"

"This tempest is but a trifle to that which is about to break upon you, unless you retrace your steps; but follow, I repeat; if a man of my years disregards the night, ought an English soldier to hesitate!"

The pride of Lionel was touched; and remembering an engagement he had previously made with his aged friend to accompany him to a scene like this, he made such changes in his dress as would serve to conceal his profession, threw on a large cloak to protect his person, and was about to lead the way himself, when he was aroused by the voice of the other.

"You mistake the route," he said; "this is to be a secret, and I hope a profitable visit none must know of your presence; and if you are a worthy son of your honourable father, I need hardly add that my faith is pledged for your discretion."

"The pledge will be respected, Sir," said Lionel, haughtily; "but in order to see what you wish, we are not to remain here?"

"Follow, then, and be silent," said the old man, turning and opening the doors which led into a little apartment lighted by one of those smaller windows, already mentioned in describing the exterior of the building. The passage was dark and narrow, but, observing the warnings of his companion, Lionel succeeded in descending, in safety, a flight of steps which formed a private communication between the offices of the dwelling and its upper apartments. They paused an instant at the bottom of the stairs, where the youth expressed his amazement that a stranger should be so much more familiar with the building than he who had for so many days made it his home.

"Have I not often told you," returned the old man, with a severity in his voice which was even apparent in its suppressed tones, "that I have known Boston for near an hundred years! how many edifices like this does it contain, that I should not have noted its erection! But follow in silence, and be prudent."

He now opened a door which conducted them through one end of the building, into the courtyard in which it was situated. As they emerged into the open air, Lionel perceived the figure of a man, crouching under the walls, as if seeking a shelter from the driving rain. The moment they appeared, this person arose, and followed as they moved towards the street.

"Are we not watched?" said Lionel, stopping to face the unknown; "whom have we skulking in our footsteps?"

"'Tis the boy," said the old man, for whom we must adopt the name of Ralph, which it would appear was the usual term used by Job when addressing his mother's guest "'tis the boy, and he can do us no harm. God has granted to him a knowledge between much of what is good and that which is evil, though the mind of the child is, at times, sadly weakened by his bodily ailings. His heart, however, is with his country, at a moment when she needs all hearts to maintain her rights."

The young British officer bowed his head to meet the tempest, and smiled scornfully within the folds of his cloak, which he drew more closely around his form, as they met the gale in the open streets of the town. They had passed swiftly through many narrow and crooked ways, before another word was uttered between the adventurers. Lionel mused on the singular and indefinable interest that he took in the movements of his companion, which could draw him at a time like this from the shelter of Mrs. Lechmere's roof, to wander he knew not whither, and on an errand which might even be dangerous to his person. Still he followed, unhesitatingly, for with these passing thoughts were blended the recollection of the many recent and interesting communications he had held with the old man during their long and close association in the ship; nor was he wanting in a natural interest for all that involved the safety and happiness of the place of his birth. He kept the form of his aged guide in his eye, as the other moved before him, careless of the tempest which beat on his withered frame, and he heard the heavy footsteps of Job in his rear who had closed so near his own person as to share, in some measure, in the shelter of his ample cloak. But no other living being seemed to have ventured abroad; and even the few sentinels they passed, instead of pacing in front of those doors which it was their duty to guard, were concealed behind the angles of walls, or sought shelter under the projections of some favouring roof. At moments the wind rushed into the narrow avenues of the streets, along which it swept, with a noise not unlike the hollow roaring of the sea, and with a violence which was nearly irresistible. At such times Lionel was compelled to pause, and even frequently to recede a little from his path, while his guide, supported by his high purpose, and but little obstructed by his garments, seemed, to the bewildered imagination of his follower, to glide through the night with a facility that was supernatural. At length the old man, who had got some distance ahead of his followers, suddenly paused, and allowed Lionel to approach to his side. The latter observed with surprise, that he had stopped before the root and stump of a tree which had once grown on the borders of the street, and which appeared to have been recently felled.

"Do you see this remnant of the Elm?" said Ralph, when the others had stopped also; "their axes have succeeded in destroying the mother-plant, but her scions are flourishing throughout a continent!"

"I do not comprehend you!" returned Lionel; "I see here nothing but the stump of some tree; surely the ministers of the king are not answerable that it stands no longer?"

"The ministers of the king are answerable to their master that it has ever become what it is but speak to the boy at your side, he will tell you of its virtues."

Lionel turned to wards Job, and perceived, by the obscure light of the moon, to his surprise, that the changeling stood with his head bared to the storm, regarding the root with an extraordinary degree of reverence.

"This is all a mystery to me!" he said; "what do you know about this stump to stand in awe of, boy?"

"'Tis the root of `Liberty-tree,'" said Job, "and 'tis wicked to pass it without making your manners!"

"And what has this tree done for liberty, that it has merited so much respect?"

"What! why did you ever see a tree afore this that could write and give notices of town meetinda's, or that could tell the people what the king meant to do with the tea and his stamps!"

"And could this marvellous tree work such miracles?"

"To be sure it could, and it did too you let stingy Tommy think to get above the people with any of his cunning over night, and you might come here next morning and read a warning on the bark of this tree, that would tell all about it, and how to put down his deviltries, written out fair, in a hand as good as master Lowell himself could put on paper, the best day of his grand scholarship."

"And who put the paper there?"

"Who!" exclaimed Job, a little positively; "why Liberty came in the night, and pasted it up herself. When Nab couldn't get a house to live in, Job used to sleep under the tree, sometimes, and many a night has he seen Liberty with his own eyes come and put up the paper."

"And was it a woman?"

"Do you think Liberty was such a fool as to come every time in woman's clothes, to be followed by the rake-helly soldiers about the streets!" said Job, with great contempt in his manner. "Sometimes she did, though, and sometimes she didn't; just as it happened. And Job was in the tree when old Noll had to give up his ungodly stamps; though he didn't do it till the `Sons of Liberty' had chucked his stamp-shop in the dock, and hung him and Lord Boot together, on the branches of the old Elm!"

"Hung!" said Lionel, unconsciously drawing back from the spot; "was it ever a gallows!"

"Yes, for iffigies," said Job, laughing; "I wish you could have been here to see how the old boot, with Satan sticking out on't, whirled about when they swung it off! they give the old boy a big shoe to put his cloven huff in!"

"Lionel, who was familiar with the peculiar sound that his townsmen gave to the letter *u*, now comprehended the allusion to the Earl of Bute, and beginning to understand more clearly the nature of the transactions, and the uses to which that memorable tree had been applied, he expressed his desire to proceed.

The old man had suffered Job to make his own explanations, though not without a curious interest in the effect they would produce on Lionel; but the instant the request was made to advance, he turned, and once more led the way. Their course was now directed more towards the wharves; nor was it long before their conductor turned into a narrow court, and entered a house of rather mean appearance, without even observing the formality of announcing his visit by the ordinary summons of rapping at its door. A long, narrow, and dimly-lighted passage, conducted them to a spacious apartment far in the court, which appeared to have been fitted as a place for the reception of large assemblages of people. In this room were collected at least a hundred men, seemingly intent on some object of more than usual interest, by the gravity and seriousness of demeanor apparent in every countenance.

As it was Sunday, the first impression of Lionel, on entering the room, was that his old friend, who often betrayed a keen sensibility on subjects of religion, had brought him there with a design to listen to some favourite exhorter of his own peculiar tenets, and as a tacit reproach for a neglect of the usual ordinances of that holy day, of which the conscience of the young man suddenly accused him, on finding himself unexpectedly mingled in such a throng. But after he had forced his person among a dense body of men, who stood at the lower end of the apartment, and became a silent observer of the scene, he was soon made to perceive his error. The weather had induced all present to appear in such garments as were best adapted to protect them from its fury; and their exteriors were rough, and perhaps a little forbidding; but there was a composure and decency in the air common to the whole assembly, which denoted that they were men who possessed in a high degree the commanding quality of self-respect. A very few minutes sufficed to teach Lionel that he was in the midst of a meeting collected to discuss questions connected with the political movements of the times, though he felt himself a little at a loss to discover the precise results it was intended to produce. To every question, there were one or two speakers, men who expressed their ideas in a familiar manner, and with the peculiar tones and pronunciation of

the province, that left no room to believe them to be orators of a higher character than the mechanics and tradesmen of the town. Most, if not all of them, wore an air of deliberation and coldness that would have rendered their sincerity in the cause they had apparently espoused, a little equivocal, but for occasional expressions of coarse, and sometimes biting invective that they expended on the ministers of the crown, and for the perfect and firm unanimity that was manifested, as each expression of the common feeling was taken after the manner of deliberative bodies. Certain resolutions, in which the most respectful remonstrances were singularly blended with the boldest assertions of constitutional principles, were read, and passed without a dissenting voice, though with a calmness that indicated no very strong excitement. Lionel was peculiarly struck with the language of these written opinions, which were expressed with a purity, and sometimes with an elegance of style, which plainly showed that the acquaintance of the sober artisan with the instrument through whose periods he was blundering, was quite recent, and far from being very intimate. The eyes of the young soldier wandered from face to face, with a strong desire to detect the secret movers of the scene he was witnessing; nor was he long without selecting one individual as an object peculiarly deserving of his suspicions. It was a man apparently but just entering into middle age, of an appearance, both in person, and in such parts of his dress as escaped from beneath his over-coat, that denoted him to be of a class altogether superior to the mass of the assembly. A deep but manly respect was evidently paid to this gentleman, by those who stood nearest to his person; and once or twice there were close and earnest communications passing between him and the more ostensible leaders of the meeting, which roused the suspicions of Lionel in the manner related. Notwithstanding the secret dislike that the English officer suddenly conceived against a man that he fancied was thus abusing his powers, by urging others to acts of insubordination, he could not conceal from himself the favourable impression made by the open, fearless, and engaging countenance of the stranger. Lionel was so situated as to be able to keep his person, which was partly concealed by the taller forms that surrounded him, in constant view; nor was it long before his earnest and curious gaze caught the attention of the other. Glances of marked meaning were exchanged between them during the remainder of the evening, until the chairman announced that the objects of the convocation were accomplished, and dissolved the meeting.

Lionel raised himself from his reclining attitude against the wall, and submitted to be carried by the current of human bodies into the dark passage through which he had entered the room. Here he lingered a moment, with a view to recover his lost companion, and with a secret wish to scan more narrowly the proceedings of the man whose air and manner had so long chained his attention. The crowd had sensibly diminished before he was aware that few remained beside himself, nor would he then have discovered that he was likely to become an object of suspicion to those few, had not a voice at his elbow recalled his recollection.

"Does Major Lincoln meet his countrymen tonight as one who sympathizes in their wrongs, or as the favoured and prosperous officer of the crown?" asked the very man for whose person he had so long been looking in vain.

"Is sympathy with the oppressed incompatible with loyalty to my Prince?" demanded Lionel.

"That it *is* not," said the stranger, in a friendly accent, "is apparent from the conduct of many gallant Englishmen among us, who espouse our cause but we claim Major Lincoln as a countryman."

"Perhaps, sir, it would be indiscreet just now to disavow that title, let my dispositions be as they may," returned Lionel, smiling a little haughtily; "this may not be as secure a spot in which to avow one's sentiments, as the town-common, or the palace of St. James."

"Had the king been present to-night, Major Lincoln, would he have heard a single sentence opposed to that constitution which has declared him a member too sacred to be offended?"

"Whatever may have been the legality of your sentiments, sir, they surely have not been expressed in language altogether fit for a royal ear."

"It may not have been adulation, or even flattery, but it is truth a quality no less sacred than the rights of kings."

"This is neither a place nor an occasion, sir," said the young soldier, quickly, "to discuss the rights of our common master; but if, as from your manner and your language, I think not improbable, we should meet hereafter in a higher sphere, you will not find me at a loss to vindicate his claims."

The stranger smiled with meaning, and as he bowed before he fell back and was lost in the darkness of the passage, he replied

"Our fathers have often met in such society, I believe; God forbid that their sons should ever encounter in a less friendly manner."

Lionel now finding himself alone, groped his way into the street, where he perceived Ralph and the changeling in waiting for his appearance. Without demanding the cause of the other's delay, the old man proceeded by the side of his companions, with the same indifference to the tempest as before, towards the residence of Mrs. Lechmere.

"You have now had some evidence of the spirit that pervades this people," said Ralph, after a few moments of silence; "think you still there is no danger that the volcano will explode?"

"Surely every thing I have heard and seen tonight, confirms such an opinion," returned Lionel. "Men on the threshold of rebellion seldom reason so closely, and with such moderation. Why, the very fuel for the combustion, the rabble themselves, discuss their constitutional principles, and keep under the mantle of law, as though they were a club of learned Templars."

"Think you that the fire will burn less steadily, because what you call the fuel has been prepared by the seasoning of time," returned Ralph. "But this comes from sending a youth into a foreign land for his education! The boy rates his sober and earnest countrymen on a level with the peasants of Europe."

So much Lionel was able to comprehend, but notwithstanding the old man muttered vehemently to himself for some time longer, it was in a tone too indistinct for his ear to understand his meaning. When they arrived in a part of the town with which Lionel was familiar, his aged guide pointed out his way, and took his leave, saying

"I see that nothing but the last, and dreadful argument of force, will convince you of the purpose of the Americans to resist their oppressors. God avert the evil hour! but when it shall come, as come it must, you will learn your error, young man, and, I trust, will not disregard the natural ties of country and kindred."

Lionel would have spoken in reply, but the rapid steps of Ralph rendered his wishes vain, for before he had time to utter, his emaciated form was seen gliding, like an immaterial being, through the sheets of driving rain, and was soon lost to the eye, as it vanished in the dim shades of night, followed by the more substantial frame of the idiot.

CHAPTER VII.

"Sergeant, you shall. Thus are poor servitors,
"When others sleep upon their quiet beds,
"Constrained to watch in darkness, rain, and cold."

King Henry VI

Two or three days of fine, balmy, spring weather succeeded to the storm, during which Lionel saw no more of his

aged fellow-voyager. Job, however, attached himself to the British soldier with a confiding helplessness that touched the heart of his young protector, who gathered from the circumstance a just opinion of the nature of the abuses that the unfortunate changeling was frequently compelled to endure from the brutal soldiery. Meriton performed the functions of master of the wardrobe to the lad, by Lionel's express commands, with evident disgust, but with manifest advantage to the external appearance, if with no very sensible evidence of additional comfort to his charge. During this short period, the slight impression made on Lionel by the scene related in the preceding chapter, faded before the cheerful changes of the season, and the increasing interest which he felt in the society of his youthful kinswomen. Polwarth relieved him from all cares of a domestic nature, and the peculiar shade of sadness, which at times had been so very perceptible in his countenance, was changed to a look of a more brightening and cheerful character. Polwarth and Lionel had found an officer, who had formerly served in the same regiment with them in the British Islands, in command of a company of grenadiers, which formed part of the garrison of Boston. This gentleman, an Irishman of the name of M'Fuse, was qualified to do great honour to the culinary skill of the officer of light-infantry, by virtue of a keen natural gusto for whatever possessed the inherent properties of a savoury taste, though utterly destitute of any of that remarkable scientific knowledge which might be said to distinguish the other in the art. He was, in consequence of this double claim on the notice of Lionel, a frequent guest at the nightly banquets prepared by Polwarth. Accordingly we find him, on the evening of the third day in the week, seated with his two friends, around a board plentifully garnished by the care of that gentleman, on the preparations for which, more than usual skill had been exerted, if the repeated declarations of the disciple of Heliogabalus, to that effect, were entitled to any ordinary credit.

"In short, Major Lincoln," said Polwarth, in continuance of his favourite theme, while seated before the table, "a man may live any where, provided he possesses food in England, or out of England, it matters not. Raiment may be necessary to appearance, but food is the only indispensable that nature has imposed on the animal world; and in my opinion there is a sort of obligation on every man to be satisfied, who has wherewithal to appease the cravings of his appetite. Captain M'Fuse, I will thank you to cut that surloin with the grain."

"What matters it Polly" said the captain of grenadiers, with a slight Irish accent, and with the humour of his countrymen strongly depicted in his fine, open, manly features, "which way a bit of meat is divided, so there be enough to allay the cravings of the appetite, you will remember!"

"It is a collateral assistance to nature that should never be neglected," returned Polwarth, whose gravity and seriousness at his banquets were not easily disturbed; "it facilitates mastication and aids digestion, two considerations of great importance to military men, sir, who have frequently such little time for the former, and no rest after their meals to complete the latter."

"He reasons like an army contractor, who wishes to make one ration do the work of two, when transportation is high," said M'Fuse, winking to Lionel. "According to your principles, then, Polly, a potato is your true campaigner, for that is a creature you may cut any way without disturbing the grain, provided the article be a little m'aly."

"Pardon me, captain M'Fuse," said Polwarth, "a potato should be broken, and not cut at all. There is no vegetable more used, and less understood than the potato."

"And is it you, Pater Polwarth, of Nesbitt's light-infantry," interrupted the grenadier, laying down his knife and fork with an air of infinite humour, "that will tell Dennis M'Fuse how to carve a potato! I will yield to the right of an Englishman over the chivalry of an ox, your sirloins, and your lady-rumps, if you please, but in my own country, one end of every farm is a bog, and the other a potato-field 'tis an Irishman's patrimony that you are making so free with, sir!"

"The possession of a thing, and the knowledge how to use it, are two very different properties."

"Give me the property of possession, then," again interrupted the ardent grenadier, "especially when a morsel of the green island is in dispute; and trust an old soldier of the Royal Irish to carve his own enjoyments. Now, I'll wager a month's pay, and that to me is as much as if the Major should say, done for a thousand, that you can't tell how many dishes can be made, and are made every day in Ireland, out of so simple a thing as a potato."

"You roast and boil; and use them in stuffing tame birds, sometimes, and "

"All old woman's cookery!" interrupted M`Fuse, with an affectation of great contempt in his manner "now, sir, we have them with butter, and without butter, that counts two; then we have the fruit p`aled; and "

"Impaled," said Lionel, laughing. "I believe this nice controversy must be referred to Job, who is amusing himself in the corner there, I see, with the very subject of the dispute transfixed on his fork, in the latter condition."

"Or suppose, rather," said M`Fuse, "as it is a matter to exercise the judgment of Solomon, we make a potato umpire of master Seth Sage, yonder, who should have some of the wisdom of the royal Jew, by the sagacity of his countenance, as well as of his name."

"Don't you call Seth r`yal," said Job, suspending his occupation on the vegetable. "The king is r`yal and fla`nty, but neighbour Sage lets Job come in and eat, like a christian."

"That lad there, is not altogether without reason, Major Lincoln," said Polwarth; "on the contrary, he discovers an instinctive knowledge of good from evil, by favouring us with his company at the hour of meals."

"The poor fellow finds but little at home to tempt him to remain there, I fear," said Lionel; "and as he was one of the first acquaintances I made on returning to my native land, I have desired Mr. Sage to admit him at all proper hours; and especially, Polwarth, at those times when he can have an opportunity of doing homage to your skill."

"I am glad to see him," said Polwarth, "for I love an uninstructed palate, as much as I admire naiveté in a woman. Be so good as to favour me with a cut from the breast of that wild-goose, M`Fuse not quite so far forward, if you please; your migratory birds are apt to be tough about the wing but simplicity in eating is, after all, the great secret of life; that and a sufficiency of food."

"You may be right this time," replied the grenadier, laughing, "for this fellow made one of the flankers of the flock, and did double duty in wheeling, I believe, or I have got him against the grain too! But, Polly, you have not told us how you improve in your light-infantry exercises of late."

By this time Polwarth had made such progress in the essential part of his meal, as to have recovered in some measure his usual tone of good-nature, and he answered with less gravity

"If Gage does not work a reformation in our habits, he will fag us all to death. I suppose you know, Leo, that all the flank companies are relieved from the guards to learn a new species of exercise. They call it relieving us, but the only relief I find in the matter, is when we lie down to fire there is a luxurious moment or two then, I must confess!"

"I have known the fact, any time these ten days, by your moanings," returned Lionel; "but what do you argue from this particular exercise, captain M`Fuse? does Gage contemplate more than the customary drills?"

"You question me now, sir, on a matter in which I am uninstructed," said the grenadier; "I am a soldier, and obey my orders, without pretending to inquire into their objects or merits; all I know is, that both grenadiers and light-infantry are taken from the guards; and that we travel over a good deal of solid earth each day, in the way of marching and counter-marching, to the manifest discomfiture and reduction of Polly there, who loses flesh as

fast as he gains ground."

"Do you think so, Mac?" cried the delighted captain of light-infantry; "then I have not all the detestable motion in vain. They have given us little Harry Skip as a drill officer, who I believe has the most restless foot of any man in his majesty's service. Do you join with me in opinion, master Sage? you seem to meditate on the subject as if it had some secret charm."

The individual to whom Polwarth addressed this question, and who has been already named, was standing with a plate in his hand, in an attitude that bespoke close attention, with a sudden and deep interest in the discourse, though his eyes were bent on the floor, and his face was averted as if, while listening earnestly, he had a particular desire to be unnoticed. He was the owner of the house in which Lionel had taken his quarters. His family had been some time before removed into the country, under the pretence of his inability to maintain them in a place destitute of business and resources like Boston; but he remained himself, for the double purpose of protecting his property and serving his guests. This man partook, in no small degree, of the qualities, both of person and mind, which distinguish a large class among his countrymen. In the former he was rather over than under the middle stature; was thin, angular, and awkward, but possessing an unusual proportion of sinew and bone. His eyes were small, black, scintillating, and it was not easy to fancy that the intelligence they manifested was unmingled with a large proportion of shrewd cunning. The rest of his countenance was meager, sallow, and rigidly demure. Thus called upon, on a sudden, by Polwarth for an opinion, Seth answered, with the cautious reserve with which he invariably delivered himself

"The adjutant is an uneasy man, but that, I suppose, is so much the better for a light-infantry officer. Captain Polwarth must find it considerable jading to keep the step, now the General has ordered these new doings with the soldiers."

"And what may be your opinion of these doings, as you call them, Mr Sage," asked M'Fuse; "you who are a man of observation, should understand your countrymen; will they fight?"

"A rat will fight if the cats pen him," said Seth, without raising his eyes from his occupation.

"But do the Americans conceive themselves to be penned?"

"Why, that is pretty much as people think, captain; the country was in a great toss about the stamps and the tea, but I always said such folks as didn't give their notes-of-hand, and had no great relish for any thing more than country food, wouldn't find themselves cramped by the laws, after all."

"Then you see no great oppression in being asked to pay your bit of a tax, master Sage," cried the grenadier, "to maintain such a worthy fellow as myself in a dacent equipage to fight your battles."

"Why, as to that captain, I suppose we can do pretty much the whole of our own fighting, when occasion calls; though I don't think there is much stomach for such doings among the people, without need."

"But what do you think the Committee of Safety, and your `Sons of Liberty,' as they call themselves, really mean, by their parades of `minute-men,' their gathering of provisions, carrying off the cannon, and such other formidable and appalling preparations ha! honest Seth, do they think to frighten British soldiers with the roll of a drum, or are they amusing themselves, like boys in the holy days, with playing war."

"I should conclude," said Seth, with undisturbed gravity and caution, "that the people are pretty much engaged, and in earnest."

"To do what?" demanded the Irishman; "to forge their own chains, that we may fetter them in truth?"

"Why, seeing that they have burnt the stamps, and thrown the tea into the harbour," returned Seth, "and since that have taken the management into their own hands, I should rather conclude that they have pretty much determined to do what they think best."

Lionel and Polwarth laughed aloud, and the former observed

"You appear not to come to conclusions with our host, captain M`Fuse, notwithstanding so much is determined. Is it well understood, Mr. Sage, that large reinforcements are coming to the colonies, and to Boston in particular?"

"Why yes," returned Seth, "it seems to be pretty generally contemplated on."

"And what is the result of these contemplations?"

Seth paused a moment, as if uncertain whether he was master of the other's meaning, before he replied

"Why, as the country is considerably engaged in the business, there are some who think if the ministers don't open the Port, that it will be done without much further words by the people."

"Do you know," said Lionel, gravely, "that such an attempt would lead directly to a civil war?"

"I suppose it is safe to calculate that such doings would bring on disturbances," returned his phlegmatic host.

"And you speak of it, sir, as a thing not to be deprecated, or averted by every possible means in the power of the nation!"

"If the Port is opened and the right to tax given up," said Seth, calmly, "I can find a man in Boston who'll engage to let them draw all the blood that will be spilt, from his own veins, for nothing."

"And who may that redoubtable individual be, master Sage?" cried M`Fuse; "your own plethoric person? How now, Doyle, to what am I indebted for the honour of this visit?"

This sudden question was put by the captain of grenadiers to the orderly of his own company, who at that instant filled the door of the apartment with his huge frame, in the attitude of military respect, as if about to address his officer.

"Orders have come down, sir, to parade the men at half an hour after tattoo, and to be in readiness for active service."

The three gentlemen rose together from their chairs at this intelligence, while M`Fuse, exclaimed "A night march! Pooh! We are to be sent back to garrison—duty I suppose; the companies in the line grow sleepy, and wish a relief Gage might have taken a more suitable time, than to put gentlemen on their march so soon after such a feast as this of yours, Polly."

"There is some deeper meaning to so extraordinary an order," interrupted Lionel; "there goes the tap of the tattoo, this instant! Are no other troops but your company ordered to parade?"

"The whole battalion is under the same orders, your honour, and so is the battalion of Light Infantry; I was commanded to report it so to Capt. Polwarth, if I saw him."

"This bears some meaning, gentlemen," said Lionel, "and it is necessary to be looked to if either corps leaves the town to—night, I will march with it as a volunteer, for it is my business, just now, to examine into the state of the

country."

"That we shall march to-night, is sure, your honour," added the sergeant, with the confidence of an old soldier; "but how far, or on what road, is known only to the officers of the Staff; though the men think we are to go out by the colleges."

"And what has put so learned an opinion in their silly heads?" demanded his captain.

"One of the men who has been on leave, has just got in, and reports that a squad of gentlemen from the army dined near them, your honour, and that as night set in they mounted and began to patrol the roads in that direction. He was met and questioned by four of them as he crossed the flats."

"All this confirms my conjectures," cried Lionel "there is a man who might now prove of important service Job where is the simpleton, Meriton?"

"He was called out, sir, a minute since, and has left the house."

"Then send in Mr. Sage," continued the young man, musing as he spoke. A moment after it was reported to him that Seth had strangely disappeared also.

"Curiosity has led him to the barracks," said Lionel, "where duty calls you, gentlemen. I will despatch a little business, and join you there in an hour; you cannot march short of that time."

The bustle of a general departure succeeded; Lionel threw his cloak into the arms of Meriton, to whom he delivered his orders, took his arms, and making his apologies to his guests, he left the house with the manner of one who saw a pressing necessity to be prompt. M Fuse proceeded to equip himself with the deliberation of a soldier who was too much practised to be easily disconcerted. Notwithstanding his great deliberation, the delay of Polwarth, however, eventually vanquished the patience of the grenadier, who exclaimed, on hearing the other repeat, for the fourth time, an order concerning the preservation of certain viands, to which he appeared to cling in spirit, after a carnal separation was directed by fortune.

"Poh! poh! man," exclaimed the Irishman, "why will you bother yourself on the eve of a march, with such epicurean propensities. It's the soldier who should show your hermits and anchorites an example of mortification; besides, Polly, this affectation of care and provision is the less excusable in yourself, you who have been well aware that we were to march on a secret expedition this very night on which you seem so much troubled."

"I!" exclaimed Polwarth; "as I hope to eat another meal, I am as ignorant as the meanest corporal in the army of the whole transaction why do you suspect otherwise?"

"Trifles tell the old campaigner when and where the blow is to be struck," returned M Fuse, coolly drawing his military over-coat tighter to his large frame; "have I not, with my own eyes, seen you within the hour, provision a certain captain of light-infantry after a very heavy fashion! Damn it, man, do you think I have served these five-and-twenty years, and do not know that when a garrison begins to fill its granaries, it expects a siege?"

"I have paid no more than a suitable compliment to the entertainment of Major Lincoln," returned Polwarth; "but so far from having had any very extraordinary appetite, I have not found myself in a condition to do all the justice I could wish to several of the dishes. Mr. Meriton, I will thank you to have the remainder of that bird sent down to the barracks, where my man will receive it; and as it may be a long march, and a hungry one, add the tongue, and a fowl, and some of the ragout; we can warm it up at any farm-house we'll take the piece of beef, Mac Leo has a particular taste for a cold cut; and you might put up the ham, also; it will keep better than any thing else, if we should be out long and I believe that will do, Meriton."

"I am as much rejoiced to hear it as I should be to hear a proclamation of war read at Charing-Cross," cried M'Fuse "you should have been a commissary, Polly nature meant you for an army sutler!"

"Laugh as you will, Mac," returned the good-humoured Polwarth, "I shall hear your thanks when we halt for breakfast; but I attend you now."

As they left the house, he continued, "I hope Gage means no more than to push us a little in advance, with a view to protect the foragers and the supplies of the army such a situation would have very pretty advantages; for a system might be established that would give the mess of the light corps the choice of the whole market."

"'Tis a mighty preparation about some old iron gun, which would cost a man his life to put a match to," returned M'Fuse, cavalierly; "for my part, captain Polwarth, if we are to fight these colonists at all, I would do the thing like a man, and allow the lads to gather together a suitable arsenal, that when we come to blows it may be a military affair as it now stands, I should be ashamed, as I am a soldier and an Irishman, to bid my fellows pull a trigger, or make a charge, on a set of peasants whose fire-arms look more like rusty waterpipes than muskets, and who have half a dozen cannon with touch-holes that a man may put his head in, with muzzles just large enough to throw marbles."

"I don't know, Mac," said Polwarth, while they diligently pursued their way towards the quarters of their men; "even a marble may destroy a man's appetite for his dinner; and the countrymen possess a great advantage over us in commanding the supplies the difference in equipments would not more than balance the odds."

"I wish to disturb no gentleman's opinion on matters of military discretion, captain Polwarth," said the grenadier with an air of high martial pride; "but I take it there exists a material difference between a soldier and a butcher, though killing be a business common to both I repeat, sir, I hope that this secret expedition is for a more worthy object than to deprive those poor devils, with whom we are about to fight, of the means of making a good battle, and I add, sir, that such is sound military doctrine, without regarding who may choose to controvert it."

"Your sentiments are generous and manly, Mac; but, after all, there is both a physical and moral obligation on every man to eat; and if starvation be the consequence of permitting your enemies to bear arms, it becomes a solemn duty to deprive them of their weapons no no I will support Gage in such a measure, at present, as highly military."

"And he is much obliged to you, sir, for your support," returned the other "I apprehend, captain Polwarth, whenever the Lieutenant-General Gage finds it necessary to lean on any one for extraordinary assistance, he will remember that there is a regiment called the Royal Irish in the country, and that he is not entirely ignorant of the qualities of the people of his own nation. You have done well, captain Polwarth, to choose the light-infantry service they are a set of foragers, and can help themselves; but the grenadiers, thank God, love to encounter men, and not cattle in the field."

How long the good-nature of Polwarth would have endured the increasing taunts of the Irishman, who was exasperating himself, gradually, by his own arguments, there is no possibility of determining, for their arrival at the barracks put an end to the controversy and to the feelings it was beginning to engender.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Preserve thy sighs, unthrifty girl!

"To purify the air;

"Thy tears, to thread, instead of pearl,

"On bracelets of thy hair."

Devenent

Lionel might have blushed to acknowledge the secret and inexplicable influence which his unknown and mysterious friend, Ralph, had obtained over his feelings, but which induced him, on leaving his own quarters thus hastily, to take his way into the lower parts of the town, in quest of the residence of Abigail Pray. He had not visited the sombre tenement of this woman since the night of his arrival, but its proximity to the well-known town-hall, as well as the quaint architecture of the building itself, had frequently brought its exterior under his observation, in the course of his rambles through the place of his nativity. A guide being, consequently, unnecessary, he took the most direct and frequented route to the docksquare. When Lionel issued into the street, he found a deep darkness already enveloping the peninsula of Boston, as if nature had lent herself to the secret designs of the British commandant. The fine strain of a shrill fife was playing among the naked hills of the place, accompanied by the occasional and measured taps of the sullen drum; and, at moments, the full, rich notes of the horns would rise from the common, and borne on the night-air, sweep along the narrow streets, causing the nerves of the excited young soldier to thrill with a stern pleasure, as he stepped proudly along. The practised ear, however, detected no other sounds in the music than the usual nightly signal of rest; and when the last melting strains of the horns seemed to be lost in the clouds, a stillness fell upon the town, like the deep and slumbering quiet of midnight. He paused a moment before the gates of Province-house, and, after examining, with an attentive eye, the windows of the building, he spoke to the grenadier, who had stopped in his short walk, to note the curious stranger.

"You should have company within, sentinel," he said, "by the brilliant light from those windows."

The rattling of Lionel's side-arms as he pointed with his hand in the direction of the illuminated apartment, taught the soldier that he was addressed by his superior, and he answered respectfully

"It does not become one such as I, to pretend to know much of what his betters do, your honour, but I stood before the quarters of General Wolfe the very night we went up to the Plains of Abram; and I think an old soldier can tell when a movement is at hand, without asking his superiors any impertinent questions."

"I suppose, from your remark, the General holds a council to-night?" said Lionel.

"No one has gone in, sir, since I have been posted," returned the sentinel, "but the Lieutenant-Colonel of the 10th, that great Northumbrian Lord, and the old Major of marines; a great war-dog is that old man, your honour, and it is not often he comes to Province-house for nothing."

"A good-night to you, my old comrade," said Lionel, walking away; "'tis probably some consultation concerning the new exercises that you practise."

The grenadier shook his head, as if unconvinced, and resumed his march with his customary steadiness. A very few minutes now brought Lionel before the low door of Abigail Pray, where he again stopped, struck with the contrast between the gloomy, dark, and unguarded threshold over which he was about to pass, and the gay portal he had just left. Urged, however, by his feelings, the young man paused but a moment before he tapped lightly for admission. After repeating his summons, and hearing no reply, he lifted the latch, and entered the building without further ceremony. The large and vacant apartment in which he found himself, was silent and dreary as the still streets he had quitted. Groping his way towards the little room in the tower, where he had met the mother of Job, as before related, Lionel found that apartment also tenantless, and dark. He was turning in disappointment, to quit the place, when a feeble ray fell from the loft of the building, and settled on the foot of a rude ladder which formed the means of communication with its upper apartments. Hesitating a single moment how to decide, he then yielded to his anxiety, and ascended to the floor above, with steps as light as extreme caution could render

them. Like the basement, the building was subdivided here, into a large, open ware-room, and a small, rudely-finished apartment in each of its towers. Following the rays from a candle, he stood on the threshold of one of these little rooms, in which he found the individual of whom he was in quest. The old man was seated on the only broken chair which the loft contained, and before him, on the simple bundle of straw which would seem, by the garments thrown loosely over the pile, to be intended as his place of rest, lay a large map, spread for inspection, which his glazed and sunken eyes appeared to be intently engaged in making. Lionel hesitated again, while he regarded the white hairs which fell across the temples of the stranger, as he bowed his head in his employment, imparting a wild and melancholy expression to his remarkable countenance, and seeming to hallow their possessor by the air of great age and attendant care that they imparted.

"I have come to seek you," the young man at length said, "since you no longer deem me worthy of your care."

"You come too late," returned Ralph, without betraying the least emotion at the suddenness of the interruption, or even raising his eyes from the map he studied so intently; "too late at least to avert calamity, if not to learn wisdom from its lessons."

"You know, then, of the secret movements of the night?"

"Old age, like mine, seldom sleeps," returned Ralph, looking for the first time at his visiter, "for the eternal night of death promises a speedy repose. I too served an apprenticeship in my youth to your trade of blood."

"Your watchfulness and experience have then detected the signs of preparation in the garrison? Have they also discovered the objects, and probable consequences of the enterprise?"

"Both; Gage weakly thinks to crush the germ of liberty which has already quickened in the land, by lopping its feeble branches, when it is rooted in the hearts of the people. He thinks that bold thoughts can be humbled by the destruction of magazines.

"It is then only a measure of precaution that he is about to take?"

The old man shook his head mournfully as he answered

"It will prove a measure of blood."

"I intend to accompany the detachment into the country," said Lionel "it will probably take post at some little distance in the interior, and it will afford me a fitting opportunity to make those inquiries which you know are so near my heart, and in which you have promised to assist it is to consult on the means that I have now sought you."

The countenance of the stranger seemed to lose its character of melancholy reflection, as Lionel spoke, and his eyes moved, vacant and unmeaning, over the naked rafters above him, passing in their wanderings across the surface of the unheeded map again, until they fell full upon the face of the astonished youth, where they remained settled for more than a minute, fixed in the glazed, rivetted look of death. The lips of Lionel had already opened in anxious inquiry, when the expression of life shot again into the features of Ralph, with the suddenness, and with an appearance of the physical reality with which light flashes from the sun when emerging from a cloud.

"You are ill!" Lionel exclaimed.

"Leave me," said the old man, "leave me."

"Surely not at such a moment, and alone."

"I bid you leave me we shall meet as you desire, in the country."

"You would then have me accompany the troops, and expect your coming?"

"Both."

"Pardon me," said Lionel, dropping his eyes in embarrassment, and speaking with hesitation, "but your present abode, and the appearance of your attire, is an evidence that old age has come upon you when you are not altogether prepared to meet its sufferings."

"You would offer me money?"

"By accepting it, I shall become the obliged party."

"When my wants exceed my means, young man, your offer shall be remembered. Go, now; there is no time for delay."

"But I would not leave you alone; the woman, the termagant is better than none?"

"She is absent."

"And the boy the changeling has the feelings of humanity, and would aid you in extremity."

"He is better employed than in propping the steps of a useless old man. Go then, I entreat I command, sir, that you leave me."

The firm, if not haughty, manner in which the other repeated his desire, taught Lionel that he had nothing more to expect at present, and he obeyed reluctantly, by slowly leaving the apartment, and as soon as he had descended the ladder he began to retrace his steps towards his own quarters. In crossing the light draw-bridge thrown over the narrow dock, already mentioned, his contemplations were first disturbed by the sounds of voices, at no great distance, apparently conversing in tones that were not intended to be heard by every ear. It was a moment when each unusual incident was likely to induce inquiry, and Lionel stopped to examine two men, who, at a little distance, held their secret and suppressed communications. He had, however, paused but an instant, when the whisperers separated, one walking leisurely up the centre of the square, entering under one of the arches of the market-place, and the other coming directly across the bridge on which he himself was standing.

"What, Job, do I find you here, whispering and plotting in the dock-square!" exclaimed Lionel; "what secrets can you have, that require the cover of night?"

"Job lives there, in the old ware'us'," said the lad sullenly "Nab has plenty of house room, now the king wont let the people bring in their goods."

"But whither are you going into the water! surely the road to your bed cannot be through the town dock."

"Nab wants fish to eat, as well as a ruff to keep off the rain," said Job, dropping lightly from the bridge into a small canoe, which was fastened to one of its posts, "and now the king has closed the harbour the fish have to come up in the dark; for come they will; Boston fish an't to be shut out by acts of Parliament!"

"Poor lad!" exclaimed Lionel, "return to your home and your bed; here is money to buy food for your mother if she suffers you will draw a shot from some of the sentinels by going about the harbour thus at night."

"Job can see a ship farther than a ship can see Job," returned the other; "and if they should kill Job, they need'n't think to shoot a Boston boy without some stir."

Further dialogue was precluded; the canoe gliding along the outer dock into the harbour, with a stillness and swiftness that showed the idiot was not ignorant of the business which he had undertaken. Lionel resumed his walk, and was passing the head of the square when he encountered, face to face, under the light of a lamp, the man whose figure he had seen but a minute before to issue from beneath the town-hall. A mutual desire to ascertain the identity of each other drew them together.

"We meet again, Major Lincoln," said the interesting stranger Lionel remembered to have seen at the political meeting. "Our interviews appear ordained to occur in secret places."

"And Job Pray would seem to be the presiding spirit," returned the young soldier. "You parted from him but now?"

"I trust, sir," said the stranger gravely, "that this is not a land, nor have we fallen on times when and where an honest man dare not say that he has spoken to whom he pleases."

"Certainly, sir, it is not for me to prohibit the intercourse," returned Lionel. "You spoke of our fathers; mine is well known to you, it would seem, though to me you are a stranger."

"And may be so yet a little longer," said the other, "though I think the time is at hand when men will be known in their true characters; until then, Major Lincoln, I bid you adieu."

Without waiting for any reply, the stranger took a different direction from that which Lionel was pursuing, and walked away with the swiftness of one who was pressed with urgent business. Lionel soon ascended into the upper part of the town, with the intention of going into Tremontstreet, to communicate his design to accompany the expedition. It was now apparent to the young man, that a rumour of the contemplated movement of the troops was spreading secretly, but swiftly, among the people. He passed several groups of earnest and excited townsmen, conferring together at the corners of the streets, from some of whom he overheard the startling intelligence that the neck, the only approach to the place by land, was closed by a line of sentinels; and that guard-boats from the vessels of war, were encircling the peninsula in a manner to intercept the communication with the adjacent country. Still no indications of a military alarm could be discovered, though, at times, a stifled hum, like the notes of busy preparation, was borne along by the damp breezes of the night, and mingled with those sounds of a Spring evening, which increased as he approached the skirts of the dwellings. In Tremont-street Lionel found no appearance of that excitement which was spreading so rapidly in the old and lower parts of the town. He passed into his own room without meeting any of the family, and having completed his brief arrangements, he was descending to inquire for his kinswomen, when the voice of Mrs. Lechmere, proceeding from a small apartment, appropriated to her own use, arrested his steps. Anxious to take leave in person, he approached the half-open door, and would have asked permission to enter, had not his eye rested on the person of Abigail Pray, who was in earnest conference with the mistress of the mansion.

"A man aged, and poor, say you?" observed Mrs. Lechmere, at that instant.

"And one that seems to know all," interrupted Abigail, glancing her eyes about with an expression of superstitious terror.

"All!" echoed Mrs. Lechmere, her lip trembling more with apprehension than age; "and he arrived with Major Lincoln, say you?"

"In the same ship; and it seems that heaven has ordained that he shall dwell with me in my poverty, as a punishment for my great sins!"

"But why do you tolerate his presence, if it be irksome," said Mrs. Lechmere; "you are at least the mistress of your own dwelling."

"It has pleased God that my home shall be the home of any who are so miserable as to need one. He has the same right to live in the warehouse that I have."

"You have the rights of a woman, and of first possession," said Mrs. Lechmere, with that unyielding severity of manner that Lionel had often observed before; "I would turn him into the street, like a dog."

"Into the street!" repeated Abigail, again looking about her in secret terror; "speak lower, madam Lechmere, for the love of heaven I dare not even look at him he reminds me of all I have ever known, and of all the evil I have ever done, by his scorching eye and yet I cannot tell why and then Job worships him as a god, and if I should offend him, he could easily worm from the child all that you and I wish so much "

"How!" exclaimed Mrs. Lechmere, in a voice husky with horror, "have you been so base as to make a confidant of that fool!"

"That fool is the child of my bosom," said Abigail, raising her hands, as if imploring pardon for the indiscretion. "Ah! madam Lechmere, you who are rich, and great, and happy, and have such a sweet and sensible grandchild, cannot know how to love one like Job; but when the heart is loaded and heavy, it throws its burden on any that will bear it; and Job is my child, though he is but little better than an idiot!"

It was by no trifling exertion of his breeding that Lionel was enabled to profit by the inability of Mrs. Lechmere to reply, and to turn away from the spot, and cease to listen to a conversation that was not intended for his ear. He reached the parlour, and threw himself on one of its settees before he was conscious that he was no longer alone or unobserved.

"What! Major Lincoln returned from his revels thus early, and armed like a bandit, to his teeth!" exclaimed the playful voice of Cecil Dynevor, who, unheeded, was in possession of the opposite seat, when he entered the room.

Lionel started, and rubbed his forehead, like a man awaking from a dream, as he answered

"Yes, a bandit, or any other opprobrious name you please; I deserve them all."

"Surely," said Cecil, turning pale, "none other dare use such language of Major Lincoln, and he does it unjustly!"

"What foolish nonsense have I uttered, Miss Dynevor?" cried Lionel, recovering his recollection; "I was lost in thought, and heard your language without comprehending its meaning."

"Still you are armed; a sword is not a usual instrument at your side, and now you bear even pistols!"

"Yes," returned the young soldier, laying aside his dangerous implements; "yes, I am about to march as a volunteer, with a party that go into the country to-night, and I take these because I would affect something very warlike, though you well know how peaceably I am disposed."

"March into the country and in the dead of night!" said Cecil, catching her breath, and turning pale "And does Lionel Lincoln volunteer on such a duty?"

"I volunteer to perform no other duty than to be a witness of whatever may occur you are not more ignorant yourself of the nature of the expedition than I am at this moment."

"Then remain where you are," said Cecil, firmly, "and enlist not in an enterprise that may be unholy in its purposes, and disgraceful in its results."

"Of the former I am innocent, whatever they may be, nor will they be affected by my presence or absence. There is little danger of disgrace in accompanying the grenadiers and light-infantry of this army, Miss Dynevor, though it should be against treble their numbers of chosen troops."

"Then it would seem," said Agnes Danforth, speaking as she entered the room, "that our friend Mercury, that feather of a man, captain Polwarth, is to be one of these night depredators! heaven shield the hen-roosts!"

"You have then heard the intelligence, Agnes?"

"I have heard that men are arming, and that boats are rowing round the town in all directions, and that it is forbidden to enter or quit Boston, as we were wont to do, Cecil, at such hours and in such fashion as suited us plain Americans," said Agnes, endeavouring to conceal her deep vexation in affected irony "God only can tell in what all these oppressive measures will end."

"If you go only as a curious spectator of the depredations of the troops," continued Cecil, "are you not wrong to lend them even the sanction of your name?"

"I have yet to learn that there will be depredations."

"You forget, Cecil," interrupted Agnes Danforth, scornfully, "that Major Lincoln did not arrive until after the renowned march from Roxbury to Dorchester! Then the troops gathered their laurels under the face of the sun; but it is easy to conceive how much more glorious their achievements will become when darkness shall conceal their blushes!"

The blood rushed across the fine features of Lionel, but he laughed as he arose to depart, saying

"You compel me to beat the retreat, my spirited coz. If I have my usual fortune in this forage, your larder, however, shall be the better for it. I kiss my hand to you, for it would be necessary to lay aside the scarlet to dare to approach with a more peaceable offering. But here I may make an approach to something like amity."

He took the hand of Cecil, who frankly met his offer, and insensibly suffered herself to be led to the door of the building while he continued speaking.

"I would, Lincoln, that you were not to go," she said, when they stopped on the threshold "it is not required of you as a soldier; and as a man your own feelings should teach you to be tender of your countrymen."

"It is as a man that I go, Cecil," he answered; "I have motives that you cannot suspect."

"And is your absence to be long?"

"If not for days, my object will be unaccomplished;" but he added, pressing her hand gently, "you cannot doubt my willingness to return when occasion may offer."

"Go, then," said Cecil, hastily, and perhaps unconsciously extricating herself "go, if you have secret reasons for your conduct; but remember that the acts of every officer of your rank are keenly noted."

"Do you then distrust me, Cecil!"

"No no I distrust no one, Major Lincoln go go and and we shall see you, Lionel, the instant you return."

He had not time to reply, for she glided into the building so rapidly as to give the young man an opportunity only to observe, that instead of rejoining her cousin, her light form passed up the great stairs with the swiftness and grace of a fairy.

CHAPTER IX.

"Hang out our banners on the outward walls;

"The cry is still, *They come.*"

Macbeth.

Lionel had walked from the dwelling of Mrs. Lechmere to the foot of Beacon-Hill, and had even toiled up some part of the steep ascent, before he recollected why he was thus wandering by himself at that unusual hour. Hearing, however, no sounds that denoted an immediate movement of the troops, he then yielded, unconsciously, to the nature of his sensations, which just at that moment rendered his feelings jealous of communication with others, and continued to ascend until he gained the summit of the eminence. From this elevated stand he paused to contemplate the scene which lay in the obscurity of night at his feet, while his thoughts returned from the flattering anticipations in which he had been indulging, to consider the more pressing business of the hour. There arose from the town itself a distant buzzing, like the hum of suppressed agitation, and lights were seen to glide along the streets, or flit across the windows, in a manner which denoted that a knowledge of the expedition had become general within its dwellings. Lionel turned his head toward the common, and listened long and anxiously, but in vain, to detect a single sound that could betray any unusual stir among the soldiery. Towards the interior, the darkness of night had fallen heavily, dimming the amphitheatre of hills that encircled the place, and enshrouding the vales and lowlands between them and the water with an impenetrable veil of gloom. There were moments, indeed, when he imagined he overheard some indications among the people of the opposite shore that they were apprised of the impending descent, but on listening more attentively, the utmost of which his ear could assure him, was the faint lowing of cattle from the meadows, or the splash of oars from a line of boats, which, by stretching far along the shores, told both the nature and the extent of the watchfulness that was deemed necessary for the occasion.

While Lionel stood thus, on the margin of the little platform of earth that had been formed by levelling the apex of the natural cone, musing on the probable results of the measure his superiors had been resolving to undertake, a dim light shed itself along the grass, and glancing upward, danced upon the beacon with strong and playful rays.

"Scoundrel!" exclaimed a man, springing from his place of concealment, at the foot of the post, and encountering him face to face, "do you dare to fire the beacon?"

"I would answer by asking how you dare to apply so rude an epithet to me, did I not see the cause of your error," said Lionel. "The light is from yonder moon, which is just emerging from the ocean."

"Ah! I see my error," returned his rough assailant "by heavens, I would have sworn at first, 'twas the beacon."

"You must then believe in the traditional witchcraft of this country, for nothing short of necromancy could have enabled me to light those combustibles at this distance."

"I don't know; 'tis a strange people we have got amongst they stole the cannon from the gunhouse here, a short time since, when I would have said the thing was impossible. It was before your arrival, sir; for I now believe I address myself to Major Lincoln, of the 27th."

"You are nearer the truth, this time, than in your first conjecture as to my character," said Lionel; "but have I met one of the gentlemen of our mess?"

The stranger now explained that he was a subaltern in a different regiment, but that he well knew the person of the other. He added that he had been ordered to watch on the hill to prevent any of the inhabitants lighting the beacon, or making any other signal which might convey into the country a knowledge of the contemplated inroad.

"This matter wears a more serious aspect than I had supposed," returned Lionel, when the young man had ended his apologies and explanation; "the commander-in-chief must intend more than we are aware of, by employing officers in this manner, to do the duties of privates."

"We poor subs know but little, and care less what he means," cried the ensign; "though I will acknowledge that I can see no sufficient reason why British troops should put on coats of darkness to march against a parcel of guessing, canting, countrymen, who would run at the sight of their uniforms under a bright sun. Had I my will, the tar above us, there, should blaze a mile high, to bring down the heroes from Connecticut river; the dogs would cow before two full companies of grenadiers ha! listen, sir; there they go, now, the pride of our army! I know them by their heavy tread."

Lionel did listen attentively, and plainly distinguished the measured step of a body of disciplined men, moving rapidly across the common, as if marching towards the water-side. Hastily bidding his companion good-night, he threw himself over the brow of the hill, and taking the direction of the sounds, he arrived at the shore at the same instant with the troops. Two dark masses of human bodies were halted in order, and as Lionel skirted the columns, his experienced eye judged that the force collected before him, could be but little short of a thousand men. A group of officers was clustered on the beach, and he approached it, rightly supposing that it was gathered about the leader of the party. This officer proved to be the Lieutenant-Colonel of the 10th, who was in close conversation with the old Major of Marines, alluded to by the sentinel who stood before the gates of Province-house. To the former of these the young soldier addressed himself, demanding leave to accompany the detachment as a volunteer. After a few words of explanation, his request was granted, though each forbore to touch in the slightest manner on the secret objects of the expedition.

Lionel now found his groom, who had followed the troops with his master's horses, and after giving his orders to the man, he proceeded in quest of his friend Polwarth, who he soon discovered, posted in all the stiffness of military exactness, at the head of the leading platoon of the column of light-infantry. As it was apparent, both from the position they occupied, as well as by the boats that had been collected at the point, that the detachment was not to leave the peninsula by its ordinary channel of communication with the country, there remained no alternative but to await patiently the order to embark. The delay was but short, and, as the most perfect order was observed, the troops were soon seated, and the boats pulled heavily from the land, just as the rays of the moon, which had been sometime playing among the hills, and gilding the spires of the town, diffused themselves softly over the bay, and lighted the busy scene, with an effect not unlike the sudden rising of the curtain at the opening of some interesting drama. Polwarth had established himself by the side of Lionel, much to the ease of his limbs, and as they moved slowly into the light, all those misgivings which had so naturally accompanied his musings on the difficulties of a partisan irruption, vanished before the loveliness of the time, and possibly before the quietude of the action.

"There are moments when I could fancy the life of a sailor," he said, leaning indolently back, and playing with one hand in the water "this pulling about in boats is easy work, and must be capital assistance for a heavy digestion, inasmuch as it furnishes air with as little violent exercise as may-be your marine should lead a merry

life of it!"

"They are said to murmur at the clashing of their duties with those of the sea-officers," said Lionel; "and I have often heard them complain of a want of room to make use of their legs."

"Humph!" ejaculated Polwarth; "the leg is a part of a man for which I see less actual necessity than for any other portion of his frame. I often think there has been a sad mistake in the formation of the animal; as, for instance, one can be a very good waterman, as you see, without legs a good fiddler, a first-rate tailor, a lawyer, a doctor, a parson, a very tolerable cook, and in short, any thing but a dancing master. I see no use in a leg unless it be to have the gout at any rate, a leg of twelve inches is as good as one a mile long, and the saving might be appropriated to the nobler parts of the animal; such as the brain and the stomach."

"You forget the officer of light-infantry," said Lionel, laughing.

"You might give him a couple of inches more; though, as every thing in this wicked world, is excellent only by comparison, it would amount to the same thing, and on my system a man would be just as fit for the light-infantry without, as with legs; and he would get rid of a good deal of troublesome manoeuvring, especially of this new exercise. It would then become a delightful service, Leo; for it may be said to monopolize all the poetry of military life, as you may see. Neither the imagination nor the body can require more than we enjoy at this moment, and of what use, I would ask, are our legs? if any thing, they are incumbrances in this boat. Here we have a soft moon, and softer seats smooth water, and a stimulating air on one side a fine country, which, though but faintly seen, is known to be fertile, and rich to abundance; and on the other a picturesque town, stored with the condiments of every climate even those rascally privates look mellowed by the moon-beams, with their scarlet coats and glittering arms! Did you meet Miss Danforth in your visit to Tremont-street, Major Lincoln?"

"That pleasure was not denied me."

"Knew she of these martial proceedings?"

"There was something exceedingly belligerent in her humour."

"Spoke she of the light-infantry, or of any who serve in the light corps?"

"Your name was certainly mentioned," returned Lionel, a little dryly "she intimated that the hen-roosts were in danger."

"Ah! she is a girl of a million! her very acids are sweet! the spices were not forgotten when the dough of her composition was mixed; would that she were here five minutes of moon-shine to a man in love is worth a whole summer of a broiling sun 'twould be a master-stroke to entice her into one of our picturesque marches; your partisan is the man to take every thing by surprise women and fortifications! Where now are your companies of the line; your artillery and dragoons; your engineers and staff! night-capped and snoring to a man, while we enjoy here the very dessert of existence I wish I could hear a nightingale!"

"You have a solitary whip-poor-will whistling his notes, as if in lamentation at our approach."

"Too dolorous, and by far too monotonous; 'tis like eating pig for a month. But why are our fifes asleep?"

"The precautions of a whole day should hardly be defeated by the tell-tale notes of our music," said Lionel; "your spirits get the better of your discretion. I should think the prospect of a fatiguing march would have lowered your vein."

"A fico for fatigue!" exclaimed Polwarth "we only go out to take a position at the colleges to cover our supplies we are for school, Leo only fancy the knapsacks of the men to be satchels, humour my folly, and you may believe yourself once more a boy."

The spirits of Polwarth had indeed undergone a sudden change, when he found the sad anticipations which crossed his mind on first hearing of a night inroad, so agreeably disappointed by the comfortable situation he occupied; and he continued conversing in the manner described, until the boats reached an unfrequented point that projected a little way into that part of the Bay which washed the western side of the peninsula of Boston. Here the troops landed, and were again formed with all possible despatch. The company of Polwarth was posted, as before, at the head of the column of light-infantry, and an officer of the staff riding a short distance in front, it was directed to follow his movements. Lionel ordered his groom to take the route of the troops with the horses, and placing himself once more by the side of the captain, they proceeded at the appointed signal.

"Now for the shades of old Harvard!" said Polwarth, pointing towards the humble buildings of the university; "you shall feast this night on reason, while I will make a more sub ha! what can that blind quarter-master mean by taking this direction! Does he not see that the meadows are half covered with water!"

"Move on, move on with the light-infantry," cried the stern voice of the old major of marines, who rode but a short distance in their rear. "Do you falter at the sight of water!"

"We are not wharf-rats," said Polwarth.

Lionel seized him by the arm, and before the disconcerted captain had time to recollect himself, he was borne through a wide pool of stagnant water, mid-leg deep.

"Do not let your romance cost your commission," said the major, as Polwarth floundered out of his difficulties; "here is an incident at once for your private narrative of the campaign."

"Ah! Leo," said the captain, with a sort of comical sorrow, "I fear we are not to court the muses by this hallowed moon to-night!"

"You can assure yourself of that, by observing that we leave the academical roofs on our left our leaders take the high-way."

They had by this time extricated themselves from the meadows, and were moving on a road which led into the interior.

"You had better order up your groom, and mount, Major Lincoln," said Polwarth, sullenly; "a man need husband his strength, I see."

"'Twould be folly now; I am wet, and must walk for safety."

With the departure of Polwarth's spirits the conversation began to flag, and the gentlemen continued their march with only such occasional communications as arose from the passing incidents of their situation. It very soon became apparent, both by the direction given to the columns, as well as by the hurried steps of their guide, that the march was to be forced, as well as of some length. But as the air was getting cool, even Polwarth was not reluctant to warm his chilled blood by more than ordinary exertion. The columns opened for the sake of ease, and each man was permitted to consult his own convenience, provided he preserved his appointed situation, and kept even pace with his comrades. In this manner the detachment advanced swiftly, a general silence pervading the whole, as the spirits of the men settled into that deep sobriety which denotes much earnestness of purpose. At first the whole country appeared buried in a general sleep, but as they proceeded, the barking of the dogs, and the tread

of the soldiery, drew the inhabitants of the farm-houses to their windows, who gazed in mute wonder at the passing spectacle, across which the mellow light of the moon cast a glow of brilliancy. Lionel had turned his head from studying the surprise depicted in the faces of the members of one of these disturbed families, when the deep tones of a distant church-bell came sweeping down the valley in which they marched, ringing peel on peel, in the quick, spirit-stirring sounds of an alarm. The men raised their heads in wondering attention, as they advanced; but it was not long before the reports of fire-arms were heard echoing among the hills, and bell began to answer bell in every direction, until the sounds blended with the murmurs of the night-air, or were lost in distance. The whole country was now filled with every organ of sound that the means of the people furnished, or their ingenuity could devise, to call the population to arms. Fires blazed along the heights, the bellowing of the conchs and horns, mingled with the rattling of the muskets and the varied tones of the bells, while the swift clattering of horses' hoofs began to be heard, as if their riders were dashing furiously along the flanks of the party.

"Push on, gentlemen, push on," shouted the old veteran of marines, amid the din. "The Yankees have awoke, and are stirring we have yet a long road to journey push on, light-infantry, the grenadiers are on your heels!"

The advance quickened their steps, and the whole body pushed for their unknown object with as much rapidity as the steadiness of military array would admit. In this manner the detachment continued to proceed for some hours, without halting, and Lionel imagined that they had advanced several leagues into the country. The sounds of the alarm had now passed away, having swept far inland, until the faintest evidence of its existence was lost to the ear, though the noise of horsemen, riding furiously along the by-ways, yet denoted that men were still hurrying past them, to the scene of the expected strife. As the deceitful light of the moon was blending with the truer colours of day, the welcome sound of 'halt!' was passed from the rear up to the head of the column of light-infantry.

"Halt!" repeated Polwarth, with instinctive readiness, and with a voice that sent the order through the whole length of their extended line; "halt, and let the rear close; if my judgment in walking be worth so much as an anchovy, they are some miles behind us, by this time! a man needs to have crossed his race with the blood of Flying Childers for this sort of work! The next command should be to break our fasts Tom, you brought the trifles I sent you from Major Lincoln's quarters?"

"Yes, Sir," returned his man; "they are on the Major's horses, in the rear, as "

"The Major's horses in the rear, you ass, when food is in such request in the front! I wonder, Leo, if a mouthful couldn't be picked up in yon farm-house?"

"Pick yourself off that stone, and make the men dress; here is Pitcairn closing to the front with the whole battalion."

Lionel had hardly spoken before an order was passed to the light-infantry to look to their arms, and for the grenadiers to prime and load. The presence of the veteran who rode in front of the column, and the hurry of the moment, suppressed the complaints of Polwarth, who was in truth an excellent officer as it respected what he himself termed the 'quiescent details of service.' Three or four companies of the light-corps were detached from the main body, and formed in the open marching order of their exercise, when the old marine, placing himself at their head, gave forth the order to advance again at a quick step. The road now led into a vale, and at some distance a small hamlet of houses was dimly seen through the morning haze, clustered around one of the humble, but decent temples, so common in Massachusetts. The halt, and the brief preparations that succeeded, had excited a powerful interest in the whole of the detachment, who pushed earnestly forward, keeping on the heels of the charger of their veteran leader, as he passed over the ground at a small trot. The air partook of the scent of morning, and the eye was enabled to dwell distinctly on surrounding objects, quickening, aided by the excitement of the action, the blood of the men who had been toiling throughout the night in uncertain obscurity along an unknown, and, apparently, interminable road. Their object now seemed before them and attainable, and they

pressed forward to achieve it in animated but silent earnestness. The plain architecture of the church and of its humble companions had just become distinct, when three or four armed horsemen were seen attempting to anticipate their arrival, by crossing the head of the column, from a by-path.

"Come in," cried an officer of the staff in front, "come in, or quit the place."

The men turned, and rode briskly off, one of their party flashing his piece in a vain attempt to give the alarm. A low mandate was now passed through the ranks to push on, and in a few moments they entered on a full view of the hamlet, the church, and the little green on which it stood. The forms of men were seen moving swiftly across the latter, as a roll of a drum broke from the spot; and there were glimpses of a small body of countrymen, drawn up in the affectation of military parade.

"Push on, light-infantry!" cried their leader, spurring his horse, and advancing with the staff at so brisk a trot, as to disappear round an angle of the church.

Lionel pressed forward with a beating heart for a crowd of horrors rushed across his imagination at the moment, when the stern voice of the major of marines was again heard, shouting

"Disperse, ye rebels, disperse! throw down your arms, and disperse!"

These memorable words were instantly followed by the reports of pistols, and the fatal mandate of `fire!' when a loud shout arose from the whole body of the soldiery, who rushed upon the open green, and threw in a close discharge on all before them.

"Great God!" exclaimed Lionel, "what is it you do? ye fire at unoffending men! is there no law but force! beat up their pieces, Polwarth stop their fire."

"Halt!" cried Polwarth, brandishing his sword fiercely among his men; "come to an order, or I'll fell ye to the earth."

But the excitement which had been gathering to a head for so many hours, and the animosity which had so long been growing between the troops and the people, were not to be repressed at a word. It was only when Pitcairn himself rode in among the soldiers, and, aided by his officers, beat down their arms, that the uproar was gradually quelled, and something like order was again restored. Before this was effected, however, a few scattering shot were thrown back from their flying adversaries, though without material injury to the British.

When the firing had ceased, officers and men stood gazing at each other for a few moments, as if even they could foresee some of the mighty events which were to follow the deeds of that hour. The smoke slowly arose, like a lifted veil from the green, and mingling with the fogs of morning, drove heavily across the country, as if to communicate the fatal intelligence that the final appeal to arms had been made. Every eye was bent inquiringly on the fatal green, and Lionel beheld, with a feeling allied to anguish, a few men at a distance, writhing and struggling in their wounds, while some five or six bodies lay stretched upon the grass, in the appalling quiet of death. Sickening at the sight, he turned, and walked away by himself, while the remainder of the troops, alarmed by the reports of the arms, were eagerly pressing up from the rear to join their comrades. Unwittingly he approached the church, nor did he awake from the deep abstraction into which he had fallen, until he was aroused by the extraordinary spectacle of Job Pray, issuing from the edifice with an air in which menace was singularly blended with resentment and fear. The changeling pointed earnestly to the body of a man, who, having been wounded, had crept for refuge near to the door of the temple in which he had so often worshipped that being to whom he had been thus hurriedly sent to render his last and great account, and said solemnly

"You have killed one of God's creatures; and he'll remember it!"

"I would it were one only," said Lionel; "but they are many, and none can tell where the carnage is to cease."

"Do you think," said Job, looking furtively around to assure himself that no other overheard him, "that the king can kill men in the Bay—colony as he can in London? They'll take this up in old Funnel, and 'twill ring again, from the north—end to the Neck."

"What can they do, boy, after all," said Lionel, forgetting at the moment that he whom he addressed had been denied the reason of his kind "the power of Britain is too mighty for these scattered and unprepared colonies to cope with and prudence would tell the people to desist from resistance while yet they may."

"Does the king believe there is more prudence in London than there is in Boston?" returned the simpleton; "he needn't think, because the people were quiet at the massacre, there'll be no stir about this you have killed one of God's creatures," added the lad, "and he'll remember it!"

"How came you here, sirrah?" demanded Lionel, suddenly recollecting himself; "did you not tell me that you were going out to fish for your mother."

"And if I did," returned the other, sullenly, "an't there fish in the ponds as well as in the bay, and can't Nab have a fresh taste? Job don't know there is any act of Parliament ag'in taking brook trout."

"Fellow, you are attempting to deceive me! Some one is practising on your ignorance, and knowing you to be a fool, is employing you on errands that may one day cost your life."

"The king can't send Job on a'r'nds," said the lad proudly; "for there is no law for it, and Job wont go."

"Your knowledge will undo you, simpleton who should teach you these niceties of the law?"

"Why, do you think the Boston people so dumb as not to know the law!" asked Job, with unfeigned astonishment "and Ralph, too he knows as much law as the king he told me it was ag'in all law to shoot at the minute—men, unless they fired first, because the colony has a right to train whenever it pleases."

"Ralph!" said Lionel, eagerly "can Ralph be with you, then! 'tis impossible; I left him ill, and at home neither would he mingle in such a business as this, at his years."

"I expect Ralph has seen bigger armies than the light—infantry, and grannies, and all the soldiers left in town put together," said Job, evasively.

Lionel was far too generous to practise on the simplicity of his companion, with a view to extract any secret which might endanger his liberty, but he felt a deep concern in the welfare of a young man who had been thrown in his way in the manner already related. He therefore pursued the subject, with the double design to advise Job against any dangerous connexions, and to relieve his own anxiety on the subject of the aged stranger. But to all his interrogatories the lad answered guardedly, and with a discretion which denoted that he possessed no small share of cunning, though a higher order of intellect had been denied him.

"I repeat to you," said Lionel, losing his patience, "that it is important for me to meet the man you call Ralph in the country, and I wish to know if he is to be seen near here."

"Ralph scorns a lie," returned Job "go where he promised to meet you, and see if he don't come."

"But no place was named and this unhappy event may embarrass him, or frighten him "

"Frighten him!" repeated Job, shaking his head with solemn earnestness; "you can't frighten Ralph!"

"His daring may prove his misfortune. Boy, I ask you for the last time whether the old man "

Perceiving Job to shrink back timidly, and lower in his looks, Lionel paused, and casting a glance behind him, beheld the captain of grenadiers standing with folded arms, silently contemplating the body of the American.

"Will you have the goodness to explain to me, Major Lincoln," said the captain, when he perceived himself observed, "why this man lies here dead?"

"You see the wound in his breast?"

"It is a palpable and baistly truth that he has been shot but why, or with what design?"

"I must leave that question to be answered by our superiors, captain M`Fuse," returned Lionel. "It is, however, rumoured that the expedition is out to seize certain magazines of provisions and arms, which the colonists have been collecting, it is feared, with hostile intentions."

"I had my own sagacious thoughts that we were bent on some such glorious errand!" said M`Fuse, with strong contempt expressed in his hard features. "Tell me, Major Lincoln you are certainly but a young soldier, though, being of the staff, you should know does Gage think we can have a war with the arms and ammunition all on one side? We have had a long p'ace, Major Lincoln, and now when there is a small prospect of some of the peculiarities of our profession arising, we are commanded to do the very thing which is most likely to def'ate the object of war."

"I do not know that I rightly understand you, sir," said Lionel; "there can be but little glory gained by such troops as we possess, in a contest with the unarmed and undisciplined inhabitants of any country."

"Exactly my maining, sir; it is quite obvious that we understand each other thoroughly, without a world of circumlocution. The lads are doing very well at present, and if left to themselves a few months longer, it may become a creditable affair. You know, as well as I do, Major Lincoln, that time is necessary to make a soldier, and if they are hurried into the business, you might as well be chasing a mob up Ludgate hill, for the honour you will gain. A discrate officer would nurse this little matter, instead of resorting to such precipitation. To my id'a'a's, sir, the man before us has been butchered, and not slain in honourable battle!"

"There is much reason to fear that others may use the same term in speaking of the affair," returned Lionel; "God knows how much cause we may have to lament the death of the poor man!"

"On that topic, the man may be said to have gone through a business that was to be done, and is not to be done over again," said the captain very coolly, "and therefore his death can be no very great calamity to himself, whatever it may be to us. If these minute-men, and as they stand but minute they 'arn their name like worthy fellows if these minute-men, sir, stood in your way, you should have whipped them from the green with your ramrods."

"Here is one who may tell you that they are not to be treated like children either," said Lionel, turning to the place which had been so recently occupied by Job Pray, but which, to his surprise, he now found vacant. While he was yet looking around him, wondering whither the lad could so suddenly have withdrawn, the drums beat the signal to form, and a general bustle among the soldiery, showed them to be on the eve of further movements. The two gentlemen instantly rejoined their companions, walking thoughtfully towards the troops, though influenced by such totally different views of the recent transactions.

During the short halt of the advance, the whole detachment was again united, and a hasty meal had been taken. The astonishment which succeeded the rencontre, had given place, among the officers, to a military pride, capable of sustaining them in much more arduous circumstances. Even the ardent looks of professional excitement were to be seen in most of their countenances, as with glittering arms, waving banners, and timing their march to the enlivening music of their band, they wheeled from the fatal spot, and advanced again, with proud and measured steps, along the highway. If such was the result of the first encounter on the lofty and tempered spirits of the gentlemen of the detachment, its effect on the common hirelings in the ranks, was still more palpable and revolting. Their coarse jests, and taunting looks, as they moved by the despised victims of their disciplined skill, together with the fierce and boastful expression of brutal triumph, which so many among them betrayed, exhibited the infallible evidence, that having tasted of blood, they were now ready, like tigers, to feed on it till they were glutted.

CHAPTER X.

"There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby clan;
"Fosters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran;
"There was racing, and chasing, on Cannobie Lea. "

Marmion.

The pomp of military parade with which the troops marched from the village of Lexington, as the little hamlet was called, where the foregoing events occurred, soon settled again into the sober and business-like air of men earnestly bent on the achievement of their object. It was no longer a secret that they were to proceed two leagues further into the interior, to destroy the stores already mentioned, and which were now known to be collected at Concord, the town where the Congress of Provincial Delegates, who were substituted by the colonists for the ancient legislatures of the Province, held their meetings. As the march could not now be concealed, it became necessary to resort to expedition, in order to ensure its successful termination. The veteran officer of marines, so often mentioned, resumed his post in front, and at the head of the same companies of the light corps which he had before led, pushed in advance of the heavier column of the grenadiers. Polwarth, by this arrangement, perceived himself again included among those on whose swiftness of foot so much depended. When Lionel rejoined his friend he found him at the head of his men, marching with so grave an air, as at once induced the Major to give him credit for regrets much more commendable than such as were connected with his physical distress. The files were once more opened for room, as well as for air, which was becoming necessary, as a hot sun began to dissipate the mists of the morning, and shed that enervating influence on the men so peculiar to the first warmth of an American Spring.

"This has been a hasty business altogether, Major Lincoln," said Polwarth, as Lionel took his wonted station at the side of the other, and dropped mechanically into the regular step of the party "I know not that it is quite as lawful to knock a man in the head as a bullock."

"You then agree with me in thinking our attack hasty, if not cruel?"

"Hasty! most unequivocally. Haste may be called the distinctive property of the expedition; and whatever destroys the appetite of an honest man, may be set down as cruel. I have not been able to swallow a mouthful of breakfast, Leo. A man must have the cravings of a hyena, and the stomach of an ostrich, to eat and digest with such work as this of ours before his eyes."

"And yet the men regard their acts with triumph!"

"The dogs are drilled into it. But you saw how sober the Provincials looked in the matter; we must endeavour to sooth their feelings in the best manner we can."

"Will they not despise our consolation and apologies, and look rather to themselves for redress and vengeance?"

Polwarth smiled contemptuously, and there was an air of pride about him that gave an appearance of elasticity even to his heavy tread, as he answered

"The thing is a bad thing, Major Lincoln, and, if you will, a wicked thing but take the assurance of a man who knows the country well, there will be no attempts at vengeance; and as for redress, in a military way, the thing is impossible."

"You speak with a confidence, sir, that should find its warranty in an intimate acquaintance with the weakness of the people."

"I have dwelt two years, Major Lincoln, in the very heart of the country," said Polwarth, without turning his eyes from the steady gaze he maintained on the long road which lay before him, "even three hundred miles beyond the inhabited districts; and I should know the character of the nation, as well as its resources. In respect to the latter, there is no esculent thing within its borders, from a humming-bird to a buffalo, or from an artichoke to a water-melon, that I have not, on some occasion or other, had tossed up, in a certain way therefore, I can speak with confidence, and do not hesitate to say, that the colonists will never fight; nor, if they had the disposition, do they possess the means to maintain a war."

"Perhaps, sir," returned Lionel sharply, "you have consulted the animals of the country too closely to be acquainted with its spirits?"

"The relation between them is intimate tell me what food a man diets on, and I will furnish you with his character. 'Tis morally impossible that a people who eat their pudding before the meats, after the fashion of these colonists, can ever make good soldiers, because the appetite is appeased before the introduction of the succulent nutriment of the flesh, into "

"Enough! spare me the remainder," interrupted Lionel "too much has been said already to prove the inferiority of the American to the European animal, and your reasoning is conclusive."

"Parliament must do something for the families of the sufferers."

"Parliament!" echoed Lionel, with bitter emphasis; "yes, we shall be called on to pass resolutions to commend the decision of the General, and the courage of the troops; and then, after we have added every possible insult to the injury, under the conviction of our imaginary supremacy, we may hear of some paltry sum to the widows and orphans, cited as an evidence of the unbounded generosity of the nation!"

"The feeding of six or seven broods of young Yankees is no such trifle, Major Lincoln," returned Polwarth; "and there I trust the unhappy affair will end. We are now marching on Concord, a place with a most auspicious name, where we shall find repose under its shadow, as well as the food of this home-made parliament, which they have gotten together. These considerations alone support me under the fatigue of this direful trot with which old Pitcairn goes over the ground does the man think he is hunting with a pack of beagles at his heels!"

The opinion expressed by his companion, concerning the martial propensities of the Americans, was one too common among the troops to excite any surprise in Lionel, but disgusted with the illiberality of the sentiment, and secretly offended at the supercilious manner with which the other expressed these injurious opinions of his countrymen, he continued his route in silence, while Polwarth speedily lost his loquacious propensity, in a sense

of the fatigue that assailed every muscle and joint in his body.

That severe training of the corps, concerning which the captain vented such frequent complaints, now stood the advance in good service. It was apparent that the whole country was in a state of high alarm, and small bodies of armed men were occasionally seen on the heights that flanked their route, though no attempts were made to revenge the deaths of those who fell at Lexington. The march of the troops was accelerated rather with a belief that the colonists might remove, or otherwise secrete the stores, than from any apprehension that they would dare to oppose the progress of the chosen troops of the army. The slight resistance of the Americans in the rencontre of that morning, was already a jest among the soldiers, who sneeringly remarked, that the term of "minute-men," was deservedly applied to warriors who had proved themselves so dexterous at flight. In short, every opprobrious and disrespectful epithet that contempt and ignorance could invent, were freely lavished on the forbearing mildness of the suffering colonists. In this temper the troops reached a point whence the modest spire and roofs of Concord became visible. A small body of the colonists retired through the place as the English advanced, and the detachment entered the town without the least resistance, and with the appearance of conquerors. Lionel was not long in discovering from such of the inhabitants as remained, that, notwithstanding their approach had been known for some time, the events of that morning were yet a secret from the people of the village. Detachments from the light corps were immediately sent in various directions; some to search for the ammunition and provisions, and some to guard the approaches to the place. One, in particular, followed the retreating footsteps of the Americans, and took post at a bridge, at some little distance, which cut off the communication with the country to the northward.

In the meantime, the work of destruction was commenced in the town, chiefly under the superintendance of the veteran officer of the marines. The few male inhabitants who remained in their dwellings, were of necessity peaceable, though Lionel could read in their flushed cheeks and gleaming eyes, the secret indignation of men, who, accustomed to the protection of the law, now found themselves subjected to the insults and wanton abuses of a military inroad. Every door was flung open, and no place was held sacred from the rude scrutiny of the licentious soldiery. Taunts and execrations soon mingled with the seeming moderation with which the search had commenced, and loud exultation was betrayed, even among the officers, as the scanty provisions of the colonists were gradually brought to light. It was not a moment to respect private rights, and the freedom and ribaldry of the men were on the point of becoming something more serious, when the report of fire-arms was heard suddenly to issue from the post held by the light-infantry, at the bridge. A few scattering shot were succeeded by a volley, which was answered by another, with the quickness of lightning, and then the air became filled with the incessant rattling of a sharp conflict. Every arm was suspended, and each tongue became mute with astonishment, and the men abandoned their occupations as these unexpected sounds of war broke on their ears. The chiefs of the party were seen in consultation, and horsemen rode furiously into the place, to communicate the nature of this new conflict. The rank of Major Lincoln soon obtained for him a knowledge that it was thought impolitic to communicate to the whole detachment. Notwithstanding it was apparent that they who brought the intelligence were anxious to give it the most favourable aspect, he soon discovered that the same body of Americans which had retired at their approach, having attempted to return to their homes in the town, had been fired on at the bridge, and in the skirmish which succeeded, the troops had been compelled to give way with loss. The effect of this prompt and spirited conduct on the part of the provincials produced a sudden alteration, not only in the aspect, but also in the proceedings of the troops. The detachments were recalled, the drums beat to arms, and, for the first time, both officers and men seemed to recollect that they had six leagues to march through a country that hardly contained a friend. Still few or no enemies were visible, with the exception of those men of Concord, who had already drawn blood freely from the invaders of their domestic sanctuaries. The dead, and all the common wounded, were left where they had fallen, and it was thought an unfavourable omen among the observant of the detachment, that a wounded young subaltern, of rank and fortune, was also abandoned to the mercy of the exasperated Americans. The privates caught the infection from their officers, and Lionel saw, that in place of the high and insulting confidence with which the troops had wheeled into the streets of Concord, that they left them, when the order was given to march, with faces bent anxiously on the surrounding heights, and with looks that bespoke a consciousness of the dangers that were likely to beset the long road which lay before them.

Their apprehensions were not groundless. The troops had hardly commenced their march before a volley was fired upon them from the protection of a barn, and as they advanced, volley succeeded volley, and musket answered musket from behind every cover that offered to their assailants. At first these desultory and feeble attacks were but little regarded; a brisk charge, and a smart fire of a few moments never failing to disperse their enemies, when the troops again proceeded for a short distance unmolested. But the alarm of the preceding night had gathered the people over an immense extent of country; and, having waited for information, those nearest to the scene of action were already pressing forward to the assistance of their friends. There was but little order, and no concert among the Americans; but each party, as it arrived, pushed into the fray, hanging on the skirts of their enemies, or making spirited though ineffectual efforts to stop their progress. While the men from the towns behind them, pressed upon their rear, the population in their front accumulated in bodies, like a rolling ball of snow, and before half the distance between Concord and Lexington was accomplished, Lionel perceived that the safety of their boasted power was in extreme jeopardy. During the first hour of these attacks, while they were yet distant, desultory, and feeble, the young soldier had marched by the side of M^r Fuse, who shook his head disdainfully whenever a shot whistled near him, and did not fail to comment freely on the folly of commencing a war thus prematurely, which, if properly nursed, might, to use his own words, "be in time brought to something pretty and interesting."

"You perceive, Major Lincoln," he added, "that these Provincials have got the first elements of the art, for the rascals fire with exceeding accuracy, when the distance is considered; and six months or a year of close drilling would make them good for something in a regular charge. They have got a smart crack to their p'aces, and a pretty whiz to their lead already; if they could but learn to deliver their fire in platoons, the lads might make some impression on the light-infantry even now; and in a year or two, sir, they would not be unworthy of the favours of the grenadiers."

Lionel listened to this, and much other similar discourse, with a vacant ear; but as the combat thickened, the blood of the young man began to course more swiftly through his veins; and at length, excited by the noise and the danger which was pressing more closely around them, he mounted, and riding to the commander of the detachment, tendered his assistance as a volunteer aid, having lost every other sensation in youthful blood, and the pride of arms. He was immediately charged with orders for the advance, and driving his spurs into his steed, he dashed through the scattered line of fighting and jaded troops, and galloped to its head. Here he found several companies, diligently employed in clearing the way for their comrades, as new foes appeared at every few rods that they advanced. Even as Lionel approached, a heavy sheet of fire flashed from a close barn-yard, full in the faces of the leading files, sending the swift engines of death into the very centre of the party.

"Wheel a company of the light-infantry, captain Polwarth," cried the old major of marines, who battled stoutly in the van, "and drive the skulking scoundrels from their ambush."

"Oh! by the sweets of ease, and the hopes of a halt! but here is another tribe of these white savages!" responded the unfortunate captain "Look out, my brave men! blaze away over the walls on your left give no quarter to the annoying rascals get the first shot give them a foot of your steel."

While venting such terrible denunciations and commands, which were drawn from the peaceable captain by the force of circumstances, Lionel beheld his friend disappear amid the buildings of the farm-yard in a cloud of smoke, followed by his troops. In a few minutes afterwards, as the line toiled its way up the hill on which this scene occurred, Polwarth re-appeared, issuing from the fray with his face blackened and grimed with powder, while a sheet of flame arose from the spot which soon laid the devoted buildings of the unfortunate husbandman in ruins.

"Ha! Major Lincoln," he cried, as he approached the other, "do you call these light-infantry movements! to me they are the torments of the damned! Go, you who have influence, and what is better, a horse, go to Smith, and tell him if he will call a halt, I will engage, with my single company, to seat ourselves in any field he may select,

and keep these blood-suckers at bay for an hour, while the detachment can rest and satisfy their hunger trusting that he will then allow time for his defenders to perform the same necessary operations. A night-march, no breakfast a burning sun mile after mile no halt, and nothing but fire fire 'tis opposed to every principle in physics, and even to the anatomy of man to think he can endure it!"

Lionel endeavoured to encourage his friend to new exertions, and turning away from their leader, spoke cheerfully, and with a martial tone, to his troops. The men cheered as they passed, and dashed forward to new encounters; the Americans yielding sullenly, but necessarily, to the constant charges of the bayonet, to which the regulars resorted to dislodge them. As the advance moved on again, Lionel turned to contemplate the scene in the rear. They had now been marching and fighting for two hours, with little or no cessation, and it was but too evident that the force of the assailants was increasing, both in numbers and in daring, at each step they took. On either side of the highway, along the skirts of every wood or orchard, in the open fields, and from every house, barn, or cover in sight, the flash of fire-arms was to be seen, while the shouts of the English grew, at each instant, feebler and less inspiring. Heavy clouds of smoke rose above the valley, into which he looked, and mingled with the dust of the march, drawing an impenetrable veil before the view; but as the wind, at moments, shoved it aside, he caught glimpses of the worried and faltering platoons of the party, sometimes breasting and repulsing an attack with spirit, and at others shrinking from the contest, with an ill-concealed desire to urge their retreat to the verge of an absolute flight. Young as he was, Major Lincoln knew enough of his profession to understand that nothing but the want of concert, and of a unity of command among the Americans, saved the detachment from total destruction. The attacks were growing extremely spirited, and not unfrequently close and bloody, though the discipline of the troops enabled them still to bear up against this desultory and divided warfare, when Lionel heard, with a pleasure he could not conceal, the loud shouts that arose from the van, as the cheering intelligence was proclaimed through the ranks, that the cloud of dust in their front was raised by a chosen brigade of their comrades, which had come most timely to their succour, with the Heir of Northumberland at its head. The Americans gave way as the two detachments joined, and the artillery of the succours opened upon their flying parties, giving a few minutes of stolen rest to those who needed it so much. Polwarth threw himself flat on the earth, as Lionel dismounted at his side, and his example was followed by the whole party, who lay panting, under the heat and fatigue, like worried deer, that had succeeded in throwing the hounds from their scent.

"As I am a gentleman of simple habits, and a man innocent of all this bloodshed, Major Lincoln," said the captain, "I pronounce this march to be a most unjust draft on the resources of human nature. I have journeyed at least five leagues between this spot and that place of discord that they falsely call Concord, within two hours, amidst dust, smoke, groans, and other infernal cries, that would cause the best trained racer in England to bolt; and breathing an air, all the time, that would boil an egg in two minutes and a quarter, if fairly exposed to it."

"You overrate the distance 'tis but two leagues by the stones "

"Stones!" interrupted Polwarth "I scorn their lies I have a leg here that is a better index for miles, feet, or even inches, than was ever chiseled in stone."

"We must not contest this idle point," returned Lionel, "for I see the troops are about to dine; and we have need of every moment to reach Boston before the night closes around us."

"Eat! Boston! night!" slowly repeated Polwarth, raising himself on one arm, and staring wildly about him. "Surely no man among us is so mad as to talk of moving from this spot short of a week it would take half that time to receive the internal refreshment necessary to our systems, and the remainder to restore us healthy appetites."

"Such, however, are the orders of the Earl Percy, from whom I learn that the whole country is rising in our front."

"Ay, but they are fellows who slept peacefully in their beds the past night; and I dare say that every dog among them ate his half-pound of pork, together with additions suitable for a breakfast, before he crossed his threshold

this morning. But with us the case is different. It is incumbent on two thousand British troops to move with deliberation, if it should be only for the credit of his majesty's arms. No, no the gallant Percy too highly respects his princely lineage and name to assume the appearance of flight before a mob of base-born hinds!"

The intelligence of Lionel was nevertheless true; for after a short halt, allowing barely time enough to the troops to eat a hasty meal, the drums again beat the signal to march, and Polwarth, as well as many hundred others, was reluctantly compelled to resume his feet, under the penalty of being abandoned to the fury of the exasperated Americans. While the troops were in a state of rest, the field-pieces of the reinforcement kept their foes at a distance, but the instant the guns were limbered, and the files had once more opened for room, the attacks were renewed from every quarter, with redoubled fury. The excesses of the troops, who had begun to vent their anger by plundering and firing the dwellings that they passed, added to the bitterness of the attacks, and the march had not been renewed many minutes, before a fiercer conflict raged along its skirts than had been before witnessed on that day.

"Would to God that the great Northumbrian would form us in order of battle, and make a fair field with the Yankees," groaned Polwarth, as he toiled his way once more with the advance "half an hour would settle the matter, and a man would then possess the gratification of seeing himself a victor, or at least of knowing that he was comfortably and quietly dead."

"Few of us would ever arrive in the morning, if we left the Americans a night to gather in; and a halt of an hour would lose us the advantages of the whole march," returned Lionel "Cheer up, my old comrade, and you will establish your reputation for activity for ever here comes a party of the Provincials over the crest of the hill to keep you in employment."

Polwarth cast a look of despair at Lionel, as he muttered in reply

"Employment! God knows that there has not been a single muscle, sinew, or joint in my body in a state of wholesome rest for four-and-twenty hours!" Then turning to his men, he cried, with tones so cheerful and animated, that they seemed to proceed from a final and closing exertion, as he led them gallantly into the approaching fray "Scatter the dogs, my brave friends away with them like gnats, like mosquitos, like leeches, as they are give it them lead and steel by handful"

"On push on with the advance!" shouted the old major of marines, who observed the leading platoons to stagger.

The voice of Polwarth was once more heard in the din, and their irregular assailants sullenly yielded before the charge.

"On on with the advance!" cried fifty voices out of a cloud of smoke and dust that was moving up the hill, on whose side this encounter occurred.

In this manner the war continued to roll slowly onward, following the weary and heavy foot-steps of the soldiery, who had now toiled for many miles, surrounded by the din of battle, and leaving in their path the bloody impressions of their footsteps. Lionel was enabled to trace their route, far towards the north, by the bright red spots, which lay scattered in alarming numbers along the highway, and in the fields through which the troops occasionally moved. He even found time, in the intervals of rest, to note the difference in the characters of the combatants. Whenever the ground or the circumstances admitted of a regular attack, the dying confidence of the troops would seem restored, and they moved up to the charge with the bold carriage which high discipline inspires, rending the air with shouts, while their enemies melted before their power in sullen silence, never ceasing to use their weapons however, with an expertness that rendered them doubly dangerous. The direction of the columns frequently brought the troops over ground that had been sharply contested in front, and the victims of these short struggles came under the eyes of the detachment. It was necessary to turn a deaf ear to the cries and

prayers of many wounded soldiers, who, with horror and abject fear written on every feature of their countenances, were the helpless witnesses of the retreating files of their comrades. On the other hand, the American lay in his blood, regarding the passing detachment with a stern and indignant eye, that appeared to look far beyond his individual suffering. Over one body, Lionel pulled the reins of his horse, and he paused a moment to consider the spectacle. It was the lifeless form of a man, whose white locks, hollow cheeks, and emaciated frame, denoted that the bullet which had stricken him to the earth had anticipated the irresistible decrees of time but a very few days. He had fallen on his back, and his glazed eye expressed, even in death, the honest resentment he had felt while living; and his palsied hand continued to grasp the fire-lock, old and time-worn, like its owner, with which he had taken the field in behalf of his country.

"Where can a contest end which calls such champions to its aid!" exclaimed Lionel, observing that the shadow of another spectator fell across the wan features of the dead "who can tell where this torrent of blood can be stayed, or how many are to be its victims!"

Receiving no answer, he raised his eyes, and discovered that he had unwittingly put this searching question to the very man whose rashness had precipitated the war. It was the major of marines, who sat looking at the sight, for a minute, with an eye as vacant as the one that seemed to throw back his wild gaze, and then rousing from his trance, he buried his rowels in the flanks of his horse, and disappeared in the smoke that enveloped a body of the grenadiers, waving his sword on high, and shouting

"On push on with the advance!"

Major Lincoln slowly followed, musing on the scene he had witnessed, when, to his surprise, he encountered Polwarth, seated on a rock by the roadside, looking with a listless and dull eye at the retreating columns. Checking his charger, he inquired of his friend if he were hurt.

"Only melted," returned the captain; "I have outdone the speed of man this day, Major Lincoln, and can do no more. If you see any of my friends in dear England, tell them that I met my fate as a soldier should, stationary; though I am actually melting away in rivulets, like the snows of April."

"Good God! you will not remain here to be slain by the Provincials, by whom you see we are completely enveloped?"

"I am preparing a speech for the first Yankee who may approach. If he be a true man he will melt into tears at my sufferings this day if a savage, my heirs will be spared the charges of my funeral."

Lionel would have continued his remonstrances, but a fierce encounter between a flanking party of the troops and a body of Americans, drove the former close upon him, and leaping the wall he rallied his comrades, and turned the tide of battle in their favour. He was drawn far from the spot by the vicissitudes of the combat, and there was a moment, while passing from one body of the troops to another, that he found himself unexpectedly alone, in a most dangerous vicinity to a small wood. The hurried call of "pick off that officer," first aroused him to his extreme danger, and he had mechanically bowed himself on the neck of his charger, in expectation of the fatal messengers, when a voice was heard among the Americans, crying, in tones that caused every nerve in his body to thrill

"Spare him! for the love of that God you worship, spare him!"

The overwhelming sensations of the moment prevented flight, and the young man beheld Ralph, running with frantic gestures, along the skirts of the cover, beating up the fire-arms of twenty Americans, and repeating his cries in a voice that did not seem to belong to a human being then, in the confusion which whirled through his brain, Lionel thought himself a prisoner, as a man, armed with a long rifle, glided from the wood, and laid his

hand on the rein of his bridle, saying earnestly

"'Tis a bloody day, and God will remember it; but if Major Lincoln will ride straight down the hill, the people wont fire for fear of hitting Job and when Job fires, he'll shoot that granny who's getting over the wall, and there'll never be a stir about it in Funnel-Hall."

Lionel wheeled away quicker than thought, and as his charger took long and desperate leaps down the slight declivity, he heard the shouts of the Americans behind him, the crack of Job's rifle, and the whizzing of the bullet which the changeling sent, as he had promised, in a direction to do him no harm. On gaining a place of comparative safety, he found Pitcairn in the act of abandoning his bleeding horse, the close and bitter attacks of the Provincials rendering it no longer safe for an officer to be seen riding on the flanks of the detachment. Lionel, though he valued his steed highly, had also received so many intimations of the dangerous notice he had attracted, that he was soon obliged to follow this example, and he saw, with deep regret, the noble animal scouring across the fields with a loose rein, snorting and snuffing the tainted air. He now joined a party of the combatants on foot, and continued to animate them to new exertions during the remainder of the tedious way.

From the moment the spires of Boston met the view of the troops, the struggle became intensely interesting. New vigour was imparted to their weary frames by the cheering sight, and assuming once more the air of high martial training, they bore up against the assaults of their enemies with renewed spirit. On the other hand, the Americans seemed aware that the moments of vengeance were passing swiftly away, and boys, and grey-headed men, the wounded and the active, crowded around their invaders, as if eager to obtain a parting blow. Even the peaceful ministers of God were known to take the field on that memorable occasion, and, mingling with their parishioners, to brave every danger in a cause which they believed in consonance with their holy calling. The sun was sinking over the land, and the situation of the detachment had become nearly desperate, when Percy abandoned the idea of reaching the Neck, across which he had proudly marched that morning from Boston, and strained every nerve to get the remainder of his command within the peninsula of Charlestown. The crests and the sides of the heights were alive with men, and as the shades of evening closed about the combatants, the bosoms of the Americans beat high with hope, while they witnessed the faltering steps and slackened fire of the troops. But high discipline, finally so far prevailed as to snatch the English from the very grasp of destruction, and enabled them to gain the narrow entrance to the desired shelter, just as night had come apparently to seal their doom.

Lionel stood leaning against a fence, as this fine body of men, which a few hours before had thought themselves equal to a march through the colonies, defiled slowly and heavily by him, dragging their weary and exhausted limbs up the toilsome ascent of Bunker-Hill. The haughty eyes of most of the officers were bent to the earth in shame; and the common herd, even in that place of security, cast many an anxious glance behind them, to assure themselves that the despised inhabitants of the Province were no longer pressing on their footsteps. Platoon after platoon passed, each man compelled to depend on his own wearied limbs for support, until Lionel at last saw a solitary horseman slowly ascending among the crowd. To his utter amazement and great joy, as this officer approached, he beheld Polwarth, mounted on his own steed, riding towards him, with a face of the utmost complacency and composure. The dress of the captain was torn in many places, and the housings of the saddle were cut into ribands, while here and there a spot of clotted blood, on the sides of the beast, served to announce the particular notice the rider had received from the Americans. The truth was soon extorted from the honest soldier. The love of life had returned with the sight of the abandoned charger. He acknowledged it had cost him his watch to have the beast caught; but once established in the saddle, no danger, nor any remonstrances, could induce him to relinquish a seat which he found so consoling after all the fatigue and motion of that evil day, in which he had been compelled to share in the calamities of those who fought on the side of the crown, in the memorable battle of Lexington.

CHAPTER XI.

"*Fluel*. Is it not lawful, an' please your majesty, "To tell how many is killed."

King Henry V.

While a strong party of the royal troops took post on the height which commanded the approach to their position, the remainder penetrated deeper into the peninsula, or were transported by the boats of the fleet to the town of Boston. Lionel and Polwarth passed the strait with the first division of the wounded, the former having no duty to detain him any longer with the detachment, and the latter stoutly maintaining that his corporeal sufferings gave him an undoubted claim to include his case among the casualties of the day. Perhaps no officer in the army of the king felt less chagrin at the result of this inroad than Major Lincoln; for notwithstanding his attachment to his Prince, and adopted country, he was keenly sensitive on the subject of the reputation of his real countrymen; a sentiment that is honourable to our nature, and which never deserts any that do not become disloyal to its purest and noblest impulses. Even while he regretted the price at which his comrades had been taught to appreciate the characters of those whose long and mild forbearance had been misconstrued into pusillanimity, he rejoiced that the eyes of the more aged would now be opened to the truth, and that the mouths of the young and thoughtless were to be for ever closed in shame. Although the actual losses of the two detachments were probably concealed from motives of policy, it was early acknowledged to amount to about one-sixth of the whole number employed.

On the wharf, Lionel and Polwarth separated; the latter agreeing to repair speedily to the private quarters of his friend, where he promised himself a solace for the compulsory abstinence and privations of his long march, and the former taking his way towards Tremont-street, with a view to allay the uneasiness which the secret and flattering whisperings of hope taught him to believe his fair young kinswomen would feel in his behalf. At every corner he encountered groups of earnest townsmen, listening with greedy ears to the particulars of the contest, a few walking away dejected at the spirit exhibited by that country they had villified to its oppressors, but most of them regarding the passing form of one whose disordered dress announced his participation in the affair, with glances of stern satisfaction. As Lionel tapped at the door of Mrs. Lechmere, he forgot his fatigue; and when it opened, and he beheld Cecil standing in the hall, with every lineament of her fine countenance expressing the power of her emotions, he no longer remembered those trying dangers he had so lately escaped.

"Lionel!" exclaimed the young lady, clasping her hands with joy "himself, and unhurt!" The blood rushed from her heart across her face to her forehead, and burying her shame in her hands, she burst into a flood of tears, and fled his presence.

Agnes Danforth received him with undisguised pleasure, nor would she indulge in a single question to appease her burning curiosity, until thoroughly assured of his perfect safety. Then, indeed, she remarked, with a smile of triumph seated on her arch features

"Your march has been well attended, Major Lincoln; from the upper windows I have seen some of the honours which the good people of the Massachusetts have paid to their visitors."

"On my soul, if it were not for the dreadful consequences which must follow, I rejoice as well as yourself, in the events of the day," said Lincoln; "for a people are never certain of their rights, until they are respected."

"Tell me then all, cousin Lincoln, that I may know how to boast of my parentage."

The young man gave her a short, but distinct and impartial account of all that had occurred, to which his fair listener attended with undisguised interest.

"Now, then," she exclaimed, as he ended, "there is an end for ever of those biting taunts that have so long insulted our ears! But you know," she added, with a slight blush, and a smile most comically arch, "I had a double stake in the fortunes of the day my country and my true love!"

"Oh! be at ease; your worshipper has returned, whole in body, and suffering in mind only through your cruelty he performed the route with wonderful address, and really showed himself a soldier in danger."

"Nay, Major Lincoln," returned Agnes, still blushing, though she laughed, "you do not mean to insinuate that Peter Polwarth has walked forty miles between the rising and setting of the sun."

"Between two sun-sets he has done the deed, if you except a trifling *promenade à cheval*, on my own steed, whom Jonathan compelled me to abandon, and of whom he took, and maintained the possession, too, in spite of dangers of every kind."

"Really," exclaimed the wilful girl, clasping her hands in affected astonishment, though Lionel thought he could read inward satisfaction at his intelligence "the prodigies of the man exceed belief! one wants the faith of father Abraham to credit such marvels! though, after the repulse of two thousand British soldiers by a body of husbandmen, I am prepared for an exceeding use of my credulity."

"The moment is then auspicious for my friend," whispered Lionel, rising to follow the flitting form of Cecil Dynevor, which he saw gliding into the opposite room, as Polwarth himself entered the apartment "credulity is said to be the great weakness of your sex, and I must leave you a moment exposed to the failing, and that, too, in the dangerous company of the subject of our discourse."

"Now would you give half your hopes of promotion, and all your hopes of a war, captain Polwarth, to know in what manner your character has been treated in your absence," cried Agnes, blushing slightly. "I shall not, however, satisfy the cravings of your curiosity, but let it serve as a stimulant to better deeds than have employed you since we met last."

"I trust Lincoln has done justice to my service," returned the good-humoured captain, "and that he has not neglected to mention the manner in which I rescued his steed from the rebels."

"The what, sir," interrupted Agnes, with a frown "how did you style the good people of Massachusetts-Bay?"

"I should have said the excited dwellers in the land, I believe. Ah! Miss Agnes, I have suffered this day as man never suffered before, and all on your behalf "

"On my behalf! your words require explanation, captain Polwarth."

"'Tis impossible," returned the captain "there are feelings and actions connected with the heart that will admit of no explanation. All I know is, that I have suffered unutterably on your account, to-day; and what is unutterable is in a great degree inexplicable."

"I shall set this down for what I understand occurs regularly in a certain description of tête-à-têtes the expression of an unutterable thing! Surely, Major Lincoln had some reason to believe he left me at the mercy of my credulity!"

"You slander your own character, fair Agnes," said Polwarth, endeavouring to look piteously; "you are neither merciful nor credulous, or you would long since have believed my tale, and taken pity on my misery."

"Is not sympathy a sort a kind in short, is not sympathy a dreadful symptom in a certain disease?" asked Agnes, resting her eyes on the floor, and affecting a girlish embarrassment.

"Who can gainsay it!" cried the captain; "'tis the infallible way for a young lady to discover the bent of her inclinations. Thousands have lived in ignorance of their own affections until their sympathies have been awakened. But what means the question, my fair tormentor? May I dare to flatter myself that you at length feel for my pains!"

"I am sadly afraid 'tis but too true, Polwarth," returned Agnes, shaking her head, and continuing to look exceedingly grave.

Polwarth moved, with something like animation again, nigher to the amused girl; and attempted to take her hand, as he said

"You restore me to life with your sweet acknowledgments I have lived for six months like a dog under your frowns, but one kind word acts like a healing balm, and restores me to myself again!"

"Then my sympathy is evaporated!" returned Agnes. "Throughout this long and anxious day have I fancied myself older than my good, staid, great-aunt; and whenever certain thoughts have crossed my mind, I have even imagined a thousand of the ailings of age had encircled me rheumatisms, gouts, asthmas, and numberless other aches and pains, exceedingly unbecoming to a young lady of nineteen. But you have enlightened me, and given vast relief to my apprehensions, by explaining it to be no more than sympathy. You see, Polwarth, what a wife you will obtain, should I ever, in a weak moment, accept you, for I have already sustained one-half your burthens!"

"A man is not made to be in constant motion, like the pendulum of that clock, Miss Danforth, and yet feel no fatigue," said Polwarth, more vexed than he would permit himself to betray; "yet I flatter myself there is no officer in the light-infantry you understand me to say the light-infantry who has passed over more ground within four-and-twenty hours, than the man who hastens, notwithstanding his exploits, to throw himself at your feet, even before he thinks of his ordinary rest."

"Captain Polwarth," said Agnes, rising, "for the compliment, if compliment it be, I thank you; but," she added, losing her affected gravity in a strong natural feeling that shone in her dark eye, and illuminated the whole of her fine countenance, as she laid her hand impressively on her heart "the man who will supplant the feelings which nature has impressed here, must not come to my feet, as you call it, from a field of battle, where he has been contending with my kinsmen, and helping to enslave my country. You will excuse me, sir, but as Major Lincoln is at home here, permit me, for a few minutes, to leave you to his hospitality."

She withdrew as Lionel re-entered, passing him on the threshold.

"I would rather be a leader in a stage-coach, or a running footman, than in love!" cried Polwarth "'tis a dog's life, Leo, and this girl treats me like a cart-horse! But what an eye she has! I could have lighted my segar by it my heart is a heap of cinders. Why, Leo, what aileth thee! throughout the whole of this damnable day, I have not before seen thee bear such a troubled look!"

"Let us withdraw to my private quarters," muttered the young man, whose aspect and air expressed the marks of extreme disturbance "'tis time to repair the disasters of our march."

"All that has been already looked to," said Polwarth, rising and limping, with sundry grimaces, in the best manner he was able, in a vain effort to equal the rapid strides of his companion. "My first business on leaving you was to borrow a conveyance of a friend, in which I rode to your place; and my next was to write to little Jimmy Craig, to

offer an exchange of my company for his for from this hour henceforth I denounce all light-infantry movements, and shall take the first opportunity to get back again into the dragoons, as soon as I have effected which, major Lincoln, I propose to treat with you for the purchase of that horse after that duty was performed, for, if self-preservation be commendable, it became a duty, I made out a bill of fare for Meriton, in order that nothing might be forgotten; after which, like yourself Lionel, I hastened to the feet of my mistress Ah! Major Lincoln, you are a happy man; for you, there is no reception but smiles and charms so"

"Talk not to me sir, of smiles," interrupted Lionel, impatiently, "nor of the charms of woman. They are all alike, capricious and unaccountable."

"Bless me!" exclaimed Polwarth, staring about him in wonder; "there is then favour for none, in this place, who battle for the King! There is a strange connexion between Cupid and Mars, love and war; for here did I, after fighting all day like a Saracen, a Turk, Jenghis Khan, or, in short, any thing but a good Christian, come with full intent to make a serious offer of my hand, commission, and of Polwarth-Hall, to that treasonable vixen, when she repulses me with a frown and a sarcasm as biting as the salutation of a hungry man. But what an eye the girl has, and what a bloom, when she is a little more seasoned than common! Then you, too, Lionel, have been treated like a dog!"

"Like a fool, as I am," said Lionel, pacing haughtily over the ground at a rate that soon threw his companion too far in the rear to admit of further discourse until they reached the place of their destination. Here, to the no small surprise of both gentlemen, they found a company collected that neither was prepared to meet. At a side-table, sat M'Fuse, discussing, with singular relish, some of the cold viands of the previous night's repast, and washing down his morsels with deep potations of the best wine of his host. In one corner of the room, Seth Sage was posted, with the appearance of a man in duress, his hands being tied before him, from which depended a long cord that might, on emergency, be made to serve the purpose of a halter. Opposite to the prisoner, for such in truth he was, stood Job, imitating the example of the Captain of Grenadiers, who now and then tossed some fragment of his meal into the hat of the simpleton. Meriton and several of the menials of the establishment were in waiting.

"What have we here!" cried Lionel, regarding the scene with a curious eye; "of what offence has Mr. Sage been guilty, that he bears those bonds?"

"Of the small crimes of tr'ason and homicide," returned M'Fuse, "if shooting at a man, with a hearty mind to kill him, can make a murder."

"It can't," said Seth, raising his eyes from the floor, where he had hitherto kept them in demure silence; "a man must kill with wicked intent to commit murder"

"Hear to the blackguard, daitailing the law as if he were my Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench!" interrupted the grenadier; "and what was your own wicked intention, ye skulking vagabond, but to kill me! I'll have you tried and hung for the same act."

"It's ag'in reason to believe that any jury will convict one man for the murder of another that a'nt dead," said Seth "there's no jury to be found in the Bay-colony, to do it."

"Bay-colony! ye murdering thief and rebel!" cried the Captain; "I'll have ye transported to England; ye shall be both transported and hung. By the Lord, I'll carry ye back to Ireland with me, and I'll hang ye up in the green Island itself, and bury ye, in the heart of winter, in a bog"

"But what is the offence," demanded Lionel, "that calls forth these severe threats?"

"The scoundrel has been out"

"Out!"

"Ay, out damn it, sir, has not the whole country been like so many bees in search of a hive! Is your memory so short that ye forget, already, Major Lincoln, the tramp the blackguards have given you over hill and dale, through thick and thin?"

"And was Mr. Sage, then, found among our enemies to day?"

"Didn't I see him pull trigger on my own stature, three times within as many minutes!" returned the angry captain; "and didn't he break the handle of my sword? and have not I a bit of lead he calls a buck-shot in my shoulder as a present from the thief?"

"It's ag'in all law to call a man a thief," said Job, "unless you can prove it upon him; but it an't ag'in law to go in and out of Boston as often as you choose."

"Do you hear the rascals! They know every angle of the law as well, or better than I do myself, who am the son of a Cork counsellor. I dare to say, you were among them too, and that ye deserve the gallows as well as your commendable companion, there."

"How is this!" said Lionel, turning quickly away from Job, with a view to prevent a reply that might endanger the safety of the changeling; "did you not only mingle in this rebellion, Mr. Sage, but also attempt the life of a gentleman who may be said, almost, to be an inmate of your own house?"

"I conclude," returned Seth, "it's best not to talk too much, seeing that no one can foretell what may happen."

"Hear to the cunning reprobate! he has not the grace to acknowledge his own sins, like an honest man," interrupted M`Fuse; "but I can save him that small trouble I got tired, you must know Major Lincoln, of being shot at like noxious vermin, from morning till night, without making some return to the compliments of those gentlemen who are out on the hills; and I took advantage of a turn, ye see, to double on a party of the uncivilized demons; this lad, here, got three good pulls at me, before we closed and made an end of them with the steel, all but this fellow, who having a becoming look for a gallows, I brought him in, as you see, for an exchange, intending to hang him the first favourable opportunity."

"If this be true we must give him into the hands of the proper authorities," said Lionel, smiling at the confused account of the angry captain "for it remains to be seen yet what course will be adopted with the prisoners in this singular contest."

"I should think nothing of the matter," returned M`Fuse, "if the reprobate had not tr'ated me like a beast of the field, with his buck-shot, and taking his aim each time, as though I had been a mad-dog. Ye villain, do you call yourself a man, and aim at a fellow-creature as you would at a brute?"

"Why," said Seth, sullenly, "when a man has pretty much made up his mind to fight, I conclude it's best to take aim, in order to save ammunition and time."

"You acknowledge the charge, then!" demanded Lionel.

"As the major is a moderate man, and will hear to reason, I will talk the matter over with him rationally," said Seth, disposing himself to speak more to the purpose. "You see I had a small call to Concurd early this morning"

"Concord!" exclaimed Lionel

"Yes, Concurd," returned Seth, laying great stress on the first syllable, and speaking with an air of extreme innocence "it lies here—away, say twenty or one—and—twenty miles"

"Damn your Concorde and your miles too," cried Polwarth; "is there a man in the army who can forget the deceitful place! Go on with your defence, without talking to us of the distance, who have measured the road by inches."

"The captain is hasty and rash!" said the deliberate prisoner "but being there, I went out of the town with some company that I happened in with; and after a time we concluded to return and so, as we came to a bridge about a mile beyond the place, we received considerable rough treatment from some of the king's troops, who were standing there "

"What did they?"

"They fired at us, and killed two of our company, besides other threatening doings. There were some among us that took the matter up in considerable earnest, and there was a sharp toss about it for a few minutes; though finally the law prevailed."

"The law!"

"Certain 'tis ag'in all law, I believe the major will own, to shoot peaceable men on the public highway!"

"Proceed with your tale in your own way."

"That is pretty much the whole of it," said Seth, warily. "The people rather took that, and some other things that happened at Lexington, to heart, and I suppose the major knows the rest."

"But what has all this to do with your attempt to murder me, you hypocrite?" demanded M'Fuse "confess the whole, ye thief, that I may hang you with an aisy conscience."

"Enough," said Lionel; "the man has acknowledge sufficient already to justify us in transferring him to the custody of others let him be taken to the main guard, and delivered as a prisoner of this day."

"I hope the major will look to the things," said Seth, who instantly prepared to depart, but stopped on the threshold to speak "I shall hold him accountable for all."

"Your property shall be protected, and I hope your life may not be in jeopardy," returned Lionel, waving his hand for those who guarded him to proceed. Seth turned, and left his own dwelling with the same quiet air which had distinguished him throughout the day; though there were occasional flashes from his quick, dark eyes, that looked like the glimmerings of a fading fire. Notwithstanding the threatening denunciation he had encountered, he left the house with a perfect conviction, that if his case were to be tried by those principles of justice which every man in the Colony so well understood, it would be found that both he and his fellows had kept thoroughly on the windy side of the law.

During this singular and characteristic discourse, Polwarth, with the solitary exception we have recorded, had employed his time in forwarding the preparations for the banquet.

As Seth and his train disappeared, Lionel cast a furtive look at Job, who was a quiet and apparently an undisturbed spectator of the scene, and then turned his attention suddenly to his guests, as if fearful the folly of the changeling might betray his agency also in the deeds of the day. The simplicity of the lad, however, defeated the kind intentions of the major, for he immediately observed, without the least indication of fear

"The king can't hang Seth Sage for firing back, when the rake-helly soldiers began first."

"Perhaps you were out too, master Solomon," cried M'Fuse, "amusing yourself at Concord, with a small party of select friends!"

"Job didn't go any further than Lexington," returned the lad, "and he hasn't got any friend, except old Nab."

"The devil has possessed the minds of the people!" continued the grenadier "lawyers and doctors praists and sinners old and young big and little, beset us in our march, and here is a fool to be added to the number! I dare say that fellow, now, has attempted murder in his day too."

"Job scorns such wickedness," returned the unmoved simpleton; "he only shot one granny, and hit an officer in the arm."

"D'ye hear that, Major Lincoln!" cried M'Fuse, jumping from the seat, which, notwithstanding the bitterness of his language, he had hitherto perseveringly maintained; "d'ye hear that shell of a man, that effigy, boasting of having killed a grenadier!"

"Hold" interrupted Lionel, arresting his excited companion by the arm "remember, we are soldiers, and that the boy is not a responsible being. No tribunal would ever sentence such an unfortunate creature to a gibbet; and in general he is as harmless as a babe "

"The devil burn such babes a pretty fellow is he to kill a man of six feet! and with a ducking gun I'll engage. I'll not hang the rascal, Major Lincoln, since it is your particular wish I'll only have him buried alive."

Job continued perfectly unmoved in his chair, and the captain, ashamed of his resentment against such unconscious imbecility, was soon persuaded to abandon his intentions of revenge, though he continued muttering his threats against the provincials, and his denunciations against such "an unmanly species of warfare," until the much-needed repast was ended.

Polwarth having restored the equilibrium of his system by a hearty meal, hobbled to his bed, and M'Fuse, without any ceremony, took possession of another of the apartments in the tenement of Mr. Sage. The servants withdrew to their own entertainment, and Lionel, who had been sitting for the last half hour in melancholy silence, now unexpectedly found himself alone with the changeling. Job had waited for this moment with exceeding patience, but when the door closed on Meriton, who was the last to retire, he made a movement that indicated some communication of more than usual importance, and succeeded in attracting the attention of his companion.

"Foolish boy!" exclaimed Lionel, as he met the unmeaning eye of the other, "did I not warn you that wicked men might endanger your life! how was it that I saw you in arms to-day, against the troops?"

"How came the troops in arms ag'in Job?" returned the changeling "they needn't think to wheel about the Bay-Province, clashing their godless drums and trumpets, burning housen, and shooting people, and find no stir about it!"

"Do you know that your life has been twice forfeited within twelve hours, by your own confession; once for murder, and again for treason against your king? You have acknowledged killing a man!"

"Yes," said the lad, with undisturbed simplicity, "Job shot the granny; but he didn't let the people kill Major Lincoln."

"True, true," said Lionel, hastily "I owe my life to you, and that debt shall be cancelled at every hazard. But why have you put yourself into the hands of your enemies so thoughtlessly what brings you here to-night?"

"Ralph told me to come; and if Ralph told Job to go into the king's parlour, he would go."

"Ralph!" exclaimed Lionel, stopping in his hurried walk across the room, and where is he?"

"In the old ware-'us', and he has sent me to tell you to come to him and what Ralph says must be done."

"He here too! is the man crazed would not his fears teach him "

"Fears!" interrupted Job, with singular disdain "you can't frighten Ralph! The grannies couldn't frighten him, nor the light-infantry couldn't hit him, though he eat nothing but their smoke the whole day Ralph's a proper warrior!"

"And he waits me, you say, in the tenement of your mother?"

"Job don't know what tenement means, but he's in the old ware-'us'."

"Come, then," said Lionel, taking his hat, "let us go to him I must save him from the effects of his own rashness, though it cost my commission!"

He left the room while speaking, and the simpleton followed close at his heels, well content with having executed his mission without encountering any greater difficulties.

CHAPTER XII.

"This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: "Gonzago is the Duke's name; his wife, Baptista: "You shall see, anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work."

Hamlet.

The agitation and deep excitement produced by the events of the day, had not yet subsided in the town, when Lionel found himself again in its narrow streets. Men passed swiftly by him, as if bent on some unusual and earnest business; and more than once the young soldier detected the triumphant smiles of the women, as they looked curiously out on the scene, from their half-open windows, and their eyes detected the professional trappings of his dress. Strong bodies of the troops were marching in different directions, and in a manner which denoted that the guards were strengthening, while the few solitary officers he met watched his approaching figure with cautious jealousy, as if they apprehended a dangerous enemy in every form they encountered.

The gates of Province-house were open, and, as usual, guarded by armed men. As Lionel passed leisurely along, he perceived that the grenadier to whom he had spoken on the preceding evening, again held his watch before the portal of the governors.

"Your experience did not deceive you, my old comrade," said Lionel, lingering a moment to address him "we have had a warm day."

"So it is reported in the barracks, your honour," returned the soldier "our company was not ordered out, and we are to stand double duty. I hope to God the next time there is any thing to do, the grenadiers of the th may not be left behind it would have been for the credit of the army had they been in the field to-day."

"Why do you think so, my veteran? The men who were out are thought to have behaved well; but it was impossible to make head against a multitude in arms."

"It is not my place, your honour, to say this man did well, and that man behaved amiss," returned the proud old soldier; "but when I hear of two thousand British troops turning their backs, or quickening their march before all the rabble this country can muster, I want the flank companies of the th to be at hand, if it should be only that I may say I have witnessed the disgraceful sight with my own eyes."

"There is no disgrace where there is no misconduct," said Lionel.

"There must have been misconduct somewhere, your honour, or such a thing could not have happened consider, your honour, the very flower of the army! Something must have been wrong, and although I could see the latter part of the business from the hills, I can hardly believe it to be true." As he concluded, he shook his head, and continued his steady pace along his allotted ground, as if unwilling to pursue the humiliating subject any further. Lionel passed slowly on, musing on that deep-rooted prejudice, which had even taught this humble menial of the crown to regard with contempt a whole nation, because they were believed to be dependants.

The dock-square was stiller than usual, and the sounds of revelry, which it was usual to hear at that hour from the adjacent drinking-houses, were no longer audible. The moon had not yet risen, and Lionel passed under the dark arches of the market with a quick step, as he now remembered that one in whom he felt so deep an interest awaited his appearance. Job, who had followed in silence, glided by him on the drawbridge, and stood holding the door of the old building in his hand, when he reached its threshold. Lionel found the large space in the centre of the warehouse, as usual, dark and empty, though the dim light of a candle glimmered through the fissures in a partition which separated an apartment in one of the little towers that was occupied by Abigail Pray, from the ruder parts of the edifice. Low voices were also heard issuing from this room, and Major Lincoln, supposing he should find the old man and the mother of Job in conference together, turned to request the lad would precede him, and announce his name. But the changeling had also detected the whispering sounds, and it would seem with a more cunning ear, for he turned and darted through the door of the building with a velocity that did not abate until Lionel, who watched his movements with amazement, saw his shuffling figure disappear among the shambles of the market-place. Thus deserted by his guide, Lionel groped his way towards the place where he believed he should find the door which led into the tower. The light deceived him, for as he approached it, his eye glanced through one of the crevices of the wall, and he again became an unintentional witness of another of those interviews which evinced the singular and mysterious affinity between the fortunes of the affluent and respected Mrs. Lechmere and the miserable tenant of the warehouse. Until that moment, the hurry of events, and the crowd of reflections which had rushed over the mind of the young man throughout the busy time of the last twenty-four hours, had prevented his recalling the hidden meaning of the singular discourse of which he had already been an auditor. But now, when he found his aunt led into these haunts of beggary, by a feeling he was not weak enough to attribute to her charity, he stood rooted to the spot by a curiosity, which, at the same time that he found it irresistible, he was willing to excuse, under a strong impression that these private communications were in some way connected with himself.

Mrs. Lechmere had evidently muffled her person in a manner that was intended to conceal this mysterious visit from any casual observer of her movements; but the hoops of her large calash were now so far raised as to admit a distinct view of her withered features, and of the hard eye which shot forth its selfish, worldly glances, from amid the surrounding decay of nature. She was seated, both in indulgence to her infirmities, and from that assumption of superiority she never neglected in the presence of her inferiors, while her companion stood before her, in an attitude that partook more of restraint than of respect.

"Your weakness, foolish woman," said Mrs. Lechmere, in those stern, repulsive tones she so well knew how to use when she wished to intimidate, "will yet prove your ruin. You owe it to respect for yourself, to your character, and even to your safety, that you should exhibit more firmness, and show yourself above this weak and idle

supersition."

"My ruin! and my character!" returned Abigail, looking about her with a haggard eye and a trembling lip; "what is ruin, Madam Lechmere, if this poverty be not called so! or what loss of character can bring upon me more biting scorn than I am now ordained to suffer for my sins!"

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Lechmere, endeavouring to affect a kinder tone, though dislike was still too evident in her manner, "in the hurry of my grandnephew's reception, I have forgotten my usual liberality."

The woman took the piece of silver which Mrs. Lechmere slowly placed in her hand, and held it in her open palm for several moments, regarding it with a vacant look, which the other mistook for dissatisfaction.

"The troubles, and the decreasing value of property, have sensibly affected my income," continued the richly clad and luxurious Mrs. Lechmere; "but if that should be too little for your immediate wants, I will add to it another crown."

"'Twill do 'twill do," said Abigail, cleaving her hand over the money, with a grasp that was convulsive "yes, yes, 'twill do. Oh! Madam Lechmere, humbling and sinful as that wicked passion is, would to God that no motive worse than avarice had proved my ruin!"

Lionel thought his aunt cast an uneasy and embarrassed glance at her companion, which he construed into an expression that betrayed there were secrets even between these strange confidants; but the momentary surprise exhibited in her features, soon gave place to her habitual look of guarded and severe formality; and she replied, with an air of coldness, as if she would repulse any approach to an acknowledgment of their common transgression

"The woman talks like one who is beside herself! of what crime has she been guilty, but such as those to which our nature is liable!"

"True, true," said Abigail Pray, with a half-stifled, hysterical laugh "'tis our guilty, guilty nature, as you say. But I grow nervous, I believe, as I grow old and feeble, Madam Lechmere; and I often forget myself. The sight of the grave so very near, is apt to bring thoughts of repentance to such as are more hardened even than I."

"Foolish girl!" said Mrs. Lechmere, endeavouring to screen her pallid features, by drawing down her calash, with a hand that trembled more with terror than with age, "why should you speak thus freely of death, who are but a child!"

Lionel heard the faltering, husky tones of his aunt, as they appeared to die in her throat, but nothing more was distinctly audible, until, after a long pause, she raised her face, and looked about her again with her severe, unbending eye, and continued

"Enough of this folly, Abigail Pray I have come to learn more of your strange inmate "

"Oh! 'tis not enough, Madam Lechmere," interrupted the conscience-stricken woman; "we have so little time left us for penitence and prayer, that there never can be enough, I fear, to answer our mighty transgressions. Let us speak of the grave, Madam Lechmere, while we can yet do it on this side of eternity."

"Ay! speak of the grave, while out of its damp cloisters; 'tis the home of the aged," said a third voice, whose hollow tones might well have issued from some tomb, "and I am here to join in the wholesome theme."

"Who who in the name of God, who art thou!" exclaimed Mrs. Lechmere, forgetting her infirmities, and her secret compunctions, in new emotions, and rising involuntarily from her seat; "tell me, I conjure thee, who art thou?"

"One, aged like thyself, Priscilla Lechmere, and standing on the threshold of that final home of which you would discourse. Speak on, then, ye widowed women; for if ever ye have done aught that calls for forgiveness, 'tis in the grave ye shall find the heavenly gift of mercy offered to your unworthiness."

By changing the position of his body a little, Lionel was now enabled to command a view of the whole apartment. In the door-way stood Ralph, immovable in his attitude, with one hand raised high towards heaven, and the other pointing impressively downward, as if about to lay bare the secrets of that tomb of which his wasted limbs, and faded lineaments marked him as a fit tenant, while his searching eye-balls glared about him, from the face of one to the other, with that look of quickness and penetration, that Abigail Pray had so well described as 'scorching.' Within a few feet of the old man, Mrs. Lechmere remained standing, rigid and motionless as marble, her calash fallen back, and her death-like features exposed, with horror and astonishment rooted in every muscle, as with open mouth, and eyes riveted on the intruder, she gazed as steadily as if placed in that posture by the chisel of the statuary. Abigail shaded her eyes with her hand, and buried her face in the folds of her garments, while strong convulsive shudderings ran through her frame, and betrayed the extent of the emotions she endeavoured to conceal. Amazed at what he had witnessed, and concerned for the apparent insensibility of his aunt, whose great age rendered such scenes dangerous, Lionel was about to rush into the apartment, when Mrs. Lechmere so far recovered her faculties as to speak, and the young man lost every consideration in a burning curiosity, which was powerfully justified by his situation.

"Who is it that calls me by the name of Priscilla?" said Mrs. Lechmere; "none now live who can claim to be so familiar."

"Priscilla Priscilla," repeated the old man, looking about him, as if he would require the presence of another; "it is a soft and pleasant sound to my ears, and there is one that owns it besides thee, as thou knowest."

"She is dead; years have gone by since I saw her in her coffin; and I would forget her, and all like her, who have proved unworthy of my blood."

"She is *not* dead!" shouted the old man, in a voice that rung through the naked rafters of the edifice like the unearthly tones of some spirit of the air; "she lives she lives ay! she yet lives!"

"Lives!" repeated Mrs. Lechmere, recoiling a step before the forward movement of the other; "why am I so weak as to listen! 'tis impossible."

"Lives!" exclaimed Abigail Pray, clasping her hands with agony; "Oh! would to God she did live! but did I not see her a bloated, disfigured corpse! did I not with these very hands place the grave-clothes about her once lovely frame! Oh! no she is dead dead and I am a"

"'Tis some madman that asserts these idle tales," exclaimed Mrs. Lechmere, with a quickness that interrupted the criminal epithet the other was about to apply to herself. "The unfortunate girl is long since dead, as we know; why should we reason with a maniac?"

"Maniac!" repeated Ralph, with an expression of the most taunting irony; "no no no such an one there is, as you and I well know, but 'tis not I who am mad thou art rather crazed thyself, woman; thou hast made one maniac already, wouldst thou make another?"

"I!" said Mrs. Lechmere, without quailing before the ardent look she encountered "that God who bestows reason, recalls his gift at will; 'tis not I who exercise such power."

"How say'st thou, Priscilla Lechmere?" cried Ralph, stepping with an inaudible tread so nigh as to grasp, unperceived, her motionless arm with his own wasted fingers; "yes I will call thee Priscilla, little as thou deservest such a holy name dost thou deny the power to craze where, then, is the head of thy boasted race? the proud Baronet of Devonshire, the wealthy, and respected, and once happy companion of Princes thy nephew Lionel Lincoln? Is he in the halls of his fathers? leading the armies of his king? ruling and protecting his household? or is he the tenant of a gloomy cell? thou knowest he is thou knowest he is and, woman, thy vile machinations have placed him there!"

"Who is it that dare thus speak to me!" demanded Mrs. Lechmere, rallying her faculties with a mighty effort, to look down this charge "if my unhappy nephew is indeed known to thee, thy own knowledge will refute this base accusation"

"Known to me! I would ask what is hid from me? I have looked at thee, and observed thy conduct, woman, for the life of man, and nothing that thou hast done is hid from me I tell thee, I know all. Of this sinful woman here also, I know all have I not told thee, Abigail Pray, of thy most secret transgressions?"

"Oh! yes yes; he is indeed acquainted with what I had thought was now concealed from every eye but that of God" cried Abigail, with superstitious terror

"Nor of thee am I ignorant, thou miserable widow of John Lechmere; and of Priscilla, too, do I not know all?"

"All!" again exclaimed Abigail

"All!" repeated Mrs. Lechmere in a voice barely audible, when she sunk back in her chair, in a state of total insensibility. The breathless interest he felt in all that had passed, could detain Lionel no longer from rushing to the assistance of his aunt. Abigail Pray, who, it would seem, had been in some measure accustomed to such scenes with her lodger, retained, however, sufficient self-command to anticipate his motions, and when he had gained the door he found her already supporting, and making the usual applications to Mrs. Lechmere. It became necessary to divest the sufferer of part of her attire, and Abigail assuring Lionel of her perfect competency to act by herself, requested him to withdraw, not only on that account, but because she felt assured that nothing could prove more dangerous to her reviving patient, than his unexpected presence. After lingering a moment, until he witnessed the signs of returning life, Lionel complied with the earnest entreaties of the woman; and leaving the room, he groped his way to the foot of the ladder, with a determination to ascend to the apartment of Ralph, in order to demand at once an explanation of what he had just seen and heard. He found the old man seated in his little tower, his hand shading his eyes from the feeble light of the miserable candle, and his head drooping upon his bosom, like one in pensive musing. Lionel approached him, without appearing to attract his attention, and was compelled to speak, in order to announce his presence.

"I have received your summons, by Job," he said, "and have obeyed it."

" 'Tis well," returned Ralph.

"Perhaps I should add that I have been an astonished witness of your interview with Mrs. Lechmere, and have heard the bold and unaccountable language you have seen proper to use to that lady."

The old man now raised his head, and Lionel saw the bright rays from his eyes quicken, as he answered

"You then heard the truth, and witnessed its effects on a guilty conscience."

Lionel Lincoln; or, The Leaguer of Boston, Volume 1

"I also heard what you call the truth, in connexion, as you know, with the names most dear to me."

"Art certain of it, boy?" returned Ralph, looking the other steadily in the face; "has no other become dearer to you, of late, than the authors of your being speak, and remember that you answer one of no common knowledge."

"What mean you, sir! is it in nature to love any as we do a parent?"

"Away with this childish simplicity," continued the other sternly; "the grandchild of that wretched woman below do you not love her, and can I put trust in thee!"

"What trust is there incompatible with affection for a being so pure as Cecil Dynevor?"

"Ay," murmured the old man in an under tone, "her mother *was* pure, and why may not the child be worthy of its parentage?" He paused, and a long, and on the part of Lionel, a painful and embarrassed silence succeeded, which was at length broken by Ralph, who said, abruptly "you were in the field to-day, Major Lincoln!"

"Of that you must be certain, as I owe my life to your kind interposition. But why have you braved the danger of an arrest, by trusting your person in the power of the troops? Your presence and activity among the Americans must be known to many in the army besides myself."

"And would they think of searching for their enemies within the streets of Boston, when the hills without are filling with armed men! My residence in this building is known only to the woman below, who dare not betray me, her worthy son, and to you. My movements are secret and sudden when men least expect them. Danger cannot touch such as I."

"But," said Lionel, hesitating with embarrassment, "ought I to conceal the presence of one whom I know to be inimical to my king?"

"Lionel Lincoln, you overrate your courage," interrupted Ralph, smiling in scorn "you dare not shed the blood of him who has spared your own; but enough of this we understand each other, and one old as I should be a stranger to fear?"

"No, no," said a low, solemn voice, from a dark corner of the apartment, where Job had stolen unseen, and was now nestled in security "you can't frighten Ralph!"

"The boy is a worthy boy, and he knows good from evil; what more is necessary to man in this wicked world!" muttered Ralph, in those quick and indistinct tones that characterized his manner.

"Whence came you, fellow, and why did you abandon me so abruptly?" demanded Lionel.

"Job has just been into the market to see if he couldn't find something that might be good for Nab," returned the lad.

"Think not to impose on me with this nonsense! Is food to be purchased at any hour of the night, though you had the means!"

"Now that is convincing the king's officers don't know every thing," said the simpleton, laughing within himself "here's as good a pound bill, old tenor, as was ever granted by the Bay-Colony, and meat's no such rarity, that a man, who has a pound-bill, old tenor, in his pocket, can't go under old Funnel when he pleases, for all their acts of parliament."

"You have plundered the dead!" cried Lionel, observing that Job exhibited in his hand several pieces of silver, besides the note he had mentioned.

"Don't call Job a thief!" said the lad, with a threatening air; "there's law in the Bay yet, though the people don't use it; and right will be done to all, when the time comes. Job shot a granny, but he's no thief."

"You were then paid for your secret errand, last night, foolish boy; and have been tempted to run into danger by money. Let it be the last time in future, when you want, come to me for assistance."

"Job won't go of a'rnds for the king if he'd give him his golden crown, with all its di'monds and flauntiness, unless Job pleases, for there's no law for it."

Lionel, with a view to appease the irritated lad, now made a few kind and conciliating remarks, but the changeling did not deign to reply, falling back in his corner in a sullen manner, as if he would repair the fatigue of the day by a few moments of sleep. In the mean time, Ralph had sunk into a profound reverie, when the young soldier remembered that the hour was late, and he had yet obtained no explanation of the mysterious charges. He therefore alluded to the subject, in a manner which he thought best adapted to obtain the desired intelligence. The instant Lionel mentioned the agitation of his aunt, his companion raised his head again, and a smile like that of fierce exultation lighted the wan face of the old man, who answered, pointing with an emphatic gesture to his own bosom

"'Twas here, boy, 'twas here nothing short of the power of conscience, and a knowledge like that of mine, could strike that woman speechless in the presence of any thing human."

"But what is this extraordinary knowledge? I am in some degree the natural protector of Mrs. Lechmere, and independent of my individual interest in your secret, have a right, in her behalf, to require an explanation of such serious allegations."

"In her behalf!" repeated Ralph. "Wait, impetuous young man, until she bids you push the inquiry it shall then be answered, in a voice of thunder."

"If not in justice to my aged aunt, at least remember your repeated promises to unfold that sad tale of my own domestic sorrows, of which you claim to be the master."

"Ay, of that, and much more, am I in possession," returned the old man, smiling, as if conscious of his knowledge and power; "if you doubt it, descend and ask the miserable tenant of this warehouse or the guilty widow of John Lechmere."

"Nay, I doubt nothing but my own patience; the moments fly swiftly, and I have yet to learn all I wish to know."

"This is neither the time, nor is it the place, where you are to hear the tale," returned Ralph; "I have already said that we shall meet beyond the colleges for that purpose."

"But after the events of this day, who can tell when it will be in the power of an officer of the crown to visit the colleges in safety?"

"What!" cried the old man, laughing aloud, in the bitterness of his scorn "has the boy found the strength and the will of the despised colonists so soon! But I pledge to thee my word, that thou shalt yet see the place, and in safety. Yes, yes, Priscilla Lechmere, thy hour is at hand, and thy doom is sealed for ever!"

Lionel again mentioned his aunt, and alluded to the necessity of his soon rejoining her, as he already heard footsteps below, which indicated that preparations were making for her departure. But his petitions and remonstrances were now totally unheeded, his aged companion was pacing swiftly up and down his small apartment, muttering incoherent sentences, in which the name of Priscilla was alone audible, and his countenance betraying the inward workings of absorbing and fierce passions. In a few moments more, the shrill voice of Abigail was heard calling upon her son, in a manner which plainly denoted her knowledge that the changeling was concealed somewhere about the building. Job heard her calls repeated, until the tones of her voice became angry and threatening, when he stole slowly from his corner, and moved towards the ladder, with a sunken brow and lingering steps. Lionel now knew not how to act. His aunt was still ignorant of his presence, and he thought if Abigail Pray had wished him to appear, he would in some manner be soon included in the summons. He had also his own secret reasons for wishing his visits to Ralph unknown; accordingly, he determined to watch the movements below, under the favour of the darkness, and to be governed entirely by circumstances. He took no leave of his companion on departing, for long use had so far accustomed him to the eccentric manner of the old man, that he well knew any attempt to divert his attention from his burning thoughts, would be futile at a moment of such intense excitement.

From the head of the ladder where Lionel took his stand, he saw Mrs. Lechmere, preceded by Job with a lantern, walking with a firmer step than he could have hoped for, towards the door, and he overheard Abigail cautioning her wilful son to light her visiter to a neighbouring corner, where it appeared a conveyance was in waiting. On the threshold, his aunt turned, and the light from the candle of Abigail falling on her features, Lionel caught a full view of her cold, hard eye, which had regained all its worldly expression, though softened a little by a deeper shade of thought than usual.

"Let the scene of to-night be forgotten, my good Abigail," she said. "Your lodger is a nameless being, who has gleaned some idle tale, and wishes to practise on our credulity to enrich himself. I will consider more of it; but on no account do you hold any further communion with him I must remove you, my trusty woman; this habitation is unworthy of you, and of your dutiful son, too I must see you better lodged, my good Abigail, indeed I must."

Lionel could distinguish the slight shudder that passed through the frame of her companion, as she alluded to the doubtful character of Ralph; but without answering, Abigail held the door open for the departure of her guest. The instant Mrs. Lechmere disappeared, Lionel glided down the ladder, and stood before the astonished woman.

"When I tell you I have heard all that passed to-night," he abruptly said, "you will see the folly of any further attempt at concealment I now demand so much of your secret as affects the happiness of me or mine."

"No no not of me, Major Lincoln," said the terrified female "not of me, for the love of God, not of me I have sworn to keep it, and one oath " her emotions choked her, and her voice became indistinct.

Lionel regretted his vehemence, and ashamed to extort a confession from a woman, he attempted to pacify her feelings, promising to require no further communication at that time.

"Go go" she said, motioning him to depart, "and I shall be well again leave me, and then I shall be alone with that terrible old man, and my God!"

Perceiving her earnestness, he reluctantly complied, and meeting Job on the threshold, he ceased to feel any further uneasiness for her safety.

During his rapid walk to Tremont-street, Major Lincoln thought intently on all he had heard and witnessed. He remembered the communications by which Ralph had attained such a powerful interest in his feelings, and he fancied he could discover a pledge of the truth of the old man's knowledge in the guilt betrayed by the manner of his aunt. From Mrs. Lechmere his thoughts recurred to her lovely grandchild, and for a moment he was perplexed,

by endeavouring to explain her contradictory deportment towards himself; at one time she was warm, frank, and even affectionate; and at another, as in the short and private interview of that very evening, cold, constrained, and repulsive. Then, again, he recollected the object which had chiefly induced him to follow his regiment to his native country, and the recollection was attended by that shade of dejection which such reflections never failed to cast across his intelligent features. On reaching the house, he ascertained the safe return of Mrs. Lechmere, who had already retired to her room, attended by her lovely relatives. Lionel immediately followed their example, and as the excitement of that memorable and busy day subsided, it was succeeded by a deep sleep, that fell on his senses like the forgetfulness of the dead.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Now let it work: Mischief thou art afoot, "Take thou what course thou wilt!"

Shakspeare.

The alarm of the inroad passed swiftly by the low shores of the Atlantic, and was heard echoing among the rugged mountains west of the rivers, as if borne along on a whirlwind. The male population, between the rolling waters of Massachusetts-Bay and the limpid stream of the Connecticut, rose as one man; and as the cry of blood was sounded far inland, the hills and valleys, the highways and footpaths, were seen covered with bands of armed husbandmen, pressing eagerly toward the scene of the war. Within eight-and-forty hours after the fatal meeting at Lexington, it was calculated that more than a hundred thousand men were in arms; and near one-fourth of that number was gathered before the Peninsulas of Boston and Charlestown. They who were precluded by distance, and a want of military provisions to support such a concourse, from participating in the more immediate contest, lay by in expectation of the arrival of that moment when their zeal might also be put to severer trials. In short, the sullen quietude in which the colonies had been slumbering for a year, was suddenly and rudely broken by the events of that day; and the patriotic among the people rose with such a cry of indignation on their lips, that the disaffected, who were no insignificant class in the more southern provinces, were compelled to silence, until the first burst of revolutionary excitement had an opportunity to subside, under the never-failing influence of time and suffering.

Gage, secure in his positions, and supported by a constantly increasing power, as well as the presence of a formidable fleet, looked on the gathering storm with a steady eye, and with that calmness which distinguished the mild benevolence of his private character. Though the attitude and the intentions of the Americans could no longer be mistaken, he listened with reluctant ears to the revengeful advice of his counsellors, and rather strove to appease the tumult, than to attempt crushing it by a force, which, though a month before, it had been thought equal to the united power of the peaceful colonists, he now prudently deemed no more than competent to protect itself within its watery boundaries. Proclamations were, however, fulminated against the rebels; and such other measures as were thought indispensable to assert the dignity and authority of the crown, were promptly adopted. Of course, these harmless denunciations were disregarded, and all his exhortations to return to an allegiance which the people still denied had ever been impaired, were lost amid the din of arms, and the popular cries of the time. These appeals of the British General, as well as sundry others, made by the royal governors who yet held their rule throughout all the provinces, except the one in which the scene of our tale is laid, were answered by the people in humble, but manly petitions to the throne for justice; and in loud remonstrances to the Parliament, requiring to be restored to the possession of those rights and immunities which should be secured to all who enjoyed the protection of their common constitution. Still the power and prerogatives of the Prince were deeply respected, and were alluded to, in all public documents, with the veneration which was thought due to the sacredness of his character and station. But that biting, though grave sarcasm which the colonists knew so well how to use, was freely expended on his ministers, who were accused of devising the measures so destructive to the peace of the empire. In this manner passed some weeks after the series of skirmishes which were called the battle of Lexington, from the circumstance of commencing at the hamlet of that name, both parties continuing to

prepare for a mightier exhibition of their power and daring.

Lionel had by no means been an unconcerned spectator of these preparations. The morning after the return of the detachment, he applied for a command, equal to his just expectations. But while he was complimented on the spirit and loyalty he had manifested on the late occasion, it was intimated to the young man that he might be of more service to the cause of his Prince, by devoting his time to the cultivation of his interest among those powerful colonists with whom his family was allied by blood, or connected by long and close intimacies. It was even submitted to his own judgment whether it would not be well, at some auspicious moment, to trust his person without the defences of the army, in the prosecution of this commendable design. There was so much that was flattering to the self-love, and soothing to the pride of the young soldier, artfully mingled with these ambiguous proposals, that he became content to await the course of events, having, however, secured a promise of obtaining a suitable military command in the case of further hostilities. That such an event was at hand, could not well be concealed from one much less observing than Major Lincoln.

Gage had already abandoned his temporary position in Charlestown, for the sake of procuring additional security by concentrating his force. From the hills of the Peninsula of Boston, it was apparent that the colonists were fast assuming the front of men who were resolved to beleaguer the army of the King. Many of the opposite heights were already crowned with hastily-formed works of earth, and a formidable body of these unpractised warriors had set themselves boldly down before the entrance to the isthmus, cutting off all communication with the adjacent country, and occupying the little village of Roxbury, directly before the muzzles of the British guns, with a hardiness that would not have disgraced men much longer tried in the field, and more inured to its dangers.

The surprise created in the army by these appearances of skill and spirit among the hitherto despised Americans, in some measure ceased when the rumour spread itself in their camp, that many gentlemen of the Provinces, who had served with credit in the forces of the crown, at former periods, were mingled with the people in stations of responsibility and command. Among others, Lionel heard the names of Ward and Thomas; men of liberal attainments, and of some experience in arms. Both were regularly commissioned by the Congress of the colony as leaders of their forces; and under their orders were numerous regiments duly organized; possessing all the necessary qualifications of soldiers, excepting the two indispensable requisites of discipline and arms. Lionel heard the name of Warren mentioned oftener than any other in the circles of Province-house, and with that sort of bitterness, which, even while it bespoke their animosity, betrayed the respect of his enemies. This gentleman, who, until the last moment had braved the presence of the royal troops, and fearlessly advocated his principles, while encircled with their bayonets, was now known to have suddenly disappeared from among them, abandoning home, property, and a lucrative profession; and by sharing in the closing scenes of the day of Lexington, to have fairly cast his fortunes on the struggle. But the name which in secret possessed the greatest charm for the ear of the young British soldier, was that of Putnam, a yeoman of the neighbouring colony of Connecticut, who, as the uproar of the alarm whirled by him, literally deserted his plough, and mounting a beast from its team, made an early halt, after a forced march of a hundred miles, in the foremost ranks of his countrymen. While the name of this sturdy American was passing in whispers among the veterans who crowded the levees of Gage, a flood of melancholy and tender recollections flashed through the brain of the young man. He remembered the frequent and interesting communications which in his boyhood, he had held with his own father, before the dark shade had passed across the reason of Sir Lionel, and, in every tale of murderous combats with the savage tenants of the wilds, in each scene of danger and of daring that had distinguished the romantic warfare of the wilderness, and even in strange and fearful encounters with the beasts of the forest, the name of this man was blended with a species of chivalrous fame that is seldom obtained in an enlightened age, and never undeservedly. The great wealth of the family of Lincoln, and the high expectations of its heir, had obtained for the latter a military rank which at that period was rarely enjoyed by any but such as had bought the distinction by long and arduous services. Consequently, many of his equals had shared in those trials of his father, in which the 'Lion heart' of America had been so conspicuous for his deeds. By these grave veterans, who should know him best, the name of Putnam was always mentioned with strong and romantic affection; and when the notable scheme of detaching him, by the promise of office and wealth, from the cause of the colonists was proposed by the cringing

counsellors who surrounded the commander-in-chief, it was listened to with a contemptuous incredulity by the former associates of the old partisan, that the result of the plan fully justified. Similar inducements were offered to others among the Americans, whose talents were thought worthy of purchase; but so deep root had the principles of the day taken, that not a man of any note was found to listen to the proposition.

While these subtle experiments were adopted in the room of more energetic measures, troops continued to arrive from England, and, before the end of May, many leaders of renown appeared in the councils of Gage, who now possessed a disposable force of not less than eight thousand bayonets. With the appearance of these reinforcements, the fallen pride of the army began to revive, and the spirits of the haughty young men who had so recently left the gay parades of their boasted island, were chafed by the reflection that such an army should be cooped within the narrow limits of the peninsula by a band of half-armed husbandmen, destitute alike of the knowledge of war and of most of its munitions. This feeling was increased by the taunts of the Americans themselves, who now turned the tables on their adversaries, applying, among other sneers, the term of "elbowroom" freely to Burgoyne, one of those chieftains of the royal army, who had boasted unwittingly of the intention of himself and his compeers, to widen the limits of the army immediately on their arrival at the scene of the contest. The aspect of things within the British camp began to indicate, however, that their leaders were serious in the intention to extend their possessions, and all eyes were again turned to the heights of Charlestown, the spot most likely to be first occupied.

No military positions could be more happily situated, as respects locality, to support each other, and to extend and weaken the lines of their enemies, than the two opposite peninsulas so often mentioned. The distance between them was but six hundred yards, and the deep and navigable waters by which they were nearly surrounded, rendered it easy for the royal general to command, at any time, the assistance of the heaviest vessels of the fleet, in defending either place. With these advantages before them, the army gladly heard those orders issued, which, it was well understood, indicated an approaching movement to the opposite shores.

It was now eight weeks since the commencement of hostilities, and the war had been confined to the preparations detailed, with the exception of one or two sharp skirmishes on the islands of the harbour, between the foragers of the army, and small parties of the Americans, in which the latter well maintained their newly acquired reputation for spirit.

With the arrival of the regiments from England, gaiety had once more visited the town, though such of the inhabitants as were compelled to remain against their inclinations, continued to maintain that cold reserve, in their deportment, which effectually repelled all the efforts of the officers to include them in the wanton festivities of the time. There were a few, however, among the colonists, who had been bribed, by offices and emoluments, to desert the good cause of the land; and as some of these had already been rewarded by offices which gave them access to the ear of the royal governor, who was thought to be unduly and unhappily influenced by the pernicious councils with which they poisoned his mind and prepared him for acts of injustice and harshness, that both his unbiassed feelings and ordinary opinions would have condemned. A few days succeeding the affair of Lexington, a meeting of the inhabitants had been convened, and a solemn compact was made between them and the governor, that such as chose to deliver up their arms, might leave the place, while the remainder were promised a suitable protection in their own dwellings. The arms were delivered, but that part of the conditions which related to the removal of the inhabitants was violated, under slight and insufficient pretexts. This, and various other causes incidental to military rule, embittered the feelings of the people, and furnished new causes of complaint; while, on the other hand, hatred was rapidly usurping the place of contempt, in the breasts of those who had been compelled to change their sentiments with respect to a people that they could never love. In this manner, resentment and distrust existed, with all the violence of personality, within the place itself, affording an additional reason to the troops for wishing to extend their limits. Notwithstanding these inauspicious omens of the character of the contest, the native kindness of Gage, and perhaps a desire to rescue a few of his own men from the hands of the colonists, induced him to consent to an exchange of the prisoners made in the inroad; thus establishing, in the onset, a precedent to distinguish the controversy from an ordinary rebellion against the loyal authority of the

sovereign. A meeting was held, for this purpose, in the village of Charlestown, at that time unoccupied by either army. At the head of the American deputation appeared Warren, and the old partisan of the wilderness, already mentioned, who, by a happy, though not uncommon constitution of temperament, was as forward in deeds of charity as in those of daring. At this interview, several of the veterans of the royal army were present, having passed the strait to hold a last, friendly converse with their ancient comrade, who received them with the frankness of a soldier, while he rejected their subtle endeavours to entice him from the banners under which he had enlisted, with a sturdiness as unpretending as it was inflexible.

While these events were occurring at the great scene of the contest, the hum of preparation was to be heard throughout the whole of the wide extent of the colonies. In various places slight acts of hostility were committed, the Americans no longer waiting for the British to be the aggressors, and everywhere such military stores as could be reached, were seized, peaceably or by violence, as the case required. The concentration of most of the troops in Boston, had, however, left the other colonies comparatively but little to achieve, though, while they still rested, nominally, under the dominion of the crown, they neglected no means within their power to assert their rights in the last extremity.

At Philadelphia "the Congress of the Delegates from the United Colonies," the body that controlled the great movements of a people who now first began to act as a distinct nation, issued their manifestos, supporting, in a masterly manner, their principles, and proceeded to organize an army that should be as competent to maintain them as circumstances would allow. Gentlemen who had been trained to arms in the service of the king, were invited to resort to their banners, and the remainder of the vacancies were filled by the names of the youthful, the bold, and adventurous, who were willing to risk their lives in a cause where even success promised so little personal advantage. At the head of this list of untrained warriors, the Congress placed one of their own body, a man already distinguished for his services in the field, and who has since bequeathed to his country the glory of an untarnished name.

CHAP. XIV.

"Thou shalt meet me at Philippi."

Julius Caesar

During this period of feverish excitement, while the appearance and privations of war existed with so little of its danger or its action, Lionel had not altogether forgotten his personal feelings, in the powerful interest created by the state of public affairs. Early on the morning succeeding the night of the scene between Mrs. Lechmere and the inmates of the warehouse, he had repaired again to the spot, to relieve the intense anxiety of his mind, by seeking a complete explanation of all those mysteries which had been the principal ligament that bound him to a man, little known, except for his singularities.

The effects of the preceding day's battle were already visible in the market-place, where, as Lionel passed, he saw few, or none of the countrymen who usually crowded the square at that hour. In fact, the windows of the shops were opened with caution, and men looked out upon the face of the sun, as if doubting of its appearance and warmth, as in seasons of ordinary quiet; jealousy, and distrust, having completely usurped the place of security within the streets of the town. Notwithstanding the hour, few were in their beds, and those who appeared betrayed by their looks that they had passed the night in watchfulness. Among this number was Abigail Pray, who received her guest in her little tower, surrounded by every thing as he had seen it on the past evening, nothing altered, except her own dark eye, which at times looked like a gem of price sat in her squalid features, but which now appeared haggard and sunken, participating more markedly than common, in the general air of misery that pervaded the woman.

"I have intruded at a somewhat unusual hour, Mrs. Pray," said Lionel, as he entered; "but business of the last moment requires that I should see your lodger I suppose he is above; it will be well to announce my visit."

Abigail shook her head with an air of solemn meaning, as she answered in a subdued voice, "he is gone!"

"Gone!" exclaimed Lionel "whither, and when?"

"The people seem visited by the wrath of God, sir," returned the woman "old and young, the sick and well, are crazy about the shedding of blood; and it's beyond the might of man to say where the torrent will be stayed!"

"But what has this to do with Ralph! where is he? Woman, you are not playing me false!"

"I! heaven forbid that I should ever be false again! and to you least of all God's creatures! No, no, Major Lincoln; the wonderful man, who seems to have lived so long that he can even read our secret thoughts, as I had supposed man could never read them, has left me, and I know not whether he will ever return."

"Ever! you have not driven him by violence from under your miserable roof?"

"My roof is like that of the fowls of the air 'tis the roof of any who are so unfortunate as to need it. There is no spot on earth, Major Lincoln, that I can call mine but one day there will be one yes, yes there will be a narrow house provided for us all; and God grant that mine may be as quiet as the coffin is said to be! I lie not, Major Lincoln no, this time I am innocent of deceit Ralph and Job have gone together, but whither, I know not, unless it be to join the people without the town they left me as the moon rose, and he gave me a parting and a warning voice, that will ring in my ears until they are deafened by the damps of the grave!"

"Gone to join the Americans, and with Job!" returned Lionel, musing, and without attending to the closing words of Abigail. "Your boy will purchase peril with this madness, Mrs. Pray, and should be looked to."

"Job is not one of God's accountables, nor is he to be treated like other children," returned the woman. "Ah! Major Lincoln, a healthier, and a stouter, and a finer boy was not to be seen in the Bay—Province, till the child had reached his fifth year! then, then it was that the judgment of heaven fell on mother and son sickness made him what you see, a being with the form, but without the reason of man, and I have grown the wretch I am. But it has all been foretold, and warnings enough have I had of it all! for is it not said, that *he* "will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children until the third and fourth generation!" Thank God, my sorrows and sins will end with Job, for there never can be a third to suffer!"

"If," said Lionel, "there be any sin which lies heavy at your heart, every consideration, whether of justice or repentance, should induce you to confess your errors to those whose happiness may be affected by the knowledge, if any such there be?"

The anxious eye of the woman raised itself to meet the look of the young man; but quailing before the piercing gaze it encountered, she quickly turned it upon the litter and confusion of her disordered apartment. Lionel waited some time for a reply, but finding that she remained obstinately silent, he continued

"From what has already passed, you must be eonscious that I have good reason to believe that my feelings are deeply concerned in your secret; make, then, your confession of the guilt which seems to bear you down so heavily; and in return for the confidence, I promise you my forgiveness and protection."

As Lionel pressed thus directly the point so near his heart, the woman shrunk away from her situation near him, and her countenance lost, as he proceeded, its remarkable expression of compunction, in a forced look of deep surprise, that showed she was no novice in dissimulation, whatever might be the occasional warnings of her

conscience.

"Guilt!" she repeated, in a slow and tremulous voice; "we are all guilty, and would be lost creatures, but for the blood of the Mediator."

"Most true; but you have spoken of crimes that infringe the laws of man, as well as those of God."

"I! Major Lincoln I, a disorderly law-breaker!" exclaimed Abigail, affecting to busy herself in arranging her apartment "it is not such as I, that have leisure or courage to break the laws! Major Lincoln is trying a poor lone woman, to make his jokes with the gentlemen of his mess this evening 'tis certain, we all of us have our burthens of guilt to answer for surely Major Lincoln couldn't have heard minister Hunt preach his sermon, the last Sabbath, on the sins of the town!"

Lionel coloured highly at the artful imputation of the woman, that he was practising on her sex and unprotected situation; and greatly provoked, in secret, at her duplicity, he became more guarded in his language, endeavouring to lead her on, by kindness and soothing, to the desired communications. But all his ingenuity was met by more than equal abilities on the part of Abigail, from whom he only obtained expressions of surprise that he could have mistaken her language for more than the usual acknowledgment of errors, that are admitted to be common to our lost nature. In this particular the woman was in no respect singular; the greater number of those who are loudest in their confessions and denunciations on the abandoned nature of our hearts, commonly resenting, in the deepest manner, the imputation of individual offences. The more earnest and pressing his inquiries became, the more wary she grew, until disgusted with her pertinacity, and secretly suspecting her of foul play with her lodger, he left the house in anger, determining to keep a close eye on her movements, and, at a suitable moment, to strike such a blow as should bring her not only to confession, but to shame.

Under the influence of this momentary resentment, and unable to avoid harboring the most unpleasant suspicions of his aunt, the young man determined, that very morning, to withdraw himself entirely, as a guest, from her dwelling. Mrs. Lechmere, who, if she knew at all that Lionel had been a witness of her intercourse with Ralph, must have received the intelligence from Abigail, received him, at breakfast, with a manner that betrayed no such consciousness. She listened to his excuses for removing, with evident concern; and more than once, as Lionel spoke of the probable nature of his future life, now that hostilities had commenced the additional trouble his presence would occasion to her habits and years of his great concern in her behalf and, in short, of all that he could devise in the way of apology for the step, he saw her eyes turned anxiously on Cecil, with an expression which, at another time, might have led him to distrust the motives of her hospitality. The young lady herself, however, evidently heard the proposal with great satisfaction, and when her grandmother appealed to her opinion, whether he had urged a single good reason for the measure, she answered with a vivacity that had been a stranger to her manner of late

"Certainly, my dear grandmama the best of all reasons his inclinations. Major Lincoln tires of us, and of our hum-drum habits, and, in my eyes, true politeness requires that we should suffer him to leave us for his barracks, without a word of remonstrance."

"My motive must be greatly mistaken, if a desire to leave you "

"Oh! sir, the explanation is not required. You have urged so many reasons, cousin Lionel. that the true and moving motive is yet kept behind the curtain. It must, and can be no other than *ennui*."

"Then I will remain," said Lionel; "for any thing is better than to be suspected of insensibility."

Cecil looked both gratified and disappointed she played with her spoon a moment in embarrassment, bit her beautiful lip with vexation, and then said, in a more friendly tone

"I must then exonerate you from the imputation go to your own quarters, if it be agreeable, and we will believe your incomprehensible reasons for the change besides, as a kinsman, we shall see you every day, you know."

Lionel had now no longer any excuse for not abiding by his avowed determination; and notwithstanding Mrs. Lechmere parted from her interesting nephew with an exhibition of reluctance that was in singular contrast with her usually cold and formal manner, the desired removal was made in the course of that very morning.

When this change was accomplished, week after week slipped by, in the manner related in the preceding chapter, during which the reinforcements continued to arrive, and general after general appeared in the place to support the unenterprising Gage in the conduct of the war. The timid amongst the colonists were appalled as they heard the long list of proud and boasted names recounted. There was Howe, a man sprung from a noble race, long known for their deeds in arms, and whose chief had already shed his blood on the soil of America. Clinton, another cadet of an illustrious house, better known for his personal intrepidity and domestic kindness, than for the rough qualities of the warrior. And the elegant and accomplished Burgoyne, who had already purchased a name in the fields of Portugal and the benefit of the late exchange, and curious to know what all the suppressed roguery he could detect in the demure countenances of his friends might signify, Lionel dropped his pen, and listened to the succeeding dialogue.

"Now answer to your offences, thou silly fellow, with a wise name," M`Fuse commenced, in a voice that did not fail, by its harsh cadences, to create some of that awe, which, by the expression of hte speaker's eye, it would seem he laboured to produce "speak out with the freedom of a man, and the compunctions of a Christian, if you have them. Why should I not send you at once to Ireland, that ye may get your deserts on three pieces of timber, the one being laid cross-wise for the sake of convenience. If you have a contrary reason, bestow it without delay, for the love you bear your own angular daiformities."

The wags did not altogether fail in their object, Seth betraying a good deal more uneasiness than it was usual for the man to exhibit even in situations of uncommon peril. After clearing his throat, and looking about him, to gather from the eyes of the spectators which way their sympathies inclined, he answered with a very commendable fortitude

"Because it's ag'in all law."

"Have done with your interminable perplexities of the law," cried M`Fuse, "and do not bother honest gentlemen with its knavery, as if they were no more than so many proctors in big wigs! 'tis the gospel you should be thinking of, you godless reprobate, on account of that final end you will yet make, one day, in a most indecent hurry."

"To your purpose, Mac," interrupted Polwarth, who perceived that the erratic feelings of his friend were beginning already to lead him from the desired point; "or I will propound the matter myself, in a style that would do credit to a mandamus counsellor."

"The mandamuses are all ag'in the charter, and the law too," continued Seth, whose courage increased as the dialogue bore more directly upon his political principles "and to my mind it's quite convincing that if ministers calculate largely on upholding them, there will be great disturbances, if not a proper fight in the land; for the whole country is in a blaze!"

"Disturbances, thou immoveable iniquity! thou quiet assassin!" roared M`Fuse; "do ye not call a fight of a day a disturbance, or do ye tar'm skulking behind fences, and laying the muzzle of a musket on the head of Job Pray, and the breech on a mullen-stalk, while ye draw upon a fellow-creature, a commendable method of fighting! Now answer me to the truth, and disdain all lying, as ye would 'ating any thing but cod on a Saturday, who were the two men that fired into my very countenance, from the unfortunate situation among the mullens that I have detailed to you?"

"Pardon me, captain M Fuse," said Polwarth, "if I say that your zeal and indignation run ahead of your discretion. If we alarm the prisoner in this manner, we may defeat the ends of justice. Besides, sir, there is a reflection contained in your language, to which I must dissent. A real *dumb* is not to be despised, especially when served up in wrapper, and between two coarser fish to preserve the steam I have had my private meditations on the subject of getting up a Saturday's club, in order to enjoy the bounty of the Bay, and for improving the cookery of the cod!"

"And let me tell you, captain Polwarth," returned the grenadier, cocking his eye fiercely at the other, "that your epicurean propensities lead you to the verge of cannibalism; for sure it may be called *that*, when you speak of 'ating while the life of a fellow cr'ature is under a discussion for its termination "

"I conclude," interrupted Seth, who was greatly averse to all quarreling, and who thought he saw the symptoms of a breach between his judges, "the captain wishes to know who the two men were that fired on him a short time before he got the hit in the shoulder?"

"A short time, ye marvellous hypocrite! 'twas as quick as pop and slap could make it."

"Perhaps there might be some mistake, for a great many of the troops were much disguised "

"Do ye insinuate that I got drunk before the enemies of my king!" roared the grenadier "Harkye, Mister Sage, I ask you in a genteel way, who the two men were that fired on me, in the manner daitailed, and remember that a man may tire of putting questions which are never answered?"

"Why," returned Seth, who, however expert at prevarication, eschewed with religious horror, a direct lie "I pretty much conclude that they the captain is sure the place he means was just beyond Menotomy?"

"As sure as men can be," said Polwarth, "who possess the use of their eyes."

"Then captain Polwarth can give testimony to the fact?"

"I believe Major Lincoln's horse carries a small bit of your lead to this moment, Master Sage."

Seth yielded to this accumulation of evidence against him, and knowing, moreover, that the grenadier had literally made him a prisoner in the fact of renewing his fire, he sagaciously determined to make a merit of necessity, and candidly to acknowledge his agency in inflicting the wounds. The utmost, however, that his cautious habits would permit him to say, was

"Seeing there can't well be any mistake, I seem to think, the two men were chiefly Job and I."

"Chaifly, you lath of uncertainty!" exclaimed M Fuse; "if there was any chaif in that cowardly assassination of wounding a Christian, and of also hurting a horse, which, though nothing but a dumb baste, has better blood than runs in your own beggarly veins, 'twas your own ugly proportions. But I rejoice that you have come to the confessional! I can now see you hung with felicity if you have any thing to say, urge it at once, why I should not embark you for Ireland by the first vessel, in a letter to my Lord-Lieutenant, with a request that he'll give you an early procession, and a dacent funeral."

Seth belonged to a class of his countrymen, amongst whom, while there was a superabundance of ingenuity, there was literally no joke. Déceived by the appearance of anger which had in reality blended with the assumed manner of the grenadier, as he dwelt upon the irritating subject of his own injuries, the belief of the prisoner in the sacred protection of the laws became much shaken, and he began to reflect very seriously on the insecurity of the times, as well as on the despotic nature of the military power. The little humour he had inherited from his puritan

ancestors, was, though exceedingly quaint, altogether after a different fashion from the off-hand, blundering wit of the Irishman; and that manner which he did not possess, he could not entirely comprehend, so that as far as a very visible alarm furthered the views of the two conspirators, they were quite successful. Polwarth now took pity on his evident embarrassment, and observed, with a careless manner

"Perhaps I can make a proposal by which Mr. Sage may redeem his neck from the halter, and at the same time essentially serve an old friend."

"Hear ye that, thou confounder of men and bastes!" cried M`Fuse "down on your knees, and thank Mr. Paiter Polwarth for the charity of his insinuation."

Seth was not displeased to hear such amicable intentions announced; but habitually cautious in all bargaining, he suppressed the exhibition of his satisfaction, and said, with an air of deliberation that would have done credit to the keenest trader in King-street that "he should like to hear the terms of the agreement, before he gave his conclusion."

"They are simply these," returned Polwarth "you shall receive your passports and freedom to-night, on condition that you sign this bond, whereby you will become obliged to supply our mess, as usual, during the time the place is invested, with certain articles of food and nourishment, as herein set forth, and according to the prices mentioned, which the veriest Jew in Duke's-place would pronounce to be liberal. Here; take the instrument, and `read, and mark,' in order that we may `inwardly digest.'"

Seth took the paper, and gave it that manner of investigation that he was wont to bestow on every thing which affected his pecuniary interests. He objected to the price of every article, all of which were altered in compliance with his obstinate resistance, and he moreover insisted that a clause should be inserted to exonerate him from the penalty, provided the intercourse should be prohibited by the authorities of the colony; after which, he continued

"If the captain will agree to take charge of the things, and become liable, I will conclude to make the trade."

"Here is a fellow who wants boot in a bargain for his life!" cried the grenadier; "but we will humour his covetous inelinations, Polly, and take charge of the chattels. Captain Polwarth and myself, pledge our words to their safe-keeping. Let me run my eyes over the articles," continued the grenadier, looking very gravely at the several covenants of the bond "faith, Paiter, you have bargained for a goodly larder! Baif, mutton, pigs, turnips, potatos, melons, and other fruits there's a blunder, now, that would keep an English mess on a grin for a month, if an Irishman had made it! as if a melon was a fruit, and a potato was not! The devil a word do I see that you have said about a mouthful, except aitable either! Here, fellow, clap your learning to it, and I'll warrant you we yet get a meal out of it, in some manner or other."

"Wouldn't it be as well to put the last agreement in the writings, too," said Seth, "in case of accidents?"

"Hear how a knave halts himself!" cried M`Fuse; "he has the individual honour of two captains of foot, and is willing to exchange it for their joint bond! The request is too reasonable to be denied, Polly, and we should be guilty of pecuniary suicide to reject it; so place a small article at the bottom, explanatory of the mistake the gentleman has fallen into."

Polwarth did not hesitate to comply, and in a very few minutes every thing was arranged to the perfect satisfaction of the parties, the two soldiers felicitating themselves on the success of a scheme which seemed to avert the principal evils of the leaguer from their own mess; and Seth, finding no difficulty in complying with an agreement which was likely to prove so profitable, however much he doubted its validity in a court of justice. The prisoner was now declared at liberty, and was advised to make his way out of the place, with as little noise as possible, and under favour of the pass he held. Seth gave the bond a last and most attentive perusal, and then departed, well

contented to abide by its conditions, and not a little pleased to escape from the grenadier, the expression of whose half-comic, half-serious eye, occasioned him more perplexity than any other subject which had ever before occupied his astuteness. After the disappearance of the prisoner, the two worthies repaired to their nightly banquet, laughing heartily at the success of their notable invention.

Lionel suffered Seth to pass from the room, without speaking, but as the man left his own abode with a lingering and doubtful step, the young soldier followed him into the street, without communicating to any one that he had witnessed what had passed, with the laudable intention of adding his own personal pledge for the security of the household goods in question. He, however, found it no easy achievement to equal the speed of a man who had just escaped from a long confinement, and who now appeared inclined to indulge his limbs freely in the pleasure of an unlimited exercise. The velocity of Seth continued unabated, until he had conducted Lionel far into the lower parts of the town, where the latter perceived him to encounter a man with whom he turned suddenly under an arch which led into a dark and narrow court. Lionel instantly increased his speed, and as he entered beneath the passage, he caught a glimpse of the lank figure of the object of his pursuit, gliding through the opposite entrance to the court, and, at the same moment, he encountered the man who had apparently induced the deviation in his route. As Lionel stepped a little on one side, the light of a lamp fell full on the form of the other, and he recognised the person of the active leader of the caucus, (as the political meeting he had attended was called,) though so disguised and muffled, that, but for the accidental opening of the folds of his cloak, the unknown might have passed his nearest friend without discovery.

"We meet again!" exclaimed Lionel, in the quickness of surprise; "though it would seem that the sun is never to shine on our interviews."

The stranger started, and betrayed an evident wish to continue his walk, as though the other had mistaken his person; then, as if suddenly recollecting himself, he turned and approached Lionel, with easy dignity, and answered

"The third time is said to contain the charm! I am happy to find that I meet Major Lincoln, unharmed, after the dangers he so lately encountered."

"The dangers have probably been exaggerated by those who wish ill to the cause of our master," returned Lionel, coldly.

There was a calm, but proud smile on the face of the stranger, as he replied

"I shall not dispute the information of one who bore so conspicuous a part in the deeds of that day still you will remember, though the march to Lexington was, like our own accidental rencontres, in the dark, that a bright sun shone upon the retreat, and nothing has been hid."

"Nothing need be concealed," replied Lionel, nettled by the proud composure of the other "unless, indeed, the man I address is afraid to walk the streets of Boston in open day."

"The man you address, Major Lincoln," said the stranger, advancing in his warmth a step nearer to Lionel, "has dared to walk the streets of Boston both by day and by night, when the bullies of him you call your master, have strutted their hour in the security of peace; and now a nation is up to humble their pretensions, shall he shrink from treading his native soil when he will!"

"This is bold language for an enemy within a British camp! Ask yourself what course my duty requires of me?"

"That is a question which lies between Major Lincoln and his conscience," returned the stranger "though," he added, after a momentary pause, and in a milder tone, as if he recollected the danger of his situation "the

gentlemen of his name and lineage were not apt to be informers, when they dwelt in the land of their birth."

"Neither is their descendant. But let this be the last of our interviews, until we can meet as friends, or as enemies should, where we may discuss these topics at the points of our weapons."

"Amen," said the stranger, seizing the hand of the young man, and pressing it with the warmth of a generous emulation "that hour may not be far distant, and may God smile only on the just cause."

Without uttering more, he drew the folds of his dress more closely around his form, and walked so swiftly away that Lionel, had he possessed the inclination, could not have found an opportunity to arrest his progress. As all expectation of overtaking Seth was now lost, the young soldier returned slowly and thoughtfully towards his quarters.

The two or three succeeding days were distinguished by an appearance of more than usual preparation among the troops, and it became known that officers of rank had closely reconnoitred the grounds of the opposite peninsula. Lionel patiently awaited the progress of events; but as the probability of active service increased, his wishes to make another effort to probe the secret of the tenant of the warehouse revived, and he took his way towards the dock-square, with that object, on the night of the fourth day from the preceding interview with the stranger. It was long after the tattoo had laid the town in that deep quiet which follows the bustle of a garrison; and as he passed along he saw none but the sentinels pacing their short limits, or an occasional officer, returning at that late hour from his revels or his duty. The windows of the warehouse were dark, and its inhabitants, if any it had, were wrapped in deep sleep. Restless, and excited, Lionel pursued his walk through the narrow and gloomy streets of the North-end, until he unexpectedly found himself issuing upon the open space that is tenanted by the dead, on Copp's-hill. On this eminence the English general had caused a battery of heavy cannon to be raised, and Lionel, unwilling to encounter the challenge of the sentinels, inclining a little to one side, proceeded to the brow of the hill, and seating himself on a stone, began to muse deeply on his own fortunes, and the situation of the country.

The night was obscure, but the thin vapours which appeared to overhang the place opened at times, when a faint star-light fell from the heavens, and rendered the black hulls of the vessels of war that lay moored before the town, and the faint outlines of the opposite shores, dimly visible. The stillness of midnight rested on the scene, and when the loud calls of "all's-well" ascended from the ships and batteries, the momentary cry was succeeded by a quiet as deep as if the universe slumbered under this assurance of safety. At such an instant, when even the light breathings of the night air were audible, the sound of rippling waters, like that occasioned by raising a paddle with extreme caution, was borne to the ear of the young soldier. He listened intently, and then bending his eyes in the direction of the faint sounds, he saw a small canoe gliding along on the surface of the water, and soon shoot upon the gravelly shore, at the foot of the hill, with a motion so easy and uniform as scarcely to curl a wave on the land. Curious to know who could be moving about the harbour at this hour, in such a secret manner, Lionel was in the act of rising to descend, when he saw the dim figure of a man land from the boat, and climb the hill, directly in a line with his own position. Suppressing even the sounds of his breath, and drawing his body back within the deep shadow cast from a point of the hill, a little above him, Lionel waited until the figure had approached within ten feet of him, when it stopped, and appeared, like himself, to be endeavouring to suppress all other sounds and feelings in the absorbing act of deep attention. The young soldier loosened his sword in its sheath, before he said

"We have chosen a private spot, and a secret hour, sir, for our meditations!"

Had the figure possessed the impalpable nature of an immaterial being, it could not have received this remark, so startling from its suddenness, with greater apathy than did the man to whom it was addressed. He turned slowly towards the speaker, and seemed to look at him earnestly, before he answered, in a low, menacing voice

"There's a granny on the hill, with a gun and baggonet, walking among the cannon, and if he hears people talking down here, he'll make them prisoners, though one of them should be Major Lincoln."

"Ha! Job," said Lionel "and is it you I meet prowling about like a thief at night! on what errand of mischief have you been sent this time?"

"If Job's a thief for coming to see the graves on Copp's," returned the lad sullenly, "there's two of them."

"Well answered boy!" said Lionel, with a smile; "but I repeat, on what errand have you returned to the town at this unseasonable and suspicious hour?"

"Job loves to come up among the graves, before the cocks grow; they say the dead walk when living men sleep."

"And would you hold communion with the dead, then?"

"'Tis sinful to ask them many questions, and such as you do put should be made in the Holy name," returned the lad, in a tone so solemn, that, connected with the place and the scene, it caused the blood of Lionel to thrill "but Job loves to be near them, to use him to the damps, ag'in the time he shall be called to walk himself in a sheet at midnight."

"Hush!" said Lionel "what noise is that?"

Job stood a moment, listening as intently as his companion, before he answered

"There's no noise but the moaning of the wind in the bay, or the sea tumbling on the beaches of the islands?"

"'Tis neither," said Lionel; "I heard the low hum of a hundred voices, or my ears have played me falsely."

"May be the spirits speak to each other," said the lad "they say their voices are like the rushing winds."

Lionel passed his hand across his brow, and endeavoured to recover the tone of his mind, which had been strangely disordered by the solemn manner of his companion, and walked slowly from the spot, closely attended by the silent changeling. He did not stop until he had reached the inner angle of the wall that enclosed the field of the dead, when he paused, and leaning on the fence, again listened intently.

"Boy, I know not how your silly conversation may have warped my brain," he said, "but there are surely strange and unearthly sounds lingering about this place, to-night! By heavens! there is another rush of voices, as if the air above the water were filled with living beings; and then again, I think I hear a noise as if heavy weights were falling to the earth!"

"Ay," said Job, "'tis the clods on the coffins; the dead are going into their graves ag'in, and 'tis time that we should leave them their own grounds."

Lionel hesitated no longer, but he rather ran than walked from the spot, with a secret horror that, at another moment, he would have blushed to acknowledge, nor did he perceive that he was still attended by Job, until he had descended some distance down Lynn-street. Here he was addressed by his companion, in his usually quiet and unmeaning tones

"There's the house that the governor built who went down into the sea for money!" he said "he was a poor boy once, like Job, and now they say his grandson is a great lord, and the king knighted the grand'ther too. It's pretty much the same thing whether a man gets his money out of the sea or out of the earth; the king will make him a lord for it."

"You hold the favours of royalty cheap, fellow," returned Lionel, glancing his eye carelessly at the `Phipp's house," as he passed "you forget that I am to be some day one of your despised knights!"

"I know it," said Job; "and you come from America too it seems to me that all the poor boys go from America to the king to be great lords, and all the sons of the great lords come to America to be made poor boys Nab says Job is the son of a great lord too!"

"Then Nab is as great a fool as her child," said Lionel; "but boy, I would see your mother in the morning, and I expect you to let me know at what hour I may visit her."

Job did not answer, and Lionel, on turning his head, perceived that he was suddenly deserted by the changeling, who was already gliding back towards his favourite haunt among the graves. Vexed at the wild humours of the lad, Lionel hastened to his quarters, and threw himself in his bed, though he heard the loud cries of "all's well," again and again, before the strange phantasies which continued to cross his mind would permit him to obtain the rest he sought.

CHAPTER XV.

"We are finer gentlemen, no doubt, than the plain farmers "we are about to encounter. Our hats carry a smarter cock, "our swords hang more gracefully by our sides, and we make "an easier figure in a ball-room; but let it be remembered, "that the most finished macaroni amongst us, would pass for "an arrant clown at Pekin."

Letter from a Veteran Officer, &c.

When the heavy sleep of morning fell upon his senses, visions of the past and future mingled with wild confusion in the dreams of the youthful soldier. The form of his father stood before him, as he had known it in his childhood, fair in the proportions and vigour of manhood, regarding him with those eyes of benignant, but melancholy affection, which characterized their expression after he had become the sole joy of his widowed parent. While his heart was warming at the sight, the figure melted away, and was succeeded by fantastic phantoms, which appeared to dance among the graves on Copp's, led along in those gambols, which partook of the ghastly horrors of the dead, by Job Pray, who glided among the tombs like a being of another world. Sudden and loud thunder then burst upon them, and the shadows fled into their secret places, from whence he could see, ever and anon, some glassy eyes and spectral faces, peering out upon him, as if conscious of the power they possessed to chill the blood of the living. His visions now became painfully distinct, and his sleep was oppressed with their vividness, when his senses burst their unnatural bonds, and he awoke. The air of morning was breathing through his open curtains, and the light of day had already shed itself upon the dusky roofs of the town. Lionel arose from his bed, and had paced his chamber several times, in a vain effort to shake off the images that had haunted his slumbers, when the sounds which broke upon the stillness of the air, became too plain to be longer mistaken by a practised ear.

"Ha!" he muttered to himself, "I have been dreaming but by halves these are the sounds of no fancied tempest, but cannon, speaking most plainly to the soldier!"

He opened his window, and looked out upon the surrounding scene. The roar of artillery was now quick and heavy, and Lionel bent his eyes about him to discover the cause of this unusual occurrence. It had been the policy of Gage to await the arrival of his reinforcements, before he struck a blow which was intended to be decisive; and the Americans were well known to be too scantily supplied with the munitions of war, to waste a single charge of powder in any of the vain attacks of modern sieges. A knowledge of these facts gave an additional interest to the curiosity with which Major Lincoln endeavoured to penetrate the mystery of so singular a disturbance. Window after window in the adjacent buildings soon exhibited, like his own, its wondering and alarmed spectator. Here

and there a half-dressed soldier, or a busy townsman, was seen hurrying along the silent streets, with steps that denoted the eagerness of his curiosity. Women began to rush wildly from their dwellings, and then, as the sounds broke on their ears with ten-fold heaviness in the open air, they shrunk back into their habitations in pallid dismay. Lionel called to three or four of the men as they hurried by, but turning their eyes wildly towards his window, they passed on without answering, as if the emergency were too pressing to admit of speech. Finding his repeated inquiries fruitless, he hastily dressed himself, and descended to the street. As he left his own door, a half-clad artilleryman hurried past him, adjusting his garments with one hand, and bearing in the other some of the lesser implements of the particular corps in which he served.

"What means the firing, sergeant," demanded Lionel, "and whither do you hasten with those fuses?"

"The rebels, your honour, the rebels!" returned the soldier, looking back to speak, without ceasing his speed; "and I go to my guns!"

"The rebels!" repeated Lionel "what can we have to fear, from a mob of countrymen, in such a position that fellow has slept from his post, and apprehensions for himself mingle with this zeal for his king!"

The towns-people now began to pour from their dwellings in scores; and Lionel imitated their example, and took his course towards the adjacent height of Beacon-hill. He toiled his way up the steep ascent, in company with twenty more, without exchanging a syllable with men who appeared as much astonished as himself at this early interruption of their slumbers, and in a few minutes he stood on the little grassy platform, surrounded by a hundred interested gazers. The sun had just lifted the thin veil of mist from the bosom of the waters, and the eye was permitted to range over a wide field beneath the light vapour. Several vessels were moored in the channels of the Charles and Mystick, to cover the northern approaches to the place; and as he beheld the column of white smoke that was wreathing about the masts of a frigate among them, Lionel was no longer at a loss to comprehend whence the firing proceeded. While he was yet gazing, uncertain of the reasons which demanded this show of war, immense fields of smoke burst from the side of a ship of the line, who also opened her deep-mouthed cannon, and presently her example was followed by several floating batteries, and lighter vessels, until the wide amphitheatre of hills that encircled Boston were filled with the echoes of a hundred pieces of artillery.

"What can it mean, sir!" exclaimed a young officer of his own regiment, addressing Major Lincoln "the sailors are in downright earnest, and they scale their guns with shot, I know, by the rattling of the reports!"

"I can boast of a vision no better than your own," returned Lionel; "for no enemy can I see. As the guns seem pointed at the opposite peninsula, it is probable a party of the Americans are attempting to destroy the grass which lies newly mown in the meadows."

The young officer was in the act of assenting to this conjecture, when a voice was heard above their heads, shouting

"There goes a gun from Copp's! They needn't think to frighten the people with their rake-helly noises; let them blaze away till the dead get out of their graves the Bay-men will keep the hill!"

Every eye was immediately turned upward, and the wondering and amused spectators discovered Job Pray, seated in the grate of the Beacon, his countenance, usually so vacant, gleaming with exultation, while he continued waving his hat high in air, as gun after gun was added to the uproar of the cannonade.

"How now, fellow!" exclaimed Lionel; "what see you? and where are the Bay-men of whom you speak?"

"Where," returned the simpleton, clapping his hands with childish delight "why, where they came at dark midnight, and where they'll stand at open noon-day! The Bay-men can look into the windows of old Funnel at

last, and now let the reg'lars come on, and they'll teach the godless murderers the law!"

Lionel, a little irritated with the bold language of Job, called to him in an angry voice

"Come down from that perch, fellow, and explain yourself, or this grenadier shall lift you from your seat, and transfer you to the post for a little of that wholesome correction which you need."

"You promised that the grannies should never flog Job ag'in," said the changeling, crouching down in the grate, whence he looked out at his threatened chastiser with a lowering and sullen eye "and Job agreed to run your a'rnds, and not take any of the king's crowns in pay."

"Come down, then, this instant, and I will remember the compact."

Comforted by this assurance, which was made in a more friendly tone, Job threw himself carelessly from his iron seat, and clinging to the post, he slid swiftly to the earth, where Major Lincoln immediately arrested him by the arm, and demanded

"Where are those Bay-men, I once more ask?"

"There!" repeated Job, pointing over the low roofs of the town, in the direction of the opposite peninsula. "They dug their cellar on Breeds, and now they are fixing the underpinnin', and next you'll see what a raising they'll invite the people to!"

The instant the spot was named, all those eyes which had hitherto gazed at the vessels themselves, instead of searching for the object of their hostility, were turned on the green eminence which rose a little to the right of the village of Charlestown, and every doubt was at once removed by the discovery. The high, conical summit of Bunker-hill lay naked, and unoccupied, as on the preceding day; but on the extremity of a more humble ridge, which extended within a short distance of the water, a low bank of earth had been thrown up, for purposes which no military eye could mistake. This redoubt, small and inartificial as it was, commanded by its position the whole of the inner harbour of Boston, and even endangered, in some measure, the occupants of the town itself. It was the sudden appearance of this magical mound, as the mists of the morning had dispersed, which roused the slumbering seamen; and it had already become the target of all the guns of the shipping in the bay. Amazement at the temerity of their countrymen, held the townsmen silent, while Major Lincoln, and the few officers who stood nigh him, saw at a glance, that this step on the part of their adversaries would bring the affairs of the leaguer to an instant crisis. In vain they turned their wondering looks on the neighbouring eminence, and around the different points of the peninsula, in quest of those places of support with which soldiers generally entrench their defences. The husbandmen opposed to them, had seized upon the point best calculated to annoy their foes, without regard to the consequences; and in a few short hours, favoured by the mantle of night, had thrown up their work with a dexterity that was only exceeded by their boldness. The truth flashed across the brain of Major Lincoln with his first glance, and he felt his cheeks glow as he remembered the low and indistinct murmurs which the night air had wafted to his ears, and those inexplicable fancies, which had even continued to haunt him till dispersed by truth and the light of day. Motioning to Job to follow, he left the hill with a hurried step, and when they gained the common, he turned, and said, sternly, to his companion

"Fellow, you have been privy to this midnight work!"

"Job has enough to do in the day, without labouring in the night, when none but the dead are out of their places of rest," returned the lad, with a look of mental imbecility, which immediately disarmed the resentment of the other.

Lionel smiled as he again remembered his own weakness, and repeated to himself

"The dead! ay, these are the works of the living, and bold men are they who have dared to do the deed. But tell me, Job, for 'tis in vain to attempt deceiving me any longer, what number of Americans did you leave on the hill when you crossed the Charles to visit the graves on Copp's, the past night?"

"Both hills were crowded," returned the other "Breeds with the people, and Copp's with the ghosts Job believes the dead rose to see their children digging so nigh them!"

"'Tis probable," said Lionel, who believed it wisest to humour the wild conceits of the lad, in order to disarm his cunning; "but though the dead are invisible, the living may be counted."

"Job did count five hundred men, marching over the nose of Bunker, by star-light, with their picks and spades; and then he stopped, for he forgot whether seven or eight hundred came next."

"And after you ceased to count, did many others pass?"

"The Bay-colony isn't so poorly off for men, that it can't muster a thousand at a raising."

"But you had a master workman on the occasion; was it the wolf-hunter of Connecticut?"

"There is no occasion to go from the province to find a workman to lay out a cellar! Dicky Gridley is a Boston boy!"

"Ah! he is the chief! we can have nothing to fear then, since the Connecticut woodsman is not at their head?"

"Do you think old Prescott, of Pepperel, will quit the hill while he has a kernel of powder to burn! no, no, Major Lincoln, Ralph himself an't a stouter warrior; and you can't frighten Ralph!"

"But if they fire their cannon often, their small stock of ammunition will be soon consumed, and then they must unavoidably run."

Job laughed tauntingly, and with an appearance of high scorn, before he answered

"Yes, if the Bay-men were as dumb as the king's troops, and used such big guns! but the cannon of the colony want but little brimstone, and there's but few of them let the rake-hellies go up to Breeds; the people will teach them the law!"

Lionel had now obtained all he expected to learn from the simpleton concerning the force and condition of the Americans; and as the moments were too precious to be wasted in vain discourse, he bid the lad repair to his quarters that night, and left him. On entering his own lodgings, Major Lincoln shut himself up in his private apartment, and passed several hours in writing, and examining important papers. One letter, in particular, was written, read, torn, and rewritten five or six times, until at length he placed his seal, and directed the important paper with a sort of carelessness that denoted his patience was exhausted by repeated trials. These documents were entrusted to Meriton, with orders to deliver them to their several addresses, unless countermanded before the following day, and the young man hastily swallowed a late and light breakfast. While shut up in his closet, Lionel had several times thrown aside his pen to listen, as the hum of the place penetrated to his retirement, and announced the excitement and bustle which pervaded the streets of the town. Having at length completed the task he had assigned himself, he caught up his hat, and took his way, with hasty steps, into the centre of the place.

Cannon were rattling over the rough pavements, followed by ammunition wagons, and officers and men of the artillery were seen in swift pursuit of their pieces. Aide-de-camps were riding furiously through the streets, charged with important messages; and here and there an officer might be seen issuing from his quarters, with a

countenance in which manly pride struggled powerfully with inward dejection, as he caught the last glance of anguish which followed his retiring form, from eyes that had been used to meet his own with looks of confidence and love. There was, however, but little time to dwell on these flitting glimpses of domestic wo, amid the general bustle and glitter of the scene. Now and then the strains of martial broke up through the windings of the crooked avenues, and detachments of the troops wheeled by on their way to the appointed place of embarkation. While Lionel stood a moment at the corner of a street, admiring the firm movement of a body of grenadiers, his eye fell on the powerful frame and rigid features of M Fuse, marching at the head of his company with that gravity which regarded the accuracy of the step amongst the important incidents of life. At a short distance from him was Job Pray, timing his paces to the tread of the soldiers, and regarding the gallant show with stupid admiration, while his ear unconsciously drank the inspiring music of their band. As this fine body of men passed on, it was immediately succeeded by a battalion in which Lionel instantly recognised the facings of his own regiment. The warm-hearted Polwarth led its forward files, and waving his hand, he cried

"God bless you, Leo, God bless you we shall make a fair stand up fight of this; there is an end of all stag-hunting."

The notes of the horns rose above his voice, and Lionel could do no more than return his cordial salute; when, recalled to his purpose by the sight of his comrades, he turned, and pursued his way to the quarters of the commander-in-chief.

The gate of Province-house was thronged with military men; some waiting for admittance, and others entering and departing with the air of those who were charged with the execution of matters of the deepest moment. The name of Major Lincoln was hardly announced before an aid appeared to conduct him into the presence of the governor, with a politeness and haste that several gentlemen, who had been in waiting for hours, deemed in a trifling degree unjust.

Lionel, however, having little to do with murmurs which he did not hear, followed his conductor, and was immediately ushered into the apartment, where a council of war had just closed its deliberations. On the threshold of its door he was compelled to give way to an officer who was departing in haste, and whose powerful frame seemed bent a little in the intensity of thought, as his dark, military countenance lighted for an instant with the salutation he returned to the low bow of the young soldier. Around this chief a group of younger men immediately clustered, and as they departed in company, Lionel was enabled to gather from their conversation that they took their way for the field of battle. The room was filled with officers of high rank, though here and there was to be seen a man in civil attire, whose disappointed and bitter looks announced him to be one of those mandamus counsellors, whose evil advice had hastened the mischief their wisdom could never repair. From out a small circle of these mortified civilians, the unpretending person of Gage advanced to meet Lionel, forming a marked contrast by the simplicity of its dress, to the military splendour that was glittering around him.

"In what can I oblige Major Lincoln?" he said, taking the young man by the hand cordially, as if glad to be rid of the troublesome counsellors he had so unceremoniously quitted.

"`Wolfe's own' has just passed me on its way to the boats, and I have ventured to intrude on your excellency to inquire if it were not time its Major had resumed his duty?"

A shade of thought was seated for a moment on the placid features of the general, and he then answered with a friendly smile

"'Twill be no more than an affair of out-posts, and must be quickly ended. But should I grant the request of every brave young man whose spirit is up to-day, it might cost his majesty's service the life of some officer that would make the purchase of the pile of earth too dear."

"But may I not be permitted to say, that the family of Lincoln is of the Province, and its example should not be lost on such an occasion?"

"The loyalty of the colonies is too well represented here to need the sacrifice," said Gage, glancing his eyes carelessly at the expecting group behind him. "My council have decided on the officers to be employed, and I regret that Major Lincoln's name was omitted, since I know it will give him pain; but valuable lives are not to be lightly and unnecessarily exposed."

Lionel bowed in submission, and after communicating the little he had gattered from Job Pray, he turned away, and found himself near another officer of high rank, who smiled as he observed his disappointed countenance, and taking him by the arm, led him from the room, with a freedom suited to his fine figure and easy air.

"Then, like myself, Lincoln, you are not to battle for the king to-day," he said, on gaining the anti-chamber. "Howe has the luck of the occasion, if there can be luck in so vulgar an affair. But *allons*; accompany me to Copp's, as a spectator, since they deny us parts in the drama; and perhaps we may pick up materials for a pasquinade, though not for an epic."

"Pardon me, General Burgoyne," said Lionel, "if I view the matter with more serious eyes than yourself."

"Ah! I had forgot that you were a follower of Percy in the hunt of Lexington!" interrupted the other; "we will call it a tragedy, then, if it better suits your humour. For myself, Lincoln, I weary of these crooked streets and gloomy houses, and having some taste for the poetry of nature, would have long since looked out upon the deserted fields of these husbandmen, had the authority, as well as the inclination, rested with me. But Clinton is joining us: he, too, is for Copp's, where we can all take a lesson in arms, by studying the manner in which Howe wields his battalions."

A soldier of middle age now joined them, whose stout frame, while it wanted the grace and ease of the gentleman who still held Lionel by the arm, bore a martial character to which the look of the quiet and domestic Gage was a stranger; and followed by their several attendants, the whole party immediately left the government-house to take their destined position on the eminence so often mentioned.

As they entered the street, Burgoyne relinquished the arm of his companion, and moved with becoming dignity by the side of his brother General. Lionel gladly availed himself of this alteration to withdraw a little from the group, whose steps he followed at such a distance as permitted him to observe those exhibitions of feeling on the part of the inhabitants, which the pride of the others induced them to overlook. Pallid and anxious female faces were gleaming out upon them from every window, while the roofs of the houses, and the steeples of the churches, were beginning to throng with more daring, and equally interested spectators. The drums no longer rolled along the narrow streets, though, occasionally, the shrill strain of a fife was heard from the water, announcing the movements of the troops to the opposite peninsula. Over all was heard the incessant roaring of the artillery, which, untired, had not ceased to rumble in the air since the appearance of light, until the ear, accustomed to its presence, had learnt to distinguish the lesser sounds we have recorded.

As the party descended into the lower passages of the town, it appeared deserted by every thing having life, the open windows and neglected doors betraying the urgency of the feelings which had called the population to situations more favourable for observing the approaching contest. This appearance of intense curiosity excited the sympathies of even the old and practised soldiers; and quickening their paces, the whole soon rose from among the gloomy edifices to the open and unobstructed view from the hill.

The whole scene now lay before them. Nearly in their front was the village of Charlestown, with its deserted streets, and silent roofs, looking like a place of the dead; or, if the signs of life were visible within its open avenues, 'twas merely some figure moving swiftly in the solitude, like one who hastened to quit the devoted spot.

On the opposite point of the south-eastern face of the peninsula, and at the distance of a thousand yards, the ground was already covered by masses of human beings, in scarlet, with their arms glittering in a noon-day sun. Between the two, though in the more immediate vicinity of the silent town, the rounded ridge already described, rose abruptly from a flat that was bounded by the water, until, having attained an elevation of some fifty or sixty feet, it swelled gradually to the little crest, where was planted the humble object that had occasioned all this commotion. The meadows, on the right, were still peaceful and smiling as in the most quiet days of the province, though the excited fancy of Lionel imagined that a sullen stillness lingered about the neglected kilns in their front, and over the whole landscape, that was in gloomy consonance with the approaching scene. Far on the left, across the waters of the Charles, the American camp had poured forth its thousands to the hills; and the whole population of the country for many miles inland, had gathered to a point, to witness a struggle charged with the fate of their nation. Beacon-hill rose from out the appalling silence of the town of Boston, like a pyramid of living faces, with every eye fixed on the fatal point, and men hung along the yards of the shipping, or were suspended on cornices, cupolas, and steeples, in thoughtless security, while every other sense was lost in the absorbing interest of the sight. The vessels of war had hauled deep into the rivers, or more properly, those narrow arms of the sea which formed the peninsula, and sent their iron missiles with unwearied industry across the low passage which alone opened the means of communication between the self-devoted yeomen on the hill, and their distant country men. While battalion landed after battalion on the point, cannon-balls from the battery of Copp's, and the vessels of war, were glancing up the natural glacis that surrounded the redoubt, burying themselves in its earthen parapet, or plunging with violence into the deserted sides of the loftier height which lay a few hundred yards in its rear; and the black and smoking bombs appeared to hover above the spot, as if pausing to select the places in which to plant their deadly combustibles.

Notwithstanding these appalling preparations, and ceaseless annoyances, throughout that long and anxious morning, the stout husbandmen on the hill had never ceased their steady efforts to maintain, to the uttermost extremity, the post they had so daringly assumed. In vain the English exhausted every means to disturb their stubborn foes; the pick, the shovel, and the spade continued to perform their offices, and mound rose after mound, amidst the din and danger of the cannonade, steadily, and as well as if the fanciful conceits of Job Pray embraced their real objects, and the labourers were employed in the peaceful pursuits of their ordinary lives. This firmness, however, was not like the proud front which high training can impart to the most common mind; for ignorant of the glare of military show; in the simple and rude vestments of their calling; armed with such weapons as they had seized from the hooks above their own mantels; and without even a banner to wave its cheering folds above their heads, they stood, sustained only by the righteousness of their cause, and those deep moral principles which they had received from their fathers, and which they intended this day should show, were to be transmitted untarnished to their children. It was afterwards known that they endured their labours and their dangers even in want of that sustenance which is so essential to support animal spirits in moments of calmness and ease; while their enemies, on the point, awaiting the arrival of their latest bands, were securely devouring a meal, which to hundreds amongst them proved to be their last. The fatal instant now seemed approaching. A general movement was seen among the battalions of the British, who began to spread along the shore, under cover of the brow of the hill the lingering boats having arrived with the rear of their detachments and officers hurried from regiment to regiment with the final mandates of their chief. At this moment a body of Americans appeared on the crown of Bunker-hill, and descending swiftly by the road, disappeared in the meadows to the left of their own redoubt. This band was followed by others, who, like themselves, had broken through the dangers of the narrow pass, by braving the fire of the shipping, and who also hurried to join their comrades on the low land. The British General determined at once to anticipate the arrival of further reinforcements, and gave forth the long-expected order to prepare for the attack.

CHAP. XVI.

"Th'imperious Briton, on the well-fought ground,

"No cause for joy, or wanton triumph found,
"But saw, with grief, their dreams of conquest vain,
"Felt the deep wounds, and mourn'd their vet'rans slain." *Humphreys*.

The Americans had made a show, in the course of that fearful morning, of returning the fire of their enemies, by throwing a few shot from their light field-pieces, as if in mockery of the tremendous cannonade which they sustained. But as the moment of severest trial approached, the same awful stillness which had settled upon the deserted streets of Charlestown, hovered around the redoubt. On the meadows, to its left, the recently arrived bands hastily threw the rails of two fences into one, and covering the whole with the mown grass that surrounded them, they posted themselves along the frail defence, which answered no better purpose than to conceal their weakness from their adversaries. Behind this characteristic rampart, several bodies of husbandmen from the neighbouring provinces of New-Hampshire and Connecticut, lay on their arms, in sullen expectation. Their line extended from the shore to the base of the ridge, where it terminated several hundred feet behind the works; leaving a wide opening in a diagonal direction, between the fence and an earthen breast-work, which ran a short distance down the declivity of the hill, from the north-eastern angle of the redoubt. A few hundred yards in the rear of this rude disposition, the naked crest of Bunker-hill rose unoccupied and undefended, and the streams of the Charles and Mystick sweeping around its base, approached so near each other as to blend the sounds of their rippling. It was across this low and narrow isthmus, that the royal frigates poured a stream of fire, that never ceased, while around it hovered the numerous parties of the undisciplined Americans, hesitating to attempt the dangerous passage.

In this manner Gage had, in a great degree, surrounded the devoted peninsula with his power; and the bold men who had so daringly planted themselves under the muzzles of his cannon, were left, as already stated, unsupported, without nourishment, and with weapons from their own gun-hooks, singly to maintain the honour of their nation. Including men of all ages and conditions, there might have been two thousand of them; but as the day advanced, small bodies of their countrymen, taking counsel of their feelings, and animated by the example of the old Partisan of the Woods, who crossed and recrossed the neck, loudly scoffing at the danger, broke through the fire of the shipping in time to join in the closing and bloody business of the hour.

On the other hand, Howe led more than an equal number of the chosen troops of his Prince; and as boats continued to ply between the two peninsulas throughout the afternoon, the relative disparity continued undiminished to the end of the struggle. It was at this point in our narrative that, deeming himself sufficiently strong to force the defences of his despised foes, the arrangements immediately preparatory to such an undertaking were made in full view of the excited spectators. Notwithstanding the security with which the English General marshalled his warriors, he felt that the approaching contest would be a battle of no common incidents. The eyes of teus of thousands were fastened on his movements, and the occasion demanded the richest display of the pageantry of war.

The troops formed with beautiful accuracy, and the columns moved steadily along the shore, and took their assigned stations under cover of the brow of the eminence. Their force was in some measure divided; one moiety attempting the toilsome ascent of the hill, and the other moving along the beach, or in the orchards of the more level ground, towards the husbandmen on the meadows. The latter soon disappeared behind some fruit-trees and the brick-kilns just mentioned. The advance of the royal columns up the ascent was slow and measured, giving time to their field-guns to add their efforts to the uproar of the cannonade, which broke out with new fury as the battalions prepared to march. When each column arrived at the allotted point, it spread the gallant array of its glittering warriors under a bright sun.

"It is a glorious spectacle," murmured the graceful chieftain by the side of Lionel, keenly alive to all the poetry of his alluring profession; "how exceeding soldier-like! and with what accuracy his `first-arm ascends the hill,' towards his enemy!"

The intensity of his feelings prevented Major Lincoln from replying, and the other soon forgot that he had spoken, in the overwhelming anxiety of the moment. The advance of the British line, so beautiful and slow, resembled rather the ordered steadiness of a drill than an approach to a deadly struggle. Their standards fluttered proudly above them, and there were moments when the wild music of their bands was heard rising on the air, and tempering the ruder sounds of the artillery. The young and thoughtless in their ranks turned their faces backward, and smiled exultingly, as they beheld steeples, roofs, masts, and heights, teeming with their thousands of eyes, bent on the show of their bright array. As the British lines moved in open view of the little redoubt, and began slowly to gather around its different faces, gun after gun became silent, and the curious artillerist, or tired seaman, lay extended on his heated piece, gazing in mute wonder at the spectacle. There was just then a minute when the roar of the cannonade seemed passing away like the rumbling of distant thunder.

"They will not fight, Lincoln," said the animated leader at the side of Lionel "the military front of Howe has chilled the hearts of the knaves, and our victory will be bloodless!"

"We shall see, sir we shall see!"

These words were barely uttered, when platoon after platoon, among the British, delivered its fire, the blaze of musketry flashing swiftly around the brow of the hill, and was immediately followed by heavy volleys that ascended from the orchard. Still no answering sound was heard from the Americans, and the royal troops were soon lost to the eye as they slowly marched into the white cloud which their own fire had alone created.

"They are cowed, by heavens the dogs are cowed!" once more cried the gay companion of Lionel, "and Howe is within two hundred feet of them, unharmed!"

At that instant a sheet of flame glanced through the smoke, like lightning playing in a cloud, while at one report a thousand muskets were added to the uproar. It was not altogether fancy which led Lionel to imagine that he saw the smoky canopy of the hill to wave as if the trained warriors it enveloped faltered before this close and appalling discharge; but in another instant, the stimulating war-cry, and the loud shouts of the combatants were borne across the strait to his ears, even amid the horrid din of the combat. Ten breathless minutes flew by like a moment of time, and the bewildered spectators on Copp's were still gazing intently on the scene, when a voice was raised among them, shouting

"Hurrah! let the rake-hellies go up to Breed's; the people will teach'em the law!"

"Throw the rebel scoundrel from the hill! Blow him from the muzzle of a gun!" cried twenty soldiers in a breath.

"Hold!" exclaimed Lionel "'tis a simpleton, an idiot, a fool!"

But the angry and savage murmurs as quickly subsided, and were lost in other feelings, as the bright red lines of the royal troops were seen issuing from the smoke, waving and recoiling before the still vivid fire of their enemies.

"Ha!" said Burgoyne "'tis some feint to draw the rebels from their hold!"

"'Tis a palpable and disgraceful retreat!" muttered the stern warrior nigh him, whose truer eye detected at a glance the discomfiture of the assailants "'Tis another base retreat before the rebels!"

"Hurrah!" shouted the reckless changeling again; "there come the reg'lars out of the orchard too! see the grannies skulking behind the kilns! Let them go on to Breed's, the people will teach'em the law!"

No cry of vengeance preceded the act this time, but fifty of the soldiery rushed, as by a common impulse, on their prey. Lionel had not time to utter a word of remonstrance, before Job appeared in the air, borne on the uplifted arms of a dozen men, and at the next instant he was seen rolling down the steep declivity, with a velocity that carried him to the water's edge. Springing to his feet, the undaunted changeling once more waved his hat in triumph, and shouted forth again his offensive challenge. Then turning, he launched his canoe from its hiding place among the adjacent lumber, amid a shower of stones, and glided across the strait; his little bark escaping unnoticed in the crowd of boats that were rowing in all directions. But his progress was watched by the uneasy eye of Lionel, who saw him land and disappear, with hasty steps, in the silent streets of the town.

While this trifling by-play was enacted, the great drama of the day was not at a stand. The smoky veil which clung around the brow of the eminence, was lifted by the air, and sailed heavily away to the south-west, leaving the scene of the bloody struggle again open to the view. Lionel witnessed the grave and meaning glances which the two lieutenants of the king exchanged as they simultaneously turned their glasses from the fatal spot, and taking the one proffered by Burgoyne, he read their explanation in the numbers of the dead that lay profusely scattered in front of the redoubt. At this instant, an officer from the field held an earnest communication with the two leaders, when, having delivered his orders, he hastened back to his boat, like one who felt himself employed in matters of life and death.

"It shall be done, sir," repeated Clinton, as the other departed, his own honest brow sternly knit under high martial excitement. "The artillery have their orders, and the work will be accomplished without delay."

"This, Major Lincoln!" cried his more sophisticated companion, "this is one of the trying duties of the soldier! To fight, to bleed, or even to die, for his prince, is his happy privilege; but it is sometimes his unfortunate lot to become the instrument of vengeance."

Lionel waited but a moment for an explanation the flaming balls were soon seen taking their wide circuit in the air, and carrying their desolation among the close and inflammable roofs of the opposite town. In a very few minutes a dense, black smoke arose from the deserted buildings, and forked flames played actively along the heated shingles, as though rioting in their unmolested possession of the place. He regarded the gathering destruction in painful silence; and on bending his looks towards his companions, he fancied, notwithstanding the language of the other, that he read the deepest regret in the averted eye of him who had so unhesitatingly uttered the fatal mandate to destroy.

In scenes like these we are attempting to describe, hours appear to be minutes, and time flies as imperceptibly as life slides from beneath the feet of age. The disordered ranks of the British had been arrested at the base of the hill, and were again forming under the eyes of their leaders, with admirable discipline, and extraordinary care. Fresh battalions, from Boston, marched with high military pride into the line, and every thing betokened that a second assault was at hand. When the moment of stupid amazement which succeeded the retreat of the royal troops had passed, the troops and batteries poured out their wrath with tenfold fury on their enemies. Shot were incessantly glancing up the gentle acclivity, madly ploughing across its grassy surface, while black and threatening shells appeared to hover above the work like the monsters of the air, about to stoop upon their prey.

Still all lay quiet and immoveable within the low mounds of earth, as if none there had a stake in the issue of the bloody day. For a few moments only, the tall figure of an aged man was seen slowly moving along the summit of the rampart, calmly regarding the dispositions of the English general in the more distant part of his line, and after exchanging a few words with a gentleman who joined him in his dangerous lookout, they disappeared together behind the grassy banks. Lionel soon detected the name of Prescott of Pepperell, passing through the crowd in low murmurs, and his glass did not deceive him when he thought, in the smaller of the two, he had himself descried the graceful person of the unknown leader of the 'caucus.'

All eyes were now watching the advance of the battalions, which once more drew nigh the point of contest. The heads of the columns were already in view of their enemies, when a man was seen swiftly ascending the hill from the burning town: he paused amid the peril, on the natural glacis, and swung his hat triumphantly, and Lionel even fancied he heard the exulting cry, as he recognised the ungainly form of the simpleton, before it plunged into the work.

The right of the British once more disappeared in the orchard, and the columns in front of the redoubt again opened with all the imposing exactness of their high discipline. Their arms were already glittering in a line with the green faces of the mound, and Lionel heard the experienced warrior at his side, murmuring to himself

"Let him hold his fire, and he will go in at the point of the bayonet!"

But the trial was too great for even the practised courage of the royal troops. Volley succeeded volley, and in a few moments they had again curtailed their ranks behind the misty skreen produced by their own fire. Then came the terrible flash from the redoubt, and the eddying volumes from the adverse hosts rolled into one cloud, enveloping the combatants in its folds, as if to conceal their bloody work from the spectators. Twenty times in the short space of as many minutes, Major Lincoln fancied he heard the incessant roll of the American musketry die away before the heavy and regular volleys of the troops, and then he thought the sounds of the latter grew more faint, and were given at longer intervals.

The result, however, was soon known. The heavy bank of smoke which now even clung along the ground, was broken in fifty places, and the disordered masses of the British were seen driven before their deliberate foes, in wild confusion. The flashing swords of the officers in vain attempted to arrest the torrent, nor did the flight cease with many of the regiments until they had even reached their boats. At this moment a hum was heard in Boston like the sudden rush of wind, and men gazed in each other's faces with undisguised amazement. Here and there a low sound of exultation escaped some unguarded lip, and many an eye gleamed with a triumph that could no longer be suppressed. Until this moment the feelings of Lionel had vacillated between the pride of country and his military spirit, but losing all other feelings in the latter sensation, he now looked fiercely about him, as if he would seek the man who dare exult in the repulse of his comrades. The poetic chieftain was still at his side, biting his nether lip in vexation; but his more tried companion had suddenly disappeared. Another quick glance fell upon his missing form in the act of entering a boat at the foot of the hill. Quicker than thought, Lionel was on the shore, crying as he flew to the water's edge

"Hold! for God's sake, hold! remember the 47th is in the field, and that I am its Major!"

"Receive him," said Clinton, with that grim satisfaction with which men acknowledge a valued friend in moments of great trial; "and then row for your lives, or what is of more value, for the honour of the British name."

The brain of Lionel whirled as the boat shot along its watery bed, but before it had gained the middle of the stream he had time to consider the whole of the appalling scene. The fire had spread from house to house, and the whole village of Charlestown, with its four hundred buildings, was just bursting into flames. The air seemed filled with whistling balls, as they hurtled above his head, and the black sides of the vessels of war were vomiting their sheets of flame with unwearied industry. Amid this tumult the English General and his companions sprung to land. The former rushed into the disordered ranks, and by his presence and voice recalled the men of one regiment to their duty. But long and loud appeals to their spirit and their ancient fame were necessary to restore a moiety of their former confidence to men who had been thus rudely repulsed, and who now looked along their thinned and exhausted ranks, missing in many instances more than half the well-known countenances of their fellows. In the midst of the faltering troops stood their stern and unbending chief; but of all those gay and gallant youths who followed in his train as he had departed from Province-house that morning, not one remained, but in his blood. He alone seemed undisturbed in that disordered crowd; and his mandates went forth as usual, calm and determined. At length the panic, in some degree, subsided, and order was once more restored as the high-spirited

and mortified gentlemen of the detachment regained their lost authority.

The leaders consulted together, apart, and the dispositions were immediately renewed for the assault. Military show was no longer affected, but the soldiers laid down all the useless implements of their trade, and many even cast aside their outer garments, under the warmth of a broiling sun, added to the heat of the conflagration which began to diffuse itself along the extremity of the peninsula. Fresh companies were placed in the columns, and most of the troops were withdrawn from the meadows, leaving merely a few skirmishers to amuse the Americans who lay behind the fence. When each disposition was completed, the final signal was given to advance.

Lionel had taken post in his regiment, but marching on the skirt of the column, he commanded a view of most of the scene of battle. In his front moved a battalion, reduced to a handful of men in the previous assaults. Behind these came a party of the marine guards, from the shipping, led by their own veteran Major; and next followed the dejected Nesbitt and his corps, amongst whom Lionel looked in vain for the features of the good-natured Polwarth. Similar columns marched on their right and left, encircling three sides of the redoubt by their battalions.

A few minutes brought him in full view of that humble and unfinished mound of earth, for the possession of which so much blood had that day been spilt in vain. It lay, as before, still as if none breathed within its bosom, though a terrific row of dark tubes were arrayed along its top, following the movements of the approaching columns, as the eyes of the imaginary charmers of our own wilderness are said to watch their victims. As the uproar of the artillery again grew fainter, the crash of falling streets, and the appalling sounds of the conflagration, on their left, became more audible. Immense volumes of black smoke issued from the smouldering ruins, and bellying outward, fold beyond fold, it overhung the work in a hideous cloud, casting its gloomy shadow across the place of blood.

A strong column was now seen ascending, as if from out the burning town, and the advance of the whole became quick and spirited. A low call ran through the platoons, to note the naked weapons of their adversaries, and it was followed by the cry of "to the bayonet! to the bayonet!"

"Hurrah! for the Royal Irish!" shouted M'Fuse, at the head of the dark column from the conflagration.

"Hurrah!" echoed a well-known voice from the silent mound; "let them come on to Breed's; the people will teach'em the law!"

Men think at such moments with the rapidity of lightning, and Lionel had even fancied his comrades in possession of the work, when the terrible stream of fire flashed in the faces of the men in front.

"Push on with the th," cried the veteran Major of Marines "push on, or the 18th will get the honour of the day!"

"We cannot," murmured the soldiers of the th; "their fire is too heavy!"

"Then break, and let the marines pass through you!"

The feeble battalion melted away, and the warriors of the deep, trained to conflicts of hand to hand, sprang forward, with a loud shout, in their places. The Americans, exhausted of their ammunition, now sunk sullenly back, a few hurling stones at their foes, in desperate indignation. The cannon of the British had been brought to enfilade their short breast-work, which was no longer tenable; and as the columns approached closer to the low rampart, it became a mutual protection to the adverse parties.

"Hurrah! for the Royal Irish!" again shouted M'Fuse, rushing up the trifling ascent, which was but of little more than his own height.

"Hurrah!" repeated Pitcairn, waving his sword on another angle of the work "the day's our own!"

One more sheet of flame issued out of the bosom of the work, and all those brave men, who had emulated the examples of their officers, were swept away, as though a whirlwind had passed along. The grenadier gave his war-cry once more before he pitched headlong among his enemies; while Pitcairn fell back into the arms of his own child. The cry of 'forward, 47th,' rung through their ranks, and in their turn this veteran battalion gallantly mounted the ramparts. In the shallow ditch Lionel passed the dying marine, and caught the dying and despairing look from his eyes, and in another instant he found himself in the presence of his foes. As company followed company into the defenceless redoubt, the Americans sullenly retired by its rear, keeping the bayonets of the soldiers at bay with clubbed muskets and sinewy arms. When the whole issued upon the open ground, the husbandmen received a close and fatal fire from the battalions which were now gathering around them on three sides. A scene of wild and savage confusion then succeeded to the order of the fight, and many fatal blows were given and taken, the *mêlée* rendering the use of fire-arms nearly impossible for several minutes.

Lionel continued in advance, pressing on the footsteps of the retiring foe, stepping over many a lifeless body in his difficult progress. Notwithstanding the hurry, and vast disorder of the fray, his eye fell on the form of the graceful stranger, stretched lifeless on the parched grass, which had greedily drank his blood. Amid the ferocious cries, and fiercer passions of the moment, the young man paused, and glanced his eyes around him with an expression that said, he thought the work of death should cease. At this instant the trappings of his attire caught the glaring eye-balls of a dying yeoman, who exerted his wasting strength to sacrifice one more worthy victim to the manes of his countrymen. The whole of the tumultuous scene vanished from the senses of Lionel at the flash of the musket of this man, and he sunk beneath the feet of the combatants, insensible of further triumph, and of every danger.

The fall of a single officer, in such a contest, was a circumstance not to be regarded, and regiments passed over him, without a single man stooping to inquire into his fate. When the Americans had disengaged themselves from the troops, they descended into the little hollow between the two hills, swiftly, and like a disordered crowd, bearing off most of their wounded, and leaving but few prisoners in the hands of their foes. The formation of the ground favoured their retreat, as hundreds of bullets whistled harmlessly above their heads; and by the time they gained the acclivity of Bunker's, distance was added to their security. Finding the field lost, the men at the fence broke away in a body from their position, and abandoned the meadows; the whole moving in confused masses behind the crest of the adjacent height. The shouting soldiery followed in their footsteps, pouring in fruitless and distant volleys; but on the summit of Bunker their tired platoons were halted, and they beheld the throng move fearlessly through the tremendous fire that enfiladed the low pass, as little injured as though most of them bore charmed lives.

The day was now drawing to a close. With the disappearance of their enemies, the ships and batteries ceased their cannonade, and presently not a musket was heard in that place where so fierce a contest had so long raged. The troops commenced fortifying the outward eminence on which they rested, in order to maintain their barren conquest, and nothing further remained for the achievement of the royal lieutenants but to go and mourn over their victory.

END OF VOL. 1.