

# **The Old Continental; or, The Price of Liberty**

James Kirke Paulding



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# **The Old Continental; or, The Price of Liberty**

**James Kirke Paulding**

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TO THE READER. –

Though some of the personages, and a portion of the incidents of the following tale, are either historical or traditional, it makes no pretensions to the dignity of a historical romance. The design was, to convey to the mind of the reader some idea of the spirit, the sufferings, and the sacrifices of a class of people who are seldom, if ever, individualized in history, yet who always bear the brunt of war and invasion. The hero of the piece once actually existed, and exhibited in his youth many of the qualities here ascribed to him. Some of the adventures detailed were well remembered by the old people of the neighborhood; few, if any, of whom are now living. Others took place in different parts of the country, at various times; and the whole may suffice to give at least a faint picture of the price paid by our fathers and mothers for the freedom we enjoy. The value of the blessing may in some measure be estimated by the sacrifices by which it was obtained. The tale was substantially written several years ago; and the author, after keeping it more than the period prescribed by Horace, has now given it a last revision.  
*New York, – 1844.*

The Old Continental; or, The Price of Liberty

**VOL. I.**

## CHAPTER I.

### IN WHICH MUCH IS SAID, AND LITTLE DONE.

During the most gloomy and disastrous period of our revolutionary war, there resided in the county of Westchester a family of plain country people, who had, in time long past, seen better days; but who now had nothing to boast of, but a small farm, a good name, and a good conscience. Though bred in the city, they had lived so long in a retired part of the country, that their habits, tastes, and manners, had become altogether rural, and they had almost outlived every vestige of former refinements, except in certain modes of thinking, and acting, which had survived in all changes of time and circumstances. Their residence was an old stone-house, bearing the date of 1688, the figures of which were formed by Holland bricks, incorporated with the walls. The roof was green with mossy honours, and the entire edifice bore testimony, not only to the lapse of time, but to the downhill progress of its inmates. Though not in ruins, it was much decayed; and, though with a good rousing fire in the broad capacious chimney, it was comfortable enough in winter, it afforded nothing without to indicate anything but the possession of those simple necessities of life, which fall to the lot of those who derive their means of happiness from the labours of their hands, the bounties of the earth, and the blessing of a quiet soul.

The old stone-house stood on the brow of a little knoll, fronting a stream something between a brook and a river, that meandered and murmured among willows and alders, at the foot of a range of high hills, which approached not so near but that they left long strips of rich meadows between their base and the banks of the stream. In the rear of the house, at no great distance, was a pond of some half a mile in circumference, and so shallow, in many places, that a variety of aquatic shrubs grew out above the surface, where congregated clouds of black-birds, whose music made but poor amends for their depredations on the newly planted corn-fields. This was not the only music; for, of a still summer evening, the sonorous bull-frog ever and anon twanged his horn, accompanied by a mingled variety of strange harmonies, that we can only compare with the inexplicable jargon of a fashionable overture.

In those days, too, the young plough-boys, and milkmaids sometimes sung their rustic ditties, with blithesome hearts, mornings and evenings, until the harsh dissonance of the trumpet, calling to deeds of bloody strife, scared away all other music, and the rural retreats of our country no longer resounded to the laugh or the song. Indeed, the latter seems to have been scared away forever. Those rural ballads are now scarcely ever heard in the quiet retreats of our country; whether it be that the long and arduous struggles, severe sufferings, and perpetual anxieties of our people, during seven years of bloody war, have given a sober, thoughtful, anxious cast to their characters, or that the possession of freedom, like every worldly blessing, has its drawbacks in new cares for ourselves and our offspring, new solitudes and new responsibilities.

The spot I have thus slightly sketched, seemed consecrated to rural happiness and rural virtue. And so it was, and so it long had been; but the time had now come when that destiny which had carried our forefathers from the old, followed and overtook them in the new world. They left their native land to escape a despotism equally exercised over mind and body. They sought the wilderness of the west, to enjoy in the new world, that seemed to have been discovered on purpose, that freedom of the soul, more precious than all other freedom. But bigotry and persecution, those bloody and remorseless fiends that so often assume the livery of the Prince of Peace, still followed them in the disguise of political devices, calling for new sacrifices, new struggles, and new sufferings. The rights and privileges, for which they had sacrificed everything in the home of their fathers, were now to be once more asserted and maintained for the home of their children. A contest had commenced, in which a proud and arrogant parent offered every wrong and violence which power could inflict, or weakness endure. There was no longer safety in the cities, or repose in the cottage. It was not only a war against men, but against women, children, and domestic animals; against the labours of husbandmen, and the bounties of the earth. The hen-roost and the pig-stye, were no longer the prey of four-footed prowlers, but of gallant soldiers; and no man could reasonably hope either to reap where he had sown, or eat the bread he had earned by the sweat of his brow.

It was not alone the foreign mercenaries of a misguided monarch that assailed the peaceful inhabitants who dwelt in the district which is the scene of our story. The army of the invader had now established its head quarters

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in New York, and the Americans were sheltered from a far superiour foe, in the Highlands of the Hudson. The intermediate space from Kingsbridge, or *Spuytey Duyvel*, was consequently a sort of "debateable land," like the English and Scottish borders, before the union of the two kingdoms. It was occupied by neither party, and it might almost be said there was neither law or gospel there. The farmers of this region, who remained at home, some because they did not know where else to go; some from being too old to remove; and some, perhaps, in the vain hope that neutrality would protect them from the ravages of war, were placed between two fires. Such peculiar situations are always, in these troubled times, the scenes of violence and devastation; the resort of reckless, unprincipled villains, belonging to neither party, yet a disgrace to both, from alternately passing, as occasion required, for adherents of one or the other. Beyond the sphere of military coercion, or the restraints of civil authority, it is here that the plunderer and ravisher luxuriates in unrestrained violence, and weakness and innocence become his unresisting prey.

The enemy, in small parties, made almost daily incursions from New York, and the sad domestic history of those melancholy times, if it were written down from the lips of those who suffered and survived their calamities, a few of whom yet live to relate them, would tell, what has never yet been told, the price at which liberty and independence were bought. On the other hand, bands of lawless Tories of native growth, aided by a class of worthless outlaws belonging to no party, but scourges to both, scoured the country at night, robbing the houses, and often setting them on fire; stealing the cattle, insulting and maltreating the wretched women and children, and not unfrequently murdering the poor victims they had dispoiled. The devoted inhabitants had no heart to labour, except from extreme necessity; the fields were fruitful only of weeds and briars; the fences destroyed, the windows broken; the roads, as far as could be seen, presented no living object, and as is ever the case, under a perpetual succession of suffering, the minds of the inhabitants had settled down into the dead calm of apathy or despair.

The little narrow vale, I have been describing, being several miles from the high road, leading along the bank of the Hudson, had hitherto, in a great degree, if not entirely, escaped the ravages either of the red-coats, the Yagers, or outlawed scum, all whose varieties were included in the expressive denomination of Cow Boys and Skinners. But every day, and more especially every night, afforded indications that the tempest was gradually approaching nearer and nearer. As the country along the river became exhausted of the means of satisfying these lawless plunderers, whose exploits, we earnestly hope, will never, like those of the Scottish border thieves, become the theme of poetic eulogium— they diverged from the high road, and penetrated into the interior. Now it was that those who had hitherto escaped the scourge, trembled for their property and their lives. The farmers no longer rejoiced in the prospect of a golden harvest, which they never expected to reap; the women lay awake at night—trembling at every whispering leaf, or breath of air; and the children fled from their cherished sports, at the cry of "the Yagers are coming!" These Yagers were a band of foreign mercenaries, hired by our mother country to assist in our subjugation; and being totally ignorant of the grounds of the quarrel, as well as, beyond doubt, stimulated by the most cruel misrepresentations of the motives and character of the people of the United States, are noted in the traditions of the times for a thousand acts of ruthless barbarity. Little did they think they were warring against themselves, and those rights, the enjoyment of which is now so anxiously sought by thousands of their countrymen.

The family at the old stone-house consisted of an aged couple, whose snow-white locks and stooping figures bore testimony to a long pilgrimage through this vale of tears; one son, and a grandson of some nineteen years old. The son had gone forth to give aid to his country in her hour of peril, and was now with the army of Washington. The grandson, whose name was John, remained at home, sorely against his will, to assist in the management of the farm. But he longed to go forth and fight by the side of his father, and frequently joined parties of militia in expeditions towards Kingsbridge to gain information of the movements of the enemy, or to protect the inhabitants from the Yagers, the Skinners, and the Cow Boys. On one of these occasions he had greatly distinguished himself, and received the thanks of the gallant Colonel Philip Van Courtlandt, who commanded the outposts at Peekskill. He was handsome, active, and possessed an intrepidity, as well as cool self-possession in time of danger, that qualifies a man to become a leader in all desperate or trying occasions. During the first fourteen years of his life, he had been brought up in the city of New York, where he received every advantage of education, until the misfortunes of his father compelled him to join his parents on the farm, now their only possession.

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One evening, in the lazy month of August, the family were in quiet chat under an old willow-tree, just at the door. The party consisted only of the old people, John, and a young woman named Jane, the only daughter of Colonel Hammond, a near neighbour, who had served in the old French war and performed divers brilliant exploits not recorded in history. The conversation naturally turned on the state of their country, and the probability of ere long receiving a visit from the red coats, the Yagers, or the outlaws, to whom allusion has previously been made. Its tone was saddened by gloomy forebodings, for nothing is more depressing to the mind than perpetual fears, and were it not that people become used to them, as to every other evil, their perpetual recurrence would be intolerable. The aged couple had made up their minds to endure all that might come with patient acquiescence; but the youth, though he said not a word, exhibited in the bright energies of his fiery eye, a far different determination. After a long pause, the old man, as if suddenly recovering himself, turned to him, and said—

"So, John, you were out last night. Did you see anything besides the stars?"

"I saw brighter lights than the stars, sir," replied John.

"Aye! what were they—the lights of the north?"

"Only a couple of houses burning. They made the country smile for miles around. It was a glorious sight, sir," said the young man with bitter irony.

"What, the red coats were out, hey?"

"Yes, sir, the red coats—at least, I suppose so— though when we came up there were none there. They had reaped the harvest of glory and retired."

"No, no, John," said the good woman, who still, like all the colonists, especially women, cherished a great respect for red coats, until roused by injuries to resentment and resistance; "no, John, not the red coats—the tories and the Yagers."

"All one to me, mother"—so he always called her after the death of his own—"British, or tories, or Yagers. They all hoist the same flag—they are all in the pay of the same employer. Master and man, like man and wife, are one flesh. I hold them all alike, and treat them so, when I meet them."

"Ah! John, John! you should not bear malice. Remember, we are commanded to forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers."

"I know it, mother, and when our country is free, and not an enemy's foot-print is to be seen on our soil, I will obey the command; but while they are every day inflicting new injuries, I cannot forgive them."

"Right, John—you say right," exclaimed the old man; "and I almost wish you were old enough to be a soldier. I could find in my heart to send you after your father, to fight by the side of Washington."

"Old enough or not, sir, I must go. I can't stay here any longer. Yesterday, I was pointed at by old Mrs. Read, who has three sons in the army, as a booby tied to his grandmother's apron-string, instead of being among men, defending his country."

"The wicked old woman!" said Jane, in a half whisper.

"I'll tell you at once," continued John, "for it must out at last. I am going this very night with a party, to see if we can't catch some of the rascals who steal our cattle under cover of darkness, and run away by the light of the burning houses."

"Don't go—I beseech you not to go, John," cried the old grandmother, earnestly.

"I entreat you not to go!" cried Jane, tenderly.

"And I," exclaimed the old man, "command—no! God forbid I should prevent your doing anything to serve our cause and our country!"

"I must go, for I have given my word. I must be off bright and early in the morning, to procure a pass from Colonel Philip Van Courtlandt, and shall hardly be back in time to meet our neighbours at the Hole. We are to scout during the night towards Kingsbridge, and must be off as soon as it is dark."

"Alas!" said Jane, "what can you raw country boys do against the red coats?"

"Whatever stout hearts and strong arms can do, Jane," rejoined the other. "Don't you remember that blessed little David, the peasant-boy after God's own heart? how, just as if to humble the pride of the proud invader, Providence armed him with a sling and a stone, to overcome Goliath? The destinies of empires, Jane, is always in the hands of a brave and virtuous people, let them be ever so poor. Our cause is that of the lowly against the exalted, and it is for poor men to maintain it."

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"But, John—John!" cried the grandmother.

But John heard her not. He had relapsed into an old habit of abstraction, common to minds of a higher order, and strengthened by being much alone. He began talking to himself, though his voice was raised, and his eye kindled with animation.

"I never read that glorious story of little David, without thinking how much is in the power of every man, if it pleases God. A sling and a stone! I have a musket and a sword, and for a good cause—a cause more just and noble never breathed fire into the soul of man. The arm of Heaven was against the Philistine, and will it not be on our side, too? But come what will, one thing I know—if a good chance happens, my name shall ring."

"There—there—now the boy has got on his high horse again! He grows madder every day. Ring, indeed! It will never be heard as far as a cow-bell, John," cried the old woman, impatiently.

"Yes, ring, mother. I feel as if I could do something to be remembered if it comes in my way, and if it don't come, I will seek it. What is it, after all, that rules the world, but courage and daring? Yonder strutting game-cock reigns over the poultry-yard, not because his father reigned before him, but by fighting his way to power. So with all, except the race of mankind which claims to wield the sceptre by right of superior intellect, and yet is continually conceding it to fools and cowards. By my soul, I think a man with the heart of a true game-chicken, may be just what he pleases in a strife like this."

"The Lord be with you, John!" sighed the old woman, "you will be shot one of these days."

"It shall not be for cowardice, or mutiny, then. All flesh must die, and fish, too, either yesterday, to-day, or to-morrow. A good deed is better than a long life, and to die for our country is to live forever."

"The boy talks like a parson. It wasn't for nothing his father sent him to the academy in New York," said the old man.

"Ah! John—you will be shot one of these days, I tell you. Remember, life is sweet!" sighed the old grandmother.

"Only a bitter, which long tasting makes sweet, mother. But I must go and get ready, for I must start before daylight. Jane, shall I see you home, for it is getting dusky. I want to talk to you about the little ducks and chickens," said John, sportively, and they went away together.

"Ducks and chickens!" quoth the dame. "The sly rogue! Did you hear that?"

"To be sure I did—I know they love each other dearly."

"I'm glad of it with all my heart, for Jane is a nice girl. But what will the colonel say to it? He is rich and proud, and we are poor and lowly, and what little we have may be laid waste before to-morrow. The colonel loves money, I believe, better than even his daughter."

"Yes—so he does—so he does," replied the old man, thoughtfully. "But who knows but John's queer notions about making his name ring may come true in the end? They say, some people have a sort of insight into what is to come, long before it happens. Who knows?"

"Who, indeed! Strange things happen in war-time. I have heard the great Washington was but a farmer's son."

"Well—well—old folks that can do nothing but talk must trust to Providence, and those that can, take care of themselves. I must make up for John's absence by stirring my old stumps a little more actively."

"And so must I; but I wish from my heart the boy was safe home again from his trip to Kingsbridge," exclaimed the good soul, with her apron to her eyes.

They then retired to their humble bed, and Providence, for that night, blessed them with a repose undisturbed by Cow Boys, Skinners, or red coats.

## CHAPTER II.

### A LOVE SCENE SPOILED BY AN OLD CONTINENTAL.

John and his gentle companion pursued their way lazily towards the home of the damsel, by a path which wound through the green meadows along the joyous stream that twittered blithely as it slipped over the white pebbles, and was so narrow in some places that their arms intertwined with each other in spite of themselves. It is true, they might have walked Indian file, that is, one before the other, but this never occurred to either. The long twilight of a summer day was now gradually subsiding into the deeper shades of approaching night; the bright star, consecrated to the queen of love and beauty, hovered low over the dark outlines of the adjacent hills, and had, for its companion, the graceful new moon, which, in the form of a silver Indian bow, hung suspended in the heavens. Like John and his darling maiden, they seemed alone in the skies, as the others were on the earth, for the crowd of lagging stars had not yet made their appearance. All nature seemed sunk on a bed of down, in soft, luxurious repose, and the enervating warmth of the weather, while it deprived the body of its elastic vigour, made ample amends, by quickening the finer feelings of the soul to sweeter and brighter aspirations. It was a dangerous hour for the wicked, and those whose passions tyrannize over all the ties of faith and duty; but it offered to pure and virtuous affection only a gentle excitement, which, while adding to love additional fervour, detracted nothing from its purity.

They walked for a while without either uttering a word, for silence is twin sister to love. The young man was thinking over those dim visions of the future, which, ever since the commencement of the struggle for freedom, had shared with Jane the empire of his heart. The two were, indeed, inseparably associated; he loved his country and his mistress, and all his hopes of possessing the one, were founded on serving the other. The young girl was occupied with her fears and anticipations. She, indeed, possessed, in common with the noble race of our revolutionary matrons, that holy spirit of patriotism which inspired the men of that memorable era, whose consequences have confounded the calculations of philosophers who draw their theories from the past history of mankind. It was this spirit which animated their resistance, nerved their arms, inspired their souls, and finally enabled the peaceful cultivators of the earth to wrest from boundless wealth, disciplined armies, and almost irresistible power, the most glorious prize for which nations ever contended.

But there is in the heart of a true woman, a gentle, we may say, a happy inclination to yield to the softer impulses of the heart. They love the brave, and worship at the shrine of glory; but when the period arrives for them to choose between the danger of one they love, and the chance of acquiring rank or fame, amid the perils of war, the sacrifice, if made at all, is made with fear and anguish, and the penalty of disappointment paid by a broken heart. Such were the feelings which checked the tongue of Jane, and repressed every expression, except what might be augured from a long and heavy sigh, which ever and anon heaved in her throbbing bosom. The struggle was more painful than obstinate, for she had made up her mind, for sometime, never, let what might come, to dissuade him from the performance of his duty to his country.

They were now in sight of the mansion of her father, which was the best in twenty miles round, and its owner the greatest man, in his own opinion, in the county. He had fought in the old French war under Putnam, and had his leg broken at the scaling of Ticonderoga; in proof of which honourable achievement, he limped all the rest of his life, and told the story every day. Colonel Hammond was a passionate old gentleman; but this was excusable, since it was observed by his neighbours, that whenever the colonel got angry, and swore by "Thunder and Mars," it was always a prelude to some act of kindness or generosity. He was somewhat wilful, as well as wayward, having long since lost his wife, who by her good temper, good sense, and steadiness of purpose governed both his will and actions, without his having the slightest suspicion of being, what he scorned beyond every other species of disgrace, namely, an obedient husband. He was, withal, somewhat of a humourist, and being rather addicted to expletives, had adopted a system of swearing, by the aid of which, he communicated great energy to his conversation, without breaking a single commandment. We are of opinion it was altogether original with the good gentleman, seeing he died before Bob Acres came into the world. It is only necessary to add, that he was exceedingly addicted to projects and inventions, none of which ever proved of the least service to himself or the

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world. He admired John, who was a frank, bold, vivacious fellow; but like many wise men, he liked him not as a son-in-law, and forgot that his daughter did not see through his spectacles. John had lately laughed at a pet invention of the colonel's, for catching moles, and had been, in consequence, under the ban of the old gentleman. It was, therefore, prudent for the young couple to part at the entrance of the little grove, that screened them from observation. This necessity unlocked their tongues, and Jane was the first to speak.

"Let us part, now," said she, "you know you are in disgrace, and my father will be angry at seeing us together."

"I know it, Jane. He looks down on me now. It shall not be my fault, if he don't look up to me before many years are past, if the war continues."

"You are much given to boasting, lately, John. Have you dreamed a dream, or seen a vision, or had your fortune told by Hagar Raven?" asked she, with a glistening eye.

"No, Jane, I rest my hopes on a fixed determination to gain your father's consent at all risks, and I know that to a brave old soldier, like him, there is no recommendation like courage. Night and day, so help me heaven, I will never rest contented, till I have done something to deserve your love, and his approbation. I will never ask you of him, until I feel I deserve you, and will win my way to your arms or those of death.

"Oh! don't talk so! You could not bear to think of death if you loved me. Since—since—what has passed between us, I never think of death without shuddering. Before that, I loved none but my father, but that love did not make me fear death; go now— and I charge you, as you love me, to take care of yourself. Do you indeed love me?"

"Love you? ah! dearest Jane, I love you better than liberty, for I would be your slave. I love you better than selfish beings love themselves—better than brave men love danger, or cowards safety. But I must now leave you. One kiss—but one. I know it is wrong, but it may be our last.

The parting was sealed by a modest kiss, a parting embrace. Just at the moment, the colonel, who had been setting his mole-trap in an adjacent field, having heard their voices, approached in somewhat of a towering passion.

"Thunder and Mars!" thought he, "a turtle dove in white dimity cooing to a mate in gray homespun. I have told that puppy fifty times he shan't have Jane, though he never asked me the question, and only the other day forbid him my house. The young rascal! to laugh at my mole-trap—and I've told Jane fifty times a-day, for months past, she shan't marry that beggarly stripling, so she couldn't possibly forget it. Not but that the puppy's a clever lad, too; the best rider, the best shot, the best runner and wrestler, aye, and the best scholar, too, in the county. I believe he knows more than I do; and as for courage, he'd eat fire for breakfast, dinner and supper before he'd turn his back on friend or foe. Confound me, if I don't sometimes think I like the fellow—but then he's poor—he wants the one thing needful, without which a man is no better than an empty purse, or a pocket turned inside out. What will become of all my improvements if I am obliged to maintain him and all his brats; for the poorer a man is, the more is he blessed with mouths to eat out what little he has? What will become of my canal from Sawmill to Byram river, which I mean to make navigable if I can only get water enough? and what will become of my patent cider press, my horizontal wheel, and my perpendicular axle-tree? It wont do—it wont do—I can't spare anything from my improvements. Hey—what—thunder and fire!"

As the worthy colonel thus communed with the inward man, the young puppy and the young damsel were standing still as mice; for though they had gone through all the preliminaries of a long farewell, they seemed inclined to begin again. Just at this moment John wound his trembling arm around the slender waist of Jane, which, though innocent of whalebone, was but a span, and drawing her to his bosom, compressed one more last memento on her rosy lips. A blush and a tear mingled together on her glowing cheek, and she reproached him for his freedom, with a quivering lip. The choleric colonel could endure this no longer—he came upon them as fast as his lame leg would permit, and was just in time to interrupt the ceremony of another last farewell.

"Thunder and Mars!" roared he, "what is all this? I'll send one of you to perdition, and disinherit the other. So madam—so sir—I say what does all this mean. Do you take this puppy for a young sapling that you cling about him like a grape vine? Hey— confound your pictures, what does all this mean, I say?"

It would be a subject worthy the deepest investigation of a philosopher, who had nothing else to employ him, why it is that the bravest spirit, when detected in the act of saluting a woman, though ever so innocently, at night, or what is still more embarrassing, by the light of the moon—except it be his great-aunt or his grandmother—looks and feels just for all the world as if he had been caught robbing a hen-roost. John could look

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danger in the face, as an eagle does the sun; he was as brave as a game chicken, but at this moment, he could neither flap his wings or crow. He looked very much like a rooster, who, in country phrase, "runs under," when detected by the master spirit of the farm yard, paying his devoirs to a young pullet. He was not dead, but he was certainly speechless. Jane, however, who was accustomed to the colonel's explosion of wrath, and a woman, besides, retained more self-possession, and with something like modest artlessness, replied to his question, of what all this meant.

"It is only our last parting, dear father."

"Only our last parting dear father," reiterated the colonel—"It looks more like your last meeting, for you seemed as if you never meant to part again. But where is the puppy going? To join the red coats, I suppose, or plunder some of the farmers down below— hey, blood and fire!"

"No, father, he is going to fight for his country."

"What, between the lines, I suppose—to rob both sides, hey!—I've a great mind to carry him before that obstinate old blockhead, Squire Day, and have him hanged for a Cow Boy."

"Take care what you say, colonel," said John, brushing up at this opprobrious charge.

"Take care what I say? I'll say what I please, and do what I please on my own ground. I'll seize you for a trespasser, and lock you up in the cellar, sir, and then what would you do, hey?"

"Why, colonel, my present impression is, that I would run away myself, and if possible, persuade Jane to go with me."

"You would, would you? Thunder and Mars! I only wish I was the man I was before the old French war, when I summoned old Ti, and surrounded a corporal's guard, that surrendered at discretion. By the Lord, I'd make you measure land by the yard faster than you ever did before. Hey! John, did you ever hear that story of old Ti?"

"Never, that I recollect—at least since you last told it," added he, in a low tone—for he knew that nothing in this world tickled the old continental so much as telling the story to one who never heard it before.

"Nor read it in history?" asked the colonel.

"Never, sir."

"What an ignoramus—and what a sieve is history; only it lets out the grain, and retains the chaff. But, what am I talking about here, when the dew is falling in showers, and the fog rising like smoke in a battle. Look you, Jane, do you love this young puppy? Why don't you answer instead of standing as dumb and as deaf as a copper-head? Do you love this great scholar, who never heard of my taking Ticonderoga? Tell me the honest truth, if a woman can possibly be honest on such an occasion. Out with it, and don't pretend to be too modest after what I have just seen."

It was now Jane's turn to be silent; and in this unnatural, unfeminine state, she continued, her head hanging down, and her forehead red with blushes, though she had answered that question scores of times to a certain person. The colonel then turned to John, and proposed the same interrogatory.

"With all my soul, sir—I would die for her if necessary."

"You would? A bargain—get a halter out of the stable yonder, and hang yourself only for fifteen minutes, and on the honour of an old continental, you shall marry Jane the next hour if you can only make the responses, and we can find a parson or justice of peace, who is not a rank tory. Mind, I except Squire Day, who is such an obstinate old fool, that ten to one, he will contradict the whole ceremony. What say you, John?—hey, boy!"

"I say, colonel, that if it were not for Jane, your lame leg, and your gray hairs, I would answer you not with a word, but a blow."

"A blow! Do I live to hear, and does the man live that threatens me a blow? Thunder and fire! But if you survive the other business, you shall give me satisfaction. Jane, I'm sorry for you—you'll be a widow before sunset to-morrow. I say, Jane, how would you like to lose your sweetheart—hey?"

"How would you like to lose your daughter, sir," replied Jane.

"What—hey—is it come to that? Drowning or poisoning, or pining away to a shadow! Very well— very exceeding well, my dutiful daughter. You'd rather he'd shoot your poor old father, I suppose. You'd prefer being an orphan to a widow—hey? Faith, he's no beauty, I must confess—he is not as tall and as straight `as a poplar tree,' nor are `his cheeks as red as a rose.' He can't jump over a seven rail fence without touching it with his hand, nor talk sentiment like a ballad monger, nor lie like an almanac maker. He's *past say*, as the French used to call it at Old Ti. But to the point. Do you love this most respectful puppy, who threatens to knock your father on the

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head, except for two or three substantial reasons? Out with it—tell the truth, which I know before hand. Remember, there never has been a lie told in my family since the declaration of independence. Do you love him, I say?"

"I can't deny it, father, with the same lips that have often uttered the confession."

"Upon my word! Signed, sealed, and delivered, as that obstinate old blockhead, Squire Day, says. But it won't do, I tell you, it won't do. The conveyance is not legal; and you, sir," turning short on John, "you will accept the conveyance of this dutiful daughter, hey?"

"When I have made myself worthy of her, and not before," replied John. "I mean to gain a reputation equal to that of the brave officer, her father, before I ask him to give me his daughter."

"Hum—brave officer—that's sensibly said, but it won't do, John—you must make yourself rich, and then you will be worthy in my sight."

"Rich, sir! I never thought of that. I mean to serve my country—that will make me worthy of any man's daughter."

"Ha! ha! hum—well, John, I can't but say I like your idea. I am a cool, calculating man, as all the world allows, except that obstinate old blockhead, Squire Day, who, by—the—bye, I suspect is a rank tory in his heart. I shouldn't be surprised if he had a British protection in his pocket at this moment. And, John—Thunder and Mars! what are you gaping at that girl for, instead of listening to what I am saying?"

"I was only reading her thoughts, sir."

"Well, and what may she be thinking about?"

"She was thinking how you could be so cruel as to bring tears in the eyes, and sorrow to the heart, of one who has been your solace in health, your nurse in sickness, and, to the utmost extent of her duty and affection, has supplied to you the loss of her dear mother."

This touched the old continental to the quick. He cherished the memory of his wife, who had been a kind and gentle mate, and was accustomed to tell Jane how much she resembled her mother.

"Well, Johnny," said the colonel, after a pause, "I am a reasonable man, only a little too easy tempered. Now, you puppy, listen to me, and don't dare to turn even the corner of your eye on that girl until I have done. You know, John, I am rich and you are poor, and that I shall be ten times richer when I have finished my canal and other great improvements—you young rascal, I see you peeping! I say, when I have finished my canal and other improvements, I shall be as rich as old Fred Phillips before his property was all confiscated."

"That will be some time after the last trumpet sounds," quoth Master John.

"What's that you are mumbling, you puppy?"

"Something about a trumpet, sir."

"Well, as I was saying, John, I am rich. I don't wish to hurt your feelings, but you are what I should call, as it were, comparatively a beggar."

"Beggar!" cried John, indignantly. "Do you think that with arms like mine, and a heart to use them, a man can be called a beggar? Sir, I shall never beg anything of you but your daughter."

"Be quiet—confound that red-pepper temper of yours; I wonder Jane ever ventures to come near you. As I was saying, Jane will have a fine time with you—you're always taking people up before they are down. I tell you I don't mean the least offence, and yet you will fly out upon me. But as I was saying, your grandfather is a beggar, without a shilling to help himself with; your father is a beggar, and will be as long as continental money lasts; you are a beggar, and your children's children, to the fourteenth generation, for aught appears to the contrary, will be beggars, if you marry without my consent. I'll disinherit Jane, by the Lord Harry! Do you hear me, John?"

"I do, sir. I have listened with the deepest attention, and, if you wish it, will answer you."

"Go on—let me hear some of your school logic, you blockhead."

"This is my answer, colonel. You say you are rich, and so you are. But by what tenure do you hold your wealth? Every day and every night, you are exposed to the inroads of a set of unprincipled plunderers, sparing neither friend or foe. Before to-morrow morning, your fields may be laid waste, your cattle driven away, your barns and house set on fire, and your life, as well as that of your daughter and your dependants, sacrificed without mercy. If you escape these midnight ruffians, it rests alone with such men as my father is, and I intend to be, to save you from being hanged as a traitor, and your property becoming the spoil of some recreant tory. Will you boast of possessions you hold by such a flimsy tenure as this? Let me tell you, Colonel Hammond, that in times

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like these, the man who possesses the hand and the heart to defend his native land, is of more worth than hoarded wealth, rich harvest—fields, herds of defenceless sheep and cows, or a splendid palace, which he cannot defend himself, and must rely on poor beggars, like me, to protect from violation. Sir, I am a man—and men are worth their weight in gold when an enemy is lording it over the land, and only brave hearts and determined hands can expel him. I own my family is become poor, but we are not beggars, for we have land, and the power to make it productive."

There was so much truth, urged with such a manly spirit, in this harangue, that the colonel was deeply affected by the picture thus presented to his contemplation. He fell into a train of brief reflection, at the end of which, he said with frank good—humour—

"Well, John, on one condition, I give my consent."

"Name it sir—shall I eat fire?"

"Eat a bull—frog, you blockhead, as the Frenchmen used to do at old Ti—at least, so the English said—as I observed before, John, you have neither money, rank or reputation, except just among the girls and boys of the neighbourhood. The husband of the only daughter of Colonel Hammond, an old continental officer, with money in his pocket, and lands at his back, ought to be somebody. Now, John, you say you are going to fight for your country, that makes every man a gentleman. Go and offer yourself to Washington, and do something to merit an honourable place in history, and Thunder and Mars! my daughter, my money, my lands and improvements, shall be yours. What say you, you puppy?"

"I say, colonel, your hand to the bargain. If I don't stake life, limb and liberty—heart and soul on this game, call me not only beggar, but coward, if you will. Your word and your hand, Colonel Hammond."

"There—take it if you dare. Come to me with the voice of your country in your favour, and the approbation of the great Washington, and by the Lord Harry, if I had a dozen girls, you should marry them all— shouldn't he, Jane?"

"Not with my consent, father. I would forbid the bans."

"What, hey!—you'd have him all to yourself, would you?"

"Even so, sir. I shall give all, and expect all in return."

"Quite a reasonable young woman," said the colonel. "But come, John, there is no time to be lost; the fate of our country hangs by a hair, and she wants every true heart, every strong arm, to sustain her. Lose not a day. Life is short, my boy, and the hours of a soldier are numbered."

"Too true," answered Jane; "and his will be briefer than the common lot, I fear. Father, you have put him on the track of death," and the tears gushed from her eyes.

"Track of a fiddlestick! Why, girl, I once had six and thirty muskets pointed at me at once, and they all missed fire, owing to the dampness of the priming. They hissed, and fizzled, and funk'd like fury, but I escaped as it were by a miracle. If they had all gone off, you might have converted my skin into a cullender. Never fear, Jane—never fear; a man can't die but once, and then not before his time comes. Think of the muffled drum—the funeral march to the tune of Roslin Castle; the long lines of soldiers, with their arms reversed—their eyes bent on the ground—the minute guns at a distance—the cocked hat and sword on the coffin, and the six rounds fired over the grave of the gallant soldier. Thunder and Mars! but it's a glorious thing to die for our country."

"Glorious to him, but death to those that love him," sighed poor Jane.

"Now, John, go and prepare yourself, and don't let me see that face of yours again till you have fulfilled your part of the contract, and won the good word of Washington. I served with him in Braddock's war, and dare say, he will recollect me. But once more away, boy, and remember while you are doing your duty to your country, you are at the same time winning your way to the arms of love and beauty. Isn't she a jewel—a rose—bud—John."

"To my eye the fairest, to my heart the dearest of all created beings, sir. But, I must leave you now. I have an engagement to go out on a sky—larking party to—night, with some of our lads. We mean to scour the country as far as Kingsbridge. Perhaps we may pick up some straggler, or gather some information that may be useful at head quarters."

"Right, John, I wish this timber leg of mine would let me go with you, as my experience might be useful. But, John, don't forget that this reasonable young lady must have all or nothing. None of your sparking, by the way—hey!"

"Let this be my answer, sir," saying which, he approached Jane, and folding her in his arms, gave her a

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farewell kiss."

"Why, Thunder and Mars!" exclaimed the old continental; "what do you mean, you puppy? you are reckoning your chickens before they are hatched. What! before my face—how dare you presume, sir. If the young rascal had not done it, I'd have kicked him." added the colonel, aside.

"Despair and hope, are no cowards, sir. One fears nothing, the other expects every thing. If I return, as I trust I shall with credit, you will forgive this freedom; if I return no more, let the offences of the dead rest in the grave. Once more, farewell, my dearest Jane."

"I cannot say what I wish," sobbed Jane. "But, oh! do not forget that in your resolution to gain me, you may lose yourself."

"Not another word—ah! that confounded twinge! I knew I should be the worse for standing in the damp here. Enough said, you young fools. John, an old continental gives you his blessing, and here's my hand, boy, that I will keep my word; see that you keep yours. Good bye, my lad,"—and the colonel led his sorrowing daughter home.

John watched till they were lost in the shadows of evening, and then burst into an extempore of love and enthusiasm, as was his custom, from having no one to talk with the greater portion of his time.

"Now," cried he, "now my good heart, and good right hand, be true as steel this once. And you, my twin darlings, equally dear, liberty and my Jane, inspire me. If I halt or falter, or turn my back, may my country disown, and my mistress desert me!"

These, and such like animating thoughts occupied his mind, as he hastened towards home to fit himself for the night adventure. His step assumed new firmness; his heart swelled with a bright train of anticipation, and his character at once became strengthened and exalted by the inspiring influence of a fixed and noble purpose. He was now a man and a hero. Returning to the old stone-house, he quietly procured his equipments, without disturbing the old couple, who, with their little handmaid, went to roost with the fowls, and rose with the sun.

### CHAPTER III.

#### A SKY-LARKING.

The rendezvous of the sky-larking party, was at a house standing apart from the post road, in a retired valley, commonly called Hungry Hollow, and sometimes Hard Scramble Hole, a name aptly indicative of the place and its inhabitants. In almost every district of country, and every town, of any considerable magnitude, there will be found some peculiar spot, where the idle, the dissipated and the worthless, as it were instinctively, or by some irresistible sympathy, congregate together, to prey upon the neighbourhood and each other. This was the case with Hungry Hollow, into whose sheltering bosom had crept some dozen families of children of the night, who, as was said of them, slept while others worked, and worked while others slept. All day, they might be found lounging in bed, or sunning themselves in summer, and in winter crouching in the chimney corner, by a fire of such decayed wood as they could procure without the labour of cutting down trees. But to make up for thus killing time in the day, report said that they laboured hard at night, when, like animals of prey, they sallied forth to the infinite annoyance of the surrounding country, committing various petty depredations, hardly aspiring to the dignity of crimes. Whether they deserved all that was said of them, is doubtful. But, certain it is, they had a bad name, which is enough to bring both dog and man into perpetual trouble.

Hungry Hollow, was, moreover, infamous for its ghosts, goblins, and all the dire array of rural superstition, partly, in all probability, from its situation, and partly from a disposition in the occupants to discourage interlopers from coming among them, to spy out the nakedness of the land. It was a lonely place, and solitude is the nurse of terror. A ruined church, with broken windows, decayed doors, without hinges, weather-beaten sides, and moss-grown roof, stood nodding to its fall, in the midst of a few old gray-beard hemlocks, under whose melancholy shade was the burial place, designated here and there by a rough unsculptured stone, most ingeniously diverging from the perpendicular. Not one of these bore letter or epitaph; for, such was the character of most of those buried in this unconsecrated spot, that Zoroaster Fisk, the stone-cutter, could never bring himself to prostitute his muse to the celebration of their virtues. We mention this, as a fact honourable to his integrity, and deserving the imitation of all those whose vocation it is to immortalize the dead. A lie on a tomb-stone, is the worst of lies. It endures for a century, and furnishes perpetual encouragement to rogues, by affording ocular demonstration that he who has lived a life of worthlessness and crime, may yet leave behind him a good name. The grave, and those who speak in its name, should tell nothing but the honest truth, or else be silent. The upper extremity of Hungry Hollow, that is, the part most distant from the high road, was especially infested with the airy creations of fear and fancy, and avoided by all honest people. Once in a great while, you might persuade a couple of strapping country lads, of the strongest nerves, to venture through it by night, but then you may be sure they always carried a great piece of fox-fire, to light them on their way, and, instead of talking, sung or whistled with all their might, "my name was Captain Kyd," or "in Scarlet Town, where I was born," or some other equally inspiring ditty, to keep up their courage.

It was indeed a gloomy vale, through which a lazy brook, of dark brown water, meandered silent and slow. Shaded with tangled foliage, and bordered beyond by precipices of mouldering rocks, that seemed to have got the start of the rest of the world, in the race of swift decay. A score of awful legends, which we may one day collect for the edification of this story-loving age, were about the only product of this barren spot, where neither squirrel, fox, weazel, or pole-cat, was ever known to abide. No cricket, it was said, ever chirped there; no honey-bee ever gathered its tribute from the coarse, unfragrant flowers; nor did the capricious butterfly, in all its vagrant excursions, ever tarry a moment there. At that time, the interior of this valley was as little known, as that of New Holland or Japan.

The house where our sky-larkers were to meet, being just at the entrance of Hungry Hollow, was presumed to be out of the sphere of diabolical influence. It was erewhile the abode of one Case—or Cornelius Boshin, who, some few years before, had decamped, no one knew whither, with some half a dozen strapping night-walkers, leaving only his wife and youngest boy in possession of the premises. The widow, as she called herself, and the son, now full grown, lived after the manner of their forefathers; young Case, being religiously brought up to

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"nothing," according to country phrase, and his mother still despising labour, from the bottom of her heart. Tradition has preserved an anecdote, highly illustrative of their character. A neighbour, passing one day, and seeing Mrs. Boshin sitting in all her glory, sunning herself under an old tottering piazza, shaped like a cocked hat, cried out, "well widow, as usual, nothing to do, I see." To which she replied—"no, the Lord be praised, we have nothing to eat, and no fire to cook it with." On another occasion, a stranger had been driven to take shelter there for the night, and rising early in the morning, indulged in a ramble about the house before breakfast. On his return, he took the liberty of expressing his wonder how people could live in such a place as Hungry Hollow. "Why," replied the widow, "when we have nothing else to live on, we live upon each other—and when we can't live upon each other, we live on strangers, like you." To make good her words, she charged a hundred dollars, continental money, for his night's lodging and breakfast. Events hereafter to be detailed, render it proper to state, that John had once given young Case a most exemplary drubbing, for affirming that Jane Hammond was no beauty, and the old continental a tory. Case never forgave him.

The path which led from Hungry Hollow, towards the south, passed down a long sloping descent to the high road, which here ran close to the Hudson. The retired situation of the house, rendered it a safe place for the party to arrange their operations, and there was a high peaked hill close by, which commanded the country round, a distance of several miles. By the time it grew dark, a party of some eight or ten, all belonging to the neighbourhood, and all well known to each other, was collected, waiting the arrival of John. There was Brom Vanderlip, who had once outrun a party of Yagers, though they were mounted, and he on foot. There was Barnabas Pudney, of Buttermilk Hill, who had been a prisoner in the old sugar-house, Liberty-street, now so called, whence he escaped, by becoming so thin, through a process, well understood by old Cunningham, the provost, that as he affirmed, he had escaped through a rat hole. There was Billy Sniffen, who could find his way, blindfold, as he often boasted, from Peekskill to Kingsbridge. There was Ira Root, commonly called Bitter Root, from being somewhat quick on the trigger. There was a tough gray headed farmer, whose nickname was Nighthawk, which originated from a famous exploit performed during a dark night against a band of Skinners. And lastly, there was Zoroaster Fisk, A. M., a composer and cutter of inscriptions, and various affecting devices, with which the pride or affection of the living loves to decorate the memorials of the dead. He excelled all men of his time, in Dutch cherubs, with narrow foreheads and chubby cheeks; his weeping willows often brought tears to the eyes of sentimental explorers of church yards; and for an urn, or a monumental pillar, he was reckoned inimitable. It was credibly, moreover, reported by his surviving cotemporaries, that he composed epitaphs in prose and rhyme, one of which is still extant in the burial ground of the little church erected by the ancient family of the Phillippes, and reads as follows: "Here lies John Williams, here lies he; Hallelujah, Hallelujee."

We are aware that this has been claimed as the joint production of the mayor and corporation of some city, whose name we have forgotten, but there is positive evidence that it belongs to our friend, Zoroaster. But, alas! what now availed his skill in Dutch cherubs, weeping willows, urns and pillars, or monumental inscriptions! Othello's occupation was gone. At the time of which we are speaking, people died or were killed by the red coats, the Yagers, the Tories, the Skinners and the Cow Boys, but it was lucky if they found a grave, much less an epitaph.

Others of lesser name and note, completed the party which had thus volunteered to serve their country without the prospect of fame or reward. There were many, very many such men in these times; and it is to the sentiment by which they were inspired, that all succeeding generations will be indebted for the freedom they enjoy. The armies of the United States would have little availed in the struggle, had the yeomanry been disaffected. These rustic adventurers had neither commander, nor any distinctions of rank other than personal qualities; each man fought his own fight, and was his own master on all ordinary occasions; but in times of great peril, instinct pointed out a leader, and the master spirit was always found to be the man. The party was anxiously waiting for John, whose long interview with the old continental, had delayed him somewhat beyond the hour appointed.

"What can have become of John?" at length exclaimed Billy Sniffen; "he is not commonly always Jack—come—last."

"Why," replied, Barnabas Pudney, who spoke most particularly through his nose, and with great deliberation: "Why, I rather calculate I saw him just about sundown—or it might be—yes, I calculate it might be, if I don't mistake, somewhere thereabouts, more or less—I won't be quite positive, though, but I believe—I rather calculate it might have been him."

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"Barnabas, my son," quoth old Nighthawk, with much gravity, "where did you learn to talk? I reckon it must have been of a snail, for you speak for all the world as if you were on a snail's gallop. You should never go for a soldier, for you'd have your head cut off before you could cry quarter."

"No—no," said Brom Vanderlip, "his speech came with a dead march, or a slow-match; I don't know which. He was seven years old before he could say mammy."

"I'll swear he must have learned of a conch shell," cried Joe Satchell.

"Pooh!" rejoined Dick Widgery, "he would out-talk a rifle bullet, if he could only get his words to come out of his mouth instead of his nose. It's got such a darnation way to go round, it's a great while a coming."

Barnabas cut short the joke, by offering to wager a drink, that he could repeat the first lines of the declaration of independence in less time than any man in company. The wager was taken, and Barnabas distanced, the first round, amid a shower of dry jokes. Accordingly, Mrs. or Miss Boshin, as they called her—was roused from her usual inactivity, to give an account of the contents of her cellar, which proved to be nothing but the remains of a barrel of hard cider, a liquor since become classical. It was first handed to old Nighthawk, who tasted it, smacked his lips, and pronounced it emphatically, "man's cider, real red streak."

"Come—come," exclaimed Barnabas—"no preaching over your liquor, daddy—pass round the mug, will you?" Barnabas took a pull, whereupon his eyes nearly started out of his head, and the liquor spirted out of his nostrils incontinently.

"Red streak!" cried he—"I swan, a feller might just as well try to swallow a sword with two edges. It must be real crab-apple, it bites so. Is this the best you've got, Miss Boshin?"

"The very best—I bought it of old Squire Day, and give him two hundred continental dollars for it. But the money is not worth much more than half what it was then, and that's some little comfort for being cheated."

"Consarn continental money," rejoined Barnabas: "It's going down hill like a run-away wagon, and the farther it goes the faster it runs. I don't believe Nighthawk could have overtaken it the time he ran away from the Yagers."

"You got ahead of me, for all that, though," replied the other; "and as for Brom Vanderlip, he ran me out of sight in less than no time."

"I'll swear pine blank to that," quoth Bitter Root—"I'll bet ten to one on Brom when the Yagers are behind, instead of before. He's just like your full-blooded colt, that always wins the race if she can only get ahead."

"Well, well," replied Brom, "see who goes ahead tonight. If I don't put my nose in the enemy's lines before the cock crows, you may tell me on't when I'm dead, that's all."

"You'll never get your nose anywhere but where it is now, right in the middle of your face, only a little on one side;" which joke, though on the whole rather an indifferent one, turned the tide against Brom, who was fated to endure a tempest of horse-laughter, reinforced by half a dozen curs without, who began barking furiously. The merriment of the party ceased in a moment, for in these times the barking of the watch-dogs was too often the signal of plunder, outrage, and murder. Each man seized his gun, and stood on the defensive with grim and silent determination, for they were inured to dangers, and feared nothing but ghosts and hobgoblins. After a pause of a few moments, footsteps were heard approaching; the barking of the dogs gradually lapsed into a growl of doubtful recognition, and the latch was slowly lifted. The door had, however, been fastened inside, and the attempt was followed up by a loud, quick knocking with the butt end of a gun.

"Who are you?" cried old Nighthawk.

"I'll tell you directly, if you don't open the door," answered a hoarse voice with a foreign accent.

"It's the bloody infernal Yagers," whispered old Nighthawk. "Now, my boys, stand to your arms. Let them break in, if they dare, and I'll be blamed if we don't give them a grist." All followed his directions, and an anxious pause ensued, during which, the landlady, who was not unused to such scenes, occupied herself very deliberately in hiding a paper of pins, a few pewter spoons, and other valuables, under a loose plank of the floor.

The knocking now became louder, and the rough demand for entrance was repeated more vociferously in broken English. Whereupon, little Barnabas Pudney, who came originally from down east, and was what is called "a curious cretur," crept slyly to a front window, through a crack in the shutters of which he saw, by the light of the stars, something which caused him to burst into a laugh exceedingly sonorous and exhilarating.

"I'm a nigger," cried he, "if it ain't John."

The whole party within set up a great shout, with the exception of old Nighthawk, who, on opening the door, welcomed him as follows:

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"I'll tell you what, youngster, you'd best take keer how you play these tricks upon travellers in these times. A little more of your fun, and you'd have bin a dead man, laughing on the wrong side of your mouth. This is no time for playing Yager. Blame me if I wa'nt going to set old Maple–Sugar on trigger," so he called his old musket, the stock of which was of maple; "you played the Yager pretty well, and had like to have got a Yager's bitters. It's all wrong, Johnny, my son."

"I know it," replied John, but I wanted to try your spunk."

"Spunk! hasn't it been pretty well tried already?" said the other.

"Only hear how the young chicken crows," said Bitter Root; "I'll bet a gallon of Miss Boshin's red streak, his sneakers are up as high as the top of the big white–wood–tree before the cock crows to–morrow morning."

"You will—will you?" retorted John, and his eye kindled. But he thought of the necessity of preserving good–fellowship, and contented himself with adding— "The proof of game, is when the gaff sticks— we shall see who cackles first."

The party being now complete, sallied forth about the hour of ten of a still, starry night, at which time all the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, except the watchful wights of Hungry Hollow, had gone to rest. Their course led them past the old grave–yard of the decayed church we have noted, and as they drew nigh, they might be seen to close their ranks and huddle together, each essaying to get on the outer side. "I wish you wouldn't push a fellow so," said Billy Sniffen to Zoroaster Fisk, in an impatient whisper, as Zoe pushed him against a rock by the roadside. At any other time, there would have been some joking at the expense of the stone–cutter, but now the scene, and the impressions to which it gave rise, impressed on all the silence of superstitious awe. In the dim twilight of the starry night, they could distinguish the rustic tomb–stones, and rough–hewn slabs of mouldering wood, which told their errand there without the aid of epitaphs, and the sight cowed the vivacity of the gallant sky–larkers, who, though they had often looked death in the face, were sorely afraid of dead men, and especially their ghosts.

"W—w—w—at in the name of goody gracious, is that there?" suddenly exclaimed Barnabas Pudney.

"What—where?" answered half a dozen voices.

"There! just there, by the old church—don't you see something as white as a sheet, standing, as I calculate, right on the very spot where Sampson Mussey, who was killed by the Skinners, is intarred?" and thereupon Barnabas blew his nose with a sonorous twang, in the true conch–shell style, which signal was answered by a white cow standing right on the spot where Sampson Mussey was interred. This discovery drew a laugh upon Barnabas, and was followed by a dispute about who was most frightened. It served to raise the spirits of the party, by relieving them from some exceeding solemn impressions which such scenes are eminently calculated to inspire, and they gaily pursued their way towards Kingsbridge, bantering Barnabas about his ghost.

The night was still as death. No lights burnt in the desolate, abandoned houses, that here and there dotted the scene, and the surface of the expanding river, which here presented all the features of lake scenery, was as smooth as a glassy mirror reflecting all the glories of the skies above. No vessel lay at anchor, or floated lazily along with the tide, on the surface of the melancholy wave: not a sail whitened the dead, monotonous scene, and life and all the business of life seemed to have reached a pause that looked like extinction itself. The lofty outlines of the opposite shore, waned beneath the twinkling sentinels of night, but their sides were clothed in deep obscurity. The peaceful Dutchmen were fast asleep, for they could sleep in peace, since the broad river interposed between them and their enemies, who were carrying their devastations in other directions.

Our sky–larkers passed on briskly, without pausing to admire the sober, solemn beauties of the scene, for they had other thoughts in their heads, and other purposes in their hearts. Anon they came opposite to those glorious walls, bordering the western margin of the river, and presenting an everlasting barrier to its expansion. At this moment, a bright light shot athwart the clear expanse of the heavens, and startled the night–adventurers, who halted to ascertain whence it proceeded. They saw the entire firmament towards the north streaked with sheets of living fire, that leaped up, and danced among the winking stars, which seemed to grow pale at their superior brilliancy. It could not be the lightning, for there was not a cloud in the sky. It was an awful sight, and the whole party stood gazing in something more than silent wonder.

Ever and anon streams and rolling waves of living light flashed across the starry vault of heaven, succeeded by the gambols of what are called the *Merry Dancers*, flourishing and skirring about in a thousand fantastic vagaries, and with a speed as swift as thought or fancy. For a while, the earth shone as if at noon–day, or rather beneath the

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silver radiance of the moon; but by degrees a rich and ruddy pink, succeeded by a deep crimson hue, stole over the sky, tinging the heavens and the earth with a rosy tint, which, however rich and beautiful, smote the hearts of all but John with awful apprehensions. They began to fancy they could detect, in this fantastic frolic of the spheres, various forms of terror and dismay flitting about among the stars; and embodied in their affrighted imagination a scene somewhat allied to the state of the country, as well as the dangers by which they were surrounded. They distinguished through the mists of fearful visions, armies fighting in the air; steeds encountering with resistless fury; columns of soldiers, in red coats, charging like lightning athwart the fiery heavens; and fancied all the dread array of bloody war raging among the stars and planets, as though the host of heaven were engaged in hot contention disputing the empire of the upper world.

"The Highlands must be on fire!" said old Nighthawk, at length recovering his speech.

"The sky is in a blaze," muttered Barnabas Pudney.

"The world is coming to an end!" exclaimed Billy Sniffen.

"It is a token and a warning," rejoined Zoroaster Fisk, solemnly.

"Pooh!" said John, "it is only the aurora borealis."

"The what?" cried all at once.

"The light in the north."

"You may call it what you will," responded Zoroaster, "but I say it is a token and a warning."

"Pooh!" quoth Bitter Root, "he begins to smell Spuyten Duyvel."

"I reckon it's a worse devil than that. It's jist for all the world what granny seen the year before the war, when the sky all turned to blood, one night, and armies were seen fighting, helter-skelter, some in red coats and some in blue."

"Which beat, Zoe?" asked John, jeeringly.

"I tell you it's no laughing matter, Johnny. I seed—no, granny did—more than a hundred thousand men, cutting and slashing at one another in the sky in a most awful manner, till it all run with blood. You could see the smoke of the great guns, and some people conceited they could smell gunpowder. After the battle was over, a voice cried out from the clouds—'War, bloody war!' and then—"

"Did you see all this, yourself?"

"No, but granny did, for she has often told me so, and she was as pious a woman as any man's mother, for that matter. So I'm for going right straight hum agin, for it stands to reason it's a token and a warning. It's flying in the face of Scripture to go down to Kingsbridge agin such a sky as that. There! there! I swear—I mean, I swan—I'm a nigger if I don't think I seed some letters there, as plain as on a head-stone. There's a great W, as long as from here to New York."

"Zoe, did you ever hear of the old cow on Long Island, that told the woman who was milking her, we should have war soon?"

"Yes, granny told me that, too, and how an old hen laid an egg, with W—A—R on the shell, in capital letters three inches long."

"It must have been a goose-egg, Zoe," said John. "But come, boys, this is wasting precious time. The light in the north has no more to do with what we are about, than the light of the stars. You that are frightened, may run home if you please, but I am for going on let who will follow."

So saying, he dashed forward in a quick step, and the whole party, not excepting Zoroaster Fisk, followed, ever and anon looking back over their shoulders to see how matters were going on in the sky. By degrees, the leaping columns of light grew dimmer and dimmer; the bloody tints faded away; the sky assumed its ethereal hue; and the stars twinkled their sleepy lustre alone in the heavens, leaving the party of sky-larkers to pursue their way by their glimmering light.

They were now ascending the high hills which command a view of both the Hudson and East rivers, and on arriving at the summit, halted to reconnoitre the country round, as far as the obscurity of night would permit.

"Look there! another Rory Bolus!" exclaimed Billy Sniffen, pointing to a great light towards the east.

"No, no," rejoined old Nighthawk, "that's another guess sort of a light than what we saw just now. It's a house or barn a-fire, I reckon."

"Then the red coats, or the Yagers, or tories, or some of the rascally Skinners are out to-night," said John. "Now, boys, is the time to do something for liberty. Let us make for the spot. It is not far off, and I know the

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house. It is poor old Ira Tebow's, if I'm not mistaken. Come, follow on; follow on, boys, and be still as mice, for ten to one we meet the rascals on the way."

"I told you something would happen; but howsomever, here goes. I'm for one of you," cried Zoroaster.

They now proceeded forward briskly, and in dead silence, or only communed in whispers. There was no occasion for a commander, or word of command; each was expert in this mode of partisan warfare, and all were left to their own discretion and experience. A walk of some half an hour brought them to the brow of a lesser hill, overlooking the little vale of Sawmill river, which gave them full view of the light proceeding from a barn, now nearly consumed to ashes. The house was beyond the reach of conflagration, being at some distance, and was built of red-stone, such as is found on the western shore of Tappan bay. They saw a light through the window, paused to consult as to their best course of action, and the conversation ended in deciding to dispatch one of the party to reconnoitre the ground. John volunteered his services, and his offer was accepted.

With the cautious silence of a cat, he approached, and the first objects he descried were six or eight horses tied to a fence in front of the house, which indicated the number of visitors within. Having ascertained that no one was on the watch without, he crept softly to the window, and peeping in, a scene was disclosed that set his blood on fire. A party of Yagers were carousing at a table on the plunder of the peaceable old man, who, with his gray-haired wife, sat looking on in the silent acquiescence of despair, while two grown up daughters were waiting on the plunderers, now half-drunk with cider. One of them, at length, on a sudden rose from the table, and seizing the elder of the girls about the waist, rudely kissed her pallid cheek, which in an instant reddened with the indignant flush of maiden modesty. The old couple groaned, and John ground his teeth and grasped his sword, as the girl, outraged by still more unmanly indecorums, no longer able to repress her feelings, pushed the ruffian from her with such good-will, that he fell against the table, overset it, and extinguished the lights. A torrent of imprecations, in a foreign tongue, now broke forth from the insolent intruders; they started up, and groping about for their swords, threatened murder in every breath, while the weak voices of the aged couple were heard begging for mercy amid the furious uproar. John could bear it no longer. All thought of his comrades, himself, or his danger, evaporated in a moment, in the heat of his rage, and leaping through the window, in an instant he was cutting and slashing among the ruffian crew. There was no danger of hitting a friend, for the occupants of the house would no doubt flee, and all the rest were fair game. Though alone, the advantage was on his side, for he was armed; while the Yagers, having laid aside their swords, were groping about for them in the dark, sputtering unintelligible imprecations.

The party of sky-larkers, who began to wonder what had become of John, now distinguished the uproar of voices, accompanied by the clashing of swords, mingled with groans and imprecations, as the invisible enemy smote one after another the stupified plunderers, now rushed forward to the scene of action. Here they discovered two of the Yagers just on the point of mounting their horses, but horse they never mounted more. They were cloven down without mercy, for they deserved none. They warred against the helplessness of age, the innocence of youth, the property of men, the chastity of women, and could claim none of the courtesies of honourable warfare. This done, they made their way into the house, where old Nighthawk ran plump against John, who was still seeking his enemies, and made a blow at him which cut a deep gash in the door-post.

"What the d—I are you hacking at?" exclaimed the old man, "don't you see it's me?"

"See! How the plague should I? It's as dark as pitch, and besides, my eyes are filled with blood. But I think I have done for the rascals, for I could find no more enemies."

"And so you fell foul of a friend?" replied the other. "But let us get a light and see how the land lies. Here, Billy Sniffen, run to the barn and bring us a Yager candle."

Billy returned in a minute or two with a burning brand, the candles were found, and the whole scene disclosed to view. On the floor, floating in their recreant blood, lay five lusty fellows, in whiskers, three with their heads split open, and two only disabled with their wounds. These, Bitter Root insinuated, had better be put out of their misery, as he expressed it; but John claimed them as his prisoners, and insisted their lives should be spared, though they richly deserved hanging. It was now proposed to search for the poor fugitives, who had been driven from their home by the lawless brutality of these hireling ruffians, and accordingly the party dispersed around, calling upon them in friendly tones, and inviting their return. They heard with fearful tremblings, but at length distinguishing their native tongue in its native accent, ventured cautiously to obey the summons, and being told what had happened, expressed their gratitude in homely phrase, but heartfelt language.

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"I wish," said John, "some one would tie a handkerchief over my forehead, for this blood almost blinds me."

"You are wounded!"—exclaimed the pretty girl, whose lips had been profaned by the brutal soldier, and with trembling steps sought her Sunday silk handkerchief, which, with hasty hands, she bound over his wound. John was a fine, manly looking fellow, with deep blue eyes, and dark brown hair curling about his ears; and the daughter of old Ira Tebow often in her solitary rambles recalled to mind the bloody brow, and thankful look of the deliverer of herself and parents, while her gratitude sometimes partook of a softer feeling.

After demolishing the remainder of the feast of the barbarous Cyclops, a consultation took place as to their future proceedings, and it was unanimously agreed that it was now too late to proceed on their original destination, since a couple of hours would bring the dawn. They decided, therefore, to bury the dead, mount their horses, and carry the two wounded caitiffs to the quarters of Colonel Courtlandt, who commanded the nearest post, and under whose authority they acted. Accordingly, their bodies were borne forth in silence, and buried in one grave, without coffin, shroud, funeral prayer, or dirge; save that of a screech-owl, which, attracted by the light of the burning barn, sat on a neighbouring tree quavering their parting knell. No memorial marks the spot, for they deserved none at the hands of those they had come so far to molest; and there they rested, in common with thousands of more deserving victims to the hopeless attempt to subjugate a nation of freemen.

Their horses and military equipments were lawful spoil of war, and divided among the sky-larkers. A few guineas found in their pockets, were given to the old man to pay for their supper.

"God forever bless you, my son," said old Ira Tebow to John, at parting. "Let us give one hurrah for liberty. I can't fight, but my heart is for the good cause." And the silent night was startled by a shout that echoed far and wide, to liberty.

"You have paid dear for it to-night," said John, "and I fear have yet much to pay."

"Well, may be so, my son. But all will come right at last. I may not live to see it, but my children, and their children's children, will reap the harvest of the seed of fire and blood, sown here this night. So long as we have God and Washington on our side, none but cowards will despair of our cause. That our country is destined to be free and independent, I am as sure as that I am alive at this moment, and in that belief I shall die contented. God bless you, my son, may your good old grandfather and grandmother, whom I know, escape the wrongs of me and mine."

Each man now mounted one of the good horses of the conquered foe, and there being one to spare, it was bestowed on the old man, with strict injunctions to sell it, as soon as possible, somewhere out of the neighbourhood, lest it might be hereafter recognised.

"But what shall I do with your handkerchief, when my wound is done bleeding?" said John, to the pretty daughter, who stood looking out at the window.

"Keep it to remember me by," answered she, with a blush, and a smile of touching sadness. And he did keep it, in spite of the affected poutings of Jane Hammond, who took, on all occasions, in and out of season, to criticise both the texture and the pattern.

The party then pursued their way homewards, first stopping at the quarters of Colonel Courtlandt, where they delivered up the two prisoners, and gave an account of their expedition. After receiving the praises of the colonel, they separated, each for his proper destination. John lingered behind a few moments, to ask the brave colonel for a testimonial of his good conduct, which he gave with all his heart; complimenting him, at the same time, on his gallantry, and assuring him of his future friendship. He then spurred on his steed towards the old stone house, it being yet too early in the morning to pay his respects to Colonel Hammond. And thus ended the pleasant sky-larking of the venturesome boys of Westchester, who, in old times, were the theme of more than one rustic ballad, now forgotten.

## CHAPTER IV.

A TOUCH AT A PICTURE—THE AUTHOR SHOWS HIMSELF A HUNDRED YEARS BEHIND THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE—JOHN SUSPECTED OF STEALING A HORSE—SILLY BEHAVIOUR OF JANE—THE OLD CONTINENTAL FLASHES A SPARK OF MAGNANIMITY, BUT IT GOES OUT WITHOUT PRODUCING A FLAME— A LONG WALK, AND A LONG TALK, WHICH IT IS BELIEVED WILL RESTORE JANE TO THE GOOD GRACES OF THE READER— TOGETHER WITH A VAST DEAL OF OTHER ENTERTAINING AND INSTRUCTIVE MATTERS.

If a heroine is worth anything, she is worth a description; and it just now occurs to us that we have not as yet intimated even the colour of Jane Hammond's eyes, for which omission we beg pardon of that fair young maiden, and all our readers. After the departure of John, she returned home with her father, filled with sad forebodings. The colonel lighted his pipe, and, soothed by that unequalled teacher of philosophy, fell into a glorious reverie, in which he conceived the abstract idea of a great improvement in ploughshares. The daughter also fell into a reverie, but it was not about ploughshares. She sat so perfectly still, in such a careless, yet becoming attitude, that we shall take the opportunity to sketch her likeness.

Her seat was at the low window of an old fashioned house, built by the colonel's father, of whom, were we inclined to make the most of a small capital of invention, we could say enough to tire the patience of any reasonable reader. We might, moreover, fill up a page or two with a description of the house, together with the chairs, tables, chests of drawers, andirons, bedding, and bedposts; but will spare our readers for the present, promising them faithfully, that if, in the course of this work, we are hard pushed for something to say, they shall have such an inventory as would suffice for an auctioneer's sale. At present, however, there is metal more attractive before us.

The window where Jane sat, looked out on the windings of the little stream through its paradise of green meadows, in the distance of which might be caught a glimpse of the old stone house, with its moss covered roof and rugged chimneys, where now dwelt, in lonely solitude, the aged grandparents of her adventurous lover. A dark spot in the grey obscurity of evening alone indicated its precise position, and fancy supplied the rest. Her arms were crossed on the window-seat, and being somewhat raised, discovered a waist fashioned by nature beyond all the art of the most expert Parisian artiste. Above this taper miracle, one might detect, beneath her folded arms, the swelling graceful outline of a gently heaving bosom, which insinuated, not disclosed, the hidden snows, and gave rise to dim, yet glowing visions of things unseen, the secret shrines of lowly adoration. Her head bent gracefully forward, and somewhat depressed, indicated something like a latent enthusiasm, mingled with hope and apprehension, and this attitude brought the silken tresses of her chestnut hair partly over her forehead and eyes. No one could ever tell the colour of those eyes; for as the tints of a summer landscape are perpetually varying in the shade and sunshine, so did the various emotions of her heart, and the inspirations of her mind, forever vary the seeming colour of her eyes. Whether black, or brown, or gray, remains a question to this day undecided, and those few who remembered her in the days of her youth, often disputed on the subject, without ever agreeing. No one was, however, so disputatious as to question the hue of her long eye-lashes, as everybody agreed they looked for all the world like changeable silk.

For the rest, her figure was the exact counterpart of that of the lady the reader most admires, and her features seemed to have come together by accident. But it was one of the happiest accidents in the world; for it produced, somehow or other, a face so irregular, yet so charming, as to distance the happiest conceptions of painting or poetry. Its beauty, or rather its loveliness—for she could not be called beautiful—consisted in that indescribable, inimitable mystery, called expression, and never failed to attract the sympathies of all who knew her, from its various parts to the delightful whole. The face of Jane was, however, composed of legitimate materials; a pair of cherry lips, inlaid with two rows of polished ivory, whence issued the balmy breath of spring; a dimpled cheek that rivalled the aforesaid cherries; a delicate, lady-like nose and chin, and a general contour divested of the slightest traces of commonplace vulgarity. But I forbear to say more, lest, peradventure, I should fall in love with the picture I am drawing. Suffice to say, that her voice, both in speaking and singing, was so soft, so exquisitely

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musically melancholy, when serious, so inspiring, when gay, that when she spoke or sung, no echoes ever replied, for they all died away in listening.

But the less we say of her education and accomplishments, the better, perhaps, for our heroine. She possessed neither piano, harp, or lute, nor could she have played honest men to sleep with them, had they been in her possession. Yet still she possessed the very soul of harmony, and an ear so nice and delicate, that an old German musician once said of her, that had not Apollo got the start of her, she would have certainly become the goddess of music. Tradition says, that she used to sing some old Scottish ballads with such pathos and expression, as often brought iron tears from the eyes of the old continental, who was fond of hearing her of a calm summer evening. One of these, which she used to sing about the time she believed John was a deserter, has been preserved, and ran as follows: Hoot awa frae me, Donald, ye're nae lad for me, Ye're fause in your tongue, lad, and fause in your ee; Hoot awa frae me, Donald, gang far o'er the sea, Ye're fause to your country, and nae true to me. Gang awa, gang awa, lad, and come nae again, To part with thee ever, sae sairly does pain, But to see thee, thou fause one, were ten time more sair Hoot awa frae me, Donald, and meet me nae mair. I will think on thee, Donald, as ane dead and gane, I will weep for thee, Donald, when I'm all alane, I will pray God to shelter thee, lad, frae all harms, For ye'll nae mair find shelter in these blighted arms. Hoot awa frae me, Donald, I'll aye wish ye weel, And when no one kens me, to pray for ye, kneel; But though my heart break, lad, ye'll never mair see The lass who is dying, fause Donald, for thee.

The mother of Jane was a clever, sensible woman, and the example of a mother is of more consequence to a daughter, than all the boarding-school discipline in the world. Jane had also occasionally spent some time in the city, before it became the head-quarters of the British army, and her manners, though partaking of rural simplicity, were not altogether rustic. There was nothing vulgar about her, but she was not at all fashionable, nor had she acquired any fashionable accomplishments. But in all that becomes a woman—a gentle and reasonable woman—in all the little arts and acquirements that contribute to the happiness of the domestic fireside, and make women ministering angels, she was by no means wanting.

Her mind was pure and simple, her understanding excellent. Nature had done much for her, by bestowing, in great perfection, the faculty of deriving knowledge from everything she saw or heard. All wisdom is not locked up in books. There is wisdom to be derived from the works of the Creator; from exhibitions of human character, the daily routine of human actions; and all that we see in nature or the social state, contributes to awaken the mind and expand the intellect. Imagination, thought, reflection, and comparison, are all rich sources, from whence is derived the nurture of the mind; and thus it not unfrequently happens, that the brightest specimens of genius seem to leap into life full formed, like Minerva from the brain of Jove. They are not so, however. They have studied in the fruitful region of their minds, and, as certain animals are said to do, grown fat on their own nutriment. Those who derive their materials from books, suffer others to think for them; while those who have no other volume to consult, but that of nature and experience, generally decide with a sagacity which often makes the learned stare, and sets philosophy to inventing new theories. Our heroine had been principally educated in this school, and the result will be best tested by the standard of her future conduct.

On arriving at home, John found the old farmer hard at work in his garden, and now and then pausing to admire his currant-bushes, which were his choicest favourites; the young handmaid was milking the cows to the tune of Barbara Allen; and the old dame preparing breakfast, which consisted entirely of the products of their own labour. They were all too patriotic to drink tea, even if it could have been procured; and as for coffee and sugar, they had become traditionary in the family. Such was the scarcity of the most ordinary conveniences of life, that, in many places, thorns were substituted for pins by the women of the interior country. Had it not been for Mangham, the pedlar and tinker, who sometimes paid a visit to this quarter, there would have been no stitching for lack of needles.

"Well, for the landsake!" exclaimed the little maid, as John rode up on his gallant charger, "where did you get that fine horse?"

"Oh! I found a mare's nest with eight fine colts in it, and took this one for my share."

"You be fiddled," retorted the little maid, "I don't believe a word on't. You've turned Cow Boy, and been robbing some of the poor people down below."

"Ah! John, John!" said the old dame, shaking her head. At the same time, the grandfather coming up, demanded rather harshly, where he got that animal? whether he came honestly by him, or had plundered some

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poor farmer like himself? and declaring, if such were the case, he should carry him back if it cost him his life. This imputation called out the lad, and he at once vindicated himself by detailing the adventure of the preceding night, drawing the attention of his auditors to the gash in his forehead, which caused the good woman to exclaim—"Thank heaven, it is no worse! You might just as well have been killed as not;" meaning, that the one was just as likely as the other.

"And so you won the nag in fair fight, John?" said the old man.

"Yes, sir; I paid for him with my blood, and that's better than continental money any day."

"Well, go and turn him out in the long meadow; there is grass up to his eyes."

"Not yet, sir; I must first carry a message to the colonel."

"A message—ah! I reckon you have made a mistake, John. You mean the colonel's daughter." But John heard him not; he was cantering away towards the portly mansion of the old continental. It was rather an early hour for a visit, but country people don't know the extreme impropriety of disturbing young ladies in their morning dress.

Jane, who had passed the first part of the night in thinking, the last, in dreaming, was up betimes in the morning, looking as fresh and blooming as a rose-bud, in spite of her anxieties, for she had a clear conscience, and that is a great consolation in all troubles. She happened, for some mysterious purpose, to be looking towards a certain old stone house, which was, indeed, rather a picturesque object in the gray morning hour, with its sharp, mossy roof, and the blue smoke ascending to the skies, from the rugged chimney, and while thus occupied, saw a horseman ride briskly up the little knoll, dismount at the door, and, after a brief parley, disappear within. The distance was too great to distinguish who it was, in the obscurity of the dawn, and the sight threw her into a trepidation which caused her heart to flutter strangely. It could hardly be John, for he, she knew, had gone forth on foot, and suddenly the thought shot across her mind that it was some messenger of ill news either from John or his father. Gradually, however, as is usual in such cases, all her apprehensions at length centered on the object nearest her heart; and in this painful state she remained, gazing wistfully in that direction, when suddenly she saw the stranger come forth, mount his horse, and dash along the road that ran beside the stream leading to the residence of the old continental. Her throbbing heart whispered that something strange had happened, and she retired from the window into her chamber, afraid of hearing it too soon. Here, in a few minutes, she could distinguish the clattering of horses hoofs, and—she could not help it—her curiosity led her to the window again, where all doubts and fears were at once dispelled by a discovery which we leave to the sagacity of the world.

It happened, unluckily for our hero, that at the precise moment of his riding up to the house, the old continental was in a very bad humour, owing to the failure of one of his pet inventions. In going the rounds, as was his daily custom, he discovered that a valuable pup, with a pedigree equal to that of a blood-horse, or a noble lord, standing at the head of the list in the royal calendar, had been caught in one of his infallible mole-traps, whereby one of his legs was so much injured that the poor animal could scarcely drag himself along. The colonel partly consoled himself by calling the puppy a great blockhead, but his afforded him only partial relief, and he continued sorely disturbed in mind.

"Thunder and Mars! what brought you here this time in the morning?" asked he, gruffly, of John. "Didn't I tell you not to show your face here again till— But, hey! Why, blood and fire! what have you got that rag tied about your pate for? and how did you come by that fine horse, hey?"

"How is my dear Jane, sir?"

"What's that to you, puppy? Get out, you stupid cur!" and here the colonel turned upon the wounded dog, who was howling most dolorously, and, lifting up his lame leg, was just on the point of giving him a benediction, when the poor dumb thing gave him such a piteous look, that his heart smote him, and he turned his wrath once more on friend John, exclaiming—

"I say, what's that to you, sir? and how dare you call my only daughter your dear Jane? But why don't you answer me? What is the matter with that fool's pate of yours, and where did you get that horse?"

"I purchased him in fair fight, and at his full value, sir. He cost me this cut across the forehead."

"What—what—hey! Johnny! Come, dismount, and tell us all about it; but mind, none of your bragging, you young dog."

John dismounted, accordingly, and entered the house, expecting to meet Jane; but that discreet damsel still remained ensconced in her chamber, where, in our opinion, she heard and saw all that was passing below. Our hero was mortified and disappointed at finding the room empty. Nay, he ventured to insinuate to the colonel, that,

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as he could not afford to tell the story twice over, he should await the appearance of the young lady, who might very naturally feel some ensionscuriosity. The old continental called him a conceited puppy, but finally surrendered, yielded to his desire to hear the adventures of the sky-larkers, and forthwith commanded the attendance of his daughter. She came, clad in all the bloom of a spring morning, adorned in woman's choicest livery— blushes and smiles; she gave her soft hand to John, and returned his pressure with something, which the vanity of the youth interpreted into a contraction of her rosy fingers; something neither passive nor yet active, but which thrilled his heart, and caused him to look down on all creation.

"There, now, confound your impudence!" cried the colonel; "give us a full and true account of your last night's frolic. Sit down, Jane, where he can't see you, or the puppy won't know what he is saying."

Jane obeyed, by getting partly behind the open door, whence she ever and anon looked out, like the sun from behind a cloud, and as often as this happened, John forgot what he was saying. As he proceeded, her feelings became deeply interested; and when he came to relate the particulars of the midnight contest, she left her retreat, placed herself close by his side, clasped his hand, and listened, with dewy eyelids, while her bosom swelled with deep emotion. When he had finished, she rose, rapidly quitted the room, and when a few minutes after, she returned, her eyes were inflamed with weeping. She brought a cambric handkerchief, which, we regret to say, was not fringed with Brussels lace, and gently removing that of the daughter of Ira Tebow, bound it about his forehead. It was some time before John could get this handkerchief again; and when, at last, he requested its return, as a keepsake from that poor girl, Jane exclaimed, as she gave it him—"Lord! what a fuss you make about an old bandana handkerchief, John!"

"Is all this true, John?" said the colonel, "real matter of fact, like my exploit at old Ti?"

"Did I ever tell you a falsehood, colonel?"

"No, John, I'll say that for you. You are always impudent enough, to speak out fairly, when you might sometimes better hold your tongue. I believe every word you've said; and now, Thunder and Mars! I'll— faith, I've a great mind—hem—hum—ha—no, not so cheaply as that, either," quoth the colonel, muttering to himself.

"What were you saying, sir?" asked John.

"Nothing—at least, nothing that concerns you to hear—that is to say— But, John, what did Colonel Phil say to you when he heard the story?"

John handed him the testimonial of that gallant officer, which the colonel read, occasionally exclaiming at intervals, "Good! good!" with particular satisfaction. When he had finished, he returned the paper, and spoke as follows:

"Well, John—but, Jane, what the deuce are you doing with papers belonging to other people, hey? But as I was going to say, John, this is a pretty good beginning, but it don't come up to old Ti yet, by a great deal, my boy. However, as I said, it is a pretty good beginning. Six Yagers killed, two wounded prisoners, and a fine horse, all at the expense of a cut over the eye. Dog cheap, John—cheap as dirt—a good beginning, certainly, as I said before, but it must not be the end. Hold your tongue, sir!"

"I was not speaking, colonel," said John, smiling.

"Yes—but you were just opening your mouth to speak; and you, young madam, don't be looking at me as if you'd eat me. Young man," and the old continental drew himself up with ineffable dignity, "this is a mere flea-bite; such things as these happen every day in war-time, and are never recorded in history. You must be in the chronicles, sir. Thunder and Mars! you must place yourself on a par with me, before I give you my daughter, my money, my lands, and improvements. You must get a timber leg, have one arm sliced off, or lose an eye, or you must have a few bullet-holes through you—"

"Oh! father!" cried Jane.

"Be dumb, madam, and listen to what I am saying. You must figure in broad daylight, and in sight of armies; you must win the gratitude of your country; you must descend to posterity; and, more than all this, you must receive the approbation of the great Washington. When you have done this, all I have shall be yours, and not before, on the honour of an old continental."

Ah! father!" cried Jane, "you will never be satisfied till you send him to his grave. Last night he escaped by miracle. A little more, and that cut would have been fatal. John—dear John!" exclaimed she, passionately, "give me up—I am not worth the price of such a purchase."

"No, dearest Jane! The contract is made, and shall be fulfilled, if heaven spares me life and opportunity. I mean

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to strive for you and my country, and if I fall, I shall die for love and liberty!"

"What a cruel situation is mine!" the tears trickling down her cheeks. "I can only look for happiness through the perpetual risk of losing it forever. But I will not discourage you with my fears. The women, like the men of my country are ready to sacrifice everything to its freedom."

"There spoke the daughter of an old continental," cried the colonel. "Kiss me, my girl—and you too, John, talk like a brave fellow. Thunder and Mars! I've a great mind to put an end to all this. But no—not yet—not yet. But I tell you what—you may go and take a walk together, if you will promise not to runaway. I give you an hour to say all you have to say, while I go and visit that infernal mole-trap, and mend this ridiculous puppy's leg, who makes more rout, by half, than if he'd lost his head. Away with you—remember, only one hour."

The walk lasted more than an hour. They rambled under the stately elms, and plane trees, that overshadowed the clear murmuring stream, and now began to exhibit the many coloured tints of autumn. The maples and sumach, already displayed their scarlet foliage, most beautiful in decay; the hardy brood of autumnal flowers were on the wane, and the blue-birds, the meadow-larks, and the robins, were collecting in flocks, preparing for the sunny regions of the south. There was a sober, calm serenity, almost bordering on melancholy, in the aspect of the earth and skies; a soothing gentleness in the murmurs of the stream, and the soft whisperings of the dying leaves, which ever and anon, smitten by the frost, fell in spiral eddies to the ground, or dropt into the brook, apt emblems of some dear and well remembered companion, on his way to the home of all the living, the region of eternal suffering or eternal rest.

Every object around them was calculated to awaken and foster the purest and tenderest emotions of the heart, and the impression that their parting now, might be to meet no more, imparted a deep solemnity to the feelings by which they were inspired. Love, engrossing, overpowering love, filled all their hearts—prompting a thousand innocent endearments, such as at a time like this, may be claimed without assurance, and granted without indelicacy. The silent solitudes of nature are not the promoters of the guilty passions; it is where the human race herd together in crowds, amid all those luxurious seductions, appealing to the senses and the imagination, through every avenue of the heart, that the passions become epidemical, spreading like contagion from one to another, until the entire mass becomes diseased and corrupted. There is no incitement to sensuality in the charms of nature; no seduction in her music; no mischief in her smiles; no luxurious fascination in the rich bounties she pours out with such a lavish hand; and they who would secure to themselves the cheapest, the purest, and the most enduring source of innocent enjoyment, should cherish in their inmost heart a feeling of admiration for that stupendous and beautiful fabric, which more than any other work of his hand, displays the wisdom, the goodness, and the omnipotence of the great Architect of the universe.

At length, after rambling a considerable way, their tongues often silent, but their eyes and hearts discoursing in the silent language of mutual love, Jane asked with a hesitation exquisitely feminine, "is it not time to return?"

"Not yet, dearest. Remember it may be long before we meet again. I do not wish to work on your apprehensions, or alarm your tenderness, in order to tempt you to exceed your father's permission. But when I go away now, it is with a determination to be absent a long while. I will not deceive you, dearest Jane. I am going to offer my services to Washington; to fight by the side of my father, and if necessary, to die with him in defence of my country. It is only in this way I can make myself worthy of your heart and hand."

"I was going to entreat you to stay with us, but I will not. No, dear John! whatever I may suffer, or whatever may happen to you—you *shall* go. It must never be said of an American woman, that there lived one who loved herself so well, that she forgot her country in times like these. At least, it shall never be said of me. Are not the peaceful farmers and their sons fighting for liberty, almost without clothing, or food, or shelter of any kind, and with nothing to sustain them but the love of freedom, their confidence in a good cause, and in the wisdom and virtue of Washington? and shall their mothers, wives, and daughters, be wanting to their glorious duty? No, John! no, dear—dearest John! Go—fight and die, if more martyrs are required. You may fall, and be buried no one will know where, without any to tell of your courage and devotion—without any memorial to mark the spot where a nameless man died for his country. But you will live in my heart while I live; and, whatever sorrows may fall to my lot, will be soothed by the pride of having been dear to the heart of one who loved his country better than his mistress. Go—and may heaven protect you!"

The effort was too much for the gentleness of woman, and at the conclusion of this heart-stirring appeal, her whole spirit dissolved in tenderness. She cast herself on his bosom, sobbed with convulsive heavings, and looking

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him in the face, with a mixture of contending emotions, she exclaimed, "Go—serve your country—her claim is greater than mine!"

They walked rapidly towards home, without exchanging another word. John took leave of the old continental, mounted his horse, and their farewell was conveyed in a silent look which was never forgotten.

## CHAPTER V.

"I see nothing before us but accumulating distress. We have been half our time without provisions, and are likely to continue so. We have no magazines, nor money to form them. We have lived upon expedients till we can live no longer." —*Washington's Letter to a Friend.*

The dark days of the infant republic of America had now come. The enemy, everywhere victorious, had overrun, though he could not subdue, a large portion of the land, and lorded it over some of our capitals. The paper currency, that last and most fatal of all the expedients of despair, was fast depreciating into a mere nominal value; the resources of the country were either exhausted, or could not be procured for such a worthless equivalent; the little waning army, suffering under the privation of almost every necessary of life, and every means of warfare, was struggling without hope, and the cradle of the infant Liberty seemed on the eve of becoming its grave.

But amid all these discouragements and disasters, the great mass of the people, the sturdy yeomanry of the country, remained true to the cause of independence; and the destitute soldiers, though raw and undisciplined in the main, continued to display a spirit of hardy endurance, of unconquerable patience, of manly submission, never on any occasion exhibited by standing armies of hirelings. So little did their rulers doubt the patriotism of the people, that when the parliament of England sent commissioners to the United States with offers of forgiveness at the mere price of returning to their allegiance, Congress directed the terms to be published throughout the land, that every man might see and judge for himself. This confidence was not misplaced. The people scorned to accept of pardon, for what they considered no crime; and the attempt to subdue them by an amnesty for the past, only animated their greater exertions in the future. Both men and women, with few exceptions, remained true to the cause, and resolved to drain the cup of suffering to the dregs, rather than turn aside the draught by abject submission. They never despaired, even in the gloomiest times; but, with a generous confidence in an oft defeated leader, resolved to dare all, suffer all, rather than lose the glorious prize for which they had already paid so dearly. It was this noble confidence, this invincible ardour, this unconquerable perseverance, which, aided by the blessing of heaven, and heaven's best gift, a Washington, at length baffled the efforts of one of the most powerful nations of the earth, and gave liberty to a new world.

The little army of Washington, after performing wonders in New Jersey, and winning laurels in the depths of the snows, with bare, bleeding feet, and half-naked bodies, was now in winter-quarters at the Highlands of the Hudson, secure, for a brief period, from the efforts of a far superior enemy. They were, in a great measure, destitute of tents; and if this had not been the case, the rough, inclement winter of these northern regions would have rendered these an inadequate defence against the driving snows and boisterous winds, that drifted and howled along the narrow valley, through which the majestic river pursues its way to the Atlantic.

Bidding farewell to home, as he believed for a long while, and receiving divers cautions to take care of himself from the old folks, John had, the morning after parting with Jane, pursued his way to the quarters of General Alexander McDougal, one of the earliest and worthiest patriots of New York, with whom his family had been acquainted during their residence in the city, and in whose brigade his father served as a captain of dragoons. The general was of Scottish descent, of a cool determined character, and undoubted courage. Like Napoleon, he was an egregious snuff-taker, and to save the trouble of opening a box, or, because no box of reasonable dimensions would contain his daily supply, usually carried his snuff in his waistcoat pocket, as we have often heard from one of his old companions in arms. From the same authority, we learn that the general's ruffles and buff-jerkin, generally exhibited a plentiful sprinkling of his favourite debauch. Our adventurer first sought his father, and the meeting was affectionately solemn. But after the parent had welcomed his son, he began a long lecture on the impropriety of leaving home, where his presence was required for the protection of the old people, and the cultivation of the farm.

"Besides," added the captain, "you would have seen me soon without coming here. I was about asking leave for a few days, as early as next week—however, John, I should not find fault with you for taking all this trouble to see me. So give me your hand, you are heartily welcome."

"But, sir," replied John, "I did not come to see you: that is, I did not come on purpose."

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"No? what then brought you here?"

"I came to fight for my country, sir!"

"You? why, you're but a boy—a chicken, what will you do amongst our old cocks?"

"Crow, and fight like the rest, father."

"Pooh, John! go home and take care of the farm, and the old people. I'm sure you've run away without permission."

"No, on my word, sir, they consented."

"What! mother too?"

"Yes sir. She opposed it at first, but at last said to me, 'well go, John, fight for your country, and take care of your father.'"

"Did she, the dear old soul?" exclaimed the captain, drawing his hand across his brow; "but why should I doubt it, when I have seen so many of our women with the hearts of men in their bosoms? John, you can hardly remember your mother, you were so young when you lost her. Though brought up tenderly in a quiet city, I verily believe she never knew what it was to fear for herself. I have seen her twice in situations that made old soldiers turn pale, without a change in her countenance. If you ever turn coward, John, you will disgrace both your parents. But you are too young for a soldier of freedom. Can you live without eating; sleep without covering; fight without shirt to your back, or shoe to your foot; without pay, and without the hope of victory? If you cannot, you'd better go home. Look at *me*, John."

John ran his eye over the poor soldier of freedom, and though he had been absent little more than a year, was struck with the change in his face and person. He had grown very thin; his brow was seamed with deep furrows; his hair, which was only a little grizzly when he left home, was now almost white, and a deep scar on his cheek, gave token of his having been within arm's reach of an enemy. Cap he had none, but its place was supplied by a coarse wool hat, of a grim, weather beaten hue, ornamented with a little faded plume, now of a most questionable colour. His epaulette was of the tint of rusty copper; his garments not only worn threadbare, but rent in more than one place; he wore a common leather stock, and his clumsy cowhide boots, the soles of which were gradually departing from each other, were innocent of oil or blacking. His sword was cased in a scabbard of cartridge paper, made by his own hands, and his entire appearance presented no bad emblem of the fortunes of his country.

"Well, John, what do you think of me?"

John made no answer. His heart was too full for words, but he thought to himself, "Such is ever the price of liberty!"

"But don't be discouraged, boy. Though I seem rather the worse for wear, I have plenty of money. Look here—" and the captain drew from his pocket a handful of paper money, with a smile that partook of bitter irony. "See how rich I am, if I could only persuade people to take these rags for money. I offered Mangham, the pedlar—you know him, I believe, a wary rascal—a hundred dollars for a pair of stockings, a luxury I have not enjoyed for some time, but the fellow answered, 'No, captain, if I want to be charitable, I give things away; but when I trade, I expect something of equal value for my goods.' He offered to give me a pair for old acquaintance sake, but I could not bring myself to that. So you see me barefoot, with a pocketful of money."

"If I were in your place, sir, I would resign and go home. Let *me* take your place, while you get a little rest and clothe yourself. I can't bear to see you look like a beggar."

"No, my son," replied the captain, with a firm determination, unalloyed by a single spark of enthusiasm, "no, John; when I first put on this old rusty sword, I swore never to lay it down till my country was free, or all hope of freedom was at an end. I mean, if God spares my life, to keep my oath, let what else may happen. If my country cannot give me shoes, I will fight barefoot; if she cannot afford me a hat, I will fight bareheaded; and if she can't pay me for my services in money, I will live in the hope of being repaid hereafter by her gratitude. I know she gives us the best she has to give—that she shares in our sufferings—and may God forsake me, when I desert her!"

Such were the men who bore the country on their shoulders, through peril, doubt, and despair: such the unknown, nameless heroes, who live only in the blessings they bestowed on posterity. And here lies the mystery which has puzzled the world, namely, the achievement of independence in the face of apparently insuperable obstacles, presenting themselves at every step and every moment, which cannot be explained but by the virtuous firmness, the unwavering patriotism, not more of the high than of the low; not more of those whose names will forever remain objects of national gratitude, than of those whose names were never remembered. The soul that

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animated and inspired the revolution, spoke from the lips of this nameless soldier.

A somewhat animated discussion took place between father and son, on the subject of the latter volunteering his services in the cause of his country.

"You'll be half-starved, John."

"I can bear what thousands suffer here."

"You'll be half-naked."

"So are they, sir."

"You'll be ragged and dirty."

"So are you, sir," said John, rather irreverently.

"You'll never be able to go through with it."

"Why not, as well as my father?"

"You never smelt powder, or drew blood in the course of your life. You could never find in your heart to cut a man down, even to save your own life."

"Couldn't I?" quoth John—and he drew from his pocket the testimonial of Colonel Courtlandt, giving the particulars of the affair at old Ira Tebow's. The father read it with a feeling of conscious pride, and clapped his hand approvingly on his shoulder.

"John," cried he, after hesitating a few moments, "you were born for a soldier of freedom. Come along, and, like the old patriarch, I will offer up my only son to God and my country."

Accordingly, they proceeded to the quarters of General McDougal, to wit, a hut of rough stone walls, covered with moss-grown shingles, and containing a single apartment, destitute of the most ordinary accommodations. They found the rusty old soldier in a weather-beaten suit of regimentals, solacing himself with his favourite luxury, which he administered with his thumb and two fingers.

"Well, captain, what news?"

"Nothing, general, except that the tories are up in Monmouth county."

"Ah! so I hear;" and the general took a pinch extraordinary.

"General," said the captain, "I have brought you a young lad, who wishes to share the pleasures of a soldier's life. I have just been giving him some account of them, and he has fallen in love with the profession."

"Aye—and how old may he be, captain?"

"Between eighteen and nineteen, sir."

"Too young—too young, captain, by a great deal. He'll be on the sick list, the first campaign, and be sick of the service besides. Young man, can you live upon nothing, and sleep on the ground of a frosty night, without any blanket but the sky?"

"I don't know, sir, till I try."

"Eh?—well, that is a more sensible answer than I expected. But do you think you can manage to go half the time without a shirt to your back, or shoe to your foot, in short, without meat, drink, clothing, or lodging—serve without any other pay than what will not pay for anything, fight without the prospect of victory, and look a red coat in the face without turning your back?"

"General, I can only answer for one thing—a heart, and I hope an arm, to serve my country. I have other motives than patriotism, which I will not trouble you with. Allow me to say, I believe I can look any man in the face, when I have done nothing that makes me ashamed of myself."

The general thrust his hand into his waistcoatpocket, and regaling himself with a pinch, half of which, as usual, he spilled on his ruffles and buff-jerkin, ran his eye over the young candidate.

"Faith and troth, young man, you're a likely lad, and promise fair. God knows we want men, and must take boys when we can get them. Do you come of a good whig stock, for hang me, if I don't believe whig and tory run in the blood, just like game in fighting-cocks."

"This is my father, sir."

"Ho! ho!—what, captain, have *you* brought him here?"

"He is my only son, general, but I did not bring him here. He came from home by himself, of his own accord, and I confess, I did all I could to make him go back again. But nothing would do, and here he is at your disposal."

"Well, if he is your chicken, he comes of the right breed. Lad, would you like to serve on horseback, or on foot? But for the matter of that, there are not half enough horses to mount the dragoons already enlisted, captain."

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"I have brought a horse with me, general," said John.

"Faith, you are a provident lad, and you and your horse shall be welcome. You wish to serve as a volunteer, I believe?"

"If you please, general, under my father."

"What—I suppose you would like to go home when you get tired?"

"No, sir. I wish to enter as a volunteer, because there is some little merit in serving my country without being obliged to do it."

"Well, lad, I like that answer, and shall probably have occasion for the services of one who acts from such motives. Can you read, write, and cipher, upon occasion? I ask, because in these times schoolmasters are as scarce as guineas."

"He is something of a scholar, general," replied the captain, "and was educated in New York, under old Macdonald, till the age of fourteen."

"Macdonald, hey? then I am perfectly satisfied. He has had learning instilled into him with the oil of birch. How many times did he flog you, lad?"

"I don't know exactly, general. I kept count till fifty, and then lost my reckoning."

The general now dismissed John, with instructions to join his father's company of dragoons, and be sure to return upon the red coats the flogging he had received from master Macdonald. The father and son then took their way to quarters.

The young volunteer forthwith entered on his career with an ardour and enthusiasm inspired by patriotism and love. He had two mistresses, his country and Jane, who, so far from dividing, concentrated his heart on one and the same object. His father placed him under an old subaltern of his company, to be drilled, and being already an expert rider, he, in a very short period, became equally distinguished for the steadiness and precision of his movements, as well as skill in the management of his weapons. In short, he practiced unweariedly, in order to accomplish himself in all the arduous duties of a soldier, and disciplined both mind and body to meet all the exigencies of those times which tried the souls of men, and the firmness of women.

The American forces being on one occasion drawn out for review on the plain between the foot of the mountains and the river, John had, for the first time, a full opportunity of contemplating the man, who, by his virtues and services, has deserved the highest of all titles, that of father of his country. As he rode along with that graceful dignity for which he was so eminently distinguished, John gazed at him till he almost forgot his soldierly duties; while all that the great and good man had done, and was still doing for his country rushed on his mind. He contemplated him with affectionate reverence, unlimited confidence, and profound gratitude; and, in the delirium of his soul, wished to heaven, that like him, though at humble distance, he might some day be able to do or suffer what might entitle him to the gratitude of his country, and the remembrance of posterity. He felt, what thousands every day experienced, in the presence of Washington, while they all but despaired everywhere else, a degree of confidence in the good cause which inspired him with hope, and animated him to exertion. Men, clothed in rags, suffering hunger and cold, and dispirited by a long succession of disastrous fortunes, awakened from the depths of despondency, and gazed on the blameless hero with reviving hope of the future. Such is the unflinching reliance of mankind on that virtue which has been long tried and never failed.

For more than four years had the country been overrun in various directions by an unscrupulous enemy, who stigmatized as rebels a whole nation that had risen in defence of its rights; and who, instead of looking on the Americans as fellow-countrymen, manfully struggling in behalf of every subject of England, viewed them as turbulent mutineers, rising against their lawful commander, and treated them as without claim to the courtesies of civilized warfare. More than four years had the country bled at every pore, and bled almost without the hope its blood would not be shed in vain. During this long period of suffering, seldom were the soldiers of freedom, or the people struggling to be free, cheered forward by success, or animated by victory; and, while every day paying the price of liberty, the boon seemed only every day receding farther and farther from their grasp. Yet, during this trying period, both leaders and people, soldiers and citizens, rejected with unconquerable decision, and wonderful unanimity, every offer of peace without independence. They refused pardon for the past, although almost without hope of the future; they rested with a generous reliance on a leader whose destiny it was to be ever on the defensive without the means of defence; and, amid all their sufferings, disappointments, disasters and defeats, clung, with all the ardour of devoted faith, to their virtuous, courageous, indefatigable leader. Even despondency

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could not weaken their reliance, and when a victorious general was presented as a successor to Washington, fleeing before a superior enemy, they decided with one heart, one voice, that they would have no other leader. Never did people display a more noble confidence, and never was such confidence more richly repaid.

## CHAPTER VI.

WINTER—QUARTERS IN THE HIGHLANDS—CHEAP MONEY—TRAITORS IN THE CAMP—A NIGHT—SCENE, WHICH ENDS IN OUR HERO BEING ARRESTED, TRIED, CONDEMNED, AND SHOT—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SWEARING AWAY A MAN'S LIFE, AND SHOOTING HIM OUTRIGHT.

The trials of Washington and his little army, were not alone confined to resisting a superior foreign enemy. His cares never slept, and their sufferings never ceased. Two-thirds of the year they had to cope with a force, from which to escape was a triumph; and during the remainder, they had to wrestle with foes still more difficult to resist. Hunger, cold, nakedness, and all their sad consequences, assailed them from day to day. The wicked never ceased to trouble them, and the weary were never at rest. While in winter-quarters, Washington was incessantly employed in advising, exhorting, and stimulating Congress and the states, to more vigorous exertions: devising and recommending new plans of defence or conquest, and using every effort of argument and persuasion, to infuse into their hearts a portion of his own unconquerable energy. It were too much to assert, that Washington alone saved his country; but it may be said with truth, that without him, it would not have been saved.

During the winter of which we are speaking, the sufferings of the army were more than usually severe, owing to the want of many comforts essential during a hard winter among the mountains of the north. They had borne all patiently, at Valley Forge and elsewhere; but there is a limit to human patience, as well as endurance, and the jests, with which they occasionally strove to keep up their spirits, at length began to give place to effusions of bitter spleen, or murmurs of deep dissatisfaction. The rapid depreciation of continental money, as it was called, bore heavily on the soldiers; for such was its daily, nay, hourly decrease in value, that ere they could exchange it for necessaries or indulgences, it had fallen still lower. It was like a wagon trundling down hill, the nearer it got to the bottom, the faster it went. The soldiers, at length, would light their pipes with it in disdain. As they sat idle in their huts of evenings, they would talk of home, and contrast their situation with that of former times, when their labours were light, their food wholesome, and their nights refreshed by undisturbed repose. In short, some of them began to form little cabals, one of which was incited, as well as led, by the old corporal who had drilled John, and who was a foreigner.

Pay-day came round, and there was nothing to pay with but continental money, the depreciation of which, no increased quantity could keep pace with. One bitter night, a party of some half dozen were gathered together in one of the huts. They had just received a few thousand dollars, that scarce sufficed to purchase a small pittance of tobacco and other homely luxuries, which the old corporal had invited John to come and share with them. He had complied, though he neither smoked nor drank, being willing to be on good terms with his fellow-soldiers, who, in truth, had no special kind feelings towards him as a volunteer.

It was now the dead of winter, savage, gloomy, and severe. The mountains were bare of foliage, save that of the melancholy evergreen, which, when the earth is covered with snow, only increases the desolation of nature by its black hues. The grim, gray rocks, contrasted with savage grandeur the white winding-sheet, which was thrown as a pall over the inanimate corpse of nature. The river was bound in thick-ribbed chains of ice, and the northeast wind swept along through the openings of the high hills, howling mournfully a requiem over the grave of the year. The only comfort within reach of the poor soldiers, was plenty of fuel growing at their very doors; and the party, consisting, besides John, of Corporal Crawley, Aaron Cronk, Pilgrim Pugsley, Hachaliah, commonly Hack Foster, and Case Boshin, the younger, were now gathered about a roaring fire, which would have been much more agreeable, had not the wind dashed down from the mountain-tops into the chimney, occasionally enveloping them in a mystification of smoke that brought tears to their eyes.

"Boys," said the corporal, "I've got a treat for you to-night. I bought a jug of spirits, some pipes, and three papers of tobacco, to-day, at Peekskill. What do you think they cost me?"

"More than you're worth, I reckon," said Case Boshin.

"Eight hundred dollars. It swept my pocket from top to bottom, clear as a whistle. I'm a ruined man; but come let's enjoy ourselves while they last. Who's got a piece of something to light my pipe with, for I see our wooden tongs is on the invalid list."

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Case, hereupon pulled out a continental bill, and twisting it between his fingers, handed it to the corporal, who very coolly lighted his pipe with it. The jug was then uncorked, and the party, with the exception of John, proceeded to make large libations.

"It's a pretty use for money," at length observed the corporal, "to be lighting one's pipe with it."

"Yes," replied Case, "and it's a pretty service this, we've got into; all summer running away from the red coats, and all winter roosting like crows here in the mountains, half clothed, and a little more than half-starved. For my part, my time is out in the course of next spring, and if I don't make tracks home on a hand-gallop, you may call me a horse, and ride me bare-backed, if you like."

"Ah! you're a lucky fellow, Case," said Hack Foster, "I've got more than a year yet to serve, the d—I take me for listing so long, I say. Liberty is a fine thing, but like gold, it may be bought too dear, I reckon."

They now began to compare notes, and the result was by no means satisfactory, most of them having a considerable time to serve. In the meanwhile, the jug went round briskly, and by degrees they began to be somewhat flustered with the mischievous inspiration. The corporal talked "big," as the phrase is, and threatened a mutiny; while the others swore they would go home in spite of all the articles of war, and the conversation became equally dangerous to the listeners as to the speakers. John, who had been absent on a visit to a certain lady, in other words, thinking of the last parting, when Jane cast herself on his bosom, and bade him go and serve his country, was at length roused to a cognizance of what was passing, just as Hack was swearing he would give them leg bail before long.

"You will—will you?" cried he, coming forward. "you'll desert in spite of the articles of war? You had better try it, if you want to be shot before the whole army, and branded as traitors to your country."

"Booh!" cried the old corporal, puffing out a cloud of smoke—"you're a gentleman volunteer, John. You can go when you please, and come when you like, whenever you want to see your mammy. But you'd better be quiet and mind your own business. We listed for pay and rations, and as we get neither one or the other, I say the bargain is broke, and we have a right to do as we please with ourselves."

"To be sure," echoed Hack Foster, "to be sure we did. It stands to reason, if one party breaks an agreement, the other has a right to break it too, and for that matter, it's broke already. Supposin, now, I make a bargain with the corporal for a jug of sperrits, and the jug turns out to be empty, do you think I'm obliged to pay him for it? Not I; I'm ex—ex—ex—I can't get out that consarned word; but I know I'm clear as a whistle off the bargain."

"That's law," quoth Pilgrim Pugsley, "'cause I was onsuited once on a trial afore Justice Day on that very account. It's jist as much as to say, every man must do as he would be done by; and so, if anybody cheats me, I have a good right to cheat him, I guess."

"As clear as preaching," rejoined the corporal, "and so, my boys, as we get no pay but continental money, that is, no money at all, we have an incombustible right to curse and quit just when we like, in spite of all you can say, mister gentleman volunteer."

"A pretty conclusion, really," replied the other, "and so you only fight for pay and rations. You have no heart for the cause or the country. As for you, corporal, you have no country, at least, none you choose to fight for; for my own countrymen here, I should think they would be ashamed to desert a cause which is that of all mankind."

"Pooh! mister gentleman volunteer, what's liberty without food, pay, or clothing? You may talk as you please, but d—n my old shoes, if a man can live upon liberty. Here's to you boys, take one more pull, and then the jug will be as empty as my pocket."

The last drop causes the cup to overflow, and this last appeal to the jug, brought the party, our hero excepted, who had declined to partake in the debauch, to the very confines of rational self-possession; for, being the last, each one had taken his full share. They became noisy, and riotous; blurted out disaffection, mutiny, and treason, and were proceeding to organize, as well as their disordered brains would permit, a system of proceeding of the most aggravated and dangerous nature. They swaggered, swore and blustered, in tones so loud and boisterous, that they might have been overheard by their neighbours in the adjacent huts, had not the uproar of the scene without, confounded that within. A violent snow-storm had commenced; the wind shrieked and moaned among the bare branches of the trees, the snow beat through the chinks of the door and windows, almost covering the earthen floor, and gradually extinguishing the fire, which was fast expiring. John had vainly attempted to stay the irritated, intoxicated soldiers; but every attempt only brought on him new taunts and reproaches, until, at length, losing all patience, he leapt in the midst of them, and cried out in a loud, firm voice:

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"Soldiers! do you know what you are saying? Do you know it is my bounden duty to report every word of it, and that I will do it, as sure as you live, unless you promise to give up this rascally plot of yours? Shame on such cowards, I say, that serve their country as a dog follows his master, because he gives him a bone!"

"What! you'll betray us—you'll turn spy and telltale, will you, you chicken-hearted puppy? I never knew a fellow that refused to drink with his companions, but would betray them the first chance that came. But we'll soon stop your wind-pipe for you, if you don't swear pine blank never to say a word about what you've just seen and heard. Tell tales of your messmates—a pretty fellow! come, give us your 'davy that you won't 'peach to-morrow," replied the old corporal.

"Not unless you will all swear to abandon your project, and never allow your tongues such liberty again. If not, I'll have you all up to-morrow, as sure as I stand here."

"You've made up your mind to blab, then," cried the other, rising, and staggering towards the corner where their arms were deposited. "I'll tell you what—damme what was I saying? before you shall bring us to the bull-ring—we—will lay you as flat as a flounder—where you—you shall never get up again except—ex—at the sound of the last trumpet. Swear—I say mister gentleman volunteer, or you're as good as ten dead men. Hip, boys! every man to his arms—lay hold of the spying rascal, we'll carry him to the rock just by, push him off, and nobody will be the wiser for it to-morrow—he'll be snowed under before that time—lay hold, and gag him!"

The whole party obeyed the order, and were about to seize their weapons in the corner, when John, placing himself on guard over that important position, brandished his sword, exclaiming:

"The first that approaches is a dead man! mind, I don't wish to hurt you, for you don't know what you are doing, and I'd as soon eat carrion, as fight with such staggering bullies. Stand off, I say, I'll not use my sword against you, but if you come within reach of my fist, I'll strike fire out of your eyes, brighter than they ever flashed before."

This threat, joined to the menacing attitude of the young volunteer, brought the others to a momentary pause. But it is the instinct of drunkenness to thrust its head into the fire; and, accordingly, with threats and bitter imprecations, the whole party staggered forward, pell-mell, the consequence of which was, that one by one they were laid sprawling on the ground, leaving John unhurt, and master of the field. A dead silence now prevailed for a moment, except that the wind howled, the door shook, and the chimney roared like distant thunder. Presently, however, voices were heard without, and a push was made at the door, which opened to a patrol, that entered without ceremony. They were going the rounds, and had been attracted to the spot by the confused hum of voices, all at once succeeded by death-like silence.

John was seen standing guard over the arms, while the rest of the party lay some on the ground, perfectly quiet, and others stood see-sawing fore and aft, the blood streaming down their faces. The officer demanded an explanation, but received no reply. John could not find in his heart to become the accuser of his companions in arms, and the others had nothing to say. At length, the demand being repeated, the old corporal, who had been pretty well sobered by the tremendous thumps he received, aided by the apprehension of probable consequences if the truth came out, gathered himself together, and told the story with great accuracy, only making a single mistake, by putting himself and his companions in the place of John, and John in the position of the mutineers. By this simple arrangement, it appeared that the young volunteer had invited the party, seduced them into a debauch, incited them to desert, and finally beaten them almost to death for rejecting his proposal. "May I never live to see my country free," concluded the corporal, "if I ever saw such a fury as that young chap is in his liquor!"

John, though gifted with strong nerves, and great presence of mind, stood confounded by the audacity of the corporal, whose story was straightway endorsed by the rest of the party, with the exception of honest Hack Foster, who was lying on the ground fast asleep, or only pretending to be so, snoring like a brave fellow. The officer perceiving some incongruity in the story, arising from the fact that John appeared to be the only sober man in the company, decided on taking the whole party into custody, and accordingly gallanted them to the guard-house for further examination next morning, when an inquiry was had before a commission of officers, over which General McDougal presided. The old corporal persisted in his story, and was sustained by all his companions, with the exception of Hack Foster, who had become so ill that he was sent to the hospital, and his testimony dispensed with. John was then called on for his defence, which he made with great clearness and precision, and with an air of truth that failed not to make a favourable impression. But the odds were too much against him; and, besides, the accuser, on such occasions, has always eleven points of the law in his favour. He was finally placed in custody

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to await his trial for offences made capital by the articles of war.

Here was likely to be a precious end to all his aspirations of love and glory, since the same testimony which proved sufficient for his committal, would suffice for his condemnation. What would his countrymen, and what would his mistress say of him, now that he lay under the imputation of a baseness, the very thought of which stung him to the quick, and made him sick at heart. Instead of honour and renown, such as he had treasured up as the end of all his efforts, he was now belike, to become a mark for the finger of scorn, a bye-word to express the lowest grade of infamy; a disgrace to his name, his cause, and his country; a thorn in the bosom of the chosen of his heart; a convicted traitor, who had fallen himself, and attempted to drag others down with him to the lowest pit of infamy. "Heaven and earth," would he exclaim mentally, as he smote his forehead, "what will Jane think of me? She will believe I am guilty, and instead of lamenting my death, abhor my very name, and thrill with horror at the thought of having plighted her faith to one who was not only a traitor himself, but a seducer of others."

In these, and such like bitter contemplations of the past and the future, he was occupying his time, when the entrance of the captain interrupted his reverie. The latter had been absent some days, for a purpose not connected with the course of our tale. The old soldier stood before him sad and stern, for a moment, after which he abruptly demanded of him to declare on his honour, and in the sight of his Maker, as if with his last breath, if he were guilty of the crime of which he stood accused. With a clear voice, and a clear eye, John denied the charge, relating, minutely, every circumstance of the affair, which had taken such an unlucky turn for him. The detail carried conviction to the heart of the parent. The good man grasped his hand with more than usual fervour, as the thought came over him, that however innocently, nay, commendably he might have acted, the unfortunate youth was now, in all probability, to become a victim to the guilt of others. "Farewell, my son," said he, "and keep a good heart, I am going to do everything that can be done to save your life and honour; though, if these scoundrels persist in their story, and do not contradict each other, I have no hope for you. You must make up your mind for the worst. If you are to die even a disgraceful death, it is still some credit to die like a man. This I know you will do, and though I may not die with you, my son, I will seek the first opportunity to die for my country, that at least one of the name may be buried with honour."

The captain, whose dress, air, and expression of face, had something of the pathetic in them, bade the young volunteer farewell, once more, and then departed on his melancholy—almost hopeless errand. As he proceeded with lingering steps, and John gazed on his mean attire, his almost worn out frame, his gray curls, which, from long neglect, now clustered carelessly about his ears and forehead, he was deeply affected with a mingled emotion of sorrow and pride. The tears came into his eyes, and he thought to himself, what honest worth, steady unpretending bravery, and sterling patriotism, ennobled that ragged, rusty, warworn old soldier.

The first thought of the captain, was to summon the accusers of his son, who all belonged to his company, for the purpose of questioning them closely, and comparing their testimony, in order to detect some contradiction or inconsistency. But against this, his sense of honour and propriety revolted. It might seem as if he was tampering with his soldiers, and using his authority and influence to induce them to prevaricate, in order to screen his guilty son from merited punishment. He accordingly determined patiently to await the decision of the court-martial, and should the unfortunate young man be convicted, take the course which honour and patriotism pointed out. Believing him innocent, he could conscientiously solicit his pardon.

The day of trial at length came, and the accusing witnesses having been well drilled by the old corporal, repeated their testimony without varying from that given on the previous occasion, or from each other. They were aware that their own lives depended on convicting John, who, if acquitted, would, without doubt, become their accuser. To their united testimony he had nothing to oppose, but his own bare word; and, though his account of the affair was given with a clearness, condour, and manliness, that made a most favourable impression, he was finally sentenced to be shot. It ought to be here mentioned, that the testimony of Hack Foster was not taken, he being confined in the hospital with a raging fever, accompanied by delirium.

During the period between sentence and execution, the unhappy father was employed incessantly in soliciting the pardon of his son, but his efforts were unavailing. It was deemed indispensable to check such attempts on the inflammable materials of a suffering army, in the bud. Much dissipation, and many cabals had already been overlooked, in consideration of the hardships and privations of the soldiers; but it was now deemed indispensable that an example should be made, in order to repress a spirit which threatened the dissolution of the army, and the ruin of the cause. The decision of the court-martial was therefore confirmed, and the youth cautioned to prepare

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for a fate which was now inevitable.

Having lost all hope of pardon, the old weather-worn soldier bent his steps towards the guard-house, where the son lingered in hopeless resignation, if that may be so called which consisted in utter recklessness, whether his father succeeded in his solicitations or not. If pardoned, he was forever a disgraced man, who could never afterwards look his country or his mistress in the face; and if any hope lingered in his heart, it was, that possibly some one of his accusers might, in a moment of awakened conscience, be brought to a confession of his perjuries. Nothing but this could retrieve his blasted reputation, or restore him to the station he once occupied among the defenders of his country. He felt that if he lived, his life would be divested of all that makes it worth preserving; that wherever he went, he would carry the burning brand of disgrace on his forehead, the burden of dishonour, which bears as heavy on the shoulders of the son of a farmer, as the offspring of a king; and, above all, he remembered, that come death, come life, Jane was lost to him forever. She who loved him because he loved his country, would never mix her being with a reprieved traitor; nor would the high-spirited old colonel, who, with all his foibles was a man of honour, ever be brought to give his only child to one who could confer on her nothing but a disgraced name. If, at times, he wished to live, it was only in the latent hope that, at some future period, he might be permitted to die in the cause of freedom, and thus entitle himself to the pity, if not the forgiveness of his country.

When, therefore, the father entered the prison, the son addressed him in a cheerful tone, for he saw by his countenance that his fate was determined. He felt for the old soldier, and wished to comfort him by showing he was not afraid to die.

"Father," said he, "I see by your look and your walk that all is decided, and I rejoice it is so. I do not wish to live, but on one condition, which is now all but hopeless. If I could preserve my honour with my life, I would grasp at it eagerly. But of this, there is now no prospect. Tell me, my father; do not be afraid."

"It is all over, my son. To-morrow you are to be shot by your countrymen. I had hoped that if shot at all, it would have been by your enemies in defending your country. But the will of God be done."

"Amen—so be it. I have now but one consolation, I shall die an innocent man; and hope that, by thus suffering here for an offence I never committed, I may obtain pardon hereafter for those of which I have been guilty."

"Say no more—say no more, John. You only make it more hard to part with you," and the old soldier shed tears.

"Father," said the young man, after a pause, "I have a request to make of you," and he paused again, overcome by his feelings. "Father, you are acquainted with Colonel Hammond and his daughter. I ought to have told you before, that she was to have been my wife, on conditions which can now never be fulfilled. Here is a letter, I wish, I entreat you, to send as directed, by the first opportunity."

He then proceeded to relate what the reader is already acquainted with, and concluded in a tone of bitter despondency.

"All my hopes are now forever blasted. Instead of coming home with honour to claim the colonel's promise, I am going to my grave, where I can claim nothing but infamy. Had I died in defence of my country, and its cause, Jane would have cherished my memory and recollected me with pride; but now, unless she should believe my last words to her, she will, if she remembers me at all, only cherish a serpent in her bosom to sting her to death. Still, I could not make up my mind to die without one last effort to preserve an honourable place in her memory, and to implant in one pure heart, at least, a feeling of pity unaccompanied by contempt and abhorrence. Will you be sure that she gets this letter, sir?"

The sorrowing old man received the letter in silence, for he could not speak; but there was that in his silence which gave a solemn pledge that it should be as John wished. That night they passed together, in sad communion on subjects to which the near approach of an eternal separation gave a painful and affecting interest. As daylight dawned, and when the morning gun announced the rising sun, John begged his father to leave him for an hour, as he wished to be alone. The good man understood him, and he was left to prepare for his last great trial. But the captain did not go far. He remained pacing to and fro in front of the guard-house, with such an air of deep and overwhelming sorrow, that the sentinel regretted he had not proposed to John to escape the night before. At the expiration of the hour, he returned, and sat down to breakfast with his son. But neither ate anything, and they were sitting in mournful silence chewing the cud of bitter fancies, when the distant roll of the drum roused them from their deep despondency.

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"The hour is come!" exclaimed John, starting upon his feet, as if the signal was a relief.

"My son," said the captain, "there is one thing I must tell you, for you ought to know it. Do not think hardly of your father when you see the very men who swore away your life, drafted to execute the sentence, and learn, as perhaps you may, that it was at my earnest solicitation. I had my motives for this, but if they should not be answered, I beseech you to die blessing me—will you?"

"With my last breath," cried John, throwing himself on his bosom.

A guard now appeared to conduct the young volunteer to the spot, whence his soul was to take its flight to the region of immortality. To make the example more impressive and awful, the whole army was drawn up in a line to witness the spectacle, and take warning from the example. It was a grand and impressive scene, in which both nature and art combined to produce sublimity. The pure, unsullied snow, soon to be sprinkled with the blood of the victim, not of his own guilt, but that of others, lay like a winding-sheet over the dead body of nature, save where the dark projecting masses of precipitous rocks presented a gloomy contrast to the whiteness all around; the sun glistened on the snow-capt peaks of the western shore; the smoke from a thousand huts curled upwards, in perpendicular columns, to the skies; the air was death-like calm, the atmosphere pure and transparent; the soldiers stood under arms, silent and immovable; the stern music of war roused the echoes of the Highlands, as the young volunteer was brought forth to receive his doom.

He walked with a firm step, escorted by a guard, towards the place of execution, and preceded by his coffin borne by two soldiers. His dress was a white cotton gown, resembling a winding-sheet, and over the spot where his heart beat, was placed the representation of a heart painted black to serve as a mark for his executioners. The procession moved forward with measured steps to the music of the dead march of Old Rosin Castle, played by muffled drums and mournful fifes, to a large, open field, in the centre of which was a heap of fresh earth, which marked the spot where the young soldier was to meet his death and find his grave. Around this, the whole army was drawn up in a hollow square to witness the ceremony. The coffin was placed beside the grave. He was told to kneel down on the former, and the officer, under whose direction the execution was to take place, was about to tie a white cap over his head, when he so earnestly entreated that he might be permitted to look his accusers in the face, that his request was granted. His kneeling was the signal for the executioners to advance, and they came forward, taking their station some twelve or fifteen yards distant, flinching, like guilty cowards, as John looked them sternly in the face. The officer raised his sword, the signal for taking aim. He then struck the drum a single tap, and the echoes of the guns leaped from hill to hill till they died in the distance. The smoke cleared away, and the young volunteer was seen still kneeling on his coffin, apparently unhurt.

"Scoundrels!" exclaimed the officer, who gave the command to fire, "load again, and see that you take better aim, or you may fill the place of yonder soldier."

Their guns were this time loaded under the immediate inspection of the officer, and while this was doing, the captain walked deliberately past, giving a look of mingled reproach and entreaty, which they well understood. Again the officer raised his sword, and paused a moment, to give them time to take aim, before he struck the drum.

At this instant, Aaron Cronk threw down his gun, and exclaimed:

"Don't strike! he is as innocent as the general himself!"

This assertion, of course, arrested the ceremony; Cronk and his companions were immediately carried to head-quarters; and, being confronted with Aaron, finally confessed the whole conspiracy. Hack Foster, also, who had his conscience awakened by the fear of death, now came forward to make a disclosure, and John was declared not only innocent, but entitled to the highest praise, by the unanimous voice of the whole army. "Young soldier, if I don't mistake, you are just such a man as I have occasion for at times. We shall be better acquainted, soon," said the father of his country, as he condescended to congratulate him on his providential escape.

We pass over the scene between father and son, after this strange adventure, in order to explain the seeming miracle of his escape from the first fire of his executioners. It is certain, that the great majority of villains, consists of men, who, though perhaps they would not shrink from swearing away the life of a fellow-creature, are brought with difficulty to witness and still greater, to become the actual instruments of his execution. Their imaginations, are, indeed, familiarized with guilt, but their senses shrink from its perpetration. Of this class, were the accusers of our hero. They could endure the thought of having caused his death by wilfully forswearing themselves; nay, they could endure to hear of his execution, or, even to become witnesses to the catastrophe, but they could not bear to

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inflict the deed with their own hands. This required a degree of hardened insensibility to which they had not yet attained.

When, therefore, at the earnest instances of the captain, they had been selected to put the sentence in execution, they were horror-stricken; for, such is the pliability of a seared conscience, that it is prone to make distinctions in its own favour, where none exist in the code of moral guilt. There was, however, no escape; and each one, without communicating with his comrade, settled in his own mind to evade the consummation of his crime, by firing wide of the mark. Thus, though the young man would undoubtedly be killed, all imagined they would be innocent of his actual murder. The result has been just detailed. When, however, they were ordered to fire a second time, and with such an ominous intimation of the consequences of again missing, all but Aaron Cronk, decided that self-preservation required them to take good aim this time. Aaron, however, could not go the length of such atrocity, and, accordingly grounded his arms, and surrendered at discretion. Thus was the life of an innocent man preserved as if by miracle; and thus was triumphant guilt arrested in the final moment of its consummation. The mutineers were tried and condemned to be shot, with the exception of Cronk and Foster, who were drummed out of the army. The others, however, managed to escape, and were, without doubt, sooner or later overtaken by the justice of heaven.

## CHAPTER VII.

ONE STORY GOOD TILL ANOTHER IS TOLD—OUR HEROINE NEGLECTS HER HOUSEKEEPING AND ITS CONSEQUENCES—THE COLONEL'S FIRESIDE—COMMEMORATION OF AN OLD FAMILY BIBLE—ARRIVAL OF A STRANGER WITH ILL NEWS—DIFFERENT BEHAVIOUR OF AN OLD MAN AND A YOUNG WOMAN ON THE SAME OCCASION—ANOTHER ARRIVAL WHICH SETS MATTERS ALL RIGHT AGAIN.

The first act of our hero, on being alone with his father, was to inquire if he had despatched the letter left in his hands, and he learnt, with deep regret, that it had been sent by a young man who was returning home, his term of service being expired. His road carried him past the door of Colonel Hammond, and as such opportunities seldom occurred, the captain had availed himself of this, by committing the letter to the care of the young soldier. It was now probably in the hands of Jane, who was weeping over his fate, and perhaps despising his treachery.

The thought was, if possible, more bitter, than were his feelings when he stood a disgraced soldier, in the presence of the whole army, with half a dozen muskets levelled at his heart. He at once entreated his father to procure him leave of absence for three days, which having received, he mounted his horse on the instant, and galloped away, in hopes of overtaking the bearer of the letter before he reached the home of his heart. It was now evening, towards sunset, and the distance some five and twenty miles; but his steed was staunch, the rider, a lover, on his way to his mistress, and the people on the road, when they saw him darting along, said to each other, "that soldier is either a deserter, or a messenger from head-quarters!" Leaving him to travel by himself, we shall precede him to the residence of the old continental, where he will, no doubt, arrive in good time, if his horse holds his wind, and the rider does not break his neck by the way.

After parting with her lover, as described in a previous chapter, Jane sought relief from the indulgence of her bitter-sweet anxieties, where it is always to be found, in the performance of our duties to ourselves, and to others. The habit of being useful, is a glorious habit; it is like mercy twice blest, for it contributes equally to our own happiness, and that of all within the sphere of its exercise. It is impossible to resist the cheering, reviving influence arising from the consciousness of doing good to our fellow-creatures, from motives of affection or duty; and they who seek a balm to their own sufferings, will always find it in alleviating those of others. This truth most especially applies to women, and above all, to those who are placed by accident or fortune above the necessity of daily labour. These are ever most prone to become the unresisting victims to that tender weakness which seems to constitute the very nature of the sex, and under whose despotic sway they are so apt to sink into a state of useless imbecility, which makes them a burden to themselves, a blight to the domestic fireside. A hopeless attachment, the loss, or recreancy of one they love, often becomes a consuming canker, eating into the heart by its own wilful indulgence, and only the more incurable from the absence of all efforts to effect a cure. Novels and romances, for the most part, administer to this fatal weakness, by inculcating that it is both refined and praiseworthy; and that no female can aspire to the dignity of a heroine, who possesses force of mind, or strength of principle, to sacrifice a selfish weakness at the shrine of her social and domestic duties. In the moral code of romance, the indulgence of excesses in any other passion is a crime, while those of love partake of something almost divine, and appertain to beings of a superior order, who are not to be judged by the standard of morals or religion.

The good sense, good habits, and good principles of Jane, preserved her from sinking under the enervating influence of a feeling, whose highest and noblest exercise is in stimulating to greater efforts of virtuous heroism. It cannot be denied, that on the day she parted from John, there was less appearance of order in the arrangement of the parlour, and a little more dust on the mahogany than usual. The testy old continental, moreover, complained that his pipe was in one corner, his tobacco-box in another, and nothing in its right place. On his retiring for the night, Jane was roused from a painful reverie by a tremendous explosion of wrath from the old gentleman. It seems his night-cap was not where it should be, there was no pillow-cases, and the entire order of the bed-clothes totally subverted, the sheets being where the blankets ought to have been. "Thunder and Mars! what is all this? Jane—Jane, I say, come here this minute," roared the colonel, as the feathers stuck in his ear, and the

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wool tickled his nose.

The love-stricken damsel hied to his room, and a blush mingled with a smile, as she discovered the occasion of this outcry.

"Look," exclaimed the wrathful old continental, "look here, you baggage, I might as well have a shoe-brush or a curry-comb at my nose, and a straw in my ear—I'm worse off than at the siege of old Ti, when I slept under a rye-stack and was half-choked with the beards. What a plague has come over you, Jane? Oh! ah! now I recollect—hum—come, kiss me, Jane,— I know what you were thinking of, when, for the first time in your life, you forgot your old father." A reconciliation took place, and the grievances of the colonel were speedily redressed; but Jane remembered the lesson, and he was never afterwards annoyed by the absence of his night-cap, or the shoe-brush and curry-comb under his nose.

From that time she rallied herself to the performance of her daily duties, and never indulged the weakness of her heart, except in the sober leisure of a twilight evening, or in the repose of darkness, when she often lay awake amid the dead silence of the midnight hour, thinking over past times, and anticipating the future, with mingled hope and apprehension. On Sabbath-days, she said her prayers and read her Bible, whose simple, yet lofty eloquence, and touching tenderness, often went to her heart, and awakened those feelings which lie dormant in every human bosom. But the favourite portions of the old continental were those of a warlike character, on which he banqueted with peculiar satisfaction, criticising the military movements with infinite discretion, and excepting to the whole system of ancient tactics, which he could do without impeaching his orthodoxy, for he stoutly maintained that not one of the commanders could lay claim to inspiration. He swore by Thunder and Mars, that if he had commanded at Jericho, he would have defied all the rams' horns in the universe; and as for Sampson's jaw-bone, it would not have cut much of a figure at old Ti.

There were churches at a distance of a few miles, but seldom, if ever, in these disastrous times, was the simple song, or the voice of the preacher, heard to break on the calm of the Sabbath-day. There, the swallows built their nests; the windows and doors were broken, and all within was silence and desolation. Scarcely a solitary traveller was seen on the high roads, for the business of life had resolved itself into the work of death and destruction. The rustic temple of the muses, the deserted school-house, no longer resounded with the hum of the gabbling fry, issuing from the mimic Babel, nor was the sonorous voice of the big master—checking their blunders, or reprehending their misdemeanors, or encouraging their successful efforts at murdering the language—now, the king's English no more—ever heard by the solitary traveller who happened by chance to wander that way. Instead of the deep traces of those boyish gambols, which whilome marked the site consecrated to teaching the young idea how to shoot, rank weeds had overgrown the spot, such as deform the face of nature, and give sure token of idleness, neglect, and desolation. Religion, law, and learning, had fled before the fierce whirlwind of war, or only nestled at the domestic fireside in fear and trembling. In recalling these fearful and melancholy times, an old relic of the revolution once said to us—"We lived without law or gospel; we were paying the price of liberty with our substance and our lives."

The sequestered spot we have heretofore described, of all the surrounding country had alone hitherto escaped the ravages of war; but none could tell how soon his turn would come to share the fate of his neighbours, for it seemed decreed by Omnipotent wisdom, that as all were to partake in the blessings of freedom, so all must, sooner or later, pay their portion of the purchase. It was now verging towards the spring, but no signs of its approach appeared to soften the grim visage of winter. The day was Sunday, and the evening hour had come early as is its wont in that season of the year. The fire crackled cheerfully in the capacious chimney of the old continental, which was innocent of all modern improvements, or economical contrivances for persuading people to freeze on philosophical principles. An old pointer lay on one side of the fireplace, and a venerable cat luxuriated on the other, each having occupied the spot where they now reclined of a winter evening, from time immemorial, and acquired a prescriptive right by long undisturbed possession. Once, and once only, within the memory of man, had old Boss, as he was called, either in that spirit of usurpation which seems inseparable from all created beings, or from sheer absence of mind, taken possession of the corner consecrated to the venerable pussy. But "he got his bitters" with a vengeance. Cats and women, are said to carry the ten commandments at their fingers' ends, and poor Boss suffered the consequences of this new exposition of the law and the prophets. He never after attempted an invasion of neutral rights, and from that time peace and good-will presided at the domestic fireside.

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The old continental and his daughter were seated before the blazing hickory fire, one smoking his pipe, the other with her head, and it may be, her heart, full of something that shrouded her face in sadness. The cat sneezed three times in quick succession, and the colonel thereupon confidently predicted a snow-storm, adding, "Come, Jane, bring out the old Bible, and read me the story of little David and Goliath." Jane obeyed, and brought forth the venerable volume. It was a family heirloom, such as is seldom seen in these days, when Bibles have become so plenty and so cheap, that they have almost lost their reverence, and we ourselves have seen their sacred leaves appropriated to the most unseemly purposes. For this reason, we shall describe this old relic, and because it is associated in our memory with all that is venerable in piety, all that is commendable in unaffected simplicity.

It was a heavy folio, the binding of which seemed emblematical of the eternal word which it enveloped. The back was covered with hinges of massy silver, so contrived, that the book opened and shut with perfect ease, when the clasps of the same metal in front were unloosed; and at each corner were spacious ornaments of rich silver open work, extending over a large portion of the covering. All these ornaments were of exquisite workmanship, in a fine old Doric taste, and finished with infinite labour. Assuredly, there is something like affinity between such lasting and massive volumes, and the eternal truths they inculcate. The casket seems worthy the jewels it contains, and the superior reverence of our forefathers for religion, may be estimated, in some degree, by the stateliness of their Bibles, as well as the care they took to preserve them. In those times, the Bible was a precious inheritance, bequeathed from generation to generation—a memorial of pious ancestors, whose hands had often turned its leaves, whose souls had derived precious nurture from its sacred fountain. But we are falling into the fashion of the time, and mingling eternal truths with worldly fictions.

Jane continued to read, and the colonel to make his comments, until the good gentleman, as was too often his custom, fell into a doze, and began talking to himself in a broken series of disjointed fragments, beyond all comprehension. These were, however, only momentary wanderings, and coming to himself, with a snort, accompanied by a start, he opened his eyes, exclaiming at the same time:

"By the way, as I was saying," he had not said a word on the subject, except, perhaps, in his sleep, "as I was saying, have you heard from that puppy, John, since he went away?"

"No, father," repeated she, with faltering lips, and twinkling eyes.

"Thunder and Mars! can't the fellow write?"

"But what is the use of writing, sir, when there is no way of sending a letter? you know, father, there is no post running now, and I have not seen a single traveller pass since he went away."

"What—you have mounted guard and kept a good look-out, hey?"

"I don't deny it, sir, for I own I am anxious to hear from him. I think of going over to-morrow to his grandfather's to inquire, if you have no objection."

"Not I, Jane. But I dare say he is sick enough of his bargain, by this time. Thunder and Mars! Jane, if you only knew what a soldier's life is. Nothing but marches and countermarches—guns, drums, and wounds, powder, grape-shot, fire, fury, hunger, thirst, cold, and the deuce knows what besides. I should'nt be surprised if the fellow had deserted by this time, or died of the home-sickness, not I."

"O, father! how can you say so? such is not the picture I draw, in the midst of my fears. I think I see him animated by love of his country, and the hope—the hope you have given him—preparing himself, by never ceasing efforts, to win the prize, humble as it is; animating and inspiring his companions in arms to do all, dare all, in the cause of mankind. I know him better than you do, sir, and something tells me that, as I heard him once say to his grandfather, his name will yet ring among his fellow-soldiers. I fear for his life, but not for his honour. Little as is my value, he will win me, or die."

At this moment, the sound of horses' feet was heard rapidly approaching, and, as if by an uncontrollable influence, Jane ran to the door, which eagerly opening, she looked out amid the starless night, where nothing could be seen but the drifting snow, which now began to fall, and nothing heard but the wind moving among the leafless branches of the trees. Immediately a voice exclaimed:

"Is Colonel Hammond at home?" It was not the voice she wished to hear, but one she had never heard before. At length, however, she answered:

"He is—will you come in, sir?"

The stranger entered, and was welcomed by the colonel in the homely old-fashioned style of those days. The colonel, by way of entering wedge, after the guest was seated by the cheerful fire, observed it was a stormy night,

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and the traveller assented; for, no one not troubled with the spirit of contradiction, would have thought of contesting such a self-evident proposition. A short silence ensued, but as every one knows that the appetite for news is innate among country-people, and more especially among our countrymen, the old continental at length inquired of the stranger if he was from head-quarters. He replied in the affirmative, adding, that he was on his way home, having served out his time, and that the storm had obliged him to claim shelter for the night, if he could be accommodated where he was. The old continental assured him of a hearty welcome, and ordered his horse to the stable, while Jane was in a great fit of the fidgets. Her lips parted more than once, as if to speak, but closed again, only breathing a deep sigh.

"How are things getting on at head-quarters?" at length asked the colonel.

"Bad enough," replied the stranger. "The soldiers are almost destitute of food and clothing, and some have become discontented, not to say disaffected. A few of them have been plotting desertion, and mutiny, and one, a young fellow from this neighbourhood, has been condemned to be shot; and, now I think of it, I've got a letter from him to this young woman."

Saying this, he fumbled in his pocket, and drawing forth a letter, handed it to Jane, who received it with trembling hand, and cheeks white as the snow falling without. Her heart grew sick, almost to fainting, and she stood supporting herself by a chair, with the letter in her hand. At length, venturing to look at it, she recognised the writing, and sliding from her hold, sunk down on the floor, helpless, though not insensible. With mingled feelings of sorrow and indignation, the colonel, assisted by the stranger, raised up and supported the blighted blossom, muttering, at intervals, to himself, "my poor Jane! my God, she is dying!" and "Thunder and Mars! what a cowardly young rascal, to desert his country!"

The smitten maiden recovered by degrees, and was seated in the colonel's arm-chair, where, summoning to her aid the pride and dignity of woman, or, perhaps, the courage of despair, she opened the letter with a firm hand, and began to read. As she proceeded, her bosom heaved, her cheek became flushed, her eye sparkled, and at the conclusion, she exclaimed "he is innocent! father, he is innocent! and a just providence will never suffer him to die the death of a traitor! see here, dear father!"

The colonel took the letter, and read it attentively, without a word. Then he stamped about the room for a time, with his hands crossed at his back, while ejaculating to himself something like the following soliloquy:

"The young rascal! it is all a lie, from beginning to end. What! six men all put their heads together to swear away the life of an innocent man! I don't believe a word of it, for it is impossible, but they must have contradicted each other. It's a lie, a cowardly lie! only to make Jane more miserable by lamenting the young rascal after he's dead. And yet, I could never believe this of John. He was always a bold, frank, up and down lad, and nobody ever caught him in a lie. I remember when the young rascal spoiled my patent plough, by not knowing the philosophy of it, and old Cæsar was blamed, he came forward like a man, and took it all on himself. Hum—may be what he says is true. Jane—my dear child, cheer up, my little blossom. It will be good sleighing to-morrow, and bright and early I'll drive to head-quarters. The general will never deny an old comrade the life of an innocent man."

"You'll be too late, sir," said the stranger, bluntly, and without reflecting on consequences. "He was shot this morning. I heard the volley fired as I passed over the mountain."

"He is dead then!" shrieked Jane, as sinking back in her chair, she sat pale and still as a statue, while not a single tear trickled from her eyes. She did not faint, but her mind and body both remained benumbed with the sudden shock. Her heart was cold, and her brain unconscious of all but indistinct imagery flitting about, as it were, without form or identity.

The stranger soon retired to rest, saying he should be off by day-light in the morning, and the father and daughter were left alone in their misery. It was now waning towards midnight, and the storm waxed louder and louder; the winds moaned bitterly, ever and anon startling the freezing silence of the night, and almost realizing the poetic fiction of the spirit of the storm, riding the blast with desolation in his train. As they sat in the hopeless silence of deep-rooted sorrow, Jane was roused from the trance of grief, by what she imagined, the trampling of a horse in the snow, amid one of those pauses so frequently occurring in the fiercest storms, when nature seems to stop her career for a moment, to recover breath for more vehement exertions. She listened with intense and eager anxiety, but the sound was again lost in the loudness of the storm. Another pause—and the tramping of footsteps was heard on the piazza. This time the colonel heard it too, and the first idea being that it was a party of Skinners, Tories, or Cow Boys, come to pay him a visit, he seized his old rusty sword, which always in these dangerous

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times, hung up in the sitting-room, a memento of the siege of old Ti, as well as a text for many a long rigmarole story of the old French war. While stamping about with this formidable weapon in his hand, Jane had ventured to the door opening on the piazza, whence she returned borne in the arms of a man covered with snow from head to foot.

"Thunder and Mars! What does all this mean?" exclaimed the old continental, advancing, sword in hand.

"What, colonel, don't you know me?" exclaimed a voice, which he recollected perfectly.

"Know you! by the memory of the immortal Wolfe, it's John! But stand off, sir—none of your hand, sir, and put down my daughter instantly, I command you, sir. Don't touch the hem of her petticoat, you rascal, till you've proved to me you don't deserve hanging. The only daughter of Colonel Hammond must not rest in the arms of a rascally mutineer, though he may have been pardoned. But—hum—ha—yes—Thunder and Mars! I forgot. I suppose you've proved your innocence, hey? Well, by the Lord Harry, John, I'm glad to see you for all that. Jane, confound you, make haste and come to yourself, that I may hear all about it; and John, mind, if you've run away from justice, I'll have you tied neck and heels, and sent back to-morrow. Make haste, Jane, I say; you think I'm as patient as that obstinate old blockhead, Squire Day."

John placed Jane tenderly in the old arm chair, and what he said to her in doing so is a mystery, but the effect was magical. She opened her eyes, and lips, too, exclaiming in tones of proud triumph, mingled with glowing affection—

"I knew you were innocent of deserting your country!"

"Yes, yes," said the colonel, "but the matter is not quite so clear yet. He may be only pardoned, not acquitted, and of the two, I'd rather for my part, he had been shot outright; or he may have escaped, for aught we know. Come, sir, let us hear the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, before I decide whether to take you by the hand or turn you out of doors. We know from your letter all that happened up to yesterday; let us hear the rest in as few words as possible. None of your rigmaroles, John."

Thus cautioned, the young soldier took up his story where it had been left in his letter, and probably to prevent Jane from jumping out of her skin, took fast hold of her hand while he related the particulars. It is out of our power to depict the feelings of that amiable, excellent girl, during the recital; but this we know, that whenever he came to a critical point in his story, he felt a thrilling pressure of the hand held captive in his own; that as the catastrophe approached, that little soft hand trembled, and grew cold; and that when he came to the lifting up the sword, the tap of the drum, and the discharge of the muskets, she looked in his face with agonized tenderness, as if to see that he was yet alive. When he had done, she drew her hand gently from his, and clasping both her own together, exclaimed—

"The hand of Heaven was in it, and to Heaven all our gratitude is due!"

"John," said the old continental, "I shan't turn you out in the snow, to-night, I believe. Give me your hand, boy. Your honour is cleared. You have deserved well of your country, and are worthy to be my son-in-law. But—hum—not quite yet, though. You've done nothing but escape by miracle from being shot for doing your duty. You must do something more than this according to our bargain."

"I know it, sir. I mean to do more, if I am spared, before another year goes over my head. I shall keep my word, sir, and never claim my bride till I feel myself worthy of the blessing."

"Spoke like a true heart. But, Thunder and Mars! John, now I think of it, I don't exactly comprehend how the grandson of an old farmer came to talk and act so much like a gentleman. I always thought such things ran in the blood, but you seem to have got them from nature."

"And why not, sir? Let me tell you, Colonel Hammond, that the same high and noble impulses lie dormant in the bosom of the peasant as in that of the king, and that nothing is wanting to awaken them to life and action, but incitement and opportunity. Inspired, as I am, by love and liberty—with such a prize as *this* to gain, and such a cause as ours to defend—I must be meaner than the dirt on which I tread, if I don't become more than a gentleman."

"I believe you are right, John, that is, so far as I understand you; for may I be shot for mutiny, as you came so near being, if you are not sometimes as deep as that old blockhead, Squire Day, who half the time can't make himself understood, and the other half don't understand himself." But there was another auditor who understood, and gave him such a look as he comprehended just as easily as he could distinguish every feeling of her heart in the clear mirror of her liquid eye.

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The worthy old gentleman had delivered himself of a succession of stupendous yawns, at the conclusion of his last speech, and with him, the next step was plump into the region of Morpheus. He always fell asleep extempore, which, in our opinion, is a faculty that makes amends for at least one-half the evils which constitute the chief inheritance of mankind. Let no one complain of his fate, while his nights are refreshed by the dews of balmy rest, and happy dreams. How the young couple employed the interval, during which the old soldier was sleeping on his post, is none of the reader's business, nor ours either. All we shall disclose, is, that John was in the act of telling his story the third time, when he was interrupted by the colonel, who burst suddenly into an eruption of expletives, which interrupted the thread of his discourse, and startled Jane to such a degree, that she snatched away her hand just as if something had bit her.

"Thunder and fire!—Dash on, my boys! huzza for old Ti! down with the *Parley voux* and the Indians!" cried the old continental, starting up at the same time, and breaking his pipe over John's head. "Ah! ah! you copper-coloured caitiff, I think I've done your business, hey?"

Awakened by the exertion, he rubbed his eyes, stared about, and at length said, "By the Lord Harry, I believe I've been napping." Then looking at his watch, and finding it was far towards morning, he commanded them to seek the land of Nod—where many a man, besides Cain, has found a wife in dreams,— and soon the uproar of the storm without, combined with the peaceful, happy feelings within, lulled them all into a luxurious repose, during which, Jane dreamed she was married to John, and that he turned out to be his old grandmother. She awoke with the fright, and finding the sun shone out brightly, arose, and commenced the performance of her customary household duties, with a heart as light and as pure as the flakes of snow that were whirling about in the eddies of a brisk northwester.

## CHAPTER VIII.

A HAPPY YOUNG COUPLE THAT WANT NOTHING—DISCREET CONDUCT OF OUR HEROINE—COLLOQUY BETWEEN TWO OLD PEOPLE— FRIEND UNDERWOOD AND HIS FAMILY—THE SADDLE ON THE WRONG HORSE—JOHN ARRIVES AT HEAD-QUARTERS— ACCOMPANIES THE CAPTAIN ON A PARTY OF OBSERVATION— A SURPRISE, A CAPTURE, AND A CHASE, WHICH ENDS IN RUNNING DOWN THE HUNTERS INSTEAD OF THE GAME.

After being six times reminded of his duty, and at length fairly pushed out of doors by Jane, our hero at length mounted his steed, and pursued his way to the old stone house to pay his respects to the good old patriarch and his wife. He was received with a simple, affectionate welcome, conveyed in few words; and when, in answer to their inquiries, he related the story of his wonderful escape, the old dame shed tears of mingled horror and gratitude, while the gray-haired patriarch shook him by the hand, and was proud of his grandson. After spending an hour or so, conversing on these matters, and hearing and answering various minute inquiries about his father, John began to show symptoms of restiveness, which he judiciously placed to the account of his horse, that was standing in the snow pawing away manfully. To the proposal, that he should be put in the stable, our hero replied, that he was going to spend the day with Colonel Hammond by special invitation; on hearing which, the old lady exchanged a significant look with her mate, who said nothing, but thought a great deal, according to the custom of wise old gentlemen. But it not being in the nature of the sex to be content with dumb-show, the look was followed up by words of the following import—

"Well, I declare!" said the old dame, "who would have thought it? So you are going to stay all day at the colonel's! and you slept there all night, too! Well, I declare! who knows what may happen!"

"Neither you or I, Rachel," quoth the wiser vessel; "but I've heard say, an ounce of luck is worth a pound of understanding."

"Yes, and you know, grandfather," so she always called him, "you know it is written in the tenth chapter of Jeremiah, that some people are born with a silver spoon in their mouths, and others with a wooden ladle."

"I don't think you'll find that in Jeremiah, Rachel, but I dare say it is true for all that."

"Well, then it's in the book of Proverbs, for I am pretty sure I saw it there, though my memory is not quite so good as it was before the old French war. But I will soon see." Accordingly she took down the old Bible but whether the passage was found in Jeremiah, or the book of Proverbs, does not appear from any authentic documents.

John passed his time, previous to joining the army, in unalloyed happiness, or, at least, only alloyed by the thought of a speedy parting with Jane. Historians and romancers—if the phrases are not synonymous— have told us a thousand times that happiness cannot be described; but we confess we do not believe a word of it. Why should there be more difficulty in depicting the smiles, than the tears of humanity? Why are the pure enjoyments of virtuous love, the cheerful scenes of domestic happiness, the rich prospects of national peace and plenty, not equally susceptible of being delineated, with the excesses of the passions, the crimes and sufferings of guilt, or the bloody and atrocious scenes of war? Alas! we fear it is not the difficulty of painting the picture, but of finding admirers, that gives such disproportioned space to the records of crime and suffering, over those of virtue and happiness. Is it not, that having, in a great measure, lost the capacity of enjoying these innocent delights ourselves, like the parent of death and sin contemplating the happiness of the first pair in the garden of Eden, we turn in sickening envy from the scene, as one in which we can never partake, and seek excitement in banqueting on those splendid exhibitions of guilt and misery which ever follow in the track of heroes and demigods?

We have, however, a different reason for refraining from enlarging on the happiness of John and his affianced bride, namely, the apprehension that some of our readers might pine away with envy in contemplating the picture of virtuous love sanctioned by parental authority, and beckoned forward by enchanting hope to a long perspective of fancied bliss. "With whom does time gallop withal," if not with such favoured mortals? The day flitted away like a blissful dream, and the morrow brought only a recurrence of what was even more delightful in the repetition. But at length the period arrived, when they were to pay the full price of all the pleasures of meeting by

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the pangs of parting. We shall not describe the scene minutely, for it was as like as two honey-bees to that delineated on a former occasion, making allowance for the difference of weather. Then, nature was all arrayed in smiles; now, she was wrapt in her gloom and severity, lifeless, though not dead, awaiting the touch of balmy, life-inspiring spring, to wake her into music, smiles, and blushes. We shall only say, that as the lovers were exchanging their mutual farewells in the presence of the old continental, each, as if influenced by a common feeling, looked wistfully, if not beseechingly, in his face, as if to ask something at his hands.

"Well, what is it?" said he. "What have you got to say to me, John?"

"Nothing, sir," replied John.

"And you, young madam?"

"Nothing, sir," replied Jane.

"Nothing, sir," exclaimed the colonel, mimicking each in turn, "nothing, sir. Then, sir, please to face to the right about, mount your horse, and be off; the snow is so deep, you will hardly save your distance, for your leave expires to-day. Good-bye, take care you are not shot for a deserter."

"Take care," said Jane, with glistening eyes, "take care you are not shot by the red coats."

"Pooh!" cried the colonel, "what do you think a man enlists as a soldier for, except to be shot at? But come, sir, mount, I say, and don't let me see your face again till you have fulfilled your part of our bargain. You understand?"

They parted. Jane watched his course, until she could see him no more, then wandered about the home a while, from room to room, not knowing what she sought, and finally sat down to mend the colonel's silk night-cap, which was a treasure in these times, when men scarcely wore a head, much less a cap on it. As the good little girl plied her long darning-needle, which was also a treasure, brought from New York by Mangham, the pedlar, it operated as a charm, just like Mesmerism, and, by degrees, soothed her throbbing heart into quiet resignation, cheered by the hope of soon meeting again to part perhaps no more. When she next encountered her father, it was with her accustomed sweet, cheerful smile, and all again went on smoothly as before in the domicil of the old continental. Blessed, yea, thrice blessed, are the employments of the hand, for they are the best assuagers of a wounded heart.

Our hero proceeded but slowly on his journey, owing to the road being covered with deep snow. Not a single track denoted that man or beast had preceded him; for the men of the country around, with the exception of the old and infirm, were either soldiers or fugitives, and the cattle had, with few exceptions, been driven away by their owners, or carried off by parties of plunderers. He lost his way three times, but whether owing to the obscurity of the road, or his head being full of other thoughts, must be left to the decision of the discreet reader. His course led him across Croton river, at a ferry then kept by a respectable Quaker, who, as a non-combatant, enjoyed a certain qualified exemption from the evils of the times, though it must be confessed he was treated with very little ceremony by both red coats and continentals. A neutral, in time of war, most especially such a one as that of our revolution, is game for both parties, and generally squares accounts by making game of them.

The peaceable Quaker had frequently experienced this truth, and as frequently put it in practice; but on the whole, like most of those mysterious broad-brims, he resembled the sheep not alone in practising the doctrine of non-resistance, but in another peculiar characteristic, for, the more you sheared him, the thicker became his wool. According to his own account, he was plundered almost every night, yet, strange to say, he waxed richer and richer every day, and was the only farmer in all the country round, that had not his broken windows stuffed with old hats, and worn out garments. He was suspected, but without cause, of having a sneaking preference for king George, but in his heart he yearned for liberty. The truth of the matter is, that he had an irresistible preference for guineas over continental money, and could not resist the temptation of supplying his enemies in preference to his friends. In short, he was a hard-money man, for he adored specie, and eschewed shin-plasters incontinently. His wife, however, like almost every farmer's wife and daughter of the heroic age of our country, was sincerely attached to the good cause, and three stout, strapping boys, kept at home by their father, was deeply imbued with her feelings.

Our traveller halted at the house of friend Underwood for refreshment and rest, and was received rather coolly; but, as he called John, friend, it served as an apology for treating him in rather an unfriendly manner, for good words are a sort of continental money, and act as worthless substitutes for the sterling value of good deeds. Farmer Underwood could tell a man afar off who dealt in paper promises, or shin-plasters, as they now began to

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be opprobriously called, and he saw, at a glance, that our hero was wanting in the one thing needful; however, he invited him in, and offered a seat at a cheerful blazing fire. Comfort is, indeed, the badge of all the tribe, and no one ever saw a Quaker who dressed in rags, cultivated lean land, or lived in a poor house.

While the steed of our hero discussed his provender, the party at the fireside was engaged in conversation on public affairs. The neat, simple, and indeed handsome Quaker dame, in the meantime busied herself about her domestic concerns, ever and anon stopping to listen to John's details of the position of the army in the Highlands. Farmer Underwood, at length, asked him if he was not tired of such hard service, saying it was a poor business to fight without victory, and live without food.

"Dost thee hear, boys," said he, as the boys came in to dinner. "Dost thee hear how the continental soldiers are without shoes, or shirts, and that their bellies are as badly off as their backs. How much better art thee off with a good house over thy head, and everything to comfort the inward man."

"But, friend Underwood," answered John, "if all the men staid at home, what would become of the cause, and the country? It would be overrun by the red coats, and we should be no better than slaves."

"We should then live in peace and quiet, friend."

"Peace and quiet! do you call it peace and quiet, when you are pinned to the ground by a pitchfork, or a bayonet, with the foot of an enemy on your neck, to keep you from writhing? Do you call it peace and quiet, when you are only let alone because you have not the spirit to turn like a worm, when trod upon? Do you call it peace and quiet, when you lie shivering under the bed-clothes, while robbers are rifling your house, laying waste your fields, insulting your wives and daughters, because they will not cry God save the king? By my soul, friend Underwood, I would rather be in the midst of an earthquake, than enjoy such peace and quiet as this."

"Friend," said the Quaker dame, who had stood listening to this animated appeal, her large black eyes kindling as he proceeded: "Friend, is there anything in the house thee would like? Thee shall be kindly welcome." John thanked her gratefully, but declined the offer.

"Obadiah," quoth farmer Underwood, "thee hadst best go and see after the stranger's horse; and Nehemiah, thee art wanted at the wood-pile; and Uriah, thee should be threshing in the barn, for thee must go to mill to-morrow."

The young men departed unwillingly, with their cheeks in a glow, and when John soon after followed, to saddle his horse, he found them shouldering their flails and pitchforks, and marching to and fro about the barnfloor, practising military manoeuvres. On his departure, he tendered the price of his entertainment, but the good woman declined receiving it, saying, in a low tone, "thee art serving thy country, and defending its women and children, and such should find welcome everywhere." He took her by the hand, and departed, thinking to himself, that the saddle was on the wrong horse, and that the Quaker and his wife ought to change garments.

"Friend," said Obadiah, as he passed the barn, where the youngster was going through the manual with a pitchfork, "friend, was that done judgematically?"

"Like an old continental," replied John, and gayly setting forward, a ride of some two or three hours brought him to his old quarters, where the captain welcomed him with great cordiality. From this period, his time passed in the regular, and somewhat monotonous routine of soldierly duties, until the breaking up of the ice, the melting of the snow, and the chirping of the little birds, announced the coming of the spring. Another campaign was about to open, with prospects ill calculated to inspire any hope that the future would make amends for the past. While the republican army had been suffering grievous privations, and a continual diminution from the expiration of their brief terms of service, that of the enemy had been quartered in the city of New York, enjoying the gayeties of life, in the midst of plenty and repose. Superior in numbers, discipline, and equipments of every kind, the royal army, flushed with the recollection of past, and the confidence of future victories, had little else to do but scour the country at pleasure, during the summer, and feast and frolic through the livelong winter.

Previous to opening the campaign, it was desirable, if possible, to gain precise information of the state of affairs in New York, the probable time the enemy would be in motion, and the course he would pursue. For this purpose, a small detachment was placed under the command of the captain, with instructions to approach York Island, under cover of night, and, if possible, seize some straggler from the British lines, who might, perhaps, communicate the desired information. John was one of the party selected, and one evening, just about dusk, they proceeded on their critical and important mission. The distance was too great to be reached that night, and arriving just about daylight at Hungry Hollow, the captain determined to halt in this sequestered spot until

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evening, assured that here they would be safe from all observation. Nothing of consequence occurred, except that John suggested to the captain the propriety of his riding over to see the old people at the stone house, and received a sharp reprimand for his pains.

The design was to approach Kingsbridge in the dead of night, beat up some outpost, and carry off one or more prisoners. The evening came in gloomy and dark, the sky being deeply overcast with clouds, and cautiously pursuing their way by a back road, some miles from the river, they at length approached the bridge, which at this time formed the only communication from the island to the mainland. Here the captain halted his little troop, detailed once more the plan of operations, and commanding that no one should utter a word, on pain of the severest punishment, proceeded cautiously forward, until he caught a view of the glimmering at the guard-house on the south end of the bridge. The darkness of the night had increased with its progress, and the silence of death reigned all around, save the grinding of the horses' feet in the sandy road that led to the point of destination. Arriving at the spot where the road made a sudden turn round a ledge of high rocks, within a short distance of the bridge, the party dismounted, with the exception of one to whom the horses were given in charge, with directions to push forward, at a given signal, towards the bridge, for the purpose of receiving his comrades, and any prisoners they might have the good fortune to secure. This done, the captain proceeded cautiously to reconnoitre the premises.

We have said there was a guard-house at the south end of the bridge, in which glimmered a light, by the aid of which was seen a sentinel pacing back and forth, with slow and sleepy pace. Sheltered by the reeds that grew on the bank of the river, the party stole along, sometimes knee-deep in mud, until they gained a lodgment under the bridge, where they listened with breathless interest, but heard nothing save the measured footsteps of the sentinel, who was pacing towards the other extremity of the bridge, where he halted, and spoke some words which they could not distinguish.

"The sentinel is about to be changed," whispered the captain, "he will perhaps return once more, and the instant he turns his back, we must spring out and seize him. Have you the gag ready, John?"

The sentinel approached, stopped, and listened, while the party under the bridge heard with dismay the neighing of one of their horses, disturbing the dead silence around. After listening a few moments, he walked briskly away towards the guard-house. "Now!" whispered the captain, and in a second the party was on the bridge. In another, they had seized the sentinel, but unfortunately not before he had uttered an exclamation which alarmed the guard, who, the moment they could get ready their arms, sallied forth. This brief interval, however, enabled the soldier to bring up the horses on the signal being given; but before they could mount with their prisoner, the guard was upon them, and discharged a volley, which, though given at random, in the deep obscurity of night, proved fatal to two of the party. The rest retreated while the guard was reloading, which was a work of some difficulty in the pitchy darkness.

Quick as thought the prisoner was placed in front of the stoutest of the troopers. "Dash on, boys!" cried the captain, in a faint voice, and on they sped fast as their steeds could go, the old soldier ever and anon urging them forward for their lives and for their country. Scarcely, however, had they proceeded a couple of miles, when he fell headlong to the earth, with the words "Dash on, boys!" trembling feebly on his lips. "They have finished me, John," said he, as the young man dismounted and knelt by his side. "I've got a bullet in my shoulder. But don't stop for *me*. Ride on—ride on for your lives—the man you have got may be worth his weight in gold. Carry him to head-quarters, and leave me to my fate. Ride on—away with you!"

The men obeyed unwillingly—the old soldier sunk down with the exertion he had made. Here he lay a few minutes without speaking, while John was vainly trying to staunch the blood flowing from his wound with a handkerchief.

"Who is that?" said he, faintly.

"Your son, dear father."

"What business have you here? Away—leave me—and do your utmost to carry that red coat to head-quarters. You cannot tell what information he may be able to give. It may save thousands of lives—it may save your country. You can do me no good, for I am dying. Go—and may God preserve you."

"Not one step, sir! Live, or die, I will not desert my father!"

The wounded soldier raised himself on his elbow, with a last effort, and passionately cried out—

"Then, instead of my blessing, take my curse. As your superior officer, I command you—as your father, I

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adjure you to leave me. With my last breath, I order you to join my men, and do your best to lead them to head-quarters. I am a dead man, and dead men can take care of themselves."

Thus saying, he sunk down, and moved and spoke no more. Rising, after an agonizing struggle, arising from grief for the fate of the brave old soldier, and the necessity of leaving him or incurring his malediction, the bitter tears rolled down his cheeks, and he said to himself—"Here is another item in the price of liberty." At this moment, he heard the sound of horses crossing the bridge, and kneeling for an instant over the breathless body, he breathed a silent farewell,—a silent prayer for the repose of the soul of his gallant parent—then mounting his horse, spurred forward to overtake his comrades.

He had scarcely turned a corner of the road, when a party of dragoons, which had been roused by one of the guard at the bridge, came riding up furiously, and seeing the body of the captain, by the light of the morning dawn, halted to examine it; but finding no signs of life they again pushed forward, to recover, if possible, their kidnapped companion. The fugitives, by this time, were some miles in advance, but being encumbered by their prisoner, did not proceed with the same speed as their pursuers. The moment John overtook them, by tacit consent he assumed the direction of the party. The road led over a succession of hills and valleys, in a devious course, and the daylight disclosed to their pursuers, the party, scampering over a high eminence at a distance of some two or three miles. Descending into a deep vale, they were again lost sight of, and thus alternately hidden, and again in full view, the chase was continued with increasing ardour, if not increasing speed. But it every moment became evident that the pursuers were gaining ground, and that to escape was almost as hopeless, as to halt and fight a party numbering three to one, would be desperate. Nearer, still nearer, appeared the enemy every time they crossed a hill in the rear, and they were now within half a mile, when John and his party descended into a deep valley, which branched off towards the interior of the country, and through which, a stream, sometimes almost dry, at others a roaring torrent, found its way to the Hudson. Being now out of view of their pursuers, a sudden thought occurred to John, which, if put in practice, might possibly secure their escape. Directing his companions to follow, he plunged into the stream, which had been lately swelled by a heavy rain, and had not yet quite subsided, and tracing his course upwards, after the example of the hunted deer, leaving no track behind, he was soon out of sight of the high road.

Scarcely had they disappeared, when the enemy gained the summit of the hill overlooking the valley, and missing the fugitives, concluded they had just descended the eminence before them. Shouting with the exultation of certain and speedy success, they spurred on with renewed eagerness, leaving John and his party in the rear, treading the mazes of the winding stream towards its source in a rugged range covered with forests. When certain he was not followed in that direction, and that he was out of their view entirely, he left the channel of the stream, crossed a field or two, and gained a back road that led to the Highlands across Pine's Bridge.

In the meantime, the enemy continued the chase over a road which, winding through a hilly country, precluded seeing any considerable distance ahead, until, ascending a high commanding eminence, which afforded a long view of the country before them, they were brought to a full stop by perceiving that the game was nowhere in view. Not a living thing was in sight, nor could they perceive on examination any fresh tracks of horses passing that way. Turning back, they could find no road branching off from that they had travelled, nor any bars or fences thrown down by which the fugitives might have escaped. They must, therefore, have passed them somewhere, and nothing was left but to turn back, and, if possible, discover the precise spot where they had deviated from the road. A scrutiny was accordingly commenced, but without success, from the difficulty of distinguishing the horses' tracks from each other, until it was discovered that one of those belonging to the retreating party was without a shoe to one of his hinder feet, having lost it in the course of the chase.

This served them as a sort of landmark, and after a tedious scouting, they at length discovered that the track was lost at the stream, which, as before stated, crossed the deep ravine through which the road passed. It was thus made evident that the chase had taken to the water, and gone eastward, as a contrary direction would have carried them to the river close at hand, and in full view. The pursuit was therefore renewed in that direction with reviving hope, and renovated vigour. They pursued their rough, embarrassed way, following the stream, and carefully searching for the precise point where the fugitives had emerged. This they discovered, after a progress of about half a mile, during which they met with many obstacles, which greatly impeded their course. The state of the fence, which had been pulled down, indicated the spot, and the tracks of the horses led them through some fields, from which they at length passed into a cross-road, where the unshod foot served as an unerring guide.

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While all this was passing, our hero and his party kept on their way, with all possible speed. But, by this time, their horses began greatly to flag, though they had been selected from the fleetest and strongest of the troop. The necessity of frequently shifting the prisoner from one to another, in order to relieve them alternately, occasioned considerable delays. The men, too, as well as their steeds, required rest and refreshment, and a halt was determined on, whatever might be the consequences. Accordingly, they proceeded to a solitary farm-house, almost hid by a stately old elm, the growth of the primeval soil, which was now slowly putting forth its pale purple buds to the breathing spring.

The column of white smoke curling upwards, and floating on the pure atmosphere of morning, gave token that the house was inhabited, and its secluded situation invited the party to choose it as a place of rest, as well as safety, for, it seemed possible, if not probable, that their pursuers might eventually follow their track and overtake them. Every precaution was therefore taken to elude surprise. The horses were kept saddled and bridled, and one of the party, by turns, stood sentinel on an eminence, which commanded a view over the road they had passed, while it hid a like portion of that they were about to pursue.

Approaching the house, it presented an aspect of neglect, decay, and desolation, emblematic of these dreary times, when the bayonet lords it over the land, and defenceless weakness, instead of exciting pity, provokes only insult and robbery. An aged female stood peeping fearfully from the corner of a broken window, as if watching their approach, but on entering, not a living soul was to be seen. The room presented a spectacle of poverty; the little furniture it contained was either worn out or broken; the surrounding fields, though blest by nature with the capacity to yield a ready reward to the labours of the husbandman, were without fences, and overgrown with worthless weeds, and neither cattle or domestic animals lowed in the fields, or loitered about the farm-yard. Silence reigned everywhere, but it was not the silence of peace. The crowing of the cock, the cackling of hens, the lowing of the cows, the ploughman's whistle, and the milkmaid's song, and all those rural sounds that give life to the rural prospects, refreshment to the soul of man, were unheard amid the grim repose of nature. John remembered it in past times, when surrounded by a family of lusty boys, and rosy cheeked girls, the old couple, to whom the place belonged, walked on their way contented and happy, and its present aspect smote on his heart. "Another item in the price of liberty," thought he, as he sighed over the sufferings of his country.

As no refreshment could be procured in the absence of the old woman who had been detected at the window, search was made for her, and she was at length found hid under a heap of straw in the cellar. The poor old soul, though her thread of life was almost spun, trembled for the little remnant that was left.

"O, for the Lord's sake! for mercy's sake! don't murder a harmless old woman!" exclaimed she, as they drew her forth.

"Murder you, mother, what put that in your head?" said John, "we are friends."

"Friends! I have no friends. I am a poor, lone woman, and friends or foes, everybody plunders and insults me. The Cow Boys come here as friends and steal my fowls; the Skinners say they are my friends, and drive away the cattle; and the red-coats and Yagers, after plundering everything they can lay their hands on, break everything they cannot carry away, and then go away cursing me for a rebel. But God's will be done, only don't murder me, gentlemen!"

John assured her that they had come as friends, and would treat her as friends. He told her his name, which she remembered, and being thus reassured, she went out for a few moments, and returned leading an old man supporting himself by a stick, and bending under the burden of almost a century of years. A few white hairs lay like strangers at a distance over his wrinkled brow, and his patched garments gave evidence of patient industry contending with extreme poverty. Still his person and his garments were clean, a circumstance more than any other indicating not worthless want, but want incurred by inevitable misfortune. Poverty may be the lot of any man, but dirt is the offspring of sheer idleness, since there is always water enough in the world to keep all the world clean. The beggar with filthy face and hands, gives sufficient evidence that he is himself the author of his own fate.

Being told the story of their wants, the old woman bent her way towards a little copse of wood at a short distance, facing a rugged cliff of rocks, within which she disappeared a few minutes, and returned with a supply of potatoes, eggs, and corn-bread. This cliff was the hiding place for all the old couple had left in the world, and to such straits were the poor people who could not remove from the scene of robbery and strife reduced, in order to preserve the scanty means of life. While the humble meal was preparing, John asked a variety of questions, and

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among others, what had become of their sons and daughters. The question brought the apron of the mother to her eyes, but the old man had long ceased to weep, for he was blind.

"Three of our sons," answered she, "are gone to the army. They may be dead, or they may be living, for it is but seldom we see any one that can tell us what is passing, and men die now—a—days without any body being the wiser for it."

"I saw them not four days ago," said John, "they were all well, and three better soldiers never drew sword or trigger."

"God reward you for that good news, young man. You shall pay nothing for your breakfast, that's all the thanks I can give you. But my youngest son—he is dead. I know he is dead, for I saw him die."

"Yes," said the old man, "and so did I. But, thank God, I shall never see such a sight again; that is some comfort."

"You saw him die?" inquired John, who felt interested in the story.

"Yes," replied the old dame, "he died here on this very spot. You can see the stain of his blood on the floor. I have scrubbed and scrubbed to get it out, but whenever the boards are wet, and the sun shines on them, there it comes again, and I can see my poor boy lying with a gash in his head, and the blood running."

"How did he die?"

"Why, like a man," said the graybeard, proudly.

"Aye, that's what he did," cried the mother. "He died trying to save his father's house from plunder, and his old parents from being whipt and spit upon. Well, I will tell you all about it, for it is a comfort to old people to be pitied, and it does one good to let every body know what a fine, bold fellow he was. You must know, sir, he was coming home from the field, the fourth of July, over a year ago, after working hard in a little corn—field we had, till it was quite dark. It was over the hill yonder, out of sight of the house. Well, a party of three Skinners or Tories, I don't know which, for one is as bad as the other, had come to the house about an hour before, and after eating and wasting all they could find, began to make a great noise about some liquor to drink. They said they were sure we had some hid away in the house, which was a great big lie, for neither I, or my old man, nor my son, ever drank anything stronger than cider, and we had none of that ever since the Yagers burnt our cider—mill. Well, we had none to give them, and then they began to call us d—d rebels, and all sorts of names, when just then my son come in, and hearing what was going on, spoke to them pretty strong about their conduct. One thing brought on another, and at last they swore that if we didn't give them liquor, they'd tie us all up and give us a whipping."

"The cowardly rascals!" exclaimed John.

"Well, then, as I was saying, one thing brought on another—I can't tell how, exactly, I was so frightened—but at last they swore they would 'split him like a shad' for his impudence. And so they did. They cut him down on this blessed spot, and hacked him to pieces afterwards. See where they cut me over the arm for trying to save him. But that was not the worst, for they cut my old man just over the eyes in such a way that by degrees he lost his sight, and has never since seen the light of heaven."

"The cowards! the bloody, villainous cowards!" exclaimed John. "Oh! if I ever come across them, if they don't pay dearly for this!"

"Well, young man," said she, "that's very good of you. I don't commonly bear malice, but I own I should like to see—no—not just see, but hear that these cruel men were served as they did my son."

"And I promise you," said John, "that if I ever meet any of those rascally Skinners, they shall not be the better off for your story, mother. But you must live in hope of better times. It cannot be but such miseries as our dear country has endured, and I fear must still endure, will not be one day repaid by long years of happiness. Liberty, like religion, must have its martyrs, and your son was one of them. It must be—it will be."

"But I shall never live to see it," replied she.

"Nor I. Old men, like me, must look beyond the grave. They have no hope but that of hereafter," said the old man. "I shall have nothing to live on but the thought of that miserable fourth of July when my poor boy was murdered. It was a bitter day for us."

"But a glorious day for our country—the birth—day of its independence; the beginning of that, whose end, I trust, will be a blessing to mankind. You may not live to see it, but your children, and your children's children will, or there is no virtue in generous blood or fearless patriotism. Think of that, mother, and thank God that you have borne children, who don't fear to die in defence of their country or their parents."

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"Do you think we shall ever be free?" asked the good woman, anxiously.

"I know it—I feel it—" said John, "for God and Washington are on our side. But where are your daughters?"

"They are gone with a bag of corn to mill, for we have no one else to send. It is so far that they are forced to start early to get back the same day."

Here the conversation was cut short by the cry of "Turn out! turn out! the red coats are in sight!" and the sentinel posted on the hill came galloping full speed. All was now haste and confusion. The party mounted, and without bidding farewell, or recollecting their bill, scoured away before their pursuers came in sight, the intervening hills, and a turn in the road, through a thick wood, screening them effectually for the time.

The red coats halted at the house, the others had just quitted, for they, too, as well as their horses, were both tired and hungry. The old dame declared truly that she had nothing to give them, and the officer commanding, being fortunately a gentleman, the desolate pair for this time escaped insult and outrage. Unluckily, however, the good woman in her zeal to prove her incapacity to entertain them, let out the secret that all her provisions had been consumed by a party that called that morning. The officer eagerly inquired, how long it was since they departed, and his hope of overtaking them, suddenly reviving, he ordered his men to mount with all speed, and resume the chase.

Away, then, they scampered full speed. But John and his party had by this time got the start some miles, and their horses having been refreshed by rest and food, travelled with new vigour. Still the disposal of their prisoner perpetually delayed their progress, and the irregular formation of the country continually enabled them to discern their pursuers, who were again evidently gaining ground. The flight and the chase thus continued, until both parties approached Pine's Bridge, one of the principal passes over Croton river, where John expected to find a detachment from the American army on guard. The horses again began to flag, and the near approach of the eager red coats was announced by shoutings that grew every moment more loud and triumphant. Fifteen minutes more and all had been lost, for when they reached the bridge the enemy was scarce half a mile in the rear.

Here they found a company of continentals, to the commander of which our hero said a few words, and rode on as if still fearful of being captured. The officer instantly ordered his men into a thick wood of evergreens, where they had scarce time to conceal themselves, when the pursuing party came in sight, and perceiving the bridge unguarded, dashed across without hesitating a moment. Turning an angle of the road, they were suddenly brought to a halt by the sight of their anticipated prey, drawn up as if waiting to receive them. A parley ensued, in which John roused the indignation of the commander of the red coats by demanding his unconditional surrender. "You are either a madman or an idiot," cried he, "don't you see we number three to one? Surrender, this instant, or take the consequences."

"Look behind you, sir," said John, and the officer obeying the intimation, was struck with dismay at seeing a company of regulars drawn up in his rear. John once more, and for the last time, demanded his surrender, and as his situation was such as to preclude all hope of escape, he relinquished his sword with feelings of the bitterest mortification. "You have caught me in a trap," said he. "Yes," replied John; "the hunters have become the game, and the game the hunters."

The commandant of the bridge gallantly resigned the prisoners to John, who, he was pleased to say, had fairly earned them by his masterly retreat, and our hero leisurely conducted them to the camp. From the prisoner captured at Kingsbridge, and those at the bridge over Croton river, much valuable information was extracted; and John had the satisfaction at hearing the father of his country regret the fate of his devoted old soldier, while he applauded the conduct of the young volunteer.

## CHAPTER IX.

### A VILLAGE SCENE—MAJOR FORCK AND THE GOVERNOR—A NIGHT ADVENTURE—AND A CATASTROPHE WHICH THREATENS A SPEEDY END TO THIS HISTORY.

The campaign was now about to open—that campaign which was to try the stuff, of which men, struggling for freedom, are made. The design we have in view, is not to detail or distort events which belong to history, but to give a domestic picture of a war, the most extraordinary in its character and results, when we consider the means of the respective parties for its prosecution, and its momentous consequences, of any perhaps on record. To judge of it with correctness, it is necessary that the feelings which animated, and the principles that governed and sustained THE People, in their long and arduous struggle, should be known, and these it is our purpose to exemplify in the character and conduct of our hero. Many, very many such ardent, fearless spirits, animated the revolution, who now rest in their graves, unknown and nameless martyrs, who have slipped through the meshes of the net of time, which open the way for all the lesser fry, to the mansions of oblivion.

Our hero, having acquired the confidence of his general, was about this period principally employed in discreet and critical emergencies, which required sagacity, promptitude, and intrepidity; such as gaining information of the movements of the enemy, beating up his quarters, and other partisan feats, all which he performed in a manner highly satisfactory. His accurate knowledge of the country between the lines, his cool daring, and his celerity in deciding and executing in a crisis of danger, enabled him to succeed in almost everything he undertook, and to acquire the confidence of one who was slow to trust, and slow to suspect, when he had once given his confidence. On more than one of these occasions he passed within a few miles of Colonel Hammond's residence, and was sorely tempted to deviate from his course, but he resisted the tempter, and bent all the energies of his mind to the service of his country.

About this time he was intrusted with a critical and important mission, on which hung the most momentous consequences. It was to meet at or near Spiking Devil, a person from New York, who had been long in the habit of giving information concerning the movements and plans of the enemy, and had signified that he had now something of great importance to communicate to the general. Although the mission not carrying him within the enemy's lines did not involve the character of a spy, yet a disguise was prudent, if not absolutely necessary; and, accordingly, John equipped himself in a suit of beggar's rags, and covering his head with a red wig, defying detection from his most intimate friends, he set forth one evening, a little after dark, on his perilous journey.

His course led him to a little village, where was a tavern, kept by a widow, a staunch whig, and one of his old acquaintance. His object was to gain what information he could, and most especially if any small parties of the enemy had been lately seen in that quarter. This house was a favourite resort of a portly, and rather opulent farmer, commonly called Major Forck, although we believe his commission was of his own signing. The major was lofty, pompous, purseproud, and withal a great braggart, especially in his cups. He wore an old fashioned cocked beaver, carried an ivory headed cane, instead of a whip, and rode a stout charger, who possessed certain instincts peculiarly accommodating to a man of the major's convivial propensities. He would mount the steps of a piazza, or enter the door of a house upon occasion, and never failed to carry the major home safe and sound, when the stout old warrior had lost the reins of his understanding, as well as the command of his legs. He was a hale, broad shouldered man, nearly six feet high, with a round, platter face, wide mouth, little pug nose, and diminutive black eyes, that twinkled furiously upon occasion.

His constant associate, and determined foe, who assisted him in his cups, irritated and soothed the major alternately, and in fact played him off on all occasions for the amusement of company, was an old inhabitant of the village, a rank tory, suspected of furnishing intelligence to the enemy, and whose situation, surrounded as he was, by whigs, would have been critical, had it not been well understood that he was in fact their protector. His house was in the centre of the town, directly opposite to that of a gentleman, who, having taken a prominent part among the friends of the country, was peculiarly obnoxious to the loyalists, so much so that he had removed his family to a more secure situation, while he himself was serving in the patriot army. They had more than once threatened to fire the old whig mansion, but had as often been dissuaded from it by the opposite tory neighbour,

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whose house would inevitably have shared the same fate. Thus the village had hitherto escaped, and whenever the old tory, who was a sly humourist, and most pestilent dry wag, was taunted by his neighbours with being an enemy to his country, he would retort upon them by affirming they were a pack of ungrateful rogues thus to abuse their protector and preserver. In short, he took such airs on himself, that he was called, in derision, "the governor," and by this title he was commonly known in the village, as well as surrounding country. The governor was a perfect contrast to the major, tall, straight, rawboned, and of imperturbable gravity. His jokes were converged in a wink, a shrug, or a sly twist of the mouth, and his skill in first exciting, and then allaying the wrath of Major Forck, was truly admirable. He never lost his temper, and the major never found his. Both were arrant cowards, but the difference was, the major kept his secret, while the governor acknowledged it openly.

These two worthies happened to be smoking their pipes at the widow's, when John, as before stated, entered, for the purpose of refreshment, and in the cant of his tribe begged something to eat. The landlady, aware of his identity, received him rather discourteously, but allowed him to take a seat in a corner. He had frequently seen them both, and they were well acquainted with his person before he joined the army. Neither, however, recognized him in his disguise. The major turned up his little snub nose contemptuously, and the governor occasionally looked over his shoulder at him in rather a significant manner. Besides these two dignitaries, there were present two or three of those disinterested persons to be found in every village on the face of the earth, whose sole occupation is to watch people while at work, and to laugh at the jokes of others, though they never perpetrate any themselves. Not being able to afford drinking at their own cost, they were occasionally permitted to partake of the major's bounty, whenever they laughed particularly loud at one of his hits at the governor.

"Governor," said Major Forck, resuming the conversation which had been interrupted by the entrance of the beggar, "any news from down below? You are in the secrets of the red coat general, you know." Here he winked to his auditors, who gave a significant chuckle. "Tell me, are they bound east, west, north or south."

"They are going to move right perpendicular, as I find by a letter I received from Sir Henry, yesterday."

"Perpendicular? why governor, that's right up and down. I never heard of an army moving that way. But I see what you're at, and if you go to cut any of your dry jokes on me, I'll serve you just as I did the party of Yagers last year; did you ever hear that story?"

"What—when you crept up chimney one night and frightened all the swallows? They made such a clatter the Yagers thought it was a troop of horse, and all ran away? If you mean that, I recollect it perfectly. I am sure I should, for I have heard it at least a thousand times."

The major was nettled, especially as the audience all laughed aloud at this sally of the governor. He started up, flourished his cane over the governor's head, and challenged him to mortal combat the next morning. The governor contented himself with standing on the defensive, by lifting his pipe, and mitigating his wrath by an explanation.

"Oh! now I recollect. I beg your pardon, Major Forck—by the way, Forck is Dutch for hog. But as I was saying—Forck being Dutch for hog—I believe I was mistaken in the particulars. I recollect, now, it was not the chimney—swallows that frightened the Yagers, it was you, major; yes, I recollect perfectly, it was you." Here the major, having recovered his serenity, sat down, while the other continued, "Yes—yes—it was you, Major Forck, which, I don't know whether you know it or not, means hog."

"Who cares what it means? Go on with your story, since you pretend to know all about it. I don't suppose anybody else ever heard it before." The company assured him they had not; whereupon the major treated them to a tipple, and the governor proceeded with great gravity.

"Well, as I was saying, you climbed up the chimney as the best mode of putting the Yagers to flight, by setting them an example, and laid hold of a gammon that was hung up there to smoke; but the string not being strong enough for two such fat pieces of bacon—you know Forck is hog in Dutch—gave way, and down you both came, so covered with soot—you know you told me so—that the Yagers took you for the old Harry, and all scampered away. Gentlemen," added the governor, "this is the true story, and I beg the major's pardon—Forck being, as, I believe, I neglected to observe before, Dutch for hog—for mistaking one story for another. I recollect, it was not then that you frightened the chimney—swallows. Neighbours, I will tell you that story, and be very particular, for it is one of the most brilliant achievements of the whole war."

Here, again, the major started up, flourished his cane, and seemed on the point of annihilating the governor, who, knowing his man, kept his seat, and begged him to listen to his explanation, which he would find perfectly

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satisfactory. He assured him he would as soon insult King George himself, as Major Forck, though he was sorry to say that Forck was certainly Dutch for hog. "Sit down—sit down," added he, "and don't be in such a passion—brave men never get angry. Come, sit down, my dear friend hog,— I mean Forck—while I tell these gentlemen, who have never heard the story, as soon as I light my pipe." Having done this, the governor commenced in the most pompous style of bombast.

"One terrible night, in the year—I forget the year, but it certainly happened some time or other—as Major Forck was returning home, about half or three-quarters over the bay—"

"It's a lie! I was as sober as a deacon!" exclaimed the major.

"Well, as the major was coming home as sober as a deacon—at least, his horse was sober—taking every bush for a Yager, and everything white for a ghost, but being able to see neither bush or Yager if there had been ever so many, he thought he heard the clattering of horses behind him, and naturally concluded, being an old soldier, that if there were horses there must be men on them, and if there were men there must be soldiers, and if there were soldiers there must be enemies. You see, neighbours, the major, whose name is hog in English, was neither tipsy nor frightened, or he would not have reasoned so coolly and judiciously. Now, what do you think the major did? Some people, with more liquor than brains in their noddles, would have stopped, or turned round to ascertain whether their conclusions were right; but the major, being as sober as a deacon, knew which side his bread was buttered, and kept on, right straightforward, full tilt, as fast as his horse could carry him, utterly regardless of meeting his enemies in the rear. Some people may, perhaps, think, the major would have stood a better chance of encountering his pursuers, had he turned his horse's head towards them, but the fact is, all old soldiers, like him, know very well that the shortest way to get into trouble is to run away from it. So the major ran from the enemy that he might meet him the sooner, for he was pretty certain they would follow and overtake him, which was just what he wanted."

"There was a manoeuvre for you!" cried the major, triumphantly.

"Well, neighbours, the major cut dirt at a great rate, I tell you; and the faster he rode, the nearer the horses' feet seemed to be, which shows that he was taking the most expeditious way of meeting the enemy in the very teeth."

"To be sure," quoth the major, "let an old soldier alone for that."

"When, at last, the enemy came fairly up with him, such was his warlike appearance, and such mortal defiance flashed from the back of his head, and especially his cocked hat, that though they kept following him, they never could pluck up the courage to draw their swords or fire a pistol. What will scarcely be credited, they quietly left him at his own door, in possession of the field and of all the honours of victory. What renders this affair still more remarkable, the next morning not a single track was to be seen on the road except that of the major's horse, and that there are many envious people among the neighbours, who swear it was his own horse he ran away from, and that he was so far gone that he not only saw but heard double."

It was some time before the major, whose perceptions were naturally somewhat obtuse, perceived the drift of the governor's story; and when, by degrees, he became aware of the joke, the conclusion of which was hailed by bursts of laughter from the auditors, his cheeks were seen to distend with a condensation of mighty indignation, while his little black eyes sparkled with consuming fires. For some time, he could not utter a syllable, but at length a kind of inarticulate gurgling in the throat was succeeded by words.

"It's a lie—a bloody lie! Any man that says he ever saw me hear double, or run away from myself, is a liar and a rascal to boot. Come out, if you dare, you tory rascal, meet me in fair fight, like a man, with sword and pistol, and I'll make you eat your words without seasoning, or season them with gunpowder. Follow me, you backsliding, cowardly tory rascal, or I'll break my cane over your head. Come out—come out, I say!"

The governor being satisfied with his joke, moved, by degrees, towards the door, while the major followed, flourishing his cane, and watching his opportunity, made a precipitate retreat. Being, however, a better runner than the major, he reached his home in time to bolt the door behind him; whereupon, Major Forck mounted his steed, and riding up the steps of the governor's long piazza, paraded back and forth, denouncing him a liar, a tory, and a poltroon. After this, having satisfied his honour, he bent his course homewards, where he arrived safely, though fast asleep, under the conduct of his discreet charger. The play being over, the audience departed, leaving John, who had become very impatient, alone with the landlady. During the preceding scene, he had remained perfectly quiet, taking no part in the joke, but he could not help observing that the governor occasionally eyed him with a scrutinizing look, which caused some little apprehension that the wily old tory suspected him of not being

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what he seemed.

"Has he come?" asked he eagerly of the landlady.

"Not yet. I am afraid all is not right. The governor was down below yesterday, and has been in and out of my house I believe at least a dozen times today, for no reason that I know of, except that he suspects me."

"How late is it?" asked John, again, after a pause, in which he called to mind the sinister looks of the governor.

"I don't know—past ten, I believe."

"Then he will not come to-night, and I must make all haste I can to the place of meeting down below."

"Wait a little—something may have delayed him."

"I am afraid the governor suspected me, from his looks."

"You—why your own father would not know you in this wig," and she sportively snatched it from his head, laughing with great glee at the same time. Unfortunately, however, the governor, who had emerged from his stronghold on the retreat of the major, was watching and listening at the window all this while. He could not distinctly hear what was said, but the moment the landlady pulled off the wig, he retreated precipitately, saddled his horse, and rode off with all speed towards New York.

After waiting some time, and finding the person expected did not arrive with his boat from the opposite shore, John determined to proceed on foot to the place appointed for meeting the messenger from the city. The distance was some fourteen or fifteen miles, and it was indispensable that he should be there before daylight. Avoiding the high road, he proceeded onward by a path leading along the bank of the river, and by great exertion arrived at the place of rendezvous, some two hours before daylight. It was just at the junction of the Hudson and Harlem rivers, on the north side, and here he made at intervals the appointed signal, a low whistle, but for a long time no response was made, and no person appeared. He now more than ever feared some untoward accident had occurred to thwart his important mission, and deliberated intensely on the propriety of remaining at the imminent risk of discovery, or return without accomplishing his purpose. Finally, he determined to wait, and take the consequences, whatever they might be.

Shrouding himself among the thick evergreens that grew on the bank of the river, he remained perfectly quiet, except ever and anon repeating the signal. No one appeared, none answered, and not a sound disturbed the dread repose that precedes the hour when all animated nature awakes to life and light, save at intervals the challenge of the enemy's sentinels at a distance, and the soft murmuring of the waves on the shore. Anon faint streaks of yellow light gradually shot up athwart the eastern sky; the stars began to wink their eyes, as if overpowered by the radiance of the rising sun, and one by one disappeared like watchful sentinels that had performed their nightly duty, and were now retiring from their posts; the birds of spring began to twitter in their leafy coverts, and at last the distant echoes of the morning gun, reverberated from the high cliffs of the opposite shore, announced that the sun had risen, and the labours of the day commenced.

At this moment, and just as John was preparing to return from his fruitless expedition, he saw through the mists that glided like sheeted spectres along the surface of the waters, something stealing along, close to the shore, under the high bank, and weathering a point of rocks projecting into the river, at a little distance towards the south. Again he sought his place of concealment, and stood watching with breathless anxiety the approach of what he soon perceived was a skiff, rowed by a single person, and advancing rapidly towards him. A few minutes more, and the little craft was opposite the spot of his concealment, where it stopped, and the oarsman looked cautiously around in all directions. Thus she lay for a brief period without motion, during which John remained undecided what course to pursue. Being of a nature to risk everything for a great purpose, he hesitated not long, but gave a signal, which was promptly answered, and suddenly the skiff glided into a little cove among the rocks, where it could neither be seen from the river or the land. The person who conducted it then landed, and approached our hero. He was, to all appearance, a plain, substantial citizen, of an open, ruddy countenance, with a clear, blue eye, and an expression of face that invited confidence. He stepped on shore with the caution of a cat seeking to ensnare a bird in the grass, and his glance quick as lightning continually ranged towards every point of the compass. With all this, as he approached, he discovered nothing like fear, but on the contrary, a perfect self-possession.

"You are late, friend," said John, in a low tone.

"I could not come sooner," repeated the other, in a whisper. "I am afraid they begin to suspect me, for all day yesterday soldiers have been loitering about my house, and asking idle questions, that seem to have no meaning.

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They called for liquor, too, and drank freely in sight of officers passing by, though I know it is against a standing order."

"Have you brought any important information?"

"Yes, very important. An officer of considerable rank, but who sometimes gets into a frolic, was at my house night before last, and while swaggering about, more than half drunk, dropt a paper from his pocket, which I secured without notice, and after copying, went and delivered to Sir Henry next morning. It contains the general order which will be published in a few days, and details the course of operations at the opening of the campaign."

After looking about cautiously in every direction, he slipped into John's hand a silver bullet, which he said contained the information to which he referred, and of which he enjoined him to be careful.

"It is a dangerous business you are engaged in, my friend," said John, "but I suppose you are well paid for it."

"Nothing can pay a man for such a task as I have undertaken. I don't pretend to be better than other people, but believe me, it is not money alone that tempts me to risk my life every day, every hour, and every minute. I love money, I confess, but I love my country better, and liberty still more. The way I choose to serve them both, I know is not considered honourable; but if it is glorious to risk one's life for our country, surely it is more so, to incur both the loss of life and reputation in her cause. I expect that I shall some day or other die with disgrace on my name, but am willing to do so whenever I am called."

"You are a true friend to your country, and I honour you with all my soul," said John, shaking him warmly by the hand, "but we must not be loitering here. I shall set forth immediately on my way, while you return to New York."

"I shall not return till night; it is too late now. Let us draw up the skiff into the thick bushes yonder, where she will not be seen. I have some provisions with me, and shall remain here quiet till evening. But the sooner you are gone the better; so make haste, and if you can, travel like a mole under ground."

At this moment, a rustling was heard among the bushes, and the next, a party of red coats rushed upon them in the rear. Quick as thought, John hurled the silver bullet from him with all his might out into the river, where, after a few skips along the surface, it disappeared. Defence was vain, for they were without arms, and surrounded on all sides. The commanding officer ordered them both to be seized and bound, swearing he would soon find out the reason of their skulking so near the lines, pretending to be skipping stones in the river.

"As for you sir," addressing the stranger, "we've had our eyes on you for some time. You are from the city. You came away last night in a boat, and unless you can give a good account of yourself, you may chance to swing for it, as well as this red-haired beggar, who we know is in disguise." Saying which, he pulled off our hero's wig, amid a general titter of the whole party.

"I *can* give a good account of myself," was the quiet response of the stranger.

"Very well, so much the better for you. As for you, Mr. Rebel, we know you of old. You are the gentleman who sliced a few Yagers not long ago, and afterwards carried off one of our sentinels. You see, I know all about you. Though not a beggar, I assure you, you are an object of charity, for you'll swing by the side of your worthy friend there, as sure as I am one of his majesty's serjeants."

When a man is caught in disguise, whatever may be his motives, he is apt to look rather sheepish. Such was the case with our hero, who remained silent, simply because he did not know exactly what to say for himself. His heart was heavy, for he felt that his country might suffer new calamities from the failure of his undertaking. This was his first thought; his second was of Jane, whom now he never expected to see more: for though he knew that not having been within the lines of the enemy, he could not be considered a spy, still he was perfectly aware that few American prisoners ever escaped alive from the fangs of old Cunningham, whose name is consecrated to eternal infamy in our domestic traditions, or from the fatal dungeons of the prison-ships, where so many nameless patriots died for their country and were forgotten.

The prisoners were roughly hurried to the nearest post of the enemy, whence they were carried before the commander-in-chief for examination.

## CHAPTER X.

A PICTURE OF A SUBJUGATED CITY—AN EXAMINATION—A LOVE-SICK MAIDEN AND A TESTY PARENT—A DIALOGUE— AND A SORTIE OF THE OLD CONTINENTAL.

After undergoing a thorough search without anything being discovered which could throw light on their mission, the two prisoners were conducted under guard to the city. As they passed along, the island presented a melancholy picture of neglect and desolation. The fields and gardens were without fences, and without cultivation; the woods had been all cut down to supply the enemy with fuel, and many of the houses deserted. Every object indicated, that the few remaining inhabitants neither sat down under their own vine and their own fig-tree, nor enjoyed unmolested the fruits of their labours. A stern enemy lorded it over the land, and no one could call that his own, which he had earned by the sweat of his brow, or inherited from his fathers.

As they entered the subjugated city, which John well remembered as the abode of competence and peace, he was struck with the sad contrast it now presented. Many of the inhabitants had left it, on being taken possession of by the enemy, and of those that remained, but few became reconciled to their new masters, who neither sought to conciliate their love, or to disguise that haughty contempt with which the conqueror almost always looks down on a subjugated people. Citizens and soldiers, even of the same country, scarcely ever associate cordially together, though the latter appear in the character of protectors and defenders; but when, on the contrary, they come as conquerors and oppressors, nothing can be expected but injuries and insults on one hand; on the other, hatred and revenge. The conspicuous red coats everywhere appeared, swaggering through the streets with an air of superiority that was in itself a perpetual insult; and to complete the picture, a large portion of the city lay in ruins, having not yet recovered from the effects of the great fire, that took place soon after it fell into the hands of the enemy.

Passing down Broadway, the prisoners at length arrived at the head-quarters of Sir Henry Clinton, at the Battery. They had been prevented from all communication with each other, and were separately brought before the general, who was attended by some of his principal officers. The examination was long, and every art and every threat was used to entrap them into a discovery or extort confession. But all these efforts failed, for both were sustained by equal firmness and self-possession. When asked whether he belonged to the rebel army, he replied, that he was one among three millions of people who were struggling for their rights, and that if a whole nation could be called rebels, he certainly was one. When charged with being a spy, he denied it, respectfully, but firmly. He acknowledged that he came for the purpose of seeking information as to the condition of the British forces and their probable destination, but having never come within their lines, until brought there a prisoner, he could not be called a spy, and therefore claimed the rights due to a captive in war. As to his meeting with the person with whom he had been found, whom he had never seen before, and from whom he had derived no information, he conceived, as they had no right to inquire, he was not bound to answer. He was found where he had a right to be, and had a right to wear what clothes he pleased.

His companion was more closely questioned, for his conduct had been still more suspicious than that of our hero, and the commander-in-chief had more than once had occasion to suspect that his contemplated movements had been betrayed in a manner for which he could not account. But every attempt to entrap the stranger was met or evaded with such consummate art and address, that nothing could be got out of him which could possibly commit himself or his associate. Without a single falsehood on his part, he so managed, that John could corroborate his statements without any breach of veracity, and the general could find no other charge substantiated against him, but that of having left the city at night in defiance of general orders; and this, he being merely a citizen, was not an offence of such magnitude as to call for the exercise of the utmost severity of military law. He was finally committed to the custody of the provost-marshal, and, with his companion, separately confined in the old sugar-house, in what is now called Liberty-street, there to undergo the discipline of the immortal Cunningham, that petty tyrant, whose name is forever associated with all that is odious and contemptible in man. Thus they escaped a sudden death, for a lingering series of privations of every kind, accompanied by insults which gave new aggravations of mind to their bodily sufferings. Having now

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accommodated our hero with board and lodging, we shall turn our attention to another quarter.

After the departure of John, his mistress remained in the usual state of young damsels in love, during the lingering hours of absence, only that her situation was more than usually trying. Solitude is the nurse of the heart, and all its most tender recollections, and Jane lived alone, in a sequestered, almost deserted region, which afforded not even the material for a flirtation, for there was nothing in the shape of a rustic Lubin, or sentimental schoolmaster, in twenty miles round. It was, therefore, a matter of absolute necessity, that she should be constant to one object, and constancy is an unnatural state of mind, a sort of monomania, inconsistent with all the analogies of nature and the world, which exhibit nothing but a perpetual succession of changes. She had neither balls, nor concerts, nor lectures, nor soirees, nor any gay associations to dissipate her mind, or charm her heart away from one single contemplation; and even the church, that never-failing resource of rural lads and lasses, was now without its pastor and its flock. Her only companion at the fireside, was a whimsical and somewhat testy old continental; her only associates abroad, were the birds, the blossoms, and the running brooks; and her only occupation, was the easy cares of a quiet household. The library of the colonel afforded little resource, consisting, as it did, principally, of a couple of folio volumes, a century old, in which were concentrated all the discoveries and inventions, good, bad, or indifferent, with which the pack-horse world had been saddled since the days of Archimedes, or Tubal Cain, for aught we know to the contrary, by visionary enthusiasts, cheating rogues, and profound philosophers. It was a perfect mine of inexhaustible treasures, and the colonel was in the habit of asserting, with what truth we know not, that nearly all the new discoveries in science or art, within his time, were nothing more than old broken-down hobby-horses, that had been tried and abandoned long years ago. There was, however, no invention for shortening the long, lingering hours of absence, or bringing together two distant lovers, and for that reason Jane never opened these precious depositories, from whence, the colonel affirmed, were stolen all modern inventions except his own.

Thus she continued a long while, without having any news of John, for the post never passed in that direction, nor did the newspapers circulate among the depths of the forests, whereby, as it is credibly asserted, the very squirrels and coons have of late become almost as wise as their hunters. Nay, it is affirmed, there is no crow so silly as to be circumvented by a fox, and that no trap, however scientifically devised, can inveigle a rat or mouse of ordinary sagacity, even by the aid of toasted cheese, or broiled bacon. It is, indeed, the age of development, and if the human intellect does not burst by its own expansion, like the frog in the fable, there is great reason to hope we shall in good time become as wise as our grandmothers. The only thing to be apprehended, is, that knowledge, by the aid of cheap literature, will become universal; in which case, it will depreciate in value as fast as continental money. When all mankind are wise, and all pebbles become diamonds, it will, belike, be all one, as though all wise men were fools, and all diamonds pebbles.

There was, however, no danger of Jane ever becoming wise, for she lived previous to, or just at the dawning of the age of development, before the revival of phrenology and animal magnetism, and consequently friend John was a lucky stripling. There was not a circulating library, we believe, within the distance of three thousand miles, and how Jane learned to love without drinking at that fountain, is a mystery only to be solved by Dame Nature. Thus was our unfortunate heroine utterly destitute of all those resources against the monopoly of the heart, which are now within reach of our kitchen-maids. She had nothing to do, but mind her business and think of John.

Thus passed her time, and thus it might have continued to pass, had not the jade, Rumour, taken upon herself the office of mails and newspapers, and blown her trumpet, to the infinite disturbance of that monotonous calm into which Jane had gradually subsided. No one could tell where the news came from, or who first bruited it abroad; but so it was, that the colonel, having stopped at a blacksmith's shop on one of his excursions, was told of the sudden disappearance of our hero from the army in the Highlands—of his being seen in the disguise of a beggar, with a red wig, at the village before noticed—and of his never having been seen or heard of since that time. The general impression of the army, it was said, was, that he had deserted to the enemy, and that his disguise had been assumed for that purpose. By way of a secret, we will apprise the reader that the news first came from Mangham, the pedlar, who had been in the Highlands on a speculation, and passed, a few days before, on his way to New York, or its neighbourhood, to replenish his pack. It was a great mystery, but certain it is, the pedlar was a sort of privileged person, and, like the ancient heralds, had free admission everywhere, though we never heard that his person or his function was considered sacred.

The old continental was one of those vessels which, whenever they are full, overflow incontinently for want of

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the self-balancing principle. A secret that was painful or disagreeable to his own feelings, very soon escaped, like a locust from its shell, and accordingly the moment he saw his daughter on his return home, he began to launch his thunderbolts at John. Jane, of course, eagerly inquired what he meant, and received the news of her lover's supposed delinquency with mingled doubt, indignation, and sorrow. Every day, however, brought new confirmation; and, in the meantime, hearing nothing from our hero, she was compelled to believe all that she heard from others was true. No one can tell what might have been the consequence of this conviction of his unworthiness, had not the vision of the beggar and his red wig, ever and anon crossed her imagination, and thus, in some degree, superseded the image of her recreant swain. She thought how ugly he must have looked, the degenerate wretch! thus to present himself to the red coats in such an ignominious disguise! What would they think of her taste, thus to fall in love with such a fright? There is no danger of young maidens dying for love, when their minds are occupied by two objects at a time, such as a handsome young fellow, with blue eyes, and chestnut hair, and a ragged tatterdemalion in a red wig. But when a single object or impression becomes indelibly impressed on the heart, to the exclusion of all others; when it plays the tyrant alone and absolute, then it is that the fatal poison works without its antidote, and that its venom becomes fatal. It was fortunate, therefore, for our heroine, that there was a certain confused intermixture in her recollection or imagination, of a ragged beggar and a handsome youth, which prevented her constantly dwelling on the latter. She was thus enabled to bear up against the first shock; and when, by degrees, the image of her lover, such as she alone remembered to have seen him, took once again full possession of her recollection, time had assuaged the first bitterness of sorrow, and contempt and indignation enabled her to bear what remained. True, the laughing eye, the ruddy cheek, the smile of careless hilarity, the look of cheerful hope, the tripping step, and all the elastic spirit of youth, had given place to a pale and sad sobriety. Still, she did not abandon herself to grief, nor forget for a moment, that, in pouring the balm of consolation into the hearts of others, she was applying the most effectual remedy to her own.

The old continental, we are compelled to say, behaved very ill on this occasion. Instead of sympathizing with the stricken deer, he often assisted in barbing the dart already rankling in her bosom. There are some persons, who, not being capable of lasting impressions of sorrow, always feel impatient at the very sight of continued grief or depression on the part of others, and instead of sympathy, resort to reproaches. It was thus with the colonel, who could not endure to see his child so changed, nor could he sympathize with the cause. His usual resource was rather to outrage the feelings of his child by anger, than sooth them by pity. He could not bear to see her so changed, nor could he participate in her depression. The old gentleman, accordingly, vented his spleen in divers sneers, inuendoes, and reproaches, occasionally not a little aggravated by the failure of some one of his favourite inventions. As he could not revenge himself on his contrivances, he fell into a passion with poor Jane; for nothing is more common with poor human nature than to retort on honest Peter the offences of Paul the rogue.

Jane used frequently to stroll over to the old stone house, but received little consolation there. Though happily for the human race, our feelings and sympathies partake in the dulness of the senses produced by age; yet are its sorrows without the solace of the inspiring hope of better times in this world. The aged must look beyond the grave for the rising sun, since they cannot expect to survive its setting here. The old couple were mourning with Christian resignation the death of their only son, and the disgrace of their only grandson, and though their grief was silent, it was not less deep and lasting. The visits of Jane were now almost their only worldly consolation, for they saw she sympathised with them, and to be pitied is one of the greatest consolations of stricken age.

One evening, she had returned from a visit of this kind, more than usually depressed and sorrowful. She took her seat in silence, and in silence sat leaning her cheek upon her hand, and giving up her whole soul to bitter recollections. The old continental, in the meantime, was observing his daughter, until at length he could contain himself no longer. In a voice that made the poor girl start and tremble, he suddenly exclaimed:

"Thunder and Mars! Jane, what are you moping about? you look for all the world as though you could'nt help it."

"Father, I cannot help it," said Jane, bursting into tears.

"Yes—I know what it is. Your head is running on that good—for—nothing, beggarly, cowardly deserter, John. You ought to be ashamed of yourself for thinking about such a scoundrel, except to hate and despise him."

"Father, I don't know, I don't believe him a deserter. He loved his country, and he loved me too well to desert one, or give up the other. He is either dead or a prisoner, my heart tells me so. You know, sir, it is nothing but a rumour, that came from no one knows where."

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"Pooh! pooh, girl! I dare say, if our country finally loses the day, you will see him come home in a British uniform, with a pair of evaulets on his shoulders, and catch you as they do gudgeons, with a red rag. You will forgive him, but by all that is sacred, I never will."

"Father," said Jane, firmly, "you don't know me, if you think so. No, father—if ever I am convinced beyond room for doubt, that is, by my own eyes, or his own acknowledgement, that he has deserted his country, from that hour he shall be to me nothing but an object of contempt and scorn. I will tear him from my heart as I would a poisoned arrow."

The colonel's eyes twinkled a little at this, but people who indulge a habit of being angry, don't always choose to be pleased against their will, and he relapsed into his crusty humour.

"Yes—yes—it is very easy to talk; but the moment he appears in his red coat, you will fall in love with it, and forgive everything. The young rascal! that ever I should be such an old blockhead as to promise him my only daughter, my estate and my improvements. But the fellow might have imposed upon a wiser man than me, if such a one is to be found. He'd signalize himself, he'd make himself worthy of being my son-in-law—he'd make his name ring! Thunder and Mars! he has kept that last promise, for it is now ringing with infamy in the camp of Washington. Zounds, I'd go twenty miles to see him hanged or shot."

"Father, dear father! do not talk so to me. You should not bear too hard upon the bruised, broken reed. I am struggling day and night to bear up against the wretched uncertainty of John's fate. I believe him innocent; but if I were sure he was a traitor to his cause, I should soon be well again, and happy. But do not harrass, do not reproach, and above all, do not ridicule me, because I am not what I once was. In all my troubles, you cannot say I have ever neglected my duty to you; and if I can now no longer cheer you with song and smiles, nothing, not even your unkindness, shall take from you my love and reverence. Take me to your arms, and bless me!"

Saying this, she crept softly towards the old man, with a look so meek, so mournful, yet affectionate, that his tough, weather-beaten heart melted, and his wrath exhaled like dew-drops of a sunny morning. He opened his arms, pressed her to his heart, and exclaimed with glistening eyes:

"Forgive your old father, dear Jane; damme if you may'nt be as miserable as you please, and welcome."

"Thank you, dear father!" answered the grateful girl, and a long silence ensued, during which the colonel was stretching his lame leg by walking back and forth, with his hands behind him, apparently communing with his thoughts. At length he stopped abruptly opposite Jane, and broke forth as follows:

"Jane, I've a great mind—yes I will—Thunder and Mars! I will, I'll see into the truth of this affair. The army has not yet left the Highlands, and to-morrow I will go and call on the general, to learn if possible whether that young puppy has deserted or not. I know something of the stratagems of war, and now I think of it, John may have put on the beggar's dress and that infernal red wig, to serve, not to betray his country. What a blockhead I was not to think of this before. Yes, I'll go—Thunder and Mars! I'll go."

"Oh! thank you, dear father, for that promise and that hope!" cried Jane, throwing her arms about his neck, and kissing him. "Only get at the truth—I do not fear the truth."

The old continental forthwith summoned his man of ebony, yeleft Mingo, and ordered him to prepare his trusty charger, old Ti, and his fellow-laborer, Black Pepper, for a journey on the morrow. Moreover, he directed him to draw his regimentals forth from their dread abode, beat them soundly with a stick or switch, and hang them out bright and early in the morning for an airing. Finally, he commanded Ebony, who had been his squire during the old French war, to dust his ancient livery that he might not disgrace his commander. This resolution of the father brought balm to the bosom of the daughter, where lurked, beyond the reach of reason or probability, a latent conviction, founded on an intimate communion of years, that the youth of her pride and affections was still worthy the place he had so long occupied. That night brought with it visions of happier times, and she rose in the morning with the sun, and almost as bright as he. The breakfast was more cheerful than for a long while past, but they were disturbed in the midst of it, by the abrupt entrance of Mingo, who, in great consternation, announced that the colonel's regimentals were so completely riddled by moth as to be totally unfitted for service.

"Dem look jis like a sive, colonel. You see daylight trough em like nottin."

"Thunder and Mars! Jane, it's all your fault. You've not aired them ever since you began a flirtation with that puppy, John. I've a great mind not to stir a foot."

Jane made the best excuses she could, and threw out something like an insinuation that it was Mingo's business to attend to the regimentals; whereupon the old continental ran a tilt against his squire, accusing him of being a

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lazy old caterpillar.

"Thunder and Mars! sir! you should have sprinkled them with snuff, or covered them with tobacco. Have not I bought ever so many pounds of both, and given them to you for that very purpose? But I suppose you have snuffed and smoked it all yourself, you old snow-ball."

Jane, now seeing the storm directed against Mingo, assumed the entire responsibility of the business, though she refrained from giving the true reason of her neglect. The colonel's uniform was that of the old provincial troops, as they were called, which was a blue coat, and scarlet waistcoat and breeches, trimmed with silver lace. Now the truth is, Jane was such a sturdy little rebel, she could not bear to see him even partially dressed in a colour she now held in abomination, and for this reason she had wilfully delivered the colonel's regimentals to the custody of the moth. She also abstained from reminding him that he might possibly be mistaken for a British officer, lest he should abandon the expedition in disgust. On examination, however, it was discovered that the case was not so desperate as Mingo had reported, and in good time, the old continental and his faithful squire were equipped for the journey. Old Ti and Black Pepper were then brought forth, caparisoned in their best, and all things being in readiness, the knight and his attendant sallied forth in gallant array, followed by the good wishes and prayers of the grateful daughter, now left in solitary loneliness to the indulgence of her fears and her anticipations.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE COLONEL'S ORDER OF MARCH—MUTINOUS CONDUCT OF OLD MINGO—THE COLONEL INFLICTS MARTIAL LAW ON HIM— CONSTERNATION OF THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN, DUCKS, PIGS, AND CHICKENS—UNHEARD OF EXPLOIT AT PINE'S BRIDGE— HONOURS PAID THE COLONEL—SUCCESSFUL ISSUE OF HIS MISSION, AND HAPPY RETURN.

The distance between the residence of Colonel Hammond and the Highlands, was not more than some five-and-twenty miles, and might easily have been compassed in a summers' day by ordinary equestrians. But neither the colonel or his squire were in the heyday of youth, and their steeds would never have won a heat at the Union course. They were a pair of sleepy animals, somewhat better fed than taught; for, being great pets of Mingo, they had been pampered, stuffed, and curry-combed, till they grew as fat as an alderman, and as sleek as moles. The colonel was a short, square-built man, so that when mounted on his broad-backed charger, his legs were utterly incapable of spanning the wide circumference, but, on the contrary, projected somewhat horizontally from the seat of gravity. Mingo was a little, squat, native African, black and shining as anthracite coal, and at the same time deeply pitted with the smallpox. But he had the advantage of the colonel in one particular, his legs, being of the extreme order of bandy, so that when he sat his horse, they fitted the animal's sides just as well as his own ribs, and clung as close as a circingle. Add to this, that the day, particularly the mid-day, was somewhat sultry, and it will readily be imagined that the progress of our adventurers was somewhat slow and easy.

The journey was rendered more tedious by the absence of all conversation, the military etiquette of the colonel not permitting Mingo to approach within a certain distance in the rear, which the latter, from time immemorial, had been accustomed to ascertain, by counting the lengths, as they are called, of the rail fences by the roadside. Mingo, by this means, managed to preserve his distance until they came to a long stone wall, where he was observed to waver very materially, and severely reprimanded accordingly. It is well known to be the instinct of all gentlemen of colour to fall asleep when they have nothing else to do, and Mingo, after a ride of some ten or a dozen miles, paid a visit to the land of Nod, according to the custom of his ancestors. Thereupon, his steed, having been used to amble side by side with his old comrade in harness, incontinently gathered himself together, and fidgeted up close beside the colonel, greeting his old messmate with a significant chuckle of welcome.

"Thunder and Mars! you old sinner, what business have you here?" exclaimed the indignant continental. Mingo replied not, except by a snort; other answer made he none, for he continued to sleep like a top. The indignation of the colonel kindled into a flame. He invoked all his energies, and would have raised himself in his stirrups, had not the oblique direction of his legs forbid, in like manner with the furious knight of La Mancha, when preparing to annihilate the valiant Biscayner. He grasped his cane, which he always rode with, and permitting the squire to precede him a single step, planted a blow with such judicious precision on his broad shoulders, that a cloud of dust ascended therefrom, and he awoke, as if by miracle, rubbing his eyes and twisting his body in a very significant manner, exclaiming at the same time—

"Hey! what de debbil dat?"

"I'll tell you what de debbil dat, you sleepy old varmint. What business have you to come alongside of me in this way, as if you were my equal, hey?"

"Why, massa, we all fightin for libbety and quality, ant we? But howsomever, you let me talk, I no sleep. Nigger mus do sumtin keep hissself awake."

"You old rascal, didn't I order you to keep the length of six rails in the rear?"

"Ees, massa, but dis dam stone fence—he bodder me. I gwine to count stones, and den, ecod, massa, nigger go fast 'sleep—dat's all. I no do so 'gin, caze why, my back put me in mind, I reckon."

"Very well—fall back in the rear, and march on, you mutinous old rascal. If you come alongside again, Thunder and Mars! I'll pay you over that stupid woolly head, instead of your shoulders."

Mingo gave his shoulders a sympathetic shake, fell in the rear, and they again proceeded forward. It was fortunate for the colonel that the country through which they passed, was, in a great measure, destitute of male inhabitants, or his colonial uniform might have cost him a shot from behind a tree or a stone wall. Occasionally

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they passed a house occupied by women and children, the father and grown up sons having gone to the wars; and whenever this happened, there was an alarm that the red coats were coming, for they were ever accustomed to associate the colour of the colonel's waistcoat and breeches with the presence of an enemy, and the leisurely pace of the old continental induced a belief that he was at the head of a party in the rear. Accordingly, the whole line along the road was in a state of alarm; mothers sought refuge in their accustomed hiding-places; children vanished like shadows; while the ducks, pigs, and chickens decamped from pure instinct. Such was the feeling of the women of this region, in these lawless times, when the sight of man, instead of inspiring confidence, was too often the prelude to insult, violence, and plunder.

Our travellers, betimes, approached the pass of Pine's bridge, where was stationed a guard of republican soldiers. The colonel stiffened himself, assumed the perpendicular, and giving old Ti a thwack across the ears with his cane, which caused him to shake his head in disgust, trotted gallantly forward towards the bridge. His appearance at a distance had puzzled the officer of the guard, who mistook his scarlet waistcoat and breeches for a full British uniform, and expected every moment to see a party of the enemy following. He accordingly ordered his men to be called together by beat of drum, while the old continental, turning to Mingo, exclaimed—

"Now, Mingo, you shall see. They are preparing to receive me with military honours."

As he planted his first hoof on the bridge, the officer called out in a loud voice—

"Hollo, my friend, where are you bound?" at the same time, his men pointed their guns in a significant manner.

"Sing out, massa, or, ecod, dey shoot you," said Mingo.

"To head-quarters," answered the colonel.

"Do you come with a flag?"

"No."

"Have you a pass?"

"Thunder and Mars! don't you know my uniform?"

"Not I, faith. What corps do you belong to?"

"To the New York regiment of continentals, that served in the old French war. My name is Hammond—  
Colonel Hammond."

"I don't know any such regiment, nor any such uniform."

"Thunder and Mars! did you never hear of old Ti?"

"Old Ti? Not I."

"Why, where in the name of old Harry were you born, and where have you lived?"

"No matter. What is your business at head-quarters?"

"None of your business, sir!"

"That won't do, old gentleman. You are without a pass. Your uniform is half British, half American, and you refuse to give any account of yourself. You are my prisoner, sir, and I shall send you under a guard to head-quarters. You may be a spy, for aught I know."

"A spy! Thunder and Mars!—a spy! I'll teach you to insult as good a whig as the mother that bore you, or any of your generation. Mingo, follow me!"

The old continental thereupon drew forth his trusty and rusty sword, and pricking forward old Ti, while he flourished his weapon, gallantly passed the officer, who, seeing what an original he had to deal with, suffered him to take his way while he stood shaking with laughter. The guard, in like manner, at a signal from the officer, respectfully opened for the colonel to pass, so that, as he long afterwards was accustomed to boast, he fairly carried the bridge sword in hand.

The officer, who had followed close in the rear, now courteously addressed him, stating that his rank and achievements forbade that he should be permitted to travel with a single attendant through a district where he was exposed to such unpleasant interruptions. He therefore respectfully proffered the attendance of three of his men, as a guard of honour, to head-quarters. This he conceived to be the most peaceable mode of disposing of one, whose appearance, conduct, and discourse, baffled all his sagacity. Whether a humourist, a madman, or a consummate deceiver, he could not decide, and therefore adopted that mode of disposing of his conqueror.

Thus honoured, the old continental pursued his journey without further adventures, entertaining his escort with his exploits at old Ti, occasionally regretting that, like most of his compeers in arms, he was now past serving his country, and lamenting, with perfect simplicity, how unfortunate it was there were so few good officers in the

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present continental army. In the midst of these sage discourses, they arrived at Peekskill, in the dusk of the evening, where the colonel requested they might halt for the night, as he felt somewhat fatigued with his exploit at the bridge, and his pury steeds could now scarcely put one foot before the other. His wish was complied with, and, as a special mark of honour, a sentinel kept guard all night at the door of his chamber.

"You see, you old snow-ball," said the colonel, proudly, "you see I am somebody among soldiers, though nobody at home. Thunder and Mars! a prophet has no honour in his own country."

Mingo grinned enormously at this sally, having sufficient shrewdness to see through the whole affair; but he held his tongue for fear of another application to his shoulders. Early in the morning, they entered the pass of the Highlands, and the colonel was conducted by his guard of honour to the quarters of the commander-in-chief.

Far be from us the presumption of attempting to portray or caricature the face, person, and deportment of the illustrious man, to whose presence the colonel was now, at his earnest request, conducted. The severe simplicity of his character—the natural, unaffected dignity of his deportment—the beautiful symmetry which blended all his great qualities and virtues in one harmonious whole—while it constitutes the perfection of our nature, will forever defy the presumption of those who attempt to portray either his person or his character. Washington was no hero of romance, and his name associates but illy with fiction. It is too sacred for such profanation; and he, of all the great characters on record, least requires the aid of the imagination to do justice to his fame. There is scarcely a house in the land, where his picture is not hung up to the contemplation of our children; there is not a heart in the land that does not throb with gratitude at the recollection of his name; and there is not a page in the history of independent America, written, or to be written, that will not in some way or other, bear testimony to the benefits derived from his services and his example. Let not the mists of fiction gather around him, and change a consummate man into a misshapen monster. Let him be enshrined in the pure white mantle of truth, for truth alone can do him justice.

Suffice it to say, the mission of the colonel ended perfectly to his satisfaction. Under a pledge of profound secrecy, the reason for which our readers will readily comprehend, the object of our hero's disguise, and the cause of his disappearance, were fully explained. The colonel further learned that John was now a prisoner, but where, and under what circumstances, remained unknown, as since his capture, and that of the person who met him at Spuyten Duyvel, the difficulty of obtaining information from New York had greatly increased. The general did full justice to his ardour, intelligence, courage, and patriotism; and the old continental, after dining at head-quarters, and talking about Braddock's war, was dismissed under a firm conviction that the goddess Rumour was no better than an almanac.

He returned home without the necessity of again carrying Pine's bridge sword in hand; astounded Jane with the relation of that famous exploit, which he insisted on before he would say a word of John; and finally, gladdened her inmost soul by detailing the testimony of the general. She acquiesced with lowly humility in his imprisonment, for that might have an end; but the brand of a traitor could never be effaced, and though he might die under its stigma, he could never live for her. For a time, her smiles and cheerfulness returned; and when, on the return of spring, the birds sung, the flowers bloomed, and the zephyrs whispered among the green leaves, she could sympathise in the joyousness of nature. END OF VOLUME I.

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**VOL. II.**

## CHAPTER I.

THE OLD SUGAR-HOUSE—A REVOLUTIONARY WORTHY—LABOUR IN VAIN—THE GOOD EFFECTS OF A LITTLE IMPATIENCE—A SAGACIOUS CONJECTURE, FOLLOWED BY A LUCKY DISCOVERY—A SHOUT—A MIDNIGHT RAMBLE, ENDING IN MEETING WITH A FRIEND—RATS AND RIVINGTON'S GAZETTE—OUR HERO IS CURED OF CERTAIN COMPLAINTS ON THE HOMOEPATHIC PRINCIPLE.

The old sugar-house to which our hero and his companion in misfortune were consigned, is still standing to remind us of the sufferings of our fathers, and the price they paid for liberty. To those who have never seen the building, it may not be amiss to state that it is a large, massive, gloomy pile of red-stone, with narrow grated windows, which gives it the air of a prison; standing at the northeast corner of the yard of the Dutch church fronting on Liberty street, which, during the occupation of the city by the British, was used as a riding-school. The aspect of the structure is forbidding, corresponding with the recollections which will long accompany its contemplation, by the descendants and countrymen of many nameless and humble patriots that here became the martyrs to the oppression of a haughty parent, and a petty tyrant whose infamous name is forever associated with the recollection of their fate.

It may perhaps furnish an explanation, though not an apology for the harsh treatment inflicted on these unfortunate men, to state the probable causes which led to such frequent violation of the usages of civilized warfare. The people of the united colonies when they took up arms to repel, if not actual despotism, at least principles which, if silently acquiesced in, would have inevitably led to that result, were looked upon by the mother country as rebels resisting the just prerogatives of their sovereign. They were not considered in the light of foreign enemies engaged in authorized and honourable warfare, but as traitors to their king, ungrateful and rebellious children rising against the sacred authority of the parent, and violating all the long recognised obligations of nature and society. Those great principles which are now gradually becoming familiar to the contemplation of the masses of Europe, and which have been not only successfully vindicated, but exemplified by the people of the United States, were at that time considered as heresies of the most aggravated kind, equally at war with all good government, and all true piety. Hence, when the people of a great and growing country rose with one heart and one mind to assert the rights of Englishmen, they were viewed as no better than banditti, equally beyond the protection of the laws, and the settled usages of arms. When the abused and down-trodden captives complained of their ill treatment, they were sneeringly told that they might thank the clemency of their captors that they escaped the gallows. This barbarous policy was after a time arrested by the firmness of Washington, who threatened retaliation; but still, throughout the whole course of the struggle, the treatment of American prisoners was, in most cases, harsh and unfeeling.

To these general, were added special causes which operated to increase the hardships of John and his companion. They were strongly suspected of having been engaged in some secret scheme for obtaining and communicating information of a dangerous character, and it was believed that a series of sufferings and inflictions might at length overcome their obstinacy, and produce a disclosure in the hope of being relieved. They were accordingly confined in separate cellars, little better than dungeons, underneath the sugar-house, where they were kept on a scanty allowance of food, in utter loneliness, where nothing but a dim twilight reigned all the day, and nothing could be seen but the grave-stones in the churchyard. The cellars were without flooring, and strewed with rubbish, producing an impression of utter neglect and desolation.

Here he was left to enjoy the miserable luxury of his own sad thoughts. Day after day, and night after night, wore tediously away in one dead uniformity—so irksome and intolerable, that when the unfeeling instrument of old Cunningham, the provost-marshal, came to bring his scanty allowance of unwholesome food, and insult him with his ribaldry, it was rather a relief than a hardship. It roused his feelings from the dead level of hopeless despondency, and set his blood once more coursing rapidly through his veins, with a motion something like life and animation.

One day, this wretched and vulgar instrument of oppression, taunted him more bitterly than usual, while relating some new disaster that had befallen his suffering country. He told him that Sir Henry Clinton was chasing

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Mr. Washington, as he called him, the rebel general, through New Jersey; that the people were everywhere coming in to solicit pardon on their knees for having dared to take arms against their lawful sovereign; that all was over with the cause of rebellion; and that their boasted hero and his abettors would soon have a rope about their necks. He accompanied all this with a tissue of gross personal reflections on himself, his condition, and his prospects, that roused him to desperation. He could command himself no longer, but suddenly springing upon the reviler, threw him to the ground, and placing his knee upon his breast, began a course of discipline that caused him to roar most lustily. His cries brought the sentinel stationed without to his relief, who, amazed at the sight of his prostrate comrade, made a push with his bayonet, which might have proved fatal to our hero, had he not dexterously put it aside, so that it merely grazed his ribs, and damaged his linen to a serious extent.

Resistance being unavailing, he was secured, ironed, and treated with still more severity. Though blessed with a fine constitution, and great vigour of body, he, in the course of a few days, found himself declining into weakness, languor, and weariness. No prospect of release presented itself, even in dim perspective; for, from what he had learned of his keeper, there appeared little hope that any exchange of prisoners would take place for a long while to come. The recollection of his father's fate, of his home, and of one yet dearer than all these, whom he should probably never see more, all coming in aid of his fears for his country, prostrated his firmness, and reduced him almost to despair. He now scarcely stirred from his bed of straw; and all the livelong, tedious day, was spent in melancholy musing on the past, or bitter anticipations of the future.

As thus, he one day sat, unconsciously scraping with his bare foot, in the rubbish of the cellar, he felt it pricked by something pointed and sharp. Without any precise motive he sought what it was, and discovered a rusty nail, which, it instantly occurred to him, might be converted to some useful purpose. Groping about further, he found various pieces of old iron, which appeared to have lain there a long time unnoticed. A sudden hope flashed upon his mind, and hiding the new found treasures under his bed, he proceeded to examine the grated window of his miserable abode. The scrutiny afforded him little comfort. The walls were thick, and firmly cemented. The iron bars were strong, forming squares of not more than four inches diameter, and appearing deeply incorporated with the solid stone. None of the implements he had discovered among the rubbish afforded the material for a saw sufficiently hard to operate on these bars, even if it were in his power to convert them into such an instrument, and once more he sat down to chew the bitter cud of despair.

But this was not his element. His natural spirit was elastic and vigorous. There was a spice of foolhardiness in his disposition, which, when it prompts to successful daring, is lauded as the inspiration of courage and genius, but when it leads to disaster and defeat, dwindles into folly or desperation. Perhaps the world is right in judging of men by the event of their undertakings, since, however desperate they may seem, they are justified by success. The chances may, indeed, appear to be a hundred or a thousand to one against them; but what is chance but a Jack of both sides, one moment an enemy, the next a friend smoothing the path, and working miracles greater than those of witchcraft or magic. Be this as it may, our hero was not a man to calculate chances when the case was already desperate. He could not be worse off than he was, in his own opinion; and the result of his deliberations was a determination to go to work at once, let what might be the consequences. He remembered how the soft water wears away the hard rock, and that a little every day makes a mickle at the end of the year.

The visits of his keeper were so perfectly uniform, that there was little danger of discovery; and the gloomy solitude of the churchyard secured him from observation in that quarter. Animated by these favourable circumstances, he set himself to work with the nail, the point of which he had sharpened against the wall, and laboured until fatigue compelled him to desist for a time. His design was to pick out the mortar, by which a large stone on each side of the window was cemented to the others, and thus, if possible, detach them, so that they could be removed and the iron bars withdrawn. When tired, he stood for a while contemplating his work, but he could scarcely see what he had done. The mortar was of the olden time, such as we seldom see in these degenerate days. It was as hard as flint.

Still something had been done. He had made a beginning, and a beginning, if persevered in, must inevitably come to an end. His progress was, indeed, almost imperceptible, but though slow, it was sure, and to hasten slowly is the shortest way to success in the end. At all events, he had an object in view—an excitement—something to employ his mind and exercise his body. In short, he was inspired by a hope, which, however distant and uncertain, was sufficient to stimulate him to exertion, and arrest the progress of that leaden apathy which is the invariable concomitant of despair. He only remitted his exertions when he expected a visit

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from his keeper, or when wearied to absolute exhaustion, and passed a good portion of the night in his laborious occupation.

As his progress became more apparent, he took the precaution to fill up the crevice with mortar, prepared by mixing some of his allowance of water with the earth of his prison floor, in order to guard against a discovery previous to the visits of his attendant. Thus he went on from day to day, and week to week; but his progress was so slow, that he calculated one night after labouring till he became quite exhausted, that at the rate he was going on, it would take at least two years to complete his work. The conviction, extinguished the hope by which he had hitherto been sustained, and drove him to desperation. A fit of sudden phrensy came over him, and he seized the iron bars of the window as if to vent his rage on the great obstacle to his escape. To his utter astonishment, the bars yielded to his hand, and fell inwards to the ground, coming nigh breaking his head. The cellar had been occupied by a criminal, condemned to death for some offence by a court-martial. While here, he had been furnished by an accomplice or friend, with the means of sawing the bars, and had succeeded so far as to render his escape almost certain the very next night, when his fate overtook him, and he was executed the day before. This happened but very recently preceding the capture of our hero, and the state of the window remained undiscovered, until he fortunately lost all his patience, and thus demonstrated by the event that it is sometimes highly judicious to fall into a passion. Fearing the noise of the falling bars might have been heard by the sentinel without, he hastily replaced them, and throwing himself on his straw, pretended to be fast asleep, though, as might be expected, his mind was busily employed in pondering over his present situation and prospects. One great obstacle to his escape was removed, but there was another equally insuperable in his way. His legs were ironed, and admitting he managed to leave his cell, it was next to impossible to escape speedy detection afterwards. His hopes died away with this conviction, and once more he gave himself up to the most gloomy anticipations.

From this state he was roused by the sentinel whose duty it was to go the rounds of the night, and who had heard the falling of the bars, although he knew not whence the noise proceeded. He entered with a light, and commenced a scrutiny which made the heart of the prisoner throb with intense anxiety. He searched the cell in every part, examined the bed, and coming to the window, where he discovered the vestiges of John's labours with the rusty nail, laughed with insulting scorn at his fruitless efforts. Last of all, he held his light up to the window, when, as fortune would have it, a puff of wind extinguished it instantaneously, leaving them in utter darkness. The soldier muttered a malediction, and groping his way out, locked the door after him.

"He will return again with a light, and then a discovery is inevitable," thought John, who waited his coming with moody resignation, or rather indifference. But he returned no more, and the prisoner was left without further interruption to his own reflections. These, at length, led him to the probability, that the person who sawed the bars might have left behind him the implement by which he performed his work. The thought at once roused him to action, and he resolved to institute a search next morning. If found, it would enable him to free himself from his shackles, and thus the great obstacle to his escape be removed.

Accordingly, soon as the day dawned in his gloomy abode, he commenced a close scrutiny into every part of his cell; but it was looking for a needle in a haystack, and ever and anon he was on the point of abandoning it as hopeless. The hour for bringing in his breakfast, found him thus occupied, and he was somewhat startled at seeing his keeper, accompanied by a stranger he had never seen before, who bade the other retire, lock the door, and wait outside.

"Well, young sir," said he, abruptly, and in a harsh tone, "are you not almost tired of your pleasant lodgings?"

John rallied his manhood, and answered in a careless, bantering mood, "No; I should not much mind spending all my days here. It is a quiet place, only a little too dark."

"The d—l you wouldn't! Come, come, young man, none of your jokes—I came to talk seriously with you."

"Well, sir, talk to me seriously, and I will answer you seriously."

"Well then, seriously, would you not like to be permitted to return to your friends?"

"Most certainly, sir. I am not in love with these irons, nor this miserable abode under ground."

"Well, you are at liberty to leave it at any time, on one or two conditions."

"Be good enough to name them," said John, eagerly.

The stranger then advanced close to him, and addressed John almost in a whisper: "You have been employed by Mr. Washington to gain information. You are in his confidence, then, and you have only to do for Sir Henry what you were employed to do for him, to entitle yourself not only to freedom, but to honours and rewards."

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"Thank you, sir," answered John.

"Thank you, sir—what do you mean by that?"

"I mean, sir, that I will not accept your conditions."

"Your cause is ruined."

"It is not the less a good cause."

"Your boasted Washington is flying before Sir Henry."

"He will turn one of these days on his pursuers."

"The rebels are coming in crowds to accept the king's mercy."

"The Tories you should say. I will never believe that one honest, true hearted Whig will ever ask or accept pardon for having had the courage to defend his rights."

"Confound your impudence—do you mean to say that subjects have a right to rebel against their lawful sovereign?"

"Certainly, if their sovereign acts unlawfully, I do."

"Very well—very good—very orthodox, Mr. Rebel. I'll not dispute the point with you."

"Why not, sir—you have the best of the argument. You have the right of the strongest on your side, you see," said John, pointing to his irons.

"So, sir—you are sneering at me, are you? Do you know who I am sir?"

"No sir—nor meaning no offence—do I wish to know."

"My name is Cunningham," and the speaker paused, drawing himself up to his full height, and waiting the event of this formidable annunciation.

But the effect was by no means what he anticipated. John had heard a hundred, nay hundreds of stories of the petty tyranny, the base impositions, the unfeeling insolence of this man towards his helpless countrymen, and the mention of his name instead of cowering his spirit to submission, only roused a spirit of indignation which over-mastered all his prudence. To the question, if he had ever heard that name before, he replied with scorn and bitterness.

"Yes, I *have* heard it before, from many a poor prisoner who coupled it with curses. It is the name of one who uses an office none but cruel, sordid, low minded men ever seek or accept, for the purpose of oppressing his fellow creatures; filching from the wretches whom the fortune of war has rescued from death on the field of battle to endure a thousand deaths afterwards, their scanty allowance of miserable food, thus heaping up riches at the expense of their sufferings; insulting their cause and their country; outraging their feelings while he starves their bodies, and adding to the miseries of confinement every ingenious device of petty malignity. You perceive I know you, sir."

During this imprudent speech, Cunningham was boiling with rage and mortification. Its truth added to its severity, and he became for a few moments speechless with passion. Then lifting his cane, he advanced towards the prisoner, muttering unintelligible oaths, and was about to give him a blow, when John coolly and sternly said:

"That's right, sir—prove the truth of all I have said by beating a prisoner in irons. Strike, sir, but take care, for my arm is free, and I will smite you to the earth, if I die for it the next minute."

Whether it was that the provost marshal still retained amidst the rubbish of his worthlessness, some little remains of that soldierly feeling which forbids offering violence to the defenceless, or was overawed by the threat still ringing in his ears, is somewhat doubtful, but certain it is, he lowered his cane and answered John in a tone of suppressed bitterness:

"You are right, young man. I will not disgrace myself by striking you. Though an insolent rebel, you are a defenceless man. But mark me, sir, you shall pay for this. I have the means, and the will to try your mettle. You seem a brave lad," added he in a tone of significant irony, "and I like to experiment on such materials. I'll put you to the proof before many days are over, and perhaps give you reason to curse me."

Saying this he departed, leaving our hero to cogitate on the extreme imprudence of his behaviour on this trying occasion. The significant threat of the petty tyrant, served, however, to rouse him to resume the search which the entrance of Cunningham had interrupted. But now, as before, the search was vain, and he relinquished his labours with his hopes. Remaining thus in the numbness of despondency, it suddenly occurred to him that he had not searched the bed, and his hopes revived a little. He commenced playing his last stake, and on a close examination discovered that one of the corners of the miserable, filthy bed had been ripped open sufficiently to admit his hand.

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Thrusting it eagerly in, and feeling amongst the straw, he at length drew out something which, on carrying to the window, he found was a little saw made of a watch-spring. His heart leaped in his bosom, and resolving not to lose a moment, lest his purpose should be thwarted by the fulfilment of Cunningham's threat, he eagerly commenced to operate on his irons. While thus employed, he expected every moment to see it put in execution; and at every noise without, a cold chill thrilled to his heart. But not a soul come near him, and strange to say, he rejoiced at going without his dinner, though both hungry and athirst. It once or twice, indeed, occurred to him, that the tyrant of the prison intended to bring him to submission by starvation; but he felt that the moment he relieved himself from his irons, he might defy the old sinner and all his works.

Fortunately, as he thought, the night set in with a storm of thunder and lightning. The rain poured down in torrents; bright, and almost incessant flashes, followed by quick crashes, alone, from time to time, changed the deep gloom into a sheet of living fire, leaving the obscurity still deeper, as it passed away. The streets became deserted, both man and beast having sought their homes. With a view, if possible, to escape from York Island before the day dawned, John had decided to leave his prison as soon as the hour for bringing in his evening meal had passed. The hour came, but no supper, and it seemed now evident that the intention of the provost was to put him on short allowance, if not to starve him outright. He now prepared himself for the crisis of his fate. Approaching the window, he cautiously removed the grating, and putting out his head listened and looked with intense anxiety. Nothing was heard but the concert of the elements; nothing seen but the swift flashes of lightning, disclosing objects for an instant, then leaving them in utter darkness. He passed himself through the window, and stood forth in the open air a free man once more.

His course led him across the churchyard, where was stationed a sentinel, who like a discreet and prudent man had sought refuge from the pelting storm, by ensconcing himself within the recess of the south door of the church, where he remained perfectly quiet. It should have been noted before, that when John was taken before Sir Henry Clinton, he was accommodated with a suit of coarse white cotton, in order that he might not offend his excellency with his beggar's rags, and that he wore it still. It was a little soiled, to be sure, but was in a fair way of being well washed on this occasion. The darkness was profound, except at momentary intervals, and our hero's first exploit was to tumble into a new made grave, half filled with water, a rather ominous accident. Whether a pause in the storm just at that moment enabled the sentinel to distinguish the splash our hero made in falling, or accident drew his attention in that direction, is not known; but certain it is, he happened to be looking that way, just as a vivid flash of lightning disclosed the whole figure of John emerging from the grave. If there ever walked a ghost, the sentinel had a fair excuse to conclude this was one. He acted from irresistible impulse, fired his gun at random, fell flat on his face on the stone steps, and roared out murder with all his might.

Our hero, though he did not mistake the sentinel for a ghost, was somewhat more alarmed than if he had been a true believer, and, in common parlance, "made tracks" across the churchyard without looking behind him, or, if the truth must be told, before, either, for there was little use for his eyes except when the lightning flashed them blind. He trusted altogether to Providence and his legs, and by great good fortune, at length broke his nose against the fence fronting on Nassau-street. Scrambling over it, without stopping to grumble or swear, as some people do on such occasions, he let himself down on the other side, and as he bade adieu to the old sugar-house, could not help laughing to hear the doughty sentinel roaring out "Murder! fire! help! help!" in the midst of the uproar of the elements. The discharge of the gun, and subsequent outcries, roused the guard and brought them to his rescue. He was found lying flat on his face, kicking with all his might, and carried to quarters, where, recovering his recollection by degrees, he astounded his auditors with one of the best authenticated ghost stories on record. Many believed him; some laughed at him; and it was not until next morning, that the worshipful Provost Cunningham, for the purpose of ascertaining the effect of his experiment on John, having paid him a second visit, discovered the whole mystery. Immediate measures were taken to secure him, the result of which will appear in the sequel.

In the meantime, John pursued his way through the storm and darkness, with all the speed in his power. But his long absence from the city had rendered his recollection somewhat indistinct, and this, aided by the obscurity of a stormy night, greatly embarrassed his progress. He continued to verify the old proverb, "The more haste, the less speed," and finally, becoming fairly bewildered, lost his way, and wandered he knew not where. Thus threading the mazes of the dark, muddy streets, without rudder, compass, or landmark, he at length saw a light at a distance, and having no other alternative, made towards it with all speed, in the hope of ascertaining at least where he was by the aid of its glimmering. Cautiously approaching, he discovered that it proceeded from a window, the shutters

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of which were not closed, into which he took the liberty of peeping, and saw, to his great surprise, as well as gratification, the stranger who had been captured with him at Spuyten Duyvel, and committed to prison at the same time with himself. Hastily drawing back, he paused a few moments for reflection. There was now no hope of clearing the lines on the island before daylight, and consequently a place of concealment during the coming day was absolutely necessary to his safety. He reflected, also, that he had this man in his power, should he betray him, and that a regard to his own safety would prevent him from endangering that of his old companion. His determination was soon made, and he cautiously knocked at the door. After a brief silence, a voice, which he recognised as that of the stranger, inquired, "Who's there?" "A friend," replied John, in a low tone. The door was then cautiously opened by the stranger, who had many reasons for dreading nightly visitors, and his dismay was evident, as, recognising who it was, he hastily exclaimed—

"My God! what brought you here?"

"Let me come in, and I'll tell you."

With evident unwillingness, the stranger complied, and closing the shutters, again anxiously asked an explanation, which was given in as few words as possible. After reflecting a while, the stranger observed—

"Your situation is exceedingly critical, not to say desperate. It is now impossible for you to leave the city to-night, and old Cunningham will move heaven and earth to find you. You must remain here till tomorrow night."

"But the boat—could I not escape in your boat?" eagerly asked John.

"What, in such a night as this? Besides, I have no boat. I sold it to avoid further suspicion, just as I keep my window open to let them see I am quietly at home. No, you must remain here to-morrow, though it will be at the risk of my life, perhaps."

"Then I will not remain," replied John; "if I am retaken, they can only put me back where I was. Only allow me to rest myself, and give me something to eat, for I am half starved, and I will leave you before daylight and take my chance."

"When I said it would be at the risk of my life," answered the other, "I did not mean that would deter me from receiving and secreting you. I risk it every day for our cause and our country, and I have seen enough of you to know you for one of their bravest defenders. Stay where you are, while I get you something to eat." Saying this, he left the room, and soon returned with food and drink, of which, as may be presumed, his guest partook most heartily. After he had satisfied his hunger, he addressed his host—

"But how did you manage to get out of prison?"

"I have friends in the royalist ranks, who interceded for me, and I have money to make more, if necessary. But I am still suspected, and, I believe, watched. You must, therefore, consent to take the lodging I shall provide for you. It is under ground, to be sure, but you are used to that, you know. You are lucky in finding me alone, to-night. My wife is on a visit to Long Island, for a few days, and our only attendant is with her; so, you see, I keep bachelor's hall for the present. But it is time to prepare for your accommodation, for the night is far spent. Follow me, and lend a helping hand." John assisted him in removing a bed and other necessaries into a back cellar, all which he was directed to hide in an empty hogshead, and turn it upside down in the morning. He then showed him a concealed trap-door, which opened into a lower cellar, where he might hide himself in case of an alarm. "I must not see you again. I am not to know you are here; and as you will have rather a lonely time of it, here is something to amuse you to-morrow, if you can find light enough to read." He then handed him a file of Rivington's Royal Gazette, and after cautioning John to be quiet, and not go near the cellar-windows, shook hands and departed, leaving our hero to his repose.

But sleep visited not his lids, which, like quarrelsome neighbours, refused to come together, and he lay awake for hours, tortured with solicitude as to his future fate. The idea of being again brought within the toils of old Cunningham, was inexpressibly revolting, and he resolved, if possible, never to be again taken alive. Then came the vision of a fair and gentle maid, whom he fancied he saw mourning his absence, or, perhaps, distorting his sudden and mysterious disappearance into a desertion of the cause of liberty. The picture was cruelly affecting to his love and his pride, and brought bitterness to his heart. At length, however, wearied and worn down by his previous struggles and long confinement, he sunk to rest under the weight of his sorrows.

But there was no rest for him here. The moment he closed his eyes, what seemed an army of rats, sallied forth, and assaulted him in divers ways; at one time, scampering athwart his face, and peradventure assaulting his nose;

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at another, nibbling at his toe; while, at times, they would appear to muster all their forces and gallop over his body, squealing and squeaking defiance, as it were, of the insolent intruder upon their hitherto undisputed domain. Then they made assaults on his stock of provisions, which he was finally obliged to take into bed with him, and defend tooth and nail. In short, they gave him no peace; and such is the virtue of petty vexations, that, from the moment the plague of the rats commenced, he never once thought of old Cunningham, the vision of the fair maid mourning his absence, or the dark future before him. It was not until the opening dawn scared away his persecutors, that he fell into a deep sleep, that lasted till the sun shone into his cellar-window, and long after his usual hour of rising.

## CHAPTER XIII.

JOHN REALIZES THE PREDICTION OF THE OLD CONTINENTAL, AND PUTS ON A BRITISH UNIFORM—IS CUT SHORT IN A CAPITAL SPEECH, AND IS PUSHED OUT OF DOORS—NIGHT ERRANTRY—HE TRUSTS A WOMAN, AND LO! WHAT FOLLOWED—MOUNTS ANOTHER MAN'S HORSE, BY MISTAKE, IT MAY BE PRESUMED—A RACING AND SWIMMING MATCH—MANY A SLIP BETWEEN CUP AND LIP—HE FALLS OUT OF THE FRYING PAN INTO THE FIRE.

The storm had passed away when our hero awoke; the sun glanced his golden beams even into the deep recesses of the cellar, and the busy racket of the town, announced that the greatest of all slaves, the civilized man, had commenced his daily round of money-making and money-spending. Each one, among the many thousand citizens, was chasing the phantom happiness under a different disguise, unconscious that in every shape, and under every mark, it was only a spectre he was pursuing. The shopkeeper was marshalling his wares at the windows in showy array; the cartman was rattling over the pavement; the milkmen cudgelling their ponies, or beating up their tin pails, and calling up the loitering kitchen maids in a language not to be found in any of the books; the marketwomen and butchers, were cheating the citizens, the citizens cheating each other; and the stiff, upright red-coat soldiers, were strutting about, thinking of love, glory, and plunder, or running in debt without paying.

The day was to John one of alternate impatience and depression. He had in some measure reconciled himself to his old quarters in the sugar-house; but the short glimpse of liberty he enjoyed, even in the midnight storm, was inexpressibly welcome, and only made his present confinement more intolerable. As a last resource, he resorted to the file of Rivington's Royal Gazette, where he was greeted with such dismal accounts of the defeats, the sufferings, and cowardice of his countrymen, coupled with remarks so contemptuous and irritating, that he felt his blood boiling and bubbling in his veins. Judging from these relations, he feared it was all over with his country, and that should he escape his miseries now, it would be only to become the slave of a power content with nothing less than absolute supremacy. Coming at length to an exquisite specimen of scurrilous loyalty, he could contain himself no longer, but dashed the papers to the ground, kicked and stamped on them, and almost annihilated various and special transcendentalisms of loyalty, as well as veracity, that would have done credit to a British traveller, and not disgraced the old termagant of the London Quarterly Review. After this victory he felt considerably relieved, and passed the rest of the day with a tolerable degree of quiet resignation.

When night came, and the shops were shut, when the streets no longer echoed to the footsteps of the busy throng, the stranger paid his guest a visit, bringing with him a bundle, which he announced as containing a suit of women's clothes, which he spread out before our hero, who demanded for what purpose they were intended.

"You sir," replied the other, "It is quite impossible you should escape in that white dress, which can be seen half way across the island in these moonlight nights. You must put these on, and pass for a woman."

"Excuse me my good friend, I shall do no such thing. If I am taken it shall be as a man, not as a woman. No, give me a sword, only give me a sword, and let me fight my way if necessary. I am determined never to be taken alive again, if any chance is left me to sell my life. Besides, as a woman, I shall certainly be stopped, for what business can a woman have to be wandering alone at midnight. If I am seen, my walk will be sufficient, and if I speak, my voice will betray me."

"I believe you are right," answered the other, after pausing a few moments. "And now I recollect, there is in my possession a suit of British uniform, which— which I sometimes find useful,"—he said this with a significant smile—"if you prefer it."

"By all means," cried John, interrupting him, "let me have that, let me wear anything but petticoats." Heavens! thought he, what would Jane say if she saw me in petticoats!

"It will do," cried the stranger. "You shall, if seen or intercepted, pass for a messenger carrying a letter from the commander-in-chief to the officer commanding the outposts. Wait a moment, and I will go and write one, and bring the uniform."

He returned in a few minutes with the letter and the uniform, which John eagerly seized, and disrobing

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himself, put on the red-coat and its appendages, which he found fitted tolerably well. But one thing was wanting, and that was a sword, which he was assured would not be necessary, and perhaps only bring him into trouble. On this point, however, he was peremptory; he would not stir a step without some means of defending himself, and the other at length assented. When the sword was brought, John seized it eagerly, at the same time exclaiming, "now I am a man, and have the means of dying like a man! but hark!"

"It is only the patrol going the rounds. It has passed, and now is your time. Come, rise and go forth, and God speed you." John followed him out of his den, and the stranger cautiously reconnoitring from the front door, ascertained that the coast was clear, and the sky becoming cloudy.

"Now is your time," said he, "no thanks—away, and my best wish is never to see you more, until this city returns to the hands of its lawful owners. Here, take this,"—handing him money—"you may want it by the way. Now go, and again I say, God speed you."

"I'm off," replied the other; "but before I go, let me assure you of my grateful recollection of your kindness. I know what you risk by it, and so sure as I live, if I escape this night, I will never cease to serve you with my heart, my hand, and my sword. Should you get into any difficulty on my account, let me know it, and I swear by my Maker I will give myself up to old Cunningham in exchange, fight for you, die for you, if it be necessary to your—"

"Get away with your long speeches," interrupted the stranger, half jesting, half earnest; "never fear for me, but look to yourself. You are a brave lad, and I hope we shall meet again. In the meantime, get about your business." Saying this, he fairly pushed our hero into the street, and shut the door in his face.

His object was to make the best of his way to Harlem river, and swim it at some point where it was narrowest. Once on the other side, and his escape would be almost certain, as the enemy had no post beyond York Island in that direction. Fortunately, or unfortunately, as the case might be, the night became dark, and though this circumstance embarrassed his progress, it at the same time diminished the chances of discovery. He found little difficulty in clearing the city, the extent of which was not what it is now, and soon found himself on the road to Kingsbridge. Nothing happened to impede his progress, or excite apprehension, until he came to the lines extending from the East river to the Hudson. Here, he paused, to reflect on the course most proper to pursue; and having decided this point, he crept cautiously along, under cover of darkness, gradually approaching the lines with the intention, if he found a chance which was not desperate, to attempt passing through them. But his scrutiny only ended in perpetual disappointment, for the sentinels were placed at such short intervals from each other that the prospect was hopeless.

It more than once occurred to him, to present himself boldly under cover of his disguise, exhibit his letter to a sentinel, and demand permission to pass. But when he reflected on the probability, if not certainty of being taken before the officer of the guard, and his utter inability to undergo the slightest examination, he decided to make this the last resort. He now resumed his peregrination, and traversed from one extremity of the lines to the other without success, when the crowing of a cock warned him of the approach of day. It smote on his ear like a passing bell, and announced the absolute necessity of seeking some place of concealment, as well as rest; for he was not the man he was before his long confinement, which had for the time impaired his vigour, and now found himself almost overcome with fatigue.

The crowing of a second cock, which was answered by others, warned him that not a moment was to be lost, and he hastily turned away from the vicinity of the lines to seek some place where he might hide himself. Groping his way among the swamps, and thickets of vines and briars, in the interior of the island, he, just at the dawn of day, suddenly came upon a little hut, which sufficiently indicated the poverty of its occupants, if such it had, and retiring behind a tuft of alders reconnoitred the premises. Nothing about the hut, however, indicated that it was inhabited. Neither domestic animal, nor domestic bird, appeared, nor any garden, or cultivated spot of any kind, gave token of human labour. He was about to advance and try the door, when at that moment it was opened by a female, who stepped forth, and after gathering a few dry sticks, returned into the house. She seemed of a middle age, and was poorly clad; but her garments were neither ragged or dirty, and her face, so far as he could distinguish through the gray dawn, was free from those strong, indelible marks, which so unerringly indicate bad passions and a dissolute life.

In a little while, the smoke curled forth from the chimney of sticks and clay, and a savoury incense, proceeding from broiled salt fish, saluted the nostrils of the tired and hungry wayfarer, sorely tempting the inward man to the

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imprudence of entering and partaking thereof. There seemed no other human being about the place but this lonely female, and he asked of himself, when it was that a woman refused kindness and relief to the hungry or distressed wanderer. Encouraged by the reply of his own heart and his own experience, he came forward with confidence, and presenting himself at the door requested shelter and food. The woman seemed neither alarmed or surprised, while she made him this reply—

"I have nothing to give you. You have made me a beggar already."

"I will pay you for your kindness," said John, showing her a piece of gold.

"So you often told me before. The king pays you, but you never pay anybody. Your coat is a license for plundering us poor women. You will find breakfast at your quarters, not here."

"But I am starving."

"So am I. This is my last meal, and you see there is nothing to spare. Your red coats have taken care of that."

She spoke with such bitter emphasis when alluding to the red coats, that John began to hope she was a rebel in her heart, and communed with himself whether it would not be his best policy to disclose his real character, and at once appeal to her sympathy as an American soldier. It was a dangerous experiment, but his case was desperate, and, as he decided, justified the experiment.

"I suppose," said he, "you have heard that the rebel general is flying on his last legs through the Jerseys, and that the cowardly Yankees are coming in by thousands, with halters about their necks, to throw themselves on the mercy of King George?"

The good woman, who was at that moment turning a piece of salt fish on the gridiron, if three ribs, without any legs, merit that respectable name, gave a sudden irritable start, dropped the fish in the ashes, hastily snatched it up, and turning full upon him, exclaimed, echoing John's words—

"Rebel general—halters about their necks, do you say? You'll be hanged before you see that day." There was no mistaking the action, the look, or the tone, accompanying these words. "It is useless to stay here," continued she, "you get nothing from me, for I have nothing left for you to buy or steal. If you insult me, you will get as good as you bring; and if you dare to use me ill, though I am but a woman, a wretched, lonely woman, I have the will and the strength of a man to defend myself. Go away, and get your breakfast from King George."

"King George owes me no breakfast. Though I wear his livery, I am not his servant."

"No! Well, now I come to look at you a little, you don't look as if that coat was made for you. If you hadn't shown me your gold, I could have almost sworn you was an American. But the defenders of their country have no money but rags."

Being now fully assured, he at once disclosed his name, the purpose of his disguise, and his present critical situation. The woman listened with a friendly interest, and at once offered him what food and shelter it was in her power to afford. During their homely repast, they talked over the best means of securing his safety during the day, and his escape the ensuing night. She declared that both would be exceedingly difficult. Her hut was frequently visited by straggling soldiers, who, in the wantonness of lawless power, played those pranks which so often degrade the dignity of that profession, which, more than any other, should elevate men above robbing the weak, or insulting the defenceless.

"But why do you remain alone in this wretched hut, exposed to these insults and outrages?" asked John.

"Because I have an only son, a prisoner in the city, and go every day to carry him such little things as I can procure for his comfort; and when I have nothing to bring, I can still weep for him. I have tried to get him released, but I fear he will at last be carried to the hospital-ship, and die, as all do who go there, for he is every day growing more pale and weakly." The poor mother wept as she told her story, and John, not knowing how to comfort her, remained silent until she recovered herself. He then told her he was very much tired with his night's ramble, and asked permission to rest on the bed standing in a corner of the room.

"Not there—not there!" exclaimed she, eagerly. "You may be discovered. Can you sleep upon straw?"

"Aye, on a rock!"

The good woman then pointed him the way up a ladder into a little garret, where was a quantity of straw, and strictly enjoining him not to stir whatever might happen, left him, removing the ladder, which she secreted outside the hut, after which she resumed her household occupations. In less than ten minutes our adventurer fell into a profound sleep, and for a while forgot all his troubles.

From this blessed oblivion he was roused, after a nap of some hours, by the tramp of horses about the hut,

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mingled with the voices of his hostess and that of men. Listening with intense and breathless anxiety, he could distinguish the purport of their conversation. The voice of the man was that of one inquiring after himself, and that of the woman was disclaiming all knowledge of such a person as he described, which she could do with a safe conscience, as the fugitive was represented in the dress in which he escaped from prison.

The morning had disclosed his departure, and spoiled the ghost story of the trusty sentinel, who never lived to hear the last of that affair. The circumstance of the sawing of the iron grating, produced a conviction of his having had accomplices without, and this, together with the zeal of old Cunningham to recover his prey, caused more than usual solicitude for his apprehension. Not being found in the city, patrols of horse had been sent out in various directions, and the doughty provost-marshal himself promised five guineas for his body, dead or alive. One of his favourite experiments on the powers of human endurance, had been brought to an untimely close by the abrupt, unceremonious evasion of his guest, and he felt all the mortification of a scientific devotee at the failure of a pet theory.

The colloquy between the hostess and her visitors, became more and more interesting as it approached the crisis, and the tenant of the garret felt his heart die away, as he heard the leader of the party declare his intention to carry his investigations into that quarter. His detection was in that case inevitable, unless he escaped beforehand. But the invention of our hero was as quick as a hair-trigger, and he determined on his course in an instant. He had noticed that there was an opening in the old weather-beaten roof, close to the chimney, apparently large enough for him to pass through; and that the chimney, being such as was once common in houses of the ordinary kind, was composed of pieces of wood laid crosswise, the interstices being filled up with mortar, and the ends projecting out at the corners sufficiently to form a sort of ladder, affording an easy ascent to the top.

The moment the real ladder was found, and applied to the opening in the floor of the garret, he rose swiftly and silently from his bed of straw, tripped on tiptoe to the chimney, which he climbed up without much difficulty, and emerged through the opening in the roof to the top of the hut. Peeping warily round for an instant or two, he saw with great satisfaction that the whole party had left their horses, and were engaged in the search, being confident that no enemy could surprise them within their own lines. Quick as thought, he slid down the roof to the ground, and in a moment was on horseback, skirring like the wind, while the party remained unconscious that he had been there, or that he had escaped.

"What can that fellow be riding after at such a rate over the common?" said the officer, who, having finished his search in the garret, was looking out at the door.

"What has become of my horse?" cried one of the troopers.

"That fellow must have stolen him," exclaimed another; and in a trice, all but the unfortunate owner of the horse, mounted in pursuit of the thief, or, as they all believed, of some mischievous fellow-soldier who was playing them a trick. And now commenced a chase, such as had not been seen for many a day in the renowned island of Manhattan, which, in compliance with a vulgar custom, we have hitherto called New York. John had made a fortunate selection, and his horse kept the lead handsomely until he reached the British lines, where a sentinel was on duty. Here, holding up the letter with which he had been furnished, and crying out, "For the commanding officer at Kingsbridge," he darted past without stopping, and without any attempt to stop him, the sentinel having either been taken by surprise, or presuming he was the bearer of important despatches.

The arrival of the pursuers a few moments after, explained the mistake, but threw little light on the real state of the case, and at all events, it was now too late to stop the fugitive, who continued on full speed, while the others followed in his rear without gaining upon him until he came to Harlem river, where the stream was narrow. Here, he plunged in, and had got nearly half-way over, when he heard a discharge of pistols, and the bullets whistling about his ears. Taking the hint, he urged forward his steed by every means in his power, and had nearly reached the opposite bank, when a fresh party arrived, and taking for granted that he was a deserter, fired with better aim. One of the balls struck his cap, and without penetrating, occasioned such a sudden dizziness, that as he mounted the bank of the river, he fell from his horse, and, stunned with the blow and the fall, remained insensible. In this helpless state he was easily taken, and when he came to himself was carried back to New York, not as the prisoner who had escaped from the old sugar-house, but a British soldier who had stolen a horse, and attempted to desert to the rebels.

What might have been his ultimate destiny under this misconception, no one can tell, had he not been recognised by the soldier who had stood sentinel over him while a prisoner, and subsequently, by the renowned

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provost–marshal, who never forgot the face of one whom he had marked out as a victim. Being seriously ill from the effects of the blow on his head, his fall, and the disappointment of all his hopes just at the moment they seemed about to be realized, he was consigned to the Hunter hospital–ship, which was moored in the East river, near the Wallabout. What happened to him on this transition from purgatory to the regions of darkness, despair, and death, the reader will know in good time, should he deign to peruse the next chapter of our humble tale.

### CHAPTER III.

"No masts or sails these crowded ships adorn,  
Dismal to view, neglected and forlorn,  
From morn to eve, along the decks we lay,  
Scorch'd into fevers by the solar ray;  
No friendly awning cast a welcome shade,  
Once it was promis'd, but was never made;  
No favours could these sons of death bestow,  
'Twas endless vengeance and eternal wo;  
On every side dire objects met the sight,  
And pallid forms, and murders of the night."

Philip Freneau.

Those who derive their impressions of the hardships, privations, and sufferings of the people of the United States, during the war of independence, from the general history of the times, will form but a vague idea of their magnitude and extension. History, for the most part, records but great events, and deals only with those illustrious characters and actions, which have an immediate or remote influence on the fate of nations. The conflicts of great armies, the siege of fortified places, and the sacking of cities, are carefully recorded; while the plunder of harvest-fields, the robbery of the husbandman of the fruits of his labours and the necessaries of life, the burning of his home, the slaughter of his wife and children, the perpetual fears and never-ceasing insults and outrages, which generally accompany the march of invading armies— all these, if alluded to at all, are expressed in loose generalities, which make little if any impression on the mind. The sufferings of the individual are lost in the mass of national distress, or only remembered in traditions which grow more obscure and doubtful at every succeeding generation, and come at last to be considered either fabulous or doubtful.

The state of New York was among those which suffered most severely in the struggle to maintain the principles of the revolution. Her capital was occupied by the enemy during almost the entire period of the war; her western frontier was exposed to invasion from Canada, to perpetual devastation and massacre by the Tories and Indians of the Six Nations, instigated and led on by the Johnsons, the bloody Butlers, and the savage Brant; and there was not a county in the state, on which the foot of the invader was not imprinted in the soil. The massacre of Cherry Valley, of Schoharie, and other places, then almost without a name, and the long succession of bloody atrocities along the whole valley of the Mohawk, although only slightly referred to, or not noticed at all in our general histories, will long be remembered by the posterity of those who were their victims.

But there was still another class of obscure and lowly patriots, whose fate, though still more melancholy than that of all the others, has excited less sympathy because it is less known. Hundreds, nay, thousands of as hardy and devoted spirits as ever the love of freedom animated and inspired, suffered long, and died lingering deaths on board the hospital and prison-ships, still remembered by a few of our aged citizens as the abode of misery and despair. They perished, unnoticed and unknown, amid insults, scoffings, and privations of every kind. They died like dogs, and like dogs they were buried. Their names have perished with their bodies, and the monument erected to commemorate their sufferings and devotion, has only sufficed to record that a multitude of victims to the cause of their country here mingle their bones together. Let it not be supposed these remarks are made with a view to revive, or strengthen, or perpetuate national antipathies. They have a higher and a better object; namely, to pay a homely tribute to lowly worth and unrecorded patriotism; to show the price which our fathers paid for liberty, and the obligation which rests on all their posterity dearly to cherish what was so dearly purchased.

The Hunter prison-ship, into whose bosom our hero was consigned, was an old dismasted hulk, which some that are yet living have not forgotten, and never will forget. Dismantled, neglected, and decayed, she lay on the water, a black and dismal object without; within, the abode of anguish and despair. The story of the miseries endured by our captured countrymen in that wretched tabernacle of sorrow, will never be thoroughly known; but enough is preserved by tradition, and in the memory of a few gray-headed survivors, to give some idea of the sufferings of those who died. It will generally be found that the direction and superintendence of prisoners of war

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falls to the lot, if it is not sought by a class of men having no other feeling to gratify but a sordid love of gain, or the indulgence of a petty spirit of tyranny. Sometimes, perhaps, a more humane and generous spirit may accept the painful office with a view to alleviate the miseries of war; but even on such occasions, it would seem that the perpetual contemplation of human suffering, instead of softening, gradually hardens the heart. Custom at length reconciles them to what they see all day long, and produces insensibility, if not an actual taste for the banquet of human sorrows. There are men who are known to be amateurs in the art of inflicting pangs on their fellow-creatures, and others who enjoy with incredible zest, the dying struggles of a condemned malefactor. People of more tender and refined feelings, are apt to shrink from stations in which they might best administer to the miseries of others; and hence, we frequently find that hospitals, jails, and poor-houses, and most especially those belonging to military establishments, are placed under the immediate superintendence of those whose hearts are naturally insensible to the contemplation of human suffering, or whom long habit has hardened into viewing it without pain or sympathy. When it becomes a daily routine of duty to attend the sick or relieve the poor, it is very likely to be performed like any other everyday business. It would be unjust, therefore, to involve a whole nation in one common censure, on account of the harsh treatment inflicted on our countrymen in the prison-ships at New York, were it not that the like was generally experienced elsewhere, during the progress of the struggle, until it was in some measure checked by the threat of retaliation. The facts are sanctioned by history, as well as living evidence; and no one can give an adequate picture of the revolution without dwelling strongly on the theme of domestic calamity and private suffering.

The unfortunate subject of our story was consigned to this receptacle of misery, debilitated by fever, and depressed by bitter disappointment, and was placed between decks among a crowd of squalid invalids, whose condition was rendered desperate by the absence of all the comforts necessary to their existence. It was now summer, and the heat was equally intolerable by day and by night; for if they had strength to crawl on deck during the former, there being no awning, they were exposed to the broiling sun; while, during the latter, they were stifling below in crowds, amid a pestilential atmosphere steaming from the lungs of death. The uncaulked deck admitted the rain to pour down upon them; the pumps were continually going; the water they drank, when the extremity of thirst drove them to it, was always stale, filthy, and frequently full of animalculæ; and the allowance of food scanty, as well as of bad quality. Add to this, the attendants, the physician, and the petty officers, were almost without exception insolent and unfeeling.

To this "Floating Hell," as she was universally denominated by the Americans, was John consigned, and laid side by side with many a fellow-sufferer who never rose again. They were crowded so close, that there was scarcely room to turn round in his narrow straw bed; the heat was intense; the air absolutely stunk of mortality, and nothing was heard but the groans of the sick and dying. His feelings, quickened by the feverish irritation of his pulse, and the pain in his head, overpowered his firmness, and as he lay down for the first time in this dreary abode, on the evening of his arrival, he groaned in agony. The signal was answered by a wretch, who lay beside him, in a tone which he thought he had heard before. He raised himself by a desperate effort, and gazed wildly around, through the dim twilight of the floating dungeon. Another groan, followed by inarticulate murmurs, the product of a diseased fancy, succeeded. It seemed the voice of his father. "I, too, am mad," thought John, as he recalled the time when the captain had expired in his arms. A few moments again elapsed, when the same voice exclaimed, in feeble accents, "Will no one bring me water—water—water? Oh! give me water!" It was, indeed, the voice of his father. The young man sprung on his elbow, placed his face close to that of the poor sufferer, recognised the pallid features, and casting himself down by his side, sobbed aloud with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow.

"My father! my dear father!" cried he, at length, and clasped the withered, burning hand, that lay languid and helpless by the side of the old man.

"Who calls me father? I have no children—no friends here. I cannot even get a drop of water."

"It is I—your son—come to die with you."

The captain made an effort to rise, but it was all in vain. He lay panting and feeble, a little while, and then desired John to put his face close to his own, that he might see if it was him. He complied, and the poor father recognised his son by the light of a lamp just brought in by one of the attendants. He put his feeble arms about his neck, and welcomed him, not in gladness, but bitter sorrow.

"You had better be in your grave, than here," said the old soldier; and his voice rambled away in disjointed

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murmurs, indicating a mind shattered by pain and suffering. Then again he cried out, "Water— water! for God's sake, give me some water!"

None answered, and no water came. John essayed to rise, but the moment he did so, his head turned, and he sunk down again on his bed. He then repeated the call for water, as loud as his weakness would permit, and at length some was brought. The captain put forth his hands with famished eagerness, and John held it to his lips. It seemed to have been dipped from some standing pool, but such was the thirst of the poor old soldier, that he emptied the vessel at a single draught. Then sinking down, he fell into a doze, interrupted at intervals by low inarticulate moanings.

It was now the hour when the convalescent patients who had been permitted to roast themselves on deck during the day, were driven down into the hold to pass the night among the dying and the dead. This accession to their numbers, added to the heat and impurity of the confined air, created an atmosphere divested of every wholesome principle of life. A night ensued, the details of which would have no other purpose than to convert pity into horror. The ravings of delirium, mingled with the curses of despair, and the taunts of unfeeling attendants, who, instead of alleviating the anguish of the wretched prisoners by sympathy, indulged in all the bitterness of political animosity. Ever and anon, some spirit winged its flight from this tabernacle of wo, and six dead bodies signalized the triumph of death, that melancholy night.

The son passed a great portion of the time in watching the father, who sometimes lay perfectly quiet for an hour or two, and then again commenced his low, disjointed moans and mutterings. Anxiety for the sufferings of the captain, in a great measure conquered all sense of his own, and he was sensible of nothing but a raging thirst, increasing every moment. A supply of water had been brought him, but so fætid and filthy, that he found it impossible to swallow a single drop. Thus realizing the tortures of Tantalus; seeing nothing by the light of the dismal lamp, but a melancholy array of suffering countrymen lying side by side, and presenting a condensation of misery; hearing nothing but the moanings of despair, the screeches of madness, and the rattle in the throat of death; borne down by weakness, and abandoned by hope, John lingered out the almost endless night, until towards the dawn, when nature gave way, and he sunk into a disturbed sleep.

When he awoke, he felt himself somewhat relieved of his pains, and found his father partly raised on his elbow, gazing on him with a look of sorrowing sympathy.

"You seem better this morning, sir," said he.

"No, my son, I shall never be better. Who can hope to get well in such a den of misery as this? No, John, I shall soon add one more to the long list of martyrs who have paid their last debt to their country here. Would to God, I could have died somewhere in the sight of the world, that those who come after me, might have known that such a man once lived and laboured in their cause. Here we die like dogs, are buried like dogs, and forgotten as soon as dead. Such is the reward of lowly men, when they pay with their lives the price of liberty."

"Father—dear father! do not despair. I hope and trust you will yet see our people free and happy, and to be known as one who aided with all his heart in securing to them the blessing. Some day or other we shall return home, and enjoy in peace what we have earned in war, under our own vine and our own fig-tree."

"You may, perhaps, my son, but I never shall. Few that enter this dismal hole, ever return alive. The only journey they make is to yonder shore, where they are thrown into a hole with curses on their heads, instead of prayers, and lay and rot together. I shall never see home again; never visit any but my last, long home—whatever happens to my country, I shall soon be free. In the grave I shall find both repose and liberty."

"Who talks of liberty here? Silence, you rebel rascals!" exclaimed a rough voice, in a foreign accent. It was the doctor, as he was called, though he disgraced a profession than which none is more honourably distinguished for humanity and gentleness. He had come to take his morning rounds among the sick, the dying, and the dead; and such another brute, in the shape of man, perhaps never disgraced his Maker, or his species. Ignorant and brutal, his only experience was that acquired by a thousand professional murders. Instead of sympathizing with the wretched victims to the fate of war, he met their complaints with unfeeling taunts, and answered every groan with oaths and blasphemies. He had come from a distant land, and was one of those sold by his sovereign, as a slave to assist in riveting the chains of his fellow creatures in another quarter of the globe. His practice accorded with his mission. Some he despatched with pills; some with blisters; some he bled to death; and some he forced out of the world by rude attempts to make them swallow his nostrums. In his nature he was harsh and cruel, and his prejudices against the cause his patients had espoused, co-operating with his natural disposition, together with a

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long familiarity with such scenes, had all combined to produce a total insensibility to their sufferings, if not a more inhuman feeling of actual enjoyment.

This degenerate professor of the healing art, in the course of his rounds, expressed his satisfaction at finding some half a dozen of his patients had, during the night, rid him of the trouble of attending them. It would be equally painful and disgusting to repeat his unfeeling jests, and vulgar ribaldry, for there are degrees of vice and inhumanity, the details of which nothing but historical truth will justify; and, though our sketches of these scenes are drawn from the relations of those who actually saw and heard what we relate, we are not writing a history, but a tale. At length it came to the turn of John and his father to undergo the torture of an examination. To the latter he merely observed, "Ah! you will soon be out of your misery, you rascally rebel;" to the former, he addressed such consolation as might be expected from such a comforter. He told him he could cure him, but it was hardly worth while, for he would certainly be hanged as soon as he recovered strength enough to mount the gallows, unless he put on the red coat in earnest, as he had done in jest, the other day. "What say you," added he, "will you enlist in the service of King George, or stay here and die, like that old rebel scoundrel by your side."

The Yankee blood boiled in our hero's veins, as he listened to this cruel speech; but for once in his life, discretion came to his aid. He reflected on his utter helplessness, and the folly of irritating this inhuman dog in office, at whose mercy his father now lay. Accordingly he gulped down a flood of glowing indignation, that added ten-fold to his burning thirst, and remained silent.

"What, stubborn, hey?" resumed the caitiff; "very well, we shall soon break down your rebel spirit. I have a way of doing these things, that never fails to bring a recruit to King George, or send one to the d—l. I only wish Davy Sproat, our superintendent, was not such a sheep-hearted fellow. If he would only give me fair play, I'd make quick work with such fellows as you, and turn this into a recruiting, instead of a hospital-ship."

"Yes," said the captain, in a feeble voice, "it is already a recruiting ship for the armies of death."

"So, so—you can talk, can you? I'll soon stop your rebel mouth. Here—swallow these directly. Your case is already desperate, and requires desperate remedies. Very likely they'll finish you, but the sooner you are out of the way the better." Here he handed the captain half a dozen pills, and insisted, with bitter oaths, on his swallowing them.

"I will take no more of your drugs. Your work is done already. Between you and the fever, I am little better than a dead man. Let me die in peace."

The unfeeling monster swore he should not die in peace, and was about to force the patient to swallow his pills, when John, forgetting all else but filial affection, and suddenly invigorated by the feelings of a son, started on his feet, and seizing the doctor by the collar, sent him reeling to a respectable distance. The wretch was a coward, as well as an oppressor, and only vented his rage in threats and imprecations. He brandished his gold-headed cane in defiance, called John by every opprobrious name his knowledge of English would permit, and finally made his exit swearing he would accommodate him with a strait jacket.

The agitation of this scene, increased the fever and weakness of the poor captain, who had now scarcely strength to answer the inquiries of his son concerning the particulars of his escape from that death, which he was assured had taken place before he left him, on the night of the adventure at Kingsbridge. In as few words as possible, and with many intervals of breathless weakness, the captain informed him that he had only fainted from loss of blood, and was shortly afterwards found in that state, by a party of British, which had come out to remove the bodies of their companions who had fallen in the skirmish. By them he was taken to the guard-house, and recovering his senses, was subsequently seized with a slow fever, during the progress of which he was sent to the hospital-ship to be cured. "They have succeeded," said the captain, dying away with the exhaustion of telling his story.

All that day John watched over his parent, who was evidently hovering on the verge of that invisible line which separates the world of flesh from the world of spirits. Sometimes, after long intervals, he would seem to rally, and at such times spoke a few words consecrated to the past and the future. He enjoined upon his son never to tell his parents the particulars of his fate. They had already mourned his death, and it would only be renewing their grief to be told that he had as it were twice died. At another time, he conjured him, while he watched over their declining age, never to forget what he owed to his country and the sacred cause of freedom.

Thus passed the day, and when evening came, it brought the doctor's wonted visit, who, though he did not venture within reach, stood shaking his cane, at the same time informing John, "If it had not been for the

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milk—and–water captain, he would have figured in irons before now." John heeded him not, for he was watching the last moments of an only parent. The captain was now in a deep, leaden sleep, such as, at a crisis like this, either ends in death, or from which he would probably only wake to take one last look at the world ere he closed his eyes forever. He lay on his back motionless, and apparently breathless, for the sound of his breathing could not be heard. Ever and anon, John placed his hand to his mouth, and felt the almost imperceptible current of air exhaling its last sighs, freighted with the departing spirit of the unfortunate soldier.

Midnight came; the distant lamp shed a gloomy and uncertain light athwart the abode of despair, showing a long array of beds, that might aptly be called graves, for death inhabited them. No sound of life was heard, except the measured step of the sentinel above, passing to and fro, and the panting breathings, or low murmured moans of the tenants of the dungeon below. At this moment, the dying captain opened his eyes, and after gazing on John, at first with a stare of vacant doubt, at length spoke his last whisper.

"Your hand, John, and place your ear close to my lips. May Heaven bless you, my parents, and my country. I have served her faithfully, and now I die for her. If I had only lived to see her free, I should die happy and content. But she will be free, so sure as there is a just God above. May that God receive my—" His voice became suddenly arrested—he cast one slow glance around—drew a long, quivering breath—then another—and then his last. Such was the end of the gallant old soldier, and such that of many, many other noble spirits, whose fleshly tabernacles mix with their parent earth, whose bones moulder in goodly fellowship together, and whose names now lay buried in oblivion on the shore of Long Island.

## CHAPTER IV.

A FUNERAL—A SUCCESSFUL PLAN OF ESCAPE—A NIGHT JOURNEY—ROBBING A HEN—ROOST—OUR HERO COMMENCES A PERILOUS VOYAGE, AND NARROWLY ESCAPES SHIPWRECK—A LONG WALK, AT THE END OF WHICH JOHN FALLS ASLEEP, AND THE GENTLE READER MAY FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE IF HE PLEASES.

John mourned over his father, though his sorrows were assuaged by the thought, that he had gone from a scene of hopeless suffering to receive the rewards of an honest life and faithful services to his country. But it cut him to the heart to see his honoured remains carried the next morning, without shroud or coffin, wrapped in the blanket on which he died, to be buried, without a prayer for the repose of his soul. Not being, however, permitted, and, indeed, altogether unable from weakness to attend the ceremony, if that may be so called which was done without any of the usual accompaniments of Christian burial, he was spared the pain of seeing his father interred more like a beast of the field than a human being.

In the course of time, however, he began to think of himself, his situation, and his future prospects. Gradually, as he recovered from the effects of his wound and fall, by the force of a most excellent constitution and a self-supported mind, he adopted a settled determination to escape from this den of misery the moment an opportunity offered, however desperate. Being now permitted to go on deck during the day, and obliged to take his turn at the pumps, which were perpetually going to keep the hulk from sinking, he found great relief from inhaling the breeze from the salt water, and regained his vigour surprisingly. Still, as during the mid-day heats, he sat, or stood at the pumps, panting and sweltering in the burning sun, without awning or protection of any kind, and looked at the green meadows and waving groves, that seemed almost within reach of his hand, his heart throbbed with indescribable yearnings to taste their refreshing coolness, and lay himself down in their shade.

The deck of the Hunter was guarded during the day by vigilant sentinels, and at sunset the prisoners were all ordered below. Night was the only period that seemed to afford any chance of escape, and a few days observation convinced him even this was a forlorn hope. The passage leading to the upper deck was strictly guarded, and the old port-holes secured by strong iron bars. The result was a conviction that if he escaped at all, it must be from the upper deck, and to do this in the daytime seemed all but impracticable. True, he was an excellent swimmer; but unless he could get out of gunshot before he was discovered, the chances were a hundred to one that he would be killed by the sentinels, or overtaken by the boats before he reached the land. Night, therefore, was indispensable to his plan, but unless permitted to remain on deck after dark, he saw little prospect of carrying it into execution.

Still he cherished the design, and at length adopted a course which seemed to present a faint hope of ultimate success, if adroitly and patiently pursued. He began to distinguish himself at the pumps, by not only labouring with hearty willingness, but by taking the turn of some of the sailors. He was always in a good humour, jesting with his fellow-labourers, and conciliating the sentinels and petty officers by humorous stories or merry songs. Gradually, he established something like that good fellowship which admits a free interchange of sentiment and opinion. This brought him to the point he wished.

He began to talk slightly and sneeringly of his countrymen, and their cause, though it cut him to the heart to do so; adopted the phrase of rebels in speaking of them; affected to sympathise with his new associates, in exultation at the hardships they suffered, and every day gratified them by drawing extravagant caricatures of the rags, distress, cowardice, and disaffection of the soldiers of freedom. In speaking of their general, he always called him Mr. Washington, and sometimes almost choked himself by naming the rebel congress.

His next step was to insinuate something like a willingness to change his colours, and serve under the banner of old England. He was tired, he said, of fighting for shadows, and receiving nothing but continental money for his reward. He affected to be convinced not only of the badness, but hopelessness of the cause, to the support of which he had been seduced by the precepts and example of his father; and finally consulted one of the sentinels, with whom he was most confidential, on the probability of being permitted to serve his Majesty, George the Third. By degrees he began to be viewed as a convert to loyalty, and by a course of judicious experiments, every

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day acquired new confidence, as well as additional freedom of action.

On one occasion, he made a trifling bet that he would jump over the barricades, and swim around the Hunter in so many minutes, which he performed, to the great admiration of the spectators, and without any attempt to take advantage of the freedom thus permitted. This, and similar incidents, not only contributed to an increase of confidence, and a consequent relaxation of vigilance in the sentinels, but created a friendly and social feeling on their part, that greatly aided his final effort. He now began to be considered more in the light of a messmate, than a prisoner, and was permitted to remain on deck of evenings, after his companions had been ordered below, that he might amuse the sailors and petty officers with stories about the cowardly Yankees.

This was what he had long been labouring to bring about. The crisis to which he so anxiously looked forward, had at length come, and he resolved to avail himself of it without delay. Accordingly, one calm evening, having been more than commonly severe and sarcastic on his countrymen, and actually persuaded the corporal of the guard to propose him as a recruit to the regiment of loyal Americans the next day, he set them all in a roar of laughter by a description of the manner in which a party of the rebels to which he belonged, had run away on a certain occasion. They insisted he should give them a specimen of the figure and gait of the Yankee captain, who he stated was lame of one leg, and limped in the most ridiculous style. At first he affected to demur, on the score of its impossibility; but being pressed on the subject, rose from his seat, bent himself almost double, and shuffling off in a gait which was applauded by bursts of laughter, made one leap over the stern of the vessel plump into the river.

The moon shone bright as day, and the hulk, owing to the turning of the tide, lay athwart the river, her stern towards Long Island. The distance was not great, and his hopes were sanguine that he might reach the shore before a boat could be got ready to intercept his escape. Accordingly, he bent his sinewy limbs to his purpose, and, without pausing to look back, swam towards the land, while the shouts of approbation at his successful personification of the lame Yankee captain, still rang in his ears. In a short time, however, the merry party began to inquire what had become of him, and his friend, the corporal, going aft, climbed up the barricades to take an observation. The bright, glassy stillness of the waters, soon enabled him to discern our hero swimming with all his might towards the shore, and at once the whole truth burst upon him.

Levelling his piece, he discharged a bullet, which whizzed past John's ears, and skipped over the surface before him. The report of the gun roused all hands; a fire was commenced that made his situation very critical, and a boat got ready with as little delay as possible, which started in pursuit of him. He could soon hear the dashing of the oars; and the approach of his pursuers was announced by the sounds becoming every moment more distinct. Those who were not rowing, from time to time discharged their pieces, and the leaping and whistling of the balls told him they were within gunshot. He redoubled his efforts; he strained every nerve, and reanimated his remaining strength by the thought of the prize for which he was contending, and the forfeit to be paid for losing it. He could now distinctly hear the threats and maledictions of his pursuers, and occasionally tried to feel the bottom. But no bottom was to be found, and once more he tasked his vigour for a last effort. The boat now gained rapidly upon him; his limbs began to stiffen; his heart almost burst with the violence of his exertions, as well as the excess of his emotions, and once more he felt for the ground. He determined to let himself sink to the bottom, though ever so deep, rather than be carried back to the floating hell, from which he had just escaped. This time his feet touched the ground, leaving his arms, head, and shoulders above the water, and fortunately, the shore being very bold, a few steps brought him to the beach, so exhausted that he could barely stand. It was no time, however, for rest, and rallying the last remnant of his strength, he cried out to the party in the boat, "Good night, friends! what do you think of the Yankee captain's retreat?" and made the best of his way towards a wood, which he had often contemplated with longing eyes, from the broiling deck of the Hunter. His farewell was answered by a volley, which he luckily escaped, and he proceeded onwards, for some time distinguishing the voices of his pursuers behind him. At length reaching the wood, he sought its recesses, and soon losing the sound of their voices, sat himself down to reflect on his future course of proceeding. It cost him but little time to decide on making the best of his way until he came opposite the mainland beyond Harlem river, and there, if possible, pass over into Westchester county, either by the aid of some fisherman along shore, or by seizing a boat, should there be no other alternative. Should this resource fail him, he had nothing left for it but to hide himself, until an opportunity of crossing presented itself, or boldly attempting to swim over; for he was aware that he would be hotly pursued next day. It was, therefore, of the last importance that the mainland should be gained before, or at

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least by daylight, and soon as he was sufficiently recovered, and had settled his plan of operations, he set forth on his journey.

He retained some recollection of the country, into which he had occasionally rambled in his school-boy days, and found his way with tolerable accuracy a distance of some miles, when he made the discovery that he was both hungry and weary—so weary, that he now for the first time became sensible that he had not yet entirely recovered the effects of his previous adventures and sufferings. He was now passing an old Dutch mansion, and though for the honour of our hero, we would fain bury the transaction in eternal oblivion, yet, does a scrupulous regard to that veracity becoming every writer of romance, impel us to the confession, that on this occasion, either hunger, or some unknown diabolical influence, prompted our hero to the enormity of robbing a hen-roost; but justice imperatively requires that he should be acquitted of the grand larceny of carrying off the hens. He poached a few of the eggs to assist him in recovering his wind, they being, as is well known, a sovereign specific, and withal a very rare article at that time, either because the rebel pullets had come to "a strike," or been nearly exterminated by the determined valour of the invincible red coats.

Though John was not, perhaps, wise enough to teach his grandmother to suck eggs, he nevertheless well knew their renovating qualities, and cautiously entering the premises under sanction of the great law of necessity, was groping about to find the sanctum sanctorum of Dame Partlet, when the dead silence around was suddenly disturbed by the significant cackle of a wakeful old rooster, who, it is presumed, was deputed to mount guard in those perilous times. This signal roused the old lady, who was nestling at his elbow, and who answered by a few notes of interrogation, as much as to say "what is the matter, my dear?" The inquiry aroused the next neighbour on the other side; the question was rapidly repeated from one to another, and in a few moments the entire roost was in an uproar. The cocks screamed; the hens cackled; the ducks quacked, and threw up their eyes appealing to heaven for protection; an old Chinese gander, with a voice like the filing of a handsaw, sent forth a note that would have done credit to the Italian Opera, and was answered by a whole generation of curs, whose music roused a donkey, and incited him to join in the concert. Finally, the old patriarch of the whole tribe, Squire Van Dozer, who never before was known to open his peepers before daylight in the morning, did incontinently awake, and shoving up the window, poked forth a long duck gun, with which he might peradventure have done some mischief, had not fate decreed that it should flash in the pan. These accumulated warnings admonished our hero to cut a stick, and make tracks; and according to custom on such occasions, he decamped without beat of drum, carrying with him three eggs, for which, in common courtesy, we think posterity should forgive him, seeing that one of them turned out no better than it should be. All this consumed but a few minutes, and feeling himself wonderfully refreshed by his stolen eggs—which, like stolen kisses, are doubtless the sweetest—he continued his route, without further incident or adventure, until he passed the famous *Helle Gatte*, where so many gallant apprentices, and doughty school-boys of the good city of mud, dust, and brickbats, have run such imminent risk of being utterly shipwrecked on the Hog's Back, the foaming Gridiron, and the Boiling Pot.

Being now near the spot where he contemplated crossing the East River into the county of Westchester, he skirted the beach, in hopes of finding a boat, which, not content with robbing the hen-roost, he was resolved to make free with, if necessary, without leave of the owner. For a while his search proved fruitless, but at length he had the good fortune to discover a little, light skiff, pulled up among the high salt grass, and half filled with water. There was a single paddle floating about in her, and it was doubtful whether, with this alone, he could manage to pilot his vessel across the strait, where the current is not only strong, but abounding in eddies. But there was no time to stand upon trifles, for the cool breeze which had succeeded the dead calm of the night, and the diminished lustre of the stars, admonished him the day was at hand. Stepping into the crazy craft, and pushing off, he brandished his paddle with might and main, making at first quite a reasonable progress, considering his boat was half full of water. But of all the rivers, inlets, straits, arms, bays or whirlpools on record, not excepting Charybdis and the Maelstrom, the East River, in this vicinity, is the most capricious and perplexing. The tide runs to every point of the compass, invisible to all eyes but those of the experienced pilot, and none can tell which way they are going, except by looking at the shores, and seeing them run away at the rate of ten miles an hour. It is the very pandemonium of waters; and, were this the age of any fables but those called emphatically humbugs, there would doubtless be as many water-fiends connected with this strait, as are to be found in the famous Hartz Mountains.

In despite of all his efforts, he was at length sucked into the eddies of the Boiling Pot, whence, after whirling about at random, he was consigned to the martyrdom of the Gridiron, and finally into the FryingPan, where his

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frail barque continued to revolve in an endless circle. Never was man so bedeviled and bamboozled by eddies and currents, and counter-currents; and such became his perplexity and vexation, that more than once he was sorely tempted to throw himself overboard, and take the chance of sinking or swimming. At length, however, by one of the caprices of the water-sprites, his boat was shot precipitately high and dry ashore, and he once again found himself on the soil of Long Island just as the sun rose.

There was no staying here in safety, and tired as he was, there was absolute necessity for renewed efforts. Laying hold of the rope by which his skiff had been fastened, he towed it along the shore with great labour and difficulty, until he believed her beyond the insidious wiles of the diabolical strait. Then, grown wiser by experience, he did what he ought to have done before, namely, pulled the light skiff to the land, and turning it over, discharged its cargo of salt water. Again launching her on the waves, he had the good fortune to reach the opposite shore in safety, just as the proprietors of the boat discovered the liberty he had taken with their property, and were calling after him lustily, with many unseemly expletives, not worth repeating. He did not think proper to return their morning salutation, but fastened his boat securely, and pointing to where she lay, bowed his thanks, and made the best of his way towards home.

Preferring the byways to the highways, least he might meet with some straggling parties of the enemy, he took his course along the bank of the little river Bronx, which flows through a retired part of the county, among hills, woods, and valleys, without meeting with any interruption. At length, finding himself excessively fatigued, and somewhat hungry, withal, he determined to seek refreshment and repose at an old, weather-beaten mansion, separated from the road he was travelling, by a long lane of nearly a quarter of a mile. It seemed retired and lonely, and he resolved to cast himself on the charity of its inmates, whoever they were. Approaching the house, he perceived a female face reconnoitring him from a broken window, and the sight of a woman seemed the signal of welcome. Meeting her at the door, he stated his wants, and after some little hesitation, she invited him in, saying in a tone of languid indifference, she would give him what she had.

This was indeed little, and homely enough; but the hungry traveller is no epicure, and beggars should not be choosers; so he ate his allowance with a good zest, and thankful heart; while at intervals they talked of the times, and other matters, until they seemed almost like old friends. Each had paid a portion of the price of liberty, for one had lost a husband, the other a father, in the contest. At length he began to feel the effects of his exertions, and want of rest the preceding night, added to a fatiguing day's journey, for it was now verging towards sunset. He asked permission to lay down and rest himself, but she seemed unwilling to grant his request, and on begging more earnestly, shook her head, and replied:

"It is dangerous to sleep here. The Skinners and Tories sometimes pay me a visit, against my will, and you know what sort of people they are."

"I know," said he, "the Skinners are the worst and basest of all God's creatures, a disgrace to their country, and a curse to this miserable district. Many of the Tories are not much better; but I have nothing to lose but my life, and that I can defend against such cowardly villains."

After many entreaties, and much reluctance, she at length consented that he should go and take his rest in the barn, which stood at some distance from the house. Here nestling himself in the new-made hay, he dropped at once into a sleep, such as is seldom enjoyed on beds of down. The reader is strenuously advised to follow his example, that he may be better prepared for what follows.

## CHAPTER V.

A RETURN TO OLD SCENES—OLD SQUIRE DAY, AND YOUNG SQUIRE DAY—THE ART OF CHEAP LIVING—LABOUR—SAVING INVENTIONS *vs.* LABOUR—A LIE DETECTED BY AN EYE— A YOUNG WOMAN'S REASONS, AND AN OLD MAN'S CALCULATIONS— THE COLONEL CONSIDERS CERTAIN MATTERS DEEPLY, AND AS IS USUAL ON SUCH OCCASIONS, DECIDES IN FAVOUR OF HIMSELF.

It is now a long time since we lost sight of Jane Hammond, who was not a person to be neglected by writers having the least pretensions to gallantry; first, because she was a peerless little damsel; secondly, because she had lost one lover; and thirdly, because she had found another, which last is such a remarkable circumstance, that it deserves to be specially explained and developed.

The old continental, as already stated, had in his visit to head-quarters, wherein, the reader doubtless recollects, he carried Pine's bridge sword in hand, ascertained that the story of our hero's desertion was a sheer calumny. His not returning from the expedition in which he wore that odious red wig, which had given Jane such dissatisfaction, was long since known to have been occasioned by having been surprised and captured; but what had become of him since, remained utterly unknown in the sequestered spot, where dwelt those most interested in his fate. The general impression was, that he had probably perished under the hardships endured by those who were stigmatised as rebel captives. But no one knew this to a certainty, and the obscurity that hung over his fate, served only to keep alive in the heart of his mistress a keener anxiety, a more affecting remembrance. Time, however, that hoary-headed benefactor of the human race, who first soothes, and then obliterates the keen pangs of sorrow; who, as he passes through his never-ceasing round, covers the rough traces of the past from our eyes, and at last completes his benefactions by bringing us to the quiet grave;—time gradually exercised his balmy influence over the heart of Jane, who continued to grieve, but did not despair; and, as if to aid in his pious endeavours, a blooming youth appeared as an ally to the wrinkled scytheman.

Old Squire Day, who is only known to the reader as an obstinate blockhead, according to the repeated declarations of the colonel, was gathered to his fathers, not long after the disappearance of our hero. Obstinate as he was, he could not hold out against the summons of him who conquers all, and yielded the citadel of life without argument, a thing he had never done before. We cannot learn that he performed any act, or decided any case in law or equity, which entitles him to the remembrance of posterity, and shall therefore refer our readers to his tomb-stone, on which the great Zoroaster Fisk exhausted his imagination in celebrating his virtues.

His death was not of the least consequence to anybody except his nephew, namesake, and heir, young Squire Day, as he was called, who immediately came from a neighbouring town, the name of which, in imitation of the sage Cid Hamet, we don't choose to remember, to take possession of the estate. Artemas, as he was christened, was in good time visited by the colonel, and returned the visit promptly; here he saw our heroine, and became suddenly smitten with a golden arrow, not from the quiver of death, but Dan Cupid. In other words, he entered into a calculation, the result of which was, that the daughter and heiress of the richest old codger in the township, would be a capital speculation in time of war, when it was so difficult to make money in an honest way. He therefore at once set himself to work to make the agreeable, and succeeded so eminently, that Jane could not endure the sight of him ever afterwards.

When he departed, the colonel pronounced him a puppy, and a blockhead to boot; while the daughter, after many pros and cons, decided that she had no opinion on the subject. He was sprucely dressed; his manners were about half way between a clodhopper and a dandy; his person was neither good, bad, or indifferent; his complexion was as rosy as a milkmaid; and the only legible word in the title-page of his face, was selfishness, imprinted in large capitals. There is no quality of the mind or heart that gives a meaner expression to the countenance; and Jane, though she had not seen enough of the world to institute comparisons, had been in the habit of contemplating a face where shone the most generous feelings, the most frank and manly expression of courage, sincerity, and honour. Besides this, it would seem, for we have often seen it exemplified, that there is an intuitive feeling in the mind of a sensible, high-souled woman, which supplies the place of experience, and at

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once detects the selfish hypocrite, who woos her for her wealth, not her worth.

Thus, father and daughter agreed perfectly in opinion on a subject which does not always produce such unanimity; and we therefore record it as one of the remarkable circumstances of the times that tried men's souls. Artemas, however, soon repeated his visit, and the opinions of both remained unchanged. Still he continued his attentions, until it came to pass, that scarcely a day dawned over their heads, in which he failed to call, on some pretence or other. Sometimes he brought Jane a bouquet of flowers; sometimes a great, rosy-cheeked apple; and at others, a newspaper from New York, for her father, which generally set the old continental in a blaze of wrath, and caused him to Thunder and Mars it prodigiously, when he saw his countrymen called rebels, and General Washington Mister. The colonel was, however, a passionate, capricious gentleman; one of those old weathercocks, that veer about with the slightest change of wind; first, his self-love became by degrees conciliated by the attentions of his neighbour; then he began to think he had done him great injustice by calling him a puppy, and blockhead to boot, and it became his duty to make him amends; lastly, from becoming used to see him, he began to feel the want of his company, and consequently saw him with pleasure. The colonel boasted to Jane that he had overcome a prejudice; but the honest truth of the matter is, his self-love had interfered to reverse the honest decision of his judgment, in the first instance, which, in nine cases out of ten, is the true one, because it is not purchased by appeals to our vanity, or selfishness; but is, as it were, an instinctive impulse that seldom deceives.

But the visits of Artemas had a directly opposite effect on the daughter, who found him every day more disagreeable. With that inspiration—for it can be nothing less—which enables the most thoughtless and inexperienced of the sex to detect the most latent indications, the most cautious approaches of a suitor, Jane had penetrated the motives of young Squire Day, while the old continental tickled his vanity with the idea that he himself was the sole attraction. There seems a repelling, as well as attractive power in love. It draws close to the object, if it be agreeable; while the attachment of one who is disagreeable, only tends to augment the antipathy. Such was the case with Jane. She might have endured the society of Artemas as a mere neighbour, or common acquaintance; but the moment she detected him as an admirer, she absolutely hated him. One reason, perhaps, was, he continually boasted of his intimacy with British officers, and was evidently infected with that inveterate disease of petty minds, the colonial feeling of inferiority, derived from long habit, and vulgar associations. He never displayed the least spark of patriotism, nor the slightest sympathy with the sufferings of his country.

Thus, while he lost ground with the young lady, he gained ground with the old gentleman. He got the blind side of him, for there is an instinct in selfishness which, as it were, irresistibly impels it to study the infirmities of our nature for the purpose of appropriating them to its purposes. Artemas possessed this instinct in great perfection, and soon discovered the favourite hobbies of the colonel, which he assisted him in mounting on all occasions. The story of old Ti—the carrying of Pine's bridge sword in hand—the value of his property, which Artemas always greatly over-estimated, to the great satisfaction of the old continental—and above all, the inexhaustible subject of mole-traps, horizontal wheels, and perpendicular axle-trees, was kept constantly alive by the ingenuity of the young squire, who was ever forgetting or remembering something apropos to the matter. At length he overthrew the colonel horse and foot, and gained his whole heart by suggesting a great improvement in a fanning-mill, by which, he demonstrated, the labour of at least twenty men would be superseded. The good man determined forthwith to set about constructing this superlative machine, and from this time Artemas was lord of the ascendant.

But for all this, the waters did not always flow smoothly. Artemas sometimes seriously annoyed the colonel by his fopperies. He had dubbed his domicile Dayspring House, in humble imitation of some of the aristocratic lords of manors in the county, and roused the rebellious feelings of the old continental by quoting Sir Somebody this, and the Honourable Colonel that, to show what great company he kept in the city, where, he boasted, he had liberty to go in and out at pleasure. On these occasions, the colonel would exclaim—

"Thunder and Mars! what business have you to keep company with the enemies of your country, instead of looking them in the face on the field of glory? I begin to suspect you are a rank tory, for you seem to think more of Sir Henry Clinton than Washington, who is worth more than all the lords in England, and the Lord Harry to boot."

On the whole, however, Artemas gained ground daily with the old gentleman, who cherished not the most remote suspicion that his visits had any reference to Jane. But he could make nothing of that pensive damsel, who

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took every occasion to avoid his society; and without absolutely insulting a man in whose company her father took such pleasure, did all that could be expected of a reasonable woman to let him see that she heartily wished him with his favourite red coats, in the city. The young squire soon discovered his case was hopeless, unless he could bring parental authority to his aid; but so far from being deterred from pursuit by the difficulty of overtaking the game, he only became more persevering in running it down. That grovelling selfishness which was his ruling passion, became only more eager and more determined by the obstacles in the way of its gratification, and what he had at first only coveted from avarice, he now sought as a means of gratifying his revenge.

One day, having brought the colonel into a perfect fool's paradise, by praising his system of rural economy, as well as his wonderful ingenuity in the invention of labour-saving machines, and wondering for the hundredth time at the affair of old Ti, Artemas thought he would break the ice a little so as to see the bottom of the water.

"By the way, colonel, what a fine, handsome girl, is your daughter. I should like to cultivate her acquaintance, but am sorry to see the wish is not reciprocal. She seems rather to shun me, I think."

"Hem—Thun—" The old continental did not exactly like this speech. He had flattered himself he was the sole attraction that brought the young squire so often to his house, and now, forsooth, it appeared he was thinking of an ignorant young baggage who did not comprehend the mystery of a mouse-trap. His vanity was mortified, and he gave vent to his feelings in the preceding fragments.

"I believe you have few neighbours, colonel," continued Artemas; "I don't recollect to have seen a single young man since I came to reside here."

"Very few—they are all gone to the army," where you ought to be, the colonel was about to add, but checked himself for once in his life.

"I am told, sir, that the old people at the stone house yonder, have a grandson, a dashing young fellow in his way, but who has gone over to the royalists not long since."

"Thunder and Mars! who told you that, sir?"

"I beg your pardon, colonel, I did not hear, I saw it with my own eyes the last time I was in the city."

"You saw it? when—how—where? Take care what you say, for if you speak truth I shall lose a son, and perhaps a daughter."

Artemas knew precisely the state of the case, and proceeded accordingly. "I would not assert, if I had not seen it with my own eyes. A tall, straight young man, with blue eyes, chestnut hair, and a scar just over his left eye."

"Ah! that's he! The young rogue got that when he cut down half a dozen rascally Yagers. Well, sir—Thunder and Mars! why don't you go on? You talk like a snail with his house on his back."

"Well, colonel, a scar just over his left eye. Such a young fellow I saw in British uniform, in company with other British soldiers, and was told he had enlisted in the corps of Loyal Americans, to escape being hanged as a spy."

"And his name?" asked the colonel, eagerly.

Artemas repeated the name of our hero, and the frank, honest old continental was convinced. Instead, however, of being sorry for poor Jane, he grew angry with John, or rather impatient of the pain he himself suffered under a conviction of his apostacy. He had, by degrees, grown to have a sort of fatherly affection for our hero, and looked forward to calling him son, with something like pride, though it cannot be denied that he sometimes wished him as rich as young Squire Day. The sudden revulsion of his feelings carried all before it, and he was proceeding to stamp about, firing volleys of expletives against John, in a voice so exalted as to attract the attention of Jane in the chamber above, who came to inquire what was the matter.

"Matter!" roared the colonel, "matter enough, and too much, too, for that matter. The young blockhead—the puppy—the rascal—the traitor—the deserter! I knew he hadn't the stuff to feel the gaff without putting up his sneakers and cackling."

"What mean you, father?" asked Jane.

"Mean? why—Thunder and Mars! I mean that young rascal who has made fools of both of us. I mean that puppy, John. Tell her all about it, squire, that she may cast him into outer darkness."

Artemas then commenced repeating his story, while Jane fixed her eye upon him with a steady gaze of incredulity that penetrated the icy region of his mean, malignant heart, causing him to pause and falter as he proceeded. With all his efforts, he could not look her in the face; and when the tale was done, he stood like a convicted criminal before her. Without a word of reply she left the room, with a glance of such withering scorn, as

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would have annihilated any man not cased in the invulnerable armour of dogged selfishness.

"Thunder and Mars! what does all this mean?" cried the colonel. "I expected to see crying and all that sort of thing. But so much the better. She is a chip of the old block, and scorns a rascally traitor to his country."

"Ye—e—e—s," replied Artemas, in a faint voice, "she certainly don't care much about him;" and mounting his horse, proceeded towards Dayspring in a state of mind not to be envied, leaving the colonel more puzzled than he ever was in his life before. His daughter appeared the moment of his departure, and placing her hand gently in his, asked—

"Father, do you believe that bad man?"

"Why—why—hem—yes, I do. There was truth in his tongue."

"No, father—there was falsehood on his tongue, in his eye, and in his heart. I saw it there. Every word he uttered was false. John may be dead—but—but—he will never disgrace himself, or me. I will stake my life, and all my hopes of happiness, on his love and his patriotism."

"Stake a fiddlestick! what can you know about mankind in general, and this young puppy in particular? You don't dream of the number of villains that hide a false heart under a fair face."

"True, father—my dreams are only the reflection of my waking experience, which has taught me to trust my father as I would myself, and John as I would my father. I am sure neither of them will ever deceive me, and if they should, I will not believe it, even on the evidence of my own eyes and ears, for I should think they deluded me."

The testy old continental was touched by this declaration of implicit faith, for he loved a compliment, as dearly as he did his daughter. But it lost more than half its unction by being coupled with one whom he believed unworthy the association.

"Jane," said he, kindly, "you are a good girl, but a great fool, and take after your mother. What motive could young Squire Day—who is a very different man from that obstinate old blockhead, his uncle—have for belying the rascal?"

This question caused great embarrassment, though Jane could have answered it satisfactorily, had she chosen. But a certain delicate, innate modesty, ever the inmate of a pure, unadulterated heart, stood in the way, and arrested her tongue. She remained silent and confused.

"Answer me, Jane, what motive could he have?"

"I don't know—sir—but I think—I suspect—he don't like John."

"Not like him! why, he never saw him in his life, except the other day in his red coat. What reason can he possibly have for disliking him? Come, Thunder and Mars! out with it!"

"Why, sir—because—because—"

"Because what? The deuce is in you, I believe."

"Because—he—he—lives so close by us, sir."

"Bravo!" cried the old continental, in a roar; "let any man tell me after this, that women can't give a good reason for anything. But seriously, Jane, I'm afraid it is too true."

"I don't believe a word of it, sir."

"Why not?"

"Why, because—because, I won't believe it."

"Good—another capital reason. One would suppose you got them from a blackberry bush, they are so plenty this morning."

Jane burst into tears, and was leaving the room, when the colonel called her back, and kissing her affectionately, said in a more serious tone:

"Suppose he proves this in black and white, hey? suppose he brings testimonials from New York, what then?"

"I shall not believe them, father. The wretch who does not shrink from telling falsehoods, will not stop at forging proofs, or bribing witnesses, dear father! For the last four or five years, I have seen John almost every day. I have shared his thoughts—I have seen his heart and his mind, a thousand times naked before me, and if we cannot rely on such experiences, in the name of heaven, what security can we have for human virtue, or what reliance on kindred or friends?"

"Well—there is something in that. But I ask again, what motive can Squire Day have for telling the tale, if it were not true?"

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"He—he—he—he," stammered Jane.

"He—what? you little goose?"

"He wants to marry me himself;" and Jane ran out of the room.

"Whew—w—w—Thunder and Mars! that alters the case," and the colonel fell into a deep cogitation, during which he was sorely beset by the counteracting influence of Ebony and Topaz. The demon of selfinterest, which is so often found lagging at the heels of old age, jogging its elbow, whispering in its ear, and jingling his money bags, to drown the still, small voice of conscience, now made a desperate assault on the old continental. He opened an account current, in which the balance preponderated mightily against our hero, and in favour of his rival. In short, he began to reason coolly on the subject; and, as we once heard a generous, warm-hearted son of old Erin affirm, the moment a man begins to reason on a subject in which his own interest is concerned, ten to one, he becomes more or less a scoundrel.

The course of the old continental's calculation ran thus: John was poor, the squire rich, carry one in favour of the squire; one was a ship richly laden, the other not even in ballast, carry two; one was a prisoner, perhaps a deserter, the other a squire of high degree, carry three; one had no genius for inventions, the other had taken out fourteen patents for labour-saving machines, carry fourteen; one was a bird in the hand, the other in the bush, carry two more; if Jane married Artemas, she would marry a good estate; if she married John, she would get nothing but a man, and a farm in perspective, carry six more. On the other hand, there was a contract of honour, but such contracts have no force in law, and besides, John being a deserter, as the colonel took for granted, on the present occasion, had been the first to violate it. Then there was the suffering of his daughter; but he passed that aside, as mere moonshine, as a rational woman would certainly in time learn to love her husband, provided he was not a baboon or a bear. While he was thus see-sawing on the line which separates right from wrong, and is no bigger than a hair, the aforesaid demon, that so often assumes the disguise of reason, impatient at his indecision, gave him a great push, and sent him at least sixteen yards beyond the dividing line, whereat the good gentleman was exceedingly relieved, inasmuch as the matter was now settled, and the balance so clearly in favour of reason and Artemas, that he resolutely determined to trouble himself no further in stating the account.

## CHAPTER VI.

A COUPLE OF INGENIOUS COMPARISONS WHICH IT IS HOPED THE READER WILL NOT PRONOUNCE ODIOUS—PROOFS THAT A WOMAN CAN GIVE EXCELLENT REASONS WHEN NOT UNDER COMPULSION—A VISIT, AND A DINNER—A YOUNG MAN OF SAVING GRACE—HOW TO TRAVEL CHEAP—MISCHIEVOUS EFFECTS OF MOLASSES AND WATER, COUPLED WITH A BAD DINNER.

Colonel Hammond was a man of great ardour, but little perseverance. His inclinations veered round like a weathercock in a high wind, but never rested long at one point of the compass. His resolutions might be likened to a ball, which is precipitated from the mouth of a gun at a prodigious rate, but soon becomes spent, or, if it meets sufficient resistance, either glances aside or rebounds, and rolls directly the other way. The discharges of his passions, in truth resembled those of a cannon, being accompanied by a great noise and an immense cloud of smoke, one of which soon dies away in echoes, becoming weaker at every repetition, and the other is speedily dissipated by expansion. He was therefore always in haste to put his resolves in execution lest he should change his mind in the interim.

The moment of his decision in favour of the young squire, was, therefore, that of communicating it to his daughter, who was (as writers of romance presume to say of the women of other countries) actually struck dumb at the annunciation. When she at length recovered her speech, (for such unnatural paroxysms seldom last long,) she ventured to remind her father of his pledge to John, sanctioned by the word of honour of an old continental, and that John was now striving to fulfil his part of the contract. In reply, the colonel urged the truth of the information received from Squire Day, and Jane reiterated her conviction, that he carried falsehood on his lips, in his eye, and in his heart. The colonel maintained, that she knew no more of what a man carried in his heart than the old codger in the moon; and as to telling when he spoke the truth, she might as well look for it at the bottom of a well, or in Rivington's Royal Gazette. The old gentleman scolded, and Jane wept. He commanded her to marry Artemas Day, and she pleaded her promise to John. He swore by Thunder and Mars she should, and she passionately declared she could not, which meant neither more nor less than that she would not obey him, at least until satisfied beyond all doubt that John had proved false to his country and to her.

"If he has," exclaimed she, with streaming eyes, and proud desperation, "if he has, I care not who is my husband. I will marry old Mingo, if my father commands me."

"That's a good girl—now kiss me, and let us be friends."

Jane complied with rather a bad grace, and less affection than she had ever felt before. The colonel called for his horse, whose head he turned towards Dayspring, and his daughter went forth to the margin of the little river, where, in the midst of scenes associated with many a tender recollection, many hours of innocent happiness, she fancied she was striving to discipline her heart into obedience to the will of her father. But, strange as it may seem, the more she strove, the more obstinate that heart became, and she returned home, as she verily believed, out of all patience with the sturdy little rebel.

Meanwhile, the colonel proceeded leisurely towards the abode of the young squire, and as he passed along by the side of his rich meadows, in which the lazy cattle reposed among luxurious beds of fragrant clover, in quiet abstraction chewing their cuds, or grazed kneedeep in the redundant timothy-grass; or cast an approving glance over the waving fields of golden grain, unscathed by the tempest of war, (for the prudent squire had a protection from the enemy,) he became more than ever determined to sacrifice his daughter to the golden calf in the wilderness. The two estates, adjoining each other, seemed predestined to matrimony; and the good gentleman had not the least doubt that this marriage, at least, was made in heaven. When he came into the presence of the thrifty young sapling, his thoughts had resolved themselves into something like the courtly speech of the nameless king, in Puss in Boots: "It will be your own fault, my lord marquis of Carabas, if you are not my son-in-law."

Artemas shrunk into the dark precincts of his narrow soul, when he saw the valiant old continental approaching, for his conscience whispered he was come to question him more closely on the subject of the apostacy of our hero. He, however, sleeked over his face with an insidious smile of welcome, and poured forth a

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profusion of civil speeches, such as the worthy old gentleman loved in his heart, seeing that age is so often neglected in this world, that nothing is more grateful than a little exuberance of attention, even when it lacks the salt of sincerity. Indeed, flattery is scarcely less agreeable from its want of truth, since it indirectly administers to our self-importance, by demonstrating that we are thought worth the trouble of deceiving. It administers at least to our pride, if not to our vanity, and gratifies that petty self-consequence which sticks like a burr to the skirts of insignificance.

"I am delighted beyond measure," cried Artemas, "at this friendly call. I hope you are come to dine with me, though, I regret to say, my cook is seriously indisposed, and you will have nothing but a cold cut. But an honest welcome is the best sauce to a bad dinner, and good wine needs no bush—though, I regret to say, that having scruples on the subject of drinking, I shall only be able to give you molasses and water, mixed with a little vinegar, which is the most wholesome beverage in the world. I have the finest spring in the county at your service."

This bill of fare did not much relish with the old continental, who despised cold cuts, and more especially molasses and water, from the bottom of his soul. After a few wry faces, and recollecting the importance of his mission, he acceded to the invitation, and recommending his horse to the special care of his host, was ushered into the house with great ceremony by the half-breed cockney.

"By the way, colonel," said Artemas, after they were seated, "if I recollect right, this is the anniversary of the capture of old Ti, and I must insist on your going through the whole siege after dinner."

"Thunder and Mars!" thought the colonel, "but the young squire is out in his chronology. He has got as far from the anniversary as from Jericho to Jerusalem. But so much the better; it proves that I have never told him the story, or that he has forgot it entirely. It will be quite new to him," and the old soldier rubbed his hands in ecstasy.

Previous to dinner, the young squire exhibited his labour-saving inventions, all of which indicated a pettifogging, parsimonious disposition, employed for selfish purposes. All were contrivances for saving money and labour; all originated in thrift, and each one superseded the labour of human hands. One would do as much threshing as half a dozen stout men; another cut as much straw in an hour as a man could in twenty-four; a third winnowed his grain at the saving of a great expense of time; and a machine for peeling apples was set forth as an invaluable expedient of economy. The colonel was at once beset by admiration and envy, for he could not but acknowledge his inferiority in the art of saving labour, and starving labourers. Following out consequences, he, at length, after a long pause, suddenly exclaimed—

"Thunder and Mars! squire, there will be no use for men at this rate. What is to become of all the poor labouring people, if you do everything by machinery, hey?"

"They can employ themselves in making and tending the machinery."

"But this won't employ them all, or there would be no use in machinery. What is to become of the rest of them?"

"That is no business of mine, colonel. All I know, is, that it puts money in my pocket; and my maxim is, take care of number one. Charity begins at home."

"Hum," muttered the old continental, who did not relish these sentiments any more than the cold cut and the molasses and water; for, with all his Thunder and Mars, he was at the bottom a kind-hearted man. He valued wealth, because it administered to his pride, rather than because he was avaricious; and could not help observing that the inventions of the squire were penny-saving contrivances, totally different from his own magnanimous machines, which were all directed against the inroads of various mischievous animals, and had for their object the greatest good of the greatest possible number of his fellow-creatures. He began to feel certain decided symptoms of contempt for his host, and determined to postpone his matrimonial overtures for the present.

The dinner and conversation of the squire strengthened the growing disgust of the colonel. The former we will not particularize, least we should irretrievably disgust the connoisseurs in French cookery, and shall decline specification altogether, after merely hinting that, on the host boasting that a slice of pork, to which he helped his guest, once appertained to a swine that weighed upwards of eight hundred pounds, which he had fattened in a manner, the particulars of which we scorn to record, the colonel dropped his knife and fork emphatically, eyed the young squire with peculiar hostility, and with great difficulty refrained from blazing out Thunder and Mars. Meanwhile, the molasses and water circulated briskly, and it seemed that the more resolutely the guest declined tasting, the more keenly it was relished by the host, who appeared actually inspired by the exhilarating beverage.

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He became garrulous and communicative; told story after story, illustrating the triumph of meanness and cunning over simplicity and inexperience; and every moment waxed more vain of what would have caused a blush of shame on the cheek of an honest man, much more of a gentleman. Finally, as the climax of his triumphs, he boasted that he had several times travelled from his house to the city, and back again, a distance of some sixty miles, without expending a penny. "I filled my pockets with dried apples," said he, "and whenever I felt a little hungry swallowed a piece or two, and then took a good drink of water. You know, dried apples when wet swell out enormously, and I did not require anything else for that day."

"And your horse—did he feed on dried apples, too?"

"Oh! as for him, I have taught the creature to take care of himself. In the first place, he can travel a whole day without eating or drinking; and in the second place, I have only to turn him loose in the road, and if there is a good pasture in a mile round, he will find his way there, I'll warrant you. He can pull down bars, or open a gate equal to any man in the county."

During the whole of this conversation, the colonel had discovered increasing symptoms of uneasy impatience. At every new display of the narrow, sordid, and dishonest mind of the young squire, he pushed his chair farther and farther from the table; and when Artemas concluded the eulogium on his horse, the triumph of his eloquence was complete. The old continental gave the chair one last decisive push, and rising abruptly from his seat, with an alacrity that seemed incompatible with his lame leg, made for the door without ceremony.

"What's your hurry, colonel? Won't you stay and drink tea?" said the squire.

"I have sworn never to drink tea until the British government gives up the right of taxing it," said the old continental, proudly.

"Well, won't you take a glass of buttermilk?"

"Hum—"

The colonel made him a profound bow, muttered something about returning his visit, dried apples, molasses and water, and buttermilk; and calling for his horse, rode home in a tempest of overwhelming disgust, which was increased, if possible, fourfold, when old Mingo pronounced it as his decided opinion, the colonel's horse had not had a mouthful to eat since morning, seeing he had debased himself by nibbling at the short grass in the court-yard.

Jane received her father with fear and trembling, for she had suspected the purport of his visit. It was proper, however, to say something; and she at length ventured to inquire where he had been, adding dinner was waiting, but that she presumed he had dined.

"Yes," said he, "on fat pork, washed down by molasses and water."

"Why, where could you have been, sir?"

"At young Squire Day's, who is ten times worse than that obstinate old blockhead, his father. The confounded skinflint! Jane, you shall never marry that mean, miserable, miserly, penny-saving machine—that molasses and water drinking trickster! I never knew a man with the soul of a half-starved caterpillar, contaminate his stomach with such stuff. Thunder and Mars! I say you shan't marry him!"

"I don't wish to marry him, father."

"Why, Jane, he'd starve you to death; he'd feed you on dried apples; he'd convert you into a labour-saving machine, and all his calculations would be, how he could squeeze most money out of you. Damme, Jane, if I don't believe he'd cheat himself out of his own money, if he could find no one else to take in. There is no use in talking, I tell you, Jane. You shan't marry him, and there is an end of the whole matter."

"But, dear father, you forget; it was you that insisted on my having him. I'm sure I'd as soon marry old Mingo."

"Eh! oh! ah!" quoth the colonel. "Yes, now I recollect—John—oh! aye! Well, Jane, I never will believe that a fellow who eats dried apples raw, cheats his neighbours, starves his work-people and his horse, and drinks nothing but molasses and water, can tell the truth if he tries ever so hard. I am sure John is after all an honest lad, and you may love him as much as you please."

"Thank you, dear, dear father!" cried Jane, and she kissed the old continental just as if he had been somebody that shall be nameless.

## CHAPTER VII.

A NAP SPOILED—SCENE IN A HAY—MOW—RUNNING A RACE AGAINST ODDS—A GHOST STORY, AND A SPECTRAL FIGHT— JOHN ESCAPES DEATH BY BEING NEARLY DROWNED—HIS RETURN HOME, AND WHAT HE SAW THERE—HIS DISINTERESTED SELF—DENIAL, AND WHAT HE GOT BY IT.

The place where John stopped to rest, was some ten miles only from the abode of the old colonel; and if by chance any of our readers should accuse him of being a stupid, insensible block, for being able to sleep within so short a distance from the object of his dearest affections, after so long an absence, all we can say in his behalf is, that he was debilitated by long confinement and disease, that he had been up all the previous night, and had walked all day without food or rest. If these considerations do not secure his acquittal, or, at least, greatly extenuate his offence, we must leave him to settle the matter with Jane Hammond, the first convenient opportunity. We know that persons in love are said to be insensible to hunger, thirst, and fatigue, but it is an absolute fact that man must sleep sometimes, though it is considered rather common; and, being common, must of course be rather a vulgar business.

Be this as it may, however, our hero did not wake until long after darkness had enveloped the world in her mantle of obscurity. Nor is it probable he would have waked then, had he not been roused by the sound of voices in the stable directly under him. From the difference of tone and other peculiarities, he soon ascertained that the party consisted of at least three or four, and among them he was certain he recognised the voice of his old enemy, Case Boshin. Recollecting what the good woman of the house had told him of the frequent visits of the Skinners, prudence, as well as curiosity, impelled him to lay still and listen.

At first he heard nothing but ribald jokes, mingled with loose profanity, and references to the outrages they had already committed or had in contemplation; but at length John was startled by a proposal that they should all adjourn to the hay—mow, and take a nap while the horses were feeding. This being carried, John thought it high time to take care of himself, as they were a desperate gang, and he could expect nothing but death from Case, on the score of old grievances. He had scarcely time to bury himself in the hay, with his mouth close against a wide crack which admitted the air, when the whole gang came and sat down within half a yard of where he lay. Here they began a consultation as to the propriety of going to sleep, as was at first decided; the result of which was, that they had better not, as they might oversleep themselves, and be too late for some adventure they had in view that night, but which they did not explain at the time.

"It's a dry business to be waiting here without something so drink. I wish we had some of old Boshin's cider to comfort us now," said one.

"Well, Hanck, if we can't have the cider, suppose we get Case to tell the story of cheating the old man so famously when they were boys."

"Agreed," rejoined Hanck. "Come, Case, tell us the story to pass away the time, while the horses are resting themselves."

Case then cleared his throat, and began as follows: "You must know, boys, the old man was a peeler himself at the spile, and betwixt him, and the old woman, and us boys, the cider used commonly always to run dry before Christmas; and as to buying any more, that was out of the question, for we had no money, and nobody would trust us. So the old man one time thought he would trick us all out of our share, by putting a lock on the cellar—door; and then he made a trap—door right under his bed, thinking we couldn't get in day or night unbeknown to him. Well, we boys one day laid a plot to out—general him, and git into the cellar. We were to wait till he began to snore, which he always did like a northwester—for we didn't much mind the old woman, who was plaguily sniffed at his contrivance to cheat us out of our share—and then I was to creep softly under the bed, lift up the trap—door, go down into the cellar with the great pewter mug, and hand up a mug of cider to each one in turn. Well, as soon as the old man begun to snore, what did I do but I creeps softly under the bed, lifts up the trap—door, goes down into the cellar, helps myself to a mug to make sure before the barrel gave out, and then begins to hand out the boys' share. When I got pretty nigh through the job, I whispered the boys the cider was jist out, when I'll

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be shot if the old man didn't put out his arm all of a sudden, and laying hold of the mug, swallowed every drop of it without fetching a single breath, only saying, 'It's my turn, now, boys.' Then he laid down, and began to snore as if nothing had happened, and we all concluded he must have done it in his sleep, for he never said a word about it afterwards."

This story tickled the auditors so sensibly, that Hanck threw himself backwards in an ecstasy of laughter, and fell upon the spot where John lay enconced beneath his covert.

"I'm blasted," exclaimed Hanck, "if I didn't feel something hard right under me," and hastily removed from the spot.

"Pooh! it's nothing but one of the beams," said Case.

"I'll see that, pretty quick," rejoined the other; and seizing a pitchfork, thrust it into the hay with such good-will that one of the prongs ran betwixt John's fingers, which he spread out instinctively to defend himself. He had, however, the self-possession to lay perfectly quiet, and Hanck, satisfied with the experiment, returned to his seat, observing, that it was now time to set out on their expedition to the old stone house, by which name the residence of our hero's grandfather was known in that part of the country. John now listened with breathless anxiety.

"Are you sure," said Case, "that the coast is clear?"

"Yes, just as sure as I set here. There is no one in the house but the old people, and a little gal; for you know the youngster is either dead, or a prisoner, or deserter, and we have nothing to fear from him. The old people can't defend themselves, nor the young woman, neither; and if they make a rout, we can soon stop their windpipes, I reckon."

"I 'most wish," replied Case, "the young chap was there, too, for I owe him a grudge or two, and should like to pay him off with interest. If I ever get a good chance, if I don't make daylight shine through him, I'm a nigger. Is that captive horse there, he got from the Yagers?"

"Yes, I saw him feeding in the meadow in front of the house, and by George he made my mouth water! He's a clipper, I tell you!"

"Well, I dreamt last night, I was riding him to church one Sunday. You two shall have all the rest of the stock, and I'll take him for my share," rejoined Case.

"Yes," said Hanck, "and I'll have a smack of the pretty gal to boot."

"No you won't," cried another, "I speak for the first taste; Case shall have the next, so, you see, you are in Jack come last."

"I'm blasted, if I do!" rejoined the other; and a dispute commenced, during which, John listened with feelings that may be easily imagined. He comprehended the designs of these ruthless marauders, and knew full well they were capable of any atrocity. Like the savages of the wilds, they spared neither sex nor age, and being beyond the reach of law, despised all the restraints of conscience and humanity. Forgetting his own situation, he gave vent to his agonized feelings in a suppressed groan, that instantly arrested the ribald jesters, and smote their hearts with the terrors of conscious guilt. A dead silence ensued, until Case, the most reckless villain of the trio, at length whispered to his comrades—

"Did you hear that?"

"Yes, that I did," said Hanck; "it sounded for all the world like the voice of a dead man."

"Let's be off like a shot, for I heard it thunder a great way off, and if it roars smartly the old folks may cry out and welcome, nobody will hear them."

"Nobody, but God!" cried John, in a hollow tone, taking a hint from the dastard fears of these guilty cowards, and following up the words by a long, deep groan, which sent the trio tumbling over each other out of the hay-mow in an ecstasy of fear. The moment they were gone he left his concealment, and seizing the pitchfork, after a brief consideration made for the road across the fields with all the speed in his power. The idea had occurred to him of cutting the bridles and girths of the horses, but unluckily he had no knife, and consequently he relinquished his purpose. To turn the horses loose was a dangerous experiment, as he could not tell but the party was lingering about the place; so he wisely took to his heels in hopes of reaching home before the villains arrived, in which case he was confident he could manage them, and with a resolution, if overtaken, to do his utmost to arrest their diabolical purposes.

Fortunately for our hero, the affrighted Skinners ran to the house, where they stopped to tell the good woman

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what they had heard in the barn, and though she could easily have explained the mystery, she contented herself with opening her eyes, lifting her hands, and from time to time exclaiming, "Well, for the land's sake!" and, "Who'd have thought it!" thereby clearly demonstrating that a woman can keep a secret, at least in the new world. Having, however, screwed up their courage by means of a canteen of spirits, which commodity is said to be a special antidote to the fear of ghosts, the trio at length ventured to return to the stable in a body, escorted by the landlady, with a lantern made of a hollow pumpkin, where they saddled their steeds in great trepidation, mounted, and galloped away as fast as the increasing darkness would permit. These delays gave John the start some miles, and as the distance was not more than nine or ten to the old stone house, his hopes revived with his progress. The night had now become excessively dark, owing to the approach of a thunder-storm, and he could scarcely distinguish the road, except by occasional flashes of vivid lightning, followed by low, muttering thunder, at a distance. He durst not stop to listen, for moments were too precious; but at times he fancied he could hear the clattering of hoofs behind him, and his mind became busily occupied in devising a plan of defence, in the event of being overtaken. He still carried his pitchfork, and felt assured that, by choosing a favourable position, he could make good his stand against the odds of three to one. This was his only hope; for, save the ruins of a house that had been burnt by the enemy, there was no traces of a human habitation on this unfrequented by-road. There was no help, except in the strength of his arm, the firmness of his heart, and the blessing of heaven.

He had now, as he discovered by the aid of a flash of lightning, arrived within a few yards of an old bridge, which spanned a deep and rapid stream, that by the labour of ages had worn its way through a ledge of high rocks, covered with gloomy evergreens. There was no passing the stream except over the bridge, the rocks on either hand being high and precipitous; and here, perceiving the enemy was now rapidly approaching, he determined to make his last stand. His first essay was to attempt pulling up some of the planks of the bridge, but they were too strongly fastened down to admit of this, and he resolved to resort to start-agem against such fearful odds. It was a retired, gloomy spot, such as where rustic chroniclers are wont to locate their tales of superstitious terrors, and already renowned in tradition for various unaccountable appearances, especially at night, for which the most approved soothsayers could not account on any rational principles. One of the best authenticated, was that of Mangham, the pedlar and tinker, and we shall give it here as a sample of all the rest.

Mangham was a man of notorious veracity, and, on returning from a trip to New York, with his knapsack replenished by various articles suitable to the wants and vanities of the rural populace, met with the following extraordinary adventure: His pack was heavy, the day hot, and he had frequent occasion to stop by the way to quench his thirst with milk punch, which was his favourite beverage. Night was coming on apace, and fearing to halt for a lodging at any of the houses by the way-side, which were often infested by Skinners, Yagers, and other banditti fry, which roamed between the lines, he determined to push on to the abode of Colonel Hammond. Here he always found a welcome for his news, and he was sure of it now, for he had some papers of pins, a supply of needles, and other choice articles for Jane, purchased with money furnished by the old continental, who had a bad habit of paying beforehand.

Accordingly, he continued on his way far into the night, and as near as he could guess arrived at the bridge, soon to be illustrated by the exploits of our hero, about the hour of eleven. Here, feeling himself greatly fatigued, and withal very thirsty, he set down his load, and proceeded to drink from the brook after the primitive fashion, that is to say, laying himself down at full length, and quaffing the current as it murmured by. But what was his surprise (for he declared he was not the least alarmed) to find that the moment his lips touched the water, he was saluted by a tweak of the nose that brought tears into his eyes, while at the same time the brook, instead of murmuring musically along as usual, grumbled out in a hoarse voice, "What business have you to drink my water?"

The pedlar was at first somewhat indignant at this assault on his nose, which was a very goodly one, and somewhat rosy at the extremity. At first he surmised it might be a snapping-turtle, then a snake, and lastly a lobster, that is, a fresh water lobster; but when he heard the question, "What business have you to drink my water?" he abandoned all these theories as untenable. Though no great scholar, Mangham was by birth a German, and as such, deeply imbued with the legends of Number Nip and the Hartz Mountain. He accordingly made up his mind at once that he was taking an undue liberty with an Undine, or some other pestilent damsel of the web-footed breed, and leaving his untasted draught, retired to the spot where he had deposited his merchandise at the corner of the bridge.

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He first thought of making the best of his way to the mansion of the colonel; but he felt so tired, he could not find in his heart to go any farther without resting, and the murmurs of the brook created an irresistible longing for a taste of its waters. In the midst of this conflict, he fell asleep with his head on his pack, and how long he remained thus he could not exactly tell; but this he could swear to, he ever and anon heard the words, "What business have you to drink of my water?" ringing in his ears, accompanied by a succession of tweaks at his nose that made his eyes wink though he was fast asleep.

Every time the words were repeated, they became louder and louder, and the tweaks waxed more emphatical, until, at length, his nose was actually pulled off, which caused him suddenly to awake in great tribulation. The first object he recognised on opening his eyes, was an extremely ugly old woman, whose face, being illustrated by the beams of a full moon, was marvellously imposing, as she held up his nose in her hand with a look of diabolical triumph. She had evidently just emerged from the stream, for the drops trickled from her long, green locks, which sparkled like quicksilver in the beams of the moon. One of these drops happening to fall on his hand, immediately raised a blister, it was so hot, which made him conclude the old woman came from a place which shall be nameless, and was no better than she should be. He was now, as he confessed, very much frightened, and would have ran away had it not been for leaving his nose behind.

"You drank my water," at length screamed the old woman, "without asking my leave, and I have taken your nose in payment, though, ifegs, it's no great bargain, for it's the ugliest piece of furniture I ever seed."

The old woman, it will be perceived, was no great scholar. But however that may be, the pedlar became somewhat wroth at this reflection on his nose, of which he was excessively vain. Anger being the father of valour, this attack on his proboscis caused Mangham to feel somewhat pugnacious, or, as he used to express it, "a little wolfish about the ears." Instead of apologizing for his offence, and then vindicating his nose, he began at the wrong end—he put the cart before the horse, and maintained that his nose was as goodly a nose as any in the whole county, not excepting her own. Finally, he pledged his veracity that he had not tasted a single drop of water, and demanded the restitution of his nose on the ground that he had not got value received for it, and consequently the whole transaction was illegal.

"Heigh for a fiddlestick's end!" exclaimed the Undine old woman. "Here's a pretty kettle of fish about one of the ugliest noses that ever disfigured `the human face divine,' as the poet says. It would disgrace the snout of a pig. But I am a goddess of few words, and always speak to the purpose. The short and the long of the business is, that I must have the rummaging of that pack of yours, and the privilege of selecting such articles as I choose, without paying for them, or I swear by my fins you shall go without a handle to your face all the rest of your life."

Finding, after a succession of most humble appeals, reinforced occasionally by various cunning devices to overreach or intimidate the old woman, that it was vain to appeal to her pity or her fears, and horrorstricken at the idea of going home without his nose, the poor pedlar at last assented to the terms of the paction, and permitted her to rummage his pack at discretion. The envious old creature selected all the little articles purchased for Jane Hammond, with the money furnished by the colonel, and having satisfied herself fully, in order to show herself a woman of her word, stuck the tinker's nose on again as fast as though it had never been removed. Then wishing him joy on its recovery, and sprinkling him with a few drops of hot water which she shook from her green locks, she wished him a pleasant journey, and told him to march about his business without looking behind him, if he knew when he was well off.

When Mangham arrived at the house of the colonel, and in order to account for not bringing the articles ordered for our heroine, related the preceding story, the old continental laughed full two hours, and affirmed, by Thunder and Mars, that never was so capital a nose so cheaply purchased. He forgave him his debt, and poor Jane lamented nothing so much as the loss of the needles and pins, which were worth about their weight in gold at that time. Many people doubted this rencontre with the Undine, but our own opinion is, that this old lady was one of the nymphs celebrated by the ancient poets, who, in the lapse of so many centuries, had lost her beauty, forgot her grammar, outlived her good manners, and expended all her integrity in gaining an honest livelihood among Christians.

It was at this elfin spot, so memorable in the biography of the tinker, that John had now determined to make a stand against the Skinners, in defiance of the old woman and the black fiddler, who had more than once been seen playing there, accompanied by a shaggy bear, who danced almost equal to Fanny Esler, and a great, whiskered, bandy-legged turnspit, who beat time with his tail with all the inimitable grace of a leader of the band at an Italian

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opera. Armed with his pitchfork, and equipped in his old white muslin suit, a little the worse for wear, it must be confessed, he stood at the front of the bridge waiting the coming of the midnight ruffians, whom he could not outrun. They gained the bridge almost the instant he had taken his post; but the moment they distinguished his dingy white figure through the gloom, predisposed by the groans in the hay-mow, they suddenly halted, wheeled about, and, with the exception of Case Boshin, made a precipitate retrograde movement. Even the redoubtable Case, after standing his ground a few moments, his teeth chattering in his head, followed the example, exclaiming aloud at intervals, "Where are you running to, blast your eyes?"

"Didn't you see it?" answered Hanck.

"See what, you sneaking ninny?"

"Why that there white thing standing on the bridge."

"Pooh! 'twas nothing but the post."

"The posts are as black as my hat. There! there! I saw it by that flash of lightning as plain as I see you," persisted Hanck. "I'm for going back for my part. We shall have a pelting shower soon, and I've no notion of getting a wet jacket to-night."

"If it storms, so much the better," replied Case; "there will be no scouting parties out, and the coast will be clear. Come along, you cowardly fools; follow me, I'm not afraid of Spooks." Saying this, he spurred his horse once more towards the bridge, and the two others, ashamed of their fears, or afraid to stay behind, unwillingly followed, for cowardice is felt as a disgrace even among those who have lost all other manly feelings.

John, who had noticed the retreat and divined its cause, took a hint from their fears, and as they were just on the point of planting their horses' hoofs on the bridge, gave them a perfect fac-simile of the groan he had uttered in the hay-mow. It was a groan so sonorous, so sepulchral, and unearthly, that it startled the very silent night, and roused the sleeping echoes of the rocks around. It was too much for the nerves of these midnight marauders, and, as if by one impulse, they one and all scampered away the road they came without once venturing to look behind them.

As, however, the distance increased, their courage again began to revive, and reflecting that there was no other road by which they could accomplish their design that night, they once more halted and sought to disguise their fears by bantering and joking each other, until, by degrees, they once more plucked up the courage to advance. Our hero heard their approach, though he could not yet see them in the pitchy darkness, which increased every moment as the storm began to howl at a distance. The first hoof planted on the bridge, was the signal for springing forward and darting his weapon in the direction whence the sound proceeded. They were all advancing abreast, and the only effect of this movement, was grazing the skin of Hanck's horse, who suddenly reared and threw him, but without any serious injury.

The storm having now passed off in another direction, and the moon occasionally peeping out from behind the clouds, afforded the combatants opportunities of seeing each other at intervals. The Skinners, being soon convinced it was no ghost they had to encounter, but a thing of real flesh and blood, became only more bold and ferocious in consequence. They demanded, with oaths and threats, that he should let them pass; but he made no reply, and continued to stand on the defensive. Enraged at this interruption, which so greatly impeded their meditated plan of robbery, the party now dashed forward, and a furious contest ensued. The weapon of our hero, being none of the sharpest, and his thrusts often made at random, while the moon passed behind a cloud, were sometimes spent on the air, an anon glanced aside from the tough skin of the horses; while the others, being only armed with broadswords, were cautious how they approached him. In this way, the fight continued for some time without either party sustaining any material injury, when, as fortune chanced, or fate decreed, the weight and violent action of the horses proved too great for the crazy old bridge, one of the planks of which suddenly gave way under him, and our hero, falling through, remained for a brief moment supporting himself by his arms. While in this situation, and before he could recover himself, he received a blow on the head from a broadsword, which inflicted a severe wound, and so stunned him that he lost his hold, fell through the opening, and was carried away by the stream.

The marauders, now freed from their unknown antagonist, proceeded forward with all speed on their destination, leaving poor John "alone in his glory." Being prevented from sinking by the force of the current, he was carried some hundred yards down the stream, and finally deposited on a little point of land, projecting outwards, and forming an eddy on the lower side. Here he lay unconscious of his situation for some time, his body

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floating, his head resting on the sloping sand. By degrees, however, he at length, in some measure, regained his recollection, and was able to drag himself entirely out of the water, the coldness of which had in a great measure staunched the bleeding from his wound. Collecting his benumbed faculties, he at length attempted to rise, but it was only after repeated efforts that he succeeded, and when he did, his head became so dizzy that he fell to the ground again. Still, animated by the hope of saving his home from plunder, and its aged inmates from violence, perhaps murder, he repeated his efforts, and at length found himself able to walk feebly onwards.

Not knowing how long he had remained in a state of insensibility, he was unable to judge whether it was now possible to reach home in time to arrest the scheme of plunder; but at all events he determined to try, and regaining the bridge, he seized his trusty weapon, and set forth with all the speed in his power. But spite of all his efforts, his progress kept no pace with his wishes or his exertions. He was often obliged to stop and take breath, and his weakness at every moment was augmented by the blood that now trickled from his wound, while the bitter consciousness that every moment of delay might enable the plunderers to accomplish their purpose, distracted his mind and enfeebled his body. Every instant he expected to meet them on their return, and felt that in his present condition he was entirely at their mercy.

He, however, proceeded onwards without encountering that peril, until, just as the rising sun glanced his golden beams athwart the dewy fields, he found himself looking from a rising ground down into the smiling vale where nestled his long lost home. He saw the moss-covered roof of the old stone house, standing in all its loneliness; but no smoke rose from out the chimney-top, as was wont at that hour, and the absence of this token of life and animation smote like the cold hand of death on his heart. As he gazed around on the fields, he saw neither cattle or sheep, and the conviction rushed on his mind that he had come too late. He approached the door of the once peaceful mansion with fearful anticipations, and found it standing wide open. He looked in, and saw a sight that thrilled his very soul with mingled anguish and bitter revenge. The good old housewife was sitting, with the head of the old man resting in her lap, while his body lay extended on the floor, which was covered with blood. A plaintive moaning announced that he still lived, but the wife was silent as the grave. Her pale, wrinkled face, was turned towards heaven, as if appealing to its justice, or in humble resignation to its decrees; her few gray hairs were without the accustomed covering, and she neither complained or wept. As John stood contemplating this scene of wo, incapable of moving, and almost lifeless, she drew a long, deep sigh, and at length murmured, as to herself, these melancholy words—

"My son is dead, my husband is dead, and John will never come home again. Why, O Father of mercy! why can't I die too?"

In an instant John was on his knees by the side of his grandfather.

"Mother!" cried he, for he remembered no other, "mother, see! I *am* come home, never to leave you alone again, so help me heaven!"

She looked at him wistfully, as if scarcely recognising the speaker, or comprehending his speech, and seeing the bloody gash in his head, murmured as to herself—

"More murder—more murder—all but me can die!"

John took her cold, withered hand, and wept over it. There is a magic power in tears of heartfelt sympathy, that communicates with the hearts of others, and awakens even despair to recollection. She looked in his face a while, and by degrees recognised her grandson.

"Oh! John! John! why did you leave us here all alone? See what has come to us," and she pointed to the bleeding head in her lap. This recalled him to a sense of the necessity of action, rather than the indulgence of unavailing sorrow. He perceived the old man was not dead, and lifting him tenderly in his arms, placed his body on a bed, and, as well as he could, bound up the wound. He looked round for something else which might administer to his aid, but the room was a scene of utter desolation. He saw no means of comfort or revival to the aged victim, whose low moans smote him to the heart, and with sudden determination, addressed his grandmother—

"I will return in a few minutes," said he, and took his way towards the house of Colonel Hammond, fast as his waning strength would permit. He soon reached the spot, and knocking at the door with eager impatience, it was opened by a sweet vision, that broke upon him like a pale aurora out of the morning mists. She screamed at the sight of the bloody spectre, and was about to call her father, when a well-known voice arrested her steps.

"Jane! dearest Jane! have you forgotten me?"

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Jane did not, she could not reply, for her voice was smothered in his bosom for some brief moments, after which she raised her head, and as she scanned his pale face and wretched attire, spotted with blood, asked with a gush of tenderness—

"Oh! tell me where you have been, and what has happened to you?"

"Not now—I have other things to tell you, and must not lose a moment." He then briefly and hurriedly related the incidents we have just described, and the reason of his unceremonious intrusion, while Jane, overpowered by the force of love and pity, wept once more on his bosom.

"Thunder and Mars!" exclaimed the colonel, who was just emerging from his dormitory, "What is all this? Who are you, sir? and what are you about, madam?"

"Father," answered Jane, for it is the privilege of the sex to speak first, "father, don't you know him?"

"Not I. Thun—my acquaintance is not so extensive among such kinds of gentry, as yours, it seems. But, hey! what! now I come to look—why, zounds! if I don't believe it's that puppy, John! Give me your hand, boy. I'm right glad to see you, especially as you don't wear a red coat, I see. But where have you been? what have you been doing? what brought you here in such a trim? and—and—Thunder and Mars! why don't you speak, you blockhead?"

John then made known his errand, and to do him justice, the colonel sympathised deeply in his tale. "But no use in talking," cried he, "something must be done at once. I know a little of flesh—wounds, myself, and will order my horse and go with you. In the meantime, we must send for Doctor Foster, who stops bleeding with three leaves—and—and—what shall we do, Jane?"

"If you will permit me, father," answered Jane, blushing a little, "I will go over myself, at once, and take such things as may be useful; you know I am an excellent doctor, sir!"

"I know you are an excellent nurse, and that is worth all the doctors in the land," replied the colonel, affectionately.

Jane proceeded to collect various articles, with which, all women whose education has been properly attended to, know so well how to administer to bodily suffering, and while the colonel was waiting for his horse, accompanied our hero on her errand of mercy. During the whole of their walk, it is our solemn belief they never once thought of themselves, except just in passing through a little grove, whose wicked twilight seduced them for a moment along a narrow path, which shortened the distance materially, they came so close together, that the young man could not in good manners avoid pressing his companion to his heart, and imprinting a kiss on her lips, for which, we hope heaven and our female readers will forgive him.

On their arrival, they found the little maid, who had been reared in the family and become a part of it, having been frightened away at the first alarm of the Skinners, was now returned, and had resumed her household duties. With her assistance, everything was done for the poor wounded old man that seemed necessary, or was within their reach; the colonel arrived soon after, and afforded the aid of his experience, and Doctor Foster in good time made his appearance. But as the wound had already ceased bleeding, he found no opportunity of demonstrating the efficacy of the magic leaves, and all he could do was to insist upon it, that, had he been called in time, he would have stopped the blood to a dead certainty.

We will not tax the patience of the gentle reader, by detailing the process by which the old man was slowly rescued from the grave, by the gentle ministration of Jane, the sage advice of the colonel, and the providential absence of Doctor Foster, who was confined to his house by an attack of inflammatory rheumatism. The good patriarch was cured of his wound, but never recovered from its effects. His mind was irretrievably gone; and during the brief remaining period of his life, his only occupation was rambling about bareheaded, in storm and sunshine, picking up chips and sticks, which he would bring in and lay on the fire, muttering to himself, "Yes—yes—a tory is a highway robber."

The Skinners, it seems, had arrived about an hour after midnight, and while two of them were collecting the spoil out of doors, the third plundered the house within, at the same time heaping insult and outrage on the helpless old couple. Aged and decrepid as he was, the good man possessed a portion of that spirit which had descended to his son and grandson. He could not resist, but reproached the robber as an enemy to his country and his God; as a brute, who disgraced the name of man; as a coward, possessing only the courage to war on women, children, and old age; as a midnight thief, who dared not fight either for or against his countrymen in the face of day, and lived by the plunder of pig—styes and hen—roosts. Irritated by these cutting reproaches, Case Boshin, for

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he it was, struck the old man across the head with his cutlass, and though he came short of murdering his body, forever robbed him of the divinity of mind. The wife never thoroughly recovered the shock of that terrible night; the mouldering tenement had received a rude jostle that shook it to the foundation, and it became evident, that, as the ancient pair had travelled the devious journey of life for more than threescore years together, so in their deaths they would not be long divided.

In this state of things, it was impossible for our hero to think of resuming his military career, even had he not bound himself by a promise not to leave home for any length of time. Indeed, his personal labours were now indispensable to the subsistence of the family. The cattle had been stolen from the fields, and the house rifled of all that was valuable. True, the old continental generously offered to supply all that was wanting, and more besides; but John at once almost sternly rejected his kindness, and he went away in high dudgeon, denouncing him as a purse-proud, beggarly puppy. But Jane—the gentle, delicate, generous Jane! John could not be offended with her, when almost every day she brought or sent some little comfort or convenience, not of sufficient value to load him with the weight of obligation, but still enough to call forth all his gratitude. Still, he continued rather restive under this system of persevering benefits, and more than once did the noble-hearted girl feel her heart swell with mingled sorrow and indignation, under a vague suspicion that he did not value her sufficiently to permit her to become his benefactress. She fancied, too, that he did not seek her as eagerly or as often as usual, nor welcome her with the warmth he used to do, previous to his last long absence. Her heart did not deceive her; for the sense of pecuniary obligation is not favourable to love, which is a strictly democratic principle, and thrives best in the generous soil of equality.

One evening, when all immediate apprehension for the life of his grandfather had subsided, John had walked over to the colonel's, and was now for the first time questioned as to the cause of his long absence. He accordingly entered into a full detail of his adventures, whereat the old continental uttered many a "Thunder and Mars," and his daughter, many an exclamation of apprehension, wonder, and delight. It would be utterly belying the heart of an old soldier to deny that the story of his sufferings, his steadiness, gallantry, and patriotism, did not greatly raise him in the estimation of the colonel; and it would be a still more atrocious slander of the heart of woman, to insinuate that every hardship he endured, and every danger he encountered, did not endear him still more to the colonel's daughter.

"By the memory of the immortal Wolfe!" cried the old soldier, when he had done, "By the memory of the immortal Wolfe, but this beats the siege of old Ti! Thunder and Mars! I've a great mind—hum—"

"To do what?" asked Jane, with a bright, speaking eye.

"I've a great mind to give—hum—"

"To give what, father?"

"I've a great mind—yes, Thunder and Mars! I will—hum—"

"Will what, dear father?"

"Why, zounds! marry you to this puppy, as soon as we can find a parson to do the job. Hey, John! what say you to that, dummy, for you seem to have lost your tongue in the last two minutes?"

John, as most of our readers will probably decide, proved himself on this occasion a great blockhead, in not jumping at this offer as eagerly as he did from the stern of the old hospital-ship; and we frankly confess, that when we came to this point in his history, we felt a great inclination to discard him forever from our good graces, and let him float quietly the rest of his way to oblivion. Reflecting, however, a little more deeply on the subject, it occurred to us, that, inasmuch as a faultless hero was a monster, a perfect *lusus naturæ*, on the whole we decided to finish his biography. The truth is, he belonged to that strange, perverse class of people, who feel a great deal more pleasure in conferring than receiving benefits. In fact, he was naturally excessively proud; and what heightens the enormity of this fault, he had become only the more so, since the distance between himself and his mistress had been increased by the losses lately sustained by his family, and the little obligations conferred on them by Jane. He felt the weight of his inferiority of position, and it had become a settled principle in his mind, never to claim the promise of the colonel until he had fulfilled the conditions on which it was made. This is all we can allege in his behalf, and with this explanation we resign him to the mercy of the judicious and gentle reader.

Instead of accepting promptly, and expressing his thanks with all the eloquence of profound gratitude, he muttered, and stammered, and coloured, and exhibited a degree of embarrassment perfectly inexplicable to the colonel and his daughter, one of whom eyed him ferociously, the other with indignant amazement. At length he

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managed to stammer—

"Colonel Hammond—I—I cannot express my gratitude."

"Then hold your tongue, sir, or say something that people in their senses can understand."

"Nay, hear me, sir. You once told me I was a beggar, and that the only daughter of Colonel Hammond should never unite herself to a man without fortune or reputation. I had neither one nor the other, then; I have, if possible, less of either now. I promised you, that if heaven spared me, and opportunity offered, I would make myself worthy of Jane, and at that time I thought I could keep my word. But my prospects are now more gloomy than ever. The little property I might have expected to inherit, is desolated, and what is of yet more consequence, the situation of my grandparents is such, that I cannot, I will not leave them now, to seek my fortune in the service of my country. No hope remains that I shall ever be able to fulfil my part of the conditions, on which, alone, I can consent to receive the greatest blessing of my life; and without this, I have solemnly sworn never to claim the hand of the only woman I ever loved, or can love. I must fairly win her—I must feel that she does not sink in the world when she becomes mine, or mine she will never be, though I would move heaven and earth to win her."

"And so, sir, you refuse my daughter, do you? Very well—I say no more—there's the door. Do you understand?" exclaimed the colonel, as he shuffled to the door, and threw it wide open.

"When you come to reflect on my motives, sir—"

"Reflect! Thunder and Mars! what's the use of reflecting, sir? The thing is perfectly plain. You have rejected the only daughter of Colonel Hammond, an old continental, and the richest man in the whole township. I comprehend that perfectly, and as to your motives, I don't care a straw about them. There's the door, sir!" The colonel then bustled out of the room in a fury, leaving our hero alone with Jane.

"Jane—dearest Jane! you, at least, understand me, I hope?" said John.

Jane made no answer, but as she followed her father, gave him one look which the young recreant remembered for many a day. It was not precisely such a look as she bestowed on Artemas Day, with which she annihilated all his hopes at one blow, but a glance of mingled reproach, wounded pride, and sorrowful anger, such as, when it flashes from the eye of one we love, cuts deep into the heart. Jane was a woman, not quite an angel, and there are so many reasons deeply mortifying to the sex, and dishonourable to man for the course pursued by our hero on this occasion, that we think Jane may be excused for ascribing to want of true affection, what in reality proceeded from the highest, purest sources of virtuous love. She was wrong in this, and it remains to be seen whether she will ever come right again.

John was actually confounded at the result of his magnanimous forbearance and self-denial. He remained some time where he was, either from not exactly knowing what to do with himself, or from a latent hope that Jane would return. But she came no more; and at length he slowly took his way towards his disconsolate home, occupied by a strange medley of feelings. He had, without doubt, from sheer ignorance of the workings of that incomprehensible machine, the human heart, flattered himself that his heroic disinterestedness would have won the admiration of his mistress, and the applause of her father; but he had been turned, as it were, out of doors by the colonel, and had received from Jane a look that spoke volumes, not of approval, but reproach, and—he could not tell what besides. He tried to persuade himself he was an injured man, and such attempts are seldom unsuccessful. This conviction is always a source of great consolation, and accordingly as he proceeded on his way, his chest gradually expanded, he held his head higher, his step became more elastic, and his form assumed additional dignity. In short, he had made friends with himself, and the alliance sustained him against the censure or disapproval of others.

Our heroine, in the meantime, had retired to her chamber. She did not weep, for pride came to her aid; and whatever severe moralists may say, "pride oft keeps men, and women, too, from falling." At first her feelings partook more of indignation than of disappointed hope, or wounded affection. She called to mind all she had felt and suffered for the ungrateful youth; how she had mourned his supposed delinquencies, sympathised in his sufferings, wept over his captivity, scorned his calumniators, and strange to say, these recollections, instead of hardening, softened her heart. They brought her back into her wonted state of feeling, and before pride could put in another word, or was aware of the trick her heart was playing her, the little bosom traitor gradually lured her back again to her old accustomed love. Then, taking advantage of this cessation of hostilities, he solemnly assured her that this imaginary rejection, was the best possible proof of the purity of her lover's passion. It demonstrated his disinterestedness beyond a doubt; it showed he loved her better than himself, and that he was capable of every

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sacrifice, but that of her respectability and happiness.

"What a fool I have been," thought Jane, and burst into a passion of tears. "It is all over now. He is as proud as Lucifer—how I do hate proud men. He will never come here again, unless he is sent for; he will wait a long time before *I* send for him. But he is poor; and after all, pride is the best safeguard of poverty, and makes it respectable. I would not give much for a man without pride, for my part. Oh! if I could only see him once more, just to explain that look I gave him—I wish I had been blind just then; but he'll never come near me again, with that confounded pride of his—and I, forsooth, am expected to make the first advances—I'll be switched if I do—I'll see him in Guinea first—I will never speak to him again, unless he goes down on his knees, and begs my pardon for rejecting me." This single word, rejecting, grated so harshly on her feelings, that it did John's business for that time; and thus ended her soliloquy.

The month of September now came round on the ever-rolling wheels of time, and every one at the old stone house being as well as could be expected, John felt the weight of inaction every day more intolerable; especially as the sight of the colonel's chimneys operated as a perpetual incentive to activity and exertion, by which alone he could hope to win his mistress with honour to himself and her. He had solemnly covenanted with himself to do this; and although most people do not much mind breaking faith with that worthy gentleman, John had too many motives for keeping it, to admit of such delinquency. As he could not join the army, for reasons already stated, all that was left him was to make occasional excursions with some of the young fellows of the neighbourhood, in the hope of serving his country by intercepting straggling plunderers, or giving information which might be useful to the cause to which his whole soul was devoted. One of these occasions led to an adventure which produced a sudden change in his prospects, and demonstrated that though chance may present opportunities for acquiring distinction, they can only be appropriated successfully by courage, integrity and patriotism.

## CHAPTER VIII.

SKETCH OF A SEPTEMBER MORNING—A GROUP OF STRANGERS INTRODUCED—THE GAME—CHICKEN AND HER COMMANDER—UTILITY OF MUSIC—A RIDE AND A DIALOGUE—QUAKERS MILITANT—DIFFICULTY OF THREADING A NEEDLE.

It was one morning just before the peep of dawn, as the full moon was hovering over the high, precipitous mountain that skirts the noble Hudson on the western bank, between Tappan Bay and Haverstraw, that a group of three persons was standing on the beach, preparatory to embarking on the river. The wide expanse of waters presented the aspect of a magnificent lake, sleeping still and calm, awaiting the approaching morn; the range of mountains to the north, was decked with a white night-cap of mist, while the banks of the river below, lay half hid, half revealed in the obscurity of distance and night. The only object visible on the wide expanse of waves, was a large ship, whose dark hull, and lofty masts, were somewhat indistinctly seen some miles below. All was silent and motionless, save the group of living beings on the beach, one of whom wore a blue surtout; the other, the dress of a plain, country gentleman; and the third, a pea-jacket, and tarpaulin hat, from under which strayed a profusion of matted gray hairs, that seemed not to have been fretted by comb or brush for many a day.

"Come, bear a hand, Arthur—there is no time to be lost, for we must be back again before the cock crows," said the plain looking man.

"An't I making all the haste I can?" answered a shrill, squeaking, querulous voice. "The Game—Chicken is half full of water, and I am baling it out with my hat."

"Do you think she will carry us safely over?"

"What—the Game—Chicken? Why, darn my eyes, sir, if I don't believe she'd swim with all the water of the sea on board. If a man is ever drowned in her, it will be because he was'nt born to be hanged, I reckon. There, now, I'm ready."

"Step in, Mr. Anderson," said the plain gentleman, politely.

"Mr. Anderson! Sir, my name is—"

"Anderson, sir," interrupted the other, quickly. "You forget," added he, in a low voice.

"Yes, too true; there is no help for it, now," said the other, in the same low tone. "Why was I not returned back to the ship as was promised?"

"Because she has changed her position during the night. See, she is just visible in the moonlight; it would be broad day before I could return, and how should I be able to account for being there at all?"

"Why, then, return? Remain on board, and accompany me to New York, where, I pledge my honour, you shall be amply rewarded."

"I thank you, major—Mr. Anderson, I should say, but I leave too great a stake behind—my family and my property."

"Take your family with you, or send for them; they will not be detained, and as for your property amends may easily be made for its loss."

"No, faith! My wife and children shall never become exiles for me. I must return, before it is known I have been away, except by this half-witted sailor."

"Aye," replied the blue surtout, bitterly, "and play the traitor to both sides, like some of your betters at West Point."

"Traitor and spy are boon companions all the world over," replied the other carelessly. "But come, sir, the boat waits; and hark! the first cock crows. It will be late before you reach Croton river. Once over that, and you may whistle your way to New York in safety."

The party now entered the Game—Chicken, as Arthur called his boat, and being pushed from the beach, the pilot began to ply his pair of oars briskly, ever and anon chaunting a stave of the following ditty, which tradition has still preserved among some of the old sky-larkers of the revolution, who were then boys living between the lines— "Yankee Doodle, he's half horse, And tother, alligator, He'll squash the red coats in his jaws, Jist like a rotten tater."

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"Oh! for mercy's sake, Arthur, stop that ditty. It sets my teeth on edge. Your voice is second only to a screech-owl," said the plain gentleman.

"Screech-owl, sir! Why, when I was aboard the Bone Ham Richard, I was counted the best singer of the whole mess. Besides, my oars won't keep time together unless I set them to music— "Yankee Doodle, he's the boy, The tories can't abide him, He makes them run from Perth Amboy, And the red coats close aside 'em. "The red coats don't come here to fight, They're all a pack of thieves, sir, They rob our hen-roosts every night, And not a pullet leaves, sir."

At the end of each alternate line of the preceding stanzas, Arthur signalized the word, sir, by jerking his oars with sudden emphasis, and throwing himself back, making the Game-Chicken spin through the water merrily. "But we'll be quits with them full soon, Though they are all so frumptious, We'll lick them tother side the moon, For all they're so contemptuous."

"Stop that infernal stave, I tell you, Arthur, major— Mr. Anderson wishes to take a nap, and can't sleep with such a squeaking in his ears. Besides, he don't like to hear the red coats run down," again interrupted the plain gentleman.

"No? why, that's strange! If Squire Anderson is a good whig, as I conclude he is, or I'll be darned if he should ever have set his foot aboard the Game-Chicken, he'll like my song above all things— "I heard a little bird to-day A singing chip, chip, chip, The Yankees will the red coats pay And all their bullies whip, whip. "Huzza! for Washington and Greene, Likewise Bloody Anthony, Such glorious boys were never seen To fight for liberty. "Then here's to all Americans Among the bold and free, That fill their cups and toss their cans Where I should like to be. "Huzza! again for—"

Here the song was brought to an abrupt close, by the Game-Chicken suddenly striking the shore, with a shock that pitched Arthur backwards into the bottom of the boat, with his heels uppermost.

"There's a hole in the ballad, Arthur," said the plain gentleman.

"N—ye—es," drawled out Arthur, feeling as if for something behind him, "and somewhere else, too, I reckon. I didn't calculate we were half over the bay, but somehow or other, the Game-Chicken sails like the wind to the tune of Yankee Doodle."

The two passengers now jumped on shore, leaving the pea-jacket in charge of the Game-Chicken, and ascended the bank, where they found a horse held by a servant of the plain gentleman, who directed him to go down to the boat and there wait his coming.

"Now, sir," said he, addressing the person in the blue surtout, "mount, and spur for life. Until you have passed Croton river, you are in danger every moment. Once on the other side, and you will be comparatively safe, in your present disguise, and with a pass in your pocket. But your life depends on escaping detection."

"My life? I can at the worst be considered and treated as a prisoner of war, and my life will be in no danger, at least after I am taken."

"Don't believe it, sir. You have been within the rebel lines. You are travelling in disguise, and carry about you what will assuredly hang you should you be taken to the head-quarters of General Washington."

"General Washington," echoed the other, contemptuously, "who made him a general? But I care not; they can only consider me a prisoner of war, and treat me as such. I should soon be exchanged."

"Never, sir. You don't know this Mr. Washington, as you call him. A court-martial will be convened, if you are taken with the papers upon you, and you will be hanged as sure as you are alive."

"Hang me! the adjutant! the— He dare not do it."

"I tell you again, you don't know him. He will dare anything authorized by the laws of war, for the good of his cause and his country. I wish well to neither, at least according to his creed; but this I will say of him, that he is as firm as a rock when he believes himself right, and in this case he will have right on his side."

"Right? I am no spy, sir."

"Mr. Anderson," said the other, firmly, "let me ask you one simple question—did you, or did you not know the business on which you were sent?"

"Was I a fool to be sent blindfold on an errand? I did—what then?"

"Then, sir, I must be bold to tell you, frankly, you come as a spy—you performed the functions of a spy, and will be treated accordingly if you fall into the hands of the rebels in this disguise."

"And who obliged me to disgrace myself thus? I came in my uniform as a British officer, known and

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recognised as such, and was thus received. That I came within the enemy's lines was not my fault; that the Vulture, in which I came, dropped down the river to escape the fire of the rebels, was no business of mine—and that I wear a disguise arises from necessity, not choice. *I a spy! I suffer the disgraceful death of a felon! Pooh, sir! you are conjuring up bugbears to frighten me.*"

"Well—well—we will not dispute the point any more. Too much time has been wasted already. Farewell, and make all the speed you can, for again I tell you, your life is involved in this perilous adventure."

The conference ended here. The man in the blue surtout turned his horse's head towards the south, the other hastily returned to the boat, which immediately pushed off for the opposite shore. The former pursued his way briskly, and notwithstanding his previous declarations, reflected keenly and deeply on the predicament in which he was placed—partly by his own acts, partly by the agency of others. Though possessed of a pass from the commandant at West Point, which would, in all probability, insure his release should he be stopped on his way, still there was something in the business he was upon, and the disguise he had assumed, which not even the fanaticism of loyalty by which he was actuated, could thoroughly reconcile to the feelings of a man of honour, or the frank and manly spirit of a gallant soldier. The sun had risen before he arrived at Croton river, at a point where there was no bridge at that time, and which was crossed by a ferry, kept, as before stated, by Farmer Underwood. It was fordable at low water, but at this time the tide was high, and a boat was necessary to pass over travellers.

The farmer was busy at his morning avocations, while his three lusty boys were as usual going through their manual in the barn; Obadiah, with a rusty old gun, acting as fogleman, while ever and anon the robustious youth chaunted a stave of some old continental song, redolent of more patriotism than poetry, greatly to the annoyance of the non-combatant farmer.

"Why, sure, it can't be possible, Ruth," said he to his wife; "the boy is singing profane and warlike songs, like unto a thunderbolt. And behold! why, son Obadiah," cried the old man, raising his voice, "what art thee going to do with that carnal weapon?"

"Father," replied the young man, approaching him, "I hear our people are well nigh starving up yonder in the Highlands. I do wish thee would send us there with a load of flour, instead of down to Kingsbridge."

"Yea, friend Obadiah, and get paid in continental money, instead of golden guineas. Thee talks like a foolish lad, friend Obadiah, of a truth, verily; go to."

"I'll tell thee what, father, I heard such stories of the Yagers, the red coats, the tories, and the Skinners burning down houses and barns, and robbing and abusing the women and children, whose fathers and brothers are gone to the wars, that the spirit moves me to tell thee I am going to join the continental army, as sure as this gun."

"And so am I, father," said Nehemiah, coming up.

"And so am I, father," said Uriah, following.

"And so am I, father! the dev—I mean thee cannot be in earnest, boys."

"Right up and down earnest, father," replied Obadiah. "We've got our guns ready, and mother has baked us a knapsack full of gingerbread. We're off this morning like a shot. Mother says every young man that can shoulder a musket, ought to fight for his country in times like these—shoulder, hoo!"

"Why, the rebellious housewife! this cometh of having Presbyterian blood in her. Thee cannot say thy mother incited thee."

"Yea, father—she told us how Nathaniel Greene, who is now fighting for his country by the side of Washington, and smiting the red coats hip and thigh, belonged to our persuasion. She said it was a sin and a shame that her sons should be carrying corn to the enemy, instead of driving him before them; so we are going to try our hands a little. Present arms!"

"A plague on Ruth, my wife, for putting such notions in thy foolish pate; thee will be read out of meeting, boys."

"Never mind, father, when the wars are over, and we are all free and independent, thee shall read us in again, with friend Nathaniel Greene. Take aim—fire! bang!"

Ruth now entered, to say breakfast was ready, and was retiring, when Farmer Underwood detained her.

"Friend Ruth," said he, "abide thee a little. Thee has been putting wicked notions into the heads of these foolish boys, and spiriting them on to mischief; even now they depart to join in the unlawful business of defending their country. Thee art but half a Quaker, Ruth. What evil spirit possessed thee?"

"No evil spirit, friend," replied Ruth, with a mild and simple fervour. "No evil spirit, friend Nathan; but almost

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every day, for more than a year past, I have seen the smoke of our neighbours' buildings rising over yonder hill, and I knew who it was that set them on fire. I have heard story after story of farms laid waste, cattle driven away, old men and women abused, even unto death, and young maidens insulted and outraged by the lawless soldiers from beyond the seas. And when I saw and heard all this, I said to myself, in the bitterness of my heart, am I the mother of women, that my sons should be idle at home, while their country is bleeding? Nathan, thou art a Friend, but thou art still a man. Thou hast sons with stout hearts and willing minds; wouldst thou see thy country—that generous country which opened its bosom to thy fathers, in times when no other refuge was left them on the face of the earth, ravaged and subdued by the descendants of our ancient persecutors—trodden under foot, crushed to the earth in cruel bondage, by those who, at the same time, if they should triumph, will persecute our faith as they did in past days, and make us again exiles or martyrs? Couldst thou see this, oh Nathan! and not lend a hand in such woful times of need?—couldst thou, friend Nathan?"

"No—d—n me if I could. Ruth, the boys shall go, and we will both bless them at parting. The spirit of truth has spoken from thy lips. They shall gird on their armour, and if they don't fight bravely, they are no blood of mine or thine. Zounds and fury, Ruth! the spirit moveth me sorely to go forth myself, like David against Goliath, and smite the Philistines."

"Nay, friend Nathan, thou shalt stay at home, and take care of me and thy mill, while thou prayest for the safety of our children and our country. But behold! some one is riding down yonder hill; he seems a stranger, and in haste."

As they turned their eyes in that direction, a horseman was seen descending with rapid pace into the valley of the Croton, whereupon, Obadiah marched out into the middle of the road, with musket on his shoulder, and awaited his coming in grim array.

"Stay a little, friend," said Obadiah, as he came up. "Where art thou riding so fast?"

"What's that to you, friend? suppose I am in haste, that is no affair of thine."

"Yea, verily, but it is, friend. Thee may be a spy, for what I know, and a spy is a serpent in the grass, I have heard say."

"Spy! why, what do you know? Have you heard?" Here the traveller checked himself, and the thought came over his mind, that his cause or his errand could not be good, when every clodhopper thus threw him off his guard and alarmed him into betraying himself. Recovering, in some measure, his self-possession, he produced his pass, and asked if that was not sufficient. Obadiah examined it with the air of an old campaigner, and answered—

"Verily, it seemeth so. Thee may go thy way, friend."

"Heaven be praised!" again thought the traveller; "but what a scoundrel do I seem to be, thus swindling my way at the risk of every moment being discovered and disgraced." Then once more addressing Obadiah, he asked—

"How far do you call it to Kingsbridge, friend?"

"What, thee is going to Kingsbridge, then, friend?"

"I expected an answer, not a question, friend."

"Yea, verily—hem—it seemeth to me, friend, that I should like to know what business thee has at Kingsbridge?"

"And it seemeth to me, friend, that I shall not tell thee, for, as I said before, it is no business of thine."

"Well, friend, I don't wish to pry into thy secrets. It is somewhere about four—and—twenty miles to Kingsbridge."

"Could I get breakfast on the road, some three or four miles onward?"

"Much nearer, friend," said Obadiah, "we are just going to fall to, ourselves, and albeit thee won't answer a civil question, I can promise thee a welcome."

"Thank you—thank you, friend, a thousand times; but I am in great haste, and must be riding a few miles onward before I stop. I would not miss being in New York this night for ten thousand guineas. Is the boat ready?" Being answered in the affirmative, he entered the boat, and in a few minutes was landed on the other side.

"I wonder who he can be. I think I have seen him somewhere before. Verily, now I recollect, Ruth, I believe it was the last time I went to New York—to—to—hem!" and here, friend Nathan stopped short, apparently in some little confusion.

"I wish I had stopped him," quoth Obadiah, "for all his pass. He talked about ten thousand guineas, and that's

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an idea that would never come across a continental; they talk about nothing but continental money. But now it's too late, for we must be going. Nehemiah, Uriah, march!" cried he, in a loud voice, which was answered by the appearance of the two brothers.

"The blessing of a good conscience and a good cause be upon thee, my sons. Take care to come back safe and sound," said the father.

"God in his goodness bless thee, my sons," said Ruth. "Go to the good Washington, and tell him, a mother hath sent the sons of her bosom to fight by his side. Take care of thy country, and be sure not to come home with a wound in thy backs."

The lads departed on their holy errand, from which one of them never returned. The stout-hearted Obadiah fell at the head of his company, storming the works at Yorktown, and the others returned at the end of the war, with an honourable rank, and honourable scars to show that it had been dearly earned. When they disappeared behind the hill, Ruth applied her snow-white apron to her eyes, and then sat down to her household cares. It is recorded, however, as a curious fact, that she never before found such difficulty in threading her needle.

## CHAPTER IX.

A LOST TRAVELLER—HAGAR IN THE WILDERNESS—FOLLY LEADING REASON—A GLANCE AT OUR HERO, HIS THOUGHTS, OCCUPATIONS, AND COMPANIONS—HAGAR'S MISSION, SHOWING THAT PROVIDENCE SOMETIMES MAKES USE OF STRANGE INSTRUMENTS TO BRING ABOUT EVENTS ON WHICH GREAT CONSEQUENCES DEPEND.

The traveller pursued his way so absorbed in his own reflections, as to leave his horse for a time to the direction of his own instinct, which is not always a safe guide to reason. It pleased instinct to turn to the left, instead of the right, simply because that was more in a direction towards the accustomed home of the animal. The traveller, after a ride of some mile or two, at length came to a deep, sequestered dell, encompassed on three sides by steep ledges of rocks, through which coursed a noisy stream, rendered gloomy by a thick growth of pine and hemlock nodding over the summit of the rugged precipice. It struck him that this could not be the highroad leading to a great city, and perceiving a log-cabin from whence rose a column of smoke, he rode up and knocked at the door with the butt-end of his whip with the intention of inquiring his way. The signal was answered by the appearance of a woman somewhat past her prime, and dressed in the wretched rags of beggary, who saluted him with the following brief interrogatory—

"Well, what's your will, good man?"

"I wish to know where I am, good woman."

It is difficult to tell why, but certain it is that the phrase, good woman, however complimentary it may seem, is not generally agreeable to the gentler sex, and accordingly the occupant of the log-cabin replied rather tartly—

"You wish to know where you are? Why, good man, in your skin, I should guess."

"I mean, I have lost my way, good woman."

"No, sure? Why, where did you come from?"

"What matters it to you? I tell you I have lost my way."

"Well, I tell you, I have not found it. But if you won't tell me where you came from, maybe you will tell where you are going to, and then I may tell you the right way."

"I want to find the post-road," said the traveller, evasively.

"The post-road! why, Lord love you, sir, where *could* you come from to get out of the post-road into such an out-of-the-way place as this? I haven't seen a stranger here since the beginning of the war."

"Suppose I have not been on the post-road, yet?"

"No? why, a'nt you come down from the army at West Point? You look for all the world like an officer in disguise."

"Disguise! well, suppose I have, what then?"

"Oh! then you saw General Washington, he that beats the red coats so handsomely," rejoined Hagar Raven, as she was called, eyeing him keenly.

"*He* beat the red coats—pshaw!" here he checked himself, adding, "No, I never saw the face of *Mr.* Washington, though I have often seen his back."

"Never saw him! why, I declare I'd go ten, aye, twenty miles on foot to see him, any day," and the woman kept her eye steadily on him.

"So would I, to see him—hum—but, good woman, my time is precious. Do you mean to direct me, or not?"

"What will you give me, sir? It's a long way, and now I think of it, there is a party of continentals up at Pine's bridge. Maybe, you'd like to fall in with them?"

"Continental soldiers! No, no," added he hastily, in a careless tone. "No, I have nothing particular to say to them, and am in great haste, as I told you. Show me some other way, and I'll give you a dollar."

"I want none of your continental money, good man."

"It shall be a silver dollar."

"What, a real silver dollar? Goody gracious, will you? I'll show you the way all the country over for that. Will it be a real Spanish dollar?"

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"Yes, yes—lead on, good woman; but mind you keep clear of the continentals."

"Never fear, sir." If that a'nt a British officer, thought Hagar, my name is not Raven. "Let me put on my hat and cloak, and make myself decent."

"O, never mind your hat and cloak," said the traveller, impatiently. Vanity and beggary are a pretty pair! The woman seems half mad or half idiot, was the thought of our traveller, while Hagar went into the cabin, whence she speedily returned, saying, "Now, sir, I'm fit to be seen like—don't you think I'm rather pretty?"

"Very—a perfect beauty."

"Won't you take me up behind you, sir?"

"My horse won't carry double." Faith, thought he, I should cut a figure with this angel behind me.

"Well, then, I suppose I must walk; but never mind, I can sing away the time. Do you like singing, sir?"

"Oh, anything, anything; only get on as fast as you can."

"I'm ready, sir;" and Hagar commenced a stave, as follows, as she led the way with long, masculine steps: "Come follow, follow me, and you shall see, As the old man said to his old blind wife, Come follow, follow me, and then you shall see What an old blind woman never saw in her life."

"What do you think that was, sir?"

"I don't know, and I don't care; zounds, why don't you push on, woman?"

"'Twas a bumble-bee, with his tail cut off. He! he! now for it, here we go."

Saying this, she increased her pace, followed by our traveller, who could not help thinking himself in a promising way, with a half-crazy or half-idiot witch for his guide. But there was no help for it now. Not another house was in sight, and shrugging his shoulders, he consoled himself with the idea, that as the blind often lead the blind, some good might come of a crack-brained guide. But Hagar was not quite as great a fool as she affected to be. Though somewhat fantastical by nature, she was still more cunning, and partly affected folly, the better to impose upon the vanity of wisdom. Her occupation was begging, than which nothing requires a more practical insight into the workings of the human heart. She knew, from experience, that thousands who would refuse her charity as a rational being, might be cheated into pitying one divested of reason. She was known through all the surrounding country, over which she roamed at pleasure; and had, by long prescription, acquired a sort of right to be relieved, or entertained wherever she went. No one ever thought of harming her, although there was sometimes a shrewd malignity in her tongue, which scarcely would have been endured from one of higher pretensions to rationality; and thus, without labour or economy, without kindred or friends, she lived in that mysterious, inscrutable way, which so often puzzles those who can scarcely procure the same comforts by perpetual labour, and unceasing economy. Among her other peculiarities, Hagar was a staunch whig, and had often, by the freedom she enjoyed under the veil of folly, and the strange intuitive cunning she possessed, obtained information of special moment to the cause she so zealously espoused.

With this hopeful guide our traveller pursued his way, unwinding the labyrinth into which he had involved himself by his absence of mind, and which eventually led to consequences so momentous to himself and to millions of his fellow-creatures. Sometimes he urged her forward by complaints, at others by promises, while occasionally he would lag behind, to escape her ceaseless prattle, and unconnected, unintelligible scraps of songs. At such times, Hagar would parody his words and manner, exclaiming, with affected impatience, "Come, good man, zounds! why don't you push on? Who makes you wait now, I wonder?"

After what seemed to him an endless succession of windings and turnings, they at length struck the post-road, a mile or two from where the traveller had deviated from it, and Hagar now demanded the reward, which was promptly paid. As he drew out his purse, the woman, who kept her eye fixed upon him so keenly that it created a disagreeable sensation, observed that it contained gold, and this circumstance increased the suspicions she had previously entertained. She well knew that the poor champions of freedom carried no such commodity, for she had often of late seen them exchanging a handful of rags for a meal. Here, they parted; the traveller taking his way towards the south to meet his fate, while Hagar stood watching his course, and brooding over a plan which will be developed in the sequel. At parting, they only exchanged these few brief words—

"Good-bye, sir; you are such a likely gentleman, that I should wish to cultivate your acquaintance. I hope we shall meet again."

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed the traveller, as he spurred his steed and was soon out of sight.

While these events were passing, our hero had principally devoted himself to rural occupations, and watching

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over the feeble old couple at the stone house, whose passage he endeavoured to smooth, by every effort of duty and affection in his power, to the long home of all the race of man. The sacrifice was painful, for his spirit longed to be once more labouring in the cause dear to his heart, for an object, if possible, still dearer. But in the conflict of opposing duties and wishes, he chose the right path; since the aid he might give to his country was but as a drop in the bucket, while his presence at home and his daily labours, were indispensable to the comfort, nay, the very existence of those, whom all the obligations of nature and gratitude called on him to protect and cherish in their old age.

He neither sought Colonel Hammond, nor did the colonel seek him. He kept aloof from Jane, who never forgot the decent maidenly pride of women by placing herself in a situation to be sought or avoided. True, she had long since forgiven the recreant; nay, reflection and good sense combined, had, after the first impulse of wounded pride and affection, served only to raise him still higher in her estimation, and root him more deeply in her heart. The old continental, too, when his indignation had cooled down, instead of blaming John, thanked him in his heart for not taking advantage of a burst of generosity, which upon reflection, he thought unworthy a man of his experience. The colonel was one of millions of human bipeds, who feel under peculiar obligations to their friends for not availing themselves of every sudden impulse of gratitude or liberality, such as frequently flashes forth with great brilliancy, but goes out like a sky-rocket without warming anybody. He would have made up matters with John, had not his daughter, who, the reader may remember, hated proud people so much, wrested from him a solemn promise not to interfere, and most especially to avoid making any advances during the present crisis of affairs. Our hero's only consolation was in feasting on the consciousness of having acted with honour, and in watching the smoke as it curled gracefully from the white chimneys of the house of his ladye love.

Occasionally, however, he made one of a party of young men, just verging towards manhood, and residing in the vicinity, to scour the country towards Kingsbridge, with the purpose of gaining information, picking up stragglers, or intercepting plunderers. On these occasions, they always acted under the sanction or authority of the nearest commanding officer of a post, and their usual rendezvous was at the house described in the outset of this history, at the entrance of Hardscrabble Hole. The party consisted of three only, Isaac, David, and John, who, not contemplating a sortie until night, had only met to arrange their plans, without bringing their arms with them. David, who was a gay, careless lad, had been singing part of a stave of an old song, when a dialogue ensued something to the following purport.

"Come—come, David, no more music now. It is high time to go home and make our preparations."

"I'll not stir a peg till I've finished my song," replied David, who began another stave, which was interrupted by a voice from without, humming— "Fe, faw, fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman— Fe, faw, fum."

"It's that half fool, half witch, half woman, and half d—I, Hagar!" exclaimed David, as he ran to the window and inquired whence she came.

"From the place where you are going, friend," said she.

"Where's that, beauty?"

"The gallows, friend. You'd make a pretty hanging bird, singing the tune the old cow died of."

"Hah! hah! she's too sharp for you, David!" exclaimed Isaac.

"As sharp as Mrs. Boshin's cider. But do tell me, what brought you here, beauty?"

"I'll not talk to such a goose as you," replied Hagar, at the same time beckoning John out, where they soon became engaged in deep discussion.

"I suppose," said David to the other, "she is telling his fortune. I wonder what she'll make of him, a justice of the peace, or a schoolmaster?"

"Oh! a schoolmaster, by all means. You know he is a great scholar, and talks horse Latin."

"A blue surtout?" said our hero to Hagar.

"Yes, but I'll swear it was never made for him. You know I was once a tailor's wife, and understand a fit. I saw him housed at Sing Sing, where he will get his breakfast. There is not a moment to be lost, if you wish to intercept him. I am certain he is disguised, and employed in some mischief." After reflecting a few moments, John spoke a few words in a low voice to Hagar, who hastily departed, while the three young men strode away to procure their arms for a purpose, of which our hero promised to apprise them on the way.

What this was, will doubtless be easily anticipated by the judicious reader, from whose intuitive sagacity it is now next to impossible for the most mystifying varlet of an author to keep a single secret, either as to the progress

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or catastrophe of his story. And hence it is, beyond all doubt, that divers ingenious writers of romantic fiction, do wilfully entangle their web of adventures in such inextricable mystery and confusion, that the gentle reader is left pretty much in the predicament of a hound who has lost the scent, and travels round and round, in an endless circle of perplexity, until, peradventure, his breath fails him, and he sinks down in a state of utter exhaustion. Nor is the writer so much to blame for using all his art, as it were, to dodge his readers and put them on the wrong track, seeing that nothing but characters acting altogether out of character, causes without effects, and effects without causes, reinforced by striking incidents, producing results diametrically opposite to their natural consequences, can possibly achieve that incomprehensible medley, that sublime obscurity, which utterly confounds the understanding, baffles the sagacity of the most experienced reader of romance, and from which the denouement at length comes forth, like a cat from a strange garret, only to create a more agreeable surprise from being so entirely unexpected and out of place. But to return from this digression, which we present as a general apology for the cruel mystifications which writers of romance are in their self-defence compelled to inflict on their readers.

Previous to their departing to furnish themselves with arms, John communicated the information he had received from Hagar, and his conviction that some mystery was connected with the journey of the stranger. The principal danger was, that he might get beyond their reach, before they could procure their arms, and gain a proper position to intercept him; and to delay him as long as possible, Hagar had undertaken to meet him on the bridge, near the church, solicit his charity, and arrest his progress by practising all the mummeries of her calling. They then parted, after appointing a meeting at Clark's Kill bridge, which spanned a small stream crossing the road, at a point bordered by a wood, which presented a favourable spot for concealment. In the lapse of little more than half a century, the wood has disappeared, the stream dwindled into a little rivulet, almost dry in summer; and the majestic tulip-tree, which constituted by far the most remarkable object in the immediate vicinity, has disappeared, leaving not a vestige behind. It was several years ago shivered by lightning from top to bottom, fell to the ground, and the precise spot where it stood, can no longer be ascertained.

## CHAPTER X.

A BREAKFAST SCENE—A LEFT-HANDED PANEGYRIC ON WAR— A LAND SCRAPE—A COUNTRY CHURCH—A RARE FORTUNETELLER, WHOSE PREDICTIONS ARE EVENTUALLY ACCOMPLISHED— THE TRAVELLER INTERCEPTED—OFFERS AND REFUSALS, SHOWING THAT POVERTY IS NOT QUITE SO GREAT A ROGUE AS SOME PEOPLE THINK.

At parting with his eccentric guide, our traveller pursued his way briskly, until he came to a little town, pleasantly situated, where he halted to refresh himself and horse at a small inn by the roadside. He was weary, and his mind but ill at ease, for he could not hide from himself that his situation was equivocal, and felt as every honourable man must feel when imposing on the world in an assumed character. As he sat musing in this unpleasant state of mind, a young girl, of rather interesting appearance, and modest manner, was passing in and out the room, preparing his meal, of whom, at length, rather from idleness, than any interest in the question, he inquired the name of the village.

"Sing Sing, sir," she replied.

"It must be a very musical place. I suppose you do nothing but sing all day long."

"No, indeed, sir—we have no heart to sing; even the birds have left off singing, I believe."

"Aye, indeed; and what may be the reason?"

"Our fathers and brothers are gone to the wars, or to their graves; the fields have grown up into weeds, for there is no one to cultivate them, and if there were, they would be plundered before harvest time. I have heard say the beggar may sing before the robber, but believe he seldom has the heart to sing."

"And your sweethearts—they too are gone to the wars, I suppose."

"We don't think of such things now, sir."

"No—what do you think of, then?"

"Of insult, poverty, and starvation."

"Suppose you take me for a sweetheart," said he, smiling.

"Your breakfast is ready, sir."

"Nay, I must have a kiss—one kiss!" and he advanced towards her, placing his arm around her waist.

"Oh, my poor mother!" exclaimed she, bursting into tears.

"Never mind your mother, she don't see you now."

"Yes she does, and my father too."

"Indeed—where are they?"

"In heaven, I trust, sir."

"What! an orphan?" exclaimed he, quickly disengaging his arm. "Forgive me, my poor girl. How long have you been here? you look as if you were not born for this place."

"No, sir—necessity forced me to it."

"As how, poor girl?"

"Do you see that black chimney, yonder, over the fields?"

"What, close by the willow tree?"

"That was my home, sir; but they came one dark night, about two months ago, and burnt it down, because they said we were d—d rebels, and my brothers were serving in the continental army."

"Who burnt it down?"

"The red coats, sir."

"The red devils reward them, I say; but go on, and tell me all."

"In that house lived my father and mother."

"And they murdered them?"

"No, sir, not with their swords. They set fire to the house, in the dead of night, and then rode away, huzzaing for King George. My father was old, and confined with rheumatism; my mother sick with ague and fever, and—so they were burnt to death. I was young, and escaped, though I could not help them; and having no other home, I came here to earn my bread, and be insulted by whoever pleases."

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"Forgive me—I entreat you to forgive me; I was but in sport."

"It may be sport to you, sir, but it is death to me." Saying this, she left the room.

"Bad—bad—bad," said the traveller, shaking his head. "I shall see to this when I get to New York. The rebels can neither be conciliated or conquered by such treatment."

"Sir," said the little girl, who had returned to wait on him.

"I—I—mean, can I do anything for you. Will money be of any service to you, my poor girl?" and he took her kindly by the hand.

"No, sir. But you look as if you might belong to the army. I have two brothers there, named George and Thomas Raymond. If you should chance to see them, tell them you saw me, and that I am well; but don't tell them what I have been telling you, for if they knew, they would butcher every red coat that fell into their hands. There is blood enough shed in battle, and though I own I cannot forgive their cruelty, I sometimes pray God to forgive them."

"What a wreath to deck the annals of glory!" thought the traveller, as he sat down to breakfast. "Surely fate can be little else than a chance medley. She fires at random, careless where she hits, or whose heart she pierces. What had this poor girl done, that she should be left fatherless, motherless, homeless, to wait at a tavern on me; me, who at this moment am about to aim a death-blow at the heart of her country? It might humble the pride of the hero, did he know that, after all his exertions, he is but warring against decrepid age, helpless women, and innocent babes. It is they that bear the brunt of bloody war, and pay the price of glory."

On his departure, he continued for some time occupied by a train of reflections, arising out of the tale to which he had been listening, until arriving at the summit of a hill, a scene broke upon his view so magnificently beautiful, that it at one and the same moment, arrested his progress and his thoughts. Towards the north, he saw the distant Highlands, rising in a long line of blue waving curves, tracing the skies from east to west, and passing away in gradually softened tints, till they melted and mingled with the clouds. To the south, a fair expanse of variegated fields, meadows, and woods, gay with the first tints of autumn, spread far and wide; while towards the west, a long line of bold hills skirted the noble river, and ended at last in those majestic cliffs, projecting out at intervals, one beyond the other, like massive battlements and towers, not the fabled work of the giants or Cyclops, but of the sublime Architect of the universe.

The soul of our traveller was full of poetry. He loved nature in her beautiful attire, and his feelings promptly associated themselves with the prospect around him. From thence, by a natural transition, his recollections wandered towards his native land, the scenes of his early days, and the wonted inmates of his heart, whom a distance of three thousand miles, and an intervening ocean, only rendered nearer and dearer. Murmuring a name dearer than all the rest besides, he spurred his horse, and descended into a solitary woodland glen, which, though not houseless, seemed quite deserted. Anon he came in sight of the steeple of a rustic stone church, peeping its taper point above a grove of ancient locust-trees, where the road making a sudden turn to the left, led into a narrow pass, shaded with trees, and coursed by a large brook, over which a bridge appeared at intervals as he proceeded, on which he was somewhat startled to perceive some one standing, as if awaiting his arrival. Coming up to the bridge, he at once recognised his former crack-brained guide, posted as if resolved to arrest his course, and the rencontre was so peculiarly unwelcome, in his present frame of mind, that he addressed Hagar rather unceremoniously, with "What do you want? and what are you doing here?"

"Oh, consider, cow, consider!" replied Hagar, adopting the whining cant of beggary. "Consider, cow, consider, as the song says; shall I sing it for you, sir? Consider I'm a poor, lonesome woman, with a family of thirteen children, one for every state, you know; and a husband that can't lift his hand to his head, for the rheumatiz. For charity's sake give me a guinea, won't you, honey dear? Do, now, and I'll sing you one of my best songs."

"A guinea? why, it is only a few hours ago that I gave you a dollar."

"Aye, sir, but you can't say you gave it me, for I earned it honestly by showing you the right road. But whether or no, it is all gone, and spent, and I've no larning to make up for its loss. I bought a paper of pins, and two jew's-harps, of an old tinkering pedlar, for my little pickaninnies to larn music."

"Poor idiot!" exclaimed the traveller. "Have you no friends, that you are wandering about between the lines, in these dangerous times?"

"Oh, sir, I am not afraid of any body but the ghosts, and the red coats, that are so fond of pretty women. The Yagers would skin a flint, but they can get nothing from poor me; and as for the tories, I always scratch out their

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eyes whenever I meet them. Now do, honey dear, bless your heart—I know by your handsome face you must be tender-hearted; now do give a guinea to a poor soul that lives in a hollow tree, and tells fortunes."

"Will you tell mine?"

"What will you give me, sir?"

"That depends on what you give *me*. If you promise me the command of his Majesty's forces in New York, perhaps I may give you a guinea."

"What! then you are a red coat? Well, I do declare, I dreamt so the night after to-morrow. Hah! hah! hah! how strange it is that my dreams always come true. Isn't it, honey dear?"

"Pshaw! let me pass, good woman?"

"Not till I've told your fortune, and earned my guinea. Come, honey—hold out your hand, that's the book of fate." Here she snatched his hand, before he was aware, and looking him full in the face, with a deal of precious mummary, began her prognostics.

"Ah! what do I see here? Here is G, stands for gallows; here is S, stands for spy—and here is a twisted rope, that stands for hanging; and here—you'll not live long, my friend, you'll not live long." And she shook her head with awful solemnity.

"Out of my way, you hag, and let me pass, or I'll ride over you!"

"Well, I declare, the more I look at you, the more faith I have in my dream. You've got the most hanging look, honey dear, of any one I almost ever saw. The gallows will be your end, so sure as your life had a beginning. You'll dance upon nothing, without a fiddle, while I stand by and sing hey diddle, diddle." Here she practised divers grotesque evolutions, taking care to keep always directly before the horse. "My guinea, sweet sir, my golden guinea."

"Alas! poor crazy idiot! what a fool was I to suppose she meant anything by her predictions. Here is something, though not a guinea. Now let me pass, my time is precious." The traveller took out his purse, and again it disclosed its golden store.

"Ha! ha! he! he!" and Hagar laughed like a sheer idiot. "La! what beautiful shiners! The Yankee officers have no such pretty pictures as these. I swear, you shan't stir from this spot, till you give me a guinea. I'll keep it for a love token, to put me in mind of you after you come to the gallows, as you certainly will do, soon. Come, honey dear—you won't want your money long."

"What are you about? let go my bridle!"

"A guinea, sweet sir—a golden guinea!"

"Let go, I say; or by heaven, I'll gallop over your body!"

A struggle now ensued. The traveller spurred his horse, and Hagar clung to the bridle, at the risk of being crushed under the feet of the startled animal, who reared and plunged furiously. At this moment, the report of a gun was distinctly heard. Hagar relinquished the bridle, and the rider dashing forward, disappeared in an instant. "I've told his fortune," said she, chuckling, and pursuing her course in another direction.

The traveller rode on, perplexed not a little at the behaviour of the crack-brained guide, which he was at a loss whether to ascribe to folly, madness, or cunning. Had he been inclined to superstition, this second prediction would have startled him, for he remembered that, just previous to his leaving home, for the new world, he had accompanied a party of gay young people to a famous fortune-teller, and that on inspecting his hand, the sybil had announced, that he was going to a distant country, beyond the sea, where it would be his fortune to be hanged. "We all laughed heartily," thought he, "but who knows? stranger things have happened in this topsy-turvy world. It is, however, quite impossible I should be known to this shedevil, that thus besets me. There is no harm, however, in a little more speed." And thus communing with himself, he spurred his horse into a gallop.

He had now passed all the American posts; a few miles' ride would bring him to Kingsbridge, and the great object of his mission be accomplished. Congratulating himself on the favourable prospects before him, he proceeded onward with a light heart, until coming to a little rustic bridge, which crossed a brook intersecting the road, the flooring of which, being somewhat loose and decayed, caused him to slacken his pace, his reins were suddenly seized by a man, who darted from the wood at the roadside, and ordered him to stop at his peril.

Thrown off his guard, for a moment, by this action, so totally unexpected, the traveller hastily asked, "Are you from above, or below?" two phrases usually employed to designate the American and British armies, one of which was in the Highlands, the other occupying the city of New York. John, for he it was, warily answered, "From

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below;" at which, the other expressed great satisfaction, declaring himself of the same party, and adding that his business was urgent; that he was exceedingly anxious to get to head-quarters, and that he desired to be permitted to proceed without a moment's delay.

"I regret, sir," said John, "that your business is so urgent, as it is absolutely necessary to detain you a little longer."

"By what authority, sir? and who are you?"

"A rebel!"

"Let me pass! let go my reins!" exclaimed the traveller, making a violent effort to ride over him."

"Dismount this instant, or I will pull you from your horse! be you whom you may, rebel, or red coat, soldier, or citizen—dismount!"

"If I were armed, I would dispute your commands, my friend; but as that is not the case, I must resort to peaceful measures. Can you read? do you know what this means?" He then drew forth a paper, which he handed to John, who, after looking it over, respectfully, yet firmly, addressed him as follows:

"This paper, as well as I can judge, sir, is genuine. But not being acquainted with the hand-writing of General Arnold, you must excuse me if I am not quite satisfied. You are here under circumstances to excite great suspicion. You have acknowledged yourself an enemy, and displayed great satisfaction at hearing I belonged to your party, for which there was no occasion, had you been on lawful business, with a pass in your pocket. I must know more, before I let you go. You must accompany me into this wood, and submit to further examination."

"By what authority, sir?"

"By the authority which God gives to every man defending his rights and his country."

"Rebellious cant!" muttered the traveller; "but you shall answer for this contempt of General Arnold's pass. Do you know the consequences?"

"Not exactly; but be they what they may, for this once, I am willing to incur them. Dismount, sir! or I shall be under the necessity of forcing you, although I wish to avoid it, if possible. There is no use in hesitating; for I must, and will be satisfied."

Perceiving the traveller still hesitated, he quietly led his horse into the wood, where he was still more surprised to find our hero's two companions, with whom it had been previously concerted not to appear, except at a given signal. His impression was, that he had fallen into the hands of one of those lawless bands of marauders, whose exploits between the lines were pretty notorious to both parties.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I am in your power; but I trust you mean no violence to my person."

"Do you take us for robbers, sir?" replied John. "I assure you we are honest men, as times go, and will take nothing from you, but what you have no right to carry."

"Very well; but before you proceed, be good enough to examine that paper once more. I assure you it came from the general's own hands."

"It certainly appears to be a pass from General Arnold, to John Anderson. Is that your name, sir?" said John, eyeing him keenly.

"John Anderson is my—I am called by that name," replied the traveller, with some little hesitation.

"On your honour, sir?"

"On my honour," and he coloured deeply.

"Excuse me, sir," observed John, after a little reflection, "for doubting the honour of one who appears to be a gentleman. But as I observed before, you are here under very doubtful circumstances; and your behaviour at the moment I arrested you, was also calculated to excite suspicion. Our country has many secret enemies, and the intentions of the commander-in-chief are frequently known to the enemy, long before they are publicly manifested. I must, and will be satisfied before we part; and for this purpose, I hope you will quietly submit to a search which shall be made with as little offence as possible."

Finding it would be vain to resort to resistance or persuasion, the traveller submitted, and a search commenced, which ended in the discovery of nothing which threw any light on his character or mission. He then inquired whether it was their pleasure to permit him to proceed on his way, again repeating the expression of his anxiety to reach the city, where he had business of great consequence.

"One moment, sir," replied John, "there is one part of your dress we have neglected. Be good enough to permit us to pull off your boots."

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"My boots! surely, gentlemen, you don't mean to insult me?" exclaiming the traveller hastily, and changing colour.

"Why insult you more by searching your boots, than any other portion of your dress? Come, sir—I'll be your servant—sit down on this rock. It is useless to resist, for I must and will know why you oppose pulling off your boots, when you made no objection to every other part of your dress being examined."

"May—be the gentleman has got no stockings on; it is not an uncommon thing in these hard times," quoth David.

The traveller seeing it must be so, sat down, and put forth his left leg.

"The right, if you please, sir," said John.

"Where is the difference? take this, or none."

"Have done with this trifling, sir," cried the other, impatiently, and seizing the right boot, drew it off in a twinkling. Then holding up and shaking it, a thin packet of papers fell out, which, on examination, proved to consist of a plan of the works at West Point; the disposition of the American forces; directions for attacking them with advantage, together with a letter from General Arnold, the commander of that most important post, stipulating its delivery on the appearance of the British army under Sir Henry Clinton. The magnitude and importance of this discovery, was fully comprehended by John and his companions; while, during the examination of the papers, the traveller sat apparently reflecting on the best means of escaping from the very serious predicament in which he now felt himself involved.

"Well, *Mr. Anderson*, what say you to this?" said John, after the examination was over.

"Thus much, sir. Here is my purse, which is pretty well filled, and here is my watch, which is worth at least fifty guineas. Take these, give me the papers, and let me go. You seem to be poor men by your dress, and it will be a long time before you will earn as much by opposing your lawful sovereign. But I can promise you ten, aye, fifty times as much, if you will accompany me to head-quarters. Name your terms, and I will pledge my honour to the bargain."

"Honour! pray, *Mr. Anderson*, leave that out. There may be honour among thieves, none among spies and traitors. But let that pass. If you buy us, you must pay well. None of your forty pieces for selling our country to the king, and our souls to perdition."

"What say you to a thousand guineas?"

"A good round sum, but not quite enough. In one word, *Mr. Anderson*, the king cannot buy us. Do not then believe us serious in thus bargaining for the destruction of our country. These papers concerning West Point, now almost the only stronghold of liberty, your extreme anxiety to get to head-quarters at New York, and the high bribe you offer, are all convincing proofs that you are concerned in some treason of great magnitude. Not five, nor ten, nor twenty thousand guineas, could you lay them down here before us, shall buy these papers or release your person. You go with us to be delivered up at the nearest continental post."

"You have only been bantering me, then?"

"I wished to estimate the importance of *Mr. Anderson*," replied our hero, who was now fully satisfied that was not his name.

"Are you all of one mind, gentlemen?"

"Exactly," said David; "we don't mind selling the produce of our land, when the red coats, the tories, and the Skinners leave us any; but we will never sell our country. You must go with us, sir."

"Well, well, take me where you will, but treat me like a gentleman."

"Gentleman!" cried John, warmly; "do you call it the course of a gentleman to wear a disguise, as I know you do? to appear under false colours and a feigned name? to sneak in and out of your enemy's camp under cover of night? to league with traitors in a base conspiracy against a nation's freedom? to become a spy, and then try to escape the consequences by bribing poor but honest men to betray their cause and their country? You shall be treated kindly, though your people have seldom set us the example."

The traveller seemed somewhat surprised, rather than offended, at hearing such language and such sentiments from a plain country lad in homespun clothes, and involuntarily entered on his defence.

"What I have done was in the course of my duty, and I stand ready to answer it to my God, my king, and my country. No more schooling, but take me where you will. I am weary with a long journey, will you trust me to ride?"

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"You might run away from us, who are on foot."

"Shoot me, if I attempt to escape; I pledge my—"

"No more of honour, sir. You have deceived us once already. On condition, however, you take your chance of three bullets in case you attempt to escape, you may ride. Come, boys, now for head-quarters."

The traveller mounted his horse, and escorted by the three young lads of Westchester, turned back towards the north, when he had much rather have been "serving his sovereign in the south." His subsequent fate has become a part of the history of those times, and will not soon be forgotten. He perished on the scaffold, a victim to the stern, but just laws of war; yet his fate may almost be envied, since the very people against whose freedom he was plotting, lamented the necessity of the sacrifice, while his countrymen, in their admiration of his loyalty, forgot that by acting as a spy he forfeited the character of a soldier. It was remarked by one of his most illustrious cotemporaries, "that never man suffered death with more justice, or deserved it less;" and it may be said with equal truth, that had he lived to the utmost age of man, he would in all probability never have acquired by his exploits the fame he has gained by his misfortunes. He has become, as it were, the hero of one of the brightest pages of our history; and the sympathy bestowed on his fate, has, in a great degree, superseded the glory which justly belongs to the three youthful volunteers of Westchester, who discovered the treason of which he was one of the instruments, and spurned the bribes he offered for its concealment.

## CHAPTER XI.

AN EXAMPLE, SHOWING THAT AS ONE ANIMAL FEEDS ON ANOTHER, SO THE HAPPINESS OF ONE—HALF THE WORLD ARISES FROM THE MISERY OF THE OTHER HALF—THE TINKER VISITS COLONEL HAMMOND, AND TELLS A MUCH BETTER STORY THAN THAT OF THE UNDINE—JANE ONCE MORE VISITS THE OLD STONE HOUSE, WHERE SHE MEETS A STRANGE PERSON, AND RECEIVES AMPLE SATISFACTION FOR A PREVIOUS OFFENCE— A YOUNG COUPLE LOSING THEIR WAY, WHICH THEY FIND IN A CURIOUS MANNER.

The good service performed by the three young farmers of Westchester, was received by their country with a burst of grateful applause. They were thanked by Washington in the presence of the army; the glorious Congress of that trying time unanimously passed a vote of thanks, and decreed that a medal should be presented to each one, bearing the honourable motto of "Fidelity." A pension was also granted them for life, and to these testimonials of national gratitude was added the donation of a fine farm to each from their native state.

John, who had necessarily been detained as a witness on the trial of the traveller, whose capture produced such important consequences to himself and his country, was now exceedingly impatient to return home. Besides his anxiety about the good old couple there, he now felt himself authorized to claim the promise of the old continental, and to aspire to his mistress at least on equal terms. The moment he was permitted, he left the army at Tappan, crossed the river, and full of throbbing anticipations, bent his steps towards the old stone house.

Leaving him on his road, let us once more turn to the affairs of the colonel and his daughter, whose current of domestic happiness, to say the truth, had not lately ran quite so smoothly as was wont in days of yore. Jane had lost much of her cheerfulness, and her step was not so lightsome. She was given to long fits of melancholy musing, and long, lonesome rambles of evening, along the little river which ran through the domains of her father, who many a time and oft, got out of all his stock of patience, which in truth was not great. He was, in fact, one of those persons, who, instead of sympathising with sorrow or low spirits, prefer to frighten them away by falling into a passion, and railing at their indulgence.

"Well, moppet," said he, as he came up in high good—humour, having caught a fat mole in his trap, for the first time in his life, as is believed; "well—but Thunder and Mars! what are you sitting there for, like a toad in a hole, moping and mewling about nothing? Thinking, I suppose, of that proud, beggarly puppy, John, who, I understand, has been absent for two or three weeks past, nobody knows where. I should not be at all surprised if he had got into the hospital—ship, again."

"Heaven forbid!" replied Jane.

"What business has the blockhead to be there, when a soldier can always get killed if he likes? Before they should take me prisoner, I'd be cut into mincemeat. Your old continentals are not to be caught like rabbits without fighting. Thunder and Mars! if I only was the man I used to be, in the old French war, I'd offer my services to drive the red coats out of New York in less than no time."

"But would you leave me, and all your improvements?" asked she, with one of her old—fashioned smiles.

"Who thinks of improvement, except in military discipline, when his country is in danger. Thunder and Mars! a soldier's life is the life after all. It is only after hearing the bullets whistle about your ears, and dodging death a hundred times, that a man may be said to enjoy life. One hour of jollification after a victory, is worth all the regular hum—drum, sleepy frolics, in a whole life. Blood and fire! if I was only twenty or thirty years younger!" and the old continental stumped about the room, vociferating— "Why, soldiers, why, Should we be melancholy, boys, Whose bus'ness 'tis to die?"

"Ah! Jane, if you had only heard the immortal Wolfe sing that song, it would have made a man of you."

"I am glad to see you in such spirits, sir," said Jane, with a deep sigh.

"I'm glad to see you in such spirits, sir," echoed the old continental, mimicking her; "Jane, you tell a—fib—you'd be glad to see me snivelling, and sighing, and turning up the whites of my eyes, like a duck in thunder, I know you would. You want me to sympathise with you, as you call it. Confound all sympathy, say I; it only encourages people to make fools of themselves, by being miserable, when they should be forgetting their

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miseries."

"Father, who is that coming up the road, yonder?" asked Jane, pointing in that direction.

"Where? Why, yes, it is that roving, cheating, lying ragamuffin, Mangham, the pedlar, tinker, and Jack of all trades, and both sides to boot."

"Ah! so it is. Perhaps he brings us news of—" and here the young maiden suddenly checked herself.

"He bring news! He never put two syllables together, without a lie between them. He is no more to be depended on, than the almanac, or Rivington's Royal Gazette. If he comes in, I insist on your not asking him a single question about that magnanimous puppy, John. Yes!" continued the colonel, rubbing his hands, "yes, there he is, coming through the gate; now—hem—now he will cheat me to a certainty."

The tinker approached, and looking into the window, asked, "May I enter your domicilio, colonel?"

"Aye, aye, come in, and take me in; for that follows as a matter of course."

The itinerant trader entered, exhibiting a long, lean, raw-boned, hard-featured figure, with a countenance of mingled roguery and archness, dressed in a leather apron, short breeches without buckles at the knee, woollen stockings, and carrying a tinker's establishment on his back. He spoke as if he could not stop his tongue when it once began wagging, and fidgeted about all the while he was talking.

"Any spoons to run, pots to patch, kettles to mend, anything in my way, colonel? do it—do it—done—as quick as wink."

"Nothing now, Mangham. But where have you been, and where did you last come from, hey?"

"Why, I have been to New York, bless your heart, mended six dozen pewter spoons for Sir Henry, patched a copper kettle for the Baroness Knyphausen, ground a pair of scissors for the baron to clip his whiskers, bribed a sentinel with a paper of pins, and came off with full pockets and colours flying."

"Well, well, we all know how much gospel you preach; but tell me now, seriously, what news do you bring?"

"Oh! lots of news, colonel. Sir Henry is deeply smitten with a fat Dutch alderman's wife, who can't speak a word of English, and sends her letters every day, which she brings to her husband to read for her. The red coats pay their debts with sterling promises, twenty shillings in the pound; and old Cunningham was detected the other day doing a kindness to a rebel prisoner."

"Come, come, Mangham, I can swallow anything but that. He would sooner be caught picking his pocket, or stealing his allowance. But Thunder and Mars! have done with your jokes, and give us a little gospel. I'll not let you cheat me, if you don't."

"Well, then, seriously, colonel, there *is* great news— news that will make you stare like a stuck pig—news that will make your queue stand up on end—news that will strike you dumb, deaf, and blind, colonel— news—"

"Tinker!" exclaimed the colonel, raising his cane, "if you don't tell what it is without any more of your confounded rigmarole, I'll make the fire fly faster out of your pate than the lies from your mouth. Quick, sir, out with it, or begone about your business."

"Patience, patience, colonel, till I collect my ideas. It is the greatest news, the most extraordinary, the—"

"Now do, Mr. Mangham, tell us at once, won't you? I am dying with curiosity," said Jane.

"Oh! when a lady requests it, by all means. Well, then, the news is—and yet I dare say you have heard,— you must have heard it before now, though it's a great secret, only known to people that know everything. I happened to hear them talking it over a bottle after dinner, at Sir Henry's, when they were all a little in for it, and didn't see me popping my head in every now and then."

"Tinker!" cried the colonel, flourishing his cane.

"Well, colonel, first and foremost, Arnold has turned traitor."

"You lie! you long-tongued, cheating rascal! He, traitor! the bravest fellow in the whole continental army, except Bloody Anthony, by land and by water. Say that again, and by the Lord Harry I'll set the dogs on you. He, traitor!"

"Yes, colonel, as black as an old iron tea-kettle. He has sold his country to the enemy, and his soul to the—hem! mus'nt swear before ladies. It's all signed, sealed, and delivered, army, cannon, West Point, and all."

"Delivered! why, good God! what do you mean?"

"No, not exactly delivered, but no thanks to him, as good luck would have it."

"Now look, you tinker, here is a guinea, if you will tell the truth right straight forward, in as few words as possible. Take it, and speak the truth; or lie, and I'll send you to perdition."

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"A bargain, colonel—and now I tell you seriously what I heard, though not where I said I did. I heard it all along the road, as I came up, and read it in general orders. By the way, your neighbour's grandson, over yonder, had a finger in the pie."

"He?" ejaculated Jane, turning pale.

"Yes—it seems he and two other young men have taken a great spy, with plans of the fortifications at West Point, and a letter from General Arnold, promising to give them all up to Sir Henry, if he would only come and take them. They say John and the other brave lads, have well-nigh saved their country. General Washington has thanked them; Congress has thanked them, and voted them a medal, with the word, 'Fidelity,' on the back of it, with a pension besides; and the state of New York has given them each a thumping farm, because they were offered thousands of guineas to let the spy go, but they refused, like honest fellows, to sell their country, and carried him to head-quarters."

"Tinker, on thy soul, is all this true?"

"True as gospel, colonel."

"Hold up your head, my darling—don't look so pale," said the old continental to his daughter. "Why don't you laugh, sing, and dance like me? He won't refuse you now, the conceited blockhead. Fol, lol, de rol—sing, dance, laugh, and be merry, I say—huzza for the Westchester boys! Thunder and Mars! this beats old Ti, out and out. I'll have such a wedding—I'll have such a row! I'll make the whole township reel and sing, dance, drink, and fight any man that won't keep me company. Tinker, you shall be one of the groomsmen, for bringing such good news. Hey diddle, diddle! d—n this old timber leg! Why, Jane—you look as if you were sorry for this!"

"He won't think of me, now, father; he is such a great man, and yet I could weep for joy."

"Weep for a fiddlestick! sing, dance, frisk, and be merry, like me; that's the way to be joyful. I never wept for joy in all my life, and hold it a crying sin to fly in the face of good luck in that way. It is what I call ungrateful. Fol, de rol, lol! why, soldiers, why?"

"Father," said Jane, the colour returning to her cheek, "may I walk over to our neighbours, this morning? I heard the good woman was not well. Now don't look so droll at me, sir, you know *he* is not there, and I should like to be the first to tell them such good news."

"Well—well—go, in God's name. It is a pleasant thing to carry happy tidings. Go, and tell the old folks I will call over and see them this evening—no, to-morrow morning, and mind you come back before dark."

The daughter took her way towards the old stone house, in a tumult of conflicting feelings; which, as they will readily occur to minds of kindred delicacy, and all others would be incapable of comprehending, we shall forbear to analyze. She often lingered on her way, and more than once resolved to return. She stopped along the sequestered path which followed the windings of the stream, to read the past, and reflect on the future. The pride of woman at one moment revolted at the possibility of a suspicion that she was throwing herself in the way of one who had declined the acceptance of her hand; but this feeling was almost instantly quelled by the conviction which had only slept for one moment in her heart, that she was only the dearer to him for his rejection. She had long since done full justice to his motives, and schooled her heart to await the event, whatever it might be. Still, had she not been confident that John was far away, she would most assuredly have denied herself the pleasure she anticipated from being the bearer of news, which she well knew would be received with joy and gratitude.

Thus thinking, and thus feeling, she arrived at the old mansion, where she was kindly welcomed by the aged woman, who soon alluded to the long absence of her grandson, saying that he had promised never to leave them more; but that she knew he must be either serving his country, or had become a victim to her cause. The old man, as usual, was rambling about, talking to himself, and picking up sticks, with his bare head exposed to the sun and the wind. The ties of nature, and the recollections of the past, were now as nothing to him. He knew those he was accustomed to see every day, but he knew not who they were, and received the attentions necessary to his forlorn condition, without consciousness, and without gratitude. He entered the house soon after the arrival of Jane, with his bundle of sticks, which he carefully laid on the hearth, and then sat down, talking occasionally to himself, while Jane was relating the story of his grandson. It was received with tempered joy by the old woman, and listless unconsciousness by the poor, stricken patriarch, whose brain seemed to have retained but one single impression. His ear caught the word tory, and he noticed it by repeating his accustomed saying, "Yes, yes—a tory is a highway robber." It may afford some insight into the operations of the human mind, to state, that among the few books which the old man was accustomed to pore over, in his better days, was a history of the reign of Queen

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Anne, where a similar derivation is given to the name of tory.

Thus passed the time, until just as Jane was preparing to return home, she heard the sound of footsteps approaching, and her heart began to palpitate in her bosom. She hastily retreated through an opposite door, just as John entered by another, and caught only a glance at her shadow as she disappeared. He supposed it was the little waiting maid, and if he thought at all on the subject, his feelings at once took another direction, as he once more received the welcome and blessing of his grandmother.

"You need not tell me where you have been, my son; we know it all, and thank God for it."

"And how and where did you hear it, mother?"

"Why, from Jane Hammond, there;" for the old dame, seeing none of the clearest, had not observed her silent retreat.

"Jane Hammond, there—where?" cried John, eagerly looking round.

"Why, I declare! why she was here just the moment you came; but the sly little toad has ran away, I see."

If John had not ran after her, he would be no longer any hero of ours; and we should have left his future adventures at the bottom of the pool of oblivion. He did follow, not on a snail pace, but a hand-gallop, and overtook our heroine just as she entered the sequestered path they had so often trodden in days of yore. She felt him coming—she distinguished his panting breath, and heard him at length whisper:

"Jane—dearest Jane, don't run away from me. Stay—dearest Jane, and hear what I have to say in excuse for my former ingratitude. When you hear all, you will forgive me, and once more take me to your heart. Was it indeed you, whose shadow I saw as I came home?"

Jane could not tell whether it was herself or not; but it was, perhaps, just as well. In a little time, he felt the soft pressure of a willing hand, which continued locked in his; and would have convinced any one but an infidel, that it was no other than her. One look from John had satisfied her pride and her love.

"I know all," said she, in a low, soft, silvery voice, "and now it is my turn to be proud."

"Ah! Jane—listen to me seriously. My pride has had a fall, and I have suffered severely for it. But now—now—I can ask you without permission; will you trust your happiness to my care? Will you be my dear, dear wife?"

"You will not refuse me again?"

"Never! unless I become unworthy of you. Answer me, dearest Jane!"

The answer of Jane was made in a whisper, which was neither overheard by the echoes, or blabbed by the tell-tale zephyrs, and for that reason it is somewhat doubtful. Some old ladies were of opinion, at the time, that it was conveyed by actions, rather than words, and one went so far as to insinuate that it was delivered in a kiss. Much may be said on both sides, and we hold ourselves entirely uncommitted on this point. All we know, is, that the lovers lost their way, and were a long time before they found it again; so that our hero, in order to beguile the tedious search, was obliged to tell over all the particulars of his last adventure, and its glorious consequences, either two or three times; for there is here, also, some diversity of opinion on this subject. We can only pledge ourselves to what we know, which is, that whatever endearments were mutually given and received, were such, and such only, as became a modest maiden, and an ardent lover, looking forward, with happy certainty, to a speedy union of hands, as well as hearts. None will doubt this, except those incapable of following their example.

## CHAPTER XII.

A STOUT CAROUSAL, INTERRUPTED BY UNWELCOME VISITERS, AND CONCLUDED BY A DESSERT OF BOILED LOBSTERS—THE UNHEARD-OF EXPLOITS OF GENERAL TINKERMAN AND LIEUTENANT FLASHFIRE—MARRIAGES, DEATHS, AND FAREWELL EULOGIES.

"Tinker," said the old continental, after the departure of his daughter—"Tinker—or to ennoble thy calling, and render thee worthy of the high honour I intend thee, silversmith—or if you aspire still higher, goldsmith—you shall dine with me to-day. You have brought good news, and the bearer of glad tidings should always be made welcome. You shall dine with the hero of Ticonderoga, eat, drink, and be merry, or die the death of a flincher. I have that in my cellar, that will inspire an old pewter spoon to twinkle like silver. What say you, tinker? I mean goldsmith— shall we be merry, roaring merry—hey?"

"With all my heart, colonel; but my dress—my outward and visible man is rather inglorious to sit down in your company. I have left all my wardrobe at home, and am rather out at the elbows, you see."

"Yes, and your face—meaning no offence—is none of the cleanest; but that may be easily remedied. Let me see—aye, that will do. I have a suit of regimentals, which I wore in the old French war, and never mean to put on again, for I don't much stomach the red waistcoat and breeches, just now. They are not much the worse for wear, only a little moth-eaten."

"Oh! never mind, colonel, they'll pass for bullet holes."

"Well, I'll make you a present of them, on this glorious occasion. But, now I think of it, did you ever hear of my carrying Pine's bridge sword in hand?"

"Never, colonel."

"Well, I'll tell you that story at dinner. You shall wear my uniform; and that you may be worthy of the honour, I'll promote you. You shall be General Tinkerman. What say you, old gold?"

"I say aye, colonel, only I shall then be your commanding officer. How will that answer? I'll make you drink like a fish, depend upon it."

"Thunder and Mars! no, I must be commander in mine own house. But we will not quarrel about rank, as some of the militia officers did at old Ti; I'll tell you that story at dinner. But come, general—go and dress yourself, while I dig up the creature."

"Why, colonel, are we to dine on potatoes, that you talk of digging up our dinner?"

"Potatoes! potatoes be — no, general, I mean old stuff imported in Noah's Ark, with a pedigree three times as long as a full blooded racer. I buried it in the cellar, to keep it out of the way of the red coats, who would smell it above ground. I had a case of it at old Ti, and whenever I wanted to do anything desperate, always charged myself with a full bottle. It made me fight like a catamount. But come along, general."

In good time the colonel appeared with the creature, and General Tinkerman in his old colonial uniform, consisting of a blue coat, scarlet waistcoat and breeches, edged with silver lace, a little cocked hat, and a rusty sword at his side. These were reinforced by an old pair of military boots, which had no fellowship with the breeches, for General Tinkerman, be it known, was a tall, raw-boned figure, and the colonel square and stumpy. The breeches absolutely declined to cover his knee-pan; and the boots just reached the calves of his legs, leaving, what the learned call, a hiatus in manuscriptus between them; to hide which, the general had ingeniously made use of his leather apron, all stratagems being allowed in war. The old continental was delighted with his appearance, and they sat down to dinner, where they remained some time better employed than in talking. At length the colonel said:

"General, you look like a veteran. One would suppose you were born a field-officer."

"And so I was, colonel. I was born on the field of battle. My father was an illustrious corporal, and my mother a dispenser of spiritual comfort to valiant soldiers. You see, I eat fire by instinct."

"Drink, you mean, general. I reverence a soldier, let him be born where he will. But come, Thunder and Mars! you don't drink—you don't honour your father and mother. And yet, now I look at you, faith, you seem to be rather ticklish in the saddle. Zounds! how you see-saw about, general!"

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"No, I don't—no I don't, colonel. I'm as steady as a steeple. It's you that begin to be top-heavy, colonel."

"Me! Thunder and Mars! it would take two dozen such fellows as you to force me out of the perpendicular. Come, fill a bumper, and I'll give you a sentiment. Fill, I say, to the brim, and we'll drink supernaculem."

"Well, general, with all my heart, here's the great General Sup—Super—never mind, here he goes."

"What an illiterate blockhead you are, tinker—I mean general. Supernaculem means—it means—hip—here's luck, general."

"Good! I must drink that standing, and in solemn silence. There's nothing I reverence like luck. An ounce of luck is worth a pound of understanding."

"A pound of pewter spoons, you mean—hey, tinker? But drink, valiant Vulcan, drink, I say!"

"Why, colonel, it seems to me you have a queer lot of acquaintance. General Super—what d'ye call 'em? and General Vulcan—why, I never heard of them before."

"Not Vulcan! why he is the friend and patron of all tinkers, blacksmiths, and whitesmiths, since the time of Tubal Cain, and before, for aught I know. But drink—drink, I say! standing, sitting, or lying, drink, I say! I'll give you a bumper for every spoon you've run, since you were cradled on the field of glory. Here's to the memory of the immortal Wolfe!"

"Standing!" cried the general.

"Standing!" echoed the colonel, both rising with no small difficulty, the creature now beginning to operate.

"Bravo! Thunder and Mars! general, one would think you had just come out of a long drought. You drink like a sand hill, and roll about like an empty hogshead in a high sea. Steady—steady—you old rusty horn spoon."

"I roll? Damme, colonel, I'll cashier you for insulting your superior officer! I'm as sober as a deacon, but you—you go round like a big spinning-wheel, and make such a humming I can hardly hear myself speak. But talking of humming, what say you to a song, most noble continental?"

"Oh! by all means, general—tol, lol, de rol! `Why, soldiers, why;' I could find in my heart to strike up a stave myself, if I could only remember a song or a tune. But come, general, give us a ranting roaring song, about love and murder."

Hereupon, the general began to tune his pipes, and make most villainous wry faces, perfectly original with him, for to the best of our knowledge he had never seen an opera singer in all his life.

"Fa, sol, la—hem—la, la, la—hem—hah—I've got a terrible cold. Fa, sol, la—hem!"

"Get on, and don't sit there cackling like a Dutch guinea-hen!"

"Fa, sol, la—ah! yes, now I have found the right pitch at last."

"Thunder and Mars! pitch away, then, head foremost."

"'Twas in the old French war, they say, At the siege of Ticonderoga—"

"Ah! yes, I remember, I was there," mumbled the colonel to himself. "When the continental army lay With cold almost quite froze—a."

"Yes, yes, it was cold enough, I remember; one of the sentinels had his fingers froze fast to his musket—um—um," and the old continental began to nod. "Full fifty bold Americans, With hearts that never fail'd them, Were carousing it with flowing cans, When the enemy assail'd 'em."

"How do you like it, colonel?"

"Capital!—first-rate, general! `Why, soldiers, why—'" "Surrender, now, all you Yankee crew, Said the captain bold that did lead 'em; Said the Yankee boys, surrender you, With that they up and treed them. "They fought full sixteen years and more—"

"That's a lie!" muttered the colonel.

"I meant sixteen hours, colonel— "They fought full sixteen hours or more, From sunset to next morning, Says the Yankee boys, I swow and snore—"

Here, the colonel, who had gradually fallen asleep in his chair, suiting the action to the word, began to snore most lustily.

"Why, colonel, have you no more manners than to join chorus in the middle of a verse? He sleeps like an alderman at afternoon service."

The colonel heard not this expostulation, but continued his nap and his accompaniment, which had all the various modulations of an organ, with the newly invented stops. Sometimes it rolled up in a lofty diapason, and then suddenly sunk into thorough bass; sometimes it seemed whistling through a quill, and anon it burst forth with

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such stupendous and transcendent exuberance, as to threaten the total disruption of the instrument itself. Its variety was inexhaustible; its transitions, sometimes gentle and insinuating, at others abrupt and ferocious; and occasionally it sent forth a long, lingering, Alexandrine note, that gradually dwindled away like a distant expiring echo. Its variety was, indeed, inexhaustible, and as the colonel seemed in no haste to finish the concert, the general, it being now dark, reclined back in his chair, and soon accompanied him in his visit to the land of Nod, as well as in his music. Nor were they in the least disturbed by Mingo bringing in candles.

From this harmonious repose, the general, who, as he affirmed, always slept with one eye open, was roused by the unceremonious intrusion of a party of red coats, consisting of some half dozen, who rushed in with drawn swords, crying out, "Surrender, you rebel rascals, surrender!" The colonel, partly between sleeping and waking, being still inspired by the creature, exclaimed, at hearing the word rebels—

"Thunder and Mars! who talks of rebels? D—n the red coats, d—n the tories, and most emphatically d—n the Yagers! Down with them, boys; huzza for old Ti!"

"What's that you say, you old rebel scoundrel?" said the commanding officer, "we'll teach you another tune presently."

During this brief colloquy, the tinker had mounted his cocked hat, and ensconcing himself behind the table in order to hide his leather apron, cried out in a most magisterial tone—

"Rebel scoundrel! Is that the way you speak to a gentleman under my protection, and of whose hospitality I am now partaking, sir? Do you see this uniform, sirrah? Put up your sword and troop off this instant, or you shall run the gauntlet through the whole British army."

"I—I—beg pardon, sir, I—I—may I ask your honour who I have the honour of speaking to?" said the petty officer who led the party, taking off his hat and bowing with great humility.

"Speaking to, sir? Know, fellow, you are speaking to General Tinkerman, of the Trudging Heroes. Who are you, fellow, that you don't know *me*?"

"I beg pardon, sir, but I—I—really, though I've been all my life in the service, I don't think—I'm sure I never heard your name before. You probably served—"

"Served! Know, fellow, I never served. I always commanded. I have had ten thousand such ragamuffins as you under me at one time. So troop, sir, troop, I say, or I'll have you tried by a drum-head court-martial, and shot for disobedience of orders before you can say your prayers."

During this lofty harangue, General Tinkerman had imprudently advanced from behind his entrenchment, so that he exposed himself not to the fire, but the reconnoissance of the enemy, who detected his leather apron. The crest-fallen officer, not recollecting that particular uniform, began to see through the deception. Advancing, and lifting up the unlucky garment, he cried out—

"Why, general, what's this? You must be a freemason, as well as a field-officer. Pray, what corps do you belong to? Here, my men, take the general into custody, and mind he don't cut all your throats."

Accordingly they laid hold of the general with such loud shouts of laughter, that they at length fairly roused the colonel, who, yawning, and rubbing his eyes, mumbled out—

"Hey! yaw—w—w—why tinker, you laugh double. You seem as merry as a cricket. Well, to it again, my son. Another glass of the stuff, and we'll drink confusion to King George, and all his rascally red coats."

"You will, will you?" said the officer. "Tinker! and so, sir, you are a general, sir. You've commanded ten thousand such ragamuffins as me. You'll make us run the gauntlet before the whole army, will you? You'll try us by a drum-head court-martial, and hang us before we can say our prayers, will you?" And he turned the tinker round and round, to the infinite diversion of his comrades. The colonel, who was now wide awake, if not duly sober, gradually came to his recollection, and gazing around him, at length asked:

"Why, what is all this? Why, Thunder and Mars! who are you, and what business have you here, hey?"

"We'll soon let you know, old gentleman. You have lately become known at head-quarters for one of the most malignant old rebels in the whole county, and I am sent here to gallant you to the city, where you will stay till you learn to cry God save the king!"

"I'll be shot first!" said the colonel.

"Well, we shall see. But come, my men, here is wine, I see—fill a bumper to King George, and may all the rebels be hanged! Why, zounds! where did you get this wine, old dog? It is fit for the king. But you have not done honour to the toast; come, sir, drink, I entreat you!" And he bowed low in derision.

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"Well, I'll drink, because I love good wine, and I like to make people welcome, though I must say you have come rather unceremoniously. But I'll not drink your toast, because I don't like it. A man has a right to his own toast, to his own wine; so here's success to liberty!"

"And here's God save the king—of good fellows," cried General Tinkerman, sinking his voice to a whisper at the concluding part of his toast.

"Down with the old rebel!" exclaimed the officer, "or rather up with him. I'll hang him on the spot, unless he drinks my toast, as I am gentleman and a Christian."

"He'll hang a man on the spot for not drinking a toast, to prove himself a gentleman and a Christian," thought the general.

The old continental resolutely refused to establish his loyalty by drinking the king, and a halter being procured from the stable, where they found Mingo fast asleep, he having verified the old adage, like master, like man, they proceeded to fasten it round the colonel's neck by a slipping noose, to the great consternation of the general, who began to feel a disagreeable sensation about the throat, and believed his turn would come next. All things being prepared, and the toast once more proposed, and rejected by the stout old continental with disdain, they were proceeding seriously to execute their purpose; and had actually raised him on tiptoe, when, at this critical moment, our hero, who, as before stated, having been delayed by losing his way, approached the house, accompanied by Jane.

His attention was first attracted by seeing various figures moving backwards and forwards past the windows; and he had not proceeded many steps further, when the sight of several horses tied to the paling of the garden fence, greatly increased his alarm. He saw that there were visitors, and a closer inspection convinced him they were not friends, for he could distinguish through the window, that they were offering violence to the colonel. He hastily returned to Jane, and in as few words as possible, informed her of the state of things within. This information was followed by the proposal of a plan, which was the only one that occurred to him in this sudden emergency. He asked if she had the resolution to play her part, and was eagerly assured, that to save her father, she was capable of anything. He then pulled off his coat and hat, with which he equipped the young maiden, at the same time giving her the necessary instructions. He next approached the window, and dashing a pane of glass to atoms, roared out in a voice of thunder:

"Surrender! you rascally red coats, or you are dead men! Down with your arms this instant!"

"Surrender! you rascally red coats!" echoed Jane from another window in the rear, while both moved about rapidly, making as much noise as possible, and in every variety of tone.

They were just in the nick of time; for the officer having allowed the colonel five minutes to say his prayers, was just on the point of making good his claim to the character of a gentleman and a Christian, when the summons to surrender, which seemed to come from fifty different quarters, brought them to a dead pause. After a few moments of reflection, the valiant subaltern responded:

"Who are we to surrender to?"

"To Captain Flashfire's troop of dragoons, eight and forty strong! Deliver your arms out of the window, or you are all dead men!"

"Down with your arms, villains!" cried Jane, "or we'll cut the throats of every man, woman, and child, in fifty miles round!"

"Bless my heart!" said General Tinkerman, "what a bloodthirsty fellow that Captain Flashfire is! I tell you what, my friends, you'd better hand out your arms at once, or in less than fifteen minutes, you'll all be as dead as mutton! I know him of old; if he once gets his dander up, it's all over with you. There! there! there! he begins again!"

"Hand out your arms this minute, or we'll blow you all sky high!" cried John, in a terrible voice.

The officer finding such odds against him, obeyed the summons, and the arms were handed out through the broken window. John then entered the house, accompanied by Captain Flashfire; and his first act was to free the colonel, who had scarcely yet recovered his breath, and stood staring around, half unconscious of what was going forward. Indeed, he had been all but suffocated. Our hero then very courteously addressed himself to the officer, stating that his men had become so exasperated by the reports of the ill-usage of their countrymen during their imprisonment in New York, that they had sworn vengeance against the first red coats that fell into their hands. He could, at present, think of no other way to protect them from their fury, than tying their hands behind them. His

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men were on the whole generous fellows, and would never think of doing violence to defenceless prisoners. The officer at once assented, at the same time begging his protection; and additional halts being procured, the valiant commander and his party had their arms well secured behind their backs.

John having thus released the colonel, and secured his prisoners, proceeded to interrogate them, as to who they were, whence they came, and the object of their coming; in the course of which he detected his old friend Boshin, who had retired into a corner, and seemed by no means desirous of exciting observation. His blood boiled at sight of the caitiff, and he called out in a loud voice, "Case Boshin, stand forth!" Case crawled out, trembling like a detected criminal.

"How come you by that uniform?"

"I have enlisted in the regiment of loyal Americans."

"Since when?"

"About three months ago."

"Liar and rascal! Within less than that time you robbed, and almost murdered my grandfather. Do you remember the ghost of the bridge? You see I know all about it. You have now come here to rob and murder in the disguise of a uniform, already sufficiently disgraced by atrocities which no circumstances can justify. I owe you two good turns for myself, and one for my country. You did all you could to bring me to a disgraceful death; you deprived my poor old grandfather of his reason, and you have deserted your country, to side with her enemies. The day of reckoning has come, and you shall pay it to the last farthing, as sure as you live."

Case made no reply, but retired in dogged silence to his corner. After some little consultation, it was decided to confine the prisoners in the root-house, whither they were conducted, and placed under guard of General Tinkerman, assisted by old Mingo, who having previously refreshed himself with a long nap, declared he could keep awake the rest of the night, if the general would only talk to him. The next day Mingo was despatched with a letter to the commandant at West Point, and the day following, the prisoners were marched under a guard sent down for them, to that post. Here Case, being recognised as a deserter, suffered the severest penalty of military law, and the others were treated according to their demerits.

The colonel having by this time sufficiently recovered his breath and recollection, recognised his deliverer, whom he welcomed with all the warmth of grateful affection. After which, he inquired for Captain Flashfire, who stood ensconced behind General Tinkerman, that worthy having left Mingo on guard, while he came to light his pipe, as he said, though the truth is, he was anxious to see what would be the end of this affair.

"I beg pardon, sir," said John, in answer to the colonel's inquiry, "permit me to introduce Captain Flashfire, as brave an officer as ever drew trigger. He is bullet proof. He fears no man living, I'll say that for him. Lieutenant Flashfire, Colonel Hammond; a gallant officer who distinguished himself at the siege of Ticonderoga, in the old French war."

"Your hand, Captain Flashfire," said the old continental. "Thunder and Mars! it feels like velvet! Sir, you have saved my life from these hang-dogs, and mine is at your service. Permit me to bid you welcome, and to assure you my house, and everything in it is yours," and the colonel bowed profoundly, with the halter still hanging about his neck.

"A trifle—a trifle, colonel," replied the captain, disguising his voice a little. "Don't mention it—don't mention it, I beg of you. It isn't the first time by a hundred. I generally kill half a dozen men of a morning, and quiet my conscience by saving as many in the afternoon."

"The d—I you do!" He talks like a militia-man who has looked the enemy in the face across a river, thought the colonel. "But come, captain, pull off your coat, which, by the way—you will excuse me, sir—looks as if it had outgrown you; and your hat, which—hem! A glass of wine, sir. Permit me—I drink your good health, and yours, John, and yours, General Tinkerman. But now I think of it, where is the rest of your company? Let them come in, there is room and welcome for them all."

"You see all our company, sir; Captain Flashfire and I," said John.

"What, hey! Thunder and Mars! a ruse, as the French used to say at old Ti. You young rascal, you learnt that of me. Isn't it so? I'll never forgive you, if it isn't a ruse."

"Something like it, colonel. But, captain, suppose you pull off your hat and coat, and make yourself at home. No one has a better right."

"I can deny you nothing;" and the captain complied.

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"What, hey! why, sure! Why, you impudent baggage, are you not ashamed of campaigning about in men's clothes? Who made *you* a captain?"

"My commander, here. I would be made anything, to assist in saving the life of my dear father."

"Ah! a chip of the old block. And so you two alone have saved me from these scoundrels. John," added the colonel, with dignified solemnity, "John, I owe my life to you, and—and Captain Flashfire. You have preserved me from a death unworthy of a soldier. In what way can I repay the obligation? Zounds! I have it. I'll give you half my estate."

John shook his head.

"No? well, what say you to the whole?"

Again John shook his head.

"Why, you unreasonable dog! Well, I have nothing else to give, except what you once rejected. I am too proud of myself and my daughter, to send her begging for a husband, especially since I hear you are grown such a great man all at once; thanked by General Washington; thanked by Congress; voted a medal, and all that. Thunder and Mars! I suppose you will look down on the old continental colonel and his daughter, now!"—and the colonel began to wax wroth.

"Ask your daughter," said John.

"What! has he made the *amen honourable*, as the French used to say at old Ti? Has he gone down on his knees, acknowledged himself a puppy, and begged your pardon with his nose in the dirt?"

"He has given me satisfactory reasons, sir."

"And what were they?"

"I can't remember them," replied Jane, blushing.

"Ah—well—um—I suppose it is all right. Come hither, Captain Flashfire;—ah! you little vixen! Here, John, take her, you puppy; but mind you keep a tight rein. Thunder and fire! how she strutted and swore! Surrender, this instant, or we'll blow you sky high! Surrender! you scoundrels, or we'll cut the throats of every man, woman and child in fifty miles round! and then she kills six men a day, and saves the lives of as many more to quiet her conscience! But come to my arms, that I may kiss you once more before I give you away. There, take her, John, with all my heart, and all my money—witness, General Tinkerman."

"I do," said the general, "and may I have the running of all the pewter spoons."

"Silver, you old empty tin canister! They shall have nothing but silver in the house! Hey! Johnny, my son?"

"Silver, pewter, horn or wood, all one, sir. To me, her only treasure is herself; silver and gold are nothing to such a heart, enshrined in such a casket."

"Hey diddle, diddle! the puppy grows poetical. But take her, John, such as heaven made her. I give her to you as the best of daughters, and such ever make the best of wives. I give her to you as the reward of patriotism and fidelity."

The wedding took place shortly afterwards; but the consummation of his love, did not subdue our hero's patriotism. He remained at home during the remainder of the winter; but joined the American army at the commencement of the campaign, with the consent of Jane, who said with tears in her eyes, and blushes on her cheeks, "I know it is your duty to go, and mine to part with you, though it cuts me to the heart. But I never wish to be the wife of any but a freeman, or the mother of slaves." He served during the remainder of the war; performed many hardy exploits, was present at the closing scene at York Town; and returned home with the rank of major, to enjoy the blessings of that liberty for which he had so faithfully laboured, and so severely suffered. Nor should it be forgotten that his two companions, Isaac and David, attended the wedding, where the latter made the bride not a little jealous by joking the bridegroom about the beautiful fortune-teller. The two equally shared with John the gratitude of their country, and lived long after the conclusion of the war, in credit and renown.

The old couple at the stone house, did not, however, live to see and share the blessings of freedom. They died within a few weeks of each other, and slid out of the world so easily, that their last sleep came on like the hour of balmy rest, after a long summer day of toil. The last words of the old man were—"Yes, yes, a tory is a highway robber." They were quietly borne to the grave, where they lay side by side, awaiting the unfolding of that awful mystery which the living never penetrate, and the dead never disclose.

General Tinkerman—once a general, always a general—survived the war, during which he had saved money enough to set up in business in New York, in the pewter and tin line. Being a long-sighted man, he purchased a

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swamp just at the outskirts of the city, which in process of time became at length so valuable, that the general deserted his caste, and went over to the aristocracy. The more the price of the swamp rose, the more weighty became his influence, both in politics, morals, and religion, and his opinions concerning public measures and the weather, were decisive. He bore his honours as if he had inherited them from the time of William the Conqueror, and it was exceedingly edifying to hear him dilate on the "mushroom nobility," or the intolerable impudence of tag-rag and bobtail democracy, as he termed the good people, who had fought for their country while he was running pewter spoons and selling pins and needles. To sustain his pretensions, he selected for his carriage a great coat of arms, of sixteen quarterings, which he found in an old book of heraldry in the city library, and, in short, became one of the granite pillars of the aristocracy of the great emporium. Finally, when he died—for all men must die—the newspapers of the time solemnly announced, that "A great man had fallen in Israel."

Artemas Day, in like manner, lived to a good old age, doubtless by virtue of his devotion to dried apples and molasses and water, and became a richer man than his neighbour, the old continental, by the aid of hard bargains and labour-saving machines. Such was the rigid propriety of his outward man, that it was taken for granted by those who never had anything to do with him, that the inward man must be equally unexceptionable. He was consequently highly respected abroad, though it must be confessed he was marvellously despised nearer home, thereby verifying the saying, that "prophets have no honour in their own country." The little mischievous boys of the neighbourhood, those shrewd judges of human character, seldom missed an opportunity of doing him an ill turn, by robbing his orchard and flouting his spareribbed horse, as he rode along with the resignation of a martyr. The last act of his life which has come to our knowledge, was his contriving, by some means or other, to get a pension for his revolutionary services, which consisted in holding friendly intercourse with the enemy, and taking a protection for his person and property. There was a sermon preached at his funeral, in which he was greatly exalted, and Zoroaster Fisk tasked his genius in works of fiction so successfully, that neither man, woman, nor innocent babe, in all the churchyard, left behind them such a character for piety, integrity, and benevolence.

Our heroine, in the opinion of those who best knew her, made a wife of at least a hundred thousand, though it is traditionary that she paid such exclusive attention to her first-born, that both John and the colonel were sometimes a little jealous. It was considered somewhat remarkable that she dressed plainer as she grew older, and that her husband actually thought she became handsomer every day, although she had a bad habit of giving him advice which cannot be sufficiently reprehended. She was pious, without being priestridden, and never went to a night meeting but once, when she caught a great cold, which the colonel swore by Thunder and Mars, was a judgment upon her. Her greatest fault was a blameable indifference to the concerns of her neighbours, into which she never pried except with a view of relieving their necessities, so that never was woman more deficient in that knowledge which concerns everybody but ourselves. With this exception, we would venture to pronounce her perfect, had she not once nearly fainted at a proposition of John to apprentice his third son to a trade, instead of making him a lawyer.

The old continental, after the marriage of his daughter, abandoned all his contemplated improvements and labour-saving machines, having got a new set of playthings in the person of divers little grandchildren, whom he did his best to spoil, and then swore by Thunder and Mars, it was all owing to the weak indulgence of the mother. John found him a very amusing companion of evenings, only he told the stories of old Ti and Pine's bridge rather too often. But to do the good man justice, he made all the amends in his power, by adding, altering, or diminishing something at every repetition, thereby producing a perpetual variety. Old Mingo sometimes took the liberty of setting him right, but such is the ingratitude of mankind that all he got for his pains was either a sharp reprimand, or a provoking insinuation that the poor old negro had outlived his recollection. He not unfrequently scolded Jane, and generally when she least deserved it. This, her husband did not much relish, either because he thought it unmerited, or that this was his exclusive privilege. The old continental lived to a patriarchal age, without ever suffering any severe pain, or actual disease, except on one occasion, when he nearly died of laughter on reading in the newspapers a pompous eulogium on that pillar of aristocracy, General Tinkerman, and that a great man had fallen in Israel. Towards the close of his life, his daughter succeeded in persuading him, that it was unbecoming his years to deal so much in Thunder and Mars, and he promised to do his best to abstain. The good gentleman succeeded during three days, by scarcely opening his mouth at all, but on the morning of the fourth, it was observed that he broke out again, and made himself ample amends for his abstinence.

Our happy trio—for happy they were, notwithstanding the little rubs of domestic life—lived to enjoy the

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blessings of that freedom, for the attainment of which, each in their appropriate sphere, had paid a just proportion of anxieties and suffering. They lived to see their country increasing in prosperity and happiness, beyond all former examples; to see it expanding in extent, growing in vigour, and giving new force to the principles, new sanctity to the name of liberty, by exhibiting an example of its glorious consequences. While enjoying the present, and anticipating still greater triumphs in the future, they often reverted to the past, and recalled to mind the hardships and sufferings of the revolutionary struggle, John would often exclaim—"It was the Price of Liberty!"  
THE END.