BRANDON;

OR,

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

A Tale of the American Colonies.

BY

OSMOND TIFFANY.

"I hold it true, whate'er befall;
I feel it, when I sorrow most;
'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all."

TENNYSON.

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TO

REV. CONVERS FRANCIS, D. D.,

OF

Harvard College,

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS.

My Dear Sir:

I take great pleasure in dedicating this little work to you, in accordance with your kind permission. You have long placed me in your debt, by advice and encouragement to pursue the path of Literature. Conscious of the inadequacy of this offering to repay you, it will, I know, be welcomed as a slight but sincere token of my gratitude.

I am, my dear Sir,

Ever truly yours,

OSMOND TIFFANY.

PREFACE.

THE story of "BRANDON," which is now submitted to the Public, was written three years ago, soon after the Author's removal from the city of Baltimore. At that period, the literary labors of a host of writers turned towards fiction, as a chosen field. The astonishing success of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and the popularity of other works, such as "The Wide, Wide World," and "The Lamplighter," had stimulated a thousand prolific pens, and novels appeared and disappeared in such ceaseless succession, that even those of merit were in many instances borne down by the weight of the many more which were good for nothing.

In the crush and hurry of the time, the author found no chance to multiply copies of his work, and he was advised by disinterested friends, who read his MSS., to wait patiently until the hurricane blew over. It died away at last, leaving the public with no further appetite

for imaginary horrors or raptures. Books illustrating real life were wisely sought. Dr. Kane's immortal volumes were welcomed by millions of the soundest readers and thinkers of the country, while Barth's and Livingston's Travels in Africa earned hearty commendation—proving that narratives of real heroism always charm the great heart of humanity, whether brave actions transpire beneath the burning equatorial sun, or amidst icy Arctic solitudes. The great commercial revulsion of the past year, following upon the decline of the romance mania, also put an effectual quietus, for the time being, on sensation books. Men with ruin staring them in the face, and women with helpless children to clothe and feed, quite forgot their wonted interest in sighing Strephons and love-lorn Chloes.

In its main feature, the experience of Lucy Tyrrell, "Brandon" is founded on fact, only that the time has been thrown back upwards of fifty years. It is unnecessary to state more particularly the source of the writer's material, which he has thus worked into the story. He thought that the manners and social life of the "Old Dominion," with the introduction of some of its celebrated characters in the early days of Washington, might prove acceptable to the reader; and, while looking into the history of the colonies "a hundred years ago," he

was struck with the interest of the Canada campaign of 1759, which is ever memorable from the surrender of Quebec. The fascinating character of General Wolfe, with his daring and successful assault, appeared to the author to offer a brilliant episode, and he has yet to learn that the events of that grand enterprise have been hitherto embodied in the pages of prose fiction.

Whether the costume of the period which the author has sketched is strictly correct, he must leave to his readers to decide; but he can safely say, that the historic details of the story have been carefully studied. From his long familiarity with Rhode Island, he trusts that his pictures of Newport in the olden time may still be recognised, although the place is no longer what it once was, especially during the period treated of, when, in the words of good Bishop Berkeley, it was "the most thriving place in all America for bigness."

Should the work which is now humbly offered to the public meet with its favor, the writer may be induced to recur again to a period which abounded with romantic interest and deeds of worth, before the chain which bound the old thirteen provinces to the mother country was snapped asunder—when the strong men and lovely women of the Colonies were loyal subjects of the English kings.

In conclusion, the Author begs leave to state, that the verses on page 168 are not original with him, but have been contributed by a poetess whom he is proud to claim as friend. Although in youth he long dreamed of a seat on Parnassus, he is happy to state, that, fortunately for his relatives' peace of mind, as well as his own, the delusion expired with his one-and-twentieth year.

Springfield, Mass.,
August 14, 1858.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHAPTER IX.

CHAPTER X.

CHAPTER XI.

CHAPTER XII.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHAPTER XIV.

CHAPTER XV.

CHAPTER XVI.

CHAPTER XVII.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHAPTER XIX.

CHAPTER XX.

CHAPTER XXI.

CHAPTER XXII.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CHAPTER XXV.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CHAPTER XXX.

CHAPTER XXXI.

BRANDON;

OR,

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

CHAPTER I.

THE ISLAND.

Not far remote from the southern shores of Massachusetts lies a stern bleak island, whose barren soil almost denies common nourishment to man, but which, for more than two hundred years, has nurtured a hardy race, who love their rocky home.

It is exposed to the full fury of the ocean, and when the blasts of winter rise into tempests, its shores are too often strewn with the wrecks of hapless vessels, overwhelmed by the Atlantic surge. High above the crags beetling over the waves, bleak downs offer scant pasturage to sheep, a few acres of marsh afford haunt to wild fowl, a snug harbor and two or three sheltered coves dot the coast, and the long line of sandy beach elsewhere stretches to the verge of the sea.

Such is the island now, and it was much the same "a hundred years ago," uninviting and of almost savage aspect. Yet, as we observed before, it cherished a hardy race—men of toil, but thoroughly independent in a life

which, though fraught with constant danger, bore with it a fearful fascination. At first sight, one might wonder that so many women and children, unaccompanied by men, should form the population, but an instant's glance at the sea told the reason. Thousands of miles beyond their ken, over its waters, the fathers of these families were scattered. Almost their whole lives were passed upon the ocean in pursuit of the whale; far away in the region of tempests which enshroud Cape Horn, or amid the more dreadful terrors of arctic latitudes.

The entire population of the small rude village bore marks of maritime life; from earliest boyhood the youth was trained to pull the oar and mind the helm, and long before manhood to follow the calling of his ancestors, who had all been sailors. Even those remaining on shore looked as if subjects of Neptune's domain, who had left it but for a brief season; bare-legged urchins might be seen disporting along the edges of the coves in pursuit of luckless shrimps, while here and there something in shape of a man enveloped in a pea-jacket of portentous size, with a face which the salt spray of many years, aided by the sun, had bronzed and hardened, lounged against a boat upon the beach, gazing out at sea with eyes which had no speculation in them, or mended nets with huge paws rough with excrescences like barnacles. Such a character is to be met in every sea-port town; one who prides himself on knowing a thing or two, as well as some other folks; whose whole talk, outside of his calling, lies in "wise saws and modern instances," taciturn as a fish, yet bluff as Boreas.

The houses were rude in construction, seldom of more than one story, and of great similarity in appearance. Their low, dim apartments were frequently decorated with the shells and corals of the sea, mingled with various

objects of the fisher's craft. Nets suspended to the walls, coils of rope stowed away in corners, a rough table and chairs to match, with the spinning wheel, whose ceaseless drone was heard all day, were seen in every cottage. Besides such furniture, in one or two tenements more favored than the rest, hung strange, outlandish-looking weapons and carved paddles from Indian seas, side by side with rusty lances and harpoons, to each of which attached some tale of wonder. No garden spot cheered the eyes of the occupant, and the invariable prospect commanded by each abode was of bleak hills on one side, and for contrast on the other, boundless ocean.

Only two buildings in the whole village betokened care, or any attempt to render them attractive; one was the parish church, small but neatly built, enclosed by its grassy yard, in which slept many of the ancient settlers, their tombstones of dusky slate carved with their name and age, a sepulchral urn, a drooping tree, and sometimes a frightful head, intended either for an angel's, or as an emblem of the "Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his wings."

The parsonage house was in keeping with the church, and, though old-fashioned and rough in construction, betokened neatness and comfort. It was placed in a sheltered nook, which a turn in the road disclosed, and a jutting spur of the cliff broke the force of the wind from it. Its little garden—the only one in the place—well kept from weeds, displayed a few bright flowers, to reward the labor bestowed upon it. Over the porch a luxuriant vine was trained to the eaves of the house, and nearly closed one or two of the windows, at the same time forming a hiding place for birds, which built their nests in its branches.

The family consisted of the Rev. Francis Tyrrell, his

wife, and their only child, a daughter, Lucy, at the period of which we now speak nearly sixteen years of age. How the good man came to settle on this barren island, its inhabitants never troubled themselves with asking. Perhaps he could have scarce told himself, beyond the fact that, falling early in love and marrying without fortune, he was forced to seek an asylum wherever it offered, and therefore accepted this post, the first and best that chanced to him.

He was a man of liberal education, a graduate of Harvard College, and of more than ordinary talents and acquirements. Thinking that he should ere long change for a better position in life, year after year had he remained, becoming not only contented with his lot, but endeared to it, happy in doing good in his own humble way, and repaid by the affectionate respect of the whole parish, and the society of his wife and child. His appearance at once betokened the gentleman; an air of mingled dignity and sweetness well became his sacred profession. His calling, which, in those days, was much more reverenced than it is now, invested him in some degree with the carriage of one having authority; but in the benevolent expression of his face one looked in vain for lines of hauteur, and no rebuke fell from him unless well merited.

His labor of love, as he ministered to the spiritual and temporal wants of his people, made his life one of interest and beauty; he took delight in the office which led him to visit every hamlet in the island, and study the peculiar character of each inhabitant. Uniting a knowledge of the healing art to his pastoral charge, as was then common in New England, the sick were gladdened by his kind smile, and assured of renewed health; while to those who required no medicine his timely advice was always

welcome. The boys but half suspended their sports as he passed, their awe being tempered by confidence, and sometimes the heart of one of those oddities in a pea jacket would be rejoiced, as the minister, without compromising his dignity, joined in a day's fishing, and listened patiently to yarns heard a hundred times before of whales and whalers.

In the pulpit he made no display of learning or attempt at brilliancy, but the service was impressive, and in an age when strong doctrine was inculcated, his sermons were always replete with instances of Divine love; while the tremulous accents of his voice as he poured out his soul in prayer and thanksgiving, softened his hearers, and led them to hope, even when he had spoken most pointedly of their guilty state.

Beyond these occupations, the minister was daily engaged in cultivating a few acres of ground which the care of years had rendered tolerably productive, and the hours which time yet left him were passed at home with those after his own heart, or with his books, of which his store might amount to two hundred volumes.

His wife, a woman of no inconsiderable beauty, of strong mind and contented disposition, was well formed to be his helpmate in that stern, wave-bound home. They had not lived without affliction, for more than one of their children lay in the churchyard, leaving only Lucy, their first-born, to gladden and bless them.

Lucy, innocent and pure in heart, looked as if the breath of heaven, and the sea, and the sunlight, might have helped to form her. Her shape was graceful, her motions free as the wave, and it demanded little fancy in the beholder to liken the tinge of her tresses to the golden light of the daybeam, or the calm rich blue of her eyes to the serene depths of the waters, or the stain-

less purity of her complexion to the snowy shell which the ebbing tide left at her feet upon the shore. Lucy had no companions of her own age, and had been reared almost without playmates. She was of different mould from the cottage children, and her parents had not encouraged intimacy beyond that prompted by good-will and kindness.

She, from earliest childhood, was their own companion, the sharer in all their joys. She was now able to relieve her mother of much care in household duties, but she was the closer partaker of the life of her father, who had been her only teacher. That age was one of fewer books than this, but it produced far better scholars. Under her father's guidance, she had become not only skilled in the English language, but also in Greek and Latin. A child learns one tongue as easily as another, and looking up to her father as the wisest man on earth, as well as the best, her quick, earnest, little mind soon mastered the difficulties of those ancient languages, and she would recite with redoubled pleasure as she observed the bright look of gratification which was sure to reward her diligence. How precious were the hours passed in that father's simple study. She was happy to sit at his feet and con her task, to listen, as he always blended amusement with instruction, or sometimes with rapt gaze watch him as he composed his weekly sermon.

A constant companion in his walks and visits to his parishioners, the tongue that uttered thanks to him never failed also to bless his Lucy. She was loved by all the cottagers, and their regard for her had been frequently expressed in simple presents, some of their own handicraft, but many more the rarer offerings of the sea.

No shell or pebble of more than ordinary beauty could be found but was added to Lucy's collection, and no sea-

man returned from a distant voyage without a token of remembrance, some curiosity in coral or fantastic carving. In her own neat chamber she had tastefully arranged all these, some little story attaching to every one; but she prized beyond all her own collection of sea mosses, brilliant greens and purples, contrasted with brown and purest white; some almost like the flowers of earth in shape, others of exquisite fern-like forms, so delicate as to offer no impression to the touch. Many she had gathered with her own hands, others had been brought to her from foreign climes—

"From Bermuda's reefs, from edges
Of sunken ledges
In some far off bright Azore;
From Bahama, and the dashing
Silver-flashing
Surges of San Salvador."

Lucy loved the ocean; it had become to her more than a friend; she was familiar with it in its every mood; she lingered beside it when it heaved gently in sunlit calm; she listened for hours as its mighty voice spoke in tempests. She beheld it from her chamber window, spreading to her sight in grey and solemn grandeur, as she rose with the dawn of day, and hastening to the beach, on which its billows broke in thunder, waited for the coming of morning. She saw the waters change from sombre gloom, to colors instinct with life, as they reflected the yellow and crimson clouds which heralded the sun; then as its golden column gleamed along the sea, and the majestic luminary soared heavenward, marked with delight its beams sparkle on the azure surge. Or, at hushed noon, she sought some sheltered cleft in the rocks, listening to the dashing of the waters as the tides rose or fell,

and many a tale of wonder and peril, which she had heard from the old cottagers, seemed to be repeated by the sea. As in a mirror it showed her the distant islands of the south, where dusky forms stood beneath the palm and cocoa trees, and the coral insect built its palaces; or, in the arctic circle, the skiff of the Greenlander, who sought the seal beneath the shadow of the awful iceberg.

But, dearest to her, were those hours after sunset hues had died away, when the moonbeams silvered the waves and changed even the hard rocks to shapes of beauty, or in darker evenings, when only the "sentinel stars," shone radiant from their celestial watch-towers. Then, the imagination of the musing girl drew around her visions strange and beautiful, as by the wand of Prospero.

Thus Lucy grew to womanhood, and that rude island held a home, in which one spirit was bright, one flower was always blooming.

CHAPTER II.

THE OLD DOMINION.

The scene now changes to a land of richer mould, and brightened by a warmer sun, far, far away from Lucy's humble home,—into the heart of Virginia in the olden time. Different indeed this region, adorned with luxuriant forests, and majestic rivers; glorying in ranges of towering mountains; and peopled by another race than the descendants of the stern New England Puritans.

As the rocky wilderness of the north, sheltered a band whom persecution drove from their ancestral firesides, but whose ordeal in the New World was welcome in the golden light of religious freedom, so the genial clime of Virginia allured adventurers more gently nurtured, who carried with them much of the wealth, refinement, and festive spirit which distinguished them in Britain.

So loyally attached to the church and state of England, as well as to its customs, were the gentry of the Old Dominion, that a hundred years ago, the traveler resting at one of their hospitable mansions, might easily imagine himself surrounded by the luxuries of an English home.

On the north bank of the River James, about eighty miles from the sea, Kingwood Hall, the well known and proud seat of the Brandon family, stood in all its glory in the year 1755. The voyager floating on the river, looked with pleasure, as through the foliage of aged trees, he caught sight of the glittering vane which topped the central tower of the mansion; and as he swept past, beheld with the feelings of longing the massive proportions

of the pile, from whose clustered chimneys rose the smoke, indicative of good cheer within. The house was placed some thirty feet above the bed of the James, and the natural banks had been shaped into successive terraces, the highest one decorated with a small garden in the formal geometric style, and balustrades of wrought stone, and large vases of the same material.

The Hall, bearing date of 1670, had been reared by Sir William Brandon, Knight, who emigrated to Virginia, and left behind him a vast entailed estate, now in the possession of his grandson. The house was of brick brought from England; between the wings rose a square massive tower which, mantled with the ivy's growth of half a century, presented a baronial aspect; while at lofty height was placed the clock, which in sonorous peals told the hours, as time pursued its round. The gardens commanded a pleasing view of the river, winding away between its green banks, and as lovely a landscape opened to the view on the other side of the Hall. A lawn of emerald verdure, gently sloped from the house; the circle bounded by the carriage-drive, was embellished by an equestrian statue of King Charles I., and the luxuriant richness of the turf, afforded parade to several proud peacocks—birds which are best fitted for appendages of aristocratic display. In the noble avenue of oaks and elms, and groves of other beautiful trees, the eye delighted to linger for a season; then beyond them marked the blue distant hills, which rose into the western sky, and denoted the margin of the manor. In the middle ground, might be descried flocks of sheep nibbling the tender herbage; or, dashing across the lawn troops of deer, who sought the little brook that ran singing through the forest, over its bed of mossy pebbles.

The interior splendors of Kingwood were worthy of

such a domain. The visitor, entering from the tower, passed through a vestibule into the principal hall, panelled with dark oak, around which rose the stately stairs of solid stone, guarded by a rich carved balustrade; occupying almost as much space as is devoted to the whole of a modern mansion. Large full-length portraits of former Brandons, hung in this hall; some, of a century back, robed in quaint but gorgeous dresses, such as they had worn in the presence of their sovereign; others, clad half in steel, represented an age ere armor fell into total disuse. The platitudes of Kneller, who smothered all expression in his countenances, however celebrated their owners, and buried them in wigs that rose high above the brow, and hung curling down on to the shoulders, were amply redeemed by the graces of Lely's pencil, exhibited in three or four of those delicious female beauties who sparkled in the court of the second Charles; and above all, by more than one master-piece of the incomparable Vandyke. Nor were the paintings confined to portraiture. Here was a genuine landscape of Salvator's, as wild a scene as ere he "dashed," a mountain cavern whence issued a robber troop, in the light of the redly sinking sun. Here, a drinking bout of some Dutch master, a laughing chorus and ringing glasses; and here, the purer genius of Ruysdael shone in a woodland scene, the branches of the trees still swayed by the storm, while, through the clouds, the sunlight broke in golden gleams on the swollen brook and waving grain.

Ample resources lay before the loiterer, the student, or the sportsman. A billiard-room and a tennis-court, attracted lovers of these interesting games; a noble library offered to intellect its treasury of genius; and the lounger, who cared neither for books nor in-door sports, had but to walk to the stables, or the kennels, to find a breed of

horses and dogs unsurpassed by any other estate in the colonies. The entire mansion was furnished in a style uniting splendor with eomfort; and the numerous apartments were deeorated with many a elassie bust, and many an antique eabinet of prceious inlay and carving. In one of the lesser rooms, hung a small but ehoice eollection of armor, and weapons of offenee, of European and Oriental fabric. Here, prized beyond all, was the sword of Sir William Brandon, who in youth had fought for his king at the battle of Naseby; here too,—must it be confessed! —the spurs whieh urged his flying steed from the pursuit of Cromwell's troopers, in that memorable defeat. In eompany with these, glittered the badge of knighthood, pledge of Charles the Seeond's gratitude to the cavalier, at the Restoration; and above the mantle, the full-length portrait of Sir William himself, kept guard, as the tutelary genius of Kingwood.

But we write of glories long departed; vainly, now, the voyager may seareh for Kingwood Hall—the river and brook still flow on, the blue hills yet lie serene in the landscape—but long sinee eeased the bell to sound, long since fell the tower. Wild, tangled shrubs grow among the shattered walls, the owl hoots from a loophole in the briek-work whieh still marks the place of a window of the mansion, whenee many a bright faee had looked out upon the garden; and of the noble pile, onee, perhaps, the first of the aneient dominion, a few mouldering fragments stand in sad memorial. . . . . .

The family at Kingwood consisted of Mr. Riehard Brandon, his wife Eleanor, and their only son, Charles Stuart. Of the old Virginia Gentleman, a raee said to be well nigh extinct, never on earth was there a prouder speeimen than in the person of the Lord of the Manor. He was proud of his family, which was ancient enough,

his pedigree running back far beyond the valorous Sir William, whom he regarded by no means the founder of his line, but as one of its scions favored peculiarly by fortune, in making the name more illustrious than it had ever been before. But, in himself, he worshipped one scarcely less distinguished; he considered it his due that the neighboring gentry should, without demur, regard him as a superior being. Beneath the rank of gentry, Mr. Brandon did not look; such persons might have opinions, or they might not; but that they possessed the privilege of comment and criticism on men like him, was an idea not to be tolerated for an instant. He was, in short, an uncompromising aristocrat; as benighted a being as existed, spite of his belief that the universe was created mainly for King George II., and that the sun, illuming his court with full splendor, mercifully bestowed a few beams on the Western Hemisphere, about the region of Kingwood, leaving the rest of the human family to perpetual gloom. Passionately devoted to heraldry, and regarding it as one of the noblest studies of a gentleman, he often spent hours in poring over musty family rolls and dingy folios, with a view of compiling a genealogy of his own; a work on which he had been engaged for at least thirty years. He was proud of his blood, his estate, his wife, and his son; prouder of himself than either. Intense as his loyalty might be to the reigning sovereign of Great Britain, his adoration of the dethroned Stuarts far exceeded it.

King Charles I. was, as Mr. Brandon thought, not only a true saint, but a martyr whose death the whole British nation could never expiate. Therefore every year, on the anniversary of his execution, Kingwood Hall hung morally in black, and its lord humbled himself in spiritual sackcloth and ashes. In memory of the worshipped

monarch, he had, at immense cost, imported from England the equestrian statue on the lawn; and his satisfaction would have been complete if historic truth would have sanctioned a recumbent figure of Cromwell beneath the hoofs of the horse. In opinions, Mr. Brandon was a despot. To differ from him was next to high treason; for, in his own estimation, he was one of the few men not only always exactly right, but who had never made a mistake in his life. He looked his character, being portly, lordly, and pompous. His tall and strong frame had been puffed up by a profusion of roast beef and ale, which he loved because his English ancestors did. His face, ruddy with health and the exercise which hunting gave, was one of good nature itself, beaming with thorough satisfaction of his own importance, and was seldom ruffled unless some one happened to dissent from his views, when a frown, which he imagined to be terrible, gathered upon his brow. On such occasions, a lofty condescension of manner, which forbade argument, became manifest; which, when his opponent had left him, was changed for a look of supreme contempt, accompanied by a formal elevation of the chin, and such a flourish of his heavy gold-headed stick, as could only be equalled by the pomposity of a drum-major.

Yet he was kind and courteous; a humane, indulgent master to his slaves; and a loving, generous husband.

The wife of his bosom was, indeed, worthy of fervent affection. She was as remarkable for sweetness of disposition, and true dignity of demeanor, as her husband was noted for assumption. A look of goodness and purity beamed from her soft grey eyes, and it was said that no one approached her and remained a few moments in conversation, without becoming attached to her. Peculiarly pleasing to children, she had the happy art of ruling them

by love; and, crowded with guests as the mansion often was, when the juveniles assembled she knew how to banish every conflicting interest of rival troops so easily, that their own mothers were taught lessons. But she was no less devoted to the management of her vast estate, than in ministering to the pleasures of her visitors, in social hours.

Nothing connected with her farm escaped her notice; nothing was ordered that she did not know; nothing concerning the cattle, the horses, the dairy, the poultry, the flower and vegetable gardens but was duly and daily noted in her book of housewifery. Thus she passed several hours every morning, not forgetting her visit of good cheer to the cabins of the slaves, to whom she was less a mistress than a friend, and who always looked eagerly to see her come with some nice present for the aged or the sick, to inquire of some new-born infant, or to impart words of hope and consolation to some one on the last stage of earth's journey.

She was of rich and rare beauty, with a form of luxurious symmetry, which set off the graces of dress in the highest degree. When within doors she appeared to entertain her guests with utmost ease, and with happy tact she always led and changed the conversation at the dinner table, seeing that every one of right bore part in it, and that no one was suffered to monopolize it; rewarding a brilliant sally with ready repartee, and encouraging the diffident by a sweet smile of regard. All this was blended with an innocent spirit, and with piety, which unobtrusive, yet leavened her whole character, and shed its light throughout all the household.

Of the heir of Kingwood we shall say but a few words in this chapter.

Charles Stuart Brandon was now nineteen years of

age, and almost the counterpart of his mother in appearance. The same elegance of figure distinguished him, only that it was more slender than hers ; the same smile displayed a like quiet love of fun, and the soft grey eyes shone with equal tenderness.

This strong resemblance had at times rather disturbed Mr. Brandon, who would have preferred his son's features moulded to the type of his ancestors, especially Sir William, the beau ideal of chivalry, and whose haughty lineaments the father thought repeated in his own—an opinion shared by no one else. Still, in spite of teasings and tutorings, and his sire's long lectures on the necessity of copying Sir William in all things, in hopes of eventually resembling him, nature would have her way, and refused to Charles other likeness than his mother's. He had been chiefly reared under her tuition, and although his father's aristocratic predilections had had great influence on his son, the mother's good sense had uprooted many a weed in his mind, which folly would have suffered to grow unchecked.

He had been two years at the Cambridge University, where his father had been before him ; the mother's influence had sent him to the Massachusetts colony, in order that a more liberal state of feeling and thinking might direct him than if he remained surrounded by the feudal state of Kingwood.

Reared as he had been, imbued from his earliest youth with exclusive notions of rank and caste, he was not happy when first transplanted to a sphere in which a different state of society prevailed, and where he was made to feel that his own position was not deferred to as in Virginia. But he soon observed that a stronger stimulus nerved ambition, that a wider field opened for distinction, that only talent commanded, and was deferred

to as soon as known, that manly independence characterized all classes, while in polished circles the elegant graces of life were not less cultivated than in the latitude of his own home. He soon became reconciled and pleased with the change. "Things must have strangely altered since my father's time," he thought. "If the world is not wiser it is older, and I can live no longer as I have all my life, in the age of King Charles the 'First.'"

CHAPTER III.

CHRISTMAS AT KINGWOOD.

It was the happy time of Christmas, and Charles Brandon was once again at Kingwood, to spend the holidays. From the snowy and frozen regions of the north, where winter reigned supreme, and kindly threw over the earth a mantle, more pure, more delicate, and beautiful than the ermine of princes; gave the hills new shapes of splendor; changed the forest recesses into the marble pillared isles of Gothic cathedrals; and, with magic touch transformed every stream and brook, into glittering icy archways,—went the youth to the sunny south, bright still as in summer days. Though the trees were stripped of leaves, a soft wind, like the breath of spring, breathed through their branches, the turf was yet green, roses bloomed in the open air beside the house, the James still flowed on, and the little brook still ran through the wood, sweetly singing.

Christmas at Kingwood was always kept in noble style, and after the fashion of Mr. Brandon's ancestors; all the gentry of the neighborhood and of Williamsburg were invited, and were generally happy to repair to his hospitable mansion.

It was Christmas day, high revel was decreed at the Hall, and the guests were now arriving in rapid succession. As the carriages drove under the gateway of the porter's lodge, half a mile from the mansion, a group of negroes assembled there, all on the grin of delight, to throw the gate wide open for the approaching vehi-

eles, and then cluster on it like monkeys, for a swing, as it shut to after them.

Now came a blue chariot, and now a green one, and next, one of violet color, followed by a modest, dark-lined equipage, which was succeeded in its turn by a superb crimson coach and four bay horses, bearing in the proudest style, almost in regal state, the governor of the realm, Robert Dinwiddie. No matter who came, proud as princes though they might be, a running fire of comment was kept up by the negroes, who agreed that no equipage in the whole number was worthy to be named with mas'r's. They were nearly struck dumb with wonder, as the stylish yellow carriage, looking bright as the sun itself, and drawn on this occasion by six black steeds, dashing fire from their heels, whirled through the portal, with Mr. John Robinson, the speaker of the House of Burgesses, who had been sent for by Mr. Brandon.

Some of the visitors would not have been much pleased with the remarks of the sable crew, had they heard them. "De lors! here comes ole Mr. Parchmount," said one; "he's bound to come, certin', say he neber stays home Christmas, fear of his niggers' eatin' too much, neber gives 'em nuffin but corn cake all de year roun. Wonder what for mas'r 'vites him?" And now came another, an open vehicle, drawn by two beautiful dapple grey horses, and in which sat a large, haughty looking woman, accompanied by a young girl of singularly brilliant complexion and beauty, who bowed very sweetly to the attendant squad, while the elder took no notice of them, but maintained an unmoved countenance. "Ole Missis Estcourt and young Miss Blanche; she's one of de hard sort, tell ye now, wouldn't like to say she owned dis nigger," said Jim, the spokesman of the party, who had criticised Mr. Parchmount's domestic economy.

"She eom'n to live here, tho'," said Tom, another dusky speaker, "de house keeper 'low'd Mas'r Charles and Miss Blaneh git married one of dese days."

"Oh, you shet up wid your jaw," retorted Jim, "what de debil you know bout it; tink Mas'r Charles ean't do no better'n dat?"

"Reekon I knows, mueh 'bout it as you does," rejoined Tom, "my 'pinion is—"

"Oh jest shet up wid your 'pinions, or git some un to tote you 'way from here; your'se allors makin yourself a fool wid your 'pinions. Sueh a nigger as you is, aint got no right to have no 'pinions. You aint fit to 'sociate no how wid likes 'o us; you'se wus den seven year iteh, you is; does you eber wash yourself?"

"Ob eourse I does," said the enraged Tom, proeeeding angrily to vindieate his standing in good soeiety, when a fight might have ensued, had not the door of the porter's lodge opened, and its grey headed oeeupant appeared whip in hand.

"Clar out, you niggers," he shouted, eraeking the lash at them, "elar out, and lem'me tend de gate alone," and with that off they seampered leaving the next eomers unseathed.

Now the great house was full of eompany, and in every room the huge fire plaee was filled with blazing hiekory; the stables were filled to suffoeation with neighing steeds; the outbuildings were merry with a erowd of servants, belonging to the visitors, earousing to their heart's eontent, and making love to all the young blaekeys of the establishment; the kitehens were all aglow with mighty fires, and the proeesses of roasting, stewing, baking and boiling; the atmosphere was hazy with the eddies of steam, eurling up from hot dishes; eross eooks were perspiring with their tremendous labors, and seolding the servants at a fearful rate, as it was nigh the dinner

hour, for which in the opinion of cooks in general, all other hours have been created.

Mr. Brandon, fond of company, was now prepared to do the honors of his house, with hearty good will. Arrayed in a style which he thought becoming to the master of such a domain, certainly he presented the look of a high bred gentleman in the costume of that age. He wore on this occasion, a plum colored coat of rich velvet, with large sleeves, embroidered flaps, and huge silver buttons, breeches of the same material, and a waistcoat extravagantly long, of bright flowered silk, relieved by a shirt frill of delicate lace; pearl colored silk stockings fitted into high shoes, clasped with enormous diamond buckles; and the costume was completed by a well curled and powdered wig, terminated by the nicely ribboned queue. Mr. Brandon received all his guests with elegant courtesy, put them at ease with a word, and offered to one or the other a pinch of finely scented snuff from a handsome French box, which he prided himself on handling gracefully. His wife was not less distinguished in costume, magnificently attired in a flowing robe of green velvet, jewels sparkled on her white arms and neck, and her serene brow was crowned by a circlet of emeralds.

A brilliant assembly of talent, wealth, and beauty, was gathered under that hospitable roof; and, while pausing awhile in the library, before seating themselves at the festive board, it may not be amiss to mention the names of a few persons, shining "a hundred years ago," among the proudest and most celebrated of the Virginia aristocracy. That race, reared in all the luxury of an age when the kingly prerogative was as yet undisputed, and the regime of manners partook of the dignity of a court, has passed away forever; but many tender and beautiful associations cling to the memory of that time.

"You are welcome to my house, and a merry Christmas may this prove to you, sir," said Mr. Brandon to a fine-looking young man who had just entered. It was George Wythe, subsequently one of the noblest of Virginia's great men, then in the flower of his youth, who had but of late abandoned habits of idleness and dissipation, which had enthralled him to the age of thirty years, when for ever casting aside slothful and pernicious courses, his high abilities, graced by varied accomplishments, began to give promise of distinction.

Immediately beside him figured one, later in life his great rival at the bar and in the House of Burgesses; this was Edmund Pendleton. He too was young, but already noticed. His slight, well-shaped frame, moved with grace, and those pleased with the expression of his manly, thoughtful face, were more charmed when he spoke, by his fascinating manners, the silvery voice which always characterized him, and the elegant tact of his address. In another part of the room, talking with Mrs. Brandon and her son, stood Peyton Randolph; at that period but thirty-two years of age, but already the king's attorney, a position which he had held from his twenty-fifth year, standing next in dignity to the speaker of the House of Burgesses himself, Mr. John Robinson, who having arrived in the coach and six, now on entering was marked as indeed

"The observed of all observers."

Even Mr. Brandon acknowledged a superior in rank, in the speaker. He was the chief subject of the crown in the Old Dominion, the leader of the provincial aristocracy, and in influence far more powerful than the governor of the realm. The "arbiter elegantiarum" of the Virginia nobility, his immense wealth enabled him to sup-

port his position with becoming grandeur. He was fondly attached to royalty, to the forms and ceremonies of the English government; but the splendors of state never dazzled his good judgment, nor chilled his warm heart: the rich honored him, and the poor always found in him sure friendship and generous aid.

"Good day to you, my excellent young friend," said Mr. Robinson, turning to one not less distinguished than any before mentioned, to Richard Henry Lee; "it is pleasant to meet so many friends in this noble hall. Have you seen aught of Beverly?"

"Please you, sir," replied Lee, "we came together, and Wythe, Pendleton, and Randolph accompanied us. Your son is somewhere in the room, but in such a throng—ah! observe him now, in the recess of yonder window; he is well engaged, I fancy, with the beauty who bears away the palm to-day. See, he is with Blanche Estcourt."

"So I now perceive. Well, let him resist her if he can; she is, indeed, lovely. You must yourself beware, and do not let me hear that you and Beverly are to call each other out, in sheer jealousy."

"Oh! have no fear of me, sir. I love not, although I play the Romeo, and from a distance look upon that beauty which

> "Hangs upon the cheek of night
> Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear."

"A good description, upon my faith. But was Juliet a brunette like Blanche, with her passionate glow in complexion? See those eyes, their light shines even on me, old as I am, like stars in a midsummer night's dream. I too, Master Lee have not forgotten Shakespeare. I must warn Beverly."

"Do so in good time, dear sir, or he is lost. There is no chance for him, though, as I opine, our young host, Charles Brandon, is the knight elect."

"It is indeed so! I had imagined that such a connection would accord with the ambitious views of Mistress Mildred Estcourt, but cannot imagine that it would please Mrs. Brandon."

"Nor do I believe that it ever will. Again, I know that Charles is not in love with her, but think the lady,"—

"A little touched, eh?"

"As you say, sir. I presume her mother would be anything but acceptable to the Brandons."

"Or to any body else, I should suppose; proud, haughty spirit, to me she is insufferable."

"You are not singular, Mr. Robinson, in your dislike. What strange stories are whispered of her, too; do you credit them?"

"I neither believe them, nor entirely reject them; but I pay no attention to such things. I make it a rule, Mr. Lee, and as you are a young man, I tell you of it, that it may save you some trouble in life;—it is a rule with me I say, never to give heed to the mere tattle and gossip of company. One who thus busies himself, will soon have little time for more important matters. Many a heartache is saved by one who suffers the points of such Liliputian arrows to fall blunted from the breastplate of indifference."

"True sir, but Lady Mildred Estcourt's darts are of no Liliputian order; they rather belong to Brobdignag."

"Then I should endeavor to avoid her. But indeed, her pride and insolence make her ridiculous! I could scarce forbear laughing, a short time since, when I was looking with her, at Sir William Brandon's portrait. 'The family are proud of it,' said she, 'but what can their

regard for him, be compared with mine for my illustrious grandsire, Sir Robert Cecil? I have always regretted that I did not make Mr. Estcourt change his name on marrying me. It is a great honor to be connected with a Cecil.' But here comes Mrs. Brandon. She is a lovely mother, and Governor Dinwiddie looks delighted with her."

"My dear Mr. Lee," said Mrs. Brandon, "you can doubtless help me, and so can Mr. Robinson. His excellency and I have had a warm discussion, and I have been defending your friend George Washington. Governor Dinwiddie, I find, will not agree with me, that his courage and conduct at Braddock's massacre last July, were entitled to as much regard as I consider his due. I want aid from the colonel's friends, to overpower the governor's scruples."

"Not fair, madam, not fair," answered Dinwiddie. "I protest against this. How can I possibly accord more to the young hero than I have. Surely I have often told how he won my good will from the first hour I saw him, when he brought me an introductory letter."

"Then, sir, you should have been more enthusiastic in my house to-day. Remember there is no chill by a Christmas fire, and your stately encomium of my young Achilles, should have been exchanged for glib praise. I shall pardon you, however, if you will promise for the remainder of the day to bestow only the most honied words on any friend I mention."

"Indeed I will, dear madam," said Dinwiddie, not sorry, perhaps, to escape so easily, for it was whispered that he regarded Washington's rising greatness rather unfavorably.

"Now, Mr. Lee," continued Mrs. Brandon, "can you tell us aught of the colonel."

"Very little, indeed, madam. I have not heard from him for some time; and, in truth, when I do hear anything from him or the army I am filled with pain, as it always renews my bitter disappointment at General Braddock's refusal to allow me a position on his staff. I should then have fought by George's side, and won laurels too."

"Or more likely been shot as Braddock was," said the governor. "You are much better off here, believe me."

"Ah, then," said Mrs. Brandon, "I should have had to deplore another dear friend, and this Christmas would have been too sad indeed."

"Now, Lee," said Speaker Robinson, "I would rather have that said to me than be a field marshal. You must come to the House of Burgesses for your laurels; I will care for you there."

"Thank you, sir, I mean to go there; and thank you, madam. It would greatly add to our pleasure if Colonel Washington could be with us to-day."

"Indeed, Mr. Brandon and I hoped until lately that he would. But it seems he has escaped death in the field to become a prisoner."

"A prisoner, madam," said Robinson, "you astound me!"

"Only to Love, a jailor who cannot bribed. He is fast in the power of that wicked widow, Martha Custis."

"Then his doom is sealed?"

"Yes," replied the lady; "but come, the dinner waits, and you shall pledge him at the feast. Governor, your hand," and Dinwiddie, with a profound bow, led Mrs. Brandon forth to the banquet, and all the guests followed in due order.

CHAPTER IV.

INSIGHT.

The festivities at Kingwood were to continue for several days, and there appeared to be no end to the amusements. Some of the guests rode, some took daily enjoyment in a fox hunt, others played at tennis ball, or lounged in the library, while some made the best of their time in flirtation. Brilliant was the daily dinner, but far more enjoyed the revelry in the evenings. There was dancing, begun solemnly by stately minuets, followed by livelier saltations and fun among the young people, who, ransacking ancient wardrobes, collected costumes in which they played the parts of mummers. Good old games were revived with spirit, and who was not delighted to take part in that most delicious chase, whose reward lurked in the sparkle of bright eyes, and was sweet in a kiss under the mistletoe!

Peyton Randolph, Wythe, Lee, Charles Brandon, and others, with some fair assistants, on one of the evenings presented to the company the Masque of Comus. Although the performers had but a short time for rehearsal, the guests declared their efforts entirely successful, and the heart of John Milton would doubtless have rejoiced could he have been present. The part of the "Lady" was admirably personified by Blanche Estcourt, who won the rapturous applause of every guest, as her haughty mother perceived with a pride which she could not conceal.

Three gentlemen, seated together, had watched the progress of the masque, and at its close, one of them,

Governor Dinwiddie, turned to Mr. Parchmount the Saving, and observed,

"I hope this has made you feel better to-night, sir."

"No, sir, quite the contrary; I have not yet recovered from the effects of that peacock pie of which I eat so inordinately at dinner on Christmas day."

"Ah, you are punished," said Speaker Robinson, on the other side of Mr. Parchmount; "it was wrong in you to destroy so noble a specimen of the cook's skill. Upon my honor I thought, at first, it was a live bird which had just spread its plumage preparatory to strutting the length of the table."

"How beautiful it was!" sighed out Parchmount.

"Worthy of the famous Vatel himself," said Dinwiddie.

"Really! and had the great authority on the laws of nations, the same fondness I have for peacock pie?"

"Perhaps so, Mr. Parchmount; but I was referring to another, a much greater man. I mean the cook to the noble Condé; he who killed himself—hero that he was—because the sea-fish which he was to dress for the king's dinner, did not come in time."

"Oh yes, I now remember; and do you indeed esteem him the greater man?" said the dry lawyer, to whom the comprehension of a jest was impossible.

"Decidedly. They worship his memory in France."

"But I am afraid, Mr. Parchmount," pursued Robinson, not unwilling to have a little fun with one whose economy and obtuseness were proverbial, "I am afraid that you are suffering not only from the peacock, who is now avenged, but that certain large slices of beef lie heavy on your conscience. The governor and I observed that 'the baron,' weighing three or four hundred pounds at the commencement of the feast, was much curtailed in proportion before it ended. Did we not, Mr. Dinwiddie?"

"Certainly, we could not help noticing it; and I particularly remarked, also, that after the boar's head was brought in, and Mr. Brandon had given the 'caput apri defero' in such grand style, that Mr. Parchmount kept a sharp eye on the dish."

"Then," said the speaker, "it is easy to fathom its disappearance. I looked for a morsel, but it was invisible. And to think, too, of the amount of wassail, the best I have ever tasted, which went to keep company with the boar's head, and the baron, and the peacock! It is no wonder that Parchmount's memory of all these good things is so active that he cannot sleep."

"True," returned Dinwiddie, "and the only way in which our friend can repent of his sins, is to keep open house next Christmas, invite us all, and pay the piper. But, to change the subject,—the Gorgon again turns her eyes upon us; why, I wonder?"—and the governor returned the stare of Mildred Estcourt, seated on the other side of the room.

"I will inform you," said Parchmount, who bore raillery about feasting well enough, but who dreaded a hint that he should entertain in his turn; "she is looking chiefly at me, knowing that I am a partner of Mr. Redtape. She hates him cordially, and no doubt imagines that we are talking about her."

"Why does she hate Mr. Redtape?" asked Speaker Robinson.

"Oh, you doubtless can imagine," answered Parchmount. "It is about that everlasting will which Redtape has hunted for so long; he thinks it will one day be found, and deprive her of her property."

"Nonsense!" said Robinson, "he might as well give up the search; it will never be found; she has destroyed it, I will warrant. She has had the estate for fourteen

years; and, to one like her, such possession is more than nine points of the law. But silence now, here comes her daughter Blanche; she is about to dance with Charles Brandon."

Vain would be the enthusiast's hackneied phrases, to describe the loveliness of Blanche; the dark brown hair, the soul-lit eyes, the luscious lips, the glowing cheek! —Away with these.

Rather tell of some ideal, some impassioned beauty which Spain or Italy alone might body forth in their glorious women, or such as haunt forever the memory of those once fascinated by the creations of Titian. Though her stature was not tall, Blanche's symmetrical figure was moulded to a voluptuous outline; the full contour of her shoulders and arms contrasted richly with the dark dress she wore, and were enhanced by the gems which burned upon her person.

Her motions which seemed not obedient to the music but to control its strain, drew the fixed gaze of the assembly, and more than one that evening felt assured that she was the destined bride of Charles Brandon, the future queen of Kingwood.

"Mr. Lee," said Speaker Robinson, "what a splendid creature is Blanche. Why do you not find out in half an hour, as you can, how her heart beats, and love her if she will let you."

"I have done so, sir, already as I told you before, but excuse me, Mr. Robinson, if I imagine that your anxiety is less on my account, than for Beverly."

Robinson smiled. "You have made a home thrust, Mr. Lee; indeed you have found me out. I did feel some interest for my son, as to-day I have seen him less with the lady than usual, and I was fearful that he might have met a rebuff."

"Oh do not be alarmed, sir, he never went so far, he is merely amusing himself. Do you not know that a lady at the north, in the Highlands of the New York Colony, is the real one who has bewitched him?—But now Blanche is alone, and I will venture to approach her."

"Bright Miss Estcourt," said the gallant Lee, "do you know how many hearts you have broken this evening, what mischief you have done?"

"No, sir, nor do I imagine that I have marred the pleasure of any one. I thought you at least would do me better justice, and give me a name for healing spirits instead of wounding them."

"I thought only of Charles Brandon, and myself, and judged accordingly."

"Then be less selfish and think rather more of others. Nobody looks injured that I can see."

"Charles is disconsolate."

"Is he? then I must have been very dull, for I tried my best to please him."

"How so? Let me be your confidant."

"I made him happy as you ought to be at this moment, by permitting him to talk to me."

"But something added would make me happier."

"What would you have then?"

"To profess to make love to you. Come, for a little amusement now."

"I shall permit no such thing, sir. I prefer sincerity, and he who makes love to me, must be in earnest."

"Then may I not essay, my dear Miss Estcourt?"

"To relieve you at once, Mr. Lee, I must tell you, no! You are so universal a favorite, that it would be a pity to devote yourself to me, and gain nothing by it."

"Well, I have not been very serious, have I?"

"No, and you have pleased me better than if you had

been. I did not come to Kingwood, for any serious conversation, or purpose."

"Did you not? I am sure Charles Brandon will regret that."

Blanche slightly colored; a blush that did not escape Lee's quick eye.

"Upon my faith, sir, you are grown bold, and you could scarce speak more plainly if I really felt a deep interest in your friend."

"Pardon me, Lady Blanche, but I thought to-night during the Masque, when you were seated in the magic chair, that you had changed places with Charles as Comus; that he was spell-bound and you were the enchantress."

"Very poetical indeed, but I always punish any one who pays me compliments. Do you see that same chair across the room? Now go and seat yourself in it, for five minutes, and do not speak a word. Consider it the stool of repentance. I must join my mother."

Lee, in his own mind, as others did, felt assured that some tender passages had occurred between his friend Charles and Blanche. Both young, rich, handsome, romantic, with kindred tastes, why should they not be united?

Two reasons had for some time been whispered against such a union; one, that Blanche's own health would probably forbid her ever marrying at all; that the glow of her complexion was the fatal hectic tinge foretelling decay, that she was probably destined to follow her father to an early grave. The other, and perhaps more serious reason urged, that no one however rich or powerful, would care to be connected with a woman of Mildred Estcourt's disposition, lovely as her daughter was. There was a nameless something in the mother, which inspired distrust and dread, and such feeling evidently affected the lot of the daughter.

Blanche was now about eighteen years of age, and had lost her father very early in life. She was winning and beloved; her mother repulsive and hated. Mildred Estcourt, "Lady Mildred," as she was generally styled not in her own hearing, was as unlike Blanche in person and disposition as a mother could be. She was of large commanding figure, erect, haughty, proud in step, with a harsh voice whose every word was law. In her face one read command, high temper, selfish purpose. Conceit, its greatest weakness, was relieved by indomitable energy and remorseless will. From her firm clenched mouth no smile of the soul ever broke, it was altogether mechanical; a brow seamed with thought; cold, stony, material eyes, her whole countenance indicated insatiate but baffled ambition. Such was this woman, without one religious principle, though an ascetic in speech, a bigot in creed, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, but ruled solely by the dictates of a heart which might have been a compound of ice and iron.

With the pride of Lucifer she dwelt on the stately magnificence of her grandsire, a distinguished statesman in the reigns of Charles II. and his ignominious brother; but her own father's memory was almost despised, because he had left England, preferring the safety and happiness of life in America to the uncertain favor of princes.

The great statesman's domestic traits were said to have resembled those of his grand-daughter; and though his unkindness to his son probably helped to expatriate him, yet Mildred so worshipped him, and imagined all the world must, that she considered nothing due from her to society, no effort to be kind or courteous, but rather that society won a transcendent honor by her slightest notice of it. She had contrived so singularly and studiedly to offend those best disposed towards her,

so pertinaciously had she affronted every human being who dared even to assert independence in opinion, that, though still in the prime of life, the name of her enemies was legion. She never hesitated to wreak upon the purest and gentlest, invective and epithets bitter as language contained; yet, as we have before mentioned, her greatest weakness, conceit, while it caused her to wonder at her own isolation, consoled her with the belief that she was a being of such superior order, as to be beyond the comprehension of ordinary mortals. But, as years rolled on, she became more and more shunned and detested, her schemes for power, increase of wealth, for a second marriage, failed one by one; her beauty which she once possessed departed, her brow contracted, and she was left a prey to rage and envy, to unpitied misery, fast settling into despair.

We have seen her as she drove beneath the gateway, when the aspect of the stately domain broke upon her in all its grandeur.

"Look, Blanche," she said aloud, then vowed in secret, "this at least I will move heaven and earth to make thine."

No thought of her daughter's true happiness crossed her scheming brain at that moment; had Charles Brandon been a libertine or a sot, the same resolve would have taken fixed possession of her. She wanted power, could she gain it—the real welfare of her daughter (whom indeed she professed to love, and probably did, next to herself,) was of slight moment. She could not manœuvre, plan, or plot, even for Blanche alone; she herself was to be elevated to the pinnacle of greatness; her own child might be near, but still must be a step beneath her. "With Blanche wedded to Charles," she thought, "I shall soon be the mistress here. I know his easy

temper; he will wear his fetters lightly: his mother's too docile spirit cannot contend with mine, and as to his father—but we shall see, we shall see."

With an art which she could easily command, the Lady Mildred now assumed a sweetness of demeanor truly captivating, which half induced some to think that all the reports they had heard of her were but malicious libels; yet even here at times her imperious nature broke its bonds. Meanwhile the two innocent subjects of her plans were, with nice tact, thrown frequently together; the high-souled romantic Blanche was soon touched with tender passion apparent enough to every beholder, and, though Charles was not exclusive in his attentions to her, her voice still sounded sweetest in his ears, nor did her lovely vision leave him even in his dreams.

CHAPTER V.

A WARNING.

The company departed from Kingwood, and Charles prepared to return at once to the north. Lady Mildred and Blanche lingered latest of the guests, and when they had gone, the great house was left in quiet to its proprietors.

How the mother and daughter felt in parting from the Brandons, time will unfold to us; the last glance which Blanche gave Charles as the carriage moved away, had a deep meaning in it which Mildred instantly perceived, and it sufficed to keep her absorbed for some time in deep thought.

Charles watched the retreating chariot until it was no longer visible, and the sound of its wheels had died away, when he walked down to the porter's lodge, vainly hoping to obtain one more glimpse of it.

At the gateway he encountered an odd specimen of humanity, of whom he asked twenty idle questions concerning the carriage, without obtaining much satisfaction. The man he addressed was a long raw-boned lank fellow, a curiosity in his way. His name was Bela Tilley, and he was as perfect a specimen of the universal Yankee, as could be found a hundred years ago. He was a traveling character, never remaining very long in any one place. He first came to Virginia as a trader, and concluded to stop a while in Williamsburg, and see what was to be seen. Mr. Brandon had encountered him there, and taken a fancy to him, and Bela had been on the estate about a year, liberally paid, doing pretty nearly as

he liked, having contrived to render himself very popular. He hailed from Newport, Rhode Island, where he had a wife and family, whom he professed to be very fond of, though thinking they could do quite as well without him. He gave his reasons frankly when asked concerning his roving disposition, and would say:

"Wal, yer see, I never was fond o' stickin' to home, and telled my wife so afore I married her. She come from Warwick Neck, had lots o' cousins spotted all over the country, clean down to Pint Judy; some more on 'em over on t'other shore—was very fond o' goin' all reound an' stayin a spell along 'er some on 'em. Wal, I telled her I was fond o' visitin tu, but my idees er forin travel warn't to be bounded no how by Rud Island Col'ny; guess I did'nt want to be kep in that are region all my life, bein treated to nothin but cohogs* and leather pies.† My views o' human natur was much more ex-ten-

* Probably quahaugs.

† In regard to the edibles which seem to have disgusted Mr. Tilley, the author feels bound to state the following. During several summers in Newport, he had been annoyed as many others were at bathing hours, by crowds of women coming down to the beach to stare at swimmers, when they ought to have been elsewhere. These women collect in Warwick, Bristol, Potowome, and other "Quaker bottoms," and go down to Newport in shoals on the Providence excursion steamboats. Bundling into omnibuses on the dock, they start "right away for the beach," as before told. It is a singular physiological fact that nearly all these women have their front teeth broken out; the appearance of their mouths is consequently peculiar, and by no means enticing. Wondering at the cause of this singular uniformity, the author was finally relieved by information from a valued friend and poet, who had discovered the reason of it. The dental vacancies, were the result of almost exclusive feeding on *leather pies.* It is highly gratifying therefore, to find the testimony of Mr. Bela Tilley a hundred years ago, corroborated by one of the enlightened minds of the nineteenth century.

sive. So we jest agreed to go an come when we liked, and whar we liked, an we've allers got along prime."

"Do you think of returning to your family at an early day, Mr. Tilley?" Charles asked.

"I calculate not soon, yer see there's nothin for me to du to home; wife an young un's doin' better nor ef I was, an I'm makin a deal sight more money for 'em here."

"Then you like Virginia better than Rhode Island?"

"Wal, not the country, no, not the country, gev me my own, with su'thin puty smart agin a rainy day, an I'd like to git clean eout er the sight er niggers for one while. But the work here and the eatin' soots my complexshun complete—weather ples'nt an not tu much to du. I can sit reound the fire nights, crack butternuts an drink cider; calculate to fat up this winter."

Charles turned away, slowly sauntering through the park. He began to feel lonesome, and wished that Blanche had not gone away. He went to the margin of the little brook, which murmured soothingly to his troubles. But he was restless, ill at ease, the landscape he thought dull, the sky gloomy, although the sun shone bright, the wind harsher than it had been an hour before, and even his friend the brook soon appeared indifferent to his sorrows. He looked towards the house, not a creature was seen stirring near it, its lonely look oppressed him; he went into the garden in front of the hall, it too was sad and deserted. The river affected him more than aught else, for it looked happy, sparkling in the sun beams, and he thought it laughed saucily at his moody fancies.

He entered the house; its shadows fell a thousand times darker than ever before; the harp which Blanche had so endeared, sounded out of tune, and as he sullenly drew his fingers over its chords, one of them suddenly

snapped. He walked into the library, read a few lines of Dryden, and the book fell from his hands.

Poor Charles! was he in love, and knew not what troubled him? No, he could still reason coolly; he was not in love with Blanche, and yet—and yet—would that she were back again, and that he was not forced to return to college.

While seated in the library, his thoughts not of the most pleasant nature, he was roused from his reverie by sounds of approaching footsteps, and looking up he saw his cousin, Randolph Brandon, who yet lingered, being privileged to do so in virtue of his relationship.

"I was looking for you, Charles, half this morning, and not being able to find you, was obliged, for want of company, to visit Mr. Bela Tilley; what a queer character your father picked up in him!"

"I dare say Tilley made a more agreeable companion than I do," replied Charles, "especially to day, as I feel in any mood but a pleasant one."

"Why, what is the matter?"

"Oh, I don't know, I have a headache."

"Poh! I know what the trouble is, you are in love, boy."

"I am not in love," said Charles blushing.

"Oh, indeed not! what is that I see in your face?"

"But, really Charles," Randolph added, "is it not true?"

"It is not. I love no one—except my mother."

"But," persisted Randolph, "have you not a tender passion for Blanche Estcourt?"

"No!" said Charles emphatically, "I have not. The little I have seen of her, I greatly like; but I have neither formed nor expressed for her any opinion beyond that of admiration for her beauty—to that, I confess."

"And, then, it is not true that you are entirely fascinated by her; in short, that you have told her of your hopes, and plighted your word to her?"

"As I live, it is not! But why are you so anxious about a matter which if determined on, could concern me solely?"

"It is for that very reason that I am so interested in it, and in you. Thank God my fears are relieved! Now let me tell you what I think about Blanche. She is charming, and were circumstances different, I should be glad to see her your wife; but she has a mother of whom you should beware. I don't warn you against her, on account of her manners or temper, of which you can judge yourself; but her ambition has something in it fearful to me, and I fear, reared as you have been, that she would cause you much unhappiness, do what you could to prevent it. Still, that is not my greatest fear; as a friend, and you know I am one, I wish to warn you against her, on other grounds. Connected with that woman's life, there have been strange and singularly unexplained circumstances, which beget suspicion in me, as they have in others. I do not love mystery, or desire to bewilder you; but I cannot explain more on the subject, at present, knowing as little as I do. Be advised by me, however; let not your admiration of Blanche, betray you into hasty love. You are yet very young, have seen little of the world, and can well wait awhile—before marrying, especially—as you avow yourself heart whole, now."

Charles promised to exercise due control over himself, but added, "You have now excited my curiosity; and it is but fair that you tell me what you know of these suspicious circumstances attaching to Blanche's mother."

"I cannot now; for I may after all, be wrong, but time will prove. Now, to change the subject, I will tell

you a secret of my own, if not those of others. You must soon go back to college; I shall accompany you. I am very shortly to be married to a lady in Boston, and you must be one of my attendants. Now, shake off your dull fit, your headache, and I will outplay you in a game of tennis ball."

Randolph Brandon was some ten years Charles' senior; he had been left an orphan at an early age, and had lived at Kingwood, chiefly under the care of Mrs. Brandon, whom he loved as if she were his own mother. A large fortune, inherited from his parents, was held in trust for him, until he attained his majority, since which period he had passed much of his time in Europe. He had been received with distinction at foreign courts, had made the acquaintance of many eminent men, among whom he was proud to number Thomas Gray, the poet, and Horace Walpole. In his wanderings about the colonies, he had visited Boston, and been smitten with the charms of the fair one, whom we shall introduce in due time.

The cousins were soon prepared for their journey, and according to the fashions of the day—with persons of distinction—traveled on horseback, attended by black servants.

At Annapolis they partook of the hospitalities of the place for a day or two, then pursued their way to the north.

Baltimore, at that time, contained some thirty or forty houses; Philadelphia, and New York, were by no means large; and, if these towns made any impression on our sagacious travelers, we fear the world must lose the benefit of their views, as none of the notes of their journey have been preserved.

Without incident worthy of narration, they eventually reached Boston, where Randolph remained, while Charles at once repaired to the university.

CHAPTER VI.

LUCY AND THE RECLUSE.

Too long have we left sweet Lucy Tyrrell; too long to wander alone upon the wild sea shore, and as she beheld ships pass in the distance, visit with them in imagination those remote countries, which she had dreamed and read of.

Yet she was happy in her little island home; and when she heard of other lands with but a half-formed wish to quit her own, she would soon check her roving fancies for fear that she had done wrong even to think of leaving her kind parents. But in truth they had anticipated her in thoughts of future plans; they often asked themselves now, if they were always to remain so far away from the busy world, and although contented with their own situation, they could hardly deem it advantageous to Lucy.

But as she was beautiful and pure-minded, a dread of her contamination by gayer society troubled them, and made them hesitate to change their habitation. Their doubts, however, were quite unexpectedly terminated. One morning Mr. Tyrrell was surprised by the appearance of his cousin Edward, who resided in Boston, and whom he had not seen for twenty-five years.

The stranger announced his intention of passing a day or two on the island, having visited it expressly to see his cousin. Classmates and chums in college, they had separated on leaving the halls of alma mater, to enter manhood under different auspices; one, born to fortune, to embrace public life and pursue a distinguished career in the service of the crown; the other, poor in purse, though

not the less deserving, to repair to the secluded island and remain in obscurity for a quarter of a century. They were about the same age, and having great similarity of tastes, were much attached to each other. Although they had not met for so long a time, their acquaintance had been kept alive by occasional letters, and the minister's little household was frequently cheered by opportune and generous presents from the richer relative. People who have been separated for twenty-five years find frequently that they have less to say and tell of than they imagined when picturing the anticipated meeting, and even in this instance, the two cousins, pleased as they were, found some trouble in loosening the rust of those long years, before they could confer together as freely as they were wont.

Soon, however, Edward Tyrrell found his relative's society no less attractive than of old, and was glad for a brief season to surrender himself to the calm enjoyment of freedom and repose, forgetting the cares of state which had borne him down for years. From two days of a purposed sojourn, his stay was lengthened to a week; then day after day passed, and he found nearly a month gone by before he could make up his mind to tear himself away. His health, impaired by long labor, now revived; he enjoyed every moment, and found at the plain board of the manse an appetite which he thought lost forever.

In his walks by the sea-beach, or among the hills, or his visits to the hamlets, listening to the queer talk of the people, Lucy was ever the light of his life, his companion. He loved her free, frank, artless conversation, its simplicity enlivened by a ceaseless playfulness, yet not without dignity; and, simple islander as she was, no awkward rusticity attached to her manners more than to her motions.

Mr. Tyrrell saw that she had been carefully nurtured, that she was by nature formed to enjoy and graee the highest ranks of life, and he blamed himself that he had not sooner known her, and aided in her edueation. When she sat with him in the little study, and he drew her unawares to speak of her father's pursuits, and of her own love of books, without the slightest tinge of pedantry she displayed to him the broad, solid foundation of her understanding and aequirements, and delighted him by speaking of her favorite authors. "Surely," thought he, "my daughter is a good girl, but this one knows a hundred times as mueh of what is really valuable, with comparatively no advantages, though perhaps she cannot work as fine embroidery, or manage a fan as Matilda does. What else has she studied. Let me see."

"You are a good Greek and Latin seholar, Lucy. I am quite surprised."

"Indeed! and do you not think that if I love papa, that I ought to try to exeel? He has taught me all I know."

"And do you understand French or Italian?"

"No, sir, papa did not study them in eollege, and—"

"Neither did I," broke in Mr. Tyrrell. "Well, Lucy, how is it as to music?"

"Oh, you will find me very ignorant, I fear. I have no musieal instrument, but I sing at times."

"And daneing?"

"No indeed!" said Lucy, with a little of the Puritan in her look and voiee, "how eould I, papa never dances!"

"Well," replied Mr. Tyrrell, laughing at her serious looks, "neither do I, my pretty cousin, but you shall learn all these if you like!"

"But daneing!" again began Lucy, very dubiously, "papa might not like it; and dancing alone, oh dear, how dismal that would be!"

"Now, Lucy, is it not possible that you could induce one of those young fishermen in a 'souwester' hat and a pea-jacket to take lessons with you?"

"It would be impossible, he would be frightened out of his wits; besides, there is not a young man on the island, even a fisherman."

"No exeeption, then, to your father and me," said Mr. Tyrrell; "eome, eousin Luey, you are too hard. But let me tell you," he added, dropping his jesting tone, "how mueh I have enjoyed your soeiety. I must, however, now return to Boston, and I hope you will aeeompany me. You should know your eousin Matilda; I am sure she will love you as I do. She is soon to be married to a wealthy gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Randolph Brandon. They have been engaged for some time, and like all other young people now want to be married. It is time for me to return home, and you, I insist upon it, must go with me."

"I should love to visit Boston and to see eousin Matilda, but I am afraid papa and mamma would never live happily without me."

"Trust me for that, Lucy. I have already spoken to them, and you have their free eonsent; so see if we do not teach you dancing in spite of the Pilgrim Fathers, and find you a handsomer partner than that young son of Neptune in a souwester."

The delighted Luey, now that her only objeetion was removed, soon prepared for her visit. Her small wardrobe was subjeeted to the elosest scrutiny; every artiele of hers must be made to look as neat as possible, she not oeing aware that perhaps the first step of her fashionable relations would be to divest her of sueh simple apparel, for that better suited to the eourtly eleganee of Boston. It was arranged between the eousins that Luey's absence from

home should not be of very brief nature, and the generosity of Edward Tyrrell, who had discovered in her such a charming character, prompted him to offer his house as her home for a season, and the defrayment of all expenses incident to a finished education. The clergyman and his wife gladly consented to this arrangement, though grieved to part with their child, and long were their talks with her, earnest their advice, and many their tears before they separated.

Lucy, full of the prospect of so much happiness, went from hamlet to hamlet to bid the old people farewell. Though they had sons in the Pacific Ocean, and husbands in the Arctic seas, they thought a visit to Boston as little less than a journey to the ends of the earth, shaking their heads in dismay when they heard of the time she was to remain absent.

As she was retracing her steps to the manse, "I had nearly forgotten Rachel," she said, "and as I am the only being on the island whom she professes to care for, excepting papa and mamma, she would take it ill indeed if I left without saying good bye to her." Turning back, she ascended the hill, and in a few moments reached Rachel's cottage, which was smaller than many of the others, but by no means as poor in appearance as the generality of them. It bore minute but ineffaceable evidence of occupancy by one of more refined taste than the village people. The vines were tastefully arranged around the door, and the abode was scrupulously neat. Nor did its interior merely display such rude chattels as at once indicated poverty and the fisher's craft, but was furnished plainly, though neatly, as if the tenant were possessed of sufficient means to insure comfort.

Rachel, for she was known by no other name, was a singular being, and all that the villagers could tell of

her was, that she had suddenly appeared in the island about nine years before the period of which we write, and, refusing all communication with the inhabitants, had dwelt alone since that time.

The most prying curiosity of the village gossips had failed to inform them who Rachel really was, or of her former history. She was evidently of superior culture, but inquisition was baffled by her dignified manner, which repelled intrusion. The clergyman and his wife knew indeed of her previous history, but they had always refused to acquaint Lucy with it. Her father's invariable reply to his child's question was, "Her history is of no consequence to you; she does not wish it divulged." And when the girl said, as she often did, "Perhaps she is a lady in disguise, papa," his only answer would be, "No matter if she is, have it so if you will."

With curiosity thus piqued, Lucy had often besought Rachel to tell her her history, but she had always put her off with excuses and promises to do so at some future time. As Lucy grew from childhood, she formed quite an intimacy with the recluse, who became much attached to her, and saw her frequently. The village tattlers, disappointed in not being able to break through Rachel's incognito, set her down, in revenge, perhaps, as insane, while some, more bitter than others, hinted that she was in league with the powers of darkness.

Strange tales were whispered by these wiseacres, of mysterious vessels that sailed in the dead of night into the harbor, but were gone when morning came, and of figures that left these phantom barks and proceeded to her cottage. Mr. Tyrrell had at first taken the trouble to investigate these matters, but whether he discovered any truth in the reports or not, he always before the people spoke of the gossip about her as sheer nonsense.

Rachel certainly carried no familiarity with the evil one in her looks, and very likely was quite ignorant of such innendoes. Hers was a lady-like presence; her countenance bore marks of former beauty, and still retained all its sweetness, but it was stamped with the impress of settled sorrow.

As Lucy entered her cottage, she was seated at the spinning-wheel, which she used occasionally for occupation's sake, though her time was more generally employed in reading. She looked up as the girl's shadow darkened the threshold, and seeing who it was, rose courteously and proffered a chair; then, without waiting for Lucy to begin the conversation, she said:

"So, my darling, you are going to leave to-morrow, I hear."

"How did you learn so, Rachel; did papa tell you?"

"Yes, Lucy; he was here yesterday, and had a long talk with me."

"And you were very glad to hear I was going, I suppose?"

"No, my pet, I cannot say that. I was very sorry; for I believe you would be happier here in the island."

"My good Rachel, why so?"

"Oh, I can hardly tell why. I may be wrong; but I have known so much sadness in my life when I was in the world, that I cannot bear to think of one so young and innocent, and so dear to me as you are, trusting yourself to its deceits!"

"Have you been deceived by it, Rachel?"

"Bitterly, indeed!—but do not concern yourself for my griefs."

"Yes, Rachel, I must feel for you. You have often said that you would tell me the story of your sufferings; why not narrate them to me now, if not too painful to you?"

"No, Lucy, not now. I do not wish you to go away, and bear with you any memory of my sorrows. My story is not, indeed, worth your sympathy."

"Will you tell me, then, on my return; as you are unwilling to do so now?"

"Yes, my pretty one; but tell me now a little more about yourself, and why you are going away."

"To complete my studies; and soon to see my cousin Matilda married."

"Ah, to be married! your father did not tell me that. Whom does she marry?"

"A gentleman from the Virginia colony, Mr. Brandon."

"From Virginia; Brandon! Brandon!" said Rachel, starting suddenly, and looking fixedly at Lucy.

"Yes, Brandon. But what is the matter, Rachel? You look alarmed."

"'Tis nothing, child; it only recalled former days. I have heard of the name in Virginia."

"Were you ever there?" asked Lucy, surprised in her turn.

"Yes, and sorry enough that I ever was; but no matter now. I never knew Mr. Brandon."

"Then why did you seem so surprised?"

"Tell me," said Rachel, without heeding this question, "did your father's cousin, Mr. Tyrrell, ever mention to you the names of any other persons in the Virginia colony?"

"No, I do not remember that he did."

"He never spoke of a Mr. Parchmount, did he? or of such a person as"..... Rachel hesitated, and looked steadfastly at Lucy again, ... "as an Estcourt?"

"No; why do you ask? What Estcourt, man or woman?"

Rachel was silent again, and for a few moments paused

in deep thought; then, without referring to these topics, said: "Well, Lucy, I hope you will be happy away from home. I was only thinking just then of the deep love I have for you, and imagined that your lot in life would be connected with mine. But this is idle fancy; and, if I mistake not, you will have no such sorrows."

In further conversation Lucy spent an hour with Rachel, then said farewell; and the next morning left the island, in company with Mr. Tyrrell.

CHAPTER VII.

LUCY IN BOSTON.

The city reached in safety, Mr. Tyrrell and Lucy were whirled in a carriage to the door of his mansion—one of those noble, massive residences, with extensive ranges of out-buildings, and large gardens, of which there were once many in Boston.

She was most kindly met by Mr. Tyrrell's wife, and his daughter Matilda, who was a year or two older than herself; and she soon ceased to feel embarrassed in their presence, for being persons of kind hearts as well as high rank in life, they took pleasure in smoothing over Lucy's little difficulties, and putting her at ease.

For a simple maiden, she found much to excite wonder; it was as if she had stepped into an enchanted palace; all was so rich and splendid.

She had never dreamed of such pictures; had never seen before a painting or a statue, not even a good engraving. The elaborate service of the table, china and plate, the profusion which reigned in the abode, at first bewildered her; but good sense suggested silence, and tact soon supplied the deficiencies of her training.

She felt more at ease when out of doors, in the gardens; but even here she was astonished at the rich and varied flowers, the shrubs and vines, and the trees, to her more wonderful than all, there being scarcely one upon the island.

The little fountain in the midst of the scene, that, from a circular basin, shot its tiny column upward, and waved glittering in the air like a plume of spun glass; this she

would love to watch—it would almost compensate for the waves that beat upon the sands. The town, with its crowded streets and busy hum, its public buildings, its park, its Province House, proud residence of the governors of the commonwealth, now existing only in the pages of Hawthorne; the stronghold of aristocratic and kingly power, now elbowed out of the way, and measured off by the yardstick of pertinacious trade, and sold a bargain; this, and many other abodes of wealth and style, formed numberless objects of attraction to the unsophisticated Lucy. In her letters to her parents, written whenever she could hear of a packet sailing to the island, she described with girlish enthusiasm all the wonders that met her gaze; and no young person, such as we read of, going to the vast London to seek fortune, was ever more overwhelmed by its immensity and magnificence, than she by the lesser glories of the town of Boston.

She soon felt at home with her uncle and aunt, as she called them, desiring to pay more respect than she considered implied by the title of cousin, and listened delighted to the outpoured confessions of the fond Matilda, the time of whose single blessedness drew rapidly to a close. Of course the betrothed, who could only talk of her love, was enchanted to find so willing a listener as Lucy; and how delightful was it to be made a confidant, to have a thousand little things told her which were of momentous importance, not to be repeated for the world, and only disclosed under the most solemn injunctions of secrecy.

Then came the endless preparation of the wardrobe; the search in every shop in the town for this, that, and the other articles of dress; the quantities of presents that poured in, examined so eagerly. All this was a new revelation to Lucy, all duly noted down, and, the secrets excepted, described in her letters. Mr. Tyrrell, once

more immersed in the cares of the body politic, looked forward every evening with delight to Lucy's society, for now the lovelorn Matilda was allowed a separate nook in the shade of the curtain, and there she lay perdue.

Lucy became the pet of the house. Randolph took a great liking to her, and once caused his lady-love a pang of jealousy that lasted full half an hour, and required violent protestations of half an hour more to soothe, because he said if he had seen Lucy sooner, he did not know what might have happened.

Mr. Tyrrell's promise to her father in regard to her education was not forgotten. Competent masters in music and languages were provided, and with her powers of close application to study and a good mind, she made immediate and rapid progress. She was anxious to excel, both from her own ambition and the pleasure which she knew her advancement would be sure to give her parents.

Lucy heard Randolph Brandon frequently speak of his cousin Charles, and when she had been domiciled for several months at her uncle's, the family sometimes wondered that they had not seen him of late.

"Mr. Brandon, what can have become of your cousin?" asked Mr. Tyrrell one day.

"Indeed I cannot tell, sir. I have sent to Cambridge a dozen times for him, but he pays no heed to my summons. I suppose he is either wrapped up in his studies, or he is too indolent to take the trouble to visit Boston."

"Surely we can have done nothing to offend him," suggested Mrs. Tyrrell.

"Whom did you ever offend, lady mine?" replied her husband, gallantly.

"Well," said Randolph, "if Charles chooses to act thus and stay away, it is because he does not know what he is losing in you, Lucy; is it not so?"

"I suspect he does, sir, and stays away for that very reason. I am sure I have no objection to his doing so as long as he likes."

"Ah, Lucy, Lucy, a little piqued I see."

"Stand firm, my charming cousin," said Mr. Tyrrell, "I perceive I must come to your aid."

"Oh, no need of it, uncle, I can defend myself very well. Mr. Randolph is the only one who is a little piqued, because I am quite as careless of his admiration as of his cousin's."

"That is right, Lucy," said Matilda, "I wish I had your mettle to keep Randolph in better order. These cousins are much alike, I think. Charles stays away because I received his advances coolly, and in revenge Randolph tries to desert me and make love to you."

"He wastes a great deal of time then."

"Now spare me," said Randolph, "and we will try to heal all differences. Did you not tell me, Mr. Tyrrell, that Governor Pownall had issued cards for a grand entertainment at the Province House ten days from this time?"

"Yes, sir, I did, and we must all be sure to honor the ball."

"Of course we will, sir. My cousin Charles will be certain to smuggle himself in from the college for it, and then Lucy and Matilda, having a hero apiece, will be appeased."

"I think of deserting you for Charles," said Matilda. "How is it with you, Lucy?"

"Oh, I will permit Mr. Randolph's attentions this time, however unwelcome they may be, and thus repay his cousin for his negligence. But I am quite indifferent to either of them."

Yes, Lucy was "quite indifferent," but when the

momentous day came, and she was told that Charles would be sure to be at the mansion in time to accompany the party to the Province House, and that he was expected to be entirely devoted to her, though regarding it as mere raillery, perhaps she lingered a moment or two longer at the mirror, and adjusted with greater care the flowing drapery of her costume.

Her dress was not to be distinguished from her cousin Matilda's for richness, and she appeared to greater advantage from her superior height and the glowing freshness of her complexion; and although so recently clad in rustic robes, she moved with as much grace and ease, as if bred in the atmosphere of courts.

The languishing Matilda would have preferred to remain behind in sweet converse with her adored lover, but her father would hear of no such thing, hinting that the absence of one member of so august a party as his family made, might be construed into nothing less than a premeditated slight to the reigning powers. Proud as he was of his official station, and thoroughly satisfied with his own appearance on this occasion, he could not but be much more delighted with two such beautiful women as his niece and daughter. Randolph, for once differing from Matilda, manifested no intention of remaining behind, and the party, having waited in vain for Charles, at length left without him; anathemas heaped upon his head all the while by his incensed cousin.

They reached the street in which the Province House was situated, descended at the gate of the courtyard which then extended before the building, and in a moment more were mixed with the throng that poured into its halls. The size of the palace, as it seemed, the broad staircase, the number and decorations of the rooms, the rich furniture and portraits of famous governors of old,

the innumerable lights, the exhilarating strains of music, the variety and richness of the ladies' dresses, the military uniforms which glanced here and there ; all these burst on Luey like a new revelation. She saw numbers of those who bore evident marks of distinction, whom she had before heard of; here a celebrated judge or lawyer, and here some famous general, a chance author, or orator of established reputation; and some traveler might be seen, who had exhausted the old world and was about to plunge into the wilderness of the new. Matilda, familiar with all these personages, informed Luey of them while they stood together for a few moments after paying their respects to the mighty governor. As became one of his official position, Mr. Tyrrell continued in conversation with the magnate, while Randolph had disappeared in the throng with his future mother-in-law.

"Two lovely daughters of yours, happy Mr. Tyrrell, quite unlike, too ; pardon me, but I have forgotten which is so soon to be married."

"It is the brunette and the smaller of the two," said Mr. Tyrrell, indicating by a nod; "but your Excellency has fallen into error. I have but one daughter, the other is my niece."

"Pardon me," replied the governor, "we public men must make mistakes sometimes; the niece is it? divinely fair; and is she too about to make her lover happy?"

"Not quite yet, she has not long been in company; she is just from out the sea."

"A pearl of price then in truth she is," said the urbane governor, but not desiring to praise the niece too much at the expense of the daughter, added, "but touching this marriage, tell me when will it be?"

"On Wednesday fortnight," said Mr. Tyrrell; "and I assure you that nothing can add more to our happiness

than the hope that your Excellency will be disposed to honor us on that occasion with your presence."

The hope was gratified on the spot, for of course nothing could be further from the governor's thoughts, than absence from the ceremony.

The Tyrrells mingled with the company and passed from room to room. Fond as Matilda's father was of her, he could not but be pleased with the remarks which Lucy's more striking beauty elicited. He introduced to her several of his acquaintances, who, in the course of the evening, spoke to him in rapturous terms of her appearance, and were surprised to learn of the short time she had been in the world of fashion. But Lucy's charm of manner was as natural to her as the graces of her person; it was instantly perceived, as her beauty was no more assumed than the glow in her cheek; and it would have fascinated one in the lonely island as soon as in the circle of high rank. No one, worldling as he might be, but enjoyed his communion with that innocent spirit.

As Lucy was seated listening to the music, and watching the mazes of the dance, which to her was a new pleasure, she suddenly missed Mr. Tyrrell and Matilda, who but a moment since had been by her side. She rose to look for them, and on the other side of the room saw the tall form of Randolph Brandon.

Judging her cousin to be near him, she moved through the throng to join her, and then in a moment more looking again, he too had disappeared. Embarrassed by her situation, and not knowing exactly whether to stand still where she was, or move on, she suddenly heard a voice close beside her with an offer to assist her if she was in search of a friend. She turned her head and looked upon the speaker; he was a tall and finely formed young personage, scarce of age, if she could judge from the smooth

roundness of his cheek, with lips about which played a slight smile; but Lucy was encouraged by the kind and gentle glance he threw upon her from his large, soft, grey eyes.

She blushed deeply, but recovering in a moment, said that she was looking for a friend, and would be greatly obliged if he could aid her in her search for Mr. Brandon.

"It will give me the greatest pleasure to do so," said Charles Brandon, for it was he, who had gone to Mr. Tyrrell's house after the family had left it, and following them to the Governor's, had arrived but a few moments before. "It is my cousin Randolph whom you desire to join, and do I not speak aright as I address Miss Lucy Tyrrell?"

"I am Miss Tyrrell in Boston, but at home I was only Lucy."

"And Lucy indeed you must be to me," thought Charles. "Oh, why have I delayed so long to meet you! Pardon me," he said, "but I almost fear to accost your relatives, I have so neglected my duty toward them. They must have blamed me."

"You have been often spoken of, but with kindness only in my presence, sir."

"I do not merit such mild treatment, but should have been happier had I known you sooner, for you too, then, might have spoken a gentle word."

"It is pleasant to forgive the repentant, but they must sin no more. But here are our friends with whom you can make your peace. Me you have not yet angered."

"I never shall," replied Charles, "if frequent meetings ensure friendship," and by Lucy's side he remained for the evening. If his dreams that night were not of her, surely Blanche Estcourt did not claim them.

The next day, and the next, and the next too, he was

found attentive in calling at the Tyrrells, and assiduous indeed in seeking opportunities of a quiet half hour with Lucy. He also suddenly took great interest in the approaching ceremony, which he had previously regarded with such indifference, that Randolph was upon the point of declaring that he should bear no part in it. But now he was to serve, and with whom but Lucy.

Many times were the cousins assembled to discuss every item connected with the all-important day; at last it came, radiant as if for the marriage feast of a monarch.

What need to say more of it; of the bride, of her six lovely attendants, Lucy lovelier than all, or of the ceremony itself, but that it was performed with becoming solemnity in Hollis Street Church. There, tears were rather profusely shed, but were repaid by smiles at home when the bridal banquet followed; a feast made brilliant by the sparkling wit of the officiating clergyman, the famous pastor Mather Byles.

CHAPTER VIII.

"LOVE'S DELIGHTFUL STORY."

Charles Brandon was seated alone in his room, in old Massachusetts Hall, of Harvard College, and with vain efforts tried to fix his attention on the task before him, in preparation for a coming recitation. But his thoughts wandered from the page, and even when apparently occupied with watching the sports of his fellow-students on the Green, his gaze was vacant, his mind was busy elsewhere. It was miles away; it was with Lucy Tyrrell. With the utmost loathing only could he now bind himself to the regular trials of study, which had before been so easy to him; he read nothing, wrote even to his parents at stated intervals with reluctance, and gave up almost entirely the society of his companions, who could not understand his sudden reserve. He withdrew from their sports and convivial pleasures, to pass hours wandering alone in the neighboring woods, or by the banks of the River Charles, in poet and lover-like mood. Now, wrapped as he was in thought of one beloved being, he experienced for the first time the grateful sense of solitude to indulge his dreams, and that morbid dread of society whose slightest sound jarred upon his spirit. He thought, hoped, feared, lived only for Lucy. From the first hour he had seen her, instinctive passion for her rose within him; he could not repress or control it; it overmastered him with its strength; it swept down every prudential thought of hesitation; he felt, he knew, that his earthly destiny, be what it might, must be for ever swayed by her. And when fully con-

scious of his love, it took such utter possession of him, that he had no power to stay its tide; he gave himself up to the rapture which entranced him, and unresisting floated on with its current.

Could he but three short months since have dreamed of one so lovely, he would not have lost by his own folly so many hours of exquisite delight, nor excluded himself from the light of those eyes and the music of that voice. How for an instant could he ever have been beguiled by Blanche Estcourt; never more was she to be thought or spoken of; he did not love, he had never loved her; a slight interest, a little tender friendship for her, that was all; but oh! how different with Lucy, whose first glance fascinated him, the very light of love streaming from those dark blue eyes! He thought of the sounds of her voice whose accents slightly trembled as she thanked him for his courtesy on parting, the eloquent thrill in the touch of her fingers, the little flower which, as he besought, she drew from her bosom, and gave with a blush which lent a new glory to her beauty. Of these he dreamed by day and by night, and asked himself many a time and oft if what he felt was love, and the heart beat back response, Yes, love; immortal, eternal love! He went forth creature of another mould, with no present or future, but in her existence; no remembered past, but that which dated from the hour they met, a past not fled irrevocably, but in which he lived and loved, and drew, in imagination, to his own breast that one form of loveliness.

And her destiny! it should be splendid, the thousand ills of life should not vex her; he was rich and noble; a lovelier bride should grace Kingwood than had ever yet trod its halls.

His fancy, looking far into the future, beheld a glorious

prospect, nor recked of all the stumbling blocks of earth which lay between.

But Lucy, so pure, so beautiful, so uncontaminate with the sins of the world, what a treasure was she to be not only to him, but to all his household; and he pictured many a scene of rapture, many a vision of domestic happiness, in which the image of his mother with a beloved daughter took part. His father would regard her with different motives; she would minister to his tastes by personal charms, gratify his pride by the striking elegancies of exterior grace, and though a portionless bride she would enrich Kingwood far beyond the wealth which ancestral beauty had ever brought to the home of the Brandons. Oh! golden dreams of love, heavenly visions of anticipation, ye go far to redeem the soul chained down by the fetters of hard life!

Young, romantic, and inexperienced, Lucy and her lover—for as yet love spoke but in looks—were happy in the hours they passed together, and every moment that Charles could steal from his studies was spent with her, in spite of the frowns of grim professors, or even the awful warning from President Holyoke.

They passed unheeded; what knew they of love? How different the dull formal tasks at Cambridge, the bare recitation rooms, from the little quiet curtained parlor adjoining Mr. Tyrrell's library, where Lucy kept her books and met her teachers; there he sat beside her, and they studied together.

Masters one and all declared that such astonishing progress was never made before; ah! they little knew for whom, or by whom it was aided. Charles and Lucy read together; he opened to her the page of history, and, by his earnest enthusiasm, made the dullest fact a thousand years old like a living and glowing reality of the present

to her. He read no novels, no romances; these were interdicted. More enchanting to her the story of a heart which she studied daily, still finding it daily of deeper interest. But into the rich realms of English poetry Charles led, and taught her to love all that its fields offer in immortal bloom. He called from the past those divinest spirits, prophets unheeded oft in their day and generation, men who toiled and were rewarded not in life, who offered to their fellow-men of the precious treasures of thoughts, and were spurned and died in poverty, but whom a later and better age loved to dwell upon, lamenting their cruel fate. The verse of Spenser, ancient though it was, but interpreted by Charles, Lucy learned to love, and to mark the triumphs of the Red Cross Knight, and to tremble for the gentle Una.

From Shakspeare, as play succeeded play, Charles would repeat descriptions of every noble and bewitching female character; which he said, might justly apply to Lucy, when she would blush, and declare it was not so. A master of French and Italian, he loved especially the language of Italy; and who can wonder that she soon did too, and would say to him, when he came, "here was the point you set for the end of my lesson; but see how far I have gone beyond it!" Tasso became her favorite, because his verse was much in style and, partly in story, like her cherished Spenser, and because of the sad reality of his woes. She read of his prison and his fetters, and of his hopeless passion for the royal Leonora, whose love for him was given in return, yet could not bless him. Tears wet her cheeks, as Charles told of having visited the scene of his triumph and misery, how his memory was hallowed in glorious Italy; and he spoke of that land, the poet's home—whence many a poet yet shall draw inspiration—of its delicious climate and golden sunset skies; of its

temples and many massy piles of ruined splendor; of its paintings and breathing statues; its lakes, its vineyards, and soaring mountains; of the exquisite bay which laves the shores of Naples, and he would say,—"Oh, Lucy, could we but visit that clime together, your life should pass like a delicious romance!" And Lucy thought, "It is a romance now."

Thus their time was spent, and he daily became more in love with the enchanting girl, though he forbore, as yet, to declare his passion, convinced as he was that it was returned.

There was no rival in the field. Lucy received few visitors, and perhaps the lovers were aided by Mr. Tyrrell, who saw with delight, the course of affairs; and who, to Charles' joy, intimated that his fair niece was not yet fairly launched upon the world—that she preferred seclusion until her studies were finished. Her studies finished! she found them now so delightful, that if left to her own choice, they would never have been completed. Randolph felt now assured that he need entertain no further fears on Charles' account concerning Blanche, and bid him adieu with a light heart, as the time came for him once more to visit Kingwood.

Lucy said farewell to him with oft told regrets; she should lament his absence, having been so happy in his society, and would be glad of his return; this she expressed naturally and sweetly, yet without the least approach to boldness. Charles could scarce forbear to declare his love for her on the instant.

They parted, and it was her time now to discover how far her feelings exceeded those of friendship, and the uselessness of any attempt to repress them. Her happiness she knew, was henceforth and forever, bound with his own; she brooded over every pleasure which he had

shared, her spirit followed his, and she prayed for his safety. He left Lucy but for a brief season, and returned more than ever anxious to clasp her to his heart as his own.

His mother had marked the change in him; how he mused alone for hours, and, for the first time in his life, was desirous of soon parting from her, to return to the north—how he shunned company, and beyond all, avoided the least mention of Blanche.

His father took little or no notice of his altered mood; for he was now immersed, more than ever, in his genealogical work, having just reached the scent of something peculiarly mouldy, and consequently of immense value. Mrs. Brandon gradually drew the truth from her son, and gently chiding him for not having sooner informed her, entered into his feelings, and assured him of all her motherly aid and countenance. She could not tell how Lucy would please his father, but she had her fears.

Charles saw Blanche but once; even then the mere effort of talking to her, proved intolerable. His indifference caused the poor girl a bitter pang, and she could not account for it.

But to her mother's keen vision, the cause was apparent; it was a dagger to her breast, and she vowed that, come what might, he should never wed another than her child. She cursed the opportunity that led him again to the north, and the intervening months ere he would return to leave no more. But why should she distress herself; it was but some boyish, silly, witless love, which he dared not speak of to his parents, or she would hear of it. It would soon be forgotten, and then;—she clenched her hand, that brow corrugated with dark, stern purpose, the haughty lip curled, and the eye flashed with

antieipated triumph. She, Mildred Esteourt, should yet rule him and his, with a rod of iron, and before long!

We leave her for the present, and return to Luey.

With the same frankness and sineerity whieh she had manifested on Charles' departure, she now joyfully met him on his return; but, in a short time, he observed that she was more quiet and abstraeted than he had ever known her before—that she was more shy, less eager to avail herself of his teachings. He divined the eause, he now felt assured that she loved as passionately as he did; to keep silenee longer, was in the power of neither. They saw love in each other's glanees; it burned for utteranee in their words, even their silenee was eloquent, when he took her hand in his own, and she did not withdraw it. They entered the garden. It was a summer's night, and a young moon faintly lit the leafy reeesses, and gleamed on the little jet, whieh arose from the marble basin, and threw its spray baek upon the waters with a eeaseless plash. They paused near a favorite spot of theirs, deeorated by a vase in whieh bloomed fragrant roses. They saw the tree tops, silvered by the moon, wave against the dark sky; the rustle of the leaves mingled with the voiee of falling waters. Charles held Luey's hand in his; it felt eold, and she trembled.

"Do you fear, dear Luey?" he asked.

"No, what should I fear when you are with me!"

"My own Luey, I love you. From our first meeting you have been dear to me, and if your heart is mine, let me hear so from your lips."

Luey turned her faee to his, and looking into his eyes with deep, tender trust, and holy relianee, answered: "I am yours for time and eternity, and from this night you will have my love as fervid and unalterable as ever wo-

man gave." As she thus spoke, Charles drew her closer to him, and beneath the ever radiant stars, the altar lamps of God's temple, they vowed their deathless love. And never did heaven witness a purer embrace than the clasp of those two beings, nor a sweeter joy than thrilled on the innocent lips of Lucy Tyrrell.

CHAPTER IX.

MISFORTUNE.

"I AM anxiously waiting to hear from home, my dearest Lucy," said Charles Brandon; "although I know the news of our engagement could only give my parents the greatest delight."

"And I am anxious too, Charles, for during the last four days I could not help feeling sad, in spite of myself. I cannot bear to tell of what will seem to you needless fear; but a presentiment has come over me, I cannot shake it off, that our trials are to begin soon."

"Do not think so, Lucy, chase away your idle fears; there is no danger, 'tis merely some dream that haunts you."

"I hope so," and Lucy sighed, but not wishing to pain Charles by her anxiety, she tried to smile again.

"You tell me your mother looks like you, dear Charles, do you not?"

"Yes, it is said so."

"Then I shall love her."

"And she will love you, Lucy, and my father will, too. Ours is a beautiful home, and you will gladly see it. Nothing in this colony at all resembles it;" and Charles gave her a description of Kingwood.

"It must be beautiful; how much have I to see and learn. And you, in turn, must come with me to the island. Have you never really beheld the sea?"

"No, bright one, but you shall teach me how to view it. You love the ocean?"

"Yes, from my very childhood; come with me and sit

upon the rocks, I will show you the glories of the waters. You will love to watch the curl of the billows, the blue distant surge, the flashing eddies at your feet; and listen to the sound of the grating pebbles on the lonely beach."

"I will, indeed; and will your parents be glad to see me?"

Lucy's forebodings again recurred to her, and she was silent.

For a brief season now, all was ecstasy with the lovers. But their happiness was not fated to endure. Like the sea, of which they spoke, and which from settled stillness rages in an hour; as the brightest sky is overclouded, and the lightning's flash darts through, so their halcyon calm was soon broken.

The first ill news came from Charles' mother, to whom he, as well as Randolph had written, detailing a full account of his love, and anticipating nothing in return but the readiest acquiescence. The answer, long delayed by the infrequent post of those days, filled them with dread and sorrow.

Part of the letter ran thus: "Oh my son, you can scarce imagine the anguish with which I write to you now. I have had sleepless sorrow. You know that I was the partaker of your joys and hopes in Lucy; but how much do I blame myself for my imprudence in permitting you to leave us, and your father ignorant of your love. He would doubtless have refused his consent, as he does at present, but your misery would not then have been aggravated by the rupture of bands of affection. But now you must endure the double pangs of exile and recantation. I can scarce speak of your father. I have never before seen him so angry; never dreamed that he could be excited to such a pitch of frenzy. He will dwell upon no other topic. He forbids your love, resolved, as

he says, that with his countenance you shall never wed a portionless stranger beneath your own rank in life. If you wish to preserve his friendship, you must abandon at once and forever all hopes of Lucy. Else he bids me say he will cast you off for life, and I surely know that he will keep his word. My prayers and tears are all in your behalf, but I cannot prevail with your father. He goes very shortly to the north. I must not counsel you to resist him, but may God help you to change his purpose, as I have failed to." . . . . .

Lucy had soon also from her father a long epistle, in which he wrote more harshly than he had ever spoken to her in his life. He blamed her exceedingly for encouraging the intimacy, and suffering it to proceed to such a length without consulting him. He expressed entire disapproval of the engagement, and pained her most cruelly by an accusation of duplicity, which her total silence regarding it in numerous letters, led him to impute to her. "Duplicity!" said the poor girl, "that is too hard indeed. I did not tell him, simply because uncle, against my remonstrances, insisted on doing so himself, saying that he could act for me better than I could."

Mr. Tyrrell in truth had written, giving a glowing description of Lucy's splendid prospects in life, but it is in vain to conjecture her father's strong repugnance to the union. Perhaps he was influenced by the thought of his daughter's removal from him to the south, or his pride was touched by her silence when she ought to have told him all.

As soon as her uncle discovered the cause of her sadness he tried to comfort her, told her to dry her tears and all would yet be well; and the kind old gentleman really thought he could do much, and that the lovers might fear nothing. But they both were filled with sadness, and

only anticipated disaster, in spite of their efforts to cheer each other. But each assured the other of unalterable affection, and now the strong love of the tender woman manifested itself in a thousand ways to encourage her desponding lover.

"We are both very young, dear Charles," she would say; "we shall love each other all the more for our trials; let us be true to each other, and in time our parents will relent; heaven will join our hands at last. But fondly as I love you, I could not be yours without the sanction of my father and mother. I could not commit so dreadful a sin."

Charles told her that he thought as she did now, but that if time produced no change in his father he should certainly in a few years feel released from his authority, and could she not also be independent? Lucy mournfully shook her head, but made no reply.

Her father shortly came, and after long interviews with her and with his cousin Edward, acknowledged that he had been too harsh, and took his daughter fondly to his arms again. He saw Charles too, having much talk with him, and it is more than likely that had everything depended solely on the pastor, the two lovers might eventually have been happily united, although he now withheld his consent. But when Mr. Brandon came, his mood was very different. A short angry note to his son announced his immediate advent, and he proceeded at once to the university being unwilling to stay an hour in Boston. His language too well agreed with Mrs. Brandon's description of it, he would listen to no reason; the connection must at once be broken off, or he would cast his son from him. It was only after long persuasion, indeed threats from Charles not to return at all to Virginia, unless he altered his tone, that he consented to see even Lucy's

relatives, he positively refusing to meet her upon any terms. But the meetings which took place accordingly were productive of no good. He first saw Randolph and rated him severely, being scarce less angry with him than with Charles.

He accused him of betraying the interests of his son, by leading him into marriage with an inferior, and also of abusing the hospitality of his house.

"I have abused the hospitality of no man's house," replied the fiery nephew, "but I have favored Charles' intimacy with Lucy, and am proud to have done so. She is one of the sweetest ladies that ever breathed, worthy indeed of my cousin, and at any moment your equal."

"Equal, sir! equal, do you mean to say, to the blood of the ancient Brandons?"

"The ancient Brandons! let them rest in their graves. Equal to them, yes; superior to any of those beauties at Kingwood; some few of whom at least were more celebrated for fine eyes than virtue. Are we to love and marry only to please dead aristocrats? What is your wish, a princess for your son? Act the part of a man of sense, and see Lucy Tyrrell before pursuing the cruel course you are about to, of ruining the happiness of Charles."

"No, Randolph, I will not see her, but I will speak to your wife."

"You shall not do so, sir, as long as you conduct yourself thus; she loves her cousin, whom she at least considers her equal, and any insult to Lucy is shared by Matilda. I shall neither permit you to see her now, nor in Virginia, whither we go shortly. Have you already resolved on whom Charles shall be made to bestow his hand?"

"I have, some time since."

"Who is she?"

"You probably know already, it is Blanche Estcourt; she is the one appointed for Charles."

"I thought as much; now listen to me, uncle. If your son Charles, forgetting the love he bears to Lucy Tyrrell, who is so worthy of it, should ever consent to marry the daughter of that vile Mildred Estcourt, he will prove a fool as well as deceiver, and I will cast him off forever. But he does not love Blanche; he cannot consent; and if he is resolved to resist your will in regard to her, he will have all aid from me, and never shall be forced into such a connection. Little does her mother know, more than you do, why I am thus determined. Mildred Estcourt is steeped to the lips in crime, but her evil deeds will not forever remain veiled from the public eye. Rave as you will, sir, Charles shall not marry Blanche," and so saying, Randolph left Mr. Brandon, in what frame of mind may be better imagined than described.

Nor did he derive more satisfaction from his interview with Matilda's father. The meeting was short, stormy, and purposeless; and Mr. Tyrrell congratulated Randolph on having for an uncle the most preposterous, obstinate old fool that he had ever seen in his life.

Lucy's father was even more justly incensed with his behavior.

"Sir," said the haughty southron, "my son may marry your daughter if he pleases; but if he dares do it he is no longer a son of mine."

Kindling with just indignation, Mr. Tyrrell returned, "When your son, sir, has my permission to aspire to the hand of my daughter, it will be quite time to refuse your consent. Until then you can spare the expression of your edict, and there will be no further conference between us."

No entreaties availed from Charles or Lucy; the angry sires were inexorable, and indulging their own resentful feelings, appeared to forget the happiness of their children.

But there was one meeting for which Mr. Brandon was quite unprepared. Lucy had heard of some of his expressions regarding her plebeian rank, and her desire of alliance with his son, from ambitious motives. Without informing any one of her plan, she resolved to confront him. He came to the house for some purpose, and while seated alone, was surprised by the appearance of a tall, elegant looking young lady, who suddenly stood before him, pale, but perfectly composed, with eyes that looked disdain. Her lips quivered for an instant, then she said haughtily:

"You are Mr. Brandon of Kingwood. My name is Lucy Tyrrell. In me you behold the woman of whom you have spoken with coarse, brutal invective; did you dream that I was to hear of it tamely without daring to resent it? I am humble and poor, but thanks to kind heaven, not dependent for bread on you. Fear not that I should ever cross your path again; look upon me for the first and last time; do I appear like one who would fawn for your favors? Were you the lord of twenty manors like your own, and all at your disposal, you would wait long before I would accept the gift of one poor acre. Your broad lands have as little value in my estimation as your proud pedigree; yours may be the blood of nobles, but mine would curdle in my veins before I could stoop to dishonor. And now you have seen me whom you so despised; remember the meeting, and that I would not permit one syllable from you in reply."

She withdrew her gaze and was passing from the room. "Stay a moment," he exclaimed, while rising. She turned,

waved him off with an imperious gesture, and giving him one look of eontempt, silently retired.

Mr. Brandon was indeed astounded; he had thought Luey a rustic, an awkward, bashful ehild, and he had been completely awed by this lofty beauty. Perhaps if he had seen more of her, and in a different mood, he might have thought her better fitted to graee the Brandon family. But she had so eompletely and scornfully repelled him, so utterly overborne him with contempt, that it was long before he eeased to feel the effeets of her stinging words. He took eomfort, however, finally, knowing that he should see no more of her, and hoping that his son would soon forget his passion.

Lucy was now to return to the island with her father. She would permit Charles to be bound by no actual engagement, but exehanged with him some golden tokens of remembranee, and each solemnly promised to be true to the other. The long and sad farewell was spoken, and with an aching heart, Charles aceompanied Lucy to the paeket in which she was to sail for home, her father making no objeetion to this act. The wind was fair, the canvas spread, and Luey leaned over the vessel's side, giving him her last look of unutterable tenderness. The bark moved on, bearing its preeious freight far from him she loved; and Charles stood watching the receding sail until its faintest trace was lost in the waters.

CHAPTER X.

A MEETING AND A LETTER.

A FEW weeks after Lucy's departure, Charles' career at the college was ended. He felt no interest in the exercises of commencement day, or the part he performed in them, for Lucy was not present to listen and smile upon him.

With a heavy heart he made his arrangements for returning to Virginia. For the last time he strolled along the avenue where he had frequently walked before, enjoying happy thoughts. He now passed a house which he had always remarked as one of the largest and most elegant in Cambridge. This noble mansion was of square proportions, and, standing back some distance from the street, was elevated above two or three successive terraces, which were planted with trees and shrubbery.

It was evidently the home of some rich personage; and its owner, Mr. Lascelles, had the reputation of wealth without refinement, and of fondness for coarse convivial pleasures. As Charles paused before the gate of the enclosure, the door of the house opened, and Mr. Lascelles himself came forth, equipped in long boots for riding, and ready to mount a fine horse which stood saddled for him. Brandon felt only aversion for Lascelles; he did not know him, had never spoken to him in his life, but had taken a dislike to his appearance from the first time of seeing him. Lascelles was but a few years older than he was; but the haughty manner in which he always conducted himself towards the students of the university, had doubtless been felt by the sensitive, proud Virginian. The horseman

now came on, swinging a light whip and humming a tune, while a look of mingled hauteur and insolence (or what Charles conceived to be such,) appeared on his face, which apparently intimated, "Get out of my way!"

Very probably Mr. Lascelles had no such intention, and was ignorant of the construction put upon his demeanor; but Charles, although he had no reason to quarrel, long retained a disagreeable impression of him which he could not account for. Such superstitions may be "trifles light as air," but at times we do meet persons with whom we link associations of the most unpleasant nature, as if they were fated to exert evil influence upon us.

On leaving college, Charles addressed a letter to one of his classmates, whom he had intrusted with a knowledge of his love affairs. It was written a few days after Lucy had gone. We have seen this letter; its style is old-fashioned now, but we give it exactly as it reads:

"Lucy went last week. I knew not how much I loved, and was beloved by, that dear girl, until we parted. Considering the parity of our fortunes, and the spirit of our parents, prudence forbid an union; and I urged every argument to convince my sweet friend of the absolute necessity of separation, though at the very moment the bare idea was pain, was torture inexpressible. She is a most amiable creature, and I am convinced if either of us possessed a competence, both might be happy.

"We parted with mutual professions of the most delicate esteem, without any actual engagements, or expectations of seeing each other again; but time shall not efface the deep impressions love hath made. Adieu, Lucy!

"I never felt the weighty curse of poverty until now. A little wealth might have bought my felicity, might

have secured the happiness of two too-fond friends. But cruel necessity obliged me to tear myself from her; with this aggravation to my wretchedness, that my generous girl must also suffer the pangs of separation."

Thus Charles Brandon had, in less than one year, learned what it was to love, and to be miserable!

CHAPTER XI.

RANDOLPH'S HOME.

The family at Kingwood were again assembled, as in former days. Charles was once more at home, with no prospect of speedily revisiting the north. Nothing bright surrounded him; he was a prey to discontent, and the misery of requited but hopeless love. He poured out to his mother the whole history of his unfortunate passion; he found relief in so doing, and consolation in her sympathies. She urged him not to abandon hope, to act the part of a kind and affectionate son, and that his father must eventually change his views.

"At all events, Charles, you would consent to no other union, one which you know would cause me unhappiness?"

Charles easily understood that her meaning referred to Blanche, and he eagerly assured her that she need have no fears. Fate might forever prevent him from marriage with the woman he loved; but he would never be forced into a connection repugnant to his principles, even to please the best father in the world.

Mrs. Brandon heard this with secret joy; for she had feared that Charles might in time be induced to look upon Blanche with favor, and then there could be no bar to their union.

The father, now that he had secured his son once more safely under his own eye, was disposed, for a time at least, to allow him liberty; he suffered him to pass his days after his own desire; did not hint to him to seek society; nor did he once introduce the name of Blanche

Estcourt. Time, he thought, would be the best disposer of events; before long his son's grief would be dissipated, he would again become pleased with the glitter of the world, and then a favorable opportunity would occur for consummating his project.

Mr. Brandon was not altogether ruled by the insane purpose of making his son think and act as he himself did; he had no such tyrannical motive, but, what he deemed Charles' real good, at heart; and with a rich, loving, and beautiful wife, as Blanche would prove, thought he could not fail to be happy.

He loved his son; was proud of his appearance and talents. What he did, harsh as it really was, was dictated only by mistaken pride, and a false estimate of the happiness of his heir.

Thus some fathers judged a hundred years ago, as some do even at the present day.

Randolph Brandon had come with his lovely bride to Virginia; but, incensed as he was with his uncle, refused to visit Kingwood, although urged to do so by Mrs. Brandon, who greeted Matilda most cordially in Williamsburg. He settled on an estate of his own, half a day's journey from Kingwood; and, blessed with an affectionate wife and an independent fortune, thoroughly tired of roaming, and not ambitious of political preferment in the colony, he was naturally fitted for the quiet enjoyments of home. A few months after his marriage, one might have imagined him a husband of ten years, such delight did his own fireside afford him.

Charles, finding it impossible to shake off his melancholy, determined to accept Randolph's invitation to visit him; and, although change of scene brought no termination to his wretchedness, it was soothed in some degree by the kindness of Matilda. How pleasing he thought

the change which had so soon taken place in her. Before marrying he had considered her rather uninteresting and indolent, if not at times silly; but now she was transformed into an active, sweet-tempered, fascinating little housewife. She was anxious to do every thing which could contribute to the charms of her household, and was also much advanced in mental power from contact with her high-souled and lofty, but kind, indulgent husband.

"If Matilda is thus improved by marriage," he thought, "oh! what would dear Lucy be, who is by nature so superior."

Matilda said nothing to him about his love affairs; she thought it best to let him brood over those sacred subjects in silence, but she adopted a hundred kind winning ways of diverting his thoughts from melancholy. She would sometimes say—

"Come, cousin, Randolph has to leave home to-day, and I expect you to help me greatly in his absence;" or at another time, "It is a fine day, cousin, and as I have nothing to do just now, you must drive me in the park;" or again, "Though I am married, I must not give up all my accomplishments, and you must now instruct me for an hour in drawing, as you promised." Then her pretty black eyes would sparkle, and she would thank him for his kindness so sweetly, that she almost made him forget his misery.

He often busied himself in gazing at her when she did not observe him, marking any slight look or motion which reminded him of Lucy. He read much to her as he was wont to his beloved, and dwelt upon those scenes and passages in the poets, endeared to him by Lucy's love of them. Matilda, with a woman's tact, fancying that he took delight in these because her cousin did, would frequently urge him to read some piece that he

suggested, being sure that it was a former favorite. She was an accomplished musician for that day, and made his evenings pass more cheerfully by playing for him upon her harpsichord, accompanying its measure by her delightful voice.

She thought the cloud was gradually lifting from his mind, and she urged Randolph to induce him to stay with them as long as he could conveniently absent himself from Kingwood. Randolph's care led Charles more to out-of-door exercise, which he judged far better for his health than brooding in solitary thought over one fatal passion. He often endeavored to enliven his charge by making him join in a deer-hunt, which in those days afforded better sport than can be had now, and many a fat buck was the reward of their sharp rifle practice.

Randolph's mansion was especially delightful to Charles, for he heard no syllable of Blanche, and saw nothing of her mother as he did at home ; for that manœuvering lady was in the habit of making friendly calls upon Mrs. Brandon, with kind inquiries for her health ; but her visits were in reality meant for the son. She had not paid her respects to Matilda on her arrival in Virginia, being determined to see no more of Randolph, whose ill will she returned with cordial hate ; but when she learned that Charles was staying at his house, she suddenly recollected her duty, and went with a thousand apologies for delay, and the warmest welcome to the bride. Her advances were coolly received, her visit unnoticed, and on her next meeting with Randolph in Williamsburg, his profound bow was returned by a dead stare which only caused the imperturbable gentleman to rejoice that his wife would not again be annoyed by her attentions.

Randolph, on one occasion, asked Charles if he had written to Lucy since he parted from her. Yes, he

had several times, but without any reply, and as sufficient time must have elapsed for her answer to reach him, he knew not what to think. He felt despondent, and had despatched another letter, in which he begged her to let him hear from her, if it was but a word.

"How were those letters sent?" asked Randolph. "In the usual manner from Kingwood to Williamsburg, thence to go northward by post."

"So I supposed; are you sure, however, that your father has not detained them?"

"He could not have done so, I provided against such a contingency, and always sent them by special messenger to the capital; it is impossible that he could ever have seen one of them."

"I am glad to hear so; now do you imagine that they could have fallen into wrong hands in Williamsburg?"

"Of course not; no one there could secrete them, and they would be forwarded with other documents; but our system of posts is wretched, and my letters may have lain idle in the office."

"The system is, indeed, poor enough, but will not be improved until we have a great increase of population. Do this, however; give me the next letter you write, and I will see that it goes forward in proper time."

It was true, indeed, that the previous letters had not gone to their proper destination, but this was no fault of the government officials.

The busy Lady Mildred Estcourt, during one of her visits to Kingwood, by professing great interest in Charles' case, had induced his father to tell the whole story of his love; when, naturally concluding that he would write to Lucy, she determined to intercept the correspondence if possible. By a keen search she discovered Charles' messenger, and, making him some small present, told him to be

sure to come to her whenever he brought letters from Kingwood, as she always desired to write at the same time to some of the same persons. The poor negro, suspecting nothing, promised and obeyed; thus twice when the black waited upon her, had she abstracted Charles' letters, giving him in their place for deposit in the office, a package whose direction was to Lucy, but whose contents were blank.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MEETING WITH A GREAT MAN.

Randolph was anxious not only to reinvigorate Charles' bodily health, but to strengthen his intellectual power. He saw that he was too prone to dreams and reverie, and that if he much longer indulged in such tastes he would become quite unfitted for real life.

He fell into conversation with him one day on the subject of mankind in general, and followed up his remarks by sketches of individual character, especially of those who had at one time been borne down by a weight of domestic affliction or extraordinary reverses of fortune, but who, by perseverance and dogged industry, had risen at last triumphant.

"There is a young man, my dear cousin Charles," said he, "living in the neighboring county of Hanover, with whom I have become lately acquainted, and whom I consider a most remarkable example of talent which has mastered misfortune. He has overcome vast difficulties, and by almost superhuman efforts placed himself in a position of recognized merit and independence. His name is Patrick Henry, and you may be sure that he will one day be eminent, and that his words will have weight in the counsels of our country. If agreeable to you, we will ride over to Hanover Court House, and see him, as I understand he is there at present."

"I will gladly do so, but tell me more about him."

"He is yet very young, but already has a wife and children to support. He was for a long time supposed to be incorrigibly idle and careless; he was twice en-

gaged in trade in which he made two signal failures, reducing himself and family almost to beggary, and he also tried farming with no better success. His friends became worn out with his continued ill luck, insisting that he was fit for nothing but to hunt, and fish, and play the violin, and hang around a tavern, listening to the gossip of any loiterers that chanced to enter. They had no hopes either of his perseverance or talents, when he suddenly determined to become a lawyer; yet, strange to say that, with very short study he has achieved wonderful success. He is formed by nature peculiarly for law, or rather for a wondrous and almost intuitive power of seizing upon the strong points, the great facts of cases, and presenting them in language of irresistible eloquenee. Of law as a science he has as yet but little knowledge. He has lately made himself prominent in the great cause of which you have doubtless heard, namely, the revenues of the clergy derived from the impost on tobacco. He took the strongest ground against the holy fathers, and his speech is said by those who have heard it to have done him immortal honor.* I became accidentally acquainted with him, and desire you to know him, because I think he would exert an influence on you of the best character, and also for one or two private reasons of my own, which I will not now unfold to you."

Charles assented, and shortly afterwards, in the afternoon of a pleasant day, the cousins found themselves at Hanover Court House, and, drawing near the tavern, heard the sound of a fiddle, accompanied by the noise of shuffling feet, and now and then a loud laugh.

* This is an anachronism. Patrick Henry did not make this speech until several years after this period (1755-6), but, for the purposes of the story, the author has taken a poetic, or rather chronologic, license.

"Some fun is going on," said Randolph, "let us see what it is."

They approached and threw open the door leading into the bar-room of the tavern, and in a moment more found themselves in the midst of the jolly company from whom the noise proceeded. Some dozen or twenty stout fellows, mostly farmers in appearance, mixed with several indubitable specimens of the tavern lounger, were busily occupied dancing with all their might to the sound of a fiddle.

It was played in a lively jig, and with considerable skill, by a tall, raw-boned young countryman, mounted on the top of a barrel in one corner of the room, whence he could overlook the whole crowd beneath him. Though obliged to work his arm hard for their entertainment, he entered into the fun with full zest, and now and then stamping on the head of his barrel, would play with renewed vigor, shouting at the same time, "Come, boys, that's not half fast enough; I can tire you all out and do twice as much at a time in the bargain."

Then suiting the action to the word, he fiddled with such amazing velocity, and with his feet beat such a tattoo and double shuffle on the end of his barrel, that it rocked again, set the dancers into roars of laughter, and these soon raised such a cloud of dust that it was almost blinding.

"Ah, Mr. Brandon, are you there," said he catching sight of Randolph and his cousin; "glad to see you; will come down in a few minutes."

"Who is that man?" asked Charles. "What does all this mean? I thought we were coming to see Patrick Henry."

"So we have come to see him," replied Randolph laughing. "That is he."

"What! you do not mean to say that that clownish-looking fellow in the corner, jerking away at that fiddle, is the great man you have told me of?"

"Certainly I do. Remember Ulysses' bow was sometimes unstrung."

"That was not a fiddle bow."

"How do you know it was not? But our friend Henry is no aristocrat in manners more than in birth, and I honor him for his simplicity. He can give a good reason himself for acting so."

"What would father think of this?"

"Heavens! he would be paralyzed with horror; but here comes Mr. Henry," and the great man descended and came to them.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Brandon; hardly prepared to meet you, as you perceive; but the truth is, father-in-law has gone off hunting to-day, and I am keeping tavern for him. It is right, you understand, to make a merry house as well as a good one. Besides, you know, it is my duty to help father, in return for many a kind deed he's done for me."

"But who have we here?" he added, looking towards Charles.

"My cousin," said Randolph, "I had forgotten to introduce him."

"Mr. Brandon, of Kingwood, I think," said Patrick Henry.

"The same, sir; and it would give me much pleasure to see you there, when you can spare time from your profession."

"Thank you, sir," said Henry, "thank you; it would afford me much happiness to pay my respects to you there," while at the same time a quiet smile shot across his face, as he at that moment pictured to himself the

reception he would be likely to have from old Mr. Brandon, whom he knew by reputation as one of the staunchest aristocrats of the realm, and whom he saw occasionally in the streets of Williamsburg, rolling along with the pompous pride of a lord mayor of London.

"Now, Mr. Brandon, if you will wait a moment, until I act as barkeeper for these people, as well as fiddler, I will be with you;" so saying, he unlocked a cupboard, and helping each man to a glass of whiskey, brewed a jorum of most excellent punch for Randolph and his cousin.

They remarked that Henry did not drink, himself; when he informed them, that he seldom touched any thing but pure water.

"It is strong enough for me," said Mr. Henry, "and the more I confine myself to it, the nearer does my mind seem to approach the purity and clearness of that element, and my flow of spirits is as constant as that of a running brook."

Charles had now an opportunity of examining the man, of whom Randolph had so favorably spoken. In dress he was not to be distinguished from the rustics around him; his clothes were coarse and threadbare, and bore marks of having recently been used in the chase, of which he was passionately fond.

His figure was tall and lank; his gait was awkward; his face—long and thin—was of a uniform sallow bronzed tint, without a particle of color in his sombre cheeks. A high forehead and long nose, were his prominent features; but his eyes baffled description, though at once arresting attention. They were not large; deep set in the head and so shaded by thick, bushy, overhanging eyebrows that, at times, they were almost hidden from view, but on the slightest emotion, they darted fire from their bluish gray

orbs, in a manner well calculated to awe an opponent. His voice was firm and melodious; and the little awkwardness he displayed on first entering upon a topie, was rapidly shaken off as he beeame exeited, when his whole frame assumed a port of dignity and power.

Sueh is a brief notiee of the man, who afterwards became so eelebrated, but who at that period was searee eonseious of his own genius. He declared himself less pleased with the fame he had already won, than the easier eireumstances of his life, after so mueh poverty; rejoieing, that he was now able to earn a comfortable subsistence for his wife and ehildren, in whom he took the greatest delight, and of whom he spoke with such affectionate warmth, that the tears stood in his eyes. He gave the cousins an outline of his own life, drawn in a ready humorous style—spoke of his truant school days, when the book he loved best, was the book of nature, studied while in pursuit of the stag upon the mountain side, or of his relish for the Epicurean philosophy, while sauntering for hours beneath the shade of the trees, overhanging the brook, into which he cast his line.

Yet, he expressed keen regrets for time lost, and desultory habits, which had so grown upon him, that he could scarce eonquer them. Then, ehanging the theme, and speaking of the publie men and measures of the day; with true artistie skill, and a few touches of strength, he drew masterly pietures of every prominent individual; displaying the keenest insight into human nature, and laying bare all its seeret springs of action. In regard to publie affairs, every subjeet that Randolph could suggest, proved to have previously engaged his attention; in many of which he predieted results, long afterwards verified in the revolt of the Colonies. He spoke of taxation—a subject which, even then, had excited strong feeling in the

country; he condemned the measure, and ended his remarks by a sudden and brilliant speech, eloquent in praise of liberal government, and the progressive march of civil liberty, so unexpected, yet thrilling, that his auditors—a number of whom had returned to the room, when he began speaking—now rewarded him with many loud cheers.

He expressed the hope of seeing Charles often, and urged him to join in a hunt to begin on the following Monday. It was to last nearly a week, and would offer to Mr. Brandon the pleasure of camping out.

Before parting, Randolph drew Mr. Henry aside, and asked him, "If he had heard any thing lately of Lady Mildred?"

"Nothing of importance; and you know that one of my condition, cannot approach such an exalted character —'a—a Cecil,' is it not, she calls herself? She does not deign to speak to me."

"Nor to me, neither; for which I am very much obliged to her." And then Charles could hear nothing more of the conversation excepting that, now and then, the words "will," and "codicil," were introduced, and Mr. Parchmount mentioned.

They took their leave then of Mr. Henry, and rode homewards.

"How do you like our friend?" asked Randolph.

"Very much indeed. I was astonished at his conversational power and eloquence; but, does he always dress in such uncomely style?"

"By no means. On proper occasions he is clothed becomingly and looks like another man; but he cares little for show and splendor, and displays, as I think, really better taste by retaining some of his old habits, than by suddenly assuming a different style. But, rely upon

it, his career will be brilliant; for he is the very incarnation of genius and common sense."

"Here we are at home again," he said, after a hard ride of an hour or two; during which the sun had gone down, and left the travelers to the light of the stars.

"Now we will see what Matilda is doing."

The young wife was anxiously waiting; and as she came forward to greet them with one of her pretty smiles, Charles was surprised to see the grave Randolph, who for the last hour had said scarce a word, dash himself off his horse, seize her in his arms as if she was an infant, and kiss her a dozen times over; proving, by this affectionate behavior, what loving husbands there were a hundred years since.

Matilda submitted to this treatment without manifesting resentment, her blushes only making her lovelier than ever; but she soon disengaged herself, and led the way to her table, which was abundantly supplied with provisions for hungry riders.

CHAPTER XIII.

MILDRED AND HER FORTUNE.

The little that we have seen of Lady Mildred Estcourt, serves to give us some insight into her character, and before proceeding to dwell farther upon her varied qualities of mind and heart, we will look back a few years at the history of so marked a personage.

We have told that she was of English origin; that her grandsire, the bold, bad statesman, was held up by her as a model of virtue and wisdom beyond that of all his compeers, but that she regarded her own father, who was of mild and deserving character, with contempt, or at least with utter indifference. Would that her grandsire were now living, to recognize his own proud spirit in hers; she would keep bright the lustre of his fame, and she would ever choose to be known and named as "the granddaughter of the celebrated statesman, Robert Cecil," rather than by the name her husband bore.

In youth she was handsome; her beauty was of the haughty style which is marked in the throng, noticed rather as a marvel, than to be loved. She had chosen for her husband Mr. Estcourt, a gentleman of fortune, quite her equal in birth and education, but of a yielding, plastic temper, without much apparent will of his own, but who, like such vacillating persons in general, when once he had resolved on anything, displayed an obstinacy not to be overcome by persuasion or threats. The Estcourts had been married in England, and were first seen in Virginia when Blanche was about two years of age. They settled on an estate near the city of Williamsburg;

but the husband did not live long to enjoy his property. His child had scarcely passed her fourth birthday, when he died of consumption, with which he had struggled for some years. Soon after his demise, his widow sold the estate, and in affluent circumstances, went to reside at the capital. Short as was the duration of her wedded life, it sufficed for her power to bind him as with fetters of iron. Though she brought no fortune to her husband, she scarce allowed him the expression of opinion even as to his worldly possessions ; all were claimed as hers ; and she spoke of them always in such a manner as left no doubt on the minds of those who heard her, that she considered her husband's interest in them as solely dependent on her will. Mr. Estcourt might occasionally assert his right to be considered her equal, but she always checked him imperiously, expressing astonishment that he should venture to remonstrate, and she a Cecil who had stooped to marry an Estcourt. Stooped to marry him ! if she had, it was done only for his fortune ; and some persons were charitable enough to say that she would have cast him off on her marriage day, had a richer suitor presented himself. Simple, easy man, he doubtless soon found out that submission only could purchase peace, and when once accustomed to her sway it proved so habitual to him, that he went and came, and rose and sat, and did her bidding to the letter in all things, as she commanded, without a murmur.

Given up to her himself, mind and soul, he had from the first, when his child began to know the word of command, instructed her ever to be ruled by her mother. She knew best ; she was to judge exclusively of every matter, small, as well as great. He was to take no part in the training of the infant, any more than if it was a stranger ; thus voluntarily surrendering one of the most

precious rights, the sweetest pleasures of a parent and a father, to watch the tiny creature expanding in life and loveliness, and aid its growth in holiness day by day. He did not accept this precious charge; he obeyed not the dictates of his own reason and common sense; and what wonder that the child, soon seeing the difference between her parents, should hold to the one, and despise the other.

In the short time which elapsed before Mr. Estcourt's death, Mildred gained the most unenviable notoriety. No one was disposed to pay that profound court to the granddaughter of Cecil, which she thought her due; none would tamely endure the insolence of this woman, whose object in life was to trample everybody in the dust beneath her feet. The Virginia dames, among whom she visited, were proud-spirited as well as lovers of peace; and were neither willing to gratify her propensity for making mischief, nor to bow down to one whose whole life, judging from what they saw of it, must have been one continued quarrel. Many of them, therefore, gave her to understand, that her prejudices, and piques, and hatreds, were not subjects of sufficient importance to warrant her keeping a dozen families in an uproar. And when her husband died, never did a woman quit her home less pitied or less loved than she, accompanied by the scorn, contempt, and execrations of her neighbors. She imagined, when leaving the country, that the gentry would too late discover the fatal mistake they had made, of having suffered to go from them, one so superior, so deserving of homage; that they would sigh for her return, and pray for it with tears. The real truth was, that they rejoiced at the departure of such a fell spirit; that such an incubus was removed; and in fewer days than she had passed months among them, she was dismissed

from their thoughts, and for all time forgotten. In the city of Williamsburg she pursued a similar course; but the community, having been timely warned of her character, she found her powers for mischief and strife very greatly diminished. It enraged her that she was avoided; but blind to her own faults, as she was to others' virtues, she regarded herself as the most persecuted of her sex; and often declared that no human being ever had half as much trouble as she did. No one, however exalted her station, if she were the descendant of a hundred Cecils, treats others as Mildred did, without having in return a tremendous retribution; without days of gloom and nights of sleepless sorrow. And who pities when this punishment comes? for come it does and always will. We have said that her husband died; he slowly wasted with consumption, and those who looked upon his daughter's bright, but hectic beauty, remembered the disease of the father, and feared that its seeds were implanted in the child.

There was a very singular circumstance connected with Mr. Estcourt's death, in regard to a will which he was said to have made in his last illness. The story went, that two lawyers, Parchmount and Redtape, who were partners, had been employed to draw for Estcourt an instrument, declared to be his last will and testament, revoking, as usual, all former wills, and that it ran, not as many persons would suppose, solely in Lady Mildred's favor. In his last hours, thinking, perhaps, that he had done wrong in yielding everything to her guidance, or to show a power after he was dead, which he dared not manifest when living, this will restricted her in a great degree. This will bequeathed his whole fortune to his daughter Blanche, on her becoming of age; but if she died unmarried, the whole property was left to a nephew.

There was but a small provision made for the wife, and this she was to enjoy for life only, without power of bequeathing it. And if she married again, it was at once to pass from her. Rumor declared further, that this will, executed without the knowledge of Mildred, was made on the last day of Estcourt's life, in consequence of some news of startling nature concerning his wife; information which had reached him in his dying hours, of transactions in which she had been partaker in former years. Be this as it might, the will was drawn carefully by Redtape and Parchmount, duly signed and witnessed, but not delivered to the lawyers for safe keeping, because at the last moment Mr. Estcourt bethought him of a codicil which he wished to add, but declined doing so that day, feeling too much fatigued to attend to any further business. Besides, there would be plenty of time on the morrow, for the will was to be drawn in duplicate. But when the morrow came, Mr. Estcourt was a breathless corpse, having died suddenly in the night.

The will which had been drawn up with such precision, and which showed at the last that Estcourt had opinions of his own, if he never before had chosen to exert them, and which now were to put a life-long check upon his wife's pride and power, that will, we repeat, was after the departure of the attorneys placed by Mr. Estcourt carefully in a drawer of his wardrobe, where he kept sundry valuables; this drawer was fastened by a secret spring. No one knew that he had placed it there, and he "died and made no sign."

But when after his burial, search was instituted by the lawyers and witnesses, two of whom were named his executors, no will could be found; the house was ransacked from garret to cellar, but all in vain. Mildred was suspected of having destroyed it, but she bore undismayed

the proof of a most thorough examination by Redtape, which may be imagined did not soothe her irritable temper, but nothing was elicited. She was enraged beyond measure, on being informed of the tenor of the will, and did not scruple to express her hopes that it would never be found, but the charge of having made way with it she indignantly denied; and she was in truth innocent in this case. She indeed knew nothing of the matter, and when the secret drawer was found at last by some one accidentally pressing the spring, it was empty, she testifying in the most positive manner that she never before knew of its existence. Nor did she, but another was aware of it. A confidential female servant of hers was the real culprit. One of those mean, prying, pimping, wretches, whose ears are always wide open for any little bit of tittle-tattle and scandal, and whose proclivity in this wise was joined to an inveterate love of pilfering, had, unknown to Mildred, been made acquainted by her husband with this secret drawer; and as she always professed great piety, Estcourt deemed the story safe in her keeping. He had never missed anything, for she was too cunning to rob that treasury, but she had long desired to leave her place for other reasons, which we shall soon mention. Fixing her period for doing so at the time of his death, which she judged could not be far off she resolved then on extensive plunder, which should ensure her a handsome sum, and some hope of settled comfort for the rest of her days.

She slept in a room adjoining Mr. Estcourt's, being his appointed nurse in his illness; Mildred, who professed to feel too keenly to stay by him at night and witness his sufferings, betaking herself to a remote and solitary chamber, where she could be out of the way and sleep comfortably.

That last night, this servant was aroused by hearing a noise of distress in her master's room. She entered and beheld him gasping for breath, unable to speak, with one hand raised to his white face; and as she came he pointed with the other to the secret drawer. The deliberate wretch looked at him a few seconds, as she marked the last ripple of life ebb away, and when he had fallen back upon his pillow, and the hand had dropped by the side of the dead man, she felt his pulse and placed her palm over the motionless heart to be assured that the spirit had fled; and, proceeding to the cabinet, touched the secret spring. The drawer opened, and the miscreant robbed the dead master who had bestowed his confidence upon her.

She concealed the jewels and money securely about her person, and then proceeded coolly to examine the parchment by the gleam of that taper whose rays were the last material light that ever shone upon those quenched orbs, which now, with frightful fixedness glared as if with horror, at the creature by its bedside.

As she perused the document, a grin of delight, like the mocking sneer of a fiend, sat fixed upon her face, and her first thought was to replace it and wait for the triumph which was sure to come, when her mistress Mildred should hearken to a voice beyond the grave, dooming her to poverty. But she thought more deeply, and with a smooth calculating satisfied smile, refolded the parchment, placed it in her bosom and shut the drawer.

If in that dim chamber which death had entered, which the struggling beams of the midnight rising moon faintly lighted, as sole witness of that awfully sudden catastrophe and the deed of cruelty which followed it, that desperate menial prayed; it was that her crime might rest undiscovered; if she rejoiced, as she did, it was at the sudden untimely fulfillment of her hopes of years. When she

had dimmed the taper again, and carefully marked that the room bore no trace of disorder, prudently forbearing to touch another article, she conveyed her spoils to a hiding place of safety; and then, with feigned tears and frantic sobs, rushed to the room of her mistress, and beat at its door to tell her tale of grief and misery for the loss of the poor dear kind sweet master, she loved so well. She too was examined, but nothing found against her; there was no suspicion of foul play in regard to the dead man, for the physicians summoned, delivered a learned opinion that his death was perfectly natural, and their certificate to this effect, couched in terms altogether unintelligible, was of course entirely satisfactory.

This servant, Jane Hook, after remaining a few weeks, and receiving the thanks and presents of the neighbors for her noble devotion and self-sacrifice in attachment to her late master, packed up her wardrobe and disappeared, going to another part of the country, where we shall again encounter her ere long.

There was another will which Mildred knew of, and which Redtape knew of, for he had a duplicate copy of it. It had been made some years previous, when the wife's influence over her husband was as yet unlimited, and this one was wholly in her favor.

Mildred produced this document in due time. She had retained it in her own possession ever since it was drawn, and had used her influence to prevent Esteourt from making another, as he sometimes said he would. She claimed now the entire property in virtue of this will. Redtape resisted her as long as possible, therefore adding himself to the list of her thousand and one enemies, because he always hoped the missing document would be found, and thought that it was some reflection on his own professional skill and caution that such an important

paper should disappear in this mysterious manner, and elude all pursuit. But nothing could be heard of it, and without it, no matter in what way Estcourt wished his property devised, the former will was in full force, and nothing could set it aside.

It was acknowledged to be valid by Redtape, and after allowing a reasonable time to recover the other, without avail, a decree of court settled the question, and Lady Mildred took quiet possession of the whole estate.

But Mr. Redtape was not satisfied; he always declared that sooner or later the mystery would be brought to light, much to the astonishment and confusion of certain parties. He had no positive ill-will to Mildred, so as to rejoice in seeing her deprived of property, but he forgot her in his anxiety that the case should stand upon its proper merits, which he deemed the last will to involve. With this idea, added to the pertinacity which distinguishes some of the more terrier-like members of the legal profession, he was ever snuffing round endeavoring to get upon the scent of this extraordinary matter. He was quite likely, however, to be baffled, for up to the period of which we write, nothing had transpired, and Mildred had possessed the estate for about fourteen years.

But to hold her fortune was one thing, and to enjoy her life quite another, for it is not very probable that Mildred could pass hers happily, owing to circumstances which we shall divulge. Her temper and disposition were by no means calculated to ensure her peace of mind, for those like her, "the worthless and offensive members of society, whose existence is a social pest, invariably think themselves the most ill-used people alive, and never get over their astonishment at the ingratitude and selfishness of their contemporaries."

She had looked, on first coming into possession of her

estate, for a brilliant career; to bestow her hand and fortune this time on one of established rank among the aristocracy of the country, and thus queen it over those who had incurred her displeasure. But her hopes, year by year had been disappointed; she found no one desperate or foolhardy enough to link himself with her; she grew more and more alone, in spite of her wish to dazzle and lead society, and in fact was tolerated but for her daughter's sake, who was as much a favorite as her mother was hated. It burned into her haughty spirit to find that her charms and her fortune were unsought, and that her influence daily grew less. As her daughter grew up and entered society, a striking, beautiful, and fascinating woman, she frequently threw open her house and entertained in elegant style; but now baffled for years, with hopes which promised but brought no fruit to her desires of a second marriage, this she reluctantly abandoned, and devoted all her energies to secure a splendid lot in life for her daughter.

But Mildred had other and far more harassing sorrows than the world knew of, and her punishment was the more terrible because she could reveal her grief to no one, but was forced, for many reasons, to keep it profoundly secret. That wretch of a servant, who had purloined valuables and stolen the will on the night of Estcourt's death, found in that document an exhaustless mine of wealth, and by its means had wrung from Mildred many a handsome sum of money. The mistress was matched in this instance by one of equal craft and wickedness, and the lower fiend had tortured her to the last degree.

Elsewhere we shall disclose scenes in Mildred's former life, in which this servant had taken part; but it will suffice to say, that she had acquired an influence and power over her mistress not to be shaken off. A short

time after her husband's death, Madam Esteourt received a letter from this woman, who had removed to another part of the country, Mildred knew not where, until this missive came from Newport, Rhode Island. Jane briefly referred in her letter to certain days past and persons interested, in a manner which, as Mildred read, curdled the very blood around her heart. She wrote that she had found the will, for which such keen search had been made, and that her former mistress was now utterly in her power, rich though she was.

For the price of secrecy in concealing this document, as well as the crime in which Mildred in years past had been an actress, was demanded a certain sum of money, or evil should befall her. The will should be produced, and her possessions should pass from her. Mildred had enough and to spare, and could purchase peace, security, and undisturbed enjoyment of her fortune, by simply ministering to the wants of her poor servant. Jane added, that she was now to be married, and tauntingly concluded by saying, that her love for her mistress was still unabated.

The guilty Mildred never doubted the truth of Jane Hook's tale, and complying with her request once, fairly committed herself to the miscreant's power.

The money was sent, and from that time she had lived under continual dread of discovery, under constant extortion from the wretch who had, as Mildred thought, married one as vile as herself, and whom we shall speak of in an ensuing chapter.

Such was the fearful penalty Mildred paid; crime is wept for in tears of blood, but these will not wash away remembrance of the sin; and even if no remorse could find its way into that iron heart of hers, it was yet a prey to bitter anguish, rage, fear, and hate. There was also another

cause of misery to this woman. On one hand it was said, that when Mildred first came to America from England, that she was accompanied by a sister who was a widow, with one young son; that after Mr. Estcourt's death, they had been domiciled with her for a short period, during which time the sister was subjected to the harshest treatment, which she bore patiently as long as she could, being of far more tender nature than Mildred, but that at last, worn out with such a course, she had left her house, and suddenly disappeared with the child, no one knew whither. She had kept herself entirely secluded, while with her sister, and when she left, there was no one who knew her or cared to ask for her. It was now whispered on the other hand, that this sister had loved not wisely but too well, and that the stern Mildred, who held herself to be without spot or blemish, could never forget or forgive such a sin in one of her kindred. She had harbored her and her fatherless love-child as long as she could, but the unrepentant transgressor had repaid kindness with ingratitude, and left at last without Mildred having any suspicion that she was about to take such a step. Henceforth, of course she was not to be named, and ere long it was forgotten that such a being had ever been seen in the community. Mildred herself, having never taken pains to trace her, was now ignorant if she was living or dead, or what had happened to the unfortunate child.

But in one of those letters which Jane Hook wrote from time to time, in which demands for money were spiced with threats in case of refusal, Mildred's sister was named; spoken of as an innocent lamb, as in truth she was, with hints that justice would yet be done her, and that her son would claim his own.

And now, wretched as Mildred was, with none to look to for hope and consolation—for this was a subject she

could not name to her daughter—an awful sense of her own guilt and the wickedness of her conduct towards her sister, whom she knew to be blameless, came upon her. She would seek her out; she would be reconciled with her; a plausible story could easily be told to the world how her suspicions, which once appeared actual certainty, were now entirely removed, that she had been found to be innocent, and was received back with the deepest affection; this she thought would go far with heaven in expiation of her sins. With this purpose she wrote to Jane, asking information of her sister, and in due time received for answer, that she had been living with her son in Newport, but they had disappeared for some years, and that she knew nothing of either.

This letter did not tally with the former, in which her sister was spoken of, and not knowing whether Jane Hook was lying in every part of her epistle, or whether it was partly true, and being unable to find out, because she knew no one else in Newport, she determined before long to visit that place in person, and suddenly pounce upon her tormentors. She would frighten them thoroughly; she would by threats or bribes get possession of that will, and once in her clutches, it would soon be scattered to the winds; then with her whole energies bent to marry her child to Charles Brandon, and to effect a reconciliation with the discarded sister, she would triumph at last, and in triumphing, be happy.

Ah, how easy a task was all this to her in imagination now; how far easier it would have been in reality to have done justly in years past, and her reward would have been abiding. But there must be some reason given for her sudden move to the north, especially to the Brandons, and it struck her that a plausible one could be furnished in the health and spirits of her daughter Blanche.

CHAPTER XIV.

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

Mildred Estcourt was now not only disappointed and vexed that Charles Brandon should pass so much of his time with his cousin Randolph, who she knew would instil into him any feeling rather than one of affection for her, but for some time past she had real cause for solicitude in regard to her own child. She, however, attributed the change in her entirely to interest in Charles, the discovery that his affections were bestowed upon another, and that her own love could never be returned; knowledge which could only be fatal to her peace and happiness. The poor girl had visibly altered ever since that time when she found by Charles Brandon's distant manner to her, that her hopes were futile. She had been insensibly led to regard herself as his destined bride. His attentions to her, she was obliged to confess, were not such as a lover would employ; still their union was anticipated, and had been mentioned to her as so natural a possibility, that she had indulged the pleasing thought too far. Vainly did she regret it now, and more so that she felt compelled to exonerate him from all blame. A sad change had indeed come over the beautiful girl; she had lost in a great degree her vivacity of spirits, and interest in the society even of her friends who loved her devotedly, and she withdrew from them as much as she could without giving them pain.

Her form lost its rounded symmetry; her cheeks grew thin, but their color heightened, and her large eyes shone with a strange light. A slight cough now troubled her,

which she in vain strove to keep concealed from her mother; and those who looked upon her wasting beauty predicted, that she would sleep in an early grave. She had loved, loved as she felt and knew, in vain; but hers was a timid, shrinking passion; she had scarce dared trust herself with it; she had not breathed it to a single friend, not even to her mother, who, fully as she was aware of it, had hitherto thought best to say nothing of it to Blanche until Charles could be influenced to offer his hand. "He never dreams of me," thought the poor girl. "Would that I could banish this hopeless passion from my breast, and be cheerful once more. But I shall soon die; I feel that life has no happy future for me; let me lie down and be forgotten—then may heaven bless him more than it has me."

Mildred thought; "This disease must be cured. I will not see my daughter dying by inches before my eyes, without an effort to save her. Charles shall marry her, and at the first hour of their engagement even, she will begin to revive."

But the mother little knew that not love only was secretly mining the health of her child; another insidious destroyer was at work—consumption was silently but fatally progressing.

It deceived her as it has a thousand parents more fond than she. She now deemed it the proper time to question Blanche, hoping that her daughter's sentiments would accord with her own, for were such the case, she saw little difficulty in the accomplishment of her wishes.

"Blanche, my child, I have something to tell you, come and sit by me. I have of late felt exceedingly concerned for your health, and I have a proposal to make which I am sure will please you. It is a pleasant season, and a journey will do you much good. Therefore, pre-

pare in a week to leave for the north. I wish to go to Newport. You saw it as a child, but quite too young to remember it. Now you will see it with different eyes. You know we landed there when we came from England."

"But mother you astonish me; go to so distant a spot in the colonies at this late season! Can you mean this seriously? Why can we not seek the sea shore at some nearer point. Beside, your proposal sounds to me like a command."

"And if it be a command, have I not a right to issue it? You have never disobeyed me."

"Nor do I wish to do so now; yet, if I think at all, as I must when a proposal or even a command is made to me, I may surely in this instance."

"Well, think, if you desire, but we must go; I say must. I have much to occupy me during my visit to Newport. Widowed as I am, with the whole management of our estate devolved upon me, I have many things to harass me. We must go at once to Newport, I say."

"Surely, mother, I will cheerfully accompany you. You have, indeed, heavy cares; but how often have I urged you to let me lend assistance. I could lighten you of much of your load."

Innocent creature, thought Mildred, would to God thou could'st.

"No Blanche, you could not help me."

"Indeed, I might; but you never would tell me what troubled you. I have wondered at your distress when those strange-looking letters, which never to me appeared like those of gentlefolks, came to you; and you would bury your face in your hands, and at times weep so bitterly, and again be angry. Often have I tried to comfort you, but you turned me away."

"Child, you know not of what you are talking. The letters were naught, naught."

"But I have heard you moan piteously in your sleep, and toss upon your pillow, and utter strange words."

"Words!" said Mildred, starting in terror.

"Oh! mother, do not frighten me with such awful vehemence; if there is something dreadful to be told, I can bear it. How much less could it afflict me than suspense, and my wish of sympathy in your misery denied me."

"There is no misery Blanche, you are too anxious, child. Have no fears."

"But mother, I must feel for you sadly, indeed, although you would never allow me to see those letters, or even learn who wrote them. You would only say they were from Newport."

"Peace, Blanche, about the letters; nothing worries me now, I tell you, and I go chiefly on account of your health. You require change."

"Change has little charm for me, and will not long avail," thought poor Blanche; but she tried to smile, and said, "Then, dear mother, I will fear no more; it will be delightful to me to visit the north."

Mildred mused as to the manner in which she should touch upon Charles; she drew Blanche closer to her side and kissed her.

"My daughter, tell me how you feel?"

"I am not strong."

"Shame," said Mildred, thinking it best to come to the point at once and assume a tone of virtuous indignation, "shame that your illness should have been caused by the heartless treatment you have received!"

"Shame, mother! there is no one at fault."

"There is, tell me not so. How dared Charles Bran-

don act as he has done? win your regard, then throw it lightly by? But he shall not."

"Mother," said Blanche, hurriedly, and with a quivering lip, "I cannot, will not, listen to this."

"And has he not worked all this evil? did he not woo and win you? did he not cast himself at the feet of another, heartless traitor that he is. You know you love him."

"I did once love him," said Blanche, very firmly, but in a sweet and modest manner, "but it is not in my nature to waste affection on those who do not care for it. I am too proud to degrade myself. I have the Cecil's blood in my veins as well as you, mother. But Mr. Brandon never did attempt to deceive me; he never gave me any proof of love, by word or deed, and our last meeting, months ago, was one of cold courtesy."

"But you say you loved him once; if you do not now, why did you then?"

"The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and its own joys and secrets too. Mine told me to love him, but never why."

"Blanche, you are a strange girl; but now if Charles did love you, how would you return his affections?"

"But he does not love me."

"If he could, though?"

"He cannot."

"Do not answer me so, I have no patience with such replies. Would you not love him in return?"

"If of his own free will, he were ready to bestow his strong, unselfish, unswerving love, I might again return it; but if only a sense of honor tempted him to offer his hand in reparation for supposed injuries, I would reject it with disdain."

"But, Blanche, he must, he does love you, and you do not blame him."

"No; for he never sought by smooth words to win me and then desert me. His conduct has been kind and honorable."

"Then, child, there is no difficulty in the way. It will require but little time; leave me to manage it."

"Manage it, manage it! What do you mean, madam, to devise a plan for the purpose of bringing Mr. Brandon to my feet? Excuse me, but I am party to no such manœuvering."

"What temper is this, daughter?"

"My own, madam; it is time indeed I find to display my spirit. I will not tamely submit to any such indignity."

"Tush! no indignity is meant; do I not know best."

"Your judgment must be impaired, mother, if you imagine that the course you indicate will receive my sanction. I have always been to you a dutiful and obedient daughter, but I will not in this matter be made a puppet. I warn you in good time, if you approach Mr. Brandon with the intent disclosed to me, he will be obliged also to listen to my sentiments. They will not agree with yours. Let me hear no more of this."

Mildred saw that she had gone too far, and had roused in Blanche a noble spirit of resistance. She was surprised but awed, and resolved to let the project rest for a season.

And Blanche was resolved too, not only in regard to her own heart, but also concerning the secret troubles in Newport. She now acquiesced the more cheerfully in the proposed visit, being determined, while there, if she possibly could, to fathom the mystery.

CHAPTER XV.

MR. BRANDON INDIGNANT.

Having prepared for her journey with Blanche, Lady Mildred Estcourt now determined to test the scheme she had planned for inducing Charles to offer his hand. She saw, with trembling, the great change in her daughter's health and spirits; and although she knew not that consumption was at work, she felt the urgent necessity of speedy success in her schemes. Loving Blanche as much as such a woman could love anything, still the possibility of losing her by early death, was not of half the moment that the failure of her designs would be. If Blanche died unmarried, what security had she against the infamous wretches who preyed upon her? After saving a handsome sum from her tribute, they might prefer to drag her before the public, and make a full exposure of her evil deeds.

She did not reflect, that should they dare take such steps against her, they would naturally involve themselves in trouble; but the perceptions of guilt seldom accord with clear judgment. While she believed that Jane Hook's regard for Blanche alone restrained her and her accomplice, the possibility of their ultimate vengeance hung over her like a sword. They had the power, and perhaps the wish, to reduce her at one fell stroke to poverty and despair; and she cursed the moment when she had been weak enough to yield to them. She could have enjoyed as much, with Blanche in possession of the estate; but it was too late to repent or regret now; a savage resolution seized upon her to gain her ends, no

matter by what means, or in case of failure, despair would kill her.

With this view, she sought her opportunity, and, without going to Kingwood, where she feared that Mrs. Brandon would thwart her scheme, held an interview with her husband in Williamsburg. Mr. Brandon was walking in the street; Mildred saw him approaching, stepped to the door, and accosted him; quite accidentally, of course. He politely ascended the steps to ask the health of the ladies, and she induced him to enter the house.

Blanche was out; the mother considered the chance too favorable to be sufferced to pass. After a few moments' gossip on common-place topics, she artfully led the conversation to turn upon her daughter.

"Mr. Brandon, you have a wife, she is a mother, and you can form by her some idea of a mother's feelings for her child. Did I not therefore know that you can sympathize with me, I never could persuade myself to speak as my duty impels."

"I listen, madam, all attention; pray tell me what it is that concerns you."

"It is the health of my darling daughter, the dearest that mother ever had; you do not know, indeed, the depth of my love for that sweet child."

Mr. Brandon bowed in a profoundly respectful manner.

"So tender a charge has ever filled me with the most anxious solicitude for her well-being, which has most fortunately been preserved to her until lately . . . but . . . truly . . . Mr. Brandon, you do not imagine how much I am pained even to approach this subject."

"Madam, why not inform me at once? I am ignorant of any cause of your daughter's illness; we are all liable to the evils which flesh is heir to; but is this an affection of the mind?"

"Ah, of the mind! now you touch the point, Mr. Brandon. I was sure that one of your acute perceptions would soon discover the cause of my grief; but my sensitive nature shrunk from the confession." Here Mildred sunk back, and wept in touching style. She knew the use of tears, and had drilled them to come when called for.

"Dear Madam Estcourt, compose yourself; I did not know before that you suffered from sensitiveness."

"Oh, yes; acute sensibility has made half my life miserable. I feel so deeply for others' woes, the world would not believe it."

"It is an ungrateful world, madam."

"It has proved so to me; but my hopes rest in heaven."

"Your daughter" . . . suggested Mr. Brandon.

"You do but recall me to my misery. I a Cecil, and the Cecils, who have always been so noted for their peculiar sensibility, their tender regard for the feelings of others, must sympathize not only for my daughter, but for one, also, almost as dear to me."

"And that one is" . . . . .

"Is Charles, dear boy," said Mildred, sobbing. She again fell back, and other tears came to add emphasis. They were the italics of her strong sentences.

"Madam, madam," said Mr. Brandon, profoundly impressed, "you astonish me." And his perceptions being by no means as quick as Mildred's flattery implied, his face denoted bewilderment almost comical.

Mildred slowly recovered; not too fast, she was too good a tactician. "My dear Mr. Brandon, I feel, now that I have told you the secret of my tenderest charge, that we can better sympathize with each other. And how will you, generous man, be pained at the thought that Charles has been too pointed in his attentions to

Blanche! Perhaps I ought not to impute blame to him; it grieves me to do so; yet, can I refuse the evidence of my own senses? I see her drooping, and he no longer approaches her."

"And you have no doubt that my son's dereliction is the cause of her melancholy?"

"I fear so. I would not have you understand that Charles actually proceeded to the length of addressing her; but there are other modes of winning; we know, dear sir," said the artful woman, "how such things are done."

She paused to mark the effect of her manœuvers. She had touched the right key. The proud old aristocrat was a man of honor; and the idea that Charles had ever ventured to tamper with the affections of any lady, stirred him to anger. But his sense of honor was ever inconsistent, and he could see no wrong in his own course towards Lucy, whose love Charles had won.

With Blanche, however, his son's equal, the case was very different; he perceived her wrongs clearly, and thought her the most aggrieved of her sex. He now burst out in anger: "He shall make reparation for his injuries, madam; he shall make reparation, and quickly; by heavens he shall marry your daughter!"

"Oh! not unless he loves her," faintly suggested Mildred, who cared little whether he did or not; "not unless he loves her."

"It is nothing," said Mr. Brandon, vehemently; "he ought to love her, madam, and he shall."

"But, suppose he cannot?"

"Cannot, madam? cannot? Do not talk to me of cannot. I say he shall; and he shall marry her too, if I insist!"

"Be more calm, my dear Mr. Brandon," said Mildred,

recovering her spirits. "I must go to Newport, in a few days, for the health of my sweet charge, and we can manage it all on my return."

"Of course we can. Yes, madam, we can. You are right, you are right. Go to Newport; and I give you the word of a Brandon—a word, madam, which never was broken—and I flatter myself, that few houses can say as much; my word for it, I say, that on your return you shall find my son ready to do exactly as we say. So, go to Newport, madam; bid your daughter put on her brightest looks again, and she shall shortly be the loveliest bride in the colonies. Have no fears, madam—have no fears, my command is to be obeyed; never gave a command in my life that was not. Did I ever inform you what summary work I made with my son's silly love affair? Would not listen to it; commands, madam, again obeyed, you see; and as for the girl he said he loved, I"—here he stopped short; for a recollection of the manner in which Luey had faced him, gave him a twinge of agony,—"she went home," he continued, faintly, before detailing to Mildred the tyrannical injustice of his course.

"And how did Charles bear it?" asked the plotter.

"He naturally rebelled at first; but now is quite subdued, and bears it meekly as a lamb. I know that he has thought better of it; in short, madam, he has reflected, reflected, madam; he is a Brandon, and when a Brandon does reflect, he remembers the ancient honor of his house."

"Indeed!" thought Mildred, "if your son suffers himself to be ruled by you, he must have left his brains at the north;" but she closed the interview, without expressing this opinion aloud, congratulating herself in the happy prospects of her daughter, and leaving Mr. Brandon to prepare his son for the destiny awaiting him.

He saw Charles at once, and was much astounded to find his overtures received in any but a lamb-like manner. His eulogium on Blanche, the promised splendor of his wedded life, and the words; "My son, be a good boy, and think no more of this other silly matter; let it pass from your mind;" was treated, at first, with indifference, and then, as he pursued the subject, with burning indignation.

In a few fiery words, Charles told his father, that he was, and would be, master of his own affections—that he wished no further reference to Blanche—that he did not love her, and never could—that, moreover, grave and insuperable reasons existed to prevent any connection with such a person, as her mother. His heart, he said, was unalterably fixed on Lucy Tyrrell; and, even if he never married her, neither time nor trial would change his love.

In vain the father swore, and stormed, and threatened, that if his son did not marry Blanche, he would turn him out of the house.

"That you may do," said Charles; "but you will not thereby accomplish your purpose. Banish me from your doors, but I will never, never marry Blanche Estcourt!" The irate man threatened, as he had many times before, to cast the rebel off forever, without a shilling.

"One fact you forget, sir," said Charles, "that the estate is entailed; and in such a manner, that you cannot destroy the provisions of your father's will; you may withhold aid during your life, but the landed property is mine at your death."

This was the opening of strife between the father and son; it was continually renewed with increased bitterness on the part of the sire, and firmer determination on the part of Charles. His mother was distressed at it,

beyond measure; but she could not counsel her son to change his purpose, and her prayers and tears availed not, with her husband. The once joyous household, was happy no longer, and deep gloom settled on the mansion, the former chosen seat of good cheer and revelry.

CHAPTER XVI.

RETROSPECTION.

In order to understand more clearly the dark purposes of the unprincipled Mildred, and those secrets which she was obliged to conceal even from her own daughter, we must briefly review a portion of her life, antecedent to the mysterious abstraction of the will.

In accordance with her husband's desire of removal to America, soon after their marriage, she left England with him and their daughter Blanche, then a young infant. She was accompanied, also, by a widowed sister, and her son, a boy of five or six years of age. The deceitful Jane Hook, followed, in capacity of a servant; and the other passengers consisted of Captain Brooke, a naval officer, who was to join his squadron on the American coast, and a petty trader, by the name of Elisha Barlow. He had been valet to Brooke, in former years, and had afterward transacted business in the colonies, sometimes in one place and sometimes in another; and, having broken up his last establishment, was now returning from a visit to England, where he had purchased a stock of goods—preparatory to settling in any new place which he might think favorable for traffic.

The voyage was a long and boisterous one; the ship crazy and leaky, was much damaged, and during a heavy gale off the coast, the captain fearing she could not weather it, resolved to run for Newport harbor, instead of trying to fight his way to the capes of Virginia whither she was bound; and accordingly the storm-tossed, wearied

passengers, were delighted to east anehor at last, and ride seeurely in the beautiful Narraganset Bay.

Captain Brooke was a man of the world, who had passed mueh of his time amid the gay eapitals of Europe, and thoroughly skilled in all the arts of corruption, he sought to make a dull voyage agreeable by the same system of pleasure whieh he had pursued on shore, and by whieh he had ruined the peace and eharacter of more than one woman, who had trusted to his words. Bold and unscrupulous, with little belief in female virtue, he was nevertheless restrained by the dignified demeanor of Mildred's sister Miriam, who permitted no approaeh to familiarity, and he eould not but respeet the woman who by the simple purity of her nature kept him at proper distanee, and even caused him to think better of the sex, in some partieular instances, than he ever had before. But with Mildred herself the ease was very different ; his keen insight into eharacter soon penetrated her hollow insineerity ; he saw that she eared little or nothing for her husband, and that her affectation of piety had no more reality in it, than some other attributes of whieh she boasted. Estcourt was too mueh eonfined by sea siekness to heed the intimaey whieh was springing up between his wife and Captain Brooke, and a eautious management of their affairs, entrusted to Jane Hook on Mildred's part, and to the sneaking trader Elisha Barlow on Brooke's, established a eorrespondenee which grew more tender as the voyage was protracted. Lost to honor, Mildred lost easte even in the estimation of the wretches who aided her downfall, but she little dreamed that retribution was to come, and in great measure to be inflicted by their hands.

Let us dwell on this no more ; the guilty woman was soon left by Captain Brooke who went off to join his squadron, and all the Estcourt family (for Miriam bore

the same name) determined, before setting out for Virginia, to remain for a while in Newport, charmed by the beauty of the island.

And now Mildred's punishment commenced; she discovered too late the dreadful mistake she had made in placing herself within the reach of such creatures as Jane Hook and Elisha Barlow.

The trader began the work of torture by such means as a vulgar knave would resort to, a threat, a demand of hush money, or there would be revelations of damning character, which would produce scenes not easily quieted between Mildred and her husband.

Bold and daring as she was by nature, Mildred shrunk with terror at this, for guilt and cowardice are allied. She was reduced to the dire expedient of asking the advice of Jane Hook, whom but a brief season before she would have discharged in an instant had she dared to offer her counsel. The friend in need of course thought that Barlow meant in earnest what he said, that a little money would quiet him, and that though she hated to gratify such a villain, yet perhaps it was the only course. She would undertake to see him, and oblige him to make oath never to trouble her mistress more, as soon as his demand was satisfied. To this Mildred agreed, little dreaming that the two harpies were combined together to plunder her, and Jane returned from her errand with the information that Barlow was quite content with the sum paid him, and would harass her no further. This was a lie, for they had agreed to share the booty and extort every shilling they could from her. This resolve of theirs was followed ere long, just as the family were about setting out for Virginia to settle on the estate Estcourt had purchased, by a demand on the part of Barlow of such magnitude, that all the money Mildred had in her own possession

could not satisfy it. Her husband's liberality must be appealed to; here was a dilemma; Jane Hook must again be consulted; and now came the most damnable iniquity of the whole plot. Mildred must be able to give a satisfactory reason for asking this sum of her husband, and step by step, by devilish art in hints, and suggestions, the absolute necessity of the case making it imperative for some desperate move, the baited, distracted woman, was induced to connive at a plan which should give her the money, and discharge her persecutor by throwing her own guilt upon her innocent sister. Horrible as was this scheme there was no other escape for her, and she reasoned with herself; "This cannot last forever. I shall be free from that leech Barlow in Virginia; Estcourt I know will not, cannot live long, he is desperately ill now. The story of Miriam's shame will not be known beyond our own household, and at my husband's death I will renew our intercourse, tell her that I was imposed upon by false stories, and all will be well again."

Monstrous wickedness! and yet she adopted it in despair. With the same arts by which she had been worked upon, and to which she now lent her own aid, Estcourt was taught to believe that his sister-in-law's conduct had been such that she could not with propriety become a member of his household, as had been intended. It was much better now that she should be given enough to make her comfortable in retirement in Newport, which could easily be done by adding something to the little property she possessed, and leaving her to repent of her sins at leisure. Thus, under pretence of aiding her sister, Mildred would secure the money, which would go to feed the insatiate maw of Elisha Barlow.

Mr. Estcourt could scarce believe when he heard of Miriam's conduct; but everything, by false swearing, was

perfectly proved. There was such exquisite skill in the hints and confessions of Barlow and Jane Hook, when, at Mildred's suggestion, they were questioned on the subject! Such dreadful fears had Jane had, which, alas! had proved too true; and such deep contrition was expressed by smooth-tongued, smirking Elisha, that he unwittingly had ever had anything to do with the business! "If he'd only knowed the contents of them ere little notes, nothink would have tempted him!" etc., etc., that all appeared to Estcourt as clear as daylight. He was shocked and indignant; but he had a kind heart, and on Mildred making him promise that he would not see her sister, alleging that her distress was too great, he readily offered a larger sum than his wife asked for. She took it, and thus was enabled to carry out a double purpose—to silence the knave's tongue and endeavor to alleviate Miriam's situation by the miserable consolation of money. There was yet another part to play in this stupendous game—that towards her sister in person; but it was managed with the same address which had attended other stages of it, and was rewarded with like success. The loss of Miriam's husband, to whom she was fondly attached, had preyed upon her spirits to such an extent that it was feared, at one time, her reason would be dethroned. She was recovering in some degree; the voyage proved of great benefit to her, and the care of her child began to absorb her attention and draw her thoughts from off their melancholy fixedness. Nor was it necessary in this vile plot that she should be directly accused and scorned. The chief points were already established—Estcourt's belief in her dishonor, and the money secured.

It was only requisite now that Miriam should be alarmed and disgusted; that she should refuse to have

aught to do with one who even suspected her of wrong. This was difficult, but was artfully accomplished by Mildred's denial that any one but her husband distrusted her.

The indignant woman, fired with the bare hint of such a doubt of her rectitude, at once saw that by keeping with Mildred, her own position would be one of abject baseness, almost tantamount to a confession of guilt. She determined not to leave the spot she was in, preferring to educate her boy, who had already begun to display a froward nature, in the ways of the New England people, rather than amidst the more luxurious institutions of the south.

Had she confronted Estcourt, all this structure of lies would have been dashed to the ground ; but Mildred's facility in making one falsehood serve to conceal another, prevented the meeting. She assured Miriam that he was far from looking at her conduct in a criminal light, but only thought she had been rather imprudent, and that he loved her too tenderly to breathe to living soul the faintest word of what he scarce credited himself; and furthermore that, owing to her husband's feeble health, a conversation on such subjects would be so exciting that it might injure him seriously. Miriam took for her son the money handed her by Mildred, on the assurance that it did not come from Estcourt, but was her own.

Jane Hook had nothing to gain by tainting Miriam's reputation in the mind of any one but Estcourt, and as for the pitiful Elisha Barlow, he considered the account fairly balanced ; that the wrongs inflicted on the innocent woman were compensated, or, as he expressed it, "credited," by the punishment dealt out to Mildred ; and for his forbearance in not extorting money from her sister, or attempting to do so, he impiously talked of

treasures laid up in heaven, from which bank he would receive his own with usury when he came to present his bill upon the day of judgment. He congratulated himself on the great skill he had displayed in the management of this whole matter, frequently chuckling and remarking, that it was "all right, all right," a set phrase of his, which, properly interpreted, meant always, all wrong! Now the scheme of crime, of cruelty, and of robbery was complete, all was accomplished, and the sisters parted with tears and sorrow, feigned on the part of Mildred but real with the sufferer; one went with her husband and child to Virginia, bearing with her a load of guilt; the other, strong in her own innocence, and happily unconscious of the wickedness which had transpired, remained with her son in Newport.

CHAPTER XVII.

BARLOW A VESTRYMAN.

Elisha Barlow, having begun so profitable a business much sooner than he could reasonably have hoped for, determined at once to settle in Newport, then far more populous and flourishing than New York.

Some men bear a singular resemblance to certain of the brute creation, their characteristics being at times of marked similarity; and the appearance, motions, and demeanor of Elisha, invariably suggested the cat. He was of moderate height, thin and meagre, with precisely that stealthy pace in his walk distinctive of the feline race. His white face was constantly moved by a smirk which played about his pale lips; while his starved sandy-colored whiskers seemed stunted in growth by the meanness of their owner. His eyes, which were of greenish grey, dotted in the pupils with minute brown specks, looked as if ever alert for a victim, and a habit of jerking his head up and snuffing at the same time, as if he scented a rat, added to his cat-like attributes. There must be mentioned another trick, of snapping his long nails, and cracking them between his irregular, and not very white teeth, when he found himself in any position of difficulty, and we complete the portrait of this human grimalkin. His laugh never came from a greater depth than his teeth; one may imagine that an honest dog comes very near laughter, when he wags his tail, and roars out a good hearty bow wow; but the mirth of a cat consists only in a purr, while its back is up, and its claws ready for scratching. Thus the puss-like

Elisha's smirk of satisfaction was the best indication that somebody had been bitten; or that he was preparing for a spring. He was as ignorant a fellow as could well be found in the colonies; his language was a sort of jargon, partly the English of the mother country, and partly the provincial dialect of the low orders of Virginia; that of whites mingling much with negroes; and while a diffuse talker, his chatter never amounted to any thing worth hearing or remembering. He was a compound of every mean and sordid quality; an insatiate love of money was mingled with such avarice, (legibly written on his low, wrinkled forehead,) that these traits frequently stood in the way of his own interest, even when urging him on to commit every petty piece of knavery, as well as fraud, upon a large scale. No villainy was too great or too little for him. Narrow as was his intellect, it could embrace both extremes of iniquity; while extraordinary vanity induced him to think that his evil deeds were quite unknown, and that he was considered a model of industry, honesty, and liberality.

His habits of business consisted in fuss, semblance of doing immense work, which was only trivial; low shrewdness, dictated by cunning; and adroit concealment of rascality by a show of candor. And his universal mode of blinding all men to his true character, was by hypocrisy so well worn, that it was as much a part of him as his clothes; and which particularly manifested itself by a profession of religion. Conspicuous attendance at church, and at religious meetings, had so imposed upon the sincere worshippers of "Trinity," that he had been chosen one of the vestry; and wished it to be thought that he was on terms of great intimacy with the pastor, the Reverend Thomas Pollen.

"Well, reelly now," said Elisha very frequently, "reelly,

there is nothink as does my heart as much good, as coming up to the tabernickle these ere Sunday mornin's. If I acted as some of them are men does yonder, I should'nt like to show my face here; I'd resign my place in the vestry. What I do like, is to see men act honest. I always, every Saturday night, afore I say my prayers, try to think if I've done anythink in the week to keep me from feelin' all right; and if I haven't, I can walk about the town so peaceful, with the testament of a good conscience; and I can go down to the pier, and feel so happy to think how my vessel will soon come in from the islands, and reward me openly."

"Neighbor Tilley," Elisha might add, while waiting at the church door for the pastor to come, and speaking in a soft, smooth voice, "I s'pose you doesn't know what negroes is quoted at, now, in Jamaica?"

And neighbor Tilley, very likely astounded at such a question, at such an hour, would look surprised, and briefly answer, "no;" when Elisha would observe, "no matter, merely thought I'd jest mention it."

He had a very nice little way of "jest mentioning it," when anxious to sound any one about a matter in which he was not quite sure he could cheat him undetected.

Then, without staying to ask neighbor Tilley any more questions, he would enter the church, and with the softest cat motion, steal up the aisle, with eyes humbly bent down, and the most delicate smirk playing about his lips; and then, in the pew, he would smoothly revolve in his mind the price of "wool and ivory," in Jamaica. He would think that just about this time his sharp little brig must have planted a cargo of "niggers" there pretty safely, and at so much a head; she would take sugar in return, which, in its rotation, would be melted into rum, in one of the twenty-two distilleries then flourishing in Newport.

The spirit would be shipped out to the coast of Africa, where it would buy another lot of slaves, worth so much. And this delightful calculation was indulged in, until Elisha was in such a frame of mind, as not easily to be moved by a sermon from those startling words, "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Then, with what excessive humility would he hand round the plate for collection; and before he laid it down again, pause, when he felt most eyes were looking at him, and with a careful effort at concealment sure to attract notice, place a broad piece of silver in it. Yes, Elisha thought that everything looked "all right, all right!" Doubtless, those numerous half crowns deposited for so many Sundays in such a number of years, would be cared for with compound interest, and roll up for him at least a thousand pounds' worth of salvation!

Barlow the vestryman had now for some years been doing a pretty flourishing trade; by dint of lying, cheating, and saving, he had accumulated quite a handsome sum. His shop in the main street, was full of goods of all kinds, including groceries; and a constant throng of buyers from morning till night, indicated a lively business. All things looked fair, and above board; Elisha always endeavoring to impress the public with the extraordinary advantages to be obtained in buying of him; and few knew, excepting his poor clerks, that all was not as it should be. Cutting their wages down to the lowest point, he ground as much work out of them as they could do; but as sure as any of them began to suspect him of trickery, and manifested the least distrust, they were immediately given notice to quit, recommended to try some other situation as the work was too hard. Then, perhaps, Elisha's partners, for he had various partners, every one of whom he swindled in turn, wondering at this,

would be quieted by "he thought he had mentioned it." This phrase was of similar purport to that of "no matter, thought he'd jest mention it;" and was in frequent use whenever any pieee of knavery was to be slurred over, as of no moment. It was not known, however, that Elisha's business was partly done in a very sly, underhand, underground manner; that, in faet, he had a private understanding with some professional gentlemen, vulgarly called smugglers; who, with that disdain, charaeteristie of enlightened minds, regarded revenue laws as monstrous impositions on the spirit of the age; and only to be obeyed by low and grovelling plodders. Elisha fully eoincided in this opinion; and earried it out, as far as his own safety would allow; though he would have looked with affeeted horror upon any one who advocated openly even a belief in their injustice.

There was a seeret rendezvous out on the island (of whieh we shall say more in another ehapter), and Elisha frequently visited it in the dusk of evening, returning safely laden with silks or eloths, which had not been duly entered at the "reeeipt of his Majesty's eustoms." These artieles he was enabled to sell at good profit, taking eare not to plaee them so low as to exeite any suspieion in the minds of buyers, while, at the same time, adverting to other dealers who had similar goods in honest possession at a little higher rate, he would observe, "Well, reelly now, it is a shame how them are men tries to keep up priees."

But Barlow, with all his niee, smooth, oily manner, now and then found himself in sueh a eorner that, like a cat, he showed his teeth and elaws, when a steady determined resistanee made him display the mean abjeet cowardiee of his nature.

Captain Walrus, a bluff sailor, who had made several

voyages to India and also to China, had been in the habit of dealing with him, but having detected him in a pieee of raseality by whieh he would have made a large profit, had prevented his doing so. Elisha was thereby incensed to sueh a degree that, after "studying over it," as he was aceustomed to say, he conelnded to scare the eaptain into eompliance with his wishes, and, aceordingly, sending for him to eome to his shop, asked him to walk up stairs, when he made a show of drawing a pistol, threatening to shoot unless paid a round sum on the spot. Captain Walrus, however, only eoolly doubling up his fist, laid it gently on the trader's nose, so that its gigantie proportions and iron weight could be felt with eloquent emphasis, and then slowly backed him around the room, the eoward exelaiming with terror, "Now don't, now don't!" The captain, contenting himself with this, and expressing his perfeet eontempt for him and his threats, took eare to inform some of his friends that he considered Elisha only a "paper tiger," an epithet whieh he had learnt among the Chinese, who by it designate a blustering fellow without eourage.

This nickname appeared so well suited to Barlow, that it became the one by whieh some of the community generally spoke of him, and we shall frequently apply it to him ourselves in the course of the ensuing narrative.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LUCY'S TRIALS.

It is a frequent cause of annoyance in life that unprincipled and designing members of society occupy our attention, to the exclusion of those whose intimacy we desire to cultivate, and who are capable of imparting happiness. Mildred, her deeds, and her accomplices, occupy much of that space which sympathy would lead us to devote to her victims, but the tale must be told in accordance with the truth of its events as they actually happened.

When Lucy Tyrrell again saw her humble home, how changed it appeared. She left the island a child, she returned a woman. As in Tieck's beautiful story of the Elves, the "Serena" of this history came back from fairy land, where she had passed bright days, until the King of the Magic Realm came to visit it, and then mortal must tread no more within fairy bowers. The golden gates must thenceforth be shut upon her, and conducted to the portal, she must bid a long farewell to all that enchantment, and seek again the home once so dear, but never before so homely. But Lucy Tyrrell had a generous spirit, a noble heart, and she felt that it was still her duty, tried though she was, to be her parents' solace, even as it had been her pleasure before, in the happiest hours of her childhood. How often then had her merry laugh rung out at some slight mishap in her mother's household, and such a sparkle of mirth always won good humor from the matron, vexed as she might be. When

her father, saddened at the prospect of his lot, had sat desponding in his study, because he imagined that all the thoughts matured in his mind and preached as glad tidings unto men, were but as pearls flung before swine, how often had Lucy, by a gentle kiss upon his brow, roused him from his reverie, when looking into her sweet face, as her eloquent lips won him from his desk, had he passed with her into the fresh, pure air, and felt that all his toil, all his care was amply repaid him; for she led him, as he had her of old, along the strand where the wild billows tossed in the shells, and, pointing over the waste of waters as the sun sunk from view, reminded him of her childish days, when he had told her of golden visions to come again with the coming morn, and why not for him? Oh, then he felt the recompense, and folding his darling Lucy in his arms, while he kissed her with a father's holiest kiss, blessed God that he had given him such a child.

She was ready to resume her duties, a poor islander, once more; but at first she hurried to her little chamber, whither in days of old she had sometimes fled, and was happy, freed from intrusive visitors. There she now, unseen, unheard, sobbed wildly, in the bitterness of her heart. At last, drying her tears, she looked around on her neat, narrow room, its single window opening upon a landscape of bleak downs and rocky passes, and that friend from infancy, the mighty sea. Then she turned to the trim, snowy couch which a mother's hand had last smoothed, the rude prints which decked the walls, the cabinet of shells, and pebbles, and sea mosses which she had gathered with her own hands. Oh! could his picture only hang among those prints, it would redeem them all. His image was glassed in her memory; he had been her teacher, had led her bright mind onwards day

by day to appreciate a better art; but he was not visible to smile upon these, and how worthless they appeared. But her shells, her pet shells and mosses, which she had taken such pains to gather bright from ocean, these she could still value, for they were the gifts of nature, and he would love to look upon them if ever he came to the island. After she had spent an hour in her chamber and was calmed, she ventured to the door of her father's study. She knocked, but there was no reply; she lifted the latch and slowly ventured in, thinking that her father might not have heard her, but the room was vacant. The windows were open, and a soft autumnal breeze stole into the study, and gently fanned her faded cheek. She closed the door, and seated, looked around on the old familiar objects, but no tears flowed now. For hours she sat gazing listlessly on those volumes which, in her former pride, she had loved to arrange and keep neat for her father's hand. At times she would totter to the shelves, then, in utter brokenness of heart, sink back upon her chair. She was roused from her trance at length by a kiss upon her brow, and she saw her father.—We pass over the scene.

She day after day came to his study and lingered near him; she gave him many a hint to speak of her sorrows, but he spoke not. It is a peculiarity, and a very unfortunate one, in the New England character, that it exacts implicit obedience from childhood, yet seldom rewards with praise. Nothing, judged by its cold criticism, is ever well done; it might always have been better done. That old Puritan spirit is harsh and stern; that spirit which, like flint, would strike and kindle fire, but never melt, and though Lucy's father displayed far less of its rigor than many, and had ever been more like a companion to her than a grave parent, yet now she deeply

felt it. Now she found in her father's face no response to her own; no, *his* name was to be unheard, forgotten —she could read this in his face. With her mother she had never enjoyed the same communion as with her father; and now occasionally the good-natured, but ill-timed jest about crossed love, jarred upon Lucy's ear. Gradually becoming more resigned to her melancholy fate—

> "No longer she wept, her tears were all spent;
> No longer she wept, and she thought it content:
> She thought it content, but her cheek it grew pale,
> And she drooped like the lily broke down by the hail."

But she yet had pleasures in memory. Her uncle, pitying her, and desiring to soothe her by every means in his power, had, with her father's permission, given to her the harpsichord over which she had enjoyed so many happy hours, and now with her music she could at once please her parents, and solace her own heart, as she drew from the keys those sounds which had delighted Charles Brandon, when he had praised her diligence and exulted in her progress.

She resumed her visits to the cottages—not as she was wont, partly with a view to amusement, but only to cheer and help such as were sick in body or in mind, and she would often pass long portions of the day with them, nurse them, and smooth their coarse pillows with her delicate hands, or read to them from their Bibles, when they would tell her that the Word of God from her lips sounded dear to them. There were eyes that turned upon their bed of illness, to look after her with a blessing as she withdrew at evening, and shone brighter as she came again with another morning; and there were hard rough hands which had grown knotted in the battle of life till

they felt like iron, which now, at the least touch of her soft fingers, would open and gently play with them, and give that pressure of gratitude which their feeble words could not express.

Sometimes, when the sick would ask her to tell them of her life while away from them in the city, and which they thought must have been a round of pleasure and happiness, she would try to do so, and speak of any sight or amusement which she deemed likely to interest them, although a constant memory of Charles wove itself into all her thoughts, and pained her, for she could scarcely speak of one experience of that time in which he did not bear part.

She had waited long before she heard from him, and with a sick heart, for she had been amazed and shocked at the receipt of the two blank letters which Mildred had sent. She was utterly at a loss to imagine the reason for such strange conduct; the handwriting, too, was unknown, though evidently that of a female. Stranger still that these missives were from Williamsburg, the very spot whence Charles had told her his letters would be sent. She rightly thought some evil agency was at work. At last came the letter which, owing to Randolph's care, had escaped the clutches of Mildred. She anticipated many such pleasures, when her father, unwilling that she should indulge hopes which he regarded as vain, at once expressed his disapprobation of the correspondence, and, writing to Mr. Brandon, forbade it altogether.

This was cruel, though not intended to be so. Lucy wrote to her lover for the last time. She told how deeply it grieved her not to be even able to continue writing as she had hoped, but that she should never love him the less, that in spirit she would always be with him. She urged him to be patient, trusting in God, and not to

abandon hope; all might yet be well with them, but that she knew that his sense of honor would not encourage her, in defiance of her father's injunction, to carry on a clandestine correspondence. In conclusion, with womanly delicacy but strong love, she begged him to see as much of her cousin Matilda as he could, and do all in his power to make her happy in her new home separated from her parents. This request was interpreted by Charles as it was meant, for he knew that Matilda would be sure to write to Lucy and speak of him, by which means the lovers would not be utterly cut off from each other, but could yet interchange affection and hope for happier days.

But a balm to Lucy's wounded spirit came from the sea; she daily visited the shore, as she always had in childhood, when she watched the sinking sun, its parting splendors flushing over the deep and far heavenward toward the zenith; though now her gaze turned not upon its glories, but like her spirit looked ever to the south, where lay the home of her beloved. Often so sad in heart that she longed, like Sappho, to bury forever her love and misery beneath the waters, still she stood steadfast, watching as if expecting him, though he came not, until the last glow faded from the heavens and twilight fell upon another weary day. Yes, a balm came to her agonized heart from out the sea; she loved it as more than a friend; when but a child it had sent its delicate foam in play across her tiny feet as she trod the shore, and it had told her many a tale of wonder and delight in the pebbles and pretty shells it had strewn before her. As she grew older it had become a teacher; its voice, which the Almighty gave, was never to be wearisome, never silent, and even in her sweet slumbers still singing, singing all night long in her little chamber, and around the rude old house, still ever on the watch, hour by hour sounding

"all's well, all's well." And now, in the saddened experience of her maturer life, that sea seemed to look up into her face with pity, and breathe sympathy, and say that all the trials of that poor heart once cast upon its waters should be lost in its immeasurable depths. And then slowly, but sweetly and serenely, as she sat upon its shore and looked over its far heaving surges, the load upon her soul grew lighter; and she was visited by visions of happier days, days when he should at last obey the magnet power of those persuasive eyes, and come once more to bless her.

In silence she breathed to the deep listening sea all her hopes and fears, all her tender and most secret thoughts, and it gave back peace; peace far better than the hope deferred which maketh the heart sick; and from daily watching by the brink of ocean, she rose with gentler feelings, with new emotions, which, if not of hope, were yet not despair; with strength which enabled her once again to smile, and to cheer her parents in the poor old home.

CHAPTER XIX.

RACHEL'S HISTORY.

Rachel, the recluse, heard of Lucy's story soon after her return to the island. As we have before seen, she was on terms of intimacy with Mr. Tyrrell, and he had told her of his daughter's misfortunes. She had appeared strangely interested when she heard the names of Mildred and Blanche mentioned; and without informing the pastor of her resolves, sent for Lucy to come and see her, as she now determined to inform her of her own history. She saw clearly, much more so than the clergyman could, what evil spirit was at work; and when she appointed a time for Lucy, she told her to bring with her those blank letters, of which she had been informed, as she wished to examine their superscription. Lucy obeyed, and set out on her visit. It was an October afternoon, chilly, and gusty; and the sunbeams could scarce pierce the masses of heavy, gray clouds, which hung, lowering, over the sea, imparting to it their own leaden hue, varied by the occasional slants of light, which fell upon its waters.

The wind was rising, the surf dashed upon the shore with a long, moaning sound, as before a tempest; the sea birds flew around with wild shrieks; and one or two vessels in the offing, were making all sail for harbor, ere the tempest should gather upon them.

Lucy found Rachel, as usual, alone; serene and stately. "I have heard your sad story, my poor child," she said; "I grieve for you, deeply. You can scarce believe me

that I may be enabled to do you a service; but you must first listen to the history you have so often asked for. It is little worth the hearing; yet it is the true story of a life, and one life is as much from God as another. Your sorrow has come, but may it be your lightest. Now, wait an instant, and I will tell you;" and she arose, and opening the door, looked, as she was often accustomed to, over the wild sea, as if in search of some vessel; then, coming back, reseated herself, and began.

"You know that I came from England. I was born in luxury, and reared with tender care; and at an early age was married to one I dearly loved; but, in a short time after my marriage, my parents were both carried off by a malignant fever which desolated London.

"My father, the son of a celebrated statesman, did not love his father, who was always harsh and unkind to him; and, immigrating to this country, after a few years in it alone, determined to make a permanent settlement with his family. He went back to England for them; when he was seized with the disease I mentioned, which swept off thousands in a few weeks. He left but a small property. My ills began with that first and dreadful bereavement. Save my husband, I was nearly alone in the world. I had a sister; but she has, indeed, been to me rather as a fiend; and in her the fierce, unloveable spirit of my grandsire early displayed itself. My father used to say, that he feared she would bring down his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave; but I rejoice that he was spared the misery I have borne. My husband was of the same rank in life with me; for both families belonged to the gentry of the land; but he, being a younger son, did not inherit a tithe of the property which the entail placed in the hands of his elder brother. But that was of little moment, for he loved me dearly, and a happy life I looked

for. But the fever which had killed my father and mother, had ruined his health; for, after nursing them in their dreadful illness, when nurses and surgeons fled from contagion, and the only sound in the streets was the dead-cart rumbling by, he himself was attacked by the same disease; and though he rose from his bed of sickness, it was but as another creature, such a change had the fever wrought in him, who was before so strong and handsome. He removed from London to Warwickshire, not far from the proud castle of Warwick's earl, with whose family my own had been intimate for a century past. But the sweet country air of England only restored my husband's health for a brief season; then he drooped and died; and lies buried in the yard of St. Mary's church, amid the relics of the haughty Brookes and Grevilles." Here Rachel paused a few moments, and covered her face with her hands; then, with a voice which trembled with agitation as she touched upon another subject, continued: "he left but one to bear his name, a son;" and when she thus spoke, she turned her face as if involuntarily, and looked out of the window towards the sea. "One son, sole joy that was left to me on earth. And now, where is he? He was between five and six years of age when my husband died, and I thought it best, because of my small property, to come to America; for here it would support me more comfortably than in England, the country of the rich alone. My sister, too, and her family, were about coming over, and I joined them in London, whence we all sailed together. It is a long time past; eighteen long years of sorrow and misery. And yet no end to all woe."

And here Rachel, whom the reader has already discovered to be Mildred's sister, gave Lucy an account of the voyage, and of Barlow and Jane Hook, as well as of

Captain Brooke, whom she had known in England; but whom she did not at the time of the voyage, suspect of any improper intimacy with her sister. She continued her story, detailing the scenes between herself and Mildred at Newport, where they had parted, she unconscious of the ignominy which had been heaped upon her.

"It was not," she said, "until after the death of my sister's husband, that I found out what a wretch she must be. Thinking she would be glad to have me with her in Virginia, to comfort her in her affliction, I took my little son, hoping that the sight of his bright, handsome, bold face would make her happier; as he could be playmate for her orphaned child, her sweet little daughter. But never shall I forget the harsh, bitter treatment I received. Even curses were mine; and blows might have been, had I remained much longer with her. I could scarce dream why, until my unnatural sister, knowing that I was innocent, accused me of the worst of crimes but murder, told me that a story which her husband believed, of my shame, was all proved true, that I had sinned with Captain Brooke, and that all the world should know it. I now saw how foully I had been slandered in Newport;" and here Rachel detailed to Lucy, an account of that plot, of which the reader has been informed. "This was too hard, it nearly crushed me; and, gathering my scanty wardrobe, I induced one kind-hearted black to remove me with my child, at night, from the hateful abode of slander and crime. Yes, crime! for not long after I had returned in wretchedness to Newport, that dreadful Jane Hook appeared there, and confessed enough to make me firmly believe that she had committed some foul deed; what it was, she would not say, only that she knew I was innocent; that she, with Barlow, had been the means of blackening my character, but that my sister's punishment

had now begun, and that she should show no mercy to her, the guilty adulteress, in expiation of her own sins, and in pity for me. All was now revealed; and I could account for my sister's hatred of me. Still, I could have lived down slander. I was not forced to beg bread; and my wretchedness, extreme as it was, I could have, perhaps, forgotten in time, but for my child."

Here Rachel's recollections came again, with irresistible power; she bowed her head, and sobbing wildly, shed those tears of frantic sorrow, which give almost as great pain when seen and listened to, as when wept by ourselves. "My poor, poor, lost son," she said; "oh! that I could but see him die, I would ask but to close his eyes, and bury him, and watch by his grave until death should lay me beside him; then could I feel that Heaven would forgive him, and accept us both. My son Ralph early displayed a spirit like that of his great grandsire; bold, rash, and wilful. He was ever fond of escaping from me, being absent for hours, and as he grew older, for days. The sea was his passion; he was born to live upon it, and long before he was ten years old, he could manage a boat with perfect skill; and fearless by nature, never hesitated to venture outside of the harbor in the wildest weather. Soon he acquired a perfect knowledge of every winding of the shore, every sounding of the bay. Frequently it was deep night before he would come into harbor. But this love of the sea did not displease me; for I was glad that he was disposed to lead an active life. I shortly found, however, that he was ruled by no principle; neither fear of God, nor love of me influencing him; though I would have died for him. He neglected his studies; refused at last to go longer to school; and what could I, a weak woman do, but weep and pray for him? His days passed in idleness, amidst bad companions; he learned

their wicked ways, and lost all sense of shame. At last he told me that he would enter some shop, and learn a trade. I had fondly hoped that he would finally change, and take to his books, that the pride of my heart might be gratified in sending him to college; for which purpose, I had saved every penny I could; and had almost denied myself food and clothes. And now, it pained me that he should engage in a calling in which I knew his wild and reckless habits would never serve him. But when I found that he was to be with that wretch, Elisha Barlow, I gave up all hope. What hold the villain had upon him, I could not then tell; but he exercised a fascination that drew my poor boy to him. I knew that he had furnished Ralph with money, for some services, which had always been spent with worthless comrades, in drunken revelry. When I begged him on my knees, to shun the miscreant, oh, God! then he mocked me, and I felt that my cup of misery was indeed full. By some means unknown to me, Barlow drew Ralph into his schemes, as he had done others; and my miserable son became, before he was sixteen years of age, one of a gang of marauders and smugglers. No doubt his tempter was in league with these, one or two of whom, it was supposed, he sent to the gibbet, by information lodged with the government, so well timed, as to screen himself from suspicion. This Barlow had the audacity to tell me that he knew enough of my son to hang him, when I confronted and upbraided him with his iniquity.

"Not long after this, during one of those unlawful expeditions, Ralph's life was jeopardized, and he nearly caused the death of one who had been the means of inflicting cruel wrongs on me. The little vessel to which Ralph belonged, had landed goods on the coast, intended to be passed into the country without duties, and while

he and his companions were busy in their hiding place, storing their contraband articles and dividing their spoils, they were surrounded by some of the revenue officers, led on by a captain in the navy, who had discovered their position, and had cruised off the coast for some time in hopes of capturing their vessel. The smugglers made a desperate resistance; one or two were taken and afterwards executed, the rest fought their way through their assailants and escaped.

"Ralph was engaged in a struggle with the captain, and being a much younger and more powerful man, easily overcame him and cut him down. He was no other than Captain Brooke, who had exercised so fatal an influence on our fortunes. And now my tale is nearly told; a price is set upon the head of my son, but he seems to bear a charmed life; he has escaped a thousand snares and dangers, and still pursues his unlawful traffic on the seas, and every man's hand is against him."

"But you have not yet told me why you are here, Rachel," said Lucy, now hesitating to call her by that designation.

"My real name, Lucy, is Miriam; I took that of Rachel when I came here in order to more completely elude observation. I could not remain in Newport, known as the mother of a robber and a pirate; no, there all things appeared to run red with blood," said the unhappy woman; "here at least I can hide my grief from every eye."

"And does Ralph know that you are here?" asked Lucy.

"Yes, he has seen me; now ask no more of him."

"Not of him," answered Lucy, "and yet one question more. What was your sister's name?"

"Mildred, Mildred Estcourt."

I suspected as much, thought Lucy, remembering what

Charles Brandon had said of her ruthless character; but I did not know one could be so wicked.

"Now, Luey, darling," said Miriam, "let us speak of my sorrows no more. We have both suffered from the wickedness of one woman, but do not despair. Let me look at those blank packets which came from Virginia."

Lucy showed them. Miriam regarded the superscriptions attentively, and said nothing, but she thought,—"Just as I deemed would prove true—her writing, her writing. Merciful heaven! grant that in this instance I may prevail;" and her thoughts took the shape of resolves to write forthwith to two persons, who, she hoped, would do good service to Luey Tyrrell.

During Miriam's narrative, the wind had risen to full fury, and as Luey walked homewards, the whole ocean was lashed into foam; that night a dreadful tempest, accompanied by thunder and lightning, struck terror to her heart. The frightful creatures of whom she had heard, in her dreams appeared to be connected with her fate; and the tumult of the elements which shook her window, was, to her terrified imagination, some hideous shape striving to burst the casement, and seize her in its grasp.

CHAPTER XX.

NEWPORT OF OLD.

The quaint little town of Newport was very much the same one hundred years ago that it is to-day, we mean the portion of it lying along the harbor; for its costly and beautiful villas which now make it the most exquisite of summer residences, are the creations of the last fifteen years. We need not, therefore, fully describe its aspect at the time of our story, for it can easily be seen now by any one of a party who trusts himself in a pleasure boat, to the pilotage of Captain King of the "Susan H. Lloyd," or old Father Nason of the "Mary N." He must imagine that he is a loyal subject of King George the Second, instead of a disappointed office-seeker under the administration of James Buchanan. Then forgetting his grumbling, as he shoots past the light-house on the pier at the end of Goat Island, let him look over the harbor and he will see, with one or two slight changes, such as a steeple here and there, the very Newport of our story. Here were studded many of the same houses which now cause the stranger to wonder at their old quaint gables and carved cornices; and on the brow of the hill stood the classic Redwood Library, then the recent work of the assistant architect of Blenheim Palace. Trinity Church spire tapered gracefully aloft; and the mysterious old stone mill, since rendered a hundred fold more interesting by the genius of Cooper and

Longfellow, wore the same ruined look it bears now. The sunny glades, the sequestered dells, and the wild sea-shore, of which such exquisite descriptions live in the poetry of Brooks, and Tuckerman, and Calvert, were scarce different, only more lonely then.

The tints of the skies were as pure as those which have inspired the coloring of Malbone and Staigg, in their invaluable miniatures, and the rocky cliff and the blue sea shone bright, but had not then charmed a master painter like Kensett.

What a jewel is that little Rhode Island, with which there is nothing to compare on the whole Atlantic coast! Shielded alike from the rigorous cold of the north and the burning heats of southern summers, the Gulf Stream, which plays along its shores, tempers its waters, as if loth to part with so much beauty, kindly freights the gales with sweet remembrances of its warmth, and diffuses in the atmosphere that delicious softness conducing to repose, yet without the langour of tropic climes. The island scenery is of every varied charm, from the craggy shores, the smooth, hard beaches, where the sea birds circle and fishers cast their seine, to the wooded glens, the rich teeming meadow lands, the round bare hills, crowned here and there with the breastworks of revolutionary days, or the ancient windmills which grind the corn, while the old patient pony waits for his load, tethered to the moss-covered stone wall.

Who loves not to look upon the dense, dark orchard of gnarled apple trees, the cool, deep wells, and long beam for drawing water, the peculiar sycamores lining the roads for miles, too many of them now touched by decay; the silent, lonely ponds of fresh water, decked with odorous lilies; the historic "Hanging Rocks," where the spiritual Berkeley sat and wrote his deathless works, and the

greener cliffs, trod in long hours of religious musing by the eloquent Channing.

Lady Mildred and Blanche Estcourt arrived safely in Newport after their tedious journey, and repaired to the public house of that day, which was kept by John Lawton, familiarly called "Jack." His tavern stood nearly opposite to the State House, but no sign of it now arrests the antiquarian's attention. The snug, cosy, high-peaked, gabled inn, of reddish brown, has been destroyed to make room for the present staring white shingle palace, known as the Park House, but yet,

> "Imagination fondly stoops to trace
> The parlor splendors of that festive place;
> The whitewashed wall, the nicely sanded floor,
> The varnished clock that clicked behind the door;
> The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
> With aspen boughs, and flowers and fennel gay;
> Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
> And news much older than their ale went round."

Jack Lawton did one's heart good to look at; rosy and portly, he stood in his top boots the picture of independence and good humor. His scarlet waistcoat, with shining buttons, set off the shape of his capacious paunch, and was pleasant to behold. One of his eyes had a remarkable twinkle in it, as if he had always something funny to tell of; it was merrier than his laugh, for that began so far down, and had so much fat to contend with, that it was nearly stifled, and slowly gurgled up like air bubbles from an ale butt.

"We shall remain, sir, some time, and wish therefore to have your best rooms," said Mildred.

"Yes, ma'rm; I will show you one room I can give you, the same one as famous Dean Berkeley used to sleep

in sometimes. Dean he was when he was over Trinity Church; bishop he's been since; dead he is now, ma'rm, these five years. Lord rest his soul, ma'rm," and Jack's countenance would have looked solemn but for his eye, which was twinkling rapidly.

"I have heard of Bishop Berkeley, a famous scholar; and did you know him well, Mr. Lawton?" Mildred condescended to say.

"Know him, ma'rm? would know his bones, poor soul! It's nigh thirty years since he come out to Rhode Island; stayed here two and a half year, ma'rm, and made every body love him. He preached in Trinity Church, close by here, where you'll see the organ he gave to it; plays most beautiful, with a crownd on top on it."

"And he sometimes slept in this room?" asked Blanche.

"Yes, miss, sometimes he come in from Whitehall, where he lived; its three mile out from town. I always drives strangers out as likes to see the place, and I shows 'em the Hanging Rocks, too, where he wrote his books. I has a nice copy of his works, miss."

"Ah, have you read them, Mr. Lawton?"

"Why no, miss," said Jack, very frankly, and not at all confused; "you see in my youth I has'nt had the benefit of much schoolin', and them works of the bishop's is too deep for me; but I am a keeping 'em for my little girls, as now goes a schoolin' to Mrs. Morpus, and I am proud to say, miss, there is'nt two smarter girls as goes to school anywhere. They will understand 'em, in course."

"You are very proud and fond of the memory of your good bishop I find, Mr. Lawton."

"Yes indeed, miss, and we ought to be, he did a great deal for us in Newport, though he stayed such a short time, only two and a half year; but times is altered

now," said Jack, despondingly, "they is not so good as they once was."

Innkeepers are not apt to take melancholy views of life, but it is a peculiarity of the race all the world over, and worthy of note, that they always inform their patrons that times are not so good as they once were.

"Then those days were very pleasant," said Blanche, willing to indulge Jack on a theme which appeared so interesting to him.

"Lord bless us, yes, miss; there was Dean Berkeley, and Mr. Callender, the parson, and Mr. Redwood, him as founded the library, you'll see it on the hill, and other gentlemen of known parts. Sometimes they used to dine here, and always said I gave 'em good wines. I've many a time since heard it said that there was'nt no such fine society anywheres else in the whole colonies. Ah, them was times!" and Jack's eye in his enthusiasm sparkled like Sirius.

"And who is settled over Trinity Church, now, sir?" asked Mildred, turning the conversation.

"The Rev'd Thomas Pollen, ma'rm; he came out from England about four years ago. Nice man, but he can't come up to the Dean. Mrs. Morpus, as my little girls goes to school to, keeps house for him; there she go now, ma'am." Jack pointed out of the window, and the ladies saw a stately figure walking with solemn grandeur at the head of a troop of little girls. The procession moved with remarkable precision, for Mrs. Morpus prided herself strongly on "deportment," and instructed her pupils to assume a queenly carriage in the street. Her presence was rendered more imposing by a bonnet of warlike shape, something like a casque, crowned with heavy ostrich plumes, which to classic readers recalled Hector's helmet, whose "nodding crest" terrified his

infant. A corpulent green umbrella, decorated with a long brass ferule, a ring, and a hooked horn handle, waved in a majestic manner, and rather added to the formidable state of Mrs. Morpus. The most rash man might well pause before encountering that lance which was a terror to all the little boys in Newport.

"So that is Mrs. Morpus?" said Mildred; "I shall become acquainted with her when I see Mr. Pollen, as I intend to. Can you tell me, Mr. Lawton, if such a person as Elisha Barlow has a shop in this town?"

Jack's eye at this question winked more than ever, it glittered like a whole constellation on a clear winter's night.

"Yes, ma'rm, he has; but my private opinion is, that Lishe Barlow is no more nor less than a willin. I never lets him come nigh me with his palaver. Mrs. Morpus is the one for him, too. He takes to his heels when he sees her a coming. Does you know him, ma'rm?"

"I have heard of him. If we wish for anything more Mr. Lawton, we will call you."

"Thank you ma'rm, always at your service;" and mine host bowed and took his leave.

When Blanche was in some degree restored from her fatigue, her health being much impaired, as she showed by her altered looks, her mother began, in the first place, to search for her sister Miriam; with what success may be imagined. She could hear nothing of her, but she was told enough, and more than enough, of her son Ralph, whose story was narrated in the last chapter, and whom she heard spoken of as a wonder of deviltry and daring, bidding fair to rival Captain Kidd in time, provided his neck was not broken too early in life.

Of Miriam, as we shall henceforth call her, she could only hear that she had suddenly disappeared; few knew

enough of her to pursue any long conversation on the subject; in fact, she had always led nearly as secluded a life in Newport as when Lucy found her in the island.

Baffled in her quest, Mildred was surprised one afternoon by a visiter announced as Mr. Castlemain, who desired to see her in private. On his entrance, she found him to be a very presentable personage. He was a lawyer of distinguished reputation in the Providence Plantations, a man of about fifty years of age, and of dignified, noble appearance. "Madam Estcourt, I believe," said Mr. Castlemain.

"The same, sir; be seated, and inform me, if you please, why I have the honor of your visit."

After some preliminary conversation on general topics, Castlemain said, "I called to see you, madam, in relation to a sister of yours, whom I believe you have not seen for some years. Miriam is her name, I think."

"Yes, sir; Miriam Estcourt, a dearly beloved sister, whom it grieves me to find that I cannot hear of. My poor dear sister!"

"H–m," said Mr. Castlemain, slowly drawing a long breath; "you are fondly attached to her, I have no doubt. Pray, madam, have you ever heard of a will made by your late lamented husband in favor of your sister's son?"

"Yes, I have heard such a thing mentioned, but I do not believe he ever did such an act of injustice to me; besides, the will never could be found, and I have been in possession of the estate in full for many years."

"Mr. Redtape drew that will, did he not?"

"I have told you, sir, that I do not believe there ever was a will; nothing could be learned of it, and we should doubtless have long since have forgotten it but for the pertinacity of Mr. Redtape."

"Very likely, madam; but he informed you that there was a will, if I mistake not."

"Yes, sir," said Mildred, looking at him with wonder, "how did you know it?"

"Oh, we lawyers frequently have correspondence at long distances; I have known Mr. Redtape for many years. Now, madam, let us suppose for a moment that your husband, in his last moments, did make such a will, can you assign any reason for it, or have you any suspicion of the cause which could possibly induce him to do so?"

"No, I have not," said Mildred, haughtily.

"Very good, madam. Now in the second place, I wish to know if you are acquainted with the character of a trader in this town named Elisha Barlow, and his wife, who was a Jane Hook?"

"Yes, I know them thoroughly; Jane was my maid."

"Your opinion of them is not very high, I presume."

"I hate them!"

"I suppose so," said Castlemain, adding suddenly, in the midst of her anger, "how much do you think, that from first to last, you have paid them?"

Thrown off her guard completely by Castlemain's manner, "Full three thousand pounds," said she; then discovering her mistake, she hurriedly added, "What did you ask, money? I have paid them none, why should I? I mistook your question; paid them!—nothing."

"My dear madam, your first answer was the true one; do not attempt to deceive me."

"I wish to deceive no one," said Mildred.

"Only perhaps in this instance," thought Castlemain. "Now I wish to know distinctly if the sum you named to me is the true one, or is it exaggerated?"

"I will answer you nothing more, sir. How dare you,

a perfect stranger to me, put such questions? I should think you were another Redtape."

"We are very good friends, and know more of this whole business than you think for; but intend you no harm; and you may do yourself a service by answering quietly the questions that I put to you."

"I will not answer them until I learn your authority for questioning me; and above all, the name of the person from whom you received the information you appear to be possessed of."

"Are you very desirous of hearing the name of that personage? it might call up recollections not altogether agreeable to you."

"What care I for recollections; you have no one to name, you are thinking to make sport of me; do your worst."

"His name, then," answered the imperturbable lawyer, "since you are anxious to hear it, is Brooke, of his Majesty's naval service; Captain Greville Brooke, and at the time he gave me this information, he put into my hand a packet of letters, most of them very brief and very pointed. Here they are," he added, drawing them from his pocket, and holding them towards Mildred; "do you recognize the hand-writing?"

"Oh, my God!" gasped Mildred, as she heard that name pronounced, and saw her own writing on the fatal notes she had sent to Brooke, "ask what you want of me; be quick, and spare me."

"You deserve pity, indeed," retorted Castlemain, "for your kindness to your sister. She is, however, I believe, far happier this day, with all her misfortunes, than you are. Do not think that I am about to make use of these letters; they have been in my possession for many years, and no one except Captain Brooke knows of their

existence, not even my friend Redtape. You, I think, have been justly punished, not only in the loss of money, but the agonies of remorse, for which there is no balm. Now listen to me attentively, for the punishment towards you is not intended, but is for Barlow, whom I consider even more guilty. Do you know of the actual existence of that will, and where it is ?"

"I do not believe in the will at all," said Mildred with dogged obstinacy, now recovering herself.

"You must, madam," said Castlemain, "or you would not have paid out full three thousand pounds hush money."

"And if there is such a one, heavens, only think of it, the whole property would pass out of my hands!"

"Assuredly! but how many years have you helped to keep your innocent sister and her son from the enjoyment of their rights. At this instant you might be living together with far more happiness to you than all your gold has ever bought for you. I know your sister Miriam well, and had she at the time of your husband's death even known of your guilt as thoroughly as she does now, she would have been too generous to have cast you off penniless. It was a devilish, murderous business throwing your own guilt on her in the way you did; it helped to unsettle her reason for a time; she lost control over her son, who, but for your unparalleled baseness, might at this instant be her support and stay, instead of wandering, as he does, with a price set upon him, as a pirate and a smuggler. Oh, woman, what an awful position is thine; think upon it!"

"But, indeed," said Mildred frantically, "I never saw that will; if it was made, God knows I am innocent of having secreted it."

"And I believe you are," said Mr. Castlemain, "and

am happy to say thus much for you; all might at this day have been well enough, if, at the first attempt at extortion on the part of Barlow, you had refused and exposed him; even if the will had been found, it was as much as his neck was worth to have had it in his possession. You would have found Mr. Redtape a kind listener, and by no means a harsh man. Have you any of Barlow's or Jane Hook's letters?"

"No," said Mildred, humbled, "I burnt them all for fear of discovery."

"That is a pity, they would be strong evidence against them."

"Where is Miriam?" asked Mildred.

"That, madam, I must now decline to inform you; she does not wish to see you."

"Oh, what shall I do! what will become of me!"

"Keep quiet, my dear madam, keep quiet, no evil is likely to befall you just now; let me entreat you, for you now see I have your good at heart, to remain in this place for a while, and do nothing but attend to your daughter's health. The poor young lady, I fear, has much need of care, but you know our Newport breezes are famed for their good effects on invalids. You did not come here exclusively on her behalf, as I well know from Mr. Redtape, but now redeem the purpose of your visit by devotion to her. My daughter, Emily, will take great pleasure in calling upon Miss Blanche. Once more, madam," said the counsellor, rising, "only one word of advice: Do not go near that detestable Barlow or his wife; you know enough of them. You need have no fear of their extorting any more money from you; I will provide against that. I have my eyes on Barlow, and, will or no will, shall endeavor to trip him up before

long. Again let me beg you, madam, not to go near him."

With this warning, Mr. George Castlemain, bidding good day, sallied forth, and, going to his own house, sat down to write a long letter, and, we hope, a very satisfactory one, to Ranger Redtape, Esq., of Williamsburg, Virginia.

CHAPTER XXI.

VISITING A TIGER.

It was a pleasant season in Newport, and Mildred, aeeording to the adviee of Mr. Castlemain, remained several weeks without attempting to see Jane or Elisha. Emily Castlemain made the acquaintance of Blanehe, to whom, with that rapidity which ladies use in sueh matters, she beeame mueh attaehed, although she disliked her proud, haughty mother as others did.

Poor Blanehe knew that soft breezes and beautiful seenery eould do little for her. She enjoyed the island, and thought a home there would be far better suited to her than in the richer south, but the memory of one passionately loved ever mingled itself with her visions and hopes. "If he could be with me, even for the little time I have to live, how much happier eould I die," she thought, and she no longer endeavored to east his image from her. Deep within she felt the glow and fire of strength growing feebler, while her pulse rapidly beating, like the uncheeked spring of the time-pieee, was the sure indieation that life would soon cease its throbbing and be still forever. Yet she looked forward with no dread and no sorrow beyond that of leaving her mother, whom she dearly loved, and of whose real eharaeter she was quite ignorant; little knowing that for her own purposes of aggrandisement that mother was still scheming to make use of her. But now she passed days of happiness, or what she supposed happiness, sent, as she thought, by

kind heaven—a sort of delicious dreamy existence, in the soft, sunny autumn days, which she knew must before long change for winter's chill. On one occasion, after visiting the shore, now so thronged with pleasure seekers, she composed and dedicated to her friend Miss Castlemain the following copy of verses, on

"THE CLIFF AT NEWPORT."

For long bright hours could I sit and dream,
And gaze upon the ocean waves, which seem
To bring each day new visions of delight,
Each day unveil new glories to the sight.

Dashing and foaming, with their feathery spray,
Onward in gladsome chase they speed their way,
Breaking in silvery streams the brown rocks o'er,
Or lulled to rest upon the pebbly shore.

And oft an instant's pausing seems to fill
All things with sacred silence, and to still
The water's voice;—again their solemn sound,
Rolls like deep organ harmony around.

And, Oh! how lovely when the parting day
Sheds softest radiance ere it fades away;
And the broad vault of heaven's reflected hue
In golden lustre tinges Ocean's blue:

When far amid the bright and glowing west,
The weary sun lies cradled on the breast
Of gorgeous clouds,—'neath canopies of light,
And dazzling glory, vanishes from sight.

Oh, I could gaze forever, and still learn
Of thee, exhaustless Ocean! still discern
From thy deep volume, thy eternal roll,
More that must raise and purify the soul.

Still proudly roll! bearing upon thy breast
Some to their haven, some to endless rest;
And let thy grand, unwearied voice proclaim
Thy mighty Ruler—evermore the same!

In spite of the caution which Mr. Castlemain had given her, Mildred finally could not resist her desire of confronting Elisha. She saw him in Trinity Church on Sundays, his face wearing an expression of sanctimonious humility and great appearance of devotion. He handled the plate for collection with an air implying, "I am not worthy to touch it," and she observed him afterwards even partaking of the holy communion, professing to rejoice that *he*, at least, was "not like this publican."

Curiosity, rage, and hopes of vengeance prompted her to seek him, and although the rascal, no doubt well on his guard from the warnings of Mr. Castlemain, had uniformly passed her as if he had never known her, she determined to visit him and open the subject of the will. Accordingly, learning from Emily Castlemain that her father had gone out of town for the day, she dressed and repaired to Barlow's shop, which the curious in such matters may see to this day in Newport, on the main street, nearly opposite to Peckham and Bull's wharf; though, we are happy to say, they will not find Elisha therein.

The Paper Tiger, at the moment of Mildred's entrance, was engaged in some nice calculations, a kind of triple rule of three, in which "sugar," and "rum," and "niggers," were the quantities involved, and the computation was evidently pleasing, from the rascally smile which lighted his white features. No sooner, however, did he hear that commanding voice pronounce his name, than the smile was gone, the "niggers" took to their heels, and he felt nearly as frightened as when Captain Walrus laid his huge fist alongside his nose.

"Drat that are woman," thought Elisha, "when I was a susposin' now Mr. Castlemain had made everything all right; but I must try to get her out; let me study over

it," and Elisha pretended to be absorbed with his calculations, and not to have heard her.

"Mr. Barlow," bawled Jimmy Wall, a small boy, "here, sir, if you please, a lady wishes to see you," and Elisha went forward, looking as innocent as a lamb led to slaughter.

"I have come to see you at last, sir," said Mildred, with abrupt hauteur.

"Well, now, reelly, ma'am, reelly at this ere instant I cannot noways remember your name. I think you must have made a mistake; its no doubt my neighbor Tilley you called to see, we is frequently mistook for one another; he lives jest acrost the way; Jimmy will show you."

"No he will not," said Mildred; "I know nothing of your neighbor Tilley, and I came to see you, Elisha Barlow. My name is Mildred Estcourt, and you know it well enough."

"There now, reelly, jest I come forward I was a thinkin' if this could be any old friend of mine, but, not lookin' to see you in Newport, or herin' of your bein' here, it kind a 'seaped my memory. Reelly, now, I'm delighted to see you."

"False, sir," said Mildred, who was disgusted with Elisha's lying speech; "false, as you have ever been yourself, sir."

"Look out for fun now," said Charley Smith to Ben Franklin (not the philosopher); "how she does give it to the old sinner; glad of it too," and the shopboys giggled with delight.

"Reelly, ma'am, upon my word," said the Paper Tiger, looking rather alarmed, "this kind of conduct is most extra-ordinary, ma'am; I makes no profession of bein' a liar. A member of the church, ma'am, and one of the

vestry to be talked to in this sort'er way! I don't think, if I was'nt honest, I should be allowed to hand round the collection plate on Sunday. Did you not see me, ma'am, engaged in that are trust?"

"And if you did not steal the money you received," answered Mildred, "you must be strangely altered. You to pretend not to know me!"

"Indeed, now," said Elisha, chuckling, as he thought of what he had gained, and, looking at her with a villainous smile, "surely you is'nt able to say that I have ever had any money of yourn; but if I have, and you'll only mention what for, I'll get one of our young men, Lycurgus Hill, to make out your account." Perceiving that he had stung her, he called out, "Curgy," and resuming his look of injured innocence, paused for a reply. Receiving none, for Mildred was now so enraged that she could not speak, "Now I comes to think on it," he continued, maliciously, "only a short time ago a friend of yourn, Capting Banks, was it! let me see; no, that was'nt the name; no, Capting Brooke, ah, that was it! Brooke, ma'am; ah, I see you recollects him! was in, and". . . .

"If you have a room, sir," said Mildred, haughtily, "to which we can retire from the gaze of these striplings, I will be obliged to you."

"Oh, certing, certing," snarled Elisha; "should have offered it before, only when one makes out as how I was a liar and a thief, I is'nt so particular. As I was a sayin', Capting Brooke called to ask about you, and". . . .

"Lead on, sir," said Mildred, in a low voice; "lead on, and if you dare to mention that man's name again, I will have you cudgeled in your own shop."

As the door of the private room was closed upon them, and they stood face to face without disguise, "Now," said Elisha, turning his pallid, villainous countenance

upon her, the foam almost flying from his lips, and his eyes gleaming with fury, "now, damn you, you ——, talk to me in that are style again, and I'll strangle you."

"Cease to damn me, Elisha Barlow, but reserve your curses for yourself; your days are numbered, and I hope to see you end them at the gibbet. The rope that stretches your neck is already twisted; and did you dream of forever escaping my vengeance? I have proof enough against you, mark my words, and Mr. Castlemain shall avenge me."

It would have been a singular sight to the lover of marvellous changes, to have noted that which came over the Paper Tiger, at the sound of that name. His knees literally smote together, his lips quivered, a cold sweat broke out upon his brow, he tottered to a seat, and gasped out, "Oh, Lord! now, Ma'am Esteourt, merey!"

Mildred looked at him with the deadly eye of an anaconda, before springing upon its victim. "Merey! you shall have it. I would laugh to see you ground to powder between mill-stones, or slowly sawn into shreds. I would sit beside you in your dungeon, and make you die a thousand deaths, in the terrors I would paint of that hell into which your coward soul will plunge; and I would see you robed in your shroud, and watch you writhe in torture, as you swung in air. Will that do, for merey's sake? You devil, you leech, who have been sucking my life-blood for years, your time is near at hand."

"Yet," continued Mildred, seeing the effect she had produced on him, to her own astonishment, "it may be well with you even now. Answer me what I ask you, and, for once in your life, speak truly, or you will rue your lies."

"I will," said Elisha, faintly; "now ask what you wants as soon as possible, 'cause I expects people begins to wonder at my bein' out of the shop so long."

"Let them wait; what care I for that? Now, tell me, sirrah, when and where you last saw Captain Brooke."

"I hasn't seed him for years—not since about the time your sister, Miriam, left here."

"I knew you had not. Now, have you anything to say about Miriam? Where is she?"

"As sure as there's a God in heaven, I doesn't know. I tried to find out, not long since—the time you wrote Janey, askin'—and Mr. Castlemain found I was a doin' so, and said if I dared make any more search for her—O Lord, he did talk awful!"

"And Ralph—where is he? You have seen him but a short time since, I know."

"Oh dear, now, how did you happen to know so? Seems to me like as if hell was breakin' up all round me!"

"Of course it is—the devils will soon be on you," replied his comforter; "where is Ralph? I say."

"Well, now, Ma'am Estcourt, I am a goin' to tell you somethink, out of the great regard I used to have for you in past times, afore these ere troubles of ourn come on us. Ralph, you know, is jest tied right up; he is at sea somewhere—somewhere, pursuin' his unlawful trade"—and here Elisha, with hypocrisy that had become almost second nature, rolled up his eyes in horror—"but, you see, the Government's on the look-out for him, and next time he tries to land on the coast it'll be right down on him. Now, I'm anxious that Ralph should be spared, if possible, and so is Mr. Castlemain; we has agreed together on that are pint. How nice it might have been for Ralph, if he'd only tuk my advice, and

done jest right. Many a time I've warned him of his sinful course; sez I, Ralph, now . . . . "

"Hush! you make me sick with your lies. What of Ralph?"

"Well, now, the whole long and short of the matter is, I spose, you want to know concerning that are will, and I think I've hit on a niee little plan I've been a studyin' over. You know, susposin' the will was destroyed, you'd feel all right, and so would I. Ralph, as I say, is out of the question. Now, don't you think if I was to make you sure, by actooally destroyin' that are parehment you're a lookin' on, that I oughter have somethink for all the trouble I've had about it? Say somethink quite nice and handsome, now, and I'll set right to work. Then you'll feel all eomfortable, as you know I eould never ask you for anythink more."

The audaeity of this eool proposal was too mueh for Mildred.

"Elisha Barlow," said she, "talk not to me of Ralph being out of the way; he is not dead. You know, villain, that you trained him in wiekedness from his boyhood; that he might become tainted with crime and branded as a felon, beeause he was the heir named in the will. Yon judged that if he was eompromised, you eould more easily plunder me, and prevent him from elaiming his own. That has been your plot; was there ever a viler one?"

"Well, reelly, now ma'am, you has found me out; I'm sorry, very sorry, but that aint no matter now; lets talk of this ere other plan of mine."

The scamp, in greedy hope of more plunder, again urged his proposal. He had, without thinking of it, or intending to do so, informed Mildred of the will, and of his eomplicity with Ralph, two points which she was glad

to know of. She slowly drew her chair up to Elisha's, took him by the arm, and fixing on him the gaze of a basilisk, hissed out: "Give me that will, or I will have you murdered. Give it to me; not a penny more of mine shall ever cross your palms, but instead, if you do not pay me a round sum back, you shall swing as sure as there is a gallows in the land. Do you mind me?" she asked, shaking him fiercely.

"Ah, what have I done! When I told you that are, I thought we was agoin to be friends," said Elisha, trembling with fear.

Mildred, not condescending to answer this; looked at him with eyes, in which, for friendship, one might read daggers or poison; then repeated, "Give me that will, and pay what I demand of you, or this day I denounce you to Mr. Castlemain."

"Don't, ah don't!" whined the Paper Tiger, appearing now to be bereft of teeth and talons.

"I will, by heaven, unless you take heed; will you obey me?"

"Yes, I will."

"At once?"

"Yes, as soon, that is, as I can get that are will; it's not in Newport."

"Mind you do not lie any more to me; how long will it take you to get it?"

"A day or two, if you will only keep quiet; but not to make you feel oneasy, I will pay you somethink now. We can settle that are up at one't. Let me see, I 'spose fifty pounds would make that all right!"

"Fifty pounds, you miser! fifty pounds to me! pay me down five hundred pounds, and that for the first instalment of what you shall have to disburse, or your neck is not worth a week's purchase. Five hundred pounds; do

you suppose I do not know thoroughly, as well as Mr. Castlemain, of your riches, through your connection with smugglers and ruffians; my poor nephew Ralph, among the number, whom you have made what he is!"

This random shaft of Mildred's winged home; the wretched Elisha imagining his plots all discovered, was ready to promise anything; and after vainly trying to buy Mildred off with one, two, three, four, or even four hundred and fifty pounds, had the inexpressible misery of paying the inexorable woman five hundred to hold her peace, besides agreeing to put the will into her hands in a day or two.

Well pleased was Mildred with the result of her visit, which opened so inauspiciously; while Elisha felt degraded in his own eyes, and completely disgusted at the manner in which he had been used by the imperious Lady Mildred.

CHAPTER XXII.

TRAITORS IN THE CAMP.

The plotters little imagined that their interview had been known to a third party, who, unseen and unheard, had listened to every word between them. Mildred perhaps would not have cared much, but we "reelly" tremble to think what Elisha's feelings would have been. It so happened that Mr. Castlemain, not having any very firm faith in Mildred's promises, had ordered her to be watched; and as ministers of police frequently select agents with whom they would not associate, yet employ for their skill, our old acquaintance, Jane Hook, had been chosen for the service of spy.

She passed for Mrs. Barlow, but she was not, Elisha having falsified his promises to her, as he had to every body else, and year after year, put off making his treachery to her "all right" by marriage. The woman, whose character we know thoroughly, determined at length to be revenged, and as soon as Mildred made her appearance in Newport, knowing that her visit must be in connection with Elisha, she went to Mr. Castlemain and unfolded a pretty tale of deception towards herself, as well as a long catalogue of rogueries, in which smuggling was not the worst. So much did she tell, and so true her words proved, that Castlemain, finding her love for the wretch turned into hatred, employed her to watch him as well as Mildred. When they came into that back-room, she being in an apartment overhead, heard their voices, and stealing down a narrow, dark stairway, fastened at its

foot the door which opened into the apartment, then applying her eye to the key-hole, after the most approved chamber-maid-style, she saw and heard every thing with secure delight. Nor was it long ere Castlemain was informed of this; he saw Mildred at once, and hinted that the air of Newport was only suited to her on account of her daughter; then perceiving that she did not understand his meaning, he astounded her by a detail of much of her own conversation with Barlow, and informed her, that if she attempted to see him again, she would be the sufferer.

He sarcastically asked her to be content with five hundred pounds, and moreover frightened her well by telling her not to open letters again unless they were addressed to herself. She could not imagine how he had derived this intelligence, never thinking it came from Miriam, but supposing that the argus-eyed Redtape, who appeared to be capable of seeing through stone walls, had found out that she opened Charles Brandon's letters.

It will be remembered that Blanche had determined to fathom the mystery of the letters which had caused her mother such distress, but the state of her health had not permitted her to do so; and she had been quieted by Mildred, who told her joyfully that she had recovered a handsome sum of money from one who had defrauded her. That had been the only cause of her distress, and Blanche feeling unable to pursue the matter, was obliged to be content with this information.

Mildred could secure no further chance of seeing Elisha, except at his devotions in church, and at length took her departure, with Blanche, for Virginia, baffled in regard to the will, when it was almost in her grasp. She had been assured by Castlemain that Barlow could give her no more trouble. Ralph was outlawed; but what if the

will should fall into Castlemain's hands, and he determine that Miriam should be reinstated. She shuddered at the prospect before her; she must marry Blanche to Charles Brandon now, or she should go mad with misfortune and despair.

We need not detail the interviews which Mr. Castlemain had with Elisha; it is sufficient to say that they were of such nature as to make the trader feel very uncomfortable and uncertain as to his own position.

He consequently tried to be more than ever devotional before men, while he was revolving various plans to save himself, by delivering up some of his freebooting friends to the tender mercies of the government. This being accomplished, and his own safety insured, he was resolved to give up such a dangerous branch of business, and live an altogether different life.

A short time after Mildred had left Newport, in the dawn of a January morning, a small vessel might have been descried coming in from sea, and before the sun arose, she had entered the west passage of Narraganset Bay, and as if seeking to avoid observation, anchored in a sheltered nook between Connanicut and Dutch Islands, quite out of the range of vision. Her sails were not furled, but clewed up, and she swung at her moorings as if ready at an instant's warning to trip her anchor and scud before the breeze. A sharp watch was set, and all that day some one was pacing her decks, ever sweeping the horizon with his glass, but no sail hove in sight.

The vessel was small, of not more than two hundred and fifty tons burthen, brig rigged, heavily sparred, and spreading an immense area of canvas in proportion to her size; her model was built for speed as well as strength, and her deck swarming with desperate-looking characters, had also a number of heavy guns which now,

however, were drawn in board, and the ports closed; so that to a stranger's eye, at a little distance, she would appear only a peaceful trader.

But this was the famous smuggler, which had been a slaver too, the "Walk to Windward," as she was named, and which had so long baffled the efforts of his Majesty's ships to take her, had beaten off more than one of superior force, and was almost unmatched in swiftness by any craft that sailed.

Ralph Estcourt (he was known on board of ship by another name) had now the command of her; a rapid career of vice and crime had placed him in his position of captain at the age of twenty-six, and well was he formed for such a service. The ruffian who had commanded the vessel before him, was a disciple of the terrific Blackbeard; and when that monster's haunt on the Carolina coast was broken up in 1718, had sailed several vessels, not so openly piratical in their character as were his master's. Through the instrumentality of Elisha Barlow, Ralph had been introduced to the smuggler, who took a great liking to him. In one of their voyages, this captain ended a long life of crime in a scuffle with a desperate negro on the coast of Guinea; and Estcourt, then but about twenty years of age, was at once elected to the command of the vessel. He was now seated in the cabin, gazing listlessly out of one of the stern ports at the distant ocean, and he occasionally hailed the watch on deck to learn whether he saw anything in the offing. He was tall and muscular, with atlantean shoulders and chest, indicating tremendous strength; a bronzed, ruddy face, strikingly handsome, with large, intensely blue, cold eyes expressed mind in no common degree, while firm-set lips, as well as the massive jaw which showed through his heavy beard, spoke of dauntless courage and daring.

"We must wait till night-fall," Ralph said to the watch, who was pacing the deck above. "Aye," answered the other, "but there is a moon to-night."

"A young one, though; it will soon be down; a fog would suit us better, for we could sweep her in, if the wind failed, and I know, by soundings, every inch of the channel."

"There will be no difficulty about that, captain," said Estcourt's "first lieutenant" (as he styled himself), who humbly imitated Ralph, and was now seated by him in the cabin. "No difficulty about running in easy enough, but the trouble will be in getting that rascal Barlow to come off. He must be a damned scoundrel to have served you so about that property of yours, you told me of the other day; how shall we manage to bring him off without creating a brawl?"

"Leave that to me, Dick Boltrope," returned Ralph. "Yes, evil blast him, to have kept me from wealth and honor, as he has, and made me what I am, with a price set on me, and as much as my life is worth to run in shore anywhere!"

"You are sure, these men, captain, have not trumped up this story to try to noose you?"

"No, indeed; Admiral Brooke and Castlemain could have had no interest in hatching such a lie. They know I am too old a bird to be caught with chaff; yet, ever since that time, you remember it, when we were landing goods up the coast, and I cut Brooke down with my hanger, leaving him for dead, as I thought—though I did not then know who he was—those two men have followed me up with this same story, communicated to me by letters, which they took care should reach me in a roundabout way. At first, I thought it as you have, only meant to entrap me; but now I know that their tale

is true, and that cursed Elisha is at the bottom of the whole trouble. If it was only for my own part, I'd give myself up quick enough, for I am sick of this infernal life, but until I know the government will pardon the whole ship's crew of us, I hang out, by God! But if I can only entice Barlow to the pier, to-night, we have him; I'll get the truth out of him and something more, or good-bye to Newport, forever, honest Elisha!"

As the twilight fell at length, the anchor was raised; and the better to avoid suspicion, the brig making sail, shot along the shores of the Connanicut, until rounding its northern point, she passed between it and Prudence Island, and then dropped down to Newport, instead of entering the harbor by doubling Beaver-tail, as if coming in from sea. The ports were still kept down, but the guns were shotted, and every thing made ready for instant action, if necessary, and just as the moon—about nine o'clock at night—was sinking to the horizon, the "Walk to Windward," anchored off the town. A four oared boat, with two men in the stern sheets, at once pulled from her side and made for one of the most unfrequented wharfs. Leaving Dick Boltrope to mind the boat, Ralph, well-armed, stepped ashore, and in a few moments had reached the shop of Elisha Barlow. The moon had gone down, the streets were deserted, and dark as Newport streets only could be before the gas works were established; but, familiar with the place, and glad of the gloom, Ralph at the shop front gave a signal which he had often used before, and in a few moments the white face of Barlow peered out of the door, he holding a candle in one hand. In an instant, Ralph was inside of the shop, and had fastened the door before Elisha had recovered from his surprise.

"Why, reelly, now Ralph, and is that you? I was

jest a wondering why I had'nt seen you this ere long time."

"Lead on," said Ralph, "and do not stand chattering here; have you not learnt manners yet?"

"He, he, he!" laughed Elisha, "Well, Ralph, you is always so amusin: Come in and sit down comfortable. There's a fire in the back room, and Mrs. Barlow will be glad to see you," so saying Elisha led the way, and seating Ralph, repeated, "I'll call Mrs. Barlow down, she'll be glad to meet you."

"Stop; we don't want any Mrs. Barlow's here, and I've not long to stay. What do you stand there for, you fool, gaping at me in that way? I want something to drink."

"Oh, indeed, somethink to drink! I forgot, let me see, will you have some nice Canary wine?"

"No, you mean wreteh, get me some strong liquor; some aqua vitæ, and hurry too." Barlow went into the shop, and staying, as the impatient smuggler thought, too long, was rated by him soundly on his return; and before Ralph would taste the brandy, he insisted that Elisha should partake of it, which he was foreed to, with awful grimaces.

"You stayed so damned long, that I thought you were trying to poison the stuff with some of your cursed drugs; you would rather do it, than not," said Ralph; then swallowing the fiery liquor at a draught, added, "rich old stuff, this, and comfortable, too, this cold night. I know it well; it is some I brought in these three years past. As you paid no duties on it, you can save your conscienee, I suppose, in not cheating your customers who buy it, more than two hundred per cent, eh?"

"Reelly," said Elisha, trying to smile, and looking supremely miserable in the attempt, "you is so funny."

"Pshaw!" answered Ralph, "now for the business I have in hand. Here," said he, producing a small bundle, which, being opened, displayed some of the richest silks and laces that ever glistened before Elisha's eyes, "here is only a sample, Barlow, of what I have on board; I must be off, you know, by dawn of day; and as you want some of these things—in short, must have them—the best way for you to see them undisturbed, is, to come to my vessel, examine them at your leisure, and select what you want. We can bundle them up for you, and set you ashore without trouble; no one will be the wiser for it; you can make your profit on them to any tune you please, and I shall be out of sight, long before the sunrise. Come!"

The proposition struck Elisha with anything but favor; he had tricked Ralph too often to feel safe in his presence; and the bare mention of going off to his vessel, among a crew of ruffians, who would put him in the rigging, and flog him, or run him up to the yardarm, in mere sport; frightened him dreadfully. To oppose Ralph openly, would, he knew, end by being carried off by main force; so deception, as usual, came to his aid, and turning to the smuggler, he said, "well, Ralph, I've been a studyin' over it, and spose I must go. But in the fust place, I'd jest like to look out in the old buildin' in the back yard, where I have my old account books, and see what them are goods I got of you last, was invoiced at, so as to be better able to judge of what I want now. Jest you wait here a few minutes," said Elisha, lighting a lantern, "and I'll be right back. Let me give you some more aqua vitæ." Ralph made no objections; Elisha replenished his glass, and went out of the door leading into the yard. He had no sooner reached it, however, than instead of going to the old building, he quickly and noiselessly

threw back a gate that opened on an alley, running by the side of his shop to the street; hurried through it, crossed the main avenue, and in a moment or two, had informed four or five of his opposite neighbors, of the prize in his house; told them to keep guard at the head of the wharf, and in a few moments he would issue forth with Ralph, when he could be easily surrounded, and secured. How Elisha chuckled, as he ran back; all his difficulties, present or anticipated, vanished; he would obtain the reward offered for the smuggler; and as for Castlemain, he might go to the devil his own way as quick as he chose to.

He reëntered, and closed the door, locking it on the inside. Ralph was seated, coolly drinking his brandy, and Elisha little knew, that during his absence, another scene had transpired. No sooner had he, going out, closed the back door, than the one at the foot of the stairs opened, and to Ralph's amazement, Jane Barlow entered.

"Mrs. Barlow!" said he, starting back.

"Hush! do not speak so loud, I am not Mrs. Barlow, and that wretch has gone to betray you." Then, in a few seconds, and in those concentrated words which hate only can supply, she told Ralph the story of her own wrongs, of his, of the will, and of his danger where he was.

"Defend yourself at all hazards, and you have a good chance to escape."

"Shall I take your husband on board my vessel, if I can?"

"Don't call the villain my husband. Yes, take him, throttle him, kill him; but don't let him return to me. Be on your guard, here he comes;" and as Elisha's footstep was heard at the back door, she closed and fastened her own as before.

Ralph was not alarmed, and the sense of danger only

heightened his courage. "I'm a match for a dozen of them," he muttered; "besides those five bull-dogs of mine in the boat."

"Well, now," said Elisha, coming in in high spirits, "you does'nt know how glad I was Ralph, to find it all right, all right. I can take some of them are goods, and we'll be off at wunst."

"Wait a moment; fill my glass again."

"That I will," replied Elisha; "and as its cold as you say, I'll try a little myself. Now then."

"Look you, Barlow, I had nearly forgotten it, did you not, the last time I was ashore, promise me on my next landing, to give me twenty pounds for distribution among my crew?"

"Yes, but reelly, we has'nt got time to attend to it now, I'll do it next time."

"No, you wont," said Ralph, sternly; "now or never. And as I think of it, I want twenty more on top of it for myself, and ten more beyond that for Dick Boltrope, my first lieutenant."

"Oh, heavens! Ralph, don't now!"

"I will, you infernal villain; do you think you are to grow rich all your life, with no fear of the gallows, and not lend a helping hand to us, who do all your work, and brave all the peril! Fifty pounds out of that strong-box, quick, or I'll make you."

The terrified Elisha opened his money chest, and handed Ralph the sum he demanded; thinking, doubtless, he should get it back in a few minutes; and then, opening the street door, they emerged from the shop. As they did so, Ralph drew a cutlass.

"What do you do that for," asked Elisha.

"To cut you in two, if you play me false."

They crossed the street, and at the instant of reaching

the head of the wharf, Elisha looked in vain for his friends; at this instant, Ralph, seizing him with an iron grip, said, "your time has come, villain;" and blew at that moment a shrill whistle. It was answered at once from the boat, and Elisha shrieked with terror. His friends, tired of waiting, and thinking some ill might have befallen him, had gone up the alley, intending to burst into the back door, but found it fastened, just as they heard the whistle, and Elisha's yell of agony.

They hurried back; Ralph heard the sound of coming feet, and pressing on, he stumbled over some object on the wharf, letting go his hold of Barlow, who in an instant ran, and was met by his friends.

There was no time for delay, or struggle in the darkness. Ralph rose to his feet, and flung himself into the boat. Two or three shots from the party on the wharf fell harmless in the water; and were returned without effect by the smugglers, who pulled with main strength for their bark. They soon reached her, sail was made instantly, and when the morning shone, the "Walk to Windward" danced on the waters of ocean; and Rhode Island lay like a faint cloud on the far horizon.

CHAPTER XXIII.

LUCY'S NEW HOME.

A SPACE of three years has been occupied by the scenes of this narrative, and the incidents about to be related occur in the autumn of 1758. At this period, the Boston packet brought to the island one morning a letter, sealed with black, for Mr. Tyrrell, which informed him, by Randolph Brandon, that his cousin Edward was dead. He had bequeathed to him a house which he had owned in Cambridge, besides a small sum of money, which would about suffice to maintain him and his family comfortably, in the frugal manner of their life. The bulk of the property of the deceased was left to his widow, and from her would pass to Matilda Brandon, who would thus become, in her own right, as rich as her husband.

Mr. Tyrrell grieved for the loss of his cousin, and he felt sorrow that his last days should have passed without their meeting; for since Lucy's unfortunate love affair they had had no intercourse, and Mr. Tyrrell had blamed his cousin Edward strongly for the part he had taken in it. But now regretting, when too late, that hasty judgment, he was the more penetrated by such kindness, inasmuch as Lucy and her mother too were also left small sums of money and memorials of friendship.

It was not until Mr. Tyrrell's wife, of more practical turn than himself, spoke, after some days, of the value of the bequests, that his thoughts ceased to dwell solely upon the memory and generosity of his departed friend.

It appeared as if Providence had finally granted to them an opportunity of leaving the island; a design which, frequently in former days, had been the subject of their thoughts and conversation, though, indeed, since Lucy's trouble, it had been seldom referred to. Suffice it to say, that after some talk with his wife, Mr. Tyrrell determined to avail himself of his cousin's bequest, and go to reside in Cambridge, where he judged the literary associations and society of the place would solace the latter portion of his life, and prove, too, a happier home for his daughter.

Nor had he, as he imagined, anything to dread from a renewal of the engagement. He had forbidden it, as Mr. Brandon had, in the most positive terms; the correspondence had long ceased, and he doubted not that Charles, with the fickleness of youth, had already transferred his affections to the wealthy Blanche Estcourt.

But poor Lucy heard the news with unmitigated sorrow. She wept with bitter anguish for the loss of her dear, kind uncle, and called up again all the happy hours she had spent under his hospitable roof, when he had been so delighted with all she did, and more proud of her progress, her appearance, and art of fascinating, than even of his own daughter's. The blessed times she had known when he was so interested and pleased with her regards for Charles, and had looked upon the youthful pair as so likely to be happy in each other, would return no more. She had gradually become calmed in her grief for her own wrongs, was already resigned to her fate—there was no hour of the day but that she thought of Charles, but with scarce a hope of ever being united to him. The life she was leading, too, had its pleasures, not dependent on earthly hopes and joys; these were abandoned.

Her household duties performed, she was ever as a

ministering angel to the sick, and the poor, and the broken in spirit, as with noiseless feet she stole to their bedsides. Her serene, chastened beauty shone in their eyes with soft lustre, like one of the beautiful alabaster lamps, whose radiance ever beams before the shrine in Catholic cathedrals, and which, withdrawn from the glare of day, resembles some watching spirit, visible only in heavenly flame. And with these poor people she had made a communion of interest and intelligence ; she had learned how to draw from them the recital of their lives, their trials, their sufferings, and penetrating the homely garb in which their thoughts were clothed, she found much of the truest beauty in their simple, unaffected stories. "These poor people must miss me," she said, "when I am gone, and it pains me to the heart to think of leaving them, for I have no pleasures to look forward to now as I had of old, when I left the island for the first time."

The news afflicted the cottagers greatly. They talked of it together in little groups, with sorrowful faces, and would say to Lucy, "And shall we never see you no more? won't you come again to see us when we are sick, and give us our doctor's stuff, and read our Bibles to us? Oh, can't you stay a little longer, Miss Lucy, only a little while, and then we'll try and not complain?" Lucy, with tearful eyes, would tell them not to mourn for her, that she would not forget them, but would often send kind messages and tokens of remembrance, and, if she possibly could, would visit them once in a while. She urged them not to forget the words she had spoken of a better land on high, where they should suffer no more, and to love the words of Him whose teachings she had repeated to them. Her own words, she said, had been weak and feeble, but His were able to sustain and comfort them in all their afflictions.

She went from house to house, when the time came to say farewell. All blessed her, and many offered to her little articles of their own making, each charging her at the same time, "to think of poor old so and so sometimes." She visited alone every little nook of the island, endeared to her from childhood by some memory connected with it; the schoolhouse, with its plot of green before the door, where she had watched the children at their sports; the rude little church, where she had listened with such awe to her father in his sacred desk; the graveyard, with its quaint old tombstones and the heaving heaps of earth, beneath which she had been told reposed her little brothers and sisters, there she had sat many a time and wondered, with a child's curiosity, how they could sleep there, and still, as her father said, be in the skies.

She felt that she should miss the reeded ponds from which she had often seen the wild fowl fly; the long glittering beach and the rolling breakers which she loved to watch; and, beyond all, her own dear quiet home, and her sweet little chamber which had been of late a sanctuary, undisturbed by the cares and miseries she had known before.

Miriam, in saying farewell, told Lucy that she might sometimes hear from her; but she did not again refer to her sister or any part of the story she had narrated. Her thoughts dwelt almost exclusively on her vagrant son.

In company with her father and mother, Lucy at length left the island; and, with a heavy heart, she saw it sink from her sight below the waters, as if all that she loved were buried with it beneath the seas. . . . . .

Once again Lucy entered her uncle's house in Boston; but saw him not coming to greet her with that pleasant smile which always lighted his features when they met. It was,

indeed, a house of mourning. She passed into the pretty room where she so often sat with Charles, and sung, and studied; it was the same; and the books, the familiar objects of the apartment, spoke in touching memories to her. But when she looked out into the garden, where words of love were spoken, its desolate aspect struck her to the heart; it truly pictured the wintry stern realities of her own life, stripped of all its summer bloom; the bare trees tossed their branches against the cold gray sky, the paths were strewn with sere leaves, and the fountain that had shot its jet upwards in silvery spray, was mute and frozen.

She was glad to find that her aunt was not left alone in her sorrow. Randolph and Matilda were still present with their infant son. The cousins had both altered since Matilda was a bride; both had had their griefs, and when Randolph spoke to his wife of Lucy's changed looks, and thin pale cheek, attributable but to one cause, they both mourned over it. "She is a martyr," said he, "she looks good and holy, as if she no longer lived for earthly hopes; but, oh, how sad that her happiness should be ruined, her peace sacrificed, by the narrow-minded prejudice of two self-willed men! Were I my cousin Charles, I would brave all my father's anger, for such a woman."

"True," said Matilda, "but you know that Lucy would not disobey her father, much as she loves Charles; do not, I implore you—gladly as I would see him marry her, do not try, by one word, to influence him to break peace with his father; it could do no good, and for my own part, I shall endeavor to console Lucy, but speak as though they were never to meet again." With this purpose, Matilda, without actually saying that there could never be a hope of the union with Charles, endeavored, in conversation with Lucy, to impress her with its great im-

probability. But she assured her, and truly, that Charles dearly loved her, and would seek her the first moment that her father relented in the least. She did not tell her what Charles had really resolved on, and confided to her; namely, his determined purpose, ere long, if Mr. Brandon would not act more justly, to openly set his authority at defiance, and seek to make Lucy his own. Matilda had not encouraged him in his purpose, and was unwilling to tell Lucy, as it would only give her pain, and lead her to refuse his solicitations.

It was settled that Matilda's mother should go with her children to Virginia, and that the family mansion be sold, which Lucy heard with keen anguish, as she had hoped to visit much at a home so dear to her.

Before parting from Matilda, Lucy had another long conversation with her about Charles. She told her to say that she felt towards him the same deep love she had ever felt—it was unconquerable by delays or trials,—but not to seek her unless his father receded from the position he held. If Matilda saw fit, she might further hint to Charles that her own parents' scruples would be easily removed, at any similar demonstration from old Mr. Brandon.

The relatives separated, the household furniture was disposed of, the whole estate sold to strangers, and Lucy, and her father and mother repaired to their new house in Cambridge. Lucy at first was much delighted in arranging the household, and with her mother busied in making their new and pretty furniture display itself to the best advantage; in placing her father's books and papers in the ample, cheerful, sunny room, such a contrast to the solemn darkness of his study on the island, but which she loved best after all. Then came the laying out of the garden, long before the first flower of spring peeped forth, and receiving visits from neighbors, who kindly

called with offerings of help, some more liberal in gifts even than words. Lucy was glad to see the change wrought in her father and mother, the former especially, who now found for the first time in more than twenty-five years the society he loved, of literary character. Books by thousands charmed him in the college library, and he now frequently said that he had lost the best part of his life in obscurity, and that, hard as he had labored, he had done no good, the Gospel seed having fallen upon barren ground. Then Lucy would not allow this to pass without comment, and would sometimes adduce visible proof of her arguments when she received a letter from one of the old cottagers, almost as puzzling as Egyptian hieroglyphics, but once deciphered, found to contain much of sound Christian faith and hope, and almost always bearing reference to some text which the good pastor had preached long long ago, and which he had himself forgotten. With the keen relish of years unsated, Mr. Tyrrell would go back again to the library, after the discussion, and revel among folios in the dusky alcoves, pausing now and then to listen to the sound of the college bells, which he declared the sweetest music he had ever heard; though we know they were not more musical one hundred years ago than they are now, and sounded just as hatefully to students at morning prayer time.

Lucy had little taste for society such as had enchanted her two or three years before, when she first entered upon life in Boston. The company of her father's friends gave her pleasure, yet the enjoyment they afforded her was less than the delight she took in seeing him happy, an ornament of that intellectual society which he appeared so well fitted for, and from which he had been so many years debarred.

CHAPTER XXIV.

EVIL TIDINGS.

Mr. Tyrrell, now absolved from parochial cares, led no longer the recluse life he had spent in the island, and not only sought company to a degree which Lucy thought excessive, but became anxious that she, too, should bear part in it for her own sake.

Gloomy apprehensions began to mingle with her feelings; her father was proud of her; he thought her charms too rare to be hidden from the world, and wished her to shine in society, even to lead it, when such display was absolutely revolting to her.

Without totally discarding his clerical character, Mr. Tyrrell was led away by the fascinations of company in a manner that did not eventually conduce to his own happiness or that of his family. Lucy saw with sorrow that her wish of retirement was displeasing to him, and what troubled her far more, that the utter indifference with which she received the attentions of several men, whom the present world would style "most eligible matches," was not countenanced by him in the manner she expected. She did not live for attention, and wished to receive none; when paid it annoyed her; she would not suffer herself to be pursued by it, and in such cases assumed a hauteur which repelled intrusion and forbade approach. Though her father as yet did not express to her his wishes, his looks indicated his displeasure, and for the first time in her life she thought he judged her un

justly and unkindly. Had she not in everything been to him an affectionate and dutiful daughter? She had given up at his command the one she loved, and could not even this purchase peace, and the wretched privilege of mourning over her sorrows in secret? This was hard; what could it add to her father's happiness to see her surrounded by those whose love and raptures she despised? At length when, in order to be freed from one or two who hoped to win her by perseveranee, Lucy absolutely refused their offers of marriage, and they, like silly fools, could not help talking and being enraged at it, the news reached Mr. Tyrrell's ears.

He then spoke to his daughter, and, after her description of these two lovers, which led him to congratulate himself that he was not to be father-in-law to either, he followed up the conversation by asking if she would never be willing to receive attention, provided a person against whom nothing could be alleged were to present himself. "Never!" said Lucy, looking up to heaven, and speaking most solemnly, "never, while I live!"

"But why not, Lucy?" said Mr. Tyrrell.

"Oh, my father," said she, bursting into tears, "surely you know too well already."

"Lucy, Lucy, I am sorry to find that you still cherish this youthful love. I was in hopes that it would have been quite eradicated, by this time."

"Father, do you judge me thus, and think I would lend my heart so lightly? No, sir, believe me when I love, I love ardently. I did not cast my affections on a fool, or on an ordinary being. I did, I do love Charles Brandon with my whole soul; and never, never, will I renounce that love, until I know that he deserves it no longer; or that he has ceased to cherish me with the same tenderness. Then I may listen to you with some

patience. But now, my dear father, as you love me do not mention this subject again, for it will kill me with grief." Luey buried her face in her hands, and sobbed aloud; and Mr. Tyrrell, for the time abandoning his purpose, smoothed her hair with his palms; then withdrawing silently from the room, left his daughter to her own sad reflections.

But Luey was again harassed, ere long, and in this instance by one for whom she had felt instinctive dread from the first hour she saw him. This was the young Mr. Laseelles, who lived alone in the large house which stood near by; the same person whom Charles had seen come swaggering down to the gateway. Luey had heard with disgust, of her name being toasted at the frequent entertainments which he held in his mansion; when he gathered together a number of boon companions, whose noisy revelry was often carried far into the night. There was nothing in his appearance to fascinate a woman of refined tastes. His countenance bold, haughty, and sensual, looked the proper index of his mind. A red, bloated complexion told too plainly of high living; and his whole appearance would have exactly suited the ideal of a fox hunting, carousing, English country squire.

But his education was not deficient; he was of good family, rich, and generous with his money; generally popular; and was received into the society of fashion as a welcome guest. But to Luey there was something in him utterly repulsive. She could not endure his undisguised looks of admiration across the village church; or when she frequently met him in her walks. In spite of her efforts to shun him, he appeared to cross her path go where she would; and to her dismay, it was not long before he obtained an introduction to her father, and succeeded so well in entering into his good graces, that he

received an invitation to visit at the house. His jovial, careless, happy style of talking, pleased Mr. Tyrrell. Lascelles, who had been thoroughly educated, could also when he chose, converse well on literary topics; while an intimate familiarity with classic authors, sometimes supplied timely information in learning, which the clergyman had forgotten.

Mr. Tyrrell heard also frequently, anecdotes of his liberality and kindness to the poor, all of which were strictly true; for the young man, fond as he was of company and high living, had many redeeming traits; and no one could ever suspect him of a mean action. Nor was he dissolute in his habits; his reputation among women was good; he was even rather a favorite with them, although the report of his wealth may have had much to do with this kind opinion.

Having gained access to the house, Mr. Lascelles was not long in making up his mind, that Lucy Tyrrell, of all the women he had ever seen, was the one, the only one worthy to preside over the destinies of his drawing-rooms, and drive in his carriage. Lascelles fell in love. He did not make himself miserable, because he thought he had only to offer his hand and fortune to any woman, and she would rejoice at the chance of securing him. On the contrary, he gave more dinners than ever before; and was pleased in hearing Lucy's name continually linked with his own, until he began almost to feel that matrimony was to ensue as a natural consequence, without the trouble of courtship.

"To think," said he, "of my being in love; I, who deemed the fortress of my heart impregnable. Well, I do not find it distressing, as I have read in the poets. I am not 'sighing like a furnace;' nor shall I indite 'a woeful ballad made to my mistress' eyebrow.' I'll go and take

a horseback gallop now, and dream over this love of mine. I will propose for Lucy next week."

Lucy's father and mother now had frequent conversations, of which she knew that she was the subject. And she soon had too good reason to fear that they looked upon Mr. Lascelles with a favor that would be likely to encourage his suit. Mr. Tyrrell had said nothing to her since that day when she so solemnly begged him to leave her in peace, and to the solitude of her love. But her mother frequently spoke of Lascelles with praise; and as we have before observed, she had less delicacy of feeling than her husband. She often pained Lucy by the abruptness of her remarks, and her hints that she should not neglect so good a chance of distinction in life; instead, as she expressed it, of "hiding her light under a bushel." Sometimes in her walks, the mother would choose the path which led by the great house, and bid Lucy mark it, and the broad lands around, which then formed a noble estate, though now much curtailed. Only a small portion of the grounds now pertain to the mansion; though it still stands in its grandeur, known in later times than Mr. Lascelles, as the head quarters of the great revolutionary chieftain; and now as the home of a celebrated poet. Mrs. Tyrrell would pause before it, and with a mother's pride, hope that ere long it would be her daughter's. And Lucy would again solemnly repeat, "never! It cannot, shall not be. Never! never! What is his great house to me; what his broad lands! Did I not cast words of scorn in the face of one, who holds an estate to which this is but one of our island freeholds in insignificance, because I thought he had dared to suppose that I could be tempted to sell myself? And this Mr. Lascelles; how is it that he has delighted you and papa? What is he? An idler, a spendthrift, if I mistake not,

fond of his jolly comrades, and a coarse jest over the bottle; proud of his stud of horses and his dogs. What value would a woman be in his eyes, but as something prized for her personal charms alone! She must be one that his friends might come and look upon, to envy; dressed to shine amidst heartless splendors, and doomed to live without one true friend, or one really happy hour." But the mother thought differently; would argue and suggest to no purpose. Lucy had but one answer; "I love another, dearly, devotedly love him; and never will I change until I know that he has changed."

Lucy now would often wish that she could go back to the quiet island, where of late her life was passing so serenely, occupied with kind visitations to the poor old parishioners. She sighed for the sanctity of her familiar room; for the quiet churchyard, that she might sit beside the graves of her unknown brothers and sisters, who had always been to her as angels. She longed once more to stand upon the rocks, decked by the long salt seaweed, which rose and fell with the waters, and watch the sun go down over the billowy waste. She thought of the times when as a child she had looked into the depths of the gorgeous cloud rifts, and fancied she could behold the walk of immortal spirits amidst their splendors; and when she had listened, entranced, to the voice of the sea, which then sung songs of joy to her. Now she heard it still, but its notes were sad; it came to her in moaning accents, as though foreboding ill; as she had heard it moan so wild and strangely on that day when she learned Miriam's story.

Although the correspondence between Charles and herself had long ceased, she now thought it strange that she did not hear of him through Matilda, who had formerly often written to her. She felt assured that Charles

must know she had left the island; he would hear of it from Randolph, and it would be enough to excite his interest in her new life: he could not have forgotten his love for her and turned away to another? This would give Matilda pain to inform her; but no! she could not harbor such a thought; she longed to hear from her cousin, but nothing came, and her sense of propriety forbade her to open the subject.

One day she was in Boston, and happening to pass by her uncle's mansion, it was closed, deserted and gloomy; but in the garden were signs of life, or rather what to her looked like destruction. The garden wall was broken down, the shrubbery neglected, the vase removed from its pedestal, but the fountain still played on with careless glee, sparkling, but heedless witness alike of joys now forever gone, and of present desolation.

Workmen's tools, and piles of lumber strewn about the ground, indicated building, and rough men trod carelessly over the spot so dear to her. She turned away with a sad heart, and gloomy forebodings fell upon her.

Lascelles now redoubled his attentions; he offered himself to her, she repulsed him with cold disdain. She told him plainly of her engaged affections, and even if her heart was not already won, that he could not gain it. He was earnest, but not presumptuous or indelicate in his pursuit; he hoped that time would induce her to change, and regard him more favorably. Lucy reiterated her resolves, and when he continued to repeat his professions, she heard him in silence, then signified by a bow that the conference was ended.

Mr. Lascelles, not daunted, laid the subject of his hopes before Lucy's parents, and as he expected, found that his proposals were favorably received. They both imagined that a little time would produce a change in their daugh-

ter's feelings. Mr. Tyrrell spoke kindly to his distressed child; he said that he was now growing old, that in the course of nature he could not be very long spared, and that it was the great desire of his life to see his Lucy happily married, as he thought she would find a kind, generous, indulgent husband in Mr. Lascelles; one in whom no vices could be proved; but much that was excellent. Lucy heard in agonized sorrow, but shook her head in determined refusal.

At length, Mr. Tyrrell came to her room one morning, and put into her hands a letter.

He had been more kind than Lucy thought; he had written to Mr. Brandon greatly against his own inclinations, asking news of his son, and if he still clung to the memory of his daughter; for although he did not say so in his letter, he had determined, as her happiness was so centered in Charles, to offer no further opposition to their union, provided his father was at all disposed to favor it. In due time came the answer from Mr. Brandon, who, after dilating on the unexpected honor done him, said not one word of his son's affections, but that he was shortly to be married to the woman of his (Mr. Brandon's) choice, Blanche Estcourt; closing with a panegyric on the beauty and virtues of that young lady, and assuring Mr. Tyrrell of his distinguished consideration.

This news Lucy's father considered sufficient, and indignant that his daughter should have wasted her noble love on such a deceiver, as he considered Charles, showed her the letter without hesitation. She read it, said nothing, and when left alone, shed not one tear, but kneeling by her bedside, she folded her hands, and prayed.

CHAPTER XXV.

CHARLES JOINS THE ARMY.

The letter spoken of in the last chapter, as written by Mr. Brandon, and which caused Lucy such intense sorrow, had no truth in it, although the writer did not mean to deceive when he penned it. For Mr. Brandon, having made up his mind that Blanche Estcourt was to be his son's wife, no sooner received Mr. Tyrrell's communication, in which news was asked of Charles, than he determined to extinguish all hopes in Lucy, and wrote accordingly, without informing either his wife or his son of having done so. But he wrote, thinking that his own plan was of easy accomplishment; that in short Charles was to do as he insisted. Blanche should be Mrs. Brandon, and his son her husband, and thus all would be concluded, and the young couple feel much better that older and wiser heads than their own had regulated affairs of matrimony for them, and saved them all trouble. But he was slightly disturbed after dispatching his letter, when, on seeing Lady Mildred, she informed him that the marriage could not take place as soon as they wished; that Blanche had for some time past, made the most serious objections to having the subject named.

"My God, madam!" said Mr. Brandon, astounded, "what do you tell me? These young people are mad, madam, absolutely mad! do they intend to thwart our plans, or try to do so? for of course they will have to yield to us; I repeat it, madam, do they?"

"I have no doubt they do."

"Then, as to that son of mine, if he was a little younger, I would horsewhip him, but as it is, I'll . . . . "

"Stop one moment," said Mildred.

"No, madam, I will not stop; my son, I say, shall marry your daughter; do you wish him to?"

"Certainly; but your son, it seems, has some will of his own; and as you cannot horsewhip him into loving Blanche, perhaps plans of persuasion will fail also."

"Loving, madam! I did not talk of loving; I was thinking of marrying and giving in marriage only; they will love each other afterward; of course they will."

"But," pursued Mildred, without noticing this nonsense, "my daughter, I am sorry to find, has a temper that I never knew of; she has always yielded to me the most absolute submission, but on this point she is firm: resolved not to marry your son Charles even if he were ready at this moment to offer his hand, unless she knew that he devotedly loved her. What are we to do? nothean be effected by passion; for on this subject I have never seen one more obstinately determined than Blanche; and passion will not influence her."

"I will disinherit my son."

"So I have heard you say before; but what good will be produced by doing so?"

"The consequences to him, madam, will be tremendous, beyond aught I can describe; he might well shudder in contemplation of them," said Mr. Brandon, with awful pomposity.

"No doubt he will," said Mildred ironically. "But, Mr. Brandon, do you think that he actually has an aversion for Blanche, or are his feelings those of mere indifference? Let me ask, does he still profess to love Lucy Tyrrell?"

"I do not know," said Mr. Brandon, gloomily; "but I

think all that matter is over, for I wrote a letter to her father in answer to one of his, and told him that his daughter might think no more of my son. I should not be surprised if she really had another love, beeause I remember me now, Mr. Tyrrell said that he did not wish his daughter to eling to false hopes, to the disparagement of those whom it might suit him to admit to his house. Heavens! were she but once married or betrothed, and my son knew of it, all our troubles would vanish."

"Very good," returned Mildred; "now be counselled by me. You ean easily by another letter, find out if Miss Tyrrell has a lover; for you can base as an exeuse for writing, that the marriage with Blanehe is postponed. Mr. Tyrrell will be very likely to speak of his daughter's prospeets."

"Admirable eounsel! I will at onee do so. I will also speak to my son."

"You had better not, until you hear from Lucy's father."

"Very well, madam, I will wait then; and now how is my sweet young friend, Miss Blanehe, eannot I pay my respects to her."

"No, thank you; not to-day. She is ill, quite ill, and cannot bear excitement."

"Not seriously ill, I hope?"

"Oh, no indeed! nothing is really the matter beyond a temporary weakness; but you know a mother's anxiety."

"Then my kindest wishes to her, my dear madam," said Mr. Brandon, and took his leave.

Blanehe was ill, indeed; she was a dying girl, to whom the world was now but a resting-plaee, before she should begin her journey into eternity; all the sehemes, hopes, and plans of her mother, availed nothing now. She did not suffer herself to dwell upon these; she cherished her

love as if for one dead, but no bitterness mingled with her feelings. Thoroughly conscious of her situation, she gave up her last days to religious instruction and thought. She would say to Mildred;—"Mother, I have ever obeyed you in all things; but I know that the hour of my death is near at hand, and I can not, indeed, will not listen to words concerning earthly and temporal triumphs; I think not of these, let me depart in peace."

But the mother could not imagine that she was about to lose her daughter forever; she saw her apparently recovering, in the full bloom of beauty, more radiant, indeed, than she had ever been. Mildred little knew the nature of her disease—consumption; how it cheats hope to the last, and often wears the mask of loveliness almost to the moment of dissolution.

Here we must turn away to pursue our story. Let us not dwell upon a scene of daily decay, but bid to Blanche a long and sad farewell; nor linger beside that form, which, ere many weeks, must be laid down beneath the sod. . . . . .

Notwithstanding the caution which Mildred had given to Mr. Brandon, he was too impatient for the match between his son and Blanche, to keep the matter to himself. He sought out Charles, and at once attacked him upon the subject, in the usual style of coaxing, mingled with threats. To his surprise and extreme displeasure, he found his son less inclined to listen to him patiently, than at any previous period. He treated threats of disinheritance with indifference; refused to prolong the discussion, or give his father the slightest hope that he would ever change; he always closed the interview by saying, that he would never marry Blanche against his own will!

He further plainly told his astonished father that, tired

with his course of harshness and tyranny, he had resolved to break loose from him at once; that he should immediately proceed to the north, and offer his hand again to Lucy Tyrrell, to engage her for a future marriage. First, however, he was resolved to win for himself a name in the service of his king and country, and had made every preparation to join the army in the Canadas—had already secured a lieutenant's commission in the corps of "Royal Americans;" these had joined the British forces, part with Amherst, the commander-in-chief in the region of Lake George, and part with Wolfe at Louisburg.

"Good God, sir!" said Mr. Brandon, smiling incredulously; "and how soon do you intend to put this notable project of yours into execution?"

"Day after to-morrow."

"You shall not go, sir."

"Listen to me, father," said Charles, respectfully, but firmly. "I have my commission in His Majesty's army, my services have been accepted; and, I know you would not wish to see me shamefully resign a post in which I may win distinguished honor."

The old man was touched instantly.

"No, my son," said he, softened, "I would not. You will go, I see; and you must; you will do your duty, and I only wish that His Majesty—God bless his sainted person!—could know that another scion of the house of Brandon was devoted to the royal cause, as the line has been for centuries. But you have not long to stay with us, my son; can you not delay a little while, 'tis a very sudden parting;" and as the father spoke, a tear glistened in his eye.

"True, father, but I must go."

"Who helped you to your commission, without my knowledge?"

"I obtained it, as almost any young man accustomed to arms, as I have been, can obtain it now, when volunteers for the war are sought in all the colonies. The influence of Mr. Robinson, the Speaker of the House of Burgesses, availed me in part, and also that of another, who you would imagine had no influence, Mr. Henry.

"What! the one who plead against the clergy; the seditious Patrick Henry! Indeed, I begin to think better of him; but I had no idea that such a man could have any weight at all."

"A good deal though, you find, my dear father."

"I am astonished. I will ride over to Williamsburg very soon, and thank Speaker Robinson, and I will also extend my compliments to Mr. Henry, for his zeal in your behalf," said the proud aristocrat, in an unusually condescending manner.

"Now, my son, tell me who is going with you? Will you join Wolfe or Amherst?"

"I do not know yet, sir; it will depend upon the 'Royal Americans,' whom we shall meet in Boston. We may march through Massachusetts, by way of Worcester and Springfield, to Albany, and from that town join Amherst, or go to Louisburg by sea. I am for Wolfe, glorious Wolfe! Two of our friends, Montcure and Selden, go with me, and our faithful Bela Tilley insists on accompanying me, as companion and servant."

"Heavens!" said the old gentleman, "Bela going too; well, he will make a figure in the camp. And now, Charles, dear boy, you are about to leave us, to fight for your king, God bless him! I forgive you for intending to leave thus suddenly, without consulting me; but I feel that I have done you wrong lately, and made you unhappy." The father said this in a faltering voice, but recovering, as if ashamed of his weakness, burst out loudly, to conceal his

emotion, "But, damn it, boy, I do love you, and did all for your good!"

The mother had known Charles' intention, but was not aware that he was so soon to leave; in short, he had determined to spare the bitterness of parting, and, stealing away, to leave a note of farewell for his parents; but now, as she learned that in a few hours she should part with him, she made haste to arrange the small wardrobe he required, shedding many a tear, with a mother's anxiety. Charles, scattering quite an amount of small coin among the negroes, charged them to behave well during his absence, and then went to Bela's quarters to say that they must be astir betimes in the morning.

He received for answer, "Wal, I never was be-lated yet, 'cept in comin' into this world, and then 'twant no concern o' mine. Jest yeou git ready right away as nigh as I am, then I calculate there'll be a pair on us," and with this notice of readiness for a long journey, Bela relapsed into silence.

Mr. Brandon, beneath an affectation of unconcern, felt deeply; the truth was, he blamed himself for having driven his son from home by his conduct; but he was secretly pleased with Charles' spirit, and proud that he was to become a soldier. He rode hurriedly over to Williamsburg and bought the most elegant sword he could find in the city, and, always liberal with money, forced on his son more than he really required, although the long, heavy purse, filled to its brim with shining gold, was very acceptable to a young officer.

To Charles' intense regret, Randolph and Matilda had not returned from the north, whither they had been called by the death of her father, and during all this period of their absence, a space of some months, he had never heard

from them ; "But it matters little now," he thought, "we shall meet in Boston."

The morning came, and the watchful Bela knocked at Charles' door at the dawn of day. Breakfast was soon dispatched ; an agonized parting with his mother followed. His father was to go with him as far as Williamsburg, and mounting their horses they emerged from under the great tower just as its bells pealed forth seven. Charles knew not that he never more should hear their sound, but pursuing his journey, he parted with his father at the city, with many a pressure of the hand. All the pompous manner of Mr. Brandon for once was laid aside, as he solemnly invoked God's blessing on his son ; and then he retraced his way back to Kingwood, thoughtful and melancholy.

Charles set off with his two companions and the faithfull Bela Tilley, who, to Mr. Brandon's question, "Think you you can take care of my son, Bela?" had replied, "Somewhat ! and bring him back sound as a Rud Island greenin."

The whole party were in high spirits ; they travelled as rapidly as possible, and reached Boston by the latter part of April, 1759. There they at once found, on application to the proper authorities, that a detachment of "Royal Americans," some twenty in number, would shortly join Wolfe at Louisburg, none going to Lake George to meet Amherst.

The season was pleasant, and the vessel for Louisburg not sailing for ten days, Charles at once resolved to go by the regular packet to the island, burning with impatience to see Lucy once more. Before embarking, he went to the Widow Tyrrell's house, hoping to see his cousins, but in vain. He saw one of the workmen near

the mansion, who told him that the family had moved away to some other part of the town, but where he could not inform him. The packet was upon the point of starting for the island, and thinking he could easily find Mrs. Tyrrell on his return, Charles gave little heed to the matter, his mind being too much occupied with a more important object. He reached the island, and learned to his dismay, that the family had left it some months before. Gone! gone where? To Boston, he was told. Distracted with this intelligence, he turned his face again to the city. A light, baffling wind kept him off the coast until the day before the bark was ready to sail for Cape Breton. He rushed again to the mansion of the Tyrrells, but with no better success than before. Perceiving at length the broken garden wall, he entered the spot so sacred to him, and its appearance made him sad indeed. Near the mansion he finally espied one familiar face, it was old Amy, one of the colored domestics of the establishment in former days.

"The Lord gracious, Master Charles, how com'd you to be here?"

"Tell me, Amy, where are they all? she, she, Lucy, where is she?"

"Oh! dear master, and didn't you know old master 's dead, and mistress is gone off to Virginny with Miss Matilda and Mr. Randolph; and Miss Lucy, I does 'nt know, indeed, where she be."

"Merciful Father!" said Charles, at length, almost beside himself. "Yes, I heard, Amy, of Mr. Tyrrell's death, but Miss Lucy, do you not indeed know? where do you think she is?"

"I does 'nt know," repeated Amy. "I was sick away from here the time old mistress went off, and though I see Miss Lucy once after she come here with her father

and mother, I did 'nt hear her say nothing of where she was going, and I aint never seed her since."

Charles did not speak for many minutes; he was convulsed with grief; at length recovering, he took some gold pieces from his purse, and handed them to the old servant, who was weeping to see him so distressed. "Here, Amy, my good old friend, do not cry; take these and buy yourself something to remember me by. You used to like white; summer is coming, buy yourself a handsome white gown."

"Thank you, master, I will," said Amy, "and I'll keep it to be buried in."

Charles left the spot; he went to his inn, wrote a long but hurried letter of explanation to Randolph, detailing his disappointments; he implored him at once to write to Lucy, and tell her all; then, nearly frantic, he repaired to the vessel, ignorant that she whom he loved was within four short miles; that she, sad and wretched, was never free from thoughts of him, and what she considered his wanton, heartless treachery.

The wind was fair, the vessel sailed fast; the Massachusetts' coast grew fainter to the sight astern, it disappeared from view, and in a few days, just as the fleet was about to sail for Quebec, Charles and his companions joined the forces of General James Wolfe, in the harbor of Louisburg.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A "HERO IN HISTORY."

The war between England and France had now been waged in the American colonies for several years. In the Canadas and north western frontiers, the fortunes of battle had frequently varied, sometimes in favor of the French, but more generally of the English, who were slowly gaining ground in the Gallic possessions.

But deep anxiety for the result of the war was felt in England under Pitt's administration; a feeling shared by that mighty statesman, and which cost him many an hour of sleepless care; a feeling which, extending as far south as Maryland, elicited a martial spirit which was not forgotten, when but a few years later the troubles with the mother country assumed the shape of open revolt. There was now just ground for apprehension, for a chivalrous spirit of union pervaded all ranks of the French, and in the Canadas a spectacle of almost unequalled grandeur was presented—that of two powerful kingdoms arrayed against each other, for the prize of a western empire.

Well might the gallant Wolfe feel the vast weight of the responsibility imposed upon him. With his little army of eight thousand troops, he was about to sail a distance of four hundred miles into a hostile country, and afterwards attack the stronghold of Quebec; even then, before a twentieth part of its stupendous fortifications were reared, regarded as the Gibraltar of America, and

well nigh impregnable. A magnificent enterprise lay before the young general, which, successfully accomplished, would crown him with glory; but again, a single false step might cover him with defeat and disgrace.

Just at this period the numerous victories of the British by sea and land had kindled in Wolfe the loftiest desires of emulation, and it was the measure of his ambition to render his own name great, and the campaign the most illustrious in the annals of his country.

In the very prime of life, Wolfe was marked by his person, his valor, his genius, as the very beau ideal of a chivalrous hero. Owing nothing to nobility of blood, he had already acquired a European reputation as a soldier, and won the favor of his superiors solely by merit. He had fought with honor to himself on the fields of Fontenoy and Dettingen, and the humanity of his nature was made memorable to the Highlanders, during the carnage of Culloden. He was but twenty-two years of age, when he was promoted to a Lieutenant-colonelcy, and scarce ten years older when entrusted with the command of the army in the St. Lawrence.

A strict disciplinarian, he exacted implicit obedience, yet the severity of military rule was tempered by kindness of disposition; his battalions were drilled to the highest point of efficiency, while his enthusiasm and devoted bravery found a response in the breast of his meanest soldier.

Nor was he merely distinguished as a military chieftain; a love of literature beguiled his leisure hours; his letters sparkle with animated descriptions of man and nature; and his imagination pictured scenes of future domestic bliss in England, where his widowed mother, with all her earthly hopes centered in him, watched for his triumphant return.

There is a monument in Quebec bearing the name of Wolfe, but nature's grand memorial, the Heights of Abraham, stands ever consecrated to his fame. War may shatter the bristling bastions of the citadel, or time may eventually leave not one stone upon another; but, as long as the St. Lawrence sweeps by the adamantine base of Cape Diamond, the memory of the hero will not be forgotten by mankind.

When Charles Brandon presented his credentials and letters of introduction to Wolfe, he was struck with his soldierly bearing, his keen look of command, and the winning sweetness of his address; he felt, in an instant, that he could follow such a leader to the death.

"I am glad you have come among us, sir," said the General, "we want men. In an hour I shall be at leisure. I shall put you through the drill, to see what you are made of, and what you know. We sail shortly. Jones," here turning to an aid-de-camp, "will show you to your quarters. Good morning, sir;" and with this Wolfe bowed, and the interview ended.

"Come on, sir," said Jones to Charles. "I am glad to hear we are to sail soon; it's cursed dull here, and I long for a little life. You are accustomed to arms, I suppose?"

"Yes; I have commanded a company in Virginia, and hope to please your general."

"You will easily do so, if you only try to deserve his favor. Wolfe is strict, but he has an eagle eye for merit; he will pardon faults, but has no patience with carelessness."

Wolfe, as good as his word, sent for Charles at the proper time, and placing a musket in his hands exercised him for half an hour closely and critically.

"Very good, sir," he said, at length, "that will do; I

see I was not wrong in my first impression of you. A little gunpowder will soon make you a soldier. You are at liberty now, sir, until four o'clock; at that hour I dine, and you will join me," he added, kindly.

Charles, greatly relieved, strolled about the camp until it was time to make his toilet, joining his general and one or two other officers at the hour named.

"You are punctual, Mr. Brandon, I see. Right, right sir, always mind the minutes."

They sat down to dinner, and little was said about war or the expedition before them. On the contrary Wolfe banished these from the gayety of the feast; he led the conversation to topics of literature, society, and the fine arts, enlivened it with piquant anecdotes, recollections of European celebrities, and with happy tact saw that each guest was drawn out in turn, and made to contribute to the entertainment of the rest. One very old colonel, a veteran in the service—dry as a chip—who knew nothing but his profession, was indulged for the thousandth time with his recital of Marlborough's victory at Malplaquet, at which the colonel had fought fifty years before, and had bored the mess table with it ever since. And another, a younger major, who never having read a book in his life, had been forced to look, during a literary disquisition, as if he understood it all, though he was in terror lest he should be mischievously questioned by Wolfe, now had a chance of displaying also; when he told of the sport he had the day before with his gun, and being a capital shot had brought down with one barrel the brace of wild fowl smoking on the table before him. Charles Brandon's finished education and good manners, soon won a place for him in the regards of those present, even with the old colonel, who at first had looked upon him with the most profound indifference. Wolfe was perfectly familiar with the state

of the country and its history; and the subject of Braddock's defeat, being mentioned, he asked Charles if he had ever seen Colonel Washington. Charles replied, that he knew Washington well.

"Ah!" said Wolfe, "he is a great and rising soldier. I should like to meet him and fight by his side. It is shameful that merit, such as his, should now be neglected by those in authority, especially since his brilliant triumphs at Fort Duquesne, now called Pittsburgh, in honor of our prime minister. I hope to meet him some day, and that too before we conquer all the Canadas. He was, I understand, in the thickest of the fight under Braddock, and yet marvellously escaped unhurt."

"Yes sir, he was," said Charles; "and one old Indian, who seldom missed his aim, reports having had seventeen direct fires at him with his rifle, without being able to hit him."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the old colonel, "that is astonishing; if he had been at Malplaquet, he would have been killed. Did I ever tell you, General Wolfe, how Marlborough and Prince Eugene, just as the Pretender made his last charge at the head of the French cavalry, said" . . . . . .

"Now, colonel," Wolfe gaily interrupted, anxious to avoid an endless story, for he caught the despairing look of the sporting major; "don't let us fight Malplaquet over again. You beat the French there, roundly; this time reserve your forces for them until we reach Quebec, then give it to them. Now, fill your glass, and you too, major, and Mr. Brandon; let us drink to the health of the gallant Colonel Washington."

CHAPTER XXVII.

QUEBEC.

It was June, 1759, and the British army, consisting of about eight thousand men, including two battalions of "Royal Americans," set sail from Louisburg; the fleet which bore them, comprising twenty-two ships of the line, and about as many smaller vessels, being commanded by Admiral Saunders.

Many distinguished naval and military officers, besides Wolfe, made part of the force. In command of one of the frigates was John Jervis, then but twenty-five years of age, celebrated afterwards as Earl of St. Vincent, one of the greatest of England's naval heroes, second probably only to Lord Nelson. There was Cook, of daring genius, thirsting now for renown which he was destined subsequently to gain as the persevering navigator; like another Columbus, to sail unknown oceans, and tell of romantic islands never before visited by the pale faced stranger. Among the army officers was the gallant Richard Montgomery, whose glory is inseparably linked with Quebec, for winning his early laurels at its capture; he fell before its walls sixteen years later, when having joined the American cause, he attacked the fortress in connection with the traitor Benedict Arnold. The three distinguished brigadiers, the immediate seconds of Wolfe, were Murray, Townshend, and Monckton, severally sons of nobles; the last named, in after years, the noble hearted and beloved Governor of New York. Here

figured also Lieutenant Colonel Howe, celebrated in revolutionary annals, and chief in command of the British forces at the evacuation of Boston.

As the fleet sailed up the magnificent St. Lawrence, its waters reflecting the snowy sails of fifty ships of war, never could its banks have beheld a spectacle of more imposing grandeur. The mighty armament moved on; the towering bulwark swarming with warriors, their faces lighted with stern joy at the coming strife, and the cannon ready to hurl their iron showers on the foe. On the 26th of June, the great fleet came to anchor at the Island of Orleans, before the devoted Quebec.

The sun shone brilliantly on the dark giant forms of the men-of-war; boats were plying between them, and strains of martial music rose from bands upon their decks; the light, flashed back from the sentry's muskets, and the rich uniforms of the officers; tinged by the clouds, it spread varied glories on the broad bosom of the river; it bathed the wooded heights with colors like those of the autumnal foliage; it filled the streets of the city, lying in fancied security beneath the inaccessible cliff; it reste on the bastions of Cape Diamond, crested by the citade and the royal ensign of France, which over that grand theatre of battle waved defiance to the invader.

Quebec, now rendered almost impregnable by the science of engineers, is formidable by nature, as surely marked for the site of a great fortress as Gibraltar or the Moro Castle.

The river which runs before it forms a wide basin, which, four hundred miles from the Atlantic, might float the combined navies of the world. At the north and east sides of the rock on which the batteries are mounted, the River St. Charles mingles with the St. Lawrence, and thus the Heights assume the shape of a peninsula. The British

army at onee disembarked, and eneamped on the Island of Orleans, opposite to the eity. The greater part of the Freneh forces under eommand of Montealm, were posted on the Heights on the north bank of the stream, their eneampment stretehing along the shores of Beauport to the River Montmorenei, which, nine miles below the eity, "after fretting itself a whirlpool route, and leaping for miles down the steps of a roeky bed, rushes with velocity toward the ledge, over which, falling two hundred and fifty feet, it pours its fleeey cataract into the ehasm."*

In a short time, Point de Levi, opposite to the eity, was seized by Monekton, and a battery erected there opened fire upon the city; many of its houses in the lower town were injured and set in flames, but the lofty bastions sustained no damage. Meanwhile, the fleet was twiee menaeed with destruction; fireships were floated down the river by the Freneh, but with eool hardihood, the sailors, grappling with them, towed them out of the reaeh of the men-of-war, then left them to burn and illumine, with fearful sublimity, the eamps, the shipping, and the fortress. On the 9th of July, Wolfe ehanged his eamp to a position near Montealm's, on the same heights, and only separated from him by the River Montmorenci.

But it seemed to be impossible to approaeh the French general; the torrent between the two armies forbade boats to eross, nor could it be forded; eeaseless reeonnoitering availed nothing, for every point along the river was defended by eannon, and watehed by the devoted soldiers of Franee. Prepared at all points, Montealm was content to act on the defensive; he knew that if the summer went by, the ships eould not remain late into the autumn, the early rigors of the climate would compel

* Bancroft.

them to return to Louisburg, and the expedition result in utter failure.

The British commander knew this too, and it made him doubly anxious to win the day by some sudden and desperate conflict. His anxiety was shared by the whole army, burning to redeem their long repose; it was felt by Charles himself to the last degree, for his mind was ill at ease, and he looked forward impatiently to action. His thoughts were gloomy, for he was far from all his friends, uncertain of the fate of his beloved Lucy, and uncheered by a word of intelligence from home. The scene which otherwise could not have failed to please him, was now unheeded; the martial appearance of the camp, the deep recesses of the wood which bounded it, the brawling river, the cataract which foamed down the abyss, in the bright moonlight nights, arrayed with a beauty far beyond the painter's art, ceased to charm.

At length, Wolfe, longing for an opportunity of converting the dullness of inaction into open battle, had submitted to his faithful brigadiers three plans of attack, too desperate to receive their approbation, and they had been abandoned. But before these were projected, another blow had been attempted without success.

According to the plan of attack, the bed of the Montmorenci was to be crossed at that part of it which lies between the St. Lawrence and the foot of the water-fall, where a ledge of rocks, about a thousand feet in extent, permits a passage when the tide is low. Monckton's forces were to cross from Point de Levi, and join the regiments on the north bank of the river, and thus combined, scale the Heights and attack the French. The signal was given, and the troops came over in boats, but before these touched the shore, they struck upon some hidden rocks in the stream, and were at once thrown into confusion.

While endeavoring to clear their boats, Wolfe's impetuosity could brook no delay, and with thirteen companies of the British Grenadiers, and about two hundred men from the second battalion of "Royal Americans," he judged he could successfully combat the enemy. But observing some stir in the French camp, he ordered his troops to form upon the beach, and wait until joined by the other regiments, as he was resolved, if possible, to bring the foe to a general engagement. But the soldiers who had longed so impatiently for action, now, regardless of danger, could not be restrained, and dashing forward with wild huzzas, instantly rushed upon the French entrenchments. Brandon, at the head of his company, carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment, stayed not for orders, but cheering on his men, cried, "Forward, my brave boys." But the assault was met by such a steady and murderous fire, that in a moment he saw his men dropping around him like autumn leaves; it was vain to withstand such an iron shower from an enemy taking cool, deliberate aim in safety behind their defence, and the word was reluctantly given to retreat to a redoubt which had been abandoned by the enemy at the commencement of the attack. Here the troops were still exposed to a raking fire; and while the cannon pealed forth their thunders, a terrific storm, which had been gathering for some hours, burst in fury, and the roar of ordnance was answered by the artillery of heaven. Wolfe now made haste to withdraw his troops, sending those of Monckton's again over the river, and retired to his camp after this desperate enterprise, with the loss of five hundred men. The impetuosity of the troops was censured in general orders, and Charles Brandon, with other officers, received a sharp private reprimand for rash conduct.

General Murray was now sent with a detachment of

twelve hundred men far above the city, to endeavor, if possible, to open a communication with Amherst, the commander-in-chief in the region of Lake Champlain; and though he did not succeed in doing so, the army was cheered by the intelligence learnt from a party of French prisoners, that Crown Point, and Ticonderoga, had been abandoned by the enemy, and that Fort Niagara had surrendered. These triumphs amply redeemed the disgrace of the previous year, caused by the pusillanimous Abererombie.

Amherst was now daily looked for to combine with the army before Quebec; but he came not, and Wolfe fell sick in body and soul. Wasted with fever, feeling his strength leaving him; the prospect of dying without accomplishing the grand object of his hopes, preyed upon his spirit, and tortured him with the gloomiest forebodings.

"It is not death that I fear," he said to Charles Brandon, on one occasion, when he had called to pay his respects to his general; "I have often braved it before. Several times have I felt that I should not survive this campaign; but the misery of dying unsuccessful, or abandoning the expedition, is more than I can bear; knowing the mighty responsibility that devolves upon me, and how anxiously the ministry and people of England look for glad tidings."

But determined that neither disappointment nor delay, nor obstacles of the most formidable nature, should overcome his dauntless spirit; once more Wolfe arose, and once again chose to decide upon desperate measures; which his genius taught him would alone serve in his emergency. He broke up his camp on the Heights of Montmorenci; and leaving only a sufficiency of troops to hold the posts on the Island of Orleans, and on the

southern bank of the St. Lawrence, he marched his army from Point Levi on the 6th of September; and then, placing his troops in transports, landed them at a spot some miles above the city. The fleet following in a day or two, manœuvered with a view to deceive the enemy. But Montcalm was a thorough adept in every stratagem of war, and he despatched fifteen hundred men from the main camp, to a point several miles higher up the river, to watch the motions of the English, and prevent any attempt upon the north bank. Cook and other officers were also employed in the work of feints; and were occupied with sounding along the shores of Beauport, and anchoring buoys in the stream.

Meanwhile Wolfe, by indefatigable reconnoitering, discovered, about three miles above Quebec, a spot which he deemed available for landing. The river at this point curving, sweeps a narrow ledge or beach, between it and the cliff; and the general's eagle vision soon descried a narrow path winding up a precipitous height. There he determined that his army should land, and scale the bank in the night.

It was a bold plan, such as he alone could have the hardihood to persist in, and which would never have received the sanction of the more cautious Amherst, had he been present. Every thing depended on secrecy, concert in action, and the suddenness of the blow.

The French were ever on the alert, the magic power of union held them all; a devoted spirit of patriotism was kindled alike in the noble, and the peasant; like the old chivalrous fire that burned in every heart, and lighted every face, when in ancient days the call to battle rang, and "the great and holy standard of France," the "oriflamme," was unfurled, and borne before its warrior kings.

Thus the two armies rested; both watching for the slightest chance of success. The French, full of hope, of joy, masters of a powerful stronghold; well posted, well supplied; confident in their leader, whose abilities were a fair match for his great antagonist; and the English, at every disadvantage; at a late season; but thoroughly disciplined, calm, brave, and patient; waiting but the word from the general they adored, to rush to battle and to victory. . . . . .

Our friend, Bela Tilley, with his large share of curiosity, took a keen interest in every thing, as may be readily imagined. His tall, lank figure, and prying, inquisitive face, made him a conspicuous mark, and it was impossible to give him the slightest military look. He was a jack-of-all-trades, and from his obliging disposition, he became a favorite with the troops; ready as he always was, to lend a helping hand to any work or sport.

"Well, Bela," said Charles to him one day, "how do you like this life?"

"Wal, puty much, puty much; it's a tolerable pattern, only wish though they'd git to work; I'd like to shoot an Ingin."

"Why so, Bela?"

"Wal, I was a thinking tother night I mought like to make some money by it. Yer see, arter I'd fout him, I'd kinder like to take him captive; an guess ef I showed him up reound about, folks 'ud be glad to pay a shillin' a piece to see him in his Ingin dress. I'd make him dance, an sing, an yell out onexpected with his warwhoop; an then, likely, they'd pay another shillin' to hear him over again, in case they war'nt skeered right dead the fust time by his hollerin'. What du yer think on't?"

"An ingenious plan, truly, and one that will be sure

to succeed, if you can only take him alive. But Indians are very slippery fellows, and hard to catch, Bela."

"Know they be. Guess I'll doze him with several shot fust, an then nooze him. Calculate neow, ef I got him deown to Rud Island, he'd make my fortin right eout. Show him up a spell, an then trade him off for a small farm, I will. Dun know how 'tis," pursued Bela, meditatively, "never took a likin' to Ingins, no how; fust time I ever see 'em. Can't go 'em. Some things I du a-bom-i-nate; an among 'em is snakes, skeeters, niggers, an Ingins." Changing the subject of his remarks snddenly: "Gineral Wolfe aint to be caught nappin'; tell yer what, he's a kind er snorter. 'Twant long back when I heered he was sick, and could'nt more nor look at his vittles; when the fust thing I knowed on, I seed hisself a canterin aleong like mad, in all sorts er places.

"Tall horse, that o' yourn, gineral," ses I.

"'Who the devil are yon?' ses he."

"'Bela Tilley,' ses I, 'friend of a friend o' yourn, Mr. Brandon.'"

"'What are you doin' here?' ses he."

"'Jest a practisn with my rifle,' ses I. 'I'll shoot Gineral Mountcalam for you, gineral,' ses I, 'ef you'll only pint him out.' With that he did'nt say nothin', only kinder snickered, and chucked me this yer gould piece," said Bela, producing the coin. "Calculate tho' he feels kinder ris about Mountcalam."

"Montcalm! Montcalm! how often have I told you how to pronounce the French general's name."

"Wall, neow, Mister Charles, t'aint no use in yer tellin' me over agin, seein' I never could speak my own Rud Island extra-ordinary correct nohow, 'and it doos actooally make me ex-pec-to-rate every time I try to say the name ev one ev them ere French mounseers."

"No matter, then, we attack the French to-night; take care of yourself, and keep out of harm's way. If I am killed, you must find your way back to Virginia, and tell them how I fell."

Bela promised, and as he walked off, revolving the chances of his master's fate, he wiped away a few honest tears from his lank cheeks, with the cuff of his coat sleeve.

The night of the 12th of September, 1759, was fixed for the attack. The day and evening were actively spent in making ready for the important move, and every precaution was taken to keep from the enemy the slightest intimation of the design. The night was still and clear; the stars studded the heavens in unclouded glory, and were reflected on the bosom of the tranquil river. Wolfe went from ship to ship, animating and cheering the troops for the last time, and found them to a man longing for distinction, and imbued with the same spirit which swayed the whole being of their general. It was an hour past midnight when the troops embarked in flat-bottomed boats, floated down with the current of the river. Absolute silence, under pain of death, was imposed upon the men. They were to keep near the north shore, for fear of passing the little cove in the darkness, but there was imminent danger of being descried by the enemy's sentinels; in truth one boat was challenged, but a Scotch officer, in command of it, with admirable presence of mind, at once answered, in French, that they were friends on the watch for the movements of the English, and the sentry's suspicions were disarmed.

As Wolfe floated down in his boat, Charles Brandon, who had been so honored as to be chosen of his party, was cheered, for the last time, with some of that delightful conversation which made his commander so charming, as with whispered voice, he spoke of Europe, its pleasures,

and the honors awaiting their success. The serene beauty of the night appeared to draw his thoughts towards poetry, when, asking if they had read the "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," which the genius of Gray had just given to the world, he repeated, with melting pathos, the greater part of it, reciting more than once, with emphasis, the stanza—

> "Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
> Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
> Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
> Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre."

and again—

> "For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
> This pleasing, anxious being e'er resigned,
> Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
> Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?"

He closed with a short panegyric on the Elegy, saying, "Now, gentlemen, I would rather be the author of that poem than take Quebec."

The profound silence which followed, proved how completely his officers were penetrated by the exquisite verse, what recollections of home it called up to some who should know earthly homes no more, and who were now taking their "longing, lingering look," with eyes which to-morrow's sun should see struck blind in death on the battle field; and the stillness was unbroken until the barge grated upon the destined beach.

Wolfe and his troops left the boats, and at once began to climb the heights by the narrow pass. Some parties had drifted in the darkness a little below the proper landing-place, and these, without a footpath to mark their way, rose from crag to crag, and, clinging to the bushes which grew

thick upon the steep, dragged their comrades below them to their own position, and thus, aiding each other, gained the summit without the loss of a man. The pickets posted upon the heights were driven in, and, after a slight skirmish, a four gun battery, to the left of the English army, was taken possession of by Lieutenant-colonel Howe. Flushed with their success, the troops emerged from their forests; the roads to Quebec were already their own, and when the morning dawned, in front of the devoted city stood Wolfe and his irresistible battalions, drawn out in array of war on the Plains of Abraham.

The surprise of the French was great indeed when they first learnt of this extraordinary achievement. "Impossible!" said Montcalm, "it cannot be the English army, 'tis but some party of marauders, come to burn houses and run away." But a second message came with evil tidings and more authentic information. "Then we must at once give battle," said the intrepid general, "and destroy them at a blow."

Never had the inhabitants of any city been more completely betrayed by a confidence in safety than those of Quebec; they had looked upon the expedition as well nigh abandoned. The night before there had been joy in the city; the feast was spread, and the wine-cup sparkled; the dance was enjoyed by lovely women, and the wearied lay down to happy slumbers. Then stealthily the foe came on, and the dreamers started from their pillows in terror, as the bugle call rang harsh on their ears, followed by the dread summons, "To arms! to arms!"

The sun arose to illume with splendor a scene always grand by nature, and now rendered still more imposing by the circumstances of the hour. Far below the Heights, wound the majestic St. Lawrence, bearing upon its sur-

face the enormous fleet which more than two months before had cast anchor in its waters, and which now lay silent, but prepared to cover the troops in case of a retreat. To the east, beyond the plain appeared the heavy ramparts of the citadel, the prize at last in sight, and not now inaccessible; while to the far horizon, the hills and waters, checkered by the French hamlets and by distant sail, glistened in the morning light. No thought of retreat, no sense of danger, was apprehended by that gallant little army, which had toiled at night, while others slept; they felt a deep thrill of joy, and a wild burst of ardor pealed from their ranks as the rays of the sun rose on their front, and here fell on the scarlet uniforms of the grenadiers, and again on the tossing plumes and rich tartans of the Scotch Highlanders, while the inspiring martial music of the bands sounded triumphant, as though victory was already won.

The English army, about five thousand strong, was thus drawn out in battle array: On the left, Brigadier General Townshend, with Amherst's regiment, to counteract a movement of Montcalm's, who endeavored to flank the British, and drive them to the river. These light infantry troops were shortly joined by the "Royal Americans," among whom Charles Brandon found himself, well pleased with the spirit of his men, anticipating a glorious contest. The fiery Murray occupied the centre, where stood the Highlanders. Monckton rested on the right, with the Louisburg grenadiers, and immediately in his rear was a reserve of Webb's. Wolfe, at the commencement of the action, occupied a position near the centre.

Opposed to this force, the French army stretched in a long line, and on its right were assembled the citizens of Quebec, ready to shed their blood in defence of their

beloved city, and these were joined by a small force of Indian allies.

A cannonade was opened, and kept up for some time on both sides with little effect, when Montcalm decided on closer action. His troops, though equal in numbers to the enemy, were vastly inferior in point of discipline. About eleven o'clock, the French rushed to the combat; their fire was scattering and ineffective; they had difficulties of ground to contend with, and the solid English columns waiting by Wolfe's order until their antagonists were within forty yards, poured in a deadly fire which instantly threw them into confusion. In vain their heroic leader flew from rank to rank, animating his soldiers; they began to give way, when Wolfe, seizing the fortunate moment, placed himself at the head of the Louisburg Grenadiers, charged with terrible fury, and in a moment the enemy broke, they retreated. Wolfe, twice wounded, still pressed on; a third bullet struck him in the chest; he felt that his wound was mortal.

"Let not my gallant fellows see me fall," he said to an officer by him; "support me."

He was carried to the rear; his life-blood oozed away, his brain reeled, he was roused for an instant from his stupor by the exclamation, "They run!" "Who run?" he feebly asked. "The French!" was the answer. "Then, thank God, I die happy," murmured the hero, and all that was mortal of James Wolfe lay stretched upon the plain.

The victorious troops rushed on; Charles Brandon sword in hand ignorant of the death of his general, was charging at the head of his company, when he was seen to stagger and fall; he was shot down dreadfully wounded, the tide of battle rolled over him, the day was won. On the 17th of September, four days after the engage-

ment, the brilliant Montcalm meanwhile dying of his wounds, and spared the misery of beholding the surrender of Quebec, the proud standard of France floated for the last time from the citadel, and the morrow's sun rose on a western empire, whose ensign was the banner of St. George.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A DOUBLE CAPTURE.

Ever since the "Paper Tiger" had so unwillingly paid out five hundred and fifty pounds, he had been a most miserable animal. He likened himself unto that man who went down to Jericho and fell among thieves, and he sighed in vain for some good Samaritan. He was disappointed in all his calculations. He had determined not to give Mildred the will, unless she repaid him, but now he was not allowed to approach her. As for the smuggler, he had thought five minutes of scuffle would suffice to settle him for this world, and the fifty pounds would be restored and quadrupled by the reward offered for him; but he had escaped, and Elisha was sick at heart. It was evident that the world had not gone "all right" with Mr. Barlow; that pleasant smirk of self-satisfaction, and slick tip-toe tread which bore him around so softly were gone; his forehead was wrinkled with anxiety; his snuffing of the air was more frequent; and the snapping of his nails between his teeth more violent than ever before. The sense of large pecuniary loss preyed upon his avaricious nature, and to add to his distress several small traders who owed him sums of money and goods gave him the slip, and disappeared at the very moment when he was about to pounce upon them and congratulate himself for his vigilant foresight.

Turn where he would, trouble seemed to menace him; there was Mildred with his five hundred pounds, and to regain them he could have murdered her with

good will; but at that thought the stern figure of Mr. Castlemain came up in his imagination, rope in hand, either to belabor him soundly, or put a noose around his neck, he could scarce tell which. Conversations with Castlemain had made him quake; indeed that gentleman had informed him that he was more than suspected of dealing with smugglers, and that any proof of his having done so would be followed by summary punishment. Elisha only wriggled out of the lawyer's cross-examination by numberless lies, so adroit that they almost deceived even the questioner himself. If the trader thought of Ralph and his gang, he shuddered at the idea of falling into their hands. Even in his dreams, his money bags appeared to be capering for joy at having escaped the clutches of such a mean rascal; large cargoes of rum and sugar melted away and left him nothing but empty hogsheads; while even his niggers seemed to have broken the bondage of the slave-ship, and were careering about in mid ocean, bound on pleasure voyages and not for the Brazils. His relations at home, too, with Mrs. Barlow, were no longer pleasant; she dropped hints that made his hair stand on end, and his meal times were hours of torture. "Drat that are lawyer, and Janey, and Missis Estcourt; drat everythink and everybody," soliloquized Elisha; "to think now of losing my character in this 'ere way, it's been worth at least two hundred pound to me since I've been here. Reckon, next think, they'll take away the collection plate from me on Sundays!"

At last the trader smiled again, his brow relaxed, a plan had struck him, and he was as cheerful as ever. His neighbor Tilley saw and spoke of the change. "Wal," said Elisha, "at first I did feel rather bothered at them men runnin off and not payin' me, but after all I've made up my mind not to worry at it for myself, but only for them, it's

their loss, the loss of their souls, for if there is any think I do find comfortin', its honesty. Honesty, neighbor Tilley, always bear that in mind." "Sound doctrine," said neighbor Tilley. But very shortly after this conversation, neighbor Tilley himself had reason to experience the worth of Elisha's honesty, and the exposure his fraud met with was precipitated by the redoubtable Mrs. Morpus.

We have already spoken of the wholesome terror with which that lady had inspired Elisha; if he beheld afar off the corpulent umbrella, or the breezes ever so lightly stirred the plumes of the Hectorian helmet, and he thought he should meet her, the valiant trader prepared for a scamper. Why? He had once cheated her out of a sixpence, and in consequence her wrath against him burned unceasing.

But to the business transaction in which Barlow bungled. A man named Cranston owed him some money, and was rather pressed for means. Cranston had often had dealings with neighbor Tilley and held notes of his, all of which Tilley had paid, excepting only a small balance; but he had neglected to take away these notes as he cashed them.

The "Paper Tiger," always prowling about, found out that Cranston still held these notes, and as he was not very likely to pay what he owed him shortly, he determined to make his money in another way, if he could. He accordingly called upon neighbor Tilley, with all his plans arranged for action. His smile was more bland than usual.

"Neighbor Tilley, I jest called to ask if you would'nt as lief pay them are notes you owes Cranston, to me as to him."

"Yes, Mr. Barlow, but I do not owe the money for the notes."

"Oh yes, you does, sir. Come now, honesty, neighbor Tilley; and the notes is all in my hands; and if you does'nt pay 'em, I shall have to sell your house, onpleasant as that would be to me."

Tilley was alarmed. He knew that he had paid nearly all that was due on the notes, but he did not hold them to show that he had; and he was confounded that Cranston should have passed them over to Barlow.

The Tiger, seeing that Tilley was frightened, said to him, "I will come day after tomorrow, and we will talk thinks over with your wife. Lem, me see, day after tomorrow's Sunday; we can fix it all right afore church time. I allers likes to git these ere little matters off my mind, and go clean-handed into the sanctyerry."

Neighbor Tilley went home very desponding; but fortunately, his wife possessed that common sense which he wanted; and was, moreover, a sister of Mrs. Morpus.

"Have you taxed Cranston with his conduct, husband?"

"No, honey, he's gone out of town."

"He is an honest man, I know; and we will learn the truth when he comes back to-morrow. Leave matters to me and my sister."

Mrs. Morpus and Mrs. Tilley accordingly waited on Cranston, when he returned. He was astounded at Elisha's villainy. He showed the notes, and handed them to Mrs. Morpus.

"I will go this moment, and expose him," he said.

"Stop," said Mrs. Morpus, thumping the floor violently, with the fat umbrella; "come to my sister's house on Sunday morning. We will then expose him thoroughly."

Sunday morning came; and Elisha, in high spirits, tripped along with the vivacity of a young kitten, to the appointed meeting. That pleasant smile mantled his fea-

tures, as he thought that in an hour's time, this little business matter would be "all right," and he would be entering the church to give thanks. He had even resolved to contribute a double portion to the collection that day; he would give five shillings.

He entered the house, and Mrs. Tilley received him. In a few amiable words he informed her that he had the notes of her husband, and had "jest called to have that little matter fixed up." Mrs. Tilley steadily regarded him:

"And you say you have those notes in your possession?"

"Yes, ma'am, I has them are notes."

At this moment a shadow darkened the threshold, and Elisha, to his terror, beheld Mrs. Morpus. The plumed crest waved fiercely, and the green umbrella was wielded like the baton of a field marshal.

"Elisha Barlow," said she, bringing the weapon down with a tremendous thump near his toes, "do not you dare go to the house of God to-day. I have been sitting on my bel-cony, to watch for your coming here, knowing for what your errand was des-tined. See these notes in my possession, you wretched hypocrite."

The Paper Tiger looked, and turned pale; he trembled. At this moment there was a loud knock at the front door.

"Mother," called out a little girl, "here's father come, and neighbor Cranston."

"Show them up," thundered Mrs. Morpus.

"Don't, ah don't let them come up here," cried Elisha, in wild distress.

"They shall come, sir, and you shall confront them with a lie in your mouth."

Elisha darted for the back window; it overlooked the garden, and was but a few feet from the ground. The

hooked beak of the green umbrella was stretched out to catch him by the coat collar; but Mrs. Morpus' alacrity could not equal his; he threw himself out, kicked up a dust as he alighted, ran over the pumpkin patch, dashed across the inclosure, scaled the fence, and was out of sight in a twinkling; his appearance as he scampered off, being very much like that of a felonious tomcat, hurriedly chased from neighbor Tilley's premises.

Elisha did not go to church that day, and saved five shillings. Mrs. Morpus strode up the middle aisle of Trinity with the air of a conqueror. And after service, Mr. Castlemain enjoyed a hearty laugh as she narrated the adventure.

Barlow now soon decided that he must quit Newport. He could play the hypocrite no longer. Having matured his plan, therefore, "studied over it," as he would express it, he thought fit to disclose it to Mrs. Barlow. She listened with delight, as she anticipated another story to relate to Castlemain; who, considering her now regularly in the service of the government, paid her for information. He did not as yet deem Elisha's guilt so thoroughly established, as to warrant his taking him into custody; and not having full confidence in Jane, accepted her revelations respecting his doings with some grains of allowance.

Assuming his most benevolent smile, the Paper Tiger drew his chair close to Mrs. Barlow, and said, "Janey dear, I is a goin' to tell you of somethink now for your and my good; for you know how much I loves you, jest as much as you does me."

"Jancy dear," listened; but if the love she had for Elisha was expressed by her eyes, one might read murder in them.

"Well," said she, abruptly, "what do you want now?

speak the truth for once, and don't tell me any more falsehoods."

"Now, Janey dear, what makes you talk that are way to me; you knows every think I've done has only been for our good; and besides, no one's ever knowed that you aint married to me; I've only delayed for the best; but as soon as I gits this ere matter off my mind, I'll make it all right, marry you at wunst, and private like, so that nobody will wonder at it. Nobody knows it now, no how."

"Nobody but Mr. Castlemain," said Jane quietly.

"Good God, Mr. Castlemain! I wisht that are man was down to the bottom of the harbor off long wharf, with a millstone tied round his neck. He is the plague of my life. What in hell did you tell him for?"

"Don't swear, saint, the vestry might hear of it," said Jane, tauntingly.

"Why Janey, what's got into you? you is so different from what you used to be; now, when I'm in trouble, it seems kind er hard I can't find peace and quiet even in the bosom of my own family."

"Your family! don't imagine that I belong to it."

"Well, Janey, never mind then, dear, you needn't if you does'nt wish to; but as I was a sayin', this 'ere Castlemain, drat him, what made you tell him you wasn't my wife?"

"That you will find out, by and by, go on and tell your story, quick, and don't bother me with your whining hypocrisy; I'm sick of it."

"I doesn't mean to deceive you."

"You had better not. Proceed."

"Well, just the whole of the matter is, we must be off this ere island, it's a gittin too hot to hold us. The fact is, I is, as you know, too much tied to that ere Ralph, to

more'n hold my head up above water. Every hour I'm afraid Castlemain will find out something more, and be down on us. And oh, Lord! what horrid dreams I has now, nights; if I'm hung wunst I'm hung twenty times afore mornin'. Last night I dreamed" . . . . . .

"Never mind your dream; be quick and tell me what your plan is."

"For you and me to run away and go back to England, and then old Castlemain may hang Ralph and all his crew, for what I care, on Goat Island, where all them are pirates was hung thirty years ago. Yes, Janey dear, we'll jest git ready; we can pack up the most valuable goods to take with us; I can make a sale to a man I know, for hard money, of all the rest—he's to keep dark about it till we gits off. We leave word, last think, or I'll write a line and contrive to send it to the boys in the shop, sayin' we's a goin' to New York, for a few days only, when, reelly, we'll go to Boston; ships is constantly cleerin' from there for the old country, and we'll sail under false names. Won't that be fine, now?" said Elisha, chuckling with joy.

"Yes," said Jane; "but are you not afraid that Castlemain will find it out?"

"Why, Lord!" said Elisha, turning pale; "how can he, who is to tell him?"

"I don't know," said Jane. "I shan't, of course; all I ever told him, was about myself, and you not marrying me, as you promised. I thought it was hard treatment, and went to see if the law couldn't make you; but Mr. Castlemain said, though it was a hard case, he could not oblige you to."

"Did he, now?" said Elisha, kissing Jane in a burst of rapture; "well, I declare, but I will marry you, and we can live in England like a lady and gentleman should;

give up this dingy old shop and ride in our carriage all day."

"And how soon do you intend to do all this?"

"In a few days. Jest you git ready, and I'll make all sure. The money's goin' to be paid at wunst for the stock of goods, groceries, etc., and I told the man I would lend him one hundred pounds or so, if he would only keep still; he thinks I am a goin' to set up a larger shop in Boston, and don't want nothin' said about it afore I leave here. Guess he'll feel rather queer when he comes to examine his stock of goods, and wonder where his hundred pounds is. Now we must be smart, and then we'll see who's to be caught in the net; Castlemain or me."

"That, in truth you will," thought Jane; "your hour has come now, and you shall swing for this."

Fool-like—for such knaves as Elisha Barlow, are always fools—he had trusted Jane with his plan, even after he had begun to suspect her as a spy, from her confession that she had informed Castlemain of her own wrongs.

Elisha's eyes were now opened, and he easily accounted for all the lawyer had found out about him; but he detailed his plan with all kinds of fair promises to her, which he meant to break, fearing that, if he appeared to suspect her, she would at once denounce him. The rogue's true idea was, indeed, to get every thing into ready money, that he could secure, and that accomplished, bid farewell to Newport, leave Jane and escape to England. Jane lulled his suspicions, but was prepared to lodge information with Castlemain at a moment's notice.

Before the day arrived on which he intended to leave, Elisha had again changed his plans. He despaired of ever getting his money from Ralph; for he knew that, even if he was caught, any attempt at tampering with

him, could only result in his own seizure. But the loss of his five hundred pounds so preyed on his avaricious nature, that he now determined to go first to Virginia; and, bearing the will with him, only deliver it into Mildred's hands on the payment of much more than she had taken from him. He little knew that Mr. Castlemain, anticipating many of his tricks, had written a full description of him to Redtape, with orders to arrest him, if he appeared in the neighborhood of Williamsburg, on any pretext whatever.

Barlow imagined that he would not only secure a round sum from Mildred, but completely baffle pursuit—some supposing that he had gone to Boston, others to New York; and after he had effected his purpose in Virginia, he would either have a chance of going to England direct, or if that failed him, he could go by sea to Boston, and there lie hid until the vessel was ready to sail for London.

On the day of his departure, he lavished the tenderest caresses on Janey, and tried to cheat her for the last time, by saying that he was only going out to the cavern, where he had been accustomed to meet the smugglers; he should bring back with him some of the valuables from the cave, and that on the next day they would leave the island forever. He intended to go to the cave, secure his booty, and get the will. It was placed there for safe keeping, which Jane did not know, for she had searched for it in vain;—but he had no intention of rejoining his faithful partner. He would sell his horse and wagon at the upper end of the island, and make his way to Providence, and thence go to Virginia, leaving Janey and every one else in Newport to whistle for his return.

With a smile so cheering that it was almost enough to disperse the thick fog spreading over the landscape—one of those autumnal sea-fogs which every body who has ever

been in Rhode Island, will remember—our Paper Tiger gathered up his reins and began his journey. Telling Jane to have something hot for his supper, he grinned with delight as he thought she would wait a long time at that meal; and, with hypocrisy to the last, decided before driving out of town, to pay a short visit to the Reverend Thomas Pollen, and having a talk with him about vestry duties and the spread of Gospel truth, leave a good impression on his mind, at least. This took him nearly an hour, for he did not wish to appear in a hurry, and thus excite any suspicion; he was as bland as a morning in May.

Let us leave him for a little while and return to Jane. No sooner had honest Elisha left the shop, than she made haste to put on her head gear and shawl, and repair to Mr. Castlemain. The lawyer was at home, but he was closeted with a very important personage, no other than our old acquaintance, Captain, now Admiral Brooke. He could not be disturbed for half an hour. Jane in a frenzy of impatience, waited double that time. She knew that Elisha was about to give them the slip, and she was anxious to see him brought back in disgrace. At length Castlemain entered, and she told him all; told him that she feared he was already too late, but that if he set off instantly with a strong posse to scour the roads in all directions, he might succeed in capturing Barlow.

Blaming himself for not having seen her before, Castlemain instantly assembled a party; by her advice he resolved to go with one or two able-bodied men to the cavern himself, she denoting its situation on the west side of Easton's pond. The other horsemen were to divide, and endeavor to stop him on one road or another. "This fog is unfortunate," thought Castlemain; "one can scarce see ten feet, but we will try what is to be done." He at once informed Admiral Brooke, who

offered to accompany him; but, by the lawyer's advice, was prevented.

"You had better return on board your frigate, and be ready to weigh anchor as soon as the fog lifts. If the report from your tender which came in this morning is correct, that a suspicious sail is off the coast, 'tis very likely that Ralph is watching his opportunity to run in, though I do not see how he can do it in this dense fog. Thank God, I have discovered at last the smuggler's rendezvous; I have been baffled in my search for it for years, and yet this sneak, Elisha Barlow, knew of it all the time. You had no idea what a devil you had for a valet. I agree with you, that now is your time to capture Ralph, if possible; if you can take him alive, I think the many generous acts he has performed might go far with the government in obtaining a pardon for him. That done, and a chance of honorable service open to him under your care, may help in some measure to soothe the bitter remorse which you tell me your own past conduct in regard to his mother, Miriam, and his aunt Mildred more especially, has entailed upon you. Go now, and God speed you."

It will be seen that Elisha's delay at the minister's had given him but little start ahead of Castlemain and his myrmidons, and they were now hard upon his track. As he drove out of town upon the West road, never did a fellow chuckle more than he. "This ere fog is jest what I want, it's better than midnight," he thought. At that instant he saw close by him some fearful looking thing in motion, loom suddenly out of the fog; it uttered a dismal groaning sound, and the superstitious wretch felt for a moment that a monster stood in his path ready to seize him; it was only one of those windmills which just north of the town formerly stood on the road side, and for a hun-

dred years frightened horses. "Drat that are windmill," said Barlow, "to think I should have been frightened at it when the horse wasn't." He tried to revive his spirits by whistling, but that fog, and the dim objects seen through it, made him feel gloomy, and he whipped his horse into a faster pace. He left the "West" road for that leading to Honniman's hill, and entered the lane on the west side of Easton's pond. This lane runs nearly north and south through the fields, and from it in clear weather a full view of the ocean, the pond, and the beach between them is presented, as well as an extensive prospect over the island. But now, nothing could be seen a few feet distant; and nothing was heard but the roar of the ocean as it dashed upon the beach.

Elisha left his wagon, tied his horse, and then made his way through the long grass down to the cave.* In the fog he had gone a little distance out of his path; it

* Bliss's Cave, the scene of this part of the story, is worthy of a visit from the stranger in Rhode Island. It lies on the west side of Easton's pond, about a mile and a half from Newport. The writer has visited it several times. It is situated close to the water, and is or was marked by two small trees growing on the bank above it. It is not very extensive, but bears within it the marks of tools, showing that its original proportions have been enlarged by art. It is quite dark, requiring the aid of a lantern to explore it. There is little doubt in the mind of the author, that this cave was at one period the depository of smugglers or pirates with whom the coast formerly abounded. A more secret hiding place can scarcely be imagined, and it could easily be approached from the sea through the creek at the east end of the town beach. In the author's early boyhood this creek was open, and deep enough to float small boats. It is now choked with sand, yet the waters work through every winter. In the summer of 1851, an arched stone passage way, leading directly from the cave to the pond, was discovered by Mr. J. B. Weaver and other gentlemen. This has now fallen in, and is difficult to trace. By whom it was built, or at what period, is quite unknown.

took a short time to regain it; at length he reached the entrance to the cave on the water's edge; he pressed through the bushes which effectually concealed it; he looked around, and saw only the dense mist. He entered, creeping up the dark narrow passage drew his flint and steel from his pocket, struck a light and went into the body of the cave. "Ugh," said Elisha, shuddering, "smells kinder mouldish here as if some one was dead. I don't like it, and mean to be off at wunst. I wonders now where I left this ere will; ah! here it is," he added, placing his hand upon a small box in one of the clefts of the rock. "Lem'me see, yes, this is it, all right, now I'll be off;" but, as he was groping about, he espied another bundle wrapped around with tarred canvass, to preserve its contents from the dampness.

"Here's some of these ere very silks and laces been here since Ralph was in last time, and I never dared take 'em in and sell 'em, for fear of that are Castlemain, blast him! The silks will be too heavy for me, and I leave 'em for the next comer, but I will have the laces; they is worth a good deal more than their weight in gold." Untying the bundle which, knotted hard, detained him a few moments, he pulled out the laces, secured them about his person, and groped his way out of the cave, much relieved to find himself once more in the open air. The fog was more dense than ever, the sun had almost set, and night was coming on.

At this instant, Elisha thought he heard a noise in the direction of the road; he stood listening intently with his back turned toward the pond, and of course observing nothing in that direction. "'T'aint nothink, no how," he said; "I've been scared all the afternoon, what a fool I is. Well, reelly now, I is sorry to leave this 'ere pleasant island; but I've got to, and quick, too, or Janey,

drat her! will be wonderin' what 's become of me. All right, off now, for, by the time I gits up to the ferry, it will be dark as" . . . .

"Dark as hell, Elisha Barlow," said a rough voice behind him, as he felt an iron grip upon his arm, and, turning his terror-stricken face around, saw Ralph Estcourt, followed by half a dozen of his gang. "Yes, very dark, but no matter; it will be light enough on board my vessel. Come!"

"Oh! mercy, Ralph dear; Ralph, only let me go, take everythink I 've got, only let me go."

"I have no time to talk here," said Ralph, seizing him by the throat, and dragging him as easily as a kitten down to the pond, and into a boat lying there; "we will discuss matters on board, shove off quick men, and don't keep us in this damned fog all night. We will land our goods another time; but we have a prize here worth them all."

The boat was pushed off, when Elisha, seeing his helpless situation, gave a wild yell of despair. "Just try that again," said Ralph, "and its the last sound you ever make;" while as he spoke he forced the muzzle of a pistol into Barlow's mouth so fiercely that it nearly choked him. At this instant the boat's crew, and Elisha, saw running down to the edge of the pond, Mr. Castlemain and two or three others. A call from him to put back was unheeded; another stroke of the oars and they were shut in by the fog, while the wretched captive, fainting away, was flung into the bottom of the boat unnoticed. The rowers pulled to the creek, where, getting out, they dragged the boat through it into the breakers, then bending to their oars again, made for their vessel, Ralph steering by a compass in the stern-sheets on account of the fog. A mile from the shore a musket was fired, it was answered to starboard, and in a few moments the hull of

the "Walk to Windward" was descried in the gloom, and the smugglers, with their prize, stood again upon her decks.

When Elisha was roused from his stupor by having water dashed in his face, and brandy poured down his throat, he found himself stretched on the floor of the cabin, and Ralph sitting by coolly regarding him.

So sudden was his seizure, so overwhelming to him the catastrophe, a prisoner in the hands of one who might murder him with little compunction, instead of being on the high road to fortune and to liberty, it was more than he could well endure, and again he sank back in a swoon.

"A damned good thing you would have made of it, running away with all this money," said Ralph, when Barlow was at length able to sit up and listen. "What in the devil's name were you doing at the cave? there was nothing there, that I know of, that you could smuggle into Newport."

"No indeed, dear Ralph; I'd made up my mind, indeed I had, to quit that are trade, 'cause I began to think it was'nt honest. I was agoin' to leave Newport forever, and find out some spot where I could be secure from the temptations of this wicked world of ourn, and try to live peaceable like with every one."

"Indeed!" sneered Ralph, "and leave Janey behind, I suppose! I have some good news to tell you, and you can inform her of it when you get back. Your damned sharp-nosed brig has gone to the bottom, niggers and all; caught in a hurricane off Barbadoes."

"Them are poor Africans!" shrieked Elisha, "who now'll take care of their souls?"

"Never do you mind their souls, they're whiter than yours. You must play the pious man to the last, eh! If you had pocketed the price of their skins, devil a

whit would their souls concern you. Well, you made a good haul, with all this gold, and government bank bills too, and this lace,—and what's this you have here!" said he, snatching the will from Elisha's breast, opening and glancing over its contents; "here, you bloodless hound, is positive proof of the story I have heard so often from Brooke and Castlemain of my being heir to a large estate; and I would have had it years ago, but for you and a strumpet relative keeping me from it. And what did you with the will all this time? why am I an outlaw, a price set on my head? Now, by all that's holy, this is too much," said the smuggler, ferociously; "down on your knees, and tell me all, and if I detect you in one lie, I'll stave your brains out and hurl you through that port." The terrified Tiger did as he was told, making a confession at which Ralph at intervals ground his teeth with fury. "I don't know," he said, when Elisha had ended, "whether I ought not to knock your head in at once, and send such a villain out of the world. But I'll work you now; I'll torment you; you'll never get away from me again."

"Oh, only let me go Ralph, and you shall have every think I have."

"I've got it already," said the ruffian coolly; "and now," he added, opening the door of the cabin, "get out of here and go forward among the men;" at the same time administering such a kick to the wretched culprit that he spun forwards, howling with agony. "Now I've kicked him out of my sight," added Ralph, musingly, "I'll see what is best to be done about this matter."

It may be imagined that Elisha's treatment that night by the crew was not of the tenderest kind, nor his dreams the most peaceful.

Castlemain and his party stood on the edge of the pond

for half an hour, shouting until they were hoarse. How bitterly the lawyer regretted the delay which caused him to lose his prize, when he could almost put his hand on him, but he was beyond pursuit now. He had heard the wretch's desponding cry, knew his figure, and was sure that the burly form beside him was that of Ralph; an instant more and the boat was lost in the mist. The disappointed party remounted their steeds, and taking Elisha's horse and wagon with them, rode back to Newport. Castlemain went direct to Mrs. Barlow, and was not surprised to find that she expressed no pity for the Tiger's fate. He next sent a dispatch out to the frigate, having great trouble to induce any boatman to venture out into the harbor; and then revenged himself the remainder of the evening by cursing the fog for all manner of misfortunes.

He knew that the vigilant Brooke would weigh anchor and spread all sail in pursuit of the smuggler, the moment the mist lifted from the waters; and at the dawn of day he ran to the window to look for the tall masts of the man-of-war, but the atmosphere was perfectly clear, and his Majesty's ship Avenger, had already left her moorings.

"Now, may heaven help us to catch the 'Walk to Windward' this time," said Admiral Brooke to Captain Benson, as they sat at breakfast; "if we do not, Ralph is the devil himself, I believe."

"He has given you the slip pretty often, I think, admiral. Why are you so anxious to see him taken under your own eye? Have you any particular reason for feeling such an interest in him?" asked Benson.

"Yes," said the admiral, in a tone intended to stop further questioning. "Have you a sharp watch set?"

"Yes, sir, a double watch, and a man has gone aloft to

each masthead, in hopes of winning the five guineas you have promised to the one who first sights the brig;" and so Captain Benson, perceiving that his superior was averse to answering questions, finished his meal and went on deck, without asking more; acting like a discreet man, as he was.

"Sail, ho!" bawled the look out at the mainmast head.

"Where away?" shouted out the first lieutenant on deck.

"Off the starboard bow, hull down to leeward."

The admiral at once came up out of the cabin, and swept the horizon with his glass. He watched the head sails of a vessel, just peering over the sea; long and keenly did he look to make out her rig. The trim neatness and cut of her canvas, even at so great a distance, could not escape his practised eye. "'Tis she!" he exclaimed, handing his glass to Benson; "'tis the 'Walk to Windward,' and I will wager my life upon it. We are to windward of her though this time, Benson, and if we only manage to keep the weather gage, she's ours. But a stern chase is a long chase, and she is almost dead ahead of us. Clap on every inch of canvas the frigate can carry, and put the best men at the wheel that ever handed spoke."

The order was no sooner given than a swarm of sailors sprung into the rigging. Sail after sail, aloft and below, was given to the wind, until the ship was almost buried beneath the towering pyramid of canvas; when leaning far over on her side, the waves were dashed in showers of foam from her bows, as she rose and fell on the billows, leaving a long, white, hissing wake on the blue and glittering brine.

The sun shone down upon the sea in unclouded splendor, lighting a scene which made the heart beat wild with

emotion; ahead lay the chase, every eye fixed upon it, and fired with delight as it became evident, from its greater distinctness in an hour's time, that the flying "Avenger" was gradually coming up with it.

Every expedient that nautical science could suggest to increase the speed of the frigate was adopted, and as if instinct with the spirit of the chase, she bounded over the waters. "Keep her just as near the wind's eye as she will graze," said the admiral; "nearer now, luff and shake her." The order, instantly obeyed, caused the frigate's topsails for a moment to shiver in the breeze, with a sharp fluttering report, then as they filled again and stretched to their utmost, she flew with accelerated motion, as a steed rushes for the goal. Nor was there less exertion on board the "Walk to Windward;" she, too, carried every sail she could spread, and was steered in the most careful manner, Ralph himself standing by the wheel; but as she was a brig, it soon became evident to him, swift as she was, that in a long chase the frigate would overhaul her.

Ralph had come to no decision in regard to the will; he was afraid to leave his vessel and take one step for the recovery of his property. Branded as he was, his first move would be the signal for his arrest. His vessel was under easy sail, and he was about to send for Elisha, to confer with him again, when the appearance of the "Avenger," the fastest ship in his Majesty's service, at once put these thoughts to flight, and caused him to bend his whole energies towards escape. He did not, of course, know his pursuer at first, but the manner in which the frigate was sailed, and had approached him, convinced him ere long that she was no other than Admiral Brooke's celebrated man-of-war. As to Elisha, he was in a most pitiable state, dreadfully sea-sick, and, coward as he was,

looking forward to a combat and capture by the frigate with the most abject terror.

The sun rose towards the meridian, and the frigate had so gained upon the chase, that her black hull, bristling with guns, now towered above the waters. The two vessels, prepared for action, were about two miles apart, yet running nearly parallel courses, when Ralph, determined on bold measures, resolved to give the first broadside, hoping to disable the "Avenger." He allowed her to draw gradually close to him, when, suddenly putting the brig about on the larboard tack, he drove her directly across the bows of the frigate. As the "Avenger's" bowsprit nearly grazed his sails, the smuggler fired a broadside into her, but as his shot were intended to injure her rigging, and thus deaden her speed, his guns were aimed too high, and, save cutting away a few stays and piercing the sails, did no damage. But the frigate's broadside, which aimed in its turn at the "Walk to Windward's" hull, poured a deadly discharge among the crew, struck down many of the smugglers, and put an end forever to the life and crimes of Ralph Estcourt, as a chain shot cut him in two. He fell dead upon his deck, and in the same instant a round shot took off the right leg of Elisha Barlow. Ralph, heedless of his frantic agony, had refused to let him go below, when the vessels were about to engage, and lashed him to a stanchion, telling him, with a sneer, that in his position he could see the fight to the greatest advantage. The frigate grappled with her adversary, and the contest was short, stern and decisive. The smugglers fought desperately, but in vain; the boarders from the "Avenger" overpowered and cut them down, until of the once powerful crew but a remnant remained, who, perceiving that further resistance was useless, surrendered. They were ironed and sent on

board the frigate, and the "Walk to Windward," having been taken formal possession of, the two vessels were once again steered to the west, and before sunset came to anchor side by side in the harbor of Newport.

Brooke regretted that he had not been able to take Ralph alive, but it had been ordained otherwise; and he felt that even if a pardon could have been obtained from the government, which was by no means certain, it would have been a hard and thankless task to win him from evil courses.

While in the cabin of the "Walk to Windward," he found a small desk stored with money, valuables, and manuscript papers. One of the first of these papers on which he placed his hand, was the will, which for so many years had been secreted, and of which he had heard so much from Castlemain. He opened and read it, powerfully affected, as he thought on the premature and melancholy fate of the unfortunate outlaw, so suddenly struck down in his career of guilt; and whom this very document had been intended to benefit. How it came into Ralph's possession, he was unable to imagine, until Elisha Barlow, having undergone the amputation of his shattered leg, sent for Brooke; and in the close, dimly-lighted cockpit, under the agony of mind produced by the fear of his approaching death, which he had every reason to expect, made a full confession of all his iniquities, and particularly those relating to the missing will. Nor was this all, for subsequently discovering that the loss of his limb would not be fatal to him, the abject wretch, fearing for his own neck, hinted that he could reveal much in regard to the smugglers; and was permitted by the government to testify against his former associates. He proved the means of bringing most of them to the gibbet; for he was accepted as "king's evi

dence;" a charaeter which some writer has described, as "a villain, pardoned for being baser than his companions."

But his infamous course met its due reward; he was spared nothing but his life, and was stripped of every particle of his ill-gotten wealth.

He found, on his return to the shore, that his affectionate partner, who never eame near him in his illness, had chosen a second husband; or rather, a legal one, for the first time; and having induced some one to marry her, had taken her departure from Newport, with many choice pickings of the shop, and he never heard of her afterwards.

Poor, unpitied, and shunned, he dragged out a miserable existence; sometimes doing a little work for support, until he finally came upon the parish; and dying some years after the period of our story, a pauper in the almshouse, was stretched beneath the sod, without a stone to indieate the spot.

Brooke and Castlemain agreed, that the will so strangely recovered, must at once be placed on record in the proper court in Virginia; and that simple justice, if not vengeance, should be the part performed against Mildred. But both were desirous, since the heir to the property was dead, and since Blanche Esteourt was in the last stage of life, that justice should be tempered by mercy; so that, if possible, no public exposure should be made of Mildred, unless she persisted in evil courses.

These preliminaries arranged, Castlemain and his daughter Emily embarked with Admiral Brooke on board the "Avenger;" and with favoring winds, in a few days she passed within the Capes of Virginia, and eame to anchor in Hampton Roads.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CHANGE OF OPINION.

The letters which Charles had written from the Canadas to his parents, had informed them of the progress of events, and his own safety, after the attack on the French entrenchments, of the 31st of July.

These papers were read with tearful interest by Mrs. Brandon, mourning for the absence of her son. She had scarce smiled since he left Kingwood; and continually felt, that but for his father's harsh treatment of him, he would still be with her in peace. What had been gained, she thought, by Mr. Brandon's stern course? He had been thwarted forever by a power mightier than his, for Blanche Estcourt was now dead; she had been borne away at the season when nature touches the leaves of the forests with the chill blasts of autumn. She died, and with her perished the hopes and plans of two proud spirits, and the fell plots of one. To Mrs. Brandon this blow was distressing, for she had learnt to love Blanche, although her son could never feel towards her as a lover. Mr. Brandon said little about her death, but it was plain that the old gentleman was ill at ease; he was observed to walk about a great deal, shaking his head and muttering. He talked of his son, though, constantly, and was never weary of praising him for his gallant part in behalf of his sovereign, and predicting that he would acquire distinguished honor in the campaign. Charles' father, laying aside the passion and blind prejudice which had

hurried him on in his obstinate course, now began seriously to reflect that he had been exceedingly unkind to his son, and had driven him from his paternal roof; but that all should be made up to him by redoubled kindness on his return.

Furthermore, he wondered, now that poor Blanche had gone, whether he had not acted very foolishly from the beginning, in his desperate opposition to Charles' love. True, Lucy was not rich, and Blanche would have been, but he should have had a quarrel with her mother in a week, in spite of all his pompous deference to her. "And this island maiden, this Lucy Tyrrell," he thought, "surely she is beautiful, she is well educated, she has spirit—that I can swear to, for on that day when she came into the drawing-room and spoke so to me, I felt her words in my very bones.

"And what if she is poor? She is proud. So am I. I like pride, and plenty of it. What if she is poor? I am rich; have more wealth than I know what to do with. Charles will have it after me. Why is she not fitted to grace the halls of Kingwood? Let me see if she is not equal to any of the pictures of my fair ancestors."

Mr. Brandon examined the beauties that decked the walls of the mansion, and decided at once, that she was superior to them all; and that no other person would or should, by any possibility, be the wife of his son. Having resolved this, with the usual impetuosity of his character, he informed his wife how sorry he felt for his harsh conduct; how much he longed to repair it by kindness; and that he was determined to write at once to Mr. Tyrrell, and claim the hand of his lovely daughter for Charles.

"Stay," said Mrs. Brandon, who, accustomed as she was to her husband's peculiar nature, was in this instance

perfectly astounded, and quite unprepared to join her consent to his, so suddenly:

"Stay, you have been too precipitate before, you may be so now."

"Impossible; do I not tell you that she is lovely, is beautiful, elegant in manners, high spirited, just the very woman for Charles. Love her I know you will, how can you help it. I love her, yes, love her dearly."

"Since when, Mr. Brandon?"

"Oh! it matters not since when, if I love her now; she shall be your daughter, she shall be Charles' wife, shall, I say; and I will this instant write to her father."

"Let me do so," said Mrs. Brandon, not displeased at the turn affairs had taken, for she had heard much of Lucy from Randolph and Matilda; "let me do so. I will act more discreetly than you can? Will you? I repeat."

"Yes, I will. Write as you please, but write."

"Oh, that they were both here now!" he added; "they might have been but for my folly."

As Mr. Brandon appeared determined to go at once and see Randolph on the subject, Mrs. Brandon sat down to write, not to Mr. Tyrrell, but to his daughter Lucy, such a letter as a mother, and a mother like her, could alone compose under the circumstances of the case.

The missive was despatched as usual to Williamsburg, but Mr. Brandon did not go that day, nor the next, nor for a week, to see his nephew. For once a Brandon felt faint-hearted, and he put off from hour to hour a meeting which he dreaded, knowing that his course towards Randolph and his wife had not been kind. At last, summoning resolution, he rode to his nephew's house, and was told by the servant that he was at home. In a moment more the door opened, and a gentleman emerged; it was Patrick Henry, with whom, ever since Charles' de-

parture, Mr. Brandon had been on the most friendly terms.

"I am happy to meet you, sir," said Henry. "I was about to repair to your house to inform you that in a day or two we might require your presence in Williamsburg, in connection with a matter touching Mistress Mildred Esteourt. May I inquire if you have ever known a Captain, now Admiral Brooke, of his Majesty's service?"

"Brooke," said Mr. Brandon; "yes, I remember many years ago a Greville Brooke; we were both young then, and he was an audacious libertine."

"The same person," said Henry; "he seems much changed now, and I understand has become a religious man. He inquired very kindly for you. That is all I wished to ask now."

"But what is all this about, and what am I required for in Williamsburg?"

"I have not now leisure to inform you, sir," replied Patrick Henry; "it is a long story, and will take some time to be told. Good morning to you, sir, my time is valuable; but I may depend upon you when required?"

"You may, sir," replied Mr. Brandon; when, as Henry rode away, he entered the house.

"At last, uncle," said Randolph heartily, "we have the pleasure of seeing you; better late than never, and more the welcome for being late. We shall not let you off now, under a day or two to begin with. Here comes Matilda."

This kind greeting made the old gentleman feel at home; he was pleased with Matilda and her little son, stayed to dinner, talked much of the war and of the prodigies of valor Charles was performing, and after the meal was over at once unbosomed himself to Randolph. He told him how completely he had changed his views,

and how anxious he was for his son's happiness, which he knew now could only be accomplished by his union with Lucy Tyrrell.

As Mr. Brandon talked, a cloud gathered on Randolph's brow. "It is a pity, uncle, that I could not have heard of this sooner, much as I am rejoiced to hear it now. In truth, we have had bad news from Lucy, which has made her cousin Matilda feel sad."

"Bad news! unhappy! oh, what a villain I have been!" burst out Mr. Brandon.

"Well, dear uncle, you did every thing as you deemed best, I know; and, thank Heaven, it is not yet too late to make all happy. Does Charles know of your change of sentiments?"

"No, I have not yet written to him about it; I preferred to wait awhile until I heard from him again, as I knew that his resolution would not be broken."

"You should write, though, at once; Charles will fight all the better for it. Now let me tell you as to Lucy and her sad letter. When Charles was in Boston, he took occasion before sailing to Louisburg, to run down to the island to see her, thinking that she was still there; for, as I had not returned to Virginia at the time he left, he was of course ignorant of the change in Mr. Tyrrell's fortunes, or rather his situation, for he is still quite poor. He was distracted to find that she had left the island, the ignorant stupid people giving or able to give no information as to her residence. They insisted, however, that she lived in Boston, because they had written to her there, and she had answered, dating from the same place; for she was frequently in the city, and wrote at such times as the packet was about starting. Some of these letters the people showed him; but they could have told nothing of Cambridge, which accounts to me for his

otherwise almost unaccountable ignorance of her home. Poor Charles has been peculiarly unfortunate, not seeing or hearing any thing of her in his distracted wanderings about Boston. Even when he went to the former mansion of Matilda's father, and met old Amy, one of the domestics of the family, she too was unable to tell him one word of Lucy. Beyond all that, the letter which he wrote me so long since, just prior to his leaving to join General Wolfe, he confided to a companion who took charge of it for the post, Charles not having time to mail it; and this friend, then utterly forgetting it, had it for some months in his possession. At last, he sent it to me a few days since, and for his carelessness makes a humble apology, which does not mend the matter. It is now the middle of October, and that letter was written on the 2d of last May. Lucy writes in sad spirits; she says that some time since you wrote a letter to her father, in answer to one of his, telling Mr. Tyrrell that Charles was very soon to be married to Blanche Estcourt, heaven rest her soul, poor girl! Was this so?"

"Yes," groaned Mr. Brandon, "I did write so, thinking at the time that it was only necessary for me to insist on Charles marrying her, and that he would. Oh, how bitterly I repent it now."

"It was indeed a serious wrong, and may do incalculable mischief. Lucy, as you may readily imagine, was dreadfully distressed at this news, this fatal treachery, as she thought it, and moreover, after Charles had sailed for Louisburg, she heard of his having been in Boston prior to joining Wolfe's expedition. This only added poison to the arrow's sting. She concluded that, even if the marriage with Blanche was broken off, of her he thought no longer. She is indeed unhappy. She writes of a suitor for her hand who persecutes her with his attentions, whom

she has already twice refused ; but Mr. Lascelles, such is his name, is agreeable to her parents, and the poor girl is tormented in many ways. She does not love him, never can love him, as she writes, and yet she may yield to the importunities of her parents, and accept him in sheer despair. Whatever we do must be done quickly. I shall at once write to her, and to her father too, explaining everything, and, sending Charles' letter, beg her not to act precipitately. You had better, by all means, write at once to Charles, and to Mr. Tyrrell also, if you are determined as you say."

"Yes, indeed, I am determined; never was more determined in my life. I will write to Charles at once, and gladden the dear boy's heart ; but Mrs. Brandon engaged to write to Lucy herself. Oh, what a fool I have been!"

Randolph could not help thinking that his uncle had appropriately styled himself, although he did not say so ; but contenting himself with a pretty sharp reprimand, considering that he was a nephew, which scolding Mr. Brandon bore without any attempt at exculpation, he now changed the subject to Mildred. He detailed what Patrick Henry had said to him, which in substance amounted to about the same as he had unfolded to Mr. Brandon, concluding by saying that though in reality he knew little more than his uncle, yet he doubted not that some catastrophe awaited her, of which they had no present conception. Then bidding the old gentleman farewell, as he was mounting his horse, he told him to be of good cheer, and without delay inform Charles of his coming happiness. This the changed old man promised to do, and at once on his arrival at home was as good as his word. His letter, as we shall see later, went direct to its destination, and gave joy to the heart of his son.—We must not, however, anticipate.

A day or two after this came the glorious news of the

battle before Quebec, and its subsequent surrender. There was nothing from Charles, and his parents, with agonized feelings, waited the receipt of the lists of killed and wounded, fearing for the worst. The next post brought a letter, not from him, but a queerly tucked, folded, and directed missive, characteristic of no one but Bela Tilley. It described, in plain terms, the state of Charles' case, spoke of his wounds, and of his anxiety to write as soon as the surgeon in attendance would permit him to.

The epistle, between tears and laughter, cost Charles' worthy parents an hour's labor in deciphering. Rejoiced as they were to hear such news of their son, whom they had already mourned as dead, and much as they trusted to the faithful Bela, Mrs. Brandon was too anxious for Charles' recovery to think of remaining at home any longer—she would go at once to nurse him. The parents determined to set off immediately, and on their way to pause but for a day in Cambridge, to see Luey and make her happy before pursuing their journey to Canada. But that night Mr. Brandon, who was highly excited with the news, coupled with what he had heard from Randolph and Patrick Henry, was taken ill, and the next morning, being in a high fever, his physician forbade him to rise or to think of leaving Kingwood until he recovered; a few days of rest, he said, would restore his patient to his usual health, and the mother, meanwhile praying often and fervently for her son's recovery, was obliged to remain with her husband. She sent for Randolph, who promised to go to Charles himself in a few days, as soon as the business which Patrick Henry had informed him was of such consequence, and in which Mildred was concerned, could be settled. "It will make scarce the difference of a day, dear Aunt Eleanor," he said, "because I will hurry through my journey and spare neither steed nor money in rapid travelling."

CHAPTER XXX.

THE FATE OF MILDRED.

Let us, once more, return to Mildred. Blanche was dead, and the mother wore the outward signs of mourning for her daughter. She doubtless felt as much as such a heart could feel, and for such a child, whom she loved next to herself; but, in place of the deep sorrow, the bitter anguish, which mothers of more tenderness, would experience, she struggled with feelings of contending nature. She beheld the ruin of all her hopes and schemes, every purpose forever blasted, and grief for Blanche was almost lost in the agonies of disappointment, and of humiliated pride. Death, itself, makes little impression on such natures; and the composure with which they bear the loss of friends is to be traced not to devout resignation, but to the cold materialism of their marble hearts. No frantic sorrow, no burst of passion, came from Mildred; but a sullen gloom, a loathing of all excitement, a lethargic indifference to all outward things, took possession of her. One day while she was in this mood, the stupid negro, who had been frequently employed to convey the letters from Kingwood to the post office, stopped at her door and asked, as she had instructed him to, if she had any thing of her own to send? Rousing from her stupor, she took Mrs. Brandon's letter to Lucy, from the hands of the servant, telling him to wait a moment, and she would give him something else to carry. Then, in the mere wantonness of crime, she determined to withhold Mrs. Brandon's letter, and see what its contents were. Then,

merely folding a blank sheet of paper, she wrote upon it a fictitious address, and gave it to the boy, whom she knew would observe no difference, he not being able to read. At the same time rewarding him with half a crown; she told him that she had altered her mind about writing, and that he need say nothing about having stopped at her house, as Mr. Brandon might not like it. But the negro boy, thick-headed as he was, on this occasion exercised his thinking faculties; it struck him, in the first place, that Mildred's caution was singular, and he feared he had done wrong in going to her house instead of direct to the office. In the next place, though he could not read, he imagined the letter looked differently from the one he gave to Mildred; she returned him one sealed with black wax, while he remembered that the seal of the other was scarlet. On his way to the office, he asked a gentleman to read the superscription, which being told to him he recollected. He made up his mind, after turning the matter over in his head several days, to say something of it to his master; but, Mr. Brandon being ill, he with great importance of manner, unfolded it to Randolph, as he was at Kingwood.

Randolph, merely telling him not to go again to Mistress Estcourt, put the boy off by saying, that it was a matter of no consequence, and then informed Mr. Redtape, who was glad to hear any news about Lady Mildred.

Mistress Estcourt, after the boy had gone, read the letter to Lucy; it filled her with bitter envy and jealousy, while, at the same time, she felt a kind of a horrid joy that her plots had succeeded so far as almost to extinguish hope in her victim, and create doubts of Charles' sincerity. With nothing to gain but sheer revenge, she determined that Lucy should never receive that letter;

her wounds should be left to bleed; doubtless she would before long wed another—the one hinted at, but not named, in Mrs. Brandon's letter—and feeling at last triumphant in this one aim, if in nothing else, she pictured to herself, Charles and his family, and Lucy prostrate at her feet. "And they thought to scorn me and my daughter! who has the power now?" said the fell woman, with flashing eyes, and a lip curling with contempt, and her form dilated with passion.

She threw the letter into a casket in which were the two others which Charles had written long ago, and which, the reader will remember, she sequestrated in the same manner as she had this. She had been accustomed, from time to time, to take them out and gloat over their contents in wanton mockery; but now, with this one added, her treasury would be much enriched. "I shall be in no want of amusement now," sneered Mildred; "it will only be necessary to read these letters, from mother and son!" . . . . .

It was but a week or two afterward that, wishing to unlock her casket, she went to her own chamber to open it. The box yielded to the touch of her fingers, without the key; and to her terror and surprise she found that its contents were gone. She had evidently been robbed; but nothing else in her whole mansion had been touched. Her servants could not have committed the theft, having no use for letters which they could not read. In their place was a folded paper, which she opened, and trembling, found it thus inscribed: "*You have now, for many years, pursued a triumphant career of guilt; but the days of your power have passed, and your punishment is nigh at hand. The stolen letters you will see again.*" This enigmatical communication was written in a bold hand, which she too well remembered; and she looked forward

with dread to some terrible ordeal; she knew not what it was to be.

No ordinary pilferer had taken those letters; and how and where should she see them again? Then arose in her mind, her own words, uttered so haughtily but a few days before: "Who has the power now?" It was not long before her fears took tangible shape; for, on the very next day she received a note of counsel, which was so professionally expressed, as to amount almost to a command, from the hated Mr. Redtape.

He wrote, that several letters, which properly belonged to the Brandon family, had been found in her possession; that an explanation was necessary, which she could doubtless give, of the means by which they came into her keeping; and, moreover, that as Mr. Brandon was ill, and could not go to Williamsburg, she would greatly oblige him by repairing to Kingwood, where she would be detained but a few hours. She would, therefore, on the afternoon of the next day proceed to the Hall, where he, Mr. Redtape, would meet her. Mildred knew that it would be useless to evade such a meeting, and at once resolved to go, swear most positively, if interrogated, that she knew nothing of the letters being found on her premises; and, that if such were discovered there, they were so placed by designing persons, to injure her. With this purpose, which she now summoned her whole resolution to perform without flinching, and anticipating no other trouble, Mildred left her home, according to appointment, and drove over to Kingwood.

It was a gray, gloomy afternoon; the wind was high, and howled through the branches of the trees, scattering their leaves in wild confusion. Mildred felt the influence of the season, and a sense of coming doom seemed to overhang her. She entered that mansion which she had

so coveted, and sinfully sought to make her daughter's own; and was shown into one of the parlors, where sat Mr. Brandon, well enough to be down stairs, and in his easy chair. But as he bid her good day, there was no tone of welcome in his voice. He looked perplexed, and was very grave. In a moment more the door opened, and several persons came in; Mrs. Brandon not among them, however, as her husband had informed Lady Mildred that she would not be visible that afternoon.

In those who entered the apartment, Mrs. Estcourt recognized Patrick Henry, and the indefatigable Redtape; on whose face was a expression of gratification, as if he were pleased at having discovered something of importance connected with his prophesy, made so many years ago, in regard to the missing will. Just behind him came a portly form, and Mildred turned as pale as ashes, as she returned, with an affrighted stare, the bland smile and bow of Mr. Castlemain.

"Good God!" she thought, "how comes that man here; he bodes no good to me!"

"We are all here now, I believe," said the impatient Redtape.

"All, sir, I believe," answered Patrick Henry, who, on this occasion, had laid aside the rusticity of his dress, and appeared clothed in the elegant fashion of the time. "All, sir, with the exception of my excellent friend, Mr. Randolph Brandon. He, as you know, has been called to the north within a day or two, in consequence of the discovery of the important letter which we have found, and which made it necessary for him at once to go to his cousins, Miss Lucy Tyrrell, and Mr. Charles Brandon. Are we ready to begin, sir?" he asked, turning to Mr. Redtape.

"Quite, quite," said Redtape; "but you, Mr. Henry,

might as well state the case, and we have but a few questions to ask."

"Very good," replied Henry. "Now, madam," said he, turning to Mildred, "I wish you to understand, for my own part, and these gentlemen also wish on theirs, that we are not combined together to injure you. Briefly and plainly, I beg leave to inform you, without putting you to the trouble of denying knowledge of them, that several letters, written by Mr. Charles Brandon and his mother, were found on your premises under suspicious circumstances; they were in a casket of yours, under your lock and key. How came you by them?"

"I know nothing of them," said Mildred, haughtily.

"Think again, madam."

"Pshaw!" returned Mildred, "do you bring me here to tease me like a child? If I do know anything of them, what does it matter to you, or those surrounding you?"

"Nothing, madam," replied Henry, "except that I act as a friend of Mr. Brandon's family."

"Indeed," replied the lady, with a sneer, "and how long since have you gained admission to the aristocratic Brandons? You are of meaner clay!"

"Madam," broke in old Mr. Brandon, "Mr. Henry is my very good friend, and you will greatly oblige me while in my house, by assuming a tone of greater courtesy towards him."

Without noticing Mildred's rudeness, Henry continued; "do you, or do you not, madam, confess any knowledge of these letters;" at the same time placing on the table and pushing towards her the three before spoken of.

She paused for an instant to look around the circle, and read her condemnation in the faces of the group, conviction, in spite of her denial of guilt; then, a torrent

of passion, sweeping away all prudence, she violently exclaimed, "Yes, I do, I do know them, and their contents well, and thank God, my plans have succeeded. My child is dead; she loved Charles Brandon, and she died of fruitless love; but I have well avenged her. I withheld those letters which Mrs. Brandon hoped would induce Lucy Tyrrell to become the wife of her son. But many a day he will wait for her; before this, I doubt not, she has wedded another, or plighted a faith not to be broken. Do your worst; I defy you all. And as to you, pilferer," addressing herself direct to Patrick Henry, "have a care of yourself; we shall see if you are to enter houses, and open caskets with impunity. Who wrote those lines I found in place of the letters?"

"You will soon find out, madam," said Redtape, coolly, "I am glad you have answered so promptly; I anticipated much more trouble. You have confessed to the letters, and now I will gratify you, in turn, with a piece of intelligence. Mr. Randolph Brandon, who has been the means of our finding these letters, through the story of the poor, ignorant black, whom you deceived, is already far on his way to Miss Lucy Tyrrell, with the full sanction of Mr. Brandon, to propose for her hand for his son Charles. We have every reason to believe that he will be successful, and that your schemes will be defeated. Your threats against Mr. Henry are powerless; here—you may read it—is our search warrant, obtained from the proper authorities. We watched our opportunity, and entered your house in your absence in order to avoid a scene. We wished nothing but the letters, and found them easily. Now, my friend Castlemain will inform you of another matter; of that will," said Redtape, slowly and gravely; "you know the will I mean."

Mildred leaned back in her chair, and put her hand to

her face, in agony. She felt as if on a raging sea, with but a plank beneath her, and that soon to be dashed from her grasp. Her evil days had come. Castlemain detailed the whole story of Elisha Barlow's capture and punishment, of her nephew Ralph's death, and of the discovery of the will, which he read aloud. But in all his narration he did not mention Brooke's name.

"You see your position, madam," he added; "you are at the mercy of the rightful owner of the estate."

"Well," said Mildred, suddenly, "at whose mercy, then? Is he not beneath the sea, as you have said? I am the rightful owner, show me another."

She rose from her chair, and once more proudly gazed on those around her. As she spoke, Castlemain left the room; and returning behind her, just as she pronounced the sentence, "show me another;" said, "behold her!" With a sudden start, Mildred turned her head, and saw a female form, clothed in deep black, supported by an officer; and at the same instant, recognizing her sister Miriam, and Admiral Brooke, she shrieked, and sank swooning into her chair. On reviving, she felt her sister embracing her, and saying, soothingly, "do not fear, dear Mildred, I know and forgive all. Do not dread poverty, for of all I have, you shall share. We will leave this land, and go back to that of our fathers. Think no more of ills; and let us live to make each other happy; there is yet time."

But Mildred heeded not; she glared at Brooke, and muttered incoherently. At length she said, wildly,

"Where is he—my husband? You! you! Greville Brooke—speak!"

She was removed from the apartment, and Admiral Brooke then told his story, saying that it was due to Mr. Brandon, as his family had been harmed by the machina-

tions of Mildred. He said that remorse had preyed upon him for his sins ; had given him no peace by night or day ; he had heard many years before from Castlemain of Miriam's wrongs, of the wicked course of Mildred and her accomplices, Jane Hook and Elisha Barlow ; he determined to make the only reparation in his power according to his sense of honor, and for the purpose had gone to Mildred's husband to offer that satisfaction which the spirit of the age countenanced, but had found Estcourt too far gone with mortal disease to accept his offer. He had felt intense regret at not having at that period attempted to carry out his purpose of providing handsomely for Ralph and taking him under his charge, until he found by his delay the boy had been suffered to become an outlaw. He had then for years sought him with the hope of reclaiming him ; and here he detailed to his audience an account of Ralph's attempted capture on the coast, and his own mishap, which the reader is already acquainted with. He lastly added a narration of the smuggler's fate ; of his having with Castlemain persuaded Miriam to leave the island, after learning of her son's death, to claim the estate left her by a codicil to the will, in case of the demise of Ralph ; of his having with Redtape searched Mildred's house, leaving the mysterious paper in place of the letters in her casket—the rest they knew.

Then, in a few words, Mr. Redtape corroborated the story, and added that Estcourt had employed him and Mr. Parchmount to draw the will as it now stood, being the only way he could punish his guilty wife. The document only required another codicil of slight importance to make it complete, when it disappeared so mysteriously.

All was now explained, all revealed. The party of

gentlemen heartily congratulated Mr. Brandon on having so narrowly escaped the schemes of Mildred Estcourt, and wished his brave son all happiness with his destined bride. They then departed for Williamsburg, promising to meet again in the morning, and arrange all things definitely between Mildred and her sister.

But it was ordained that that meeting was never to take place within the walls of Kingwood. The miserable Mildred had been conveyed to a chamber, and was attended by her sister and Mrs. Brandon, who used every effort to alleviate her sufferings, but she was alternately raving or moping like one in idiocy. At length she was quieted, and lay in apparent slumber. In order more effectually to secure her repose, they concluded to retire to the drawing room, leaving a female servant to guard her, and call them if she stirred. But no sooner had they gone away than the domestic, negro-like, stole off to the kitchen, thinking it much more pleasant to doze there by the fire than to watch a woman whom she feared to remain by. About an hour after this Mildred arose, not in her right mind, but wandering and distressed. In her sleep, all the scenes of her evil life had passed in review, and her victims heaped reproaches on her, like the ghosts who cursed the murderer Richard the night before the battle of Bosworth Field. She started up in agony, and to her heated fancy the apparitions of the dead thronged around her, and menaced her with evil. They made companionship with those she knew to be living, those who but a few hours before had humbled her to the dust. There stood her injured husband, by the side of his daughter Blanche, who now looked sternly upon her as she never had in life, while close beside them was one dreadful to behold, with blood dropping

from his limbs, mingled with the water on his dripping sailor's garb.

Here, too, were the vile faces of Elisha Barlow and Jane Hook, turned upon her with triumphant leer. It was too horrible; she put her hands over her face and closed her eyes, but still they were there; only the creatures of her delirium, yet to her absolute forms of living death. Surrounding her bedside, they glared at her; she rose in terror, she rushed towards the window, and lifted the sash; but the hellish faces stared in upon her from outer darkness. Turn where she would they pursued her. At length, in desperation, she rushed for the door, bursting, as she imagined, through a legion of fiends, and without perceiving what she had done in her chamber, passed down the staircase, which was near by, and, opening a door close to the foot of the steps, went out into the night air, she knew not whither. In her agony in the chamber, she had overthrown a little table with two wax lights upon it; they fell at the foot of the bed, and in an instant the flame was communicated to the muslin drapery. The entire bed and curtains were blazing in a moment, the fire spread from them to the dry panel work, and, fanned by the blast which came in through the window which Mildred had opened, it rolled on, its fury increasing every moment, poured out of the open door with volumes of smoke, and rapidly finding food in the woodwork of the hall and staircase, grew strong beyond the aid of the household to quell it. An alarm was now sounded by the negroes, and the inmates of the house were aroused, but too late. Notwithstanding the great thickness of the walls, the fire had made too much headway to be subdued; like a subtle and agile enemy, cut off in one place it burst forth more furiously in another, until perceiving the folly of attempt-

ing to check it, the efforts of the crowd were employed in securing such articles as were within reach. All the plate, and many of the pictures and valuables, were removed to a safe distance; and then the family looked on in anguish, and saw their proud home wrapped in ruin, yet magnificent to the last.

Mildred had rushed from the house, and wandered away, pursued by the demons of her imagination. At length, she stopped on the bank of the river, some distance below the mansion. The very winds howled in vengeance around her; the bright stars glowed as in wrath above her, and at that instant rang in her ears the cry of fire.

She stood gazing upon the flame as it gathered strength, and lighted up the country for miles around with its awful light; then the fiends once more shrieked in her ears, "Behold thy work accomplished."

And, as they screamed and pointed, the dreadful glare as of hell itself shining in their faces; high above the sound of the winds, the cries of the workers, and the roaring of the fire-blast, rose the boom of the bell in the great clock tower, as with sullen beat the iron hammer smote the stroke of twelve. Midnight had come—her last! None saw her, none heeded her, and as the bell from its burnt fastenings, loosed, fell into the surging fire below, Mildred, who heard to obey its deep knell, turned her face from the scene, and with one desperate leap plunging into the river, sunk beneath its lurid waters.

CHAPTER XXXI.

LUCY SURVIVES HER SORROWS.

Our tale is nearly told. We left Charles Brandon stretched upon the battle field; he was at first thought to be dead, and dreadfully wounded as he was found to be, some days elapsed before he regained his consciousness. When at length he did so, he discovered the faithful Bela Tilley sitting beside his pallet, with his lank countenance covered by his huge hands, moaning dismally and keeping time to the noise by a see-saw motion of his body. Charles gazed at him for some moments as in a dream; at length he feebly stirred, and Bela, hearing him move, looked up, burst into tears of joy, and at last found utterance: "Wal! blessed be the Lord's name, ye've come tu again; I guessed yeou was abeout gone when I fust diskivered yer, all bloody and stuck full o' baggenet holes, as one o' them ere tarnation porcupines as hed squirted all his quills eout. Gineral Wolfe's dead an' Gineral Mountcalam tu, so I'll jist squat deown and rite Mister Brandon this'ere pleasant noos; all yer've got tu du is jist to lie still." So Bela squared his elbows, and, after innumerable efforts to pen an elegant epistle, worthy of reception at aristocratic Kingwood, gave it up in despair, and wisely indited, in his own fashion, the letter which we have already mentioned.

As soon as Charles was able to raise his body, his leg having been carefully set by the military surgeon, he was gladdened to his heart's core by the intelligence contained in his father's letter, written in regard to Lucy. It told

him of her present home, that he might at once write to her, making unreserved offer of his hand, and that he had already, together with his mother, written in accordance with this permission to Mr. Tyrrell's family. Anticipating now nothing but happiness, he poured out his whole soul in a letter to his beloved, and, rapt in reveries of bliss, gave himself up with patience to the confinement of his pallet and the orders of the surgeon, a man of few words and great ability. Honest Bela scarce left him for an instant, and continually amused him by his odd remarks.

"Where is that Indian, Bela?" said Charles, one morning, "is he secured ready for exhibition?"

"Oh, consarn him, no," said Bela; "them are pesky red skins is more wrigglesome nor eels, they is. I shot one on em, but could'nt keep him alive no how; got his tommy-hawk tho', an his beads, an his feathers, so calculate I can jest paint up myself, and the performance 'll come puty nigh on to him."

Thanks to a good constitution and careful nursing, Charles soon began to gain strength, and received honorable mention in the official despatches for his gallant conduct, though he had, in the first report, been enumerated among the dead. Hoping now daily for intelligence from Lucy, he was suddenly surprised and delighted by the appearance of his cousin Randolph. He looked wearied with his journey from Virginia, and the intense sympathy and pity impressed upon his countenance was at first attributed by Charles to anxious interest in his own shattered and wounded frame.

The autumn leaves were fast, fast falling from the elms and maples of old Cambridge, and filling its fields and avenues with their rich yellow and scarlet tributes, as the

hapless Lucy Tyrrell prepared, in brokenness of heart, to give her hand to Mr. Lascelles. She yielded to the solicitations of her parents, who now implored her in language too earnest to be longer resisted. She could no longer exercise the will to oppose them ; she was utterly prostrated by the conduct of Charles, which, to her, was without a parallel in baseness, and she attributed the long, strange silence of Randolph and Matilda to their unwillingness to write on a subject which must have caused them intense sorrow. She had passed days, weeks almost, in passionate grief; she had wept until her tears refused longer to flow; she had indulged in sorrow till she had scarce further power even to sigh over her fate, and when the news came of the surrender of Quebec, and she read, with unutterable anguish, among the lists of casualties, the name of her faithless lover, who had fallen bravely fighting at the head of his company, abandoning forever her dreams of the past, she sent for her father, and summoning almost superhuman resolution, told him, with fearful calmness, that she could no longer oppose his desires, in regard to her union with Mr. Lascelles. She had not a heart to give, but could bestow her hand, were it still worth the asking. For her own choice she would prefer to follow in death the one who had destroyed her happiness, but as it pleased heaven to deny her wish, she would now obey her parents.

Her father, rejoiced to see this change in Lucy, treated her with the utmost tenderness, at the same time asking that the marriage might soon take place. Lucy was indifferent to the period of the ceremony, but she insisted, and in that determination was inflexible, that the wedding should be one of strictest privacy and simplicity. Mr. Lascelles was forced to submit, and Lucy informing him that in her he would find one who would endeavor to do

her duty by him as a wife, but that she did not and could not love again, bid adieu forever to all hope and joy in life, and became the wife of his bosom, the inmate and mistress of his stately home.

Her parents at once came to live with her; Mr. Lascelles was kind and bounteous in his hospitality, and engaged in her household duties, surrounded by those who loved her, she might finally have forgotten her sorrows. But the cup of her misery was not yet full. She had been scarce a month married, when one morning, during the absence of Mr. Lascelles, as she was left alone with her parents, the servant in attendance placed a letter in her hands. She glanced at the superscription, and turned as pale as marble. Could that be indeed the handwriting once so loved and familiar, but not seen for long years? Was it from beyond the tomb, from him she believed to have died on the field of battle? She summoned strength to open it, and, motionless, read its entire contents; then listlessly handing it across the table to her father, who had watched her with breathless interest, she placed her hands for a moment to her temples, and one wild shriek of agony burst from her lips, as she fell in convulsions to the floor. Removed to her chamber, it was many hours before she regained her consciousness. At length, arousing from her swoon she exclaimed, in tones of the bitterest grief, "Oh, God! and have I lived for this; have I suffered in silence so long, and endured patiently, to be thus requited? Write to him, write to him; I cannot, but say that I am dead!"

The fatal letter explained all things; it was the one which Charles had written, in spite of the orders of his surgeon to avoid exertion, and at the imminent risk of bringing back his fever, as he yet lay upon his sick bed, but written with high hope, with devoted spirit, detailing

all the circumstances which the reader already knows. Clearly establishing his own innocence, and relying on Lucy's unaltered affection, he concluded with the conviction that their mutual trials were now at an end, and joyfully anticipating the hour when in person he could renew the offer of his hand and fortune to the only woman he had ever loved, or ever could love.

The misery of the distracted parents may be imagined, as they perused this long epistle. To add to their troubles, on the afternoon of that very same day, arrived the letters from the Brandons; which ought to have reached their destination a month before, but which, owing to some singular fatality, never accounted for, came, alas, too late.

We have but little more to tell. Our story has been a sad one to relate; for though presented in the guise of fiction, the incidents of Lucy's life were those of a real personage, whose history was unfortunate, as we have portrayed it.

Mr. Tyrrell briefly answered the letters, informing the Brandons of Lucy's marriage. There was nothing else to be spoken of; neither hopes for her happiness, nor regrets for her fate. A day or two after despatching his letters, he received a visit from a young officer. It was Montcure, one of the companions of Charles in his expedition to Quebec; who, on being detached from service, and on his return to Virginia, had promised Brandon to visit Lucy, and bear the news of his convalescence. He heard the sad truth from her father; and hastening homeward, met Randolph in New York; to whom he imparted this intelligence. His hearer was so powerfully affected, that instead of pursuing his journey to Boston, he proceeded at once up the Hudson river, and made his way to Quebec by the shortest route. In due time, he told his mel-

ancholy story; and, as soon as Charles health would permit, returned with his broken hearted charge to Virginia; where they beheld, in Charles' ruined home, too true an image of the destruction of his earthly hopes. The young soldier found his parents in altered health and spirits; greatly changed in the year of his absence. His mother's lovely smile had faded; and her locks were streaked with gray; while his father's portly form was shrunk and bent; and he wandered about, a changed man, often shaking his head, and sadly muttering. The old man took matters much to heart; but Charles, for the remainder of his life, did all he could to soothe him. The proud Hall he so loved to contemplate, was never rebuilt; and ere many years, before the ordinary allotment of nature's bound, the softened, chastened father, and the beautiful mother were called from earth. It was when the Revolutionary troubles had begun, that Mr. Brandon, on his dying bed, called Charles to his side, and said, "My son! I have done you heavy wrong, and I fear that I shall not be forgiven for it. I have seen with pain, that for several years you have leaned towards the cause of the colonies, against his sacred majesty, God bless him! but I have not said to you one word upon the subject. I am old, and weak, and erring; you are yet young and strong; do as seemeth to you best; be faithful to your country, as God may incline you. I can only add my blessing, and leave you to act by the advice of these two friends, (turning to Randolph, and to Patrick Henry, who were now often by him,) whom I once also wronged, but now ask of them pardon for my faults. But for myself, bear ye witness for me, I die as I have lived, a loyal subject of my king."

The staunch aristocrat was gathered to his fathers; and when the day of trial came, Charles joined the

American army, and rose high in the favor of Washington. Had he lived, he might at last have been united to Lucy, but at the battle of Eutaw Springs, in South Carolina, just as that memorable bayonet charge was made by the troops under the command of the good and brave Otho Holland Williams, of Maryland, which decided the fortunes of that day—Charles Brandon was shot dead; bravely fighting against the royal cause; as he had before fought in its favor on the Plains of Abraham. His large estates devolved upon his cousins, Randolph and Matilda; who continued to dwell in peace in the land; and their descendants, at this day, hold rank with the best and most affluent citizens of the Old Dominion.

Of the other characters of our history, we have to add that Miriam did not long survive her sister Mildred; of whose suicide she continued ignorant; imagining, as others did, that her fate was accompanied by the dreadful terrors of the fire. It was found that a good portion of her property had been dissipated; and Miriam bequeathed the remainder, in equal shares, to Mr. Castlemain, and to Lucy.

Jack Lawton lived to a good old age; and to the last his merry eye twinkled like a beacon, which weary travellers hailed with delight. Peace to his ashes!

The Reverend Thomas Pollen, having some difficulty with his flock, left Rhode Island, and went back to England, in 1760. But for thirty years, at least, after his departure, did Mrs. Morpus, under the shadows of the Trojan helmet, and the veteran umbrella, continue to train the youthful mind of Newport. Seated on her "bel-cony," she enjoyed the summer breezes, no longer ruffled by the sight of Elisha Barlow. She formed a strong attachment to the writings of a celebrated Swiss author; and it is related of her, that one of her canons

of "deportment," instructed young ladies, who would study true elegance, to be found by their morning visitors in a musing attitude, and with a finger inserted between the leaves of "Zimmerman on Solitude."

As for Bela Tilley, he continued all his life an unchanged specimen of the universal Yankee. Whenever he became disgusted with quahaugs and leather pies, he would leave his family for weeks or months at a time to themselves, in Newport; his absence causing them about as much anxiety as if he had merely gone after a black fish, off Seal Rock. He often repaired to Kingwood, where he always found warm welcome and plenty of butternuts. He was in several of the Revolutionary battles; and though he had a high reverence for General Washington, he always declared, as his opinion, that "he warn't quite so com-plete, as Gineral Wolfe and Mount-ca-lam!"

And Lucy—Lucy Laseelles. When time, the universal comforter, had softened the memory of her sorrows, she felt a sense of thankfulness that her lover, unfortunate as he had been, had passed through all trials unspotted with dishonor. She heard indirectly from him, that he acquitted her of all blame; and that, although they could not meet again, he must still love her to the last. As years passed on, Lucy devoted herself to her family with a serene spirit of resignation. She was not blessed with children; and her arts of pleasing were all bestowed upon her husband and her parents. Mr. Lascelles generously performed his part in life; but his tastes were so utterly different from Lucy's, that great sympathy between them was impossible. She was destined to lose both her parents before many years of her married life, and was finally left alone in the world, by the death of her husband, some twelve months after she had once more shed

wild tears of sorrow, as she heard of the tragic end of Charles, on the field of honor; but, "God be praised," she said, "that good, and generous, and noble, as was his life, it was yielded at last in a holy cause!"

The reckless extravagance and speculations of Mr. Lascelles, left her at his death but ill provided for, excepting by the bequest of Miriam; but, by great prudence and energy, she, in time, recovered sufficient from the wreck of her husband's fortune, to maintain her in affluence for the remainder of her days. Still in the full bloom of life and beauty, she naturally attracted attention; but, withdrawing entirely from society, she resumed and steadily pursued her literary accomplishments. Those who knew her but slightly, sometimes imputed her seclusion to hauteur and pride in wealth; but in that stately home she thought not of riches, save as a means of comfort for the poor and worthy, who never sought her in vain. With Randolph and Matilda she continued on terms of the most affectionate intercourse; and once, at their solicitation, made a journey to Virginia, after peace was declared. She visited, at Kingwood, every spot hallowed to her by the memory of Charles Brandon; the little brook, on whose banks he had for many an hour mused of her; the hills he had loved; the forest recesses; the bright flowing river, James.

Even the shattered, mouldering ruins of the Hall, appeared no longer desolate; for shrubs and vines now waved in green luxuriance over them, hiding their blackened masses—to her, emblematic of the new and tender verdure, which the hand of God had sown again in her once torn and wasted heart. She stood daily beside the simple monument erected over the remains of her lover, humbly thanking heaven that her pilgrim feet had been permitted to press the ground which held his honored clay.

As her life passed, every summer found her at the dear old island—a friend, as she ever had been, to the poor cottagers. And when she visited the rocky shore, to watch the setting sun, her gaze, as in her days of trial, turned often to the south, where slept the one she loved.

But now, she felt only serene felicity; the deep sea had fulfilled its promises of tranquil joy, and as its choral waves rang with notes of triumph, from her soul fled the last memory of pain; and she was filled with that "peace of God, which passeth all understanding."

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