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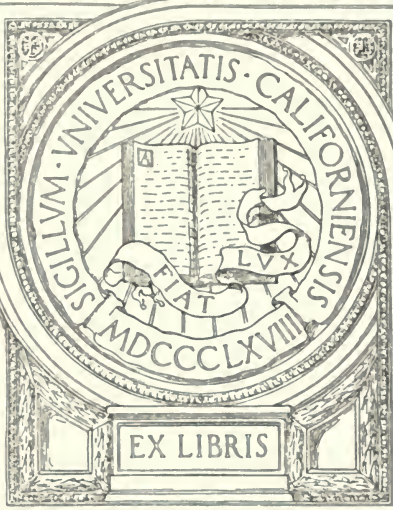
A large, dark laurel wreath with a ribbon at the top, framing the title text.

IN OLD
NEW ENGLAND



HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH





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IN OLD NEW ENGLAND

THE ROMANCE OF A COLONIAL FIRESIDE

BY

HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH

AUTHOR OF

THE LOG SCHOOL-HOUSE ON THE COLUMBIA, IN THE BOYHOOD OF
LINCOLN, THE BOYS OF GREENWAY COURT, THE PATRIOT
SCHOOLMASTER, ZIGZAG JOURNEYS, ETC.



NEW YORK
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
1895

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P R E F A C E .

THE stories that were told on old red settles by chimney fires in old New England days had a peculiar spirit and coloring. Quaint as many of them were, they carried deep spiritual meanings. Reward or retribution was somehow associated with the queer tale of the country grocery store, the ordinary, the husking party, or of the neighborhood or town.

I used to hear many of these tales when a boy in the old home farm in the Pokanoket country on the Mount Hope and Narragansett Bays. They have always haunted me at such times as my mind wandered back to the past, and I have liked to reproduce them in my own way for the magazines and papers. Of the stories in this volume, A Hallowe'en Reformation (Captain Tuttle and the Miracle Clock) and A Regular Old-fashioned Thanksgiving (The Haunted Oven) appeared in the Century Magazine, and are used here by permission of the Century Company. The Inn of the Good Woman appeared in Harper's

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Magazine, and is used by permission. Wych Hazel, The Poet's Corner, and No Room in the Inn were originally published in the publications of Messrs. Harper and Brothers, and are reproduced here by the courtesy of the publishers. Of the other stories, some have not been printed before and others have appeared in The Youth's Companion, The Household, and popular papers which have kindly allowed me to republish them.

H. B.

Boston, *May 1, 1895.*

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IN OLD NEW ENGLAND.

PARDON PONDER, PEDAGOGUE.

POKANOKET HOUSE was a century old and looked out on Mount Hope and Narragansett Bays.

We were approaching the holidays of the short days and long evenings—Hallowe'en, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Our favorite stories on such evenings had been the famous Ingoldsby Legends, but this year there had appeared among us as a visitor, one Pardon Ponder, an old schoolmaster and town clerk, whose early days had been passed on a farm in one of the old Swansea towns. He was a fine gentleman of the olden time, with a taste for legendary lore and of much historic knowledge. We called him the "Red Settler."

"Why should we repeat the old English tales again?" said friend Conner. "Pedagogue Ponder is deep in the legends of the colonial farms and inns, and the Red Settle tales of the later period. Why may we not have some Ingoldsby Legends of our own, or tales that resemble them?"

Pardon Ponder, Pedagogue, was asked if he would relate before the open fire of the old chimney a series

of New England stories, such as most closely resemble the English Ingoldsby Legends.

"I should be delighted to do so, if I only knew how," said he, delighted. He lifted his brows. "Must they be true stories?" asked he.

"Yes," we answered.

"Must I follow the old story-tellers?"

"Yes."

"And like the old story-tellers, may I use my own dialogue and colorings?"

"Yes, you may follow the old methods."

"Then gather up a pile of driftwood on the shore and bring it here to make a sort of sympathetic light, and to-morrow evening I will begin. I have not the art of the English parish story-teller. But I know some tales that I like to relate in my own homely way."

Joy go with you, Pardon Ponder, Pedagogue! We have never met any one who sounded our souls like an old New England story-teller by a driftwood fire.

The old farms on the Mount Hope lands of the Pokanoket country were once the scenes of merry gatherings, where strange tales, of which many were humorous ghost stories, were told on long, red settles, by natural story-tellers. This period of story-telling belongs to Old Colony times, Massachusetts Bay Colony times, and early Rhode Island days. Ghost stories and supposed supernatural happenings were the popular subjects of these tales, and the weird and willowy story-teller adhered to the original outline of a popular legend, while he used his own imagination at will in developing it. The same story was seldom told in the same way, and the most ac-

ceptable entertainer was he who could make a wonder tale most vivid and dramatic, and send his listeners away under a spell. The popular mind required that the tale should be founded on fact, but that the narrator should make use of the novelist's and the actor's art in the development of his curious narrative. Such a person became a very popular character, and was known as a "natural story-teller."

These tales were much like the Ingoldsby Legends, those queer English parish legends collected by Richard Harris Barham, very popular in England a half century ago. Of the supernatural legends it was the humorous ghost story that was usually the most pleasing, and such a tale was rehearsed over and over with many variations for three generations, and has not yet ceased to reappear on holiday evenings.

New England had no fairy land—no passing clouds with angels' chariots. The ghost story was in harmony with her religious traditions. The Pilgrims and precisioners had fled to the coast-lined wilderness from injustice, and the haunted conscience, which produced the ghost of the imagination, fulfilled the conception of retributive justice. He whose wrongdoing escaped detection could not flee from his own soul and memory. He would become a haunted man. . . There was another life where his true self would be made clear.

The terror which evildoers had of ghosts and graveyards had its comical sides, and out of such episodes, that were at once fearful and humorous, some of the most popular of these tales arose.

Pardon Ponder's boyhood was spent in the Pokanoket country, in sight of the Mount Hope lands,

and he retained a part of an old estate, which has always been held by the family, since early colonial times. It was here that he first heard many of these stories and incidents to which he has given the enlargement of fiction. Some of them were husking-party tales.

The memory of the historic traditions of the Pokanoket country, and the land that stretched from Cape Cod to the Narragansett Bay; of the homes of the descendants of the Pilgrims; of Massasoit, King Philip, Queen Weetano; of Roger Williams, Bishop Berkeley, and the early magistrates of Plymouth Colony and Providence Plantations; of the days of the hardy orchards, grand elms, broad hayfields and cornfields; of the rugged conquest of the whale; of the picturesque coast fisheries; of the high-curtained pulpits that stood for justice, and threatened the retributive ghost, which doctrine was true in spirit if not in fact; of the lives of rural populations passed in homely honor, when the farm was made sufficient to meet all the wants of the family, and of the contrasts of such scenes with the crowded vassalage to social conditions of the great city populations—all led him to cherish these stories as one who loves to bring back again a dream of by-gone years. In relating them while he sought to use the creative fancy and interpretative imagination, such frames and colorings were, for the most part, merely employed in an effort to make more vivid and interesting real scenes, facts, and traditions.

We gathered the driftwood for the evening fires on a bright October day, and while the first fire was burning red, green, and blue in the unlighted old

keeping room, Pardon Ponder, Pedagogue, appeared, tall, thin, and shadowy among the shadows, and leaning our elbows on our knees we listened to the first of our own queer stories suggested by the old Ingoldsby Legends.

Pile on the driftwood and let the fire burn. The spirit of the past haunts the fire, for the world itself was once fire, and the latent fire is a mystery as deep as the soul.

Let the fire burn merrily to-night for it is an old husking tale that I have to tell. Such an one was followed by the fiddle, in the days when the frosty air used to be stirred to the tunes of "Money Musk" and "Rosin the Beau."

THE HAUNTED OVEN, OR A REGULAR OLD-FASHIONED THANKSGIVING.

“THAT is just the stun!”

Squire Job Pettijohn sat down on the wall, and leaned his chin on his hand, and scanned a slate gravestone among a cluster of savin trees. It was a solitary stone in the corner of a great field on a windy hill, where it was intended to make a family graveyard. The turnpike had passed the lot, and near the savin trees was a “pair of bars,” as the rustic New England gateway used to be called. The gravestone had stood in the corner of the lot for nearly thirty years. Time had slanted it, and the little mound that had swelled the earth had sunken to the common level, and bore a network of blackberry briars with red leaves. The top of the stone bore the usual grim death’s-head and crossbones, and underneath this solemn admonition had been carved the memorial :

Sacred to the Memory of
DELIGHT PETTIJOHN,
only daughter of Joshua Toogood, and wife of Job Pettijohn,
Aged 28 years.

Beware, my friends, when this you see.
What I am now, you soon shall be.
You too like me will soon be gone.
I *was* the wife of Pettijohn,
And what I was you too shall be,
And oh, my friends, remember me.

Peace to her ashes.

“That is just the stun—the Lord forgive me if I am wrong. That there poetry never did quite suit me, although the schoolmarm composed it, she that is the traveling dressmaker now, and gets her livin’ by goin’ round visitin’. Stands to reason that every one that reads that there poetry can’t have been the wife of Job Pettijohn. The parson criticised that verse when I first set it up, and it has never given me any satisfaction, though I have mowed past it, and stopped to whet my scythe here, for nigh upon thirty years. This ain’t no place for a graveyard, anyhow.”

Squire Pettijohn sat for a time in silence. A cloud of wild geese in V-form flew honking over his head.

“Them are dreadful lonesome birds,” he said. “They’ve gone over my head now well-nigh thirty falls since Delight went away. How this new house that I am buildin’ would have pleased her! I always set store by her, and I think of her still when the avens blow and the martins come, and the conquiddles sing, and the wild geese go over after the leaves begin to turn. She wanted to live, but she had to die, and I was sorry for her. She would have been a good wife to me, Delight would, if she’d only lived. Them wild geese make me think of old times.”

It was nearly night. The red sun burned low in the west, and promised a bright afterglow. The blue bay rolled afar, and over the savin trees that margined the waters gray shadows were falling.

It was October, and the air was still. With leaden feet the hired men were returning to their homes along the country road. An old clamdigger came up the hill and stopped to ask :

“How do you come on with that house of yourn? Have you found them ovenstones yet?”

“Yes,” said the Squire; “I’ve found just the stun.”

“Glad to hear it, Squire. That kind of stone is hard to find. I’d ought to know. I’ve built walls now for e’enmost fifty year.”

The old clamdigger jogged along with a pail of clams on his back, hung on a crooked stick.

The Squire slowly got down from the wall, saying mysteriously :

“I remember it all as though it was yesterday. The horses stopped three times, and there were thirty carriages. I’m a well-to-do man, I am, and I have been elected justice of the peace four times. I ought not to build a new house without gettin’ Delight a pair of new gravestones. I’ll put these, poetry and all, into the floor of the new oven, and say nothin’ about it. That headstone is just what I’ve been lookin’ for. I’ll have her removed to the cemet’ry, and get some white stones for her, and put a Scripture text on the headstone. Stands to reason that it is the right thing to do.”

The Squire walked slowly up the road in the cool, crisp air. The walls were covered with wild grapes in dark red and purple clusters, or were feathery with clematis. Yellow cornfields lay in the valley below, and ox carts with loads of corn for husking were going home to the haystack meadows. The shouts of the farm boys to the heavy oxen echoed in the silent air. The wild-apple boughs were red with fruit, which would soon be crushed in the cider mills. There in the distance a white sail careened in the

blue bay. The sun sank red, and the clouds about the sunset turned into coppery castles, with pinnacles of gold.

The Squire stopped at the bars of an uncultivated farm that joined his own, and which was larger than his. It belonged to John Bradford, a commercial man, who lived in a public way in New York. The farmhouse was built of stone and brick, was two and a half stories high, and had a heavy oak portico and great dormer windows. A son of the owner sometimes visited the place, and when he did so took his meals at the Squire's.

"It is a pity that that great farm should all run to waste," the Squire said. "Even the pigeons look lonesome there. It makes me lonesome; it does, now. Bradford's wife used to be a mighty pretty creeter; she's a fine lady now."

The Squire moved on, and came to the Four Corners, where stood a guidepost.

"To Boston," he read. There was a painted black hand on the board. "To Boston," he repeated. "That is the right way. I've been elected justice of the peace three times, and maybe they'll send me to the General Court. Stranger things than that have happened. That guidepost is a kind of prophet. They all go right who follow that—to Boston. Maybe I'll get there yet."

The Squire passed thoughtfully on, and came to his farmhouse, which for a full century had been known as The Old Red House on the Hill. The house had been built in the days of the Pilgrim Fathers. It had great chimneys and a slanting roof, over which a cool woodbine, now flaming with crimson

leaves, in the summer time fell like a waterfall. It had been built in garrison style, the second story projecting over the first, and one of the chimneys contained a pane of glass out of which one could see the valley without being seen, a provision made during King Philip's war. Back of the house were orchards of ancient trees, and a huge barn, and stacks of hay and straw.

Across the road rose a new house, two stories high, perpendicular, and as stately, cold, and expressionless as the old farmstead was picturesque and full of historic character. The Squire had not the education or fine manners of his ancestors, but he inherited their sturdy character, and was a thrifty man. He had started right in life, always spending a little less than he earned, and so had become what was called in those times "beforehanded." Thirty years' savings had enabled him to enlarge his farm, and build a new house after the manner of the times, one that was so perfectly perpendicular and correct that every angle of beauty was wanting. He stopped at the pasture bars of the farmhouse meadow, and surveyed the tall structure and its two perfectly proper chimneys with pride.

Hadley, for twenty years his hired man, a negro from one of the Windward Islands, who had come to Plymouth on a merchant ship, came out to meet him, lifting his eyebrows as he approached, as though some unexpected event had happened.

"Massa Job," he said, coming up to the bars, "these be the las' times. To-day we are—we are here, smart as peppergrass, and to-morrow where is we? Do you know who is dead?"

“No, Hadley; who?”

“You know the Plymouth stage has passed?”

“Yes; but who is gone?”

“John Bradford. He died in New York; the Brewsters have had a letter.”

“John Bradford! Can it be? Then Mary Bradford is a widder!”

“Lor’, Massa Job!”

“Don’t say anythin’ about it.”

“What, Massa Job?”

“The widder.”

“Lordy, Massa Job, your min’ is not turnin’ in that way so soon! He ain’t buried yet. They’re goin’ to bring him to Plymouth to rest among his folks.”

“And the widder will come, too. I wonder if the funeral procession will pass *this* way.”

Squire Job looked up with renewed pride to his perpendicular mansion, and over the cidery orchards to his bursting barns. Mary Bradford had been a favorite companion of his boyhood. They used to go whortleberrying together, and had gathered red cranberries in the pasture lands, and checkerberries in the woods. She had fair cheeks and bright eyes then; he had dreamed of her often in his long widowerhood.

He stood in silence. The negro respected his feelings, and from time to time lifted his eyebrows. The Squire felt at last that he must say something.

“Yes, Hadley, these are solemn times. The earth drops its inhabitants as—as the tree drops its leaves,” which last happy figure was suggested by a ripple of sea wind among the orchard boughs followed by a russet shower. “We come up and go like Indian pipes, the ghost flowers of the woods.” He was again silent.

“Hadley,” he continued, “I’ve got somethin’ on my conscience. I’ve had a burden there for many years.”

“Lordy, Massa, I’ve seen that you warn’t always at ease.”

“Yes, Hadley; that poetry ain’t correct.”

“Poetry is it, Massa? In the hymn book, Massa?”

“No; on the gravestun. Hadley, I’m goin’ to get Delight some new ones——”

“Gravestuns, Massa?”

“Yes, Hadley.”

“Now, that am right, Massa. I always knew that you’re a good man in your ’magnations——”

“And, Hadley, what am I goin’ to do with the old ones?”

“Don’t know, Massa; for the Lor’ sake, what?”

“Them stuns, if they weren’t gravestuns, would be just the thing for the floor of the new oven.”

“For the Lor’ sake, Massa! Baked poetry and all!”

“I want the best stuns that can be had for that oven, Hadley. An oven is a very important part of the house. If we didn’t eat we wouldn’t live. When a man quits eatin’ it is all over with him in this world.”

“Sure, Massa.”

“Think of the great oven in the old house, and the Saturday’s bakin’s in it for now nigh on to a hundred and fifty years. Think of the cordwood it has swallowed up, and the walnut leaves; and the brown bread it has baked, and the apple puddin’s, and the rye-and-Injun, and the pans of apples, and the pumpkin pies, and the gingerbread, and the beans, and all. Think of the funerals, when you could hear the clock tick and the wills that have been read when they came back

from the grave, and the feasts with which the old oven comforted the mourners."

"For sure, Massa."

"And the Thanksgivin's, Hadley! Oh, what Thanksgivin' dinners have come out of that old oven! Makes me thankful just to think of it. Roast pigs, and turkeys, and ducks, and chickens, and wild fowl, and shellfish, and flatfish, and ministers."

"For the Lor' sake, Massa, you don't mean ter say that you roasted *them*?"

"No, no, Hadley; they came to say grace. Old Parson Bonny he once fell asleep while saying grace, and we had to wait until he woke up, and by that time the dinner all got cold."

"For the Lor' sake! That was in the good old times."

"Yes; he had the palsy. But that ain't here nor there. Those were fine old days, in the town-meetin' times, and we don't have any such of late years. The world is growin' worldly, and it isn't now what it used to be."

"Spects 'tis the las' times, Massa!"

"Hadley, I've got a great thought in my head—a scheme."

"For the Lor' sake, Massa!"

"Yes, Hadley; we must finish that oven at once. I want you to find two large, flat stones almost as big as them gravestuns for the floor. You can get 'em. Next year I'll have a reg'lar old-fashioned Thanksgivin'. I'll just have baked in that oven all the old things of the Pilgrim days, and we'll have the minister come, and it may be the Lef'tenant-Governor Winslow

and other property people will be here—likely enough somebody else—I can't say now."

"Who, Massa?"

"I can't exactly say now—somebody—but never mind; we'll have a reg'lar old-fashioned 'Thanksgivin', wild geese and all."

Hadley lifted his eyebrows again and again.

"Surely you don't mean that Bradford woman—the widder?"

"Sho, Hadley! 'tis too soon to think of such things now. But old Governor Bradford—I've just been thinkin' on't; my grandmother used to tell me about it—well, old Governor Bradford, accordin' to her account, old Governor Bradford, of the Mayflower—well, his wife was drowned at the landing of the Pilgrims, and he had been kind o' partial in his early years to a pretty girl at Austerfield, or Scrooby, or some country place in England, and she married, and her husband died. Well, I won't tell you any more now; it is a pretty story, but that ain't neither here nor there. You go and look the farm all over, and see if you can't find two flat ovenstuns that will hold heat, large ones, almost as big as those gravestuns. I first thought I would use them—the Lord forgive me! It wouldn't 'a' been decent, would it, now?"

"What became of the girl that the Governor loved, Massa?"

"She became a widder."

"Did she come over in the Mayflower, Massa?"

"No; she came over after the Mayflower. Some folks do. It was a mighty pretty story; shows what a woman will do for a man when her heart is all set right. She became Bradford's second wife; some folks do have

second wives. The Atlantic ocean, and Indians, and cold ain't anythin'—to some folks. The Bradfords all sleep over yonder where the moon is risin'."

Job Pettijohn made his way through the wallside bushes of red alderberries, when he was arrested by Hadley.

"Massa, what you goin' to do with the old gravestuns?"

"Well, Hadley, I would put 'em into the oven if they weren't gravestuns. I always used Delight well when she was livin', and I'm goin' to keep right on now. Hadley, do you put them gravestuns out of sight somewhere—into the barn sullar wall, or somewhere, you needn't tell me where. I never want to see 'em again. I've always had a prejudice agin' 'em, since Mary Bow, the old-maid dressmaker, stood here by my side and read :

'I *was* the wife of Pettijohn,
And what I was you soon shall be.'

She looked up to me kind o' knowin', and put her hand on my shoulders, and sort o' pressed down, and I've never wanted to visit the place with no women folks after that. That ain't no kind o' right poetry; 'tain't respectable to me. Stands to reason that *all* the old maids and widders and other folks' wives can't be the second consort of Job Pettijohn.

'And what I was you soon shall be.'

Folks just laughed at that stun, and now I want you to hide it where I and no one else will never see it again. Break it all up. Just look at the moon—as big as the sun. 'Tis, sometimes, in these fall evenin's."

Far over the sea, where the white sail of the Mayflower had drifted the Cross of St. George, the hunter's moon, like a night sun, was filling the sky with a flood of veiled splendor. Silence had fallen on all the farmyards; candles gleamed here and there through the dusky trees; and the chill of a frosty night crept over the walnut trees and rowaned meadows. Afar gleamed the sea marshes, and in the stillness the memories of heroic lives and days seemed to haunt the air, as always in the old Cape towns.

The two men went up the hill in the shadows. Hadley felt the spell of the moon, and made a classical allusion to one of the legends of the place.

"The ghost, Massa!"

"Oh, that was nothin' but an old white horse."

"But his *paws* were in the moon, Massa."

"He was eatin' apples from the top of the tree. Horses like wild apples, and will lift themselves up to get at them."

The two men went home. The next day Hadley searched the farm for two large, flat stones, but could not find any of sufficient size and hardness. He also "took up" the two gravestones, and set them against the mossy wall, and sat down and looked at them.

"If I were to break 'em up they'd do first-rate; and nobody would ever know it until the resurrection. I'll do it."

That night Hadley might have been seen among the savin trees and red alders with a stone hammer. The next morning poor Delight's unfortunate gravestones, poetry and all, had disappeared, and Hadley informed his master that he had found the right ovenstones, and "put them in."

From the day that the great stone oven was completed, Squire Pettijohn seemed to be lost in the vision of the proposed Thanksgiving dinner to his friends. It became the one event in his mental horizon. Poor John Bradford's body came back to the burying ground of his fathers. The carriage of the undertaker passed the Squire's new house, and the widow in her solitary coach. There were twenty carriages in the procession on the day of the funeral, and the horses stopped twice, or "acted contrary," on their way to the windy hill where the earth had been opened. For horses to act contrary in a long funeral procession was the notable event of that slow, final ride to life's eternal pillow.

Squire Pettijohn's sister, Hannah, a maiden lady who had been a school dame, kept his house. She was a tall, stately woman, and wore a high cap with flying ribbons at the ears, a crossed handkerchief about her breast, carried her keys at her side, and maintained a gold snuffbox with a very curious picture on the cover. She fondly hoped that her brother would never marry again, but yet looked upon all events of life philosophically, and took her poetry of life from the ancient Book of Job. "That is the best which happens to every man," she used to say in the spirit of the man of Uz. "Since we do not know anything, and never can know anything, we must believe that everything that happens is for the best good of every creature that lives." This Oriental philosophy gave her a serene manner, and left a peace in her long, charitable face that was something really beautiful to meet.

"Hannah," said the Squire, one September even-

ing nearly a year after the new house and its handy oven were completed—"Hannah, stop your knittin' and listen to me. You have kept up your education, and I never did. I want you to help me about them there invitations."

"What invitations, Brother Job?" said Hannah, dropping her needles.

"To the 'Thanksgivin' dinner. I have a curious plan in my head. I've been thinkin' of it all summer. I'm goin' to have a reg'lar old-fashioned 'Thanksgivin'. I'm goin' to send the invitations by letter, and put into each letter five grains of corn."

"For the Lor' sake!" said Hadley.

"Brother Job, be you crazy? What are you goin' to send the corn for?"

"Hannah, what did the ancient people of the Lord used to build green tabernacles for, and live in 'em a week every year? 'Twas for the remembrance. Now, Hannah, when the famine came to the colony in Governor Bradford's day, Myles Standish dealt out to the people five grains of corn for a meal. Well, what happened? The old Pilgrims had faith in the five grains of corn, and the next year good times came, and they met in the old log church on Pilgrim Hill and had a 'Thanksgivin'. For *remembrance*, Hannah."

"For the Lor' sake!" said Hadley. "I thought it was for seed, or the chickens."

"Who are you going to send invitations to?" asked Hannah.

"Lef'tenant-Governor Winslow——"

"That's a good idea, Brother Job. He honored the General Court, and is a good man; besides, he's all alone in the world."

“And the selectmen, bein’ as I’m a justice of the peace.”

“Yes; you ought to invite them.”

“And the parson.”

“Yes.”

“And seein’ that the Widder Bradford must be rather lonely, and must long again for old scenes and the bygones, I just thought I’d invite *her*.”

Hadley rolled up his eyes, and if ever Hannah Pettijohn began to knit as though a tire-woman were waiting, it was then.

There was a long silence, broken only by the solemn tick of the old clock and the sound of the needles.

Suddenly Hannah dropped her knitting work, pushed her spectacles up on her forehead, and said calmly:

“Those are good ideas, Job. I’ve been communin’ with myself, and I’ll do it.”

“You’ll write ’em, Hannah?”

“Yes; to *all* of them. It don’t matter what becomes of me. That which is best for us all is sure to come. I can trust Providence in all the changes of the winds and waves. But I’m human, and I’ll have to battle with myself. Never mind; good comes that way.” Her lip quivered, and she dropped her spectacles to hide her tears.

“I’ll always take care of you, Hannah, and she’s well off.”

“Who is well off, Brother Job?”

“Oh, our old school friend.”

Hannah’s needles flew again. She stopped knitting at times to punch the fire, and to stroke the

kitten that lay purring in her lap. Then her needles would fly again. At last she arose slowly.

“Job, I’m goin’ upstairs to baste those quilts on the frames.”

“Hannah, wait. Let’s have it out and over. I want to have good cookin’ for that day—the best ever seen in the colony.”

“Don’t I cook well, and bake, and serve, Job? Don’t I do it all well?”

“Yes, Hannah. We will want succotash, because that belonged to the Thanksgivin’s of old Indian times. And pandowdy, because that was the great dish of the next generation, after the apple trees began to bear. And apple dumplings with potato crusts. And rabbit pie, and wild fowl, and cider-apple sass, and all things that the Pilgrim families used to serve on Thanksgivin’s in all their years of hardships.”

“I’ll do my best, Brother Job, to have everything just as you say. I’ll lay myself out on it, Job. You’ve been a good brother to me, in the main, and my heart has always been true, and to say that one is true-hearted is the best thing that can be said of anybody in this uncertain world; ain’t it, now, Job?”

A queer episode followed, which could not happen to-day, but was a serious thing then. The cat suddenly leaped up as from a dream, turned round and round, and ran under the great oak table.

“She seen a ghost,” said Hadley. “Animals always sees ’em before folks. Missus, don’t go upstairs! Don’t, Missus! The sexton brought the new gravestones to-day, and left ’em among the savin trees on the hill, and to-morrow he’s goin’ to move the body

and all. You don't know what that eat sees. These am the las' times."

"Why didn't you tell me, Job?"

There was a silence. Hannah began to rock to and fro, and to hum, and then to sing. In those days of New England religious revivals, which changed and lifted character, and kept communities strong and pure, there was one very searching hymn that Hannah used to sing in the conference meetings held "round at the houses"; and this she repeated now:

"The pure testimoni poured forth from the sperrit,
Cuts like a two-edgèd sword,
And hypocrits now are most sorle' tormented
Because they're condemned by the word.
The pure testimoni discovers the dross,
And——'"

Hum, hum, hum, and a violent rocking.

"You didn't answer me, Job?"

There was another silence, broken only by the tick of the clock.

"Job?"

"Well, Hannah?"

"There's one thing that I would like to know, and I've heard others speak of it, too. Whatever became of those slate gravestones on Windy Hill, among the savin trees?"

"I used 'em in buildin', Hannah. That was no proper poetry for a gravestone. I've done the respectable thing by Delight. I've waited now goin' on thirty years, and to-morrow I shall show again my respect for her. She was a good woman."

"Buildin' what, Brother Job?"

"Oh, I got 'em used, for foundation stones on

somethin' I was buildin'. That wa'n't no good poetry, Hannah. Don't ever speak of it again."

The cat again whisked across the room, and Hadley rolled up his eyes, and went and stood by his benefactor's chair, and said :

"For the Lor' sake, Massa Job! These be the las' times. My conscience is all on fire now. That there cat knows it all."

Hannah would sit evening after evening on the old red settle, and look into the fire. She grew absent minded, and used to stand in the frame of the door, and gaze at the tops of the trees.

"If he marries her, they'll never want me," she would sometimes say, talking to herself. "But somebody else will. Right doin' makes a home for every one in the world. I never cooked as I mean to cook for that Thanksgivin' Day. My pandowdy will make them all grateful for the days of the five grains of corn."

In the midst of the fall cooking an extraordinary thing occurred. For great husking parties Hannah had been accustomed to bake very large loaves of wheat bread in the old house, and she followed up the old method in the new. She placed one of these enormous loaves on walnut leaves on the floor of the oven, without a pan, after the old custom. When she went to cut the bread for the great husking supper she thought that she saw the word "ashes" in raised letters on the bottom of it.

"It must be a happenin'," she said, "so I'll say nothin' about it. But it is very mysterious; the letters all face backward. Some folks would think it was a sign."

Early in October Mrs. Bradford was one day seated in her rooms in Fraunces' Tavern, New York, where Washington had bade the officers of his army farewell, and announced his intention of retiring to private life. There was with her a very bright and unique companion, little Annie Brewster of New Windsor, New York, a dwarf and a daughter of a descendant of Elder Brewster, the first minister of the Pilgrim republic. Washington had been a friend to her, and for the very popular reason that she had once refused an invitation from Lady Washington to be present at a social party.

"I have been invited merely out of curiosity," said the little child of the Pilgrims, "and never will I take the blood of the Brewsters to any place where it is not invited for its own worth."

The little girl may have misunderstood Lady Washington's motive. Be that as it may, both Washington and his lady so much respected her for her refusal as to become her friends, and, according to an old family tradition, probably offered her a home with them.

Mrs. Bradford had lived at the old historic hostelry since her husband died, as this had been his New York home. She had an unmarried son, and three daughters who were married, and each of her sons-in-law had offered her a home with him. But her days of ambition were over, she had lost a part of her property at sea, and she longed for a quiet life on her Old Colony farm. She dreamed continually of the simple scenes of her girlhood, and felt that her son's health would be better on the windy hills overlooking Plymouth Harbor and Provincetown Bay.

The postman knocked at the door, and sprightly

Annie Brewster answered the call. She was given a letter, very odd and bulky, bearing the address of Mrs. Bradford.

"It is from the Cape," said the widow. "I hope that nothing ill has befallen any of my old friends there. Annie, read it."

The beautiful dwarf opened the letter, and there dropped from it a grain of corn. Then fell another, then others, five in all.

"Five grains of corn," said the widow. "That has an Old Cape sound. What does the letter mean?"

"This," said little Annie:

"DEAR MRS. BRADFORD: Let us remember the days of old. Our fathers dwelt in booths in the wilderness, and in grateful remembrance let us keep the feast of green tents and adorn our houses with boughs. I have sealed up in this letter five grains of corn, such as your great-great-grandfather, in the days of distress and humiliation, dealt out as a fast-day meal.

"I am going to give a dinner on Thanksgiving Day to my old friends, and keep a Feast of Tabernacles like the patriarchs of old. We were friends in other years. Let me invite you to be present on Thanksgiving Day, and renew the friendships of the past, and honor the enduring precisioners by our own grateful remembrance. You are a daughter of the Pilgrims of Scrooby and Austerfield, and you married a son of the Pilgrims, whose name is an ancestral crown. You will make me very happy by accepting the invitation, and thus honoring the men and days of old.

"Sincerely yours,

"JOB PETTIJOHN."

“P. S. Hannah joins with me in the invitation. It is she that herewith expresses my thoughts to you.”

The postscript was written in the same hand as the letter. Mrs. Bradford handed it to her son William.

“*He* made her write that,” said the boy, with a smile. “Hannah Pettijohn is a saint. Let us go, mother. And, Annie, you shall go with us. It is a delightful thing to visit the old Brewster farm in husking time.”

Mrs. Bradford’s mind ran over the past—the old thrifty home scenes of her girlhood; the avens, the lilac bushes, the blooming orchards, the peach boughs that grew pink, and the pear trees that grew white and odorous, at the coming of the long days of spring; the orioles in the great hourglass elms; the clover fields; and the bobolinks, or Indian conquiddles, that toppled in the waving grass; the haying times; the merry huskings; the apple pickings; the nuttings; the cranberry meadows; and the old dinner horn that was blown from the bowery back door at the noontime hour. She could even hear the ospreys scream in the long July days in the clear blue sky. The great airy rooms and their industrious associations all rose before her. She thought of the looms in the garret; of the dipping-of-candles day; of the dismal “killing time”; of the powder candles that were burned on Christmas night; of the old bread-cart man, with his jingling bells; of the peddlers in their red carts; of the summer showers on the dry roof; of the horse block; and even of the rag bag and the button bag in the “saddle room.” She pictured the general training day, and commencement day in Cambridge town, but more than all the old

Pilgrims' Thanksgiving, when the people came home, and hands clasped hands over the bridge of a year, and heart pressed heart with affections that moistened the eyes. The stage driver, with his long whip, the coach dog and spanking steeds rushed across her vision; the old folks with white hair and serene faces, at the end of the long table; the churchyard toward which the procession of loving hearts all traveled, and in which they all found rest at last; the bell, ringing, tolling on Sundays, and finally tolling on uncertain days as the earth opened and closed, and the sexton did his office. She laughed, burst into tears, and said:

"Yes, I will go. We will all go. Annie, you should go home and see the old Brewster farm once more, and read Elder Brewster's Bible, and sit in his chair, and look into his looking-glass, into which all the Pilgrims have looked."

The Brewster farm, with its great rooms, and long orchards overlooking the sea, was near the estate of the Bradfords and Pettijohns. The old parlor contained, and still exhibits, Elder Brewster's mirror, before which it is probable that all the Pilgrims passed, and saw their faces and forms, forever lost now, even to memory.

Thanksgiving Day came, a mellow splendor of Indian-summer weather, falling leaves, and purple gentians. The stage from Boston came rumbling down the old country road, the farm geese fleeing before it into the lanes, and partridges whirring into the woods. It was a day of trial to serene Hannah Pettijohn. She had toiled for weeks in preparation for this day. There was hardly a notable dish in the country round that she had not prepared. She had scoured the house in all of its rooms, put down her new rag carpet

in the parlor, her new husk mats on the kitchen floors, and had "herrin'-boned" the chambers.

In the midst of these preparations another curious and remarkable event had occurred. Hannah had found on the bottom of a great loaf of gingerbread, baked on walnut leaves in the new oven, some strange angles like raise letters.

"That looks just as though it read 'Remember me' backward," said she. "Mebby 'tis a sign. There's something queer about that oven. The gingerbread seems all right, and it must be my head is out of order." She looked troubled, but did not mention the incident, and only said: "I hope the bakin' on 'Thanksgivin' Day will come out straight. I'd hate to have anything to happen then, especially before Madam Bradford. *She* used to be a very particular person. That there loaf of gingerbread did look just like a gravestone. I wouldn't like to have one of my great 'Thanksgivin' loaves of wheat bread come out that way. I'm goin' to make my loaves of wheat bread for that particular day long and broad, and bake them on walnut leaves, and I want 'em to come out smooth. I'm goin' to do my duty, if it does hurt me, and it does."

Mrs. Bradford, or Madam Bradford, as she was called, with her son and little Annie Brewster, had arrived at the old Brewster farm a few days before the Pilgrims' feast. So when the stage arrived on Thanksgiving Day, the only guest that came directly to the Pettijohn house was Lieutenant-Governor Winslow, from the Winslow estate near the great Marshfield meadows.

Governor Winslow, as he was called, belonged to the great family of colonial governors and town magis-

trates, had once presided over the Senate in the General Court as substitute officer, and so carried the family honor of Governor, or Left-tenant-Governor, as the title was then pronounced. He was a portly man of sixty, a widower, rich, and handsome. He looked finely on that day. The dogs barked when he arrived, and the farm hands stood with uncovered heads under the burning elms to meet him. He had been a life-long friend of the Pettijohns, the Bradfords, and the Brewsters, and had seemed to take a particular interest in Hannah Pettijohn in his young days, before his marriage, when she used to keep school and sing *country* in the choir. The Brewsters and the Bradfords came over to the Pettijohn farm early on the eventful day, and Madam Bradford received a most gracious reception from Job, and a polite one from Hannah.

Madam Bradford wandered about the place, and gazed out on the hills where the old precisioners used to live, and where were their graves. She lived in her girlhood again. Job watched her impatiently.

Job was a man of decision. He had a very practical mind. He never let the grass grow under the horses' feet when he was going to mill; he galloped with the grist while the stream was flowing. To-day the past had little poetry for him. He had invited Madam Bradford here to "learn her mind," and he proceeded to do this at once, so that no cloud should hang over his Thanksgiving dinner.

"Mis' Bradford," said he, "come, let those old things go. I want to show you my new house. Let's go upstairs. I want you to look out of the chamber winders."

Madam followed Job with a complex expression on her face.

“There, Mis’ Bradford, I want you to look out on to your own farm, and see it as I see it every mornin’. It is all goin’ to wreck and ruin, and it is a shame. Nobody to put up the walls, nobody to keep the meadows in order, nobody to pick the apples, nor nothin’. Now, just look at *my* farm. Don’t it look like livin’, now? And you ’way off there in York State. It’s strange that people will live so far away, and ketch such queer notions. Mis’ Bradford, I’ve had an idea in my head goin’ on—months. Your farm jines *mine*, and you ought to jine *me*. There, that idea has flew out of my head like a martin bird. I know it’s sudden. Say, Widder, now, what do you say?”

“Esquire Pettijohn, you amaze me. I—I—I can’t answer *now*. I must wait and consider.” She looked out of the window and far away. “My old farm does look neglected—it does; but I must consider.”

“‘Consider’—how long? I don’t want you to spile my dinner by keepin’ me tossed about like a toad under a harrer. Oh, come back here to the old town, Sarah, and pass your remainin’ days among the genuine, original families. I’ve got enough; we’re all property people on the Cape, and your folks are all buried here.”

“But this, you know, is a very serious matter, and I must have time to consider.”

“I’ll give you until after dinner, bein’ ’tis you. And if nothin’ happens, I just know you’ll have me and we’ll both sing out of the same book at the sing after dinner, and render thanks for mercies new, as

well as for the way leadings of the Pilgrims of old. We'll be led, too."

"But how about Hannah? What a sister she has been to you! She might feel that I had supplanted her in her new home."

"It would be hard for Hannah at first. But she has got a spirit that keeps a stiff upper lip, and marches on straight after duty; and after a little she'll be glad of the change. She ought to have married herself."

"And she would have had offers but for you, Squire."

The two stood in silence, looking out on the crimson woods. While this extraordinary scene was taking place in the chamber, another equally novel was occurring in the bright parlor below.

"Lef'tenant-Governor Winslow," said Hannah, on the arrival of that distinguished guest, "you have been a very particular friend of the family ever since I can remember, and I am glad that you came early, for I want to have an honest talk with you about a matter that concerns my peace of mind. Lef'tenant-Governor Winslow, I am in trouble. I feel just as I hadn't ought to, and I don't know of any one who has better sense to advise me than you. Lef'tenant-Governor Winslow, let us go into the parlor, all by ourselves, and I'll lift the curtains and let the light come in."

After this explicit statement of her unhappy state of mind, Hannah led the Lieutenant-Governor into the parlor and raised the curtains to the sun. The light seldom entered an old New England parlor, except on wedding and funeral occasions, and when

“property people” were guests. The parlor, as a rule, was the still, dark room of all in the house.

The stately couple sat down in the parlor, which in this case was new.

“Lef’tenant-Governor Winslow, did you see them go upstairs?”

“Yes, Hannah. Why does that disturb you? She went up to see the new house.”

“O Governor, I feel as though the fox and the goose was havin’ a conference meeting, now I do. Just to think what I have done for that man! I nussed him when he was weakly, and made herb tea for him for years and years, and gathered pennyroyal, and motherwort, and wintergreen, and all that.”

“But I don’t understand——”

“Then, Governor, listen. Think of the work that I have done, the hens that I have set, the peppers that I have raised, and ground, too, with my head all tied up in a bag as big as a bolster case, and the apples that I have dried, and how I pinched and pinched years and years, so that he might save money to build his new house, and now there’s goin’ to be a change, Governor. Oh, I can’t help cryin’.” And poor Hannah threw her white apron over her face. “There’s goin’ to be a change. I’ve seen it comin’ for a long time, and I’ve done my duty just the same.”

“What, Hannah?”

“I hate to tell you, Governor, but I suppose I must. I’ve done my duty, and tried to bear up. Just look out and see those milk pans in the sun—how they shine! Well, Governor, it isn’t for the Pilgrim Fathers that Job has made this great Thanksgivin’ party, and that I’ve been slavin’ for. They’re dead.

It is for Sarah Bradford. There—the Lord forgive me! I'm goin' to tell you all my heart, but I'm goin' to act real good about it before the world, and show a Christian spirit."

"But you don't think that Madam Bradford would marry—anybody?"

"Yes, Governor; why shouldn't she? She lost most of her property except this in the old Cape Town, and birds don't roost in the air. Job's good-lookin', and beforehanded, and honest, and a good provider. You can't say anything ag'in' him, only that he talks Yankee talk, and never minded his grammar. And she's a widder; a single woman won't take advantage of me in my home, but she's a widder, and you know a widder always stands in the market place, and you never yet knew one to say 'No' to a man like Job. Now, what am I to do, Governor?"

"They'll want you to live with them."

"How could I, Governor, after I have managed this household all these years? No; I must seek a home of my own—

"As on some loneli building's top
The sparrer makes her moan,
Far from the tents of joy and hope
I set and grieve alone,"

as the hymn says. But, Governor, I must go and get the dinner horn and blow it, and I feel as though it was the last trumpet. Think how many springs and summers and falls I've blowed that horn—night on to thirty years, and every time to a good dinner, and that my own hands have made. When I think of all these home things, the martin birds, the chimney

swallows, the lilacs, the mowin's, the huskin's, the workfolks that are dead and gone, and how I've done my duty all these years—oh! oh! oh! You do pity me, don't you, Governor? I shall be so lonesome. You know what it is to be lonesome, don't you, Governor?"

"Yes, Hannah; I've been a widower ten years now, and I know what it is to be lonesome, Hannah. I know what a capable woman you have been, and I feel for you, and I couldn't bear to see you lonesome. I should have said so to you before, if it hadn't been for Job."

"I begin to see now what it must be to be lonesome. I can sympathize with you now."

"But, Hannah, you needn't be lonesome, and I needn't be lonesome. We can be company for each other. We've known each other all our lives. Now I wouldn't take you away from your brother Job, as a matter of principle; but if he marries the widow, I'll just marry you, Hannah, if you'll have me, Hannah. Eh? What do you say to that?"

"O Governor, Governor, what have I been sayin' and doin'! I only came to you in my trouble because you're a particular friend of the family, and I had to go to some one. Oh! oh! it seems as though everything was breakin' up. What *have* I done!"

"That's right. You did just right. I've been looking forward to something like this for a long time, Hannah, so I suppose we are as good as engaged."

"O Governor, *engaged!* What shall I say? Oh, the vicissitudes and the providences and the changes of this life! I'm too old."

“But one of the Scripture women was five hundred when she got married the first time.”

“Do tell, Governor! Who?”

“I don’t recollect now, but ’twas so.”

“I’m only fifty, Governor. I do feel kind of providential. I always had great respect for you, and you’ve always been a particular friend of the family. I’ll give you my answer at the singing circle this afternoon. Let me wait and see how *they* act. Now I’ll blow the dinner horn, and I’ll blow it as I never blew it before! They’ll think it is the trumpet of jubilee!”

Hannah went to the porch door, and took down the long tin dinner horn that had hung by the door-sill of the old house for a generation, and had been given a like place in the new.

The blasts of the horn caused the guests and the workmen on the place to stand still. Such a vigorous dinner call had never been heard on the place before. It made the dog bark and the fall chickens run under the currant bushes.

The response to the old dinner horn was joyful. Hannah had left the final preparation of the table to Hadley, after she had put on her best alpaca gown and white kerchief.

The Governor and Hannah came out to the table together, and Hannah was about to take her accustomed place as hostess when Job whispered to her:

“Sister!”

How tender that word seemed! He did not use it often.

“Sister, would you mind if Madam Bradford were to take your place to-day?”

“No, Brother Job; I would be right glad——”

She sank into a chair, and her face turned white as Madam Bradford was seated by Job at the middle of the table, opposite the blue gentian flowers. The Governor sat down beside her, followed by the selectmen, and then Elder Cashman rose to say grace.

The table was long and massive. The workpeople were seated at a second table near the guests, except Hadley and one female domestic who “went out to work,” who were to serve.

It would be hard to describe a New England Thanksgiving dinner a century after the days of the Pilgrims. The steaming brown bread, the baked apples, the apple sauce, the succotash, the roast beef, ham, or pork, the crisp turkey, chickens, and game! The dessert was a long procession of bountiful dishes, from the apple dumplings with potato crusts, sweet-apple pudding, mince pies, gingerbread, and whole preserved “clingstone” peaches, quince “marmelaid,” to the shagbarks and mugs of cider.

The room was trimmed with twined “creeping jenny” and red alderberries. Over the shelf were a gun and powder horn which had been used in King Philip’s war. Beside the fireplace hung long strings of red peppers, which were regarded as ornamental. Beside each plate were five grains of Indian corn, recalling historic times, like the green booth and twigs of the Tabernacle feast of old.

Just as the elder arose to offer thanks for all of this outward prosperity, Mary Bow came flitting in. She was the traveling dressmaker, and in lieu of a local paper was the domestic news agent of the Cape towns. It is said that she had once been partial to

Job, but that he had "disapp'inted" her. She entertained no good feelings toward him, although she was a warm friend to Hannah. She had an easy tongue, was very superstitious, always attended quiltings, apple parings, and funerals, and was present on all notable occasions on the Cape, invited or not invited.

She had brought scandal upon herself only once, though she carried scandal everywhere. One June day, when the church windows were open and the air dreamy, the sermon had become to her a sort of distant hum moving far, far away, like a bee among the sweetbriars. She had loosened the strings of her bonnet, which was new, and for the times gay, and oblivion came upon her, and her head fell back, and her bonnet dropped over on to the floor, and her nose had to be tickled by the tithing man—a humiliating event in those days.

The scene at the table as good Elder Cashman lifted his hands was representative. The elder had a pure, firm Puritan face, that bore everywhere the certificate of his high character. Near him sat the selectmen in ruffles and wigs, and the Brewsters, recalling the days of Scrooby manor house, when old Elder Brewster first preached to the poor people on Sunday, and then fed them. Little Annie Brewster was there, who had refused the invitation of Lady Washington in honor of her old Pilgrim blood.

As soon as grace had been said in stately Hebrew rhetoric, Job turned to Madam Bradford and, with a long departure from the poetry of the Hebrews, exclaimed :

"I'll sarve the meat, you cut the bread, and then let everybody help themselves and not wait for any compliments, or stand on ceremony."

The people all looked toward Hannah, for she seemed to have been displaced at her usual royal place and office at the table, and all of the Cape folks were true friends to the worthy woman.

Madam Bradford rose and lifted to its side an enormous loaf of white bread, which had been placed between a sweet-apple pudding and a suet pudding in the middle of the table; for in those bountiful days and occasions food was not served in courses, but the table was loaded with the whole meal from the beginning of the service.

Madam Bradford looked handsome and stately as she lifted the bread knife.

"This is the largest loaf of wheat bread that I ever saw," she said. "I do not believe that the like was ever seen in the Colony towns."

She was right. The like had probably never been seen on the planet. She rested it against the suet-pudding dish, and whetted the knife after the old manner on the fork handle. Just here Mary Bow tripped up to her elbow, and said :

"Here, Madam Bradford, let me help you."

As the knife and fork in Madam's hand were flying back and forth in the glittering air in the process of preparation for service, Mary Bow jumped back, and said :

"Hannah !"

"What, Mary?" asked the startled spinster.

"What is that on the bottom of the bread, Hannah? Look—look there !"

There was a deep silence. Hadley came round, lifted his eyebrows, and said :

“For the Lor’ sake ! Signs and wonders ! That looks just like the poetry on the old gravestone up among the savin trees, for sure !”

Madam Bradford’s eyes became fixed, as if they were “sot,” as one of the guests afterward described them in provincial adjectives. She let fall the fork, lifted the knife into the air, and stepped back slowly, saying in a deep, cavernous voice :

“Job Pettijohn, what is *that* ?

‘Beware, my friends, when this you see !’

And the letters all face backward !”

Mary Bow gave a little shriek. The guests all dropped their forks, and sat silent. The crows of the swamp trees might have held a convention there undisturbed. Madam broke the silence again :

“‘What I am now, you soon shall be,’”

in a reading tone, spelling the words of the reversed letters.

“The spirit of Delight wrote that,” said Mary Bow. “It is resurrection poetry ! It’s all turned round ; that was never done by any mortal. It’s a sign !”

“The spirit of Delight !” exclaimed Madam Bradford.

“Yes,” answered Mary, excitedly. “She’s been in the oven. It’s a warnin’ ! I think it’s a death fetch. It is the handwriting on the—bread !”

Job sat with fixed eyes, and Hannah with lifted hands. One of the selectmen said “Hum,” and one

pounded with his cane, while the others sat with their forks in the air.

“Hadley, what does this mean?” said Madam, firmly. “Where did *that* come from?”

Hadley stood trembling, with a dish of succotash in his hand.

“’Fore Heaven, it come out of the oven.”

“Who did it?”

“*She*,” said Mary Bow, her cap strings flying. “It’s a warnin’. I tell ye it’s a warnin’. This ain’t no Feast of the Tabernacles, as Job said; he’s a hypercritter; this is the Feast of *Belshazzar*, and there’s a Jonah here——”

At these awful words Hadley let drop the dish of succotash, which came down with such an ominous crash that it caused the poor negro’s eyes to roll back in his head.

“There, what did I tell you?” said Mary Bow, her ribbons flying around like wool on the spindle of a spinning wheel. “Just look there and read that:

‘ You too like me will soon be gone.
I was——’

It breaks off there. Lift up the other loaves. There! There! You that have eyes prepare for wonders now—signs and wonders—the sea ragin’ and the earth roarin’. Look there on the bottom of that there loaf. What do you think of that? Just read it topsyturvy:

‘The wife of Pettijohn!’”

Hadley still stood over the broken succotash-dish with lifted eyebrows.

Mary's head bobbed, and her sharp eye fell upon him.

"What are you standing there like a stuck pig for? This is a time to be stirrin', not starin'. Look *there!*"

"'Fore Heaven, Missus, I just wish that the yearth would open and swallow us all up."

The guests sat dumb, and the selectmen stared and listened to the frantic words of Mary Bow, who believed herself to be the Daniel of the awe-inspiring event.

"That poetry was written by the spirit of Delight. She copied it off her gravestone. It's a warnin' to you, Sarah Bradford, and it came for Hannah's sake. I had an impression to come here to-night, to this feast of the Medes and Persians. I never fail to do my duty, and my tongue is my sword, and I will not spare. Sarah Bradford, don't you ever have anything to do with Job Pettijohn. The times of Cotton Mather have come back again, the folks have become so selfish and wicked. Everything here belongs to Hannah as much as to him. She helped earn it all, raisin' red peppers, and grindin' 'em, and sellin' 'em, and dryin' apples, and settin' soap, and makin' rag carpets, and sellin' live geese feathers, and all."

Mary turned to poor Hadley again, who stood over the ruins of the succotash bowl like an ebony statue.

"I once knew a woman who could *fly*," said she, wishing to impress the wonders of the invisible world upon him.

"The powers above! I wish I could!" said Hadley. "I would."

A guest at one end of the table uplifted a long loaf of brown bread, and his hands uprose a moment later, and all the hands about him like so many muskets went up into the air.

“*She’s* been here too!” said a timid voice.

The bottom of the loaf revealed the pathetic injunction :

“Remember me.”

“Job,” said Madam Bradford, “these things are very strange. I don’t think I shall ever change my relations after such an hour as this.”

“‘Beware’!” said Mary Bow, quoting the bread.

Just here the coach dog caught the atmosphere of terror, and threw back his head and howled directly at Mary’s heels.

Mary turned like a wheel, and the animal uttered another piercing cry, and added to the atmosphere of nervous excitement.

“Hadley,” said Hannah, “I don’t believe in ghosts, or that anything ever happened without a cause. How came those letters on the bread?”

“It mout be Belshazzar, and it mout not, as she said,” said Hadley, nervously. “That poetry used to be on Delight’s gravestone. It was dreadful distress-in’ poetry to Job, Missus, and he told me to hide the stones where they never would be seen again.”

“Did you do it, Hadley?”

“Yes, Missus, that I did. I always obey Massa.”

“Well, this is all very strange,” said Madam Bradford. “I haven’t any appetite left for a Thanksgiving dinner after this. My nerves are weak, and I might as well take my bonnet and go. Hannah,

I came here on account of the Pilgrim Fathers. I never meant to do you harm. I never thought of the things Job said to me upstairs."

"What things did he say?" asked Hannah, independently.

"Why, it might as well all be known. He asked me to become his wife."

"He did? And what did you tell him, Madam Bradford?"

"I told him to wait until after dinner for an answer, and you see what has happened. It was never in my heart to injure you, Hannah. What Mary says is true. You belong here, and I never would do a feather's weight of wrong to any human being, and I love you like a sister, Hannah."

"I never meant to deprive you of a home, Hannah," said Job. "I hoped that you would share it with us, and be happy. I've always been an honest man. It don't need no ha'nts to teach Job Pettijohn to be honest, and square, and true."

"Well, Madam Bradford," said Hannah, "I wish these things hadn't 'a' happened, and you'd 'a' said 'Yes' to Job. I've carried myself pretty straight in life, but I've misjudged him."

Hannah gazed again at the bread.

"Looks just as though it was stamped by a piece of gravestone. I wish that these things could be explained. Now, Madam Bradford, it would make me perfectly happy if you would have Job; it would now. It would make me sing the Thanksgiving hymns after dinner like a meadow lark. Job is a good man, if he does talk rough, and is my brother."

Hannah's eyes again pierced the bread. Suddenly

there came into her face a flash, and she turned squarely toward Hadley, and looked at him in silence.

“Hadley! Hadley! Hadley!” she at last exclaimed in a low, searching, and reproachful tone. “Where did you hide those gravestones?”

“Heaven have mercy on a poor soul, Missus! I’m done gone, sure. I hid ’em in the *oven*!”

There was a long silence, followed by a wonderful lighting up of faces. Madam Bradford sank into her chair. Job supported her. She presently turned to Hannah, and said:

“Then I am engaged!”

Hannah turned her chair squarely around, and looked first at Job and then at her beaming guest, and said:

“So am I!”

“You, Hannah!” said Job, starting up. “Who to?”

“The Governor,” said Hannah in a firm voice. “I would have been engaged before, but for you, Job.”

If ever there was a joyful Thanksgiving under the oak beams of an old New England farmhouse it was that which followed. Job got out his bass viol immediately at the end of the bountiful meal, and, after tuning it, led the psalm of praise to the tune of “Portland,” by Ephraim Maxim, the favorite composer of that time, who once went out into the woods to commit suicide on account of his blighted affections, and, instead, wrote a hymn and tune—a matter to be greatly commended. “Amity,” a very appropriate selection, followed in the tuneful numbers, Job swinging the tuning fork:

“ How pleasant 't is to see
Kindred and friends agree,
Each in *their* proper station move,
And each fulfill *their* part of love.”

Evening came early, with the November moon gilding the east as the sun went down over the dark, cool hills. The red settle, that throne of old New England wonder tales, was brought before the fire, and one of the selectmen, with pipe, snuffbox, and a mug of cider told legends of the old Pilgrims and King Philip's war. The far waves of the harbor glimmered as the moon rose high, and the old historic scenes lived again in the minds of all. At nine the great eight-day clock slowly and heavily struck the hour of separation, and under the shadow, regret, and pain, Elder Cashman arose and said :

“ My friends, the years are short and few,” and lifted his hands, and there fell a silence over all, with the Apostles' Benediction.

Job and the Lieutenant-Governor shook hands at parting, surrounded by the selectmen, the Brewsters, the merry farm hands, and the indoor “ help.”

“ Well, Governor, this seems like old times, when you and I were younger than we are now. I'll tell ye what, Governor, we've had a reg'lar old-fashioned Thanksgivin' !”

Again let the driftwood burn. The spirit of the legends of old are in its salt-soaked fiber. In its light I can see old ships sailing in fair winds and over sunny calms; ships growing gray with time; ships outweath'ring storms; and ships swamped by billows and lost in the sea forever. I can see lights set in cottage windows overlooking the harbor for those who will never return. I can see women at prayer in still rooms, all alone. I can see ships long tossed coming home again—on this side of the Banks.

Sail carefully, O ships; there is danger near the coasts. Here ye can not tell where the rocks are, but ye have been sailing where there are no rocks at all. The driftwood burns with a purple hue. Pile on more. The fire burns red now; are you ready?

WYCH HAZEL, THE JEW.

“Which, like a hazel twig in skillful hands,
Points surely to the hidden springs of truth.”—*Lowell.*

“WYCH HAZEL!” I never see the old New England witch-hazel blooming amid falling leaves in the denuded tangles of the swamps and woodland pastures that I do not recall that very mysterious man of old Rhode Island days who bore that name with a different spelling, and who gave in his extreme old age such a Thanksgiving dinner that it took a generation to forget the surprise.

His name was Abnerjonah, and he was a Jew. Misfortune came upon him, the world neglected him, and he changed his name to “Wych Hazel”; it was a good name to have. “I shall flower late,” he used to say—“I shall bloom when the leaves are falling; that is why I call myself Wych Hazel. There are no more roses in life for me; I am a Jew, and have lost all my wealth, which is my all in many folks’ view; but I have something left yet in my heart. There is only one flower that blossoms for me—you know what that is; it comes after the frosts have fallen. If God will, the world will one day know what I mean, but no one now thinks of Wych Hazel.”

I have sometimes wondered why people have not

attached some harvest or Thanksgiving sentiment to the shrub or tree called witch-hazel. Like the gentian, it is the harvest flower; and like the arbutus, it is the flower of hope. Its blossoms break forth while its leaves are withering. The Indians cherished it, and it was to them a kind of national flower. It may have sometimes been used at old Virginia merriments or New England harvest feasts, but the world has not yet learned its secret lesson; there are disappointed hearts that flower late.

A mile or more from where the ruins of Bishop Berkeley's house now stand near Newport, Rhode Island, there might have been seen some thirty years ago a deserted mansion. I shall always vividly remember it. In it I imagined I saw my first ghost, and I have seen none since. The incident which caused me to lie in my bed for an hour shaking in terror is always associated in my mind with another event, or with the remembrance of an old Rhode Island Thanksgiving dinner that was served me in that house, and the substantially true story that was told me there by an old rector, a friend of mine hostess, old Mary Pettipiece, who had a double chin, and who "kept the key."

I had gone with a party of students to encamp near the sounding Newport beaches during a vacation season, and expected to live in a tent somewhere on the glistening white sands, to idle, fish, and bathe in the surf. Our party pitched our tent and lived a delectable life, until a cold storm and a summer gale rolled in the ocean upon us, and caused us to seek a place on higher ground.

While thus disturbed we chanced to make a tour

inland over that old road lined with bowery farms, with orchards of Rhode Island greenings, with here and there a reminder of the opulent times of the days of the old merchants before the Revolution, whose punch bowls were never empty, and whose hospitable tables were always set. Among those princely livers were some families of Jews from the strange Dutch island of Curaçoa and their brethren from Lisbon, the latter of whom came to the anchored island shortly after the great earthquake. Judah Touro, Newport's early benefactor, and founder of the famous Redwood Library where Channing used to dream over forgotten volumes alone, was one of these emigrants to the then Quaker plantation of peace and plenty. Bishop Berkeley, whose name is associated with the beautiful traditions of Trinity Church, and who uttered the prophecy "Westward the course of empire takes its way," came later, at a time when the Episcopal Church was magnanimously held to be "second best" to the Friends' meetinghouse and the Jewish synagogue.

We had started for an excursion to the old Barton Prescott House, some miles distant, allured by the echo of the old ballad:

"'Twas on that dark and stormy night,
The winds and waves did roar,
Bold Barton then with twenty men
Went down upon the shore."

As we went rambling along the old roads, picking blackcap raspberries here and there, as they grew under the gray crumbling walls, we came upon the deserted house. Its great chimney rose above a long row of mottled buttonwoods, and its upper windows overlooked the long beaches and tumbling ocean.

“Boys,” said Walter Dean, one of our number, “what hinders us from occupying that old house and pitching our tent into the woodshed there?”

We sat down to rest under the tall palmlike-leaved buttonwoods on the broken wall. It was midday. There was an osprey’s nest in the tallest of the buttonwoods, and the parent ospreys were wheeling with protecting wings over their young in the clear steel-blue sky. Swallows and martin birds were twittering under the cool woodbine that covered half the roof. Near the house was a windmill. On the opposite side of the house there were lilac bushes with dried blooms. Near the end of the piazza was a well with a stone curb covered with houseleeks. On the door was a brass knocker, and over the piazza was a window with diamond panes.

“Looks as though it might be a ghost’s nest,” said Walter Dean, as his uplifted eye came down from the huge pile of sticks that constituted the osprey’s nest in the tall buttonwood to the woodbine diamond window and the unpolished knocker.

An old negro with white hair and one long tooth like a tusk came rambling by.

“Say, Uncle Jonas?” said Walter.

“At your sarvice, sar,” with a colonial bow.

“Say, Uncle Jonas, say, who lives there?”

“Nobody, sar; some on ’em gone to live on the mainland, and some on ’em they—well, they all are gone to parts unknown. I don’t cast any reflections, sar.” Then the old negro wiped his face with a large red handkerchief, and added: “Abnerjonah—old Wych Hazel—he am dun gone to be in hebben, if any Jews goes there; and I sometimes think, accord-

ing to the parable of the Good Samaritan, they does. After Abraham and sich, I'd like to see old Abner-jonah in de kingdom; you've all heard of Abner-jonah?"

We looked at each other ashamed at our ignorance.

"Who has charge of this place?" said Walter, becoming interested in a vague mystery that seemed atmospheric.

"The woman who keeps the keys, sar."

"What is her name?"

"Pettiplace, sar, Mary Pettiplace, sar; Molly we call her in these old farm parts. You'll know her when you see her, sar; her chin and nose come together, sar."

"We are on our way toward the old house where Barton's big negro battered in General Prescott's door with his head—we are not sure of our way."

"Ought always to keep your way when you have it, sar, beg your pardon."

"But what do you do when you lose it?"

"Turn to the right and go straight ahead, sar; dat's wot the preacher tells us all, sar, is the true and shining way to reach the hebbenly world."

"But we are not going there now."

"More's the pity, my good friends, if dat be true. I am!"

The wise negro saw that the mental picture that he had made of the old woman whose "nose and chin came together" confirmed to our awakened interest, and added: "That's better than old dead Pomp—hi! hi! His nose was so long and ridgy dat dey couldn't shut the coffin lid down, so dey had to cut a hole.

Reckon you haven't lived here long ; never heard of Pomp, dare say ? ”

“ Where does Mary Pettiplace live ? ” asked Walter.

“ In de red house on de hill ; see dar ? ” He pointed. A modest red cottage gleamed out of an orchard and through some skeletonlike locust trees over the dead windmill.

“ Is she rich ? ” asked I.

“ Molly ? Lor' bless your heart, no ! Molly rich ? No. She raises red peppers. She used to help her father run the snuff mill. People all used to take snuff in the grand old Rhode Island days. You've hern tell that Captain Melbourne, who lived here, had a snuffbox all made of gold. Silver snuffboxes did use to be nothin' in those old Rhode Island days. There comes Molly now, shore. She'll just tell ye all about it, dare say. De dinner horn has blowed, and I must hasten on. Things ain't no more as dey used to be in de old Rhode Island days.” He rambled away.

The ospreys, fearing intrusion on their nest, now and then swept down from the clear sky and shrieked over our heads. Here and there fluted an oriole and thrush. Below, as running down to the sea, meadows of timothy and clover waved in the idling wind, and the waves of the ripening grass seemed one with the waves of the glimmering sea. Afar were windmills turning on the hills.

It was an old little woman that was coming down the hill toward us. Her form was bent, yet her step was active. She wore a short black dress and a wide-rimmed hat, and had in her hand a sprig of old English balm with a flaring red bloom—a flower that

belonged to the old Rhode Island days. Her hurried step retarded as she approached us; and as she came near we saw that she had lost her teeth, and that her hooked nose and protruding chin nearly touched each other, like a London Punch.

“Don’t disturb anything, boys,” she said, smelling of the sprig of balm. “I keep the keys.”

“Who were the people who used to live here?” I asked, as before of the old negro.

“They were property people once, but they are all dead and gone now, except Eleza; he’s in consumption, and lives away off on the Windward Islands, and he’s left the keys to me. I have to see that nothing don’t happen. Where ye all from?”

“We’re encamping on the beach,” said I; “students. Walter here is son of Judge Dean. You must have heard of Judge Dean; he used to live here in summer.”

“Oh yes; I knew him well. Many the kettle of fish I’ve fried for him after the scup began to come to Secunnet Point in May and June. He used to say”—here she smelled of the balm again—“I smell of the balm for refreshment. As I was saying, he used to say that scup was the best fish in all the world, and that no one could fry scup and serve it like me. Beg your pardons, did you ever go scupping down to Secunnet?”

“That’s one of the things we are going to do. We have heard of it.”

“Well, when you do, you bring ’em to me, and let me fry a parcel for you for the old judge’s sake. He was an upright man, the judge was. I live in the red house on the hill, and I raise red peppers for a livin’.

I used to grind snuff. I'm nigh on to eighty years old. Don't look so, do I? I'd pass for fifty, some folks say." She smelled of the balm again, and added, "I make johnnycakes of Rhode Island corn, all ground fine in the windmill."

"I've heard my father speak of you," said Walter Dean. "I once heard him say that you could cook like old Cudjo. Who was old Cudjo?"

"Did the judge say that? Well, he was right. I can cook like old Cudjo. Who was he? Did you never hear of the Melbournes, who had a great house in a ten-acre lot, and their chimneytop overlooked the bay and the far ocean? They used to give great dinners, and invite gentry people, and Cudjo was their cook. He knew the secret of cooking dunfish. So do I. Can cook dunfish as well as he. I'll tell you how old Cudjo did it. He just soaked the fish over night, then stewed them in napkins, and then browned them over the fire, and poured melted butter and boiled eggs over them; that's all there was to it. I'll cook you a mess some day, if you stay."

"My father used to say that you made the best pandowdy that he ever ate," added Walter.

"Did he!"—the old woman smelled of the sprig of balm—"did he! Boys, you didn't know that this house used to be great for feasting. There was once held here the curiousest Thanksgiving dinner that I ever heard of. The old people used to tell of it. Abnerjonah, the Jew, who gave it; did the judge ever tell you about that?"

"I have heard of old Abnerjonah's Thanksgiving feast," said I, "but never knew what it was. Is this the house where it took place?"

“Yes; that was a feast to make the people all praise the Lord,” said the old woman, smelling of her balm again. “If you’ll all follow me now I’ll get out my keys, and will show you the very room where the feast was held, and the very spot where the old Jew sat when the Lord came down after him.”

Mary Pettiplace felt deep down in her pocket as though fishing, and brought up a jingling bunch of keys. We followed her into the old house. She opened a blind, and let the sunlight into the dead air. The room was large, high, and time-stained. A huge beam of oak ran across it overhead.

“Boys,” said Walter Dean, “wouldn’t this be just the place for an old-time Thanksgiving dinner such as I have heard my father describe, such as they used to have in old Rhode Island days?”

“If we could get this lady to cook it for us,” said I.

“Apple dumplings of old Rhode Island greenings,” said Walter.

“And puddings of corn ground in the windmills,” said she.

“Mrs. Pettiplace,” said I, “we are honest young men, if I do say it, and we belong to good families. Would you let us have a Thanksgiving dinner here, and would you cook it and take charge of it if we will pay you well?”

“The land of the ocean! yes; and tell you that story of the old Jew Abnerjonah and his feast, just as the old folks used to do after a Thanksgiving dinner was over. We always related that story on Thanksgiving days. The rector, he’s a masterhand to tell that story; maybe he’d come if you ask him. I’ll

cook the dinner and serve it here, and let him tell the story. Come up and see the chambers. It is a boogerish place now."

We went up a winding flight of stairs. From the windows the ocean rolled afar, a living splendor. Everywhere were windmills.

"It's a beautiful sight now," said Mrs. Pettiplace; "but you ought to see it after a storm, when the sandpipers scream. The old Jew left a dog, and he howled himself to death. He used to haunt the place, 'tis said. Do you want to know how to tell a dog from the devil? You feel of his nose, and if 'tis hot 'tis a devil, and if 'tis cold 'tis a dog, and mebbly he'll bite ye. That's what the old folks used to say, but such things are kind o' gone now."

We were greatly enlightened, but we had no wish to apply the test, and we were not sorry that the Rhode Island days of such spiritlore were fading; but before we left the house we had engaged Mrs. Mary Pettiplace to prepare for us a Thanksgiving dinner in the old-fashioned way, and to relate, or get the rector to do so, on that occasion, the once-famous Wonder Story of Abnerjonah's Thanksgiving dinner.

"'Twas a Feast of Tabernacles he called it, not a Thanksgiving," said the old lady as we parted. "They used to call him 'Wych Hazel,' because he used to gather witch-hazel blooms in late fall, and walk with a witch-hazel stick just like this."

In a rambling gait the old woman went up the hill and disappeared among the dooryard trees of the little red cottage. We could fancy that we saw Abnerjonah in her gait as she disappeared. We thought of the hungry dog and the remarkable test

by which we might know that he was not the evil one. Amid such scenes and characters we seemed living in a past generation.

If one would lose out of life one hundred and fifty years, let him go to the farm lands of the coasts of the island of Rhode Island, outside of gay Newport. Here the very air seems to hold the past, and the old houses, windmills, trees, and roads are like that fabled German village that came up only once in a hundred years.

We abandoned the Prescott-Barton excursion for the time, and on turning toward Newport we met the bent old negro again.

"Ye found Molly, whose nose and chin comes together, yer honors," said he. "Curus, ain't it? De chilern think so. Dare say she told ye about old Abnerjonah."

"What was that mystery?" said I.

"Dun'no', sar; only there was Spanish money jars in it, such as dey used to bury in the groun'!"

"It was not the devil that came for him, like Faust and Tom Walker?" said I.

"Never heard of dem persons, sar. No, it wa'n't any dark spirit like dat." He bowed reverently, and added: "I have heard it was an angel, but I dun'no'. I always pick up my feet lively when I go past de ole house after sundown."

We returned and took up our abode in the old house. We were not haunted by the doubtful dog. The summer brought us a charmed life on the glimmering waters with but little thought of Abnerjonah. Our sail ofttimes drifted along the purple Narragansett, and we once entered the Mount Hope Bay by

the swift Narrows, and visited Mount Hope, the ancient seat of the Pokonoket kings, and the burial ground of the lost race. Here we sat in the royal rock throne of King Philip, and drank from the sachem's spring, visited the monumental stone in the wild swamp where the same chieftain fell on that hot August day that closed the book of Indian history.

As we looked across the bay on the dreamy land-slopes and farms between Fall River and Tiverton, we could but imagine the days when the warrior Queen of Pocasset, the ill-starred Wetamoo, drifted across the water in her birch canoe to join in war dances of Pomotacom (Philip) beneath the moon and stars; and how, hunted like an animal, she at last perished on a raft that she had constructed in the hope of reaching again the graves of her fathers.

Near Mount Hope we went to the Northmen's Rock, where is an inscription, partly effaced, like that to be found on Dighton Rock. It was here that the first discoverers of America may have been sheltered in the year 1002; and here—in Vineland the Good, among the wild grape—which afterward in Columbian days became "Rooat Eylandt," Snorre, from whom, it is claimed, was descended the sculptor Thorwaldsen, may have been born. We can not tell, but the finding of a second skeleton in armor, of European origin, on these shores and on this side of the bay, gives a pleasing color to these old legends. Warren, close at hand, is the shore where Massasoit sheltered Roger Williams when that old precisioner and wanderer was dreaming of the separation of Church and state and of universal liberty of conscience; and there, too, the famous John Hampden is legended to

have come with Governor Winslow to visit Massasoit in the days when the great commoner was secretly looking for a place of refuge should the Parliamentary cause fail. Lord Nugent's *Life of Hampden* does not mention the legend, but the people here love to cherish the tradition and the name honored by Gray—

“Some village Hampden that, with dauntless breast,
The little tyrants of his fields withstood.”

Roger Williams was certainly a friend of Milton, whose name is honored by indirection in the same immortal stanza.

We visited also the shores of bowery, oak-sheltered old Swanzea, that still holds the moral traditions of its early Welsh settlers. The whole Pokonoket country, with its shining waterways, rich farms, elm-shaded roads, and bowery orchards, is most lovely in mid-summer, and always alive with glorious traditions that recede far into the past, further by several centuries than any other place on the wide continent. There is one thing that strangely recalls old legends; it is the osprey's or fishhawk's nest in the lingering giants of trees. These sea eagles, that wheel and scream at noon in the deep blue sky, live on still in the old way where all other life has greatly changed. Their nests are protected by the farmers. As inhabitants of the air they utter cries that to the poetic mind recall the old tribes of vanished history. One wonders why the old Pokonoket country never found a poet, artist, or any adequate historian. It surpasses most other regions in the wealth and grandeur of its traditions. The story of the plantations of old Rhode Island days have never been told, pictured, or sung.

In our free rambles over Aquidneck, or poetic Aquidoy, as the island of Rhode Island was once called, we were shown two curious looking gourdlike Spanish money jars, made for the purpose of burying treasures. One of these excited our fancy, and we asked its present owner concerning its history.

"They do say," said the lady, "that this is one of the jars that Abnerjonah, the Jew, gave to one of the six merchants on Thanksgiving day."

"Why did he give it on that day?"

"That is what I never knew, but I have heard that Abnerjonah once had a feast. The old folks used to tell a story about it at the fall family gatherings, but I do not remember it now. I used to get tired of hearing about the luxury of old Rhode Island days, and how old Colonel Melbourne feasted by the light of the fire of his burning mansion, and all that."

"Would you be willing to sell that jar?" asked I.

"I would be willing to give it to you; what should I want it for, except to make trouble at house cleaning? But mother, she would never forgive me if I were to sell it for its weight in gold."

The jar made wings of my imagination. The Jew and the jar became permanent figures in my fancy. I wondered if the rector's promised story would explain the remarkable jar.

In these adventurous days we met the rector. His name, I think, was Van Dimond, but he was to us then merely the rector. He was a genial soul, a retired Episcopal minister, whose experience in life had followed the old Rhode Island times, but who loved the ancient traditions of the place. He consented to become our guest on Thanksgiving, and to relate the

tale of Abnerjonah, or Wych Hazel. He would never tell us of what the poor Jew's feast consisted, or how it had become once famous. He used to say, "That is an after-dinner story." But on a black marble mantelpiece in the rector's house there stood a Spanish jar. It was like the other that we had seen at the farmhouse.

"Mr. Van Dimond," said I, "what is the history of that curious jar on your mantelpiece? I can not keep my eyes off it."

"Well, look at it well, my young friend. I can not tell you about it now; its history is my story."

The second jar, like the first, haunted me. There are certain heirlooms that are like ghosts; this was one.

When we left the house where Abnerjonah held his mysterious feast, and, unlike Faust, passed away mysteriously in a happy manner, we did not take our cot beds with us. We thought that we might need them again on the Thanksgiving visit.

Walter Dean and I went down from Providence to the deserted house two days before Thanksgiving, to see that adequate preparations were made for the rest of our summer party. We arrived at the Second Beach late in the afternoon, and hurried past orchards of yellow Tallman sweetings to the silent place, which we reached just as the sun was going down in a glowing sky. The atmosphere was a mellowing splendor.

"Let's go in," said Walter, as we reached the old house, whose woodbines now lay in huge beds of crimson leaves, waiting some late November storm. A hop vine that had run over the windmill had turned yellow.

We knew how to enter the house without the key.

We hurried upstairs, and found our cots as we had left them. The air was dead, but we opened the windows and breathed the cool eiderly air as it came in, and watched the evening shade as it covered the sea.

“Let’s stay here all night,” said I, “and go to see Miss Pettiplace and the rector in the morning.”

“Yes,” said Walter; “this seems like home, and we are not likely to be disturbed by any haunting dog, and old Mary goes to bed by candlelight.”

He threw himself upon one of the cots and I upon another. With only the sound of the crickets chirping in the matted and faded grass the night fell, and I knew no more.

I was awakened by the most mysterious sounds that ever fell upon my ears. Imagination is what it thinks, and I thought of old Abnerjonah’s dog that howled himself to death, and that Miss Pettiplace had said still haunted the place. He must have been a very mechanical dog if this was his voice. It seemed to be a revolving growl; the noise went round and round with a hard lonesome tone. It was early morning; there was gray mist over the sea, and the grass was wet with the salt fog.

“Walter,” said I, in a calling tone.

He started up.

“Listen.”

“What?”

“The dog.”

“Never any dog of this world growled like that.”

“No, no dog of this world.”

We listened; the circular growl went steadily on. I began to shake.

“It’s in the cheese room,” said Walter. “Let’s go and see.”

We slowly dressed; then opened the door, and passed along the narrow entry, which had been the herb room toward the cheese room. The sound was there, and it grew more terrible than before. There was a fiery smell in the room. We stopped before the door, which was painted green. There was a transom, with lights over the door.

“Hold me up and let me look through,” said Walter.

He was taller and lighter than I, and climbed upon my shoulders, and took one glance through the lights of the transom. A nervous tremor came over him, and he slid down, and glided away to our room, beckoning. There was an unaccountable look in his eyes.

“What did you see?” I asked, as we sat down on our cots.

“Never did I see a sight like that!”

“How did it appear?”

“It was a witch, if ever there was one. I never believed in such things before. It was never any human being.”

“Did it have eyes?”

“No. It had a hood like a chaisetop, and a long green veil, and a cloak with wings like the dragon. It was grinding a mill, and its head turned about this way and that, and its wings flared about this way and that, and there never, never was any sight like that. *You* go and see.”

We stole away toward the cheese room again. This time I mounted Walter’s shoulders, and surely

the object that I beheld in the room exceeded any creature of the common imagination.

"It's alive." I whispered. "You hold me up steadily." I accidentally pushed my hand against the transom. It opened. The air immediately seemed like a shower of red pepper. I gasped and sneezed. The mysterious miller came rushing to the door, Walter's strength faltered as he saw the door opening, and he sank down and I with him just as the appalling figure appeared.

"The land of the ocean!" said a familiar voice. "Is that you, boys? I didn't think you would come so soon. Well, I am proper glad to see you. I come over here airy in the mornings to grind peppers. Let me get my calash and cloak and veil off, and then I'll talk with ye."

We put our handkerchiefs to our faces and went into the curious room, and opened the window, and looked out on the pastures of deer laurel, in early summer the home of the whistling quail. Beyond lay the sea, from which a pillar of white fog was rolling, burying here and there a sail. The windmills everywhere were turning in the sun.

We turned around to examine the room. I raised my eyes toward an upper shelf and started back, saying, "Look there." My eyes were haunted again. It was a Spanish money jar.

We followed the old woman of the keys to her cottage home, where we were most generously provided for.

Thanksgiving day came. The college party had arrived the day before, and found a home with Van Dimond, the rector. The day was bright and full

of Indian-summer glory; the partridge berries lined the ways; the blue jays flitted among the wild grapevines and falling leaves; and the air was full of bells.

Miss Pettiplace had indeed prepared a Thanksgiving feast for us. There was the Rhode Island johnnycake, the pancakes, the boiled Indian pudding and baked Indian pudding, the succotash and pandowdy, along with the roast goose and onions; and the whole ended with apple dumplings, with potato crusts and Rhode Island greenings. All except the last was placed on the table at the beginning of the meal. The room was trimmed with witch-hazel twigs, creeping jenny, and gentians, and the table with boxberries or teaberries and Indian pipe.

Long before the meal was over most of us felt that we should never need anything more to eat in a long life. The apple dumplings added to the illusion, and we talked an hour before we were in any condition to listen to the mysterious tale of Abnerjonah's feast in the same room more than a century before.

The day slanted into the golden sea, and the rector at last said: "I think you must now be ready for the story. If so, look at the hazel rods. It is near winter, but, like Aaron's rod, they have budded.

"It was an afternoon like this more than a century ago," he began, "and nearer two centuries ago than one, that Abnerjonah died, or was translated, sitting where I do now. This is the story:

"It was in the old Rhode Island days, when the Jewish families had become rich by trading at sea, and the Quaker families rich by living on the grand green farms, and every year spending less than they earned and gave away. In those times more than two

hundred vessels were engaged in the foreign trade; three thousand sailors found employment on the ships; and at certain seasons a dozen or more India-men would arrive in port in a single day.

“The rich merchants feasted sumptuously, and Colonel Melbourne, one of whose estates was not far from this deserted house, used to give banquets at the end of which every dish was broken in a mock fight by the guests. He had a terraced garden of ten acres, with artificial lakes for silverfish and goldfish. The country seats were all delectable; fountains played amid acacias and plane trees. There were retinues of servants; and one gentleman, who wished to economize, boasted that he had reduced his family service to seventy persons.

“The corn huskings were the grand feasts of the year, under the hunters’ moon. After husking an hour or so from long stacks of corn, the guests repaired to the great kitchen and hall, where pumpkin pie led the feast, and gay music enlivened it; bowls flowed, and the dances went on late into the morning hours. The husking lasted several days. In one instance it is recorded that a thousand bushels of corn were husked in a single day.

“At the dances gentlemen appeared in scarlet coats and lace ruffles, swords, powdered hair, silk stockings, and silver and gold buckles. The brocades of the ladies swept the rooms, and snuffboxes passed around as freely as the punch. Snuffboxes and punch bowls are still to be found among the heirlooms of many of the descendants of these old families. The favorite dance was the stately minuet, in which independent posing was the chief grace. The

Roger de Coverley dance doubtless followed. No one would wish to renew such scenes now ; but we are accustomed to be dazzled by descriptions of them, and to sigh for the famous old Rhode Island days. My boys, the people are a great deal better now than they were then. Every age is better than the last ; so it always will be, and the best of all times is now.

“ It was terrible to be poor then, when gold rolled about so easily. It might have been hard to be a slave, but for a man to fail and become poor left him an outcast.

“ Abnerjonah was a rich Newport Jew, who had gained a fortune early in life by the West India trade. He came to Newport, I believe, from Curaçoa. His wife was dead, and he had one child, a daughter by the name of Leah.

“ In the days of the old prosperity, if prosperity it could be called, many of the Newport merchants traded rum for slaves. There were many distilleries running on the island, and much of the product was used for the robbery of the African coast. There were certain rich Quakers who kept slaves.

“ But Abnerjonah was an honest Jew ; he lived for the soul. ‘ I must do right for the sake of right,’ he used to say. ‘ God made me so, and glory be to his name ! He has written Ought on every man’s soul, and I must be what I ought, come what will. There shall never anything come between my soul and the heavens ; this life vanishes away and my soul must have the open vision.’

“ What he meant by the open vision no one seemed exactly to know. The Quakers claimed to be led by the inner light, and those who did not become over-

rich led very blameless and sympathetic lives. The world has rarely seen a more ideal community than that in the old Quaker farms of the island. The famous June meetings seemed like turning the leaves of the Book of Revelation.

“One day a company of English merchants invited Abnerjonah to a business meeting; and their leader, Richard Mayne, said to him: ‘Abnerjonah, this company has been formed to trade on the coast of Africa, and we have voted to invite you to join it. You are a very honorable man, and we would recognize it by giving you the opportunity to share in the profits.’

“‘You have done me great honor, my good friends,’ said Abnerjonah. ‘What are the cargoes to be?’

“‘We shall chiefly send out New England rum, and exchange it for slaves. There never was a more prosperous trade in the colonies. Will you unite your ships with ours?’

“The Jew stood silent. He dropped his eyes to the floor. Then raised them to the faces of the company, then slowly lifted them toward heaven.

“‘No—I can not.’ He stood rigid.

“‘Why, may I ask?’ said the director.

“‘I would lose the open vision.’

“‘That is superstition,’ said the director.

“‘Richard Mayne, you know not what you say. I may miss wealth and still be happy. I may be disturbed and still have peace. The world may cast me out, and yet all things may be mine; but if I lose the open vision, what would I have? Though all the cargoes of the Indies and Africa were to land on my

wharves, what? I do not like to say no to my friends, but I can not say no to my soul! I have made my vow that come what will I will live for the soul.'

"Abnerjonah was not held in favor by the luxury-loving traders from that hour, though they treated him generously in the time of his dire distress.

"Abnerjonah, the most honorable of all the old seatraders, failed. He was the only one of them who did fail. Three of his ships went upon the Bahama reefs in an October gale. He sat on his wharves and watched for them, straining his eyes over the blue or ruffled sea, but they never came back. His creditors were six merchants of the council of trade. He would sit in the cold, with Leah at his side, and look out upon the sea. It was in the room, my boys, where you used to sleep in the summer that the two would look out on the sea. Winter came, and one day Abnerjonah took Leah by the hand and said :

"'They never will come back, and on the first of January my accounts will become due, and I will have nothing to pay. They may take my all, and we may become wanderers on the face of the earth. But I have my soul and the open vision.'

"'Father, where thou goest I will go!'

"'Then, Leah, I have something beside my soul for which to thank God. The best gifts of earth and heaven are those that money can not buy. I shall give up all that I have to my creditors, and then we must work together to pay all that we owe.'

"'But, father, the unjust prosper!'

"'Leah, I own the heavens. I shall never cease to be thankful while my soul is clear and I keep the open vision.'

“The Board of Trade on the first of January accepted a part of Abnerjonah’s property, but they allowed him the use of his house and one ship. Then they seemed to neglect and forget him. The world passed him by.

“The one ship traded, but for years brought back but little return. The lonely Jew worked in his garden and on his farm; but his garden, meadows, and orchards yielded him little beyond a living, but that little he saved. His beard grew long and gray, his form became bent. He wore poor clothes, and seldom appeared abroad. He ceased to recognize his former friends. When he went down to the wharves with Leah by his side he walked in untraveled ways, and he would gaze out on the sea in silence, unmindful of those who passed him by.

“One day he was summoned again before the council of trade. His one ship had come in, but it had brought him little profit, and with a heavy heart he came down to the sea, and the golden council chamber.

“He sat down among the velvet and silken merchants silent, with downcast eyes.

“‘Abnerjonah,’ said Richard Mayne, ‘misfortune follows you. We offered you an open door to wealth, but you refused it. We have concluded to lay claim to your ship, but we will leave you your house.’

“Abnerjonah looked up and cast his eye over the open sea, and said: ‘I would have dealt more mercifully with you, though I am a Jew. Let me call over your names: Richard Mayne, John Marlow, Henry-Burleigh, George Procter, Martin Melbourne, Charles Tracy.

“‘Do they sound right to you? Is the ring true? Is there all in them that you would like to hear when they are spoken for the last time, when the clod falls, and this world is dark and ended, and opportunity is vanished and gone?’

“He rose up amid a dead silence, and cast his eye over the sea that lay shining in the cerulean distance where sails were zigzagging, coming in and going out. He turned and repeated slowly: ‘Richard Mayne, John Marlow, Henry Burleigh, George Procter, Martin Melbourne, Charles Tracy.’

“He raised his eyes upward, and passed out of the door. He lifted his heavy feet slowly, and sought the back streets and passed out of the town. His eyes filled with tears and his throat choked up at times. He came at last to a byway that led past a swamp that has long been gone. He sat down on a heavy stone wall, and said: ‘How shall I tell Leah? Poor girl, she deserves a better father than I.’ It was fall, the time of the Indian summer here. The tree under which he sat was a savin, commonly called the juniper tree. It was near night. The old man’s heart burned. He at last looked up and saw the tree. He thought of the tale of the ancient prophet of his race, who sat down in his despondency under a tree of the same name. Then his heart swelled, and he bent down on his staff and wept. But in the glory of the sundown he fancied that he heard the same words that had greeted the prophet under the juniper tree. He turned around; near the juniper tree, in the edge of the swamp, was a tree on whose naked boughs were golden blooms. It was a witch-hazel. He had often seen the shrub, but had never noticed it in bloom.

He stood gazing at it. 'It blossoms late,' he said, 'when the leaves are falling. It is a burning bush. The frosts have come, but it is not consumed. It should be to me a sign.'

"He stumbled over the wall and culled some blossoms, and made of the limb of the bush a cane. He carried home a bouquet of the blossoms to Leah, and he told her the events of the day, and said, 'Call me no more Abnerjonah; call me Wych Hazel, for I have the open vision left, and I have seen the future of my life in the burning bush!'

"Leah was sent to the town school. She was a beautiful girl, of quick mind and brilliant scholarship, but with a forlorn shrinking heart. She was neglected by the pupils, and she went with reluctant feet to her seat each morning, feeling like one who had a doubtful right in the world.

"On the graduation day she was assigned a recitation from Spencer. Her father longed to hear it, so he crept down to the back of the schoolhouse, finding his way out of sight, and listened. He lifted his face as he heard her voice, when suddenly a stone thrown by some boys who had seen him there struck him on the head. He turned away, saying, 'The world has forsaken me, and were it not for my honor I would care for nothing more.'

"He waited Leah's return outside of the town, and when she came to him joyous, he took her hand and told her all, and they sat down and wept together as they had oft done before.

"But Wych Hazel began to make his garden profitable, and, living on simple food and wearing poor clothes, he saved in a few years £200. He sent it to

be invested by a brother in Curaçoa. He lived more frugally than ever, and dressed so poorly that he was jeered in the streets. His old friends ceased to regard him at all. He seemed like a mere shadow of a man, an outcast and a wanderer. But he saved another £100, and another, and all that he saved he sent to be invested in Curaçoa. A good return came at last. He was eighty years old now, and he was rich again. But his newly received profits, as large as they were, would only pay his debts, nothing more.

“Just as the returns came from Curaçoa, Leah died, and was laid away in the Jewish burying ground, and for a time old Wych Hazel was seldom seen in any public ways.

“Late in the autumn of one of those years of almost fabulous prosperity that was a part of Newport life in the half century before the Revolution, Richard Mayne, John Marlow, Henry Burleigh, George Procter, Martin Melbourne, and Charles Tracy, merchants, each received a note from Abnerjonah. They were greatly surprised. The note to each was the same, and it read curiously :

““Have pity upon me, my friends ; I am all alone in the world. My prophetic sight tells me that this is the last year of my life ; and while your chimneys smoke for your gatherings of family and friends, I have no one to keep my Feast of the Tabernacles with me. They are gone, all gone. The storm fell upon me, and the clouds returned after the rain. Even poor Leah is gone, and my tent is about to fall. Will you do an old man the goodness to take dinner with him on the afternoon of Thanksgiving day at sundown, between your own meal and your evening merriments ?

Thanksgiving days should be forgiving days. My meal will be a very simple one, but my life will be in it; and if you will come it will make this old heart give thanks, and Abnerjonah will never trouble you more.'

"The strange note, with its Hebrew poetic figures and mysterious meaning, awakened great curiosity in the gay Newport society. The merchants were touched by the appeal, and felt a regret that they had not been more sympathetic to the lonely old man, and they agreed among themselves to accept the invitation at sundown on Thanksgiving day.

"An old Newport Thanksgiving in the old Rhode Island days, as we have indicated, can hardly be described. It began with johnnycake, the envy of which among certain French cooks, according to a Rhode Island chronicle, was the cause of the French Revolution; punch flowed after the roast goose, and the whole ended with the Sir Roger de Coverley dance, with its rhythm and poetry of motion.

"Thanksgiving afternoon came, and the six merchants passed out of town in their carriages to drive at sundown to Abnerjonah's. The old Jew awaited them at the door. His beard was gray and long, his hair flowing, and his black eyes seemed to beam with a beneficent gratitude.

"He welcomed each with the old-time courtesy, though his hand trembled, his limbs faltered, and there was a waxy whiteness about his thin hooked nose and his cavernous cheeks.

"'You make my old heart glad, my friends,' he said. 'I have been looking for you for hours, and I have been waiting for you for years, and happy indeed

is he who is not disappointed in his best expectations. All of you are here—six; my dim eyes see—six: I am thankful. Six merchants—ah yes; I see you are all here!’

“He opened the dining-room door—*that* door—and the six merchants passed in. They looked upon the table, and stood in silence. A curious scene lay before their eyes. What did it mean? On the table were six Spanish money jars, such as in former times were used for burying treasures in the earth. Each jar had a long narrow neck, and in the neck of each were some blossoms of witch-hazel.

“‘Be seated, gentlemen,’ said Abnerjonah, ‘and I will serve you presently as fast as my old limbs will allow.’

“‘Richard Mayne, will you take the place at the head of the table?’

“He seated each one, laying his hand gently on each one’s shoulder as one sat down.

“‘Witch-hazel?’ said Richard Mayne; ‘it heals poisons—it takes the sting away from the poisons of dogwood and laurel. Is that what you mean, Abnerjonah?’

“‘No, no, no, no! Heaven forbid any thought of that kind! I am past all that now. The witch-hazel blooms late, when the leaves are falling. It is the flower that offers hope to the last; it is the flower of God—so I call it. I saw this flower when my heart was as lonely and heavy as the rocks of the sea. It was revealed to me when the witch-hazel bloomed in full, like the burning bush.’

“The old Jew went to a cupboard—*that* very cupboard—and took down two large plates, one turned over

the other; on the top of the overturned plate there were a silver candlestick and candle.

“He brought it trembling, and set it down before Richard Mayne, the one plate covering the other, with the candle on top. ‘Richard Mayne, merchant. It is sundown, but I will light the candle when the shade spreads. Leah is not here to do such things any longer.’

“He tottered back to the cupboard—*that* cupboard—and took down from the shelf two other plates, the one covering the other, and holding a candle, like the first.

“‘John Marlow, merchant. I will light the candle—the sun is going down. I have nothing left to pay a servant, and so you will excuse me if I serve you with my own hands.’

“He tottered to the cupboard—*that* cupboard.

“‘Henry Burleigh, merchant. I bring you the same dish as the others. The sun is falling fast. I will light the candle.’

“He turned to the cupboard again.

“‘George Procter, merchant. I set this dish before you. I have tried to be what I ought to be. To fulfill the Ought is the true life. Live for the things that live; self gives us nothing that we can keep.’

“‘Martin Melbourne, merchant,’ he presently continued. ‘I set before you this dish. He who denies himself the most will receive the most from God. I will light the candle.’

“He was exhausted.

“‘Let me rest a minute,’ said he. He sank down. His face grew luminous and beautiful. ‘It is very kind of you to come,’ he continued; ‘you have made me happy, and the witch-hazel is in bloom.’

“He rose feebly and went to the cupboard again.

“‘Charles Tracy, merchant. He has not failed who has been true to his own soul. Let me set this dish before you. I will light the candle.’

“The shade of the short day was spreading over the land and sea.

“‘My brothers, the sun has set, and my failing heart feels that it will never rise again in this world to Abnerjonah. But I am happy—oh, never in all my life was I as happy as I am now! I have been made rich by all that I have lost. This is to you a Thanksgiving, but to me a Feast of Tabernacles, which was the Thanksgiving of the people of old. Let us give thanks.’

“The room grew dark, but he spread out his hands in the shadows, and repeated the old Feast of Tabernacles psalm :

“‘Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, and his mercy endureth forever!’ He repeated the whole psalm.

“At each chorus of the psalm, ‘Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness,’ he lifted his face and kept the selah.

“‘It is dark now,’ he said, after the thanksgiving. ‘I will now light the candles; and then, and then—praise the Lord for his goodness to a poor old Jew. I wish you to uncover your plates and praise the Lord that he has kept my soul, and enabled me to walk in mine integrity all the days of my life.’

“He lit each candle and removed it from the top of each upper plate that covered the under plate. The plates were dinner plates of ample size. He looked

down on the glimmering table, raised his face again, and said :

“ ‘ My brothers, remove the covers. My soul is free, and my life done. I am only waiting now.’ ”

“ They removed the covers—Richard Mayne, John Marlow, Henry Burleigh, George Procter, Martin Melbourne, and Charles Tracy, merchants. Each under plate was heaped with Spanish gold.

“ ‘ This pays you all, my brothers,’ said Abnerjonah. ‘ Take the witch-hazel flowers out of the jars, and put into them the gold, and do not thank me, but Heaven. My last strength is spent now, and I perceive that my time is come.’ ”

“ He sank down into his chair, and took up a sprig of witch-hazel, to him the flower of God, laid his head down on the table, and said, ‘ Let me give thanks again.’ ”

“ They heard him breathe low in a musical tone.

“ ‘ Let the redeemed of the Lord say so——’ ”

“ And, in a lower voice, ‘ They wandered in the wilderness and a solitary way.’ ”

“ And whisper, ‘ Oh that men——’ ”

“ Over the mossy house and dead windmill swept some fitful gusts of November wind.

“ He sat there motionless for a time. He then lifted his dark luminous face :

“ ‘ It has come. Heart and flesh faileth, but God is my strength and my portion forever. I thank him for all—all—all—I thank him for all!’ ”

“ His head dropped. It lay on the table, amid the blooms of witch-hazel and the gleam of the golden coins.

“ There he reclined motionless. The six merchants

set in reverent silence, waiting for him to lift his head. But Abnerjonah's head was never lifted again ; it was his last Feast of Tabernacles : he was dead."

They told tales of Louisburg by the fires of old, when the heavy clocks ticked slowly ; and it is an odd story that I have to-night. Let the driftwood fire form castles now, and listen, my friends, to the clock.

CAPTAIN TUT-TUT-TUTTLE AND THE MIRACLE CLOCK.

A HALLOWE'EN REFORMATION.

LADY MERRIWEATHER sat alone in the "great room," as the reception room was called. It was Hallowe'en, and the good woman turned at times from the black cat that lay purring on the floor to the old mahogany clock that stood in the shadows in the corner. The clock had been associated with strange traditions and histories, and had a spectral look in the shadows.

"If he had been older when he was younger, he might have been wiser." She shook her gold snuff-box, and took a stimulating pinch of snuff after this charitable remark. "Some people are like babies," she added. "They find it hard to get used to the world. I hope that he won't come again to night. But he always keeps Hallowe'en with me. This is the night when they say that the dead visit the world. Let me stir the fire! Would that something might appear to *him!*"

The fire on the hearth caused the brass dogs to glimmer as a puff of wind came down the chimney from the roof.

“He said,” she continued, musing, “that a brave heart never is daunted—tut, tut!—that he never doubted anything, nor feared the face of clay—tut, tut!—and that if ever I found cowardice in his heart he would leave me, but never before—tut, tut! Oh, Captain Tuttle, Captain Tuttle, I am tired of your ‘tut, tut’!”

The black cat lay on the floor. Her eye fell upon it, and she said, “You blessed cat!” Then she lifted her eyes to the apostles’ clock.

The house was old and grand. It was built of stone, and stood on the corner of Salem and Charter Streets in Boston town. The ancient burying ground now known as Copp’s Hill was then a common, and commanded a beautiful view of the blue and restless harbor by day, and the lights on the churning rocks and windy sea by night. Soon after the fall of Quebec the masts and spars of old ships, and forty-five tar barrels and fifty pounds of powder, had been used one night on this common to express the joy of the people. Under this illumination, and seen from the sea, Christ Church stood out on the hill like a ghost.

The house had once been occupied by Sir William Phips and his lady, and was known as “the old stone house on the faire greene lane of Boston town.” Did not every schoolboy of old Boston know that Sir William was one of a family of twenty-six unlettered children, born in a hut among the pines of Maine? That he courted a lovely widow much older than himself, and promised her that if she would marry him she should one day live in a house in the “faire greene lañe of Boston town”? That the good woman believed him, and taught him to read? That he went

in search of a sunken Spanish treasure ship among the Bahamas, under the patronage of the Duke of Albemarle, and found it petrified among the deep-sea rocks, and fished up nearly a million dollars in gold? That he honestly returned with this treasure to the duke, and received a fortune for his own share? That he was knighted, and made one of the ten royal governors? That he built this tall stone house for his lady, who afterward came to own the high, windy mansion that was purchased for the Province House, the viceregal court of vanished lords and knights and heroes? What true tale of any land could more than equal this? Boys circled by the old stone house with open mouths and eyes, and women walked slow in "the faire greene lane," and looked up to the windows, and held on to their calashes when the wind blew from the sea.

Lady Merriweather was thinking of old Captain Tuttle of Louisburg fame. This local hero had sought her hand for many years, and he used to boast that he would never cease his attentions until he had won her heart. He usually came to visit her on Hallowe'en, one of his excuses for that special yearly call being his desire to talk about the lost Albemarle cup of gold, and see the midnight wonders of the apostles' clock.

For when the Duke of Albemarle had enriched Sir William, he had also sent to the sea-rover's wife a cup of gold. The king knighted the treasure finder, so that the latter not only returned to Boston with a fortune for himself and a cup of gold for his wife, but he brought to the admiring dame the title of Lady, and she became known in "the faire greene lane of Boston town" as "my Lady Phips."

But after she died the gold cup disappeared. There was a whispered rumor that Lady Merriweather knew where the gold cup was, and there was a suspicion that she had hidden it somehow or somewhere in the apostles' clock that had belonged to Sir William.

Captain Tuttle had long visited Lady Merriweather—for years and years. She received him kindly at first as a suitor, and she seemed about to give him her hand when she learned that he was periodically given to “spells” of intemperance. She then informed him that she could receive him only as a friend. He promised reformation.

“Any one can reform if he have a sufficient motive,” said Lady Merriweather. “If *I* am not a sufficient motive for your reformation, I must remain single. If your love for me will not reform you now, what could I expect after marriage?”

“Tut, tut!” said Captain Tuttle; “if I will remain sober for a year, will you take me then?” He looked up at her inquiringly, and pounded on the floor with his cane.

“Yes; if you will swear to remain sober ever after. A man who could remain sober for a single year could do so for life. I tell you, Captain Tuttle, that a man can do anything he chooses if he have the sufficient motive.”

So promise was made, and it was Hallowe'en.

“Lady Merriweather, this is Hallowe'en, when cats yowl, and ghosts are abroad, and shutters bang—there goes one now! I shall come to see you and renew my proposals every year on Hallowe'en night until I reform.”

“But, Captain Tuttle, why do you not reform now?”

“Tut, tut; it takes time, Lady Merriweather; it takes time. No one can be perfect all at once. But I’ll come round to see you just the same. Keep the apostles’ clock always wound for Hallowe’en. There’s treasure there, I suspect—eh, Lady Merriweather?”

My lady was silent.

“They say ghosts walk on Hallowe’en nights; the dead all come back—eh, Lady Merriweather? Suppose Sir William Phips were to come back, what would he find in that clock case—eh, Lady Merriweather? Maybe we will own it together some day; then I’ll know. I should think if the old witch hunters appeared anywhere it would be here; of all the ghostly places in this windy town this is the ghostliest. Hark! Hear the shutters bang!”

Captain Tuttle claimed to have accomplished a wonderful feat in his day, and the story of it was a popular tale in old inns and ordinaries.

He had had firm faith that the fortress of Louisburg could be taken when the provincial officers at Boston laughed at the idea and plan. His name was Gideon, and he had gathered great inspiration from the Hebrew narrative which that name suggested. The biblical phrase, “the sword of the Lord and of Gideon,” had seemed to have a prophetic meaning and message for him. He had been told that there was a chapel inside the fortress of Louisburg which was surmounted by an iron cross. As this cross was the only object of which he had heard *inside* of the fortress, he fixed his mind upon it, and aspired to capture it, and bring it to Boston as a trophy.

Captain Gideon Tuttle had ships at sea, and these were menaced by the stately fortress that had cost France millions of money and the labor of thirty years, and that afforded a safe harbor for the cruisers of the *fleur-de-lis*. His ships could never be safe in wars between France and England while this fortress stood.

So Captain Gideon had read his Bible, and thoroughly learned the tale of the "lamps and pitchers," and imbibed its confident spirit.

"Brethren," he said at a patriotic conference in the old South Church, "a man of faith can do anything. Do you see this right hand that has held the rudder and turned the wheel on the sea amid storms and hurricanes? It is the hand of Gideon. This hand shall one day bring down the iron cross from the French chapel in the fortress of Louisburg. The patriots are with me in this thing. We are going to buy a hatchet, and carry it about with us until we do; it shall be to us a sign, and we will be a sign unto this people. There can be no peace in these English colonies while that fortress stands; no safety on land or sea. Louisburg must fall. Let us select a band of men who can 'lap water,' and then break our pitchers and let our lights shine."

Captain Gideon and his band purchased a new hatchet, and carried it about with them as a witness of their vow, and Gideon became a "sign" unto the people. On his return from the siege of Louisburg they brought back the iron cross. It may be seen to-day at Harvard University, over the door of the Gore Hall Library, one of the most curious relics of any of the old New England legends.

Soon after this patriarchal event, Captain Gideon

had offered his heart, hand, ships, and fame to Lady Merriweather. She was a loyal Episcopalian, a firm believer in apostolic succession, and she did not find herself altogether in sympathy with this patriarch who received his commissions straight from the skies. She occupied her Sunday pew in Christ Church, in the quiet corner where the mysterious bust of Washington now stands—a bust that Lafayette pronounced the most lifelike of any that he had ever seen. There she had prayed for the Georges many years; and when her prayers had failed, she still loved the place where she felt that she had done her duty.

“The hand that brought down the sign of Louisburg shall one day lead that proud old maid to the parson—tut, tut!” said Captain Tuttle. “I never yet yielded my will or gave up my purpose to anybody or anything, and I never yet feared the face of clay. Else I will court her until I die. Her heart can not be harder than the fortress of Cape Breton. Reform for a year? Of course I can. Is Gideon Tuttle a slave? *Next* year—that is the year that I will reform. Faith and time do all things. I didn’t win at Louisburg to be defeated by a woman. I carry the hatchet yet, and her pride shall come down, down, down! I can wait.” And he added “tut, tut!” many times over in a lower and lower tone until his voice was gone.

At the word “down” he had pounded his gold-headed cane on the floor. Captain Tuttle had his special words and manners of emphatic assertion. Most people did in those vigorous times. When he wished to make a positive expression—and he was a very positive man—he said “tut, tut!” and, lifting his gold-headed cane to the level of his eyes, brought it

down to the floor with a report like a blunderbuss ; and when he had thus ended, he felt that there was nothing more to be said—the final decision had been made. He also used the same expression “ tut, tut ! ” to silence an opponent. It was usually effective, but failed when he made his first proposal to Lady Merriweather.

In his second proposal to the lady of the old stone house of “ the faire greene lane,” his “ tut, tut ! ” was no more successful in turning aside her objections. But on this long-remembered occasion he brought to bear the special emphasis of his gold-headed cane.

“ Lady Merriweather,” said he — “ Lady Merriweather, listen ! If you should ever find my courage to fail in any situation of life, I will leave you, as a cowardly heart ought to leave a noble woman like you. But, Lady Merriweather, I never yet feared the face of clay, and while my heart is brave I will never cease to seek your confidence. Remember Louisburg ! ”

He lifted his gold-headed cane to the top of his wig, and brought it down on the heavy oak floor with a bang ; then added, “ There ! ”

Lady Merriweather remembered Louisburg. It haunted her. It was the one rift of cloud in her serene life. She wished that Captain Tuttle would either reform, or else that he could be made to violate his vow in regard to fear, and so give up his patient purpose. She had often wondered if in the captain’s nature there was not some secret avenue for fear to enter, and she once said she would give half a fortune, if she possessed it, to see the self-sufficient captain unmanned by some surprise or unexpected fright.

But the captain's conduct always sustained his words except his promise of reformation.

Only once had Lady Merriweather observed the slightest change in his nervous attitudes. There was a young officer in Phips's company at the time of the finding of the Spanish treasure ship who had gone mad at the sight of the bursting sacks that the divers had brought up from the sea, as the gold coins covered the deck. This man had once lived in the old stone house in "the faire greene lane," and a report had gone out that his spirit still visited it and caused discordant noises. Once, during a call on a gusty November evening, when the clouds were scudding over the moon, a hall door had blown open with a shrieking draught and a force that caused the floor to tremble. Captain Tuttle had started a little, and said with a voice of hollowness and mysterious awe:

"What's that—the madman?" But immediately he became calm again, and added: "I never fear anything. A man who does right, and is sincere with the heavens, has nothing to alarm him in this world. A quiet conscience is stronger than Louisburg, as the Psalmist said."

The apostles' clock? It was a marvelous piece of mechanism, and had belonged to Sir William Phips. It had an enormous mahogany frame, and filled a corner of the high reception room. Its weights were ponderous; it struck the hours like a bell, very slowly; and its face was a miniature heaven, in which were the sun, moon, and planets, and the signs of the zodiac. The figures on the dial plate were made of ebony and gold.

Over the dial was a broad surface of polished

mahogany, on which was a gilt picture of the head of Father Time, with a scythe gleaming like a crown above it. There were two open holes in the place of the eyes, which had been made for effect in the ticking and striking of this marvelous chronicle.

This strange structure had been presented to Governor and Lady Phips by some Boston merchants, and was called the miracle clock at the time that the gift was made. One of the miracles that the patriarchal structure performed was to cause a procession of the twelve apostles in effigy to appear at midnight in a little balcony just over the face and open eyes of Father Time.

There was a feature of Lady Merriweather's miracle clock that was particularly attractive to the children. After the clock had struck, and the row of apostles had passed over the little bridge, a silver cock on the top of the case opened his bill, and crowed. The mimic chanticleer had a secret spring that rasped upon some bits of internal machinery which produced this mimicry when the works within caused the bill to open. Lady Merriweather was fond of children, and she entertained them generously; and merry was the Christmas night when she invited them to witness the midnight miracles of the apostles' clock.

It was a gusty night. The window blinds flapped around Garden Court, and it was only occasionally that a step was heard on the half-frozen street. The first cold "snap" of fall had come before the Indian-summer days. There was a great fire on the hearth, but the frost crystals formed on the diamond window panes. Lady Merriweather was not alone. She had

in the earlier part of the evening in Christ Church entertained some steeple-jacks for an hour after the service, and had made them presents, and sent them away. Hallowe'en was not much remembered in Boston at this time, outside of a few English families associated with Christ Church.

These families had loved to keep the remembrance of the old superstitions, and to pretend to believe that the dead return to their late habitations on that one night of the year, and mingle with the people as they used to do. They filled great tubs with water and floating apples, and tried to secure the apples with their teeth, and so bobbed their heads into the water. They hung sticks from the ceiling, with a burning candle on one end of them and an apple on the other, and twisted them, and tried to catch the apple in their teeth, and received smutches from the candle. They threw apple parings over their shoulders that these might form the initial letters of their lovers' names. They combed their hair before looking-glasses in lonely chambers that their future husbands might appear and look over their shoulders. They told ghost stories of castle life in old England, and sang ballads, the same as people now read Burns's Hallowe'en, or Poe's Black Cat, or William Morris's tale of the Northern knight who visited Elsie with "his coffin on his back." The gift of pieces of cake on which were rings or sibyl-like poems and prophecies ended the merriment at midnight.

Apart from the rattling wind, the old stone house was very still. It is sweet to sit alone with a quiet conscience after deeds of charity, and Lady Merriweather was enjoying such a rest. A chimney breeze

would anon cause the embers to glow again, and she recalled her faded years. Once, when the brightened fire flashed over the room, the black cat rolled over in the warm glow, and Lady Merriweather said again :

“ You blessed cat ! ”

The cat had a great aversion to Captain Tuttle. She knew his step, and would run and hide when she heard it, and glance in at the windows or down the staircases to see if he had gone. She seemed to have caught the spirit of her mistress, and held him an unwelcome visitor.

It was half-past ten. Men were going home from the inns with quick step and jolly laughter.

Suddenly the cat gave a pitiful cry, jumped as if smitten, and ran around the chairs, casting a pitiful look behind her. Lady Merriweather listened. The hinges of the gate creaked. There was a step on the pavement, and presently there would be a rap on the door. Captain Tuttle was coming again.

Lady Merriweather arose, and went to the clock, opening the door and looking in. Why she did it she probably did not know. She was nervous, and felt that she must do something before the expected rap came. While she stood looking at the clock, the black cat ventured into the open room again, and hid herself under the folds of her mistress's dress.

There was a loud call from the brass knocker at the door—four heavy raps that echoed through the house. The cat vanished—where, Lady Merriweather did not know. Our lady went with nervous haste to answer the knock, leaving the door of the clock still partly open ; and when she returned she closed the door of the timepiece.

It was Captain Tuttle, surely. There was a great bluster in the hall, and a loud pounding with the cane.

“Lady Merriweather,” said the captain, “I’m in time. I’ve come to see if you have done your duty and wound the clock—tut, tut! It is a mighty scary night—shutters banging, cats a-running, and clouds a-flying. In old Cotton Mather’s days, when people’s minds roosted in the air, they used to see witches on such a night as this. My mother used to know a woman who could fly; but that’s neither here nor there. Seems like old times to be here—natural like—this side of the skies of the long ago, as it were, Lady Merriweather.”

The captain blustered along amid the still shadows of the reception room, and stood under the astral adjusting his stock.

“This stock chokes me up,” said he. “Makes me feel as though I was being hung. Just you fix it, and give it a twist, won’t ye, Lady Merriweather? It takes two to tie a stock.”

“I don’t quite comprehend you, Captain Tuttle.”

“Tut, tut! yes, yes, you do. The cart shouldn’t get rid of the horse unless it’s going down hill. I’m speaking in a figure now, like one of the old prophets. I’ve got a sort of undercurrent of poetry in me, if it does all run to hollyhocks. The cart was made for the horse, and the horse for the cart, and the cart won’t go right without the horse, unless it’s going *down* hill. You see, I’ve brought a parable to ye, Lady Merriweather. There are some things we know that we rather speak in parables, Lady Merriweather. Now, let me set down here by the fire and talk of old times—old times, Lady Merriweather. This fire seems

proper good. It's a rough night on the sea, tut, tut!"

The captain faced the hard-wood fire until his cheeks grew red. There came a puff of the night wind down the chimney again, and he said, "Sho!" Then he walked the great armchair into the middle of the room, near Lady Merriweather, and looked up at the apostles' clock.

The pendulum swung slowly with a deep, hollow tick. It could be heard in all the rooms of the house on a still winter night. When there came a silence in the conversation in the room, the occupants were made to feel that time was passing. The case was made large for the purpose of lending a sounding tone to the pendulum and the bell.

There was a sudden break in the ticking of the great clock as Captain Tuttle gazed. He noticed it, but did not speak of it. Lady Merriweather seemed to be aware of the interruption, but indicated her interest only by a very perpendicular position and attentive ears.

The break in the measured sound came again. Each listened in silence. The captain said "Hal——" Then followed a low musical vibration of the bell.

Captain Tuttle looked at Lady Merriweather. How handsome she appeared! He only added "tut, tut!" and pounded his cane in an uncertain way.

There followed a little knocking inside the clock case. The captain said, "Something—oh, tut, tut!" Each seemed to feel that there was something awry about the historic timepiece, and each hesitated to

speaking about it. A nervous atmosphere began to fill the room. The captain pounded the floor again, and said, "Tut, tut!"

The silence became painful, and the captain was the first to speak. "What scenes that clock has seen! It has told the hours of a whole generation in the old stone house. I've been around here myself nigh on to twenty year. It is almost winter with me; it is snowing in my hair now." He ran his hand through his hair, over his broad forehead, and continued: "How many weddings and funerals that old clock has timed! I can see them now. The people are comin', still-like, in black, and lookin' at the face of the dead, and wondering at the mystery of it all. We shall get there at last, Lady Merriweather, every one of us; and we are goin' on pretty fast, especially *us*—the horse without the cart, and the cart without the horse. How often I've heard that clock strike *one* at the funeral, and seen the tall parson rise up slowly, and lift his gold-bowed spectacles, and say in a voice as hollow as the tomb, 'Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.' These words are mighty solemn, Lady Merriweather, when a man's voice is 'way down in his boots. But it is so, Lady Merriweather; to-day we are here, smart as peppergrass, and to-morrow where are we? Where are the sparks that fly around? It behooves us to improve the time, Lady Merriweather; the clock will strike *one* for us all at last. I thought of that as I came by the hearsehouse to-night. An awful lonesome kind o' place that old hearsehouse is; but the slow carriage will come round for us, and it is time to be up and doin', Lady Merriweather. Don't the

world begin to look lonesome to you, after all these changes, funerals, and things?"

"No, Captain Tuttle; I am in love with my quiet life in this old stone house. It is afternoon with me——"

"Tut, tut! Afternoon? I should think it was! It will all grow dark and chilly soon, and you'll need some one to lead you down into the shadows. I've laid siege to the old stone house, and I'm growin' gray. Lady Merriweather, don't you think that it is about time that Louisburg surrendered?"

He looked at her aside from under his tufted eyebrows. Lady Merriweather sat in silence.

"Your heart can't stand the siege forever," said the captain. "The stars are ag'in' ye, Lady Merriweather; you are not as young as you once were—that anybody can see with half an eye—and I told you years and years ago that I would never give up hope until my heart ceased to be brave and I became a coward; and, Lady Merriweather, I was not brought up in these rocky parts to lose my courage at the hoot of an owl—tut, tut! I didn't mean to call you an *howl*, Lady Merriweather!"

The captain started.

"Land o' massy! What was *that*?"

There was a strange mingling of sounds in the clock case. One of the heavy weights had mysteriously struck against the mahogany frame.

"See the case tremble," said the captain. "What do you suppose *it* is?"

They sat in silence. The captain's imagination began to grow.

"You don't think it is the mad sailor, do you?"

said he in a slow, low voice. "I'd hate to see *him*. But, Lor', it were nothin'—tut, tut! Where is my wits gone?"

"There have some strange things happened in this house," said Lady Merriweather. "It makes me gloomy sometimes to think of them, and I am *almost* glad that you came to-night."

"Almost, Lady Merriweather—*almost*? That is the first word of hope that you've spoken to me of late, Lady Merriweather. It makes me quite happy—I am a happy man. Almost, almost! One step is all the way."

"You misunderstand me, Captain Tuttle. I meant——"

"Oh, tut, tut! You meant—you mean—well, I know what you mean—the heart of Louisburg is goin' to surrender. Let me tell you how it all was with me down to Cape Breton, Lady Merriweather—I never yet feared the face of clay. Let me tell you how it was *there*. Well, Lady Merriweather, it was Whitefield that gave us the motto for the expedition. Listen to it, Lady Merriweather—I never shall forget it—'*Nil desperandum*.'"

The captain might have added to it "*Christo duce*," which was needed to complete the legend.

"'Never despair'—that was it, Lady Merriweather. Well, we had a public fast, and then we sailed away three thousand strong. Sir Peter Warren with the fleet joined us at Canso. Great Peter! what was *that*? There it goes again!"

The captain stared at the clock. So did Lady Merriweather. The latter moved her chair up to a

point a little nearer the captain. There came a rift of light over his face amid the shadows.

"That's right," said he; "sit up nearer. Fear seeks companionship."

"But, Captain Tuttle, *you* are not afraid, are you?"

"Tut, tut! No, no; not afraid, but suspicious-like. What *do* you suppose struck the weight of that clock?"

"Go and see."

He hesitated.

"There's nothing to see. Stands to reason that there can not be anybody inside that clock case. You draw your chair up here, and don't be alarmed. We neither of us have got anything resting on our consciences—I ain't, anyhow (I'm going to reform *next* year); and you wouldn't ha' had if ye *had* me. But we're nervous. 'Tis the same draught of wind that comes whisking down the chimney that shakes that there weight. Let me see. Where was I on the way to Louisburg?"

"Well, as I was sayin', or goin' to say, we sailed out into the spring waters. The wild geese was honking overhead like so many funeral processions up in the air; the sea was steady and blue as the spring sky; and on the 30th of April, 1795, we came in sight of Louisburg. You should ha' seen it then. If we could take that fortress, mortal men could do anything, Lady Merriweather. The walls were from twenty to thirty feet high and forty feet thick; they were surrounded by a ditch eighty feet wide, and over them were the black mouths of one hundred and eighty-three cannon, besides sixty more in the ap-

proaches and lower batteries. What do you think of that, Lady Merriweather? Over two hundred guns! Why, the King of France once said that that fortress had cost so much that he expected to see it from his palace windows rise up and look over the sea. But we took it—and I'm goin' to do it again, Lady Merriweather! The powers above! What *was* that? I thought I *see* somethin', Lady Merriweather."

"What was it?"

"It was awful. Sit up here. Now you are safe."

"What was it, captain?"

"It was an *eye*." Captain Tuttle crooked his index finger, and pointed it to his own eye.

"Where?" faltered Lady Merriweather. "Where?"

"Oh, we're both nervous. We ought to be ashamed. You just keep your eyes on the clock, and tell me if you see anything peculiar. Look at the face of old Father Time there, under the scythe. Well, now, about Louisburg. I—oh, the guns!" The eyes of both were riveted on the clock.

"Well, we only had eighteen cannon and three mortars. The fortress could only be taken by there being a foe within it—that foe was *fear*, Lady Merriweather. I never knew what it was to know fear."

Lady Merriweather gave her chair a little jump. The captain seized her hand, and said:

"There it is again, Lady Merriweather. What did *you* see?"

"An *eye*."

"Where, Lady Merriweather?"

"In the eye of Father Time. Watch the clock!"

"That's what I saw, Lady Merriweather. 'Tis gone now."

“ You go and see.”

“ But there’s nothing to see. There can’t be anything human inside that clock, and there can not be an eye there without a body. We have had a fit of the imaginations. I never had one before. Well, well, we laid siege to the town and fortress for six weeks, not five times six years. The worst of all fortresses is a stubborn woman’s will and pride. Oh, Lady Merriweather, I haven’t any piazza to my name, as you have; but I haven’t any debts, and I have ships on the sea, and am an honest man; and this head ordered the iron cross to be cut down from the roof of the chapel of Louisburg, and this heart never felt fear.”

Just here the captain leaped and Lady Merriweather started back.

“ I saw it again ! ”

“ Oh, captain, *I* did ! ”

“ Two of ’em ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ Two eyes in the openwork of the face of Father Time on the clock ? ”

“ Yes, captain.”

“ Living eyes ? ”

“ Yes, captain.”

“ Just like two balls of fire ? ”

“ Yes, captain.”

“ And, Lady Merriweather——”

“ Oh, captain ! ”

“ It *winked*—it just did, one of *them* eyes ! ”

“ The clock winked—*winked* ! Oh, captain ! ”

“ You’re sure, Lady Merriweather, that is no part of the clock’s works.”

“I never knew of such a thing before, captain.”

“But that is a trick clock, and this is—Hallowe’en.”

“True, Captain Tuttle; but those eyes were *living*.”

“They must be spirits. There can be no living eyes without a body, and there can be no body inside of that clock case. Let us watch and talk over matters. It is only one of the tricks of the clock on Hallowe’en, and you never discovered it before. That is a miracle clock, Lady Merriweather.”

“It belonged to Lady Phips,” said Lady Merriweather. “There is much room in the case outside of the works. I have heard that Lady Phips used to hide her golden goblet in the case, as you said. The clock locks hard.”

“The golden goblet, Lady Merriweather?”

“Yes; the one presented her by the crown in honor of the service of her husband. They say that it was worth a thousand pounds.”

“Yes; I’ve he’rn tell of it. I referred to it before. I wonder what became of it. ’Tain’t there now, is it, Lady Merriweather? Maybe ’tis *she* that is in there now. ’Tis Hallowe’en. They do say awful things happen such nights, when treasures are hid. Is that so, Lady Merriweather? No, no—tut, tut! that can’t be. What am I thinkin’ of? I’m gettin’ kind o’ confused. It was Governor Phips that formed the Court of Oyer and Terminer to try witches.”

“And the golden goblet trembled in Lady Phips’s hand when *she* was cried down upon as being a witch,” said Lady Merriweather.

“Yes; and that was what ended the persecution.

It makes people charitable to be accused of the same things that they condemn in others. But Lady Phips always pitied those who were accused of witchcraft, Lady Merriweather. Do you believe in *hants*? There ain't any witches in that clock—do you think there are, Lady Merriweather?"

She did not answer. Her face was white.

"Sho, sho!" said the captain; "we're just two fools—beg pardon!—but that is just what we are; and I wish we was only one. Let us reason. There can't be a living eye looking through a keyhole, or the eye of a clock, or the eye of a picture, without there's a body to it. And there can't be a body inside of that case. Now, that is reasonable. Now, I've told ye—now there!"

The captain got up nervously. He put his hands behind him, and went and stood by the fire. Over the fireplace was a printed parchment in a great frame. He looked up at it, and read slowly, in a tone of courage, as though indifferent to the strange workings of the clock:

"Near this place is interred the body of Sir William Phips, Knight'—that means the Church of St. Mary, Woolworth, London. This is a copy of the inscription on Sir William's tomb—'Who in the year 1687——'" continued Captain Tuttle, reading.

"You don't see anything now about the clock that is strange, do you?" he said nervously, as a parenthesis.

"—discovered among the rocks near the Banks of Bahama, on the north side of Hispaniola, a Spanish plate ship which had been under water forty-four

years, out of which he took gold and silver to the value of £300,000 sterling——’

“Massy, good woman, what a haul that was! You don’t see anything now, do you?”

“—and with a fidelity equal to his conduct brought it all to London——’

“Honest, wa’n’t he?”

“—for which great service he was knighted by James II——’

“He was a true son of Gideon.

“—His lady hath caused this monument to be erected.’

“Lady Merriweather.”

There was a deep silence.

“Lady Merriweather, did you know Lady Phips got married again?”

“No, Captain Tuttle.”

“Well, she did. She married Peter Sargeant, him that owned the Province House. Lady Merriweather?”

“Well, captain?”

“She got married *three* times! ’Cause she was a widder when she married him. And *you*, Lady Merriweather—the April skies pity ye!—*you’ve* never been married at all.”

There was a silence broken only by the loud ticking of the clock.

“And living here all alone among the spirits of dead sailors, and winkin’ clocks, and cats, and in the rooms of those who persecuted the witches, too!”

He drew near her chair.

“Lady Merriweather, let us go and look at the portrait of my Lady Phips.”

But Lady Merriweather sat as one petrified, with staring eyes. Slowly she raised her white hand, glittering with old jewels, and said :

“ Captain Tuttle, look *there!* ”

There was a silence. Lady Merriweather at last whispered :

“ It is gone. ”

They sat still again. The spell of the past was upon them. There is something tomblike in old houses in which the rooms, the pictures, the furniture, the arrangement of everything, are thoughts of a generation departed. The expressions of past life linger on in such places; the tenants of the tombs in the churchyards still live on in their old thoughts, plans, and dreams.

A night heron swept over the old stone house in the moonlight, uttering a wild, sad cry as it passed. A dog howled on Copp's Hill, and some half-drunken sailors were heard staggering back to the ships near the Battery, singing Nancy Dawson.

“ I feel lonesomer than ever I did in all my life before, ” said the captain, when the sounds had passed.

“ This is a shaky world. ”

Lady Merriweather started.

“ Captain Tuttle, Captain Tuttle, look *there!* ”

“ Tut, tut! ” But he arose, and bent forward.

“ Stand near me, captain. *This is a shaky world.* ”

The captain leaned over Lady Merriweather's chair, and stared as one petrified. His mouth opened, his wig bobbed, his ruffles quivered.

Against the eyeholes in the effigy of Time, in the crown of the clock, two living eyes were pressed, and the light in them was like two coals of fire.

“There’s—a—witch—in—the—clock!” he stammered. “I always said there were witches, and people need not laugh at old Cotton Mather any more. Witches’ eyes are coals of fire from the pit—their’s ’em!”

A shutter banged on a neighboring house. The noise seemed almost friendly in the awful silence. The moon could be seen over the top of one of the shutters, and the skeleton clouds flying over the moon.

“Lady Merriweather.”

“Captain Tuttle.”

“Don’t you think that I’m a very brave man to stand here and protect you, a lone woman, with the eyes of the invisible world searching me through and through? It’s gone!”

“Captain Tuttle, go up to the clock, and look into those eyeholes, and tell me what you see.”

“I dare—put your hand on my shoulder, tender and steady-like, and follow me, Lady Merriweather. I’ve looked into the cannon’s mouth, but my soul never came so near shaking as it does now.”

“Captain Tuttle, have you got anything on your conscience?”

“No, Lady Merriweather; no. Only *that*—that’s nothin’. I’m goin’ to reform.”

He took one step, and Lady Merriweather followed him.

“The mysteries of life,” said he wisely—“the mysteries of life—life’s mysteries—are somehow the blossoming of hidden sins and crimes. Life’s mysteries?” His mind seemed wandering.

“We’re two fools,” he added encouragingly. “A

thing that will not be of much account ten years from now is of little account now ; but prudence is becoming at all times."

This expression of vague philosophy gave him an excuse to move very carefully, to step slowly in a very military and dignified way, as though inspecting an intrenchment of doubtful strength and force.

"Lady Merriweather, when I gave my head and my hands and my *heels* to my country—no, no—tut, tut!—I never gave my *heels*. I never run from anybody or anything. I meant my *sword*—my head, my hands, and my sword—to my country, Lady Merriweather—what was I saying? I never was shot in my heels. No, I never turned my back on any danger—I mean mysteries and dreadful confusings, Lady Merriweather—my thoughts are mixed. Let us move cautiously. You know Solomon said——"

He hesitated. His mind seemed sorely blurred and unsettled. "I wish that——"

He hesitated again. Lady Merriweather, now all nerves, faintly whispered, "Wish what, captain?"

"That there'd be an earthquake."

"Oh, Captain Tuttle, let's go on! Be a Gideon! Remember Louisburg!"

Lady Merriweather put her hand on his shoulder.

"I wish Adonijah Pettibone was here," said Captain Tuttle. "Adonijah never quailed before any battery at Louisburg. He always stood firm, Lady Merriweather. I will get the tongs, and fetch you the shovel. We can't tell what may happen." The captain got the tongs and shovel, returned, and bent

forward his head with a cautious look of the eyes, which changed into a fixed stare.

“I can see those eyes in the clock now—’way back in the case. You look. They are livin’!”

Lady Merriweather looked over the captain’s shoulder.

“It is almost twelve,” said the captain, “and the clock is going to strike. What do you suppose will happen *then*? They say that the cattle all kneel at twelve o’clock on Christmas night, and the water all turns into wine; and the dead—the dead all come out at that time on Hallowe’en.”

“Oh, Captain Tuttle, you are nervous. It may only be our imaginations. I’ve suffered as much in my dreams.”

“Who did you dream about? I once heard of a man who seized a witch by the head, and she vanished right down into the earth, and left in his hand a lock of her hair.”

There was a whir, whir, whir in the machinery of the clock.

“Don’t let us go any nearer,” said the captain; “it is going to strike. Wait till it *has* struck.”

There was a dead silence. Presently the first of the twelve strokes of midnight fell, and echoed through the halls and empty chambers.

“*One*,” said the captain, counting. “You count with me; ’twill be company.” There was a frightful silence.

“*Two*,” said they both.

“There comes one of the twelve apostles—Peter, or Abraham, or Nebuchadnezzar, or some of ’em. My mind is all gone on the Scriptures.”

There appeared a mimic apostle on the little balcony over the face of the clock, above the picture of Father Time, at each stroke of the clock.

“*Three*,” said the two at the third solemn stroke, as a third apostle appeared.

“Can you tell the names of all the apostles?” said Captain Tuttle. “I could when I was a child. That one looks like Ananias. Guess it be *him*.”

“*Four*. And then comes another. Hear the clock buzz.”

“*Five*.”

“Next time ’twill be six,” said the captain, “and there ain’t nothing happened yet.”

“*Six*. There, I told you so—and there comes another one!”

“*Seven*.”

“Yeou-ow-ow!” It was a cry of terror and anguish.

“The mighty dead! What’s that?”

“It sounds human! Oh, captain, this is an awful night. I feel as though my hair were turning white. What shall we do?”

The clock case began to tremble. There was a sound as of scratching within.

“*Eight*,” said Lady Merriweather.

“I can’t count any more,” said the captain. “That scratching sound all unstrings me.”

“*Nine*,” said Lady Merriweather. “What do you suppose will happen when it gets to twelve?”

“Nine of them apostles have come out, and some of ’em are goin’ in again. I wish it was mornin’—Jeru-sa-lem! What was *that*?”

There seemed a struggle going on in the clock case.

The side weight knocked to and fro. Then something fell with a thud, and it was that last startling sound that caused the captain's exclamation.

The clock made eleven strokes, and twelve. The two stood with staring eyes, "like geese going to a funeral," as Lady Merriweather afterward said.

"I believe that the clock is goin' to turn into a human being, face, hands, eyes, and all," said the captain. "It was that wink—that all unstrung me."

Here the clock door seemed to be pushed from the inside.

"Heaven save us now! It's coming," said the captain.

The catch of the clock door parted with a snap, and the door itself opened and stood still.

"Maybe 'tis that mad sailor," said the captain, "or Ann Hibbin, or some other body that old Governor Phips hung. I can feel my wig crawl all around my head."

The door of the clock started again, and slowly opened a little wider.

"Lady Merriweather, this may be the last time. I have a confession to make. I have something on my soul, and I must speak it out. Lady Merriweather, I—*am—scared*. Hear my heart beat! I never yet feared the face of clay, but I can't stand these things of the invisible world. Cotton Mather couldn't. My heart is weak, and my nerves shaky. I must speak true in the face of all these awful things. One can't afford to be insincere when the heavens are tumbling. Oh, Lady Merriweather——"

The clock door gave a shadowy jerk, as if suddenly shaken by an unseen hand.

"She's comin'," said Captain Tuttle, in a nervous spasm.

"Who, Captain Tuttle? Who's coming?"

"Lady Phips. If Cotton Mather was not ashamed to be afraid, why should I be?"

The shadowy door trembled again, like a warning.

"I can't stand this a minute longer. Let us run."

"No, Captain Tuttle."

"Then I will! You *follow!*"

The hero of the lamps and pitchers seized his hat, banged the door hurriedly, and the rapid tap, tap, tap of his cane was heard vanishing in diminuendo down the long street.

Lady Merriweather stood like a statue. A head looked out of the clock door cautiously and inquiringly, and uttered a pitiful, long-drawn, but very familiar cry.

"You blessed cat!" She sank into a chair by the fire. The ghost of the clock case came to her, purring, and leaped into her lap. "You blessed, blessed cat! How light I do feel—my head and all! My heart is as light as a feather. He has forfeited his claim now. It has been our last Hallowe'en."

Not so, Lady Merriweather.

The night when the dead visit the world came again. Lady Merriweather had been told that year that Captain Tuttle had reformed, that he had had a "visitation from the invisible world" and been under "concern," and that these experiences had wrought a well-nigh marvelous change in his character.

Lady Merriweather still lived in the old stone house. The clock, like a sentinel of duty, was still passing on the hours. The prudent cat lay on the rug by the fire.

The old rap came on the door; the old guest took his seat by the fire again.

“Lady Merriweather, I *have* reformed. The powers of the invisible world were too much for me. Stands to reason I don’t want to die, and go *there*. Now I am not going to stay until midnight this Hallowe’en to see no apostles nor nothin’. I’m comin’ to business at once. I have been sober for a year, and I am never goin’ to drink any more, except the water from the well in Spring Lane. You said in that case you would have me—tut, tut!—you said so—eh, Lady Merriweather?”

“Any man can reform if he have a sufficient reason. But, Captain Tuttle, I was not the cause of your reformation. Love was not. That was not a sufficient reason.”

“What was, Lady Merriweather?”

“Fear.”

“Oh, Lady Merriweather, that is a sorry word.”

“Captain Tuttle, what do you think it was that was in the clock that night—last Hallowe’en?”

“That Phips woman.”

“No, Captain Tuttle.”

“Well, what was it?”

“The cat!”

Captain Tuttle rose slowly. He was about to bow and say good-by, when he altered his mind on seeing a feline object partly open the unlatched door and look inquiringly into the room.

“Scat!” he thundered. The cat obeyed.

Ten years have passed. The old triangular-wall house is dark now. Captain Gideon and his good

wife have kept Hallowe'en together seven times in the old stone house. The apostles have come and gone, and the silver cock has crowed these seven years; but the Albemarle cup has never been found.

"I did reform, didn't I now?" the old captain used to say on the night of the dead. "You used to say that any one could if he had sufficient reasons. You was Lady Merriweather then. Mrs. Tuttle, you were right."

The drift fire burns brightly to-night, like the fires on the hearths of the long-vanished New England inns. They rise before me, those jolly and hospitable hostleries, with their swinging signs and great piazzas. The guideposts stand before them—how many young feet have those guideposts directed out of the town and to the town! What noble men have followed the direction of the country guidepost—"To Boston," "To Philadelphia," "To Washington."

But oh those inns on the stormy nights when cats ran home, and the owls hid, and the stagecoach pulled through the snow, and the clouds hurried past the moon!

On holidays? They were homes for the wayfarer then. Put a large piece of a broken hulk on the fire, and let me tell you another queer old tale!

THE INN OF THE GOOD WOMAN.

“His hoary frost, his fleecy snow,
Descend and clothe the ground.’

Sing!”

The fine old choir of the Cockerel Church—a church long gone, but whose haughty vane still turns in the shifting winds on a weather-stained spire in Cambridge, Massachusetts—were practicing for the Thanksgiving service. The precentor, or singing master, as he was called, was a tall young man in a black suit with white ruffles, who held in his right hand a steel turning fork, which he bit with lifted brow, held to his ear as though it were an oracle, and dropped by his side.

“Now, all—

‘His hoary frost, his fleecy snow,
Descend and clothe the ground’—

sing!”

The word was spoken with a vigor and earnestness that would have been befitting in an officer in the army, and accompanied by a jackknife-like bow which was more emphatic than graceful. The choir obeyed with spirit and alacrity, as the band used to be swayed by the drum major in the same artless times, before the symphony orchestra was so much as a dream.

“Fine! fine! Now again! Attention! *Sing!*”

The young master bowed as before, and lifted his hand and tuning fork to mark the time.

“‘The liquid streams forbear to flow,
In icy fetters bound.’

Sing!”

The music of this “autumnal selection,” or “winter piece,” as it was called, was written long before the troubled days of Richard Wagner, but it anticipated the realistic method of the great German school. The “liquid streams” of the high soprano glided on in silvery ripples into one pure and continuous tone. The high soprano, or “first treble,” on this eventful occasion was Penelope Vassal, who had come over from the Mystic Meadows with the singing master to make the best possible preparation for the service on the bountiful New England festival, the Feast of Trumpets, that crowned the declining year.

“That was fine again, especially the upper part. I can hear the winter coming in that glorious voice of yours! That is what I call art. Now we will all take a pinch of snuff.”

The white face of the soprano caught the flush of early years again. She was a sturdy little woman in a vandyke dress, prim and neat, and looking as though she wished that she was a few years younger. There was a sprinkling of frost in her hair, which was rolled back over her earnest, intellectual forehead.

The singing master’s name was Joseph Strange. He was a well-known character at the inns and ordinaries in Julien’s days, and bore the sobriquet of “Town-meeting Joe.” He lived on the Mystic Meadows,

and for years and years *and* years he had attended Penelope Vassal to the singing school and the choir, and during all these years the charms of the courtly Mystic maiden had undergone a perceptible change.

“Town-meeting Joe,” as a characteristic name, would not be easily understood to-day; it was clear then to all, for the memories of Faneuil Hall were yet vivid in the minds of the disappearing generation of original patriots.

We must explain.

In the primitive days of Sam Adams, when Boston was a town, and the folkmote governed the town, and the selectmen were men of great dignity and power, there was developed a class of reformers whose highest ambition was to speak in public on town-meeting days. They were men of progressive ideas, to whom literature at that time offered little opportunity, but who once a year might unfold their plans for the better adjustment of human affairs to their “feller-citizens.” The idea that every moral man had the right to be a free-man was electrical and in the air. Great minds had grasped it with prudence, and small ones with a fiery zeal for popular rights. The folkmote, or town meeting, was the common forum. After the Revolution the town-meeting orator became a kind of local Cicero in his zeal for republican ideas, and among those who made a great noise at town meetings in the old town of Medford, Massachusetts, in the picturesque days of forensic oratory, was a philosophical cordwainer and music teacher, of a large head and great horizons. He was the hero of our tale, Town-meeting Joe.

When the rehearsal was over, our *maestro* and his silver-voiced soprano came out of the church, where

their carriage was waiting to take them over the Mystic, on the turnpike of "Dick Turpin's" (Mike Martyn's) awful deeds. It was a crisp autumn evening, and the harvest moon, like a night sun, was ascending the dusky blue sky. There were fitful gusts of light wind, which turned the golden cockerel hither and thither, "just like the mind of Peter," to use Joe's scriptural comparison, as he helped Penelope into the vehicle, and shouted "Whoa!" as the impatient horse began to move a little too soon toward the stables over the glimmering river. At a little distance Capps Hill rose like a shadow, and masts of ships and schooners swayed beneath it on the tides like a bare forest in the wind. The horse started at a rapid rate toward the river.

"How beautifully you did sing that there passage!" said Town-meeting Joe. "How it did draw upon my imagination! Music is the true language of the soul. We never know what a person is until we hear him *sing*."

Past ropewalks into the marshes, sweet with rosemary and glimmering with frost, the horse hurried home, leaving Penelope at her own bowery house on the river. As the musical couple parted, Joe said:

"They say that the old anchormaker is sick and is going to die. The doctor told Father Cleveland that he couldn't last the night out. Poor man! he will have to cast anchor now. We'll all have to some time. Wonder if they'll send for me to lay him out, and watch with him?"

"If they do, you will send for me, of course," said Penelope. "I am not afraid. You would need me, and I shall await your call."

The music teacher lifted his brow silently and said: "Whoa! Good-night! Whoa!"

Then the horse flew homeward, under the spur of the memory of a well-filled barn among the corn heaps, pumpkin piles, and cider presses.

Since the days when the Mathers governed New England opinions, and peopled the sky with witches and the graveyards with avenging specters, and had attributed most nervous diseases to obsession, many curious customs in regard to death and burial had prevailed in the superstitious towns. In the old colonial houses on the capes, the woodtick was held to be a death watch; and on the decease of a member of the family in rural neighborhoods, the nearest relative went and told the bees, and sometimes trimmed the straw hives under the quince or peach or apple trees with crape. It was a touching sight to see an aged woman go out into the green yard and knock on the hives, and give the final word to the golden inhabitants of the air and flowers. The bees in those domestic times, like the cat and dog, were a part of the family, and were supposed to possess occult knowledge, and so to these mysterious botanists were taken the family bereavements. The dog howled when death was approaching; the cat saw spirits, and started up and ran; and any unusual occurrence fell under the suspicion of being a death fetch.

Most curious of the old-time superstitions was the custom of requiring lovers to watch the corpse. It associated the hopes of marriage with the silent vigil, was poetic, and has only disappeared from the oldest towns within a generation. No obligation of the social conscience was more scrupulously regarded

than that a dead body should never be left alone at night. In the earliest days the solemn watchers were old men and women, deacons, selectmen; but as the colonies grew, honest lovers with plighted troths were frequently selected for these long vigils. Awful were the stories that used to be told in the old inns and ordinaries of lovers who were disturbed amid such depressing duties by cats, owls, mysterious noises, and spectral visions. A few of these stories were odd and comical, and we recall no tale that we ever heard from the lips of the natural story-tellers, who were the novelists of those days, that people better liked to hear than a very eventful episode in the only courtship of that early apostle of art and pioneer advocate of human rights, Town-meeting Joe.

There was a hospitable ordinary at the North End, Boston, during the early part of the present century that was called the Inn of the Good Woman. The sign was the picture of a woman without a head. It was an old English device, which had served a purpose in some merrymaking hostel in the days of Queen Anne. The suggestion of the sign that the head was a dispensable part of a truly good woman, and that service and silence became a landlady, was quite Pauline, but if ever a device set a woman's tongue in motion it was that, and the flow of wit that it inspired was never unwelcome among the visitors at the inn. The sign was commonly the topic of conversation at the dinner hour, and here probably began the first lively discussions of woman's rights in the Puritan city.

The Inn of the Good Woman was famous for its humor and lively tales, and the after-dinner stories on

Thanksgiving days were a feature of the period of political expectancy. Thanksgiving was the Puritan Christmas in colonial times, the one day of merry-making and good cheer, but it was not until after the long sermon and the bountiful dinner that the religious purpose of the day changed into social amusements. It was Thanksgiving afternoon and night that were given to the musician, the riddler, and the story-teller.

The wayfarer, the bachelor, the traveler, the immigrant, sought the hospitality of the inn during this bountiful festival; and Julien's, with its famous soups and songs, and the ordinary of the Good Woman, with its cheerful dining room, were favorite resorts of people without an established home. In these cordial hostelries great fires blazed for all. The jug, the beef, the turkey, the brown bread, the succotash, the great pans of Tallman sweetings, the pumpkin cake, the apple puddings, were for all broken families. The Inn of the Good Woman had an especially American *cuisine* on that day. There the peppery sausages were browned for all in the morning; the apple dumplings with potato crusts and pandowdy were served for a dessert for all at noon, and the hot gingerbread with like liberality at the evening meal. There the best, the cleverest, the most thrilling of all the marvelous stories were told.

Town-meeting Joe was a bachelor, and lived on one of the bowery farms of Medford, on the Mystic, between the old Craddock House, which is supposed to be the oldest building in New England, and which has been changed into a museum, and the grand old Royall House, now famous in folklore as Hobgoblin

Hall. There were great forests then near the long sea meadows of the river Mystic. The Craddock House had been a garrison in the early days of the colony, and had had a secret window in one of its chimneys, and port holes in the walls which may still be seen. It was surrounded by a park. Near it ships were built and launched; and here was one of the old shops of Blingo, the blacksmith, who made anchors in Boston and ship nails here, and whose open doors in this place were covered with posters on which the news of the two towns might be read, especially when a "caravan" or circus was coming.

It was Town-meeting Joe's mission and calling to regulate the opinions and conduct of the town, and not to let a few people have their ways and says, but compel them to follow his own wiser and more restricted views. The old Medford town meeting was his field day—he was never able to keep step well at the general training; he walked independently, and so never rose from the ranks. But on town-meeting days he arose to the eventful demands and opportunities of the hour, and addressed his "fellow-citizens" on every topic and occasion with words that were plain and homely, but that rung and stung. Tall and lank, he wore a tile hat, the top of which was filled with a handkerchief large enough for a national flag, a stiff black stock in which he might have been hung with perfect safety, a substantial gray coat, and a vest and trousers made on Medford looms. One could see that he was a man of ideas, and that he had found many things wrong in the world.

Penelope Vassal was a descendant of one of the

families of royalists who had fled to Barbadoes, or one of the Windward Islands, at the beginning of the Revolution. The property of the Vassals had been confiscated, and Penelope, being left with nothing but an education and a name, was compelled to open a dame school in Medford. She taught the school with great credit for a quarter of a generation, and among her patrons and advisers were supposed to be Maria Gowen Brooks, called by Southey "Maria del Occidente"; Mrs. Susannah Rowson, author of *Charlotte Temple*; and Lydia Maria Child, the earliest pen in children's literature in America. She lived at the literary period of Medford, and her lofty and exact manners sustained the traditional dignity of the fine old town. Her dignity never relapsed, except in the matter of her weakness for her musical and patriotic hero.

With her grand name and education and distinguished patronage she had this one weakness, an affection for Town-meeting Joe. He had never meant to win her affections. He was not a candidate for the affections of any one; his one ambition was to make a noise. He had gone to her to rehearse his town-meeting orations, and to receive "p'int's," and to sing. But his eloquence was so engaging, and his interest in public affairs so lively, and his voice so uplifting, that poor Dame Vassal conceived a great affection for him, and idealized him, and covered his head with the aureole of ideality. He felt complimented by her regard at first, for to be appreciated by a teacher of such high social connections and distinction he held to be no ordinary recognition of ability. But he had never thought of love or mar-

riage in the matter. Love would hinder his ambitions. Dame Vassal hinted loftily at the disturbed state of her affections at opportune times, and their relations would have become strained but for her watchfulness and assiduous attention.

One day her feelings rose to an affectionate admiration beyond all restraint; she could stand the stress no longer, and she frankly told her passion.

“Cracky, good woman!” said Joe; “I never thought of such a thing as that. I am wedded to the town, and to art, don’t you know.”

“And I may venture to hope,” said Dame Vassal, at a loss of her wonted dignity, “that you will one day be wedded to another. Every man needs a heart and a home. I have a home now—a house.”

“Cracky, good woman! I suppose so. Who would you have me have?”

The little woman rose up before him, tall and taller, until she seemed to be the tallest woman that he had ever known. His eyes rose to the unexpected altitude, and he stared with uplifted brows.

“She who now stands before you,” was her frank avowal.

His brows fell. “If ever I do marry, I’ll—I’ll reckon on you—I reckon I will,” said Joe, in great hesitancy and mental confusion—“I reckon I will.” Joe lifted his brows again.

“Then we are betrothed,” said Penelope, to whom Joe’s dubious words were rainbows and apple blooms.

Joe dropped his eyes with a look of despair. What had he said? What had he done? The affair would ruin his reputation among his “fellow-citizens,” and he would not be able to oppose Provided

Willows from being elected a selectman with any show of success. Had he pronounced a death sentence to all his cherished hopes of life? The gray matter under his cranium began to be much agitated.

“My feelings overpower me,” said he. “I never can describe them. There is a ringin’ in my head—up here in the tower. It is so unexpected—the honor. I will come again. I want to feel the cool air. I must!”

He hurried out of the door, under the moon and stars.

“I am a ruined man,” he muttered to himself, “and I’ll never marry, never, not for all the planets in the sky. What an idjut I have been! How did it all happen?”

He was a burdened man for years. His thought day and night was how he might free himself from the awful promise that Dame Penelope thought that he had made to her.

The prosperous year of 18— found the great fields of Medford yellow with corn and pumpkins. Governor Brooks, of Medford, had issued a goodly Thanksgiving proclamation; the old Commonwealth of Massachusetts was in a grateful mood; and Dame Penelope read the annual State document with becoming hopefulness, and resolved to invite Joe to spend the day with her, that they might unite their gratitude for the general prosperity of the year. She had rehearsed with him, as we have seen, for the public service in Cockerel Hall, Boston, when everything looked propitious. But when she approached him with the beneficent invitation for the day, she was greatly surprised at his answer:

“ I can’t come—I can’t now——”

“ Why, Joe? It is the proper thing. Don’t you remember our everlasting vows that we plighted to each other on that sacred occasion? ”

He certainly did. That cloud in his sky had never disappeared for an hour.

“ I can’t——”

“ Why? ”

“ I’ve got to watch with the korps.”

“ *Ma foi*, is he dead, Joe? ” said Penelope, in a spasm of disappointment.

“ Yes, Blingo, the blacksmith, is gone at last—the anchor’s cast. His body is in the Good Woman Inn. He’s to be buried from the Old North Church, in Copps Hill Buryin’ Ground, and they have asked me to watch with the korps. I couldn’t refuse. He hadn’t any relations, but used to sleep in the store-house chamber in the inn. I was a particular friend of Blingo. He will never make anchors no more, nor ship bolts, nor shoe hosses, nor nothin’. The ships are all anchored in the port to which he has gone. We shall all sail away some day. It will make a dreadful solemn Thanksgivin’ at the inn.”

Penelope considered the imperative situation.

“ Joe, I would think it would be a very solemn thing to watch with a dead body of a fellow-mortal like Blingo all alone.”

“ Yes, but he was a Federal. There were no hants about him. Don’t let it worry you at all; be as happy and contented as you can on Thanksgivin’ day, and that will make me happy and contented.”

“ But *you* will be so lonely, Joe. A dead man isn’t company; and just think what might happen!”

“Yes, but he never had any difficulty with the Lord, nor me, nor anybody. He always turned to the right and went straight ahead, Blingo did. That’s wot he’s done now—gone right on. I wouldn’t be any more afraid of his body than of his old leather apron. I wouldn’t—would you, now?”

“No; but the *custom*.”

“The custom? What custom?”

“Joe, when a betrothed man watches with the dead, you know whom he invites to watch with him. I will watch with you, Joe. I’ve been wanting to have a serious talk with you about the vital issues of life, and our wedding day, and all that we hope to be to each other in this world and the world to come.”

“The world to come?” Here was a wide perspective, and the suggested addition to the mortal association startled Joe. The cloud was sweeping across the whole horizon.

“The world to come? Folks ain’t married there, the Scripture says,” he ventured.

“No; but we would wish to be near each other there as here—wouldn’t we, Joe? I would—wouldn’t you?”

Joe went down into the wells of deep thought. “Penelope, I’m sorry for ye, but—but it wouldn’t be proper for you to watch with me at the inn, would it, now, at Thanksgivin’ time, when the house is full and runnin’ over? It wouldn’t do, now, would it? And you a Royall, too, and a schoolma’am, too, and a friend of the Governor, too. I forgot to tell ye: they’ve laid out old Blingo in the storeroom chamber, where he breathed his last; so they told me. It

makes me think of the Scripture that 'There was no room for him in the inn.'” Joe rolled his eyes nervously, and added: “That old chamber is a dreadful place; all herbs and rats and old chests, and ghosts of cats and dead folks' things; and the pepper-mill is there, and the chopper block for mincemeat. The house is so full and all runnin' over on 'Thanksgivin' that they had to let old Blingo rest there, just where he died. It wouldn't be any good place for you to go to, now would it? You are a Royall, don't you know. A Royall never forgets his place.”

“Yes, but to be loyal to one's betrothed is more than to inherit the blood of famous ancestors. My heart has been loyal to you ever since the day that you told me you would never marry another. My affections are not like the weathervane, but are deep and firm and lasting—true as Penelope of old to Ulysses. I have long been waiting to have a talk with you, and make definite and explicit arrangements in regard to the blessed institution of matrimony. *That* will give me an opportunity. It will be a solemn night to talk about such joyful events. No, Joe, the eyes of this world and the world above are upon us, and your vows are before your own eyes, and it shall never be said that the betrothed of Joe Strange was untrue to him in any dark hour of his life. Penelope is my name, and I am a true Penelope.”

“Oh, Madame Royall, I wouldn't have you do it for all the world. Watch with old Blingo's korps in the storehouse chamber—why!”

“But I'd rather. 'Tis for *your* sake, Joe.”

“What would Governor Brooks say?”

“That I was ready to do my duty—a real true

Penelope, and one worthy of the name that stands for the heart of all womankind.”

“But, Madame—Madame Royall—oh, Madame—oh, Penelope—I have heard—it is so dreadful—I *have* heard that old storerooms in taverns are *hanted*.”

“But you said that you were not afraid of the body of Blingo.”

“No, but there might be other people’s hants—pirates or cats or somethin’. Old Cotton Mather, who lived and died up there, used to see black people in the air who would *explode*. There, now, he did, and he’s buried in Copps Hill, right there.”

“That’s why I ought to be true to you, Joe—a real Penelope. I will be true. How could I bear to think of you watching there all alone in that old store-chamber with the body of Blingo, the blacksmith? Penelope Royall knows her duties better than that. I’ll be there to comfort you, you may be sure of that, and we’ll lay out all our plans in life, and if anything happens there, we will share the danger together. There shall be no hants find you alone, Joe, in such a place as that, while Penelope Royall is living. You may be sure that I will be there to comfort you.”

If ever a man had a doleful prospect of Thanksgiving that year, it was Town-meeting Joe. He was anything but the Ulysses of poor Penelope’s fancy. He had dreamed of going to the Inn of the Good Woman, eating of roast pig and succotash and pandoody, and interpolating wonder stories between the courses of the cuisine; of smoking, and telling more rollicking stories; listening to harrowing legends and droll jokes from others; of having supper of sweet-apple pudding and pumpkin pie and fuming coffee;

telling more stories; then going to the old storehouse chambers with some jovial friend, and spending the night by the corpse of poor Blingo; telling more stories, and drinking apple cider and eating more pie. The winds might howl and the seas dash in Boston Harbor, but he was sure that poor Blingo would never harm him.

But to have Penelope for company, that was another matter. To sit up all night with Blingo, with classical-minded Penelope nagging him to marry her, and imparting to him moral precepts from the correct example of the Odysseus or the Book of Ruth; to be put at his wits' end how to turn the subject; and to hear the wind howl and the sea roar in Boston Harbor without the invigorating pie and cider, which Dame Vassal would surely not have regarded as a proper luxury for such a vigil! This picture was as appalling to him as it would have been to search a cellar for thieves or spectral lights or alarming midnight noises.

It should not be. He would go to Penelope and tell her that he would not expect her. So one evening, as the red twilight faded behind the bare oaks over the brown sea meadows, he knocked at Penelope's door. An earnest face soon appeared in the framework.

"I came over to say," said he—"you are real good—but I came over to say that I won't need you on 'Thanksgivin' night to watch. You are real good, but I will get Provided Usher to watch with me. He'd just as lives. You are real good, and that is what I came over to say."

Penelope surveyed her Ulysses with some misgiv-

ings, but said : " But what we are to each other, Joe, you know, and any true heart will stand by her betrothed at a time like this. It is the custom, Joe. I am ready."

" Yes, I know that you are real good, but I have heard that that old chamber is full of herbs and red peppers, and dead folks' things, and rafters and beams and pigeons and things, and it ain't any suitable place for womankind. I told you so before. You are real good, but I shall not need ye. Hope you'll have a good Thanksgivin'. I'll see you home after church that day. You're real good. Good-by."

" You will see me *there*, too," said Penelope, as Joe moved away with a quaking heart. " You will see me there. No Provided Usher shall keep you company when you need *me*."

Thanksgiving came, with a mellow air and a lingering summer splendor. Carriages full of merry people rolled to and fro, guns cracked in the woods, and the Boston bells rang, and the Old North chimes pealed out joyful airs. At noon a thin cloud passed over the sun ; the day turned gray ; the wind rose ; there came gusts of snow, and the harbor grew white with foam. The season was changing.

" It will be a fearful night," said Joe. " The Lord pity the sailor ! *She* won't come now, and what a good time I'll have ! These wild evenings are great for story-tellin' and apple cider. I'll tell my story of Peter Rugg, who has been ridin' and ridin' about on snowy nights like that that is comin', for the Lord knows how many years, tryin' to find Boston town. He's doomed to ride forever ; and I'll tell 'em how a boy threw a pumpkin at him on Charlestown Bridge,

and it went right through him, and came out on the other side. With the wind, and the sea moanin', and old Blingo up there in the storeroom, it will be a solemn night at the inn! But, thanks to gracious, it will all be nothing to what it would ha' been to have set up with Penelope! The winds do howl like music to me. Howl! howl on! as Shakespeare says."

With this dramatic address to Æolus, Joe harnessed his reluctant horse, and prepared to take his Penelope to the old Cockerel Church, where the principal Thanksgiving service was to be observed.

The day was one of all kinds of weather, such as only comes in November and March. The white-caps rolled on the waves. Half of the sky was a placid arch of purple, and half a belt of slaty cloud; there were gusts of wind and spiral snow, and gleams of sunlight on the far brown hills. In the parting days of Indian summer such fitful and uncertain minglings of all weathers came to the coast.

"One does not know what to think," said Penelope—which applied to her own experience as well as to the weather on that remarkable day.

The wind had sharply shaken the trees, and the ground was red with apples along the Mystic and Charles. The dark cloud grew, and rose like a hood over the blue arch. Dogs ran and geese flew before the gusts of wind.

"I know what to think," said Joe, after a long silence; "it is going to be an awful night—awful! The snow will fly, and the shutters will bang. How thankful you ought to be that you've got a home to stay to?"

“All the powers of the storm will not deter me from being at my post of duty,” said Penelope.

Late in the afternoon Joe set out for the inn alone, where he was to dine with the living and watch with the dead. He little minded the storm. His mind was rid of Penelope, and that made the whole world serene to him.

The inn was crowded. A sumptuous dinner was served, which lasted from two o'clock to four o'clock, when the guests, the stagedrivers, and the idlers gathered in the office before the great fire, and while most of them smoked their pipes and rested their feet on the brass fenders, a few told stories on the old red settle in the corner—an article of furniture then found in every inn, ordinary, and farmhouse. The storm increased toward evening; the wind whirled, and the gusts of snow in the streets became blinding. The sign of the Good Woman creaked, and the dry shutters banged and rattled. The teamsters came in from the great sheds, stamping their feet, and saying “Cracky!” The cats hid under the settle, and the dogs lay down on the mats near the fire, and curled themselves into ominous heaps.

“It will be an awful night,” said the landlord to Joe. “Heaven save them on the sea!” The Inn of the Good Woman was to-night indeed a house of refuge. Few of the guests knew that the old anchor maker lay dead in the storehouse chamber, or even that there was such a place.

The inn had *two* storehouses and *two* storehouse chambers. Each contained old ancestral bedsteads, uncertain furniture, and outworn utensils of many kinds. One of these was large, and one was small. In

the small chamber was a grand old mahogany bedstead, with a valance, or canopy. It looked like a royal bed, and it was kept here because it had belonged to a member of the Vassal family, and was ordered to be preserved as a relic. Near it was a high-backed settle, and over all hung strings of dried apples and peppers.

It was not in the great storehouse chambers of herbs, the looms, and the pepper mill that the body of hard-working Blingo had been laid out, as Job had supposed, but in the more retired room of the grand bedstead, leading out of the apartments where the stagedrivers and teamsters slept. The landlord had told Joe that the body would remain in the storehouse chamber, and it had not occurred to the latter that there were *two* chambers that bore that name. The only storehouse chamber that Joe had ever visited, though he had often slept in the inn, was the herb room, in which were old wheels and looms and carding machines and the sausage block and pepper mill and the usual inventory of a New England garret.

Just at night, amid the fury of the storm, an event not unusual happened. A cloaked traveler came in, asked quietly for a room for the night, and was told that the inn was full. The man was an Irish gentleman of a marked brogue, but of excellent bearing, and there were but few persons of his nationality in the city at that time.

“An’ surely you would not sind a gentlemin out into the storm,” said he, quietly. “I would be willin’ to slape anywhere on a night like this, I would, even though the conveniences were small. I do not often ask favors the like o’ this.”

The landlord led the man out to the servants' room to see the chamber maid as to what might be done.

"There is only one place where we can put him," said the maid; "that is the storehouse chamber. He might sleep there, but we would want to be going in and out. We have put the provisions there from the *other* store chamber, so as to leave the place to the body of Blingo."

"Ara, now, ara, you wouldn't disturb me any. Come in and out as much as ye loike—only give me a bed. I'll cover meself all over, and slape as peaceful as a kitten. Hear the wind howl! In Heaven's name, let me slape in the storehouse, or anywhere. I have been turned away from two inns. I am half sick. I want to go to my room now. Hear the wind—wharra!"

There was a tone of hearty good humor in his voice as he made this vigorous plea.

"Well, show him to the storehouse chamber," said the landlord.

The maid did so speedily, leading the way with a wax taper to the unoccupied room. She arranged the musty bed, and bade the worn traveler good-night, and left him to go to sleep in the very bed where Joe supposed the body of poor Blingo had been laid out. The Irish traveler hurriedly took off his clothing, laid it on the foot of the bed, covered his body over with the antique bedclothing, and his head with a sheet, and went to sleep, little caring who should enter the room during the night.

He was the only sleeper in the house at this early hour, except poor Blingo, in the other storeroom. The servants gave themselves up to merriment, not-

withstanding the solemn illustration of mortality in the lean to. The dining room was cleared; the red settles were set before the roaring log fire. The apple cider flowed, and the usual crowd assembled to listen to the stories told on Thanksgiving evening. It was a typical Thanksgiving night, and wild and fearful these stories were. Never in any land was there folklore like that started by imaginative old Cotton Mather in his *Wonders of the Invisible World*. Hoffman's *Strange Stories* are dreamy impressions to them. The spirits of the Puritan's day were all dark and avenging, desolate and troubled as the windy graveyards on the bleak coasts.

The story-telling began with the awful legend of Nix's Mate, which was followed by the tale of the Shrieking Woman, of Giles Corey the Wizard, the Bell Tavern Mystery, and the Specter Leaguers of Cape Ann. After the blood-chilling account of the Stone-throwing Devil of Portsmouth, which had lately been published in London, and which may be found in Increase Mather's *Wonderful Providences*, the white-capped landlady gave a very picturesque version of Jonathan Moulton and the Devil, a harrowing tale of Hampton. Every one's nerves were now receptive, and Town-meeting Joe saw that his opportunity to relate the old Boston wonder tale of Peter Rugg, the Missing Man, had come. It was the night for such a tale. Peter, according to the tradition, had been doomed to ride forever in search of Boston on wild nights like this. What his offense was, we do not know. Perhaps he had said that baked pulse was not good, or something of that kind; but he was often met on wild nights inquiring the way to Boston, and

driving his spectral steed, with fiery eyes and streaming hair, with a poor white-faced little girl crying beside him.

Joe was in his element when defending popular rights in the town meeting and when telling such a story. He loved to feel his power. To-night he seemed possessed of the story-telling inspiration and magnetism. The storm, the crowded room, the great fire, and the well-schooled superstition of his hearers, all tended to make the scene dramatic, and bring the nervous atmosphere under his control.

At the point of the story when Peter Rugg and his crying child approached Charlestown Bridge, Joe rose to his feet, and pictured the scene with all his resources of provincial dialect and startling gestures; his hand flew about his head in such a way as made the eyes and mouth of the old black cook, who stood looking in at the door, open so wide that her head seemed all mouth and eyes.

“The old toll-gatherer saw the chaise comin’,” he said, “and ran out into the rivers of wind and rain to meet it, his lantern swingin’ in his hand—*so, so*. He heard the black waters runnin’ under the piers of the bridge, but no sound of any horse’s feet or of wheels. The chaise was comin’ on as silent as a chaise of the air. But it *was* comin’; the old toll-gatherer could see it—it might have been with spiritual eyes—and Peter Rugg was in it. It might have been the spiritual vision that saw him; I can’t tell. The spiritual world is awfully mysterious. But the toll-gatherer saw Peter Rugg, and the hanted Peter seemed drivin’ on the air, and he leaned his head out of the chaise, *so*, and his daughter was sobbin’ and sobbin’ by his side. The old toll-

gatherer lifted his lantern, *so*, swingin' it aloft in the darkness and rain, *so*. But the steed was runnin' as for life. 'Hold!' shouted the toll-gatherer. The horse rose into the air and——"

The door of the dining room slowly opened on the rural actor and his nervous listeners. A woman in a long clock and quilted bonnet appeared, covered with snow. She bent her face on Joe reproachfully, and he withered before it. She glanced over the room, and each one seemed to feel a kind of moral shrinkage under the sweep of her eye. Though Peter Rugg's chaise was just rising in the air in the imagination of the company, and the minds of all were excited to the highest pitch to know what became of him and the toll-gatherer, the sweeping look of the sturdy woman instantly destroyed the spell of the story.

"Joe," said the storm-beaten lady, "I have come. I told you I would. Penelope Royall does her duty, in stormy nights and always. Meet me in the women's room. This is no night for story-telling, Joe; no time for cider-drinking. The dead deserve more respect than this. The elements are abroad. There is one under this roof sleeping his last sleep. He has cast anchor, and the anchor holds. Good people, all be reverent. *Your* time will come."

She turned away, leaving the room in silence. Joe sank down, saying only, "Well, the chaise passed over the toll-gatherer's head," omitting the usual dialogue between Peter and the toll-collector about the way to the lost town of Boston.

There are nervous conditions that belong to special periods of time, and that rise and fall with popular

beliefs, for faith creates the moods of the soul. Could any one have seen the nervous thrill on the faces in the ordinary that night of some sixty years ago, and have painted it on canvas, he would have produced a picture of the facial effect of superstitious fancies such as will never be seen again in New England, or possibly elsewhere. When Joe lifted his hand to indicate that the chaise of Peter Rugg was about to rise in the air, he seemed to hypnotize the listeners. All saw the spectral vehicle mentally, as no one could now. Even the cat felt the force of the spectral atmosphere, and uttered a mysterious cry.

The long room was smoky and shadowy in the languishing lights that struggled to consume the thick whale oil. The great sticks of wood in the black fireplace were falling into coals and white ashes. The people had been unconsciously drawing their chairs nearer each other all the evening, their nervous terrors calling forth a need of close companionship. The long room seemed to be filled with a kind of nervous air, in which the story-telling hypnotizer might produce effects at will. Into this supersensitive atmosphere Dame Vassal came like an illumination, and shattered the spell. She changed into life again the colorless faces, and the fixed and dilated expression of all eyes, especially the eyes of the ebony cook. The people sank back as though their souls had been withdrawn from another world.

Amid a long and powerful silence, the old English clock sounded nine bells, and Joe arose and went to the women's room.

Penelope was there with a tall wax candle and a foot-stove of coals waiting. She was very neatly

dressed in a gray silk. She really looked handsome.

"You needn't 'a' come," said Joe; "I told you that you needn't. It wasn't prudent. It is an awful night—just *awful!*"

"Do you think that I would leave you to watch with the anchor maker all alone? Is that the kind of woman that you thought me to be? I hope not, Joe."

"But Provided, the cordwainer——"

"One wants nearer hearts than such as his for duties like these. Let us go at once to the room and show our respect for the dead, and not leave the body alone. Come, the night is before us."

"I shouldn't want to be left alone if I were dead," said Joe. "I wish it were morning, I do. This is the way"; and Joe led Penelope toward the old storehouse chamber in which the Irish traveler was quietly sleeping under the parted curtains of the ancient post bed, but which our two watchers supposed was occupied by the dead anchor maker, the beat of whose hammer had rent the air of the Charles River, and the gleam of whose forges had illumined the Mystic for over forty years.

The room was under the roof. The rafters were bare, and under them were wasps' nests and cobwebs, and long poles on which sausages (after "killing-time") were hung to dry. The quilting frames were hung there also, on two strings, and there was a scaffolding on the cross beams covered with ancient pennyroyal, motherwort, everlasting, and other herbs. There were old chests in the corners, and on the sides of the room were hung brass warming-pans, warped spits, and spiders. In one corner were old flax wheels and abandoned looms.

Over a rude mantel, which seemed to have been a receptacle for all manner of things, were two silhouettes. Under them was the legend of "The Deacon and His." Some one had added, "We are not handsome, but pious." Penelope peered into the queer cupboardlike place, behind which was a dormer window that overlooked the sea. She surveyed the antique bedstead solemnly as she passed around the room. To her imagination it was the last bed of the anchor maker, and the form under the faded white counterpane was breathless forever.

"So still!" she said; "so still! There he lies, so still!"

She put down the foot-stove of coals, placed the light on a shelf, and arranged an old settle for the long vigil with the supposed tenantless body.

"Now, Joe, sit down. This is a solemn night, and I want to talk with you. Don't you feel solemn? You look so."

The wind lulled. The storm was clearing. The town was still. The old inn became still. The furious wind waves seemed to move away over the ocean. The full moon came out, and the broken clouds flew past it. The half-parted curtains of the single window revealed white roofs and white waters. The world all seemed as dead as the supposed Blingo.

Penelope dropped the window curtains, and partly shut out the light of the room. She approached the bed of the supposed anchor maker reverently, and surveyed the form of the body under the bedclothing in the deep shadows, and said, in a deep, reverent voice, "He is dead!"

Joe approached her on tiptoe, and repeated the

words in a very oratorical way, as though he were in the town hall addressing his "feller-citizens." "He is dead. Poor Blingo! 'After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.'"

Joe was a student of Shakespeare. He used to quote Shakespeare on all occasions, and especially in his public orations on town-meeting days, in a provincial dialect, and a deep voice that awed the old Medford farmers.

Penelope turned away from the affecting scene. Joe followed her. The two sat down on the settle, Joe looking very distressed, and Penelope very resolute.

"Now," said Penelope, "we will talk. Next to the day of one's funeral, what day is the most sacred in human experience?" she began, in a mathematical tone, smoothing her rolled hair.

"Town-meetin' day," answered Joe, promptly. "But don't let's talk. Remember the sign of the Good Woman."

"Oh, no, no. Joe, listen. The wind has gone down. This is a solemn time, isn't it, Joe?"

"I never felt solemn in all my life. I'd give five dollars if it were only mornin'."

There was a long silence. It was broken by Penelope, who was not to be admonished by the recollection of the Good Woman. "Joe, listen. What day is that that is most sacred to the human heart?"

"You just said it was the day of one's funeral. I think it is the town-meetin' day. Stands to reason it is. This is the day that regulates everything. Wonder what time it is gettin' to be?"

There was another long silence. A mouse ran

along the herb shelf, and struck the pennyroyal, and the air of the chamber became fragrant with a medicinal odor.

“Joe, listen. There is a day in life more eventful than the folkmote, or that which ends the great drama of all. Joe, think, now—what day is that? It is the day of which we both should be thinking now, if ever we expect to be happy. The long procession of years is passing. Man goeth, and he is not. We are not young now, as we once were. What day is it, now?”

“General trainin’ day. Oh, don’t bother me so! Think of the Good Woman.”

“Oh, Joe!”

There was another long silence. Then Penelope slowly raised her hand and placed it on Joe’s shoulder, and said, in a decisive tone:

“I must be plain—I must. It is our wedding day, Joe. There!”

He started. “Hippografts and thunder. Where’s my snuffbox gone?”

“Eh, Joe?”

“The dragon! Let’s say over Watts’s hymns to each other. You begin.”

“Joe, listen. It is customary—— But before I proceed to call your mind to this point let us do our duty, and be true to our solemn office. Let us go and examine Blingo.”

She took the wax candle, and the two went to the catafalque-looking structure where the supposed Blingo lay in his last repose; “the anchors he had forged holding fast on many a coast, and himself anchored in the home port beyond all the hills and

hollows of this changeable world," as Penelope pictured him now.

Penelope gazed on the outline under the sheets and repeated the solemn words: "He's dead. Seems so he is breathing and the bed is living. Don't it to you? 'Tis my imagination."

Joe repeated the formula, "He's dead," adding, "May the Lord have mercy on his soul!"—a frequent remark of a late Judge Sewall, who was not sparing in the exercise of his prerogatives.

Penelope's mind began to be greatly agitated, and she wandered about the chamber, examining chests and boxes, and even peering into the *boogah* hole—a name of uncertain orthography, but one used to designate a cavernous place under the eaves, the hiding place of cats and of children fleeing from justice, and of "boogars" or "boogahs," whatever these mysterious things may have been. If the children of early New England had ever published a dictionary, the word would have found a conspicuous place, and its orthography would have been decided.

In her excited wanderings Penelope chanced to do a very careless thing. She disturbed an ancient string of peppers, which had an immediate effect on the atmosphere, and she began to sneeze. Joe also became afflicted in the same way, and the violent noises woke up the traveler who was occupying the supposed bed of the deceased anchor maker. He pulled the sheet from over his head, took one draught of the peppery atmosphere, and gave a suppressed sneeze.

Joe started. "What was *that*?"

"It was an echo," said Penelope. "Sounds echo

along the rafters of these old rooms. We're both of us nervous to-night."

"You don't think that Blingo has come to life again, do you? Pepper is powerful stuff;" and Joe sneezed again violently, with an effort to suppress the act.

Penelope sat down again on the settle, drew up to her the foot-stove, and quoted Shakespeare, saying, "'Trifles light as air.'"

There was a long silence, broken only by the wood-ticks, which were numerous in the old rafters. The moonlight fell through a dormer window upon her really handsome form. She had dressed to look well, even on this solemn occasion. Her light gray silk seemed luminous as the moon.

"They do sound solemn," at last said Joe, referring to the woodticks. "I feel just as though there was somethin' livin' in the room. Don't you? Somethin' breathin'. I do, now."

"Joe, listen. Your imagination is excited. Let it be calm. I was about to say that it is the custom for the betrothed lady to appoint the wedding day. Don't you know—eh?"

"No, I don't know anything about such things, Penelope, I don't."

"Well, I will tell you. Now, in my case, I would rather that *you* would appoint the day. When shall it be?"

There was a long silence.

"Eh, Joe?"

"Not on town-meetin' day."

"No."

"Nor in plantin'-time."

“No.”

“Nor on Fourth of July day.”

“No. But when—eh?”

“Hear that sign creak. That woman hasn’t got any head.”

“But I have, Joe.”

“Let’s go and examine Blingo. I do feel as though there must be somethin’ wrong there, I do. That pepper is powerful powerful. I’ll go—you follow with the light.”

“But the day?”

“I’d rather be married in October than any other time of the year, if I’ve got to be. It’s kind o’ melancholy then, and one sees everything goin’ to pieces, and don’t mind what one does. Funerals and weddin’ days are awful solemn times.”

Penelope took the wax taper again and moved with light tread toward the bed. Joe followed her with a woe-begone look, like a shriveled apology of his former self, saying, abruptly, “Oh, what would I give if it were only mornin’?”

Penelope said again, “He’s dead.”

Joe repeated the words as before, then both in chorus.

“I wonder if he looks natural?” asked Joe. “The funeral is going to be on Saturday, from the Old North Church. How thankful we ought to be that his troubles are over at last! What did they leave his clothes on the foot of the bed for? It looks very mysterious. Don’t it seem so to you?”

Penelope turned to the window, nervously, and looked out on the snowscape. The clocks were striking the hour of twelve. The night was silent after

the snow gust, and the lighthouse loomed afar under the low moon.

She sat down again on the settle beside the unhappy Joe, and they listened for a time to the wood-ticks. Joe sighed often, and repeated over and over again, "How I wish it was mornin'!"

There was now another wretched being in the shadowy chamber—the Irish traveler in the bed. He had been listening half awake. He had heard the mysterious sentence, "He is dead," spoken above him, and he pinched himself and stretched out his feet to see if any unusual thing had happened him. He seemed to be the same person physically and mentally as when he fell asleep, but, like the old woman in the nursery rhyme, he wondered if it was really himself or not. He thought he would rise very silently and cautiously, and get out of bed, and try to solve these mysterious sentences that forbade sleep. He wrapped the white counterpane around him, and in this condition very noiselessly prepared to emerge from the bed.

His movements would have startled the couple at once had it not been for a rasping sound that broke upon the stillness of the midnight hour. A reveling servant had forgotten to grind the coffee for breakfast at the proper time, and began to turn the coffee mill in the room below. Fifty years ago the drowsy people of New England were often awakened in the morning by the grinding of the coffee mill, which sound was a kind of long growl, like a mad dog spinning in the air.

"The coffee mill goes on," said Joe, "I wonder if it will go on when *I* am dead?"

The Irishman quietly got out of the bed on the back side, and slowly approached the high-backed settle. He stopped a little, and gazed upon the two occupants of that antique bench. Who were they? Why were they there? He comprehended that that resolute, trim-looking woman had been trying to make the thin, clerical-faced man fix her wedding day.

While he was thus standing in the habiliments of the bedclothes, his olfactory nerves began to be affected by the peppery atmosphere, and he felt a desire to sneeze, which he was able for a time to repress.

“Joe, listen,” said the woman. “This is a night of decision. The wings of the wind are spent. It is near one o’clock. Mark the hour, for I want you always to remember it. In the old storehouse chamber, in the chamber of the dead, under the midnight moon, amid the silence of the inn—— Merciful heavens! What is *that*?”

A sneeze directly behind the vigilant pair turned Joe for a moment into a statue. He presently glanced around mechanically with fixed eyes, and beheld what he took to be an awful apparition.

“Ap—pollion!”

He started up as by a shock of human electricity. One bound brought him to the narrow stairway, and another took him to the foot of the stairs.

Penelope rose slowly, faced the giant specter, and stood firm.

“Who are you?” she demanded.

“Pennypacker—just Pennypacker—a gentleman

from Dublin, Ireland, travelin' in this foine country, and comin' late to the inn, and findin' it full, they put me here."

"But—you ain't alive."

"Sure that I am, madam." He sneezed again. "Dead people do not sneeze. How came you here? This is a mighty queer place for a nice-lookin' woman like you to be at the dead o' night!"

"I came to watch with you. I thought you were a dead man—the old anchor maker."

"That is a queer story that you are tellin', but you look like an honest woman and a real lady; but what should a lady like you be naggin' a spokeshite like him to marry you for? He don't want you at all. I could sense that lyin' in me bed there and hearin' him put ye off. Sure I'm a widower meself, and there isn't a likelier man in all Ireland. I trated me fust wife well. I'll have ye meself. What do ye say? Don't ever try to court a bachelor," he added. "Try a widower always. The bachelor hasn't any heart; his blood flows through a muscle; but a widower can feel."

Penelope thought of Joe; a flush of anger rose in her cheeks, and her honest indignation made her form a sudden resolution.

"If you'll prove to me that you are what you say, I'll consider the matter. I will; in justice I will. I do not believe in long courtships."

"An' a good woman ye be, and this is the Inn of one Good Woman. So we are engaged."

"Yes, engaged, if what you say is true. Heaven only knows what I have endured from that man. Suspense! The most awful state of anything is sus-

pense! I'm desperate! I'll have ye, if you be anybody—*anybody!*”

A blast on a stage horn in the office aroused the inn. The landlord came running to the foot of the stairs to the storehouse chamber, calling: “Blingo isn't there; he's in the *other* chamber. Penelope! Penelope! Come down! come down!”

Penelope came down stairs slowly, in a very unconcerned and stately way, and confronted Joe. “I'll give you up,” she said. “You are not a Ulysses. I am engaged. I do not believe in long courtships. I never shall sing with you any more. Heaven pity you! I do. You needn't stand there staring like a *stuck pig*. I am engaged,” with which unclassical comparison she forever dismissed her Ulysses.

The old New England clambake, like the husking party, still follows the history of the coast, and is a part of all the events of the summers of the growing cornfields. Clams saved the Pilgrims of Plymouth and of Dorchester. May they never fail on the coasts! Driftwood again.

The fire glows again.

THE BEWITCHED CLAMBAKE.

“THIS is a most extraordinary occasion!” said Professor Cameralsman, surveying a great multitude of people which had assembled under the great trees where locusts were piping, and a cloud of smoke was curling from a circle of stones called a bake-hole. “Most extraordinary! A clambake, do you call it? And do they bake all those wagon loads of bivalves in that round stone oven? It is unique; unlike any social gathering I have ever seen.”

He was a guest of the Church Clambake Committee, and followed the latter through the rustic crowds. He was a tall man, and his white hat and green goggles towered over them all, like the white church steeple, which, near at hand, rose in the mellow sunlight over the green trees.

He carried a cane, and with it he hit this and that object, contemptuously at times, a habit of his.

“And what do you call *that*?”

“That was last year’s bake-hole or oven,” answered the chairman of the church committee.

The professor hit the blackened stones of the old oven with his cane, one after another.

“Yes, yes, yes; and what do you call *that*?” he continued, pointing with his cane.

“That was the oven of the year before.”

“Do you build a new oven every year?”

“Yes.”

“That is very extraordinary, very! And why?”

The chairman was silent. So were all of the members of the Committee of Reception except one, who said:

“An old bake-oven won’t bake.”

“An old bake-oven won’t bake?” said the professor. “If this was only Gotham I should think—ah—I should think that the people were about as wise as those men of Gotham were. Pardon me, I mean no offense—a new stove oven every year—it is very extraordinary!”

But the pompous old professor liked the clam-bake greatly, notwithstanding he found everything so “very extraordinary.” The steaming clams, the melted butter, the dressed fish, the excellent brown bread, the sweet potatoes, the fresh green corn, the browned chickens, the puddings and the berry pies—all suited his appetite and excellent digestion, and he grew good-natured and told jokes and stories, and shook the table with laughter as surprise followed surprise in the dishes of the rustic feast.

“I have conceived the purpose,” he said at last to the chairman, “to arrange to have a clambake in this grove myself, and invite all my friends, among them the Governor! “Say, waiter,” he continued.

“Sir?”

“What are you going to do with that stone oven when you get through with it?”

“Nothing, sir. It will never be any good again.”

“You do not intend to use it any more?”

"No, sir, we never use the same stone oven twice."

"Isn't that a mistake? Can I have it? I shall be glad to make adequate compensation for it."

"Certainly, sir, if the committee have no objections you can have it for nothing. *Them* stones are dead now."

"'The stones are dead, now'? I am incredulous. If true, it's very extraordinary—'the stones are dead,' you say?"

"Dead stones don't bake twice——"

Just here there came a troublesome mosquito, which set the professor's arms revolving like a wind-mill.

After the feast the professor made a very learned historical address on John Hampden, who was supposed to have visited this part of the country, with Edward Winslow, on a secret mission of a London Colonization Society. He spoke of the Indian graveyards which were to be seen on the hillsides, and pictured in eloquent and beautiful language the vanished Indian race.

"I have learned," he said facetiously, at the close of his address, "some very remarkable facts in geology since I came here, and the most remarkable is that it kills a stone to roast a clam, and I suppose it also kills a clam to be roasted by stone."

"You may be sure of both of them 'ere things," shouted old Jerry the clamdigger. "It kills 'em both dead as *Injuns*."

The people laughed; the professor lifted his brows and said, "It is my purpose soon to give a clambake to my friends, and I think I will engage your oven before you go."

“No, you won’t never give no clambake to your friends if you live to be as old as *Methuselah*, if you use them ’ere stones,” said old Jerry. “I don’t know much, that’s a fact, but I know a stone when it’s alive and when it’s dead, and those stones are as dead as the clams that were baked on ’em, and are all gone now. You would find it a ‘very extraordinary’ clambake if you was to try to bake clams on one of them old ovens; forty cords of wood wouldn’t do it.”

“Then I will make a ‘very extraordinary’ clambake for my friends,” said the professor. “I should like to attempt a service to the good people who come here each year, by putting an end to a superstition which seems to have lasted since the days of the Pilgrim Fathers.”

“If you try to do anything like that you will have to eat raw clams, and fish, and pudding, with smoke for sass!” said Jerry.

“Very well, my good friend, I think I will attempt it,” said the professor, “and I’ll engage you to make a bake for me in that very place. If you do as I say, I shall not hold you responsible, and shall gladly pay you for your services.”

“Then I will have to make another bake close beside your ‘extraordinary’ one. I would hate to see a pig-headed man with a great heart disappointed and lose his money.”

The place was Old Swansea. The professor was a visitor to the town from an inland college city. He was a member of the Folklore Society of his college, and he had come to study the folklore tales and traditions of the Pokanoket Country, making his

home for the August holidays at Newport and on the Mount Hope Lands.

In riding through this picturesque and historic country he had noticed many black clambake holes, or stone ovens, in the same orchards, under the cool trees. He had asked, "Why do the people need more than one clam oven?" and received, as has been shown, the usual answers, that these ovens "do not bake well twice."

Here was a folklore superstition indeed. He would correct the popular mistake, and make his experiment the subject of a lecture. The thought made the good man happy. The old annual clambake at Swansea, Mass., is a historical memory in Rhode Island, and in the industrious city of Fall River, Mass., and the neighboring town of Somerset. In fact, most of the well-to-do people of the western part of the old by-gone Indian Kingdom of Pokanoket, which comprised the territory from Plymouth, Mass., to Bristol, R. I., were regular attendants on this annual festival of clams, fish, chowder, and puddings.

It may seem strange to Western readers that a clambake should ever have been made a church festival, a provincial Feast of Tabernacles. But the Hebraic feast was but a rejoicing over the harvests of the Land of Promise.

This historic clambake was a like recognition of the bountiful resources of sea and shore. It called the people together for merry-making reunion, from the time of the old provincial "Elders" to a very recent date, and was imitated in many ways by hundreds of churches in Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

The bake was usually made in old oak groves or in orchards. A great, hollow heap of "live" stones was made on the ground. This was heated by building a fire of cordwood upon it, like a funeral pile. Into this oven the shellfish was poured.

The other preparations to be baked were placed upon the shellfish. The whole was covered with rockweed, and a steaming heat followed, which baked thoroughly the immense dinner.

A strange thing was the festival of esculent bivalves to one who saw it for the first time, as did our professor. The great stone oven on the ground, the blazing wood that was to heat the stones, the coming of vehicles of every description over all the oak-shaded roads, the greetings of people who had not seen each other since the former year, and who seldom met except at church and here, the groups of old people, the women with children by the hand, the belles and the beaux, the city people, the orator the poet, the singers.

It was on one of those September days of living splendor when Cameralsman and his guests, who were the Governor of the State and his suite, with their wives and some Southern people from the beautiful cottages of Newport, rode through the bowery roads of Old Swansea toward the great oak grove, famous for its church clambakes.

The orchards were loaded with fruit. The hollyhocks were in bloom in the yards. The cornfields wore a yellow luster, and purple flowers and golden-rods lined the roadways, and clematis the mossy old stone walls.

There are few seasons so beautiful in New England as these early September days.

As the party drew near the sunny oaks, from the vistas which opened to the bright, steel-blue waters of the Narragansett Bay, they saw two spiral columns of smoke ascending through the trees. Jerry, the clamdigger, had made a new bake-oven beside the old one, in which was to be placed the professor's extraordinary dinner.

"So you wouldn't trust the old oven," said the professor to Jerry. "Well, be sure and heat my oven hot."

"No matter how hot it is heated, it won't bake. Most of the clams are as sure to come out of it alive as the Hebrew children were to come out of the fiery furnace. Excuse the Scripture, I meant no irreverence!"

The party sat down at rough board tables, which were spread on grounds of matted leaves and airy thistle downs. The smoke of the two ovens fell, the "bake" was put into the ovens, a steam arose as the rockweed was placed over the shellfish, and the professor took his stand by his own "extraordinary" oven, and looked through the trees into the air to see the ospreys wheel and hear them scream.

"This sets at naught all your traditions," said the professor.

"No, it don't," said Jerry. "You just wait and see. You needn't laff at old Jerry. He laffs best who laffs last! But it is a rule of life that self-sufficiency and conceit go before a downfall. There are some things that we know by instinct, and some by experience. "You couldn't catch fish like a fishhawk

if you were to try; nor could you, sir, make a clam-bake like me with all your learning."

"I am going to take a ride with the Governor and his wife," said the professor. "I will return in an hour. Will the bake be ready when I return?"

"*My* bake will, sir. Yours won't be ready before next year at this time. It will just stand waiting forever!"

"Aren't you somewhat impertinent, sir," exclaimed the professor, haughtily.

"Professor Cameralsman," said Jerry, "I'm a plain-spoken man. We Swansea people, as a rule, speak plain. A man is frequently very near disappointment when he is over-confident, and he will have to eat humble pie sooner or later. You will pardon me, sir, but it is my candid opinion that you are preparing a large pie of that kind for yourself to-day."

We will let Jerry, the clamdigger, tell the rest of the story in his own peculiar dialect:

"You just ort to have seen those Newport gentry when they sat down to that there table," said Jerry, "mor'n twenty of 'em, with that great big ox of a professor at their head.

"They were all ribbins, and bows, and smiles; and the locases they sung, and the katydids were merry as spring robins in the trees.

"At last, after much bowin' and jokin', the professor riz up like a Scriptur giant, and offered his 'gratulations, and gave an order like a drum major, just like this:

"'We are all ready; bring on the bivalves from my own oven.' He called a clam a bivalve.

"Well, in two minutes the rockweed and the sea-

weed was rolled off the top of the old bake-oven like a great blanket, and the waiters came running to the tables with pans of clams, which ought to have been steamin', but they were not.

"The professor he opened his mouth to show his guests from South Carolina how Yankees eat clams. Just then the live clams in his pan began to cool off from their warmin' and feelin' kind o' comfortable like, they opened their mouths, too.

"The wimmen folks they began to start back and say, 'They ain't dead; the clams ain't dead!' The professor rolled up his eyes and put on his great goggles, and says he, he says :

"'This is very extraordinary, very extraordinary.'

"He turned round slowly in a kind o' majestic way, when another extraordinary thing followed. The hired help seemed to have been all called away. Some were goin' one way, some another. In a minute or two more the waiters all dropped their pans and began to run, just streaked it, they did, and I was left there all alone, with the bake almost as alive and raw as when it went into that oven.

"'Jerry,' said the professor, 'are those bivalves *dead?*'

"'No,' says I, 'but the stones in that bake-hole are, and you'll be, too, if you eat those raw livin' clams. You may know a heap about books and 'ologies and sich, but when you be goin' to make a clam bake, you better listen to some one who has had experience like old Jerry.'

"A dreadful wilted look came into his face. The locases they all sung, and the katydids were all merry, and I felt just like 'em; so I just tossed my own hat

right into the air—'twan't the right kind o' spirret, I'll allow—just like that.

“And the professor, he took off his green goggles, and says he, kind o' disconsolate like :

“‘This is very extraordinary. If I believed in such things, I should say that clambake was *be-witched*.’

“Now I had kind o' a tender spot in my heart for a man when his pride has been cast down like a heathen image, and I pitied the professor and all of those Newport gentry, who might have had nothin' to eat but raw clams. We all of us make mistakes, and it is best to be forgivin'.

“‘Professor,’ says I, ‘you are a mighty good sort of a man. You watch the fishing-hawks and talk about the Indian relics a spell, while I open my clam-bake, and then I'll give you such a treat as will make you all want to come back to Swansea every year.’

“When I opened my oven the odor of the dinner filled the air. Some of the hired men and waiters came back again, and I never saw a happier party than that when my bake was served. I felt as proud as old King Solomon.

“‘My lecture will be spoiled,’ said the professor at last, ‘but, Jerry, we have all of us much to learn in this world, and sometimes from sources we least expect. Here's twenty dollars. Shall I introduce you to the Governor?’

“He did, and the Governor and I bowed to each other very low, and the professor, he bowed to me after the Governor, and said :

“‘This is all very extraordinary !’

“‘Very,’ said I, hat in hand.”

An old husking tale? Yes. And, after it, let us have the fiddle, and listen again to the husking tunes of the merry days when soup and hasty pudding made life long, and the muscles such as built the gray stone walls beside the ferny roads.

THE MIRACULOUS BASKET.

AMONG the early tales of the Mount Hope Lands is one that the old families of Swansea, Massachusetts, and of Warren and Bristol, Rhode Island, like to recall by their winter evening fires. The region which goes to make these towns was once known as Pokanoket. It was the hunting and fishing ground of Massasoit, and of those unknown tribes that perished by the plague a few years before the coming of the Mayflower.

Winter in the early colonial period is reported to have had three "pinches" or "spells" of merciless weather, when rivers turned to crystal and landscapes to snow; when birds fled to the heart of the forests, and only the white owl came out of the woods o' nights "to see what he could see."

The first of these Northern severities, with its trumpeting winds and drifting snows and steel-gray desolations, usually fell about Thanksgiving, the Pilgrims' holiday.

Fifty years after the settlement of Plymouth apple orchards began to fill the dooryards with creamy blossoms and subtle odors in spring, and with fruitage, red, yellow, russet, and green in the fall. The early apple trees grew to giants, and the Baltimore orioles

adopted their high branches for their pouch nests, to which they came year after year.

The Indian families that were left after Philip's war liked to visit the farm cider presses, and see the old horse going round at the end of a beam, turning the cogged wooden wheels that ground the apples. They delighted to see the apple cheese made, bound in straw, and placed under great wooden screws. Better than all, they liked to drink the sweet cider when the presses began to flow.

One might have seen them in such places in their blankets on the blazing days of the Indian summer, when the "locusts" were singing their last melancholy notes and the crickets were piping in the shade.

In those days apples were free to all. The new cider was equally free, and Indians and idlers loved to sun themselves amid the social surroundings of the bountiful cider press.

Old Quaker John Pettijohn, or "Friend Pettijohn," of the Mount Hope Lands, had a great estate overlooking Mount Hope and Narragansett Bays. An immense orchard stood back from the farmhouse, and in the orchard the good gray man, with stout legs and round, rosy face, had a cider press.

Friend Pettijohn's house flowed with hospitalities. His great heart went out to the remnant of the Indians, and he never denied the wandering families of the shattered tribes anything that they asked.

"Treat 'em well, Ruth," he said to his wife. "Thee treat 'em all well. They once owned the whole, and of a right the land belongs to them now. 'Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that

would borrow of thee turn not thou away.' Thee treat 'em well, and remember thy own blessings."

Ruth Pettijohn needed not the instruction, but she heeded it well. Her heart was as bountiful as his. So the Indians never went away from her door without shelter, food, or some gift. They lay down in their blankets by the Quaker's fires in winter, or slept in his great barns, and they were helped in summer from the best dishes on his long oak tables.

But Friend Pettijohn's eyes began after a period of years to see the need of a moral reform, of which Ruth was the leader.

It happened on this wise: The Indians began to love hard cider, as old cider was called, and they made a great drain upon his stored barrels in winter. The men and women would call at the back door on the frosty mornings and say, "Mug, mug." Then Mistress Ruth would send the hired men to draw a pitcher of cider for each one to drink to his fill.

But it came to be seen that hard cider made the Indians cross, quarrelsome, and dangerous, and that their desire for it grew. Sometimes the honest Quaker would find two or three Indians waiting at the door for cider in the very early morning, before milking. And the Indians had ceased to say, "Mug, mug." Their call always became "Old mug! Old mug!" meaning hard cider and cider that would intoxicate.

Mistress Pettijohn became convinced that it was her duty to form a temperance society among her Indian visitors, and she began by preaching to them, with solemn "thees" and "thous," of the sin of being a slave to appetite.

She gathered her red visitors one Sunday morning

by the fire, and exhorted them with language from the Scriptures: "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey." The Indians listened and were convinced, but their fever for "old mugs" still burned. There were long faces when Mistress Ruth concluded her exhortation with the emphatic declaration:

"I am thy friend. I will nurse thee in sickness, feed thee in hunger, and shelter thee in cold. But cursed is he that putteth the bottle to his neighbor's lips. Look at this hand. It has never failed thy need, but as the Spirit moves me, may the Powers above wither it if it ever gives an 'old mug' to one of you again!"

Friend Pettijohn, was surprised that his good wife had been so resolutely moved by the Spirit. He was more astounded perhaps at the declaration that followed:

"John Pettijohn, I have a message from the Lord for *thee*. Stop that cider press! Let the apples rot, but never the souls of men!"

"What, Ruth! But the vinegar! What should we do for vinegar?"

"The world was good before vinegar was made, and would be better without it," answered Ruth, with decision.

Ruth would never handle a glass of cider from that hour; but Friend Pettijohn had received no such definite message as his wife, and he used sometimes to treat a thirsty Indian in husking time, when she was not on her guard.

There was one poor Indian, named Wormsley, who had become a hard-cider drinker. In him the old

cider produced intoxication, with great violence of temper, and was followed by an inordinate thirst for more. He would come to Mistress Pettijohn's door and stand there by the hour with imploring eyes.

The good woman would come to the door, and raising her rolling-pin or carving knife over her head, say:

"What does thee want, Wormsley?"

"Old mug, for the last time!"

"No, Wormsley, I've had a message. Go away!"

One autumn morning, not long before the Puritan festival, Friend Pettijohn found old Wormsley at the door very early in the morning. The Indian stood and stared.

"Well, Wormsley, is thee here?"

"Indian thirsty—old mug."

"No, Wormsley."

"Indian sick—old mug!"

"No, Wormsley, white squaw say *no*. Not right, Wormsley; all wrong. No, no! Thee must go."

"Old mug, for the Lord's sake! For the last time!" The Indian lingered piteously.

Friend Pettijohn was a tender-hearted man. He looked back to his warm rooms, and saw the half-naked Indian standing there in the cold, with a basket on his arm.

"Come on Thanksgiving day, Wormsley, and I will fill your basket."

"With old mug?" The Indian's eyes glowed.

The Quaker's heart grew weak with pity, and a queer expression passed over his face.

"Yes, Wormsley, I will pour it into the basket. That is the place for it. Always bring a basket when

thee comes for cider. So it will be like water poured upon the ground, never to be gathered up."

"You give old mug in basket? Good!"

"Yes, Wormsley, all the cider thy basket will hold, and better things, too. Give me thy basket now. I will fill it with victuals. Then thee must go. White squaw is right, Wormsley. She had message. Thee can't have any more cider than a basket will carry."

Friend Pettijohn took the basket from the Indian's arm, filled it with food, and returned it, repeating, "Wormsley, go."

"Thanksgiving day I come. Bring the basket for old mug."

There was a twinkle in his eye. The Quaker saw it. Ruth saw it, too, from the window. As her husband came in she said:

"John, what has thee promised him?"

"Only to fill his basket with cider on Thanksgiving day. But an Indian basket don't hold cider. It'll all run out."

"What made him look so happy? There's something wrong in thy promise, John."

She ran to the door, flung it open and called:

"Wormsley, Wormsley, come back! Come back! *What* basket is thee going to bring us on Thanksgiving day?"

"Same basket—same one."

"That's right, Wormsley. Thee must bring that *same* basket and no other. Thee understands?"

"Me understand. John fill it with old mug, for the *last* time. Me understand." Then he hastened away.

Thanksgiving day fell gray and cold. The trees

glimmered with frost. The streams were bridged with ice, and the Northern air cut keenly the faces of the choremen as they went to the barns and cattle sheds.

The preparations for Thanksgiving in the thrifty Quaker home had been as liberal as usual. The great ovens were full of brown bread, roast apples, roast game and beef, pies, gingerbread, and Indian and sweet-apple puddings.

Mistress Ruth rose early. It was to be a busy day. She opened her Bible, glanced at a text for silent meditation, and taking up the shovel, opened the oven.

Rap! rap! rap! came a knock at the door.

"John, get up, and go to the door!" said his wife, and the good Quaker rose.

Rap! rap! rap! came the knock again, hard and impatient.

"Wormsley, perhaps. I will look out of the window," said Mistress Ruth. She raised the curtain and looked out.

"Oh, John! John!" She drew back, and flung up her hands in distress.

"What, Ruth?"

"It's Wormsley with his basket for old cider."

"Well, he is welcome to all it will hold."

"It will hold gallons. Go out and see. Oh, thy rash promise! Oh, that thee had had the sense of a woman! I never yet was caught in any snare of the adversary like that! John, thy upper story is empty. Hurry and see that basket."

Friend Pettijohn went to the door and pulled hard to open it, for frost had settled in the edges.

"Everything sticks this morning. It is cold,"

said the good Quaker as he went out to behold the Indian's basket. There stood Wormsley. He had his basket on his arm.

"Same basket," said the Indian, with beaming face.

"Wha-a-at!" cried the Quaker.

"Old mug. Fill basket. Same basket; me dip him. Water sticks. John promise—fill him!"

"Let me look at it," said the bewildered Quaker.

Wormsley handed him the basket. How beautiful it shone in the sunlight! It was a basket of crystal. It would hold water or cider, or any liquid.

Wormsley had dipped it again and again in a half-frozen stream, and after each immersion had left it to freeze. All its chinks were filled in and frozen as solid as glass; and the coat was thick enough so that the liquor would not soon melt a hole through it.

The Quaker looked at his wife, who stood holding a fire shovel high in air. A shrewd look came into her face.

"Wormsley," she said, "thee come in, and sit down by the fire. Thee come in, and hear the kettles sing!"

The Indian entered. He held the basket close to his blanket, and would not give it up. He took a chair in a dark, cold corner of the great room.

"Thee sit up to the fire, Wormsley, and hear the kettle sing on Thanksgiving day."

"Indian cold."

"Sit up to the fire, then."

"Old mug make him warm."

But he refused to be warmed by anything else than the fire of his lively anticipations. His ice

basket, in which the miracle had been performed, was close beside him in the cold corner.

“Get up, Wormsley, and come to the fire,” said Mistress Ruth, resolutely.

The Indian arose reluctantly.

“Come to the fire, and hear the kettles sing of Thanksgiving, Wormsley.”

He obeyed. Ruth followed him, and set him a chair close to the fire. He had left the ice basket in the corner of the room.

Ruth piled the fire with walnut logs and split wood. When the fire began to roar, she brought the ice basket out of the dark, cold corner and set it down beside him. Wormsley looked at it doubtfully.

“Hold heap!” he said. “Put in cider now!”

“I’ll put in victuals,” said Mistress Ruth. “Heap victuals. Hear the kettles sing, Wormsley.”

Ruth punched the fire again. The Indian cast a woeful look at the ice basket, and covered it with his blanket.

Soon the hardwood fire caused the kettles to run over, and the cat and dog to seek the cool corner of the room. But the Indian’s code of etiquette did not permit Wormsley to move from the seat allotted him.

Despite the covering, the ice basket, that had been so carefully prepared for “old mug,” was speedily reduced to a temperance basket—no vehicle for any potation.

“There, Wormsley, thee can have all the old mug that the basket will hold now,” said Mistress Ruth.

She lifted up the basket from under the oily blanket, and looked through it as the last drops of the melted ice fell upon the floor.

“Ugh,” said the Indian, lifting his black eyes, “ugh! ugh! UGH!” He saw that he was beaten; and when Ruth said, “Shall I fill it instead with God’s food of Thanksgiving?” he nodded assent.

She filled the basket from the oven, and gave it back to the Indian, who received it sadly. The odor of the steaming food cheered him somewhat after a time, and he went away grateful, but not as grateful as he would have been for the expected “old mug.”

The orchards on Mount Hope lands near old Bristol and Warren are beautiful still, but the cider presses long ago went to the bats, and the last Indian family has disappeared. The old tales live on in many forms, and are annually made the vehicles of lively imaginations in picturing the changing times and vanished scenes of the old New England Thanksgivings.

*The fire slumbers, and I will tell a Christmas Tale
and sing an old, old song in the hush of the glow.
The bells are ringing afar, and all over this great
world, in the halls of the stars. I think of those in
the cold blasts on nights like this, and the embers
touch my heart. Listen while the embers fade into
ashes. The story has been told in many ways, and I
will give it my own interpretation.*

NO ROOM IN THE INN; OR, THE OLD MADHOUSE IN THE ORCHARD.

I STAND by the frosted window. The red light of early morning is breaking serenely among the billows of pearly clouds over the cold sea. The frost crystals on the panes gleam, and every crystal is a star.

The world is still. The white streets do not yet move with the long, shadowy processions of the day. I love the stillness. It was so when the Advent angels sang of the birth of our Peace in the silence of the march of time.

On the hills in the east the great towers of the hospital for unhappy minds gleam like a crown. I love to see them rise in the widening light, and especially when the bells in the crystal air ring in the green festival of the Nativity. Beautiful are the Christmas bells of hospitals—the hotels of God. But that hospital! It rose out of a sympathetic vision of the Virgin Mother as she stood before the inn and was turned away. “There was no room for them in the inn.”

It is a strange story, reader, that I have to tell you, but its most remarkable incidents are true, and its lesson has ever haunted me since I first heard it in my boyhood. I have often thought that I would write it out. There were a few stories that I used to hear in

my old New England home that were parables of life, and whose meaning has always followed me. This is one of them.

I can see it still in memory, that little red cottage with but one room, under the hill. There were iron bars across the single window, and the door was always shut. Some called it the madhouse, and some Gadara. There were many such houses in New England a hundred years ago, and a few may still be seen on old farms ; for long before Pinel's beautiful mission had begun to fill the world with its influence good hearts had sought ways of being merciful to the insane.

In early New England days people who became dangerous to themselves or to the community by reason of disordered intellects were chained to some oak post or beam in the great family kitchen. In the same provincial times the little family madhouse began to be seen here and there near certain great farmhouses upon the country roads. This strange cottage hospital usually stood a little apart from the farmhouse, so that the cries and the irresponsible monologues of the unhappy inmates might not be heard by the family and their friends. The iron-grated window made by the blacksmith usually faced the sun and pleasant trees and prospects, and sometimes the faithful house dog's kennel was placed near the barred door, and the howl of the dog mingled at night with the helpless human cries. Insanity was not uncommon a hundred years ago in the farming communities of the old New England States, and the victims were most often found to be patient, hard-working, care-taking, sympathizing wives and mothers. The thoughtful traveler looked

pitifully from the open stage window on a homestead with a cottage hospital in its airy yard or field, and prayed to be delivered from loss of himself after the manner of the poor inmate there.

It has gone now, that cottage of sorrow under the bowery hill; but there are some places that stamp indelible photographs upon the mental vision, and I see it still. It stood on the edge of a great meadow, where timothy, clover, and daisies waved in summer like a floral sea, where bobolinks toppled in the broad June sunshine, and over which barn swallows skimmed on iridescent wings in the long twilights of the hills. The cool orchard rose behind it on the hills, a region of birds, balms, and blooms in the May time, and of idle people about the quaint cider mill in the fall. At the breathless summer middays, when the sunlight was a living splendor, the ospreys wheeled and screamed in the clear sky over the prosperous farmstead. Beyond the meadow was the family graveyard, a little piece of ground inclosed by a mossy wall, where were slate-colored stones, some of them new, with clearly chiseled death's-heads, and some mossy and zigzaggy amid sunken graves and briers.

The farmhouse was ample, with open doors and windows in summer. The dairyhouse joined it, and in its portico well-scoured milkpans used to dry in the sun. It was called "The Esquire's"—Squire Martin. Mayne Martin had lived there for eighty years. His son John now occupied it. It was for John's wife, Mary Martin, that the little cottage hospital had to be built.

I used to look curiously upon the house of sorrow amid all these scenes of prosperity as I passed it on

my way to the country school. It was called "Mary's room." I had often seen an uncertain face at the grated window, and one day I said to my seatmate: "Let us go some day when the folks are not at home and look into 'Mary's room.' They say that she is mad."

I did so one day when the farm folks were in the hay fields, and I shall never forget the scene. In the little room sat a wretched woman with a thin face, out of which hope seemed to have gone, her hands clasped over her knees, her hair uncombed and unkempt, and her bosom half exposed. She looked up and saw my young, half-terrified face, and rose and came slowly, with halting steps, to the window. There was something in her eyes that I can never analyze or explain. It seemed as though some other soul than her own were looking through them. She was calm for a short time, and looked pleased and kindly, then her eyelids began to move rapidly, and her eyes to kindle with a strange fire, and she said:

"Little boy—little boy." I started back, but presently put my face to the grating again. I shall never forget the pathos of her words. "You do pity me, don't you?"

I answered "Yes" with trembling lips—"yes, Mary, I am sorry for you."

"Heaven bless those who pity such as me!" Her thin face changed again. "Little boy—I can not help it; I ain't myself—go away—I shall fly at ye."

A dreadful look settled in her face—a look as of something or somebody else. I hurried away to the road. I could not sleep that night, and I have often

seen that face in dreams and in the imaginations of sleepless nights since then.

The son of the old Esquire, John Martin, died of an epidemic—"autumn fever," as typhoid fever was then called. He was still a young man. His poor wife was never told of it, but she died of emaciation not long afterward, and both were carried to the family graveyard, where all of the old families are gathered at last, in the silent farm household of love-consecrated ground.

John Martin was not a clear-sighted man like his father, the Esquire, and he left an estate involved in debt, and this had to be sold. The neighbors long remembered the old country auction, or vendue (*vandue*, it was called), when the old Esquire's effects were offered for sale by the auctioneer and "bid" away.

The hapless couple left one child, a little girl named Mary—Mary Martin. She was a strange girl from her childhood, and her history was a wonder tale of the old New England housewives of fifty years ago. New England has few Christmas stories, but this was one of the few, and it often caused the tears of charity to flow by the holiday fires of the windy coasts and hills.

In the old neighborhood of "The Esquire's" lived several families of Quakers, and the doors of their hospitable homes stood open to orphans, wayfarers, and to all in need of human pity and sympathy.

"My house is not my own," said one of these gray Friends; "it is Heaven's. I have no right to close my doors on any one. All I have is the Master's, as free as the earth, the sky, and the air."

It was to a Quaker wife called Rachel, a woman with a serene face and consecrated heart, that little Mary Martin, of her own choice, went for sympathy and shelter. And here she found a mother who was as true to her best interests as her own mother could have been.

But Mary was a strange child. Her conduct put to a severe test even the well-disciplined heart of Rachel. She would run away and hide for days in a barn loft or in the woods, and when severely reproved would declare that she could not help doing as she did. Several times she had been found going at nightfall up to the tree tops, meaning to spend the night with the birds. She loved to be alone in the woods, among streams imbedded in cowslips, hunting lady's slippers, or making herself an unwelcome visitor to nests of jays or meadow larks.

"Mary," said Rachel, one day, after the girl had returned from one of her wanderings, "what does make thee act so?"

"I can't help it, mother; indeed I can't. It relieves me to wander in the open air."

"Relieves you? How, child? Explain it all to me. I do not want to be hard. I wish to do just right by thee, Mary. I do love thee, with all thy strange ways. *How* does it relieve thee to wander away so? I do not understand. Am I not good to thee? Could your own mother do more than I try to do?"

"No, mother; you are good. I think that you are as good as God." Rachel started with uplifted hands. "But it relieves me *here*." The girl lifted her white hands to her head and pressed them against her fore-

head in the region of memory and ideality. "Mother, there are times when my brain burns; and then—oh, mother——"

"What, my poor child?"

"*I can't remember.*"

"Is that why thee stayed out nights?"

"Yes, mother. I forgot. And when it all came to me, I was so confused I hated to come home again and find you sorry. It was all like a dream."

"Oh, Mary——"

"Mother, trouble dwells in houses. Out of doors is God's house. Its roof is gold. The sun shines over it by day and stars at night, and the clouds sail by like angels' carriages. I have seen the angels in them. I can see angels sometimes; can't you? They do not cast a shadow. I shall not cast a shadow after the death comes and takes away my mask, and I go away. I sometimes long for the time when I shall not cast a shadow. I do now. You feel my shadow."

The words were strange. Rachel gazed on the girl with a face full of anxiety and apprehension. "Child, thou art not like other people. Thy thoughts are not natural; they are like waking dreams. Thou dost not see angels. Thy mind is disordered."

The girl sat with staring eyes.

"Mary, there is one cure for thee."

"Cure? Oh, mother, what? I will do anything."

"It is self-control in thy youth. It is to make self-control a life habit. When thee wishes to do a thing about which thou art doubtful, say 'No' to thyself. In this way, child, thou canst come to possess thyself, and this strength will shield thee in the

time of temptation, and thou wilt impart it to thy children."

"Children! Oh, mother, such as I ought never to marry!"

"But thou art becoming a very beautiful girl, Mary. The experience of love will come, and it will be sweet to thee, and thou wilt follow it."

"But I ought not to follow it, ought I?"

"Yes, if thou wilt gain the habit of perfect self-control. Such a loving heart as thine would make a home happy if thou wilt but learn to govern thyself. A right purpose becomes at last a habit of life, the habit of life a character, and character is heredity and destiny. If thou wilt follow my will for two years, I think I can change in thee thy dangerous tendencies of life. Wilt thou, Mary?"

"Heaven knows I will try. I often long to become nothing. It is so difficult, but"—she again pressed her hand upon the region of memory and ideality—"I will do anything. You will ask God?"

But, poor girl! Mother Rachel fell sick and died. The plain Quaker procession carried her body away to the little cemetery, and stood around her grave in silence. Mary heard the clod fall from the sexton's spade. A new home now awaited her. It was with an aunt, a good Episcopal gentlewoman of some means, who lived in the suburbs of a coast city.

A new home brought a nearly complete change in the strange life of Mary Martin. The past seemed to vanish from her mind—her childhood among the hills, her mother's unhappy years, and pious Rachel's care and counsels.

"I do not like to think of the life I led there,"

she said one day to her aunt, in answer to some question. "I only wish that my childhood may become oblivion."

She grew very beautiful in person and very brilliant in mind. All things in life seemed clearer to her than to others. She became a social leader among the young, and was everywhere admired. She was sent to a select school, and easily led her classes. She was fond of poetry, music, and art, and seemed equal to the mastery of every polite accomplishment. She was active as a member of the little Episcopal parish, and her devotion to the work of the society entirely won the heart of her aunt, who lived chiefly for the Church. She was gifted with a voice for music, and saw the relation of music to the hearts of the people, and became a member of the choir and the local choral society. Every festival for charity found in her a sympathetic soul, an angel of good will and good works. Only once did her old mental malady seem to master her. It was on the Easter morning that she was confirmed as a member of the church. The good bishop, standing amid the Ascension lilies as the organ was playing low, asked her to give him her full name. Her mind went from her. She stood before him dumb for a time, and then pressed her hand on her forehead and said :

"I can not—oh, I can not recollect !"

The incident passed without much comment, as a mere matter of mental confusion. The solemn words were said, and the anthem pealed out, and when she went forth into the April air the birds were singing, and her heart seemed very happy.

So passed three brilliant years. She was twenty

now, and the most beautiful and accomplished girl in the prosperous seaport suburb. The doors of society were all open to her, and amid these attentions several lovers came into her experience, but none of them made any deep impression on her affections.

She was as lovely in life as in person. Her accomplishments were at the disposal of any who desired them for any life-cheering purpose; her heart was sympathetic to sickness, suffering, and to every form of distress and sorrow. The poor girls of the parish sought her for their Sunday teacher, and sent her birthday and holiday gifts. Wherever she went she found the world what she made it by her sympathy—full of sunshine, happiness, smiles, and good will. No one envied her; she felt so much for others and was so forgetful of self that her heart seemed to live in other hearts and her life in other lives, and she formed a kinship of soul with all who came under her influence.

There was in the choir which she led a delightful singer whose name was Owen Marlowe. He was a thoughtful, reserved young man, gentlemanly and intellectual, of a fine face, and everywhere esteemed for his personal worth. Mary Martin met him regularly at the choir rehearsals, and she came to know that he was singularly devoted to his poor invalid mother, and this devotion and his modest reserve and conscientious singing awakened in her heart a strong admiration for him, which kindled into love. He returned her affection, each acknowledged the affinity, and each was supremely happy in the new relation. The world became a new creation to them; the sun, flowers, birds—all things were new; life seemed to

open to them its golden doors. Mary Martin's happiness was full when Owen Marlowe pressed over her finger the magic engagement ring, and drew her to himself with kisses, and said :

“ This makes you my wife.”

“ Wife ? ” She started at the word. Afar from the radiant rainbows lay the clouds of old days. But the dark memory passed. She told every one of her engagement, and all shared her happiness. She set the wedding day for Christmas afternoon, and when she began to prepare for the wedding, it seemed as though all hearts went out with her in the thought how to make the event the most happy and merry that the well-ordered parish had ever known.

The stone church, with its English-like angles and ivies, was beautiful at all times of the year, but it was especially so in the interior when the evergreens festooned the white chancel and shining memorial windows.

Never had the parish prepared such extensive decorations as now. The place was made a vast bower. It was told everywhere that two of the singers were to celebrate the Nativity at the morning service in glorious songs, and were to be wedded in the dusk of the same afternoon ; the story was like a fairy tale of the day of the bell-ringing world. All young hearts beat more warmly as the picture of orange blossoms drifted through the diamond dust of the frost and snow.

Amid the last joyful preparations it was reluctantly noticed that Mary Martin had again and again become pale and exhausted, and that she was subject to transient flushes of fever which exhibited

a slight delirium in their invasions. Her wonted brightness came back after these attacks; she even seemed more radiant and brilliant than ever after they had passed; but they recurred again; the "clouds returned after the rain." On the evening before the festival she threw herself upon her aunt's breast weeping, and said:

"They expect so much of me! O God! How I wish I were well! There is something dark behind it all. Oh, to have as my very own such a heart as Marlowe's, and that old shadow! I tremble when I see my bridal veil. I am afraid of myself; a shadow follows me. What shall I do?"

She sang at the service on the Christmas eve. The cloud was gone. Her radiant self came back again.

"Beautiful thoughts come to me," she said to young Marlowe as they left the church, "and I seem to have been singing, indeed, over the manger and the Holy One. Did you listen to the sermon? How the scene touched my heart! Mary turned away from the door: 'There was no room for them in the inn.' No room for her who was about to become the mother of the Saviour of mankind! 'No room in the inn'; and how beautifully the rector added at the close, as though it was an afterthought, 'In every virtuous sorrow is born a Redeemer, and God has some unknown mission of life for those for whom there is no room in the inns of the world.'"

"Leaders of truth are always forsaken in their own generation," said Marlowe, "and all the institutions that have pitied the poor and blessed mankind have been born of some great sorrow. Sympathy is but

the clear sight of a heart purified by trial. But we will not talk of such things now. You look pale. Are you ill?"

"I feel strange and apprehensive."

The two went home, and when they had entered the house, Mary threw herself upon a couch, pressed her temples, and repeated :

"'No room for them in the inn!' 'No room for them in the inn!'" She then added, vaguely and strangely: "How I would have loved to have met Mary when she turned away from the door of the inn! Sing something, Owen. You can not tell how I feel. That song of Robert Burns's. You know—that one—the one—yes, Burns. I love his poems; he could *feel*."

"What shall I sing, dear? I will sing anything for you. What is it?"

"Oh, that one—the one—you know. I am confused. Oh, I have it now :

'Oh, wert thou in the cauld blast,
Id' shelter thee.'

'No room in the inn'—'Oh, wert thou in the cauld blast.' There is a great darkness coming over me. Sing! Sing!"

Owen Marlowe sang 'the beautiful song to Mendelssohn's sweet interpretation, which was then for the first time drifting over the world :

"Oh, wert thou in the cauld blast
On yonder lea, on yonder lea;
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee."

The next morning Mary was apparently well again—the sylphlike radiant beauty of golden words, affluent affections, and unconscious charms, as in recent years.

She sang in the odorous church that morning in the same sympathetic way, then returned home. It only wanted, as it seemed, to throw over her beauty and charms the bridal dress, the orange blossoms and sheeny veil, to present the loveliest and the most admired bride that the parish church had ever welcomed to its doors.

The Christmas morning had dawned crystal and white; the red sun broke through billowy clouds on the gray earth, ringing with bells and gladdened with song. The noontime was a pale pearly splendor, and the sun went into the banks of clouds early in the afternoon, and lights began to flash in merrymaking rooms long before the short day passed. The wedding was the thought of all.

The home of the bride was crowded with friends early in the cloud shadows of the mid-afternoon. The bridesmaids were in waiting and the grooms were ready for their duties in the glimmering chamber. Marlowe came down to the parlor and stood by the chair of his invalid mother for a time before the hour. He looked the model of manly beauty, the picture of happiness and confident hope. The minutes seemed to pass too slowly for him.

The bride stood before the mirror in her room. She was not a vain girl, but she looked so lovely, even in her own eyes, when the silver sheen of her wedding dress had mantled her, that she hurried childishly into Marlowe's room, and sent for him, and said, "Do I look beautiful, Marlowe?"

“ Yes, my charm—beautiful ! ”

“ I am so glad ; not for my sake, but for yours. Let me kiss you and go. I will return again in a moment.”

A necklace of pearls and brilliants was added to her charms. How bright they looked under the spilled light of the silvery astrals ! She tripped back again to Marlowe’s room, and said, “ How do I look now ? ”

“ Charming, charming, my little enchantress ! Beautiful ! ”

“ Let me kiss you again and go. I will come back again in a minute. Orange blooms and veil next time ; how will I look then ? Oh, I don’t care about these things myself, but I want to please you and *them* all. This is a beautiful world. Hark ! ”

There was a peal of marriage bells, chimes. Her marriage bells—and his.

“ How they make my heart beat ! Oh, it would be worth a world of suffering to enjoy what I now feel for one single moment. This is heaven to my heart—an angel could not feel more. Life, life, glorious life ! Oh, Marlowe ! I would that the minutes were hours, and the hours were days, and the days years ! ”

The bells rang on. There were carriages rolling before the door, and a rustle of silks in the odorous dusks of the rooms.

She tripped back for the setting of the veil and the coronet of living, breathing orange blooms on her forehead. She bent down to the maids to receive the white coronation. Suddenly she lifted her jeweled hand to her forehead. The movement was a flash of gems. She started back, lifted her face, uttered a pitiful shriek, and said : “ O Heaven, be merciful ! There

is no room for me in the inn," and sank to the floor.

The bells were pealing again on the frosty, cloudy air. Steps were hurrying on the street. There was a rush of guests toward the bride's apartment, followed by speechless tongues and wild eyes. There she lay, a heap of silks and gauze and jewels, white as the dead, and unconscious of bells or groom, or any earthly concern. They took the glittering wreck of beauty, hope, and gems, laid her on a couch, and called Marlowe. A medical man was summoned, and came rushing in, and asked the people to retire. They did so, wondering in intense suspense what the decision would be.

Marlowe bent over her form of wax, his heart beating, but still hopeful, his mind in suspense. The medical man held her hand, and marked her pulse for a time in silence, and then gasped :

"It is the autumn fever. She must have had it about her for days. Have you not noticed it? The wedding will have to be postponed. It will be weeks before she will be well again."

The people were told, and stood still. Each one said, "I am sorry"—simple, helpless words. The merry bells stopped with a half note. Carriages wheeled down the street. Guests said their kindest word to Marlowe, and hurried away.

For six weeks there was silence in the house. Only Marlowe and the medical man came and went from the door—they only. Over the house hung the black doubt of life or death. In all these weeks the bride lay unconscious. Then the fever turned. Two days passed, but she did not speak.

"The crisis has passed," said the medical man.

“Her pulse has come back again, her temperature is normal now, but there is something about the case that is very strange. She does not know me or any one. She seems like an infant. I dislike to say it—I have been experimenting; but I must tell you that it seems to me that her memory has gone. She seems to have no knowledge whatever of anything past. She does not even know Marlowe. It is a remarkable and unusual case. We must wait.”

They waited. The days went on. The March wind blew over the foaming harbor, cerulean skies came, and the swallows flitted back from the South, and the air became sweet with the peach and the apple blooms.

But she recognized no one. She lingered silent and helpless until summer came, then she seemed to begin life again. They had to teach her to walk, and then to talk, and she walked and talked like a child. Some said that she had become insane, and others vacant, but neither view nor report was true—the faculty of memory had disappeared. Many stories of such cases have been told, but none more peculiar and pathetic than this.

Marlowe passed about the streets like the shadow of a man; he came each day to the silent room for a word of hope, but no word came. She did not know him. He ever left his kisses on her cheek and hands, and on the hand of the jeweled ring, but their meanings were all strange to her. One person in her infant world was the same as another.

“The case is hopeless,” said the medical man at last.

“Then I must go away,” said Marlowe.

He did. His mother had died in these anxious months, and he was all alone in the world now.

"I shall never marry," he said. "I shall wait. She may come to know me again."

"You can not be bound not to marry again in a case like this," said the medical man. "Providence has made you free."

"No," said he. "A man who is untrue to another is untrue to himself. We need the sick and helpless to make us noble and true, and only true hearts become stars in the darkness of this world. I shall wait to respond to her return of reason, and I shall seek for money only with the thought of making her happy. Wherever the stars find me, they shall see me true to the mystery called life. Whatever happens, I have faith in Him whose eye sees the whole of being, and who knows what is best for us all. I shall do my simple duty, and trust that I will one day see life more clearly."

He went to Florida. It was at the time of the English occupation, and he engaged himself to an indigo-planter as an overseer of the Minorcan laborers. He remained here for years, amid the endless summers, the paradise of the air, and celestial seas. He at last became a partner in the business and grew rich. He received many letters from the friends of Mary. Each stated that her case was still regarded as hopeless. He forwarded money regularly by the returning vessels for the care of the helpless woman. Her aunt died, and he secured a place for her through the Church in an Episcopal Home.

As he became rich, he yearly sent for Christmas holidays a gift to this motherly charity. With the

gift came the thought of what a blessing such homes as these were to those to whom all the doors of family life were closed.

But Florida, which was a glory in the air and in the highlands, was full of poison in the indigo fields that lined the dead river-beds and the swamps of the cypress trees. Marlowe gradually became a victim to periodical malaria, and resolved to return by ship from St. Augustine to the old seacoast town. Twenty years had now passed since he left the scenes of his early disappointment. He came back to the old town again a sallow and withered man, bearded gray. No one knew him. He inquired about Mary, but few knew anything of her, except that she had been taken to an institution years ago, and had never recovered her mind.

He inquired for the physician who attended the patients of the Home. He found him. It was the 24th of December.

“Do you have a patient in your Home by the name of Mary Martin?” he asked.

“Yes, at the Home—a very remarkable case,” said the physician. “Was engaged to be married, and fell sick on her wedding day, and never recovered her mind. Lost her mind in a long fever. She is ill again. She looks like an old woman now. Her face is emaciated, her hair is white; I never saw hair so white as hers.”

“I was a dear friend to her, and I have never ceased to regard her above others. Can I visit her?”

“Yes, yes; or I think you can at the right time—to-morrow perhaps. She has been sick of a fever, and is very much reduced. The fever turned yesterday,

and she is out of danger for the present, but she lies sleeping. The sleep is hardly natural. Call at the Home to-morrow, and if she is better, you can see her. See her?—yes; there are few who call for her now.”

Marlowe went out of the medical office, and passed about the town. The little church was still mantled with ivy, as of old, and young people and children were carrying evergreens into it. He went in, and looked up to the choir gallery where he used to sing, then sat down and cried. A child came to him and asked him if he were *hurt*. He said that he was, and covered his heart with his hand, and the little one moved doubtfully away.

He inquired of the sexton about an inn in the place, for the old inns were gone, and everything seemed changed. There were few ships in the harbor now, but great smoking factories rose like cheerless fortresses on the hills.

“The inn; was it the inn you said? Well, I am sorry for ye, but there isn’t any room in the inn.”

“Then let me sleep in the stable. I am all alone in the world.”

“You do not look like a man to be after sleeping in a stable,” said the sexton. “An’ sure, on a night like this, when all the world is friendly, I might let a gentleman like you sleep in the study. We haven’t any rector now, only a supply, and you might stay at my house, or in the study.”

“I used to sing in this church,” said Marlowe.

“An’ how long ago was *that*?”

“Twenty years. I have been away to Florida, and now that I have come back, there is but the church here that is as it used to be. Let me stay in the

study after the service. I love the old church. It stands in the past, and my rest in it would be sweet."

How beautiful was the anthem that night—"When all things were in silence!" The people came and went, but he knew not one of them, nor they him. But the peace of the world seemed there. The sexton turned down the lights. The cross faded, the scanty decorations. He went into the little study, where was a bed-lounge, gave a Christmas gift to the sexton, and still wondering at the meaning of this strange life, sank trustfully to sleep.

He was awakened in the morning by a cool draught of air and the chimes. They were the bells of old. He came to the communion fasting, and, after the service, went to the inn for refreshment, and then went to the Retreat.

"Mary Martin?" he asked at the door.

The kilted servant stood in silence. "Mary Martin," she said at last. "Don't you know?"

"Yes, all. I knew her years ago. I wish to see her. I have come a thousand miles, and the doctor set the hour."

"You can see her," said the woman, "if it will be a satisfaction to you. It won't make any difference to her. She has not yet come out of her long sleep, but one visitor can do her no harm or good. Go in, if you wish. In that apartment." She pointed.

Marlowe walked away toward the room. It was afternoon. Oh, how changed from that afternoon twenty years ago! The woman followed him to the door. A white bed and a white face in a drift of white hair lay in one corner of the room. The place was silent.

“ A brother it may be ? ”

“ As near as that. ”

“ Will you stay with her awhile, ” asked the servant, “ and let me go out ? I haven’t been out to-day. It is very lonesome, sir. ”

“ Yes ; go. I will stay by her for an hour, if the matron be willing. Speak to her. ”

The servant went to the matron, and the latter came out sturdily, and paused, and said :

“ You are an old friend of the family ? ”

“ Yes, madam. ”

“ A stranger in town ? ”

“ I once lived here many years, madam. ”

“ Your name ? ”

“ Marlowe. ”

“ Marlowe ; yes, I have heard her aunt mention that name with respect. Marlowe ? It sounds familiar. It is all right. Poor soul, there are few who come to see her now. This is her room. ”

He entered. He approached the bed, which stood opposite the window. He slowly stepped toward the white face, which seemed as unconscious as of one dead. Opposite the bed, on the side of the door, was a long mirror, and on the counterpane was a single spray of ivy.

He sat down in a chair close to the bed, and passed an hour in silence. Then he spoke : “ Mary ! ”

The sleeper started, and opened her eyes, and looked around.

“ Mary. ”

The blue eyes gleamed.

“ Owen ! ”

“ What, Mary ? ”

“Where am I?”

“With me, Mary.”

She lifted her thin hands from the sheet. “Owen, look! Do you see? These are not my hands, Owen—these are not mine. They are not mine, are they, Owen?”

“You have been ill, Mary.”

“Where is my ring gone? That is not my hand, Owen; say no.”

“You have been ill, dear—ill for a long time. You are better now.”

She brushed her hair from her face. “Owen”—there was a long silence—“this is not my hair.” She lifted her white locks slowly and spread them out on the pillow.

“This is the hair of an old woman, Owen. It is gray; look at it—it is gray. No; it is white. I am not an old woman. What has happened? It is white. Oh, Owen, look, it is white!” She lifted her locks again from the pillow, and drew them out as if they were the flax of the spinner. “Have I been ill long, Owen?”

“Yes, a very long time.”

The western light of the window glimmered across the bed, and she continued to draw out her locks, and to wonder when and how they were changed. “I seem to have been away, Owen. There was no room for me in the inn of this world, and I went away to the cave; and the stars of God shone over me, and the camel bells came. But, oh, that was all a dream! I hope I am dreaming now.”

“Yes, that was a dream, Mary. You are better now.”

“What did they do with my dress and veil? Open the bureau, Owen, and see if they are there.” She saw the ivy spray on the white counterpane. “There is some ivy,” she said. “Who brought it? Where are the orange blooms?” A merry peal of bells from the church tower fell on the crystal air. She started up. “I will hurry. Those are our wedding bells.” She turned her face toward the glass, and saw herself once more. “Owen!”

“Mary?”

“Is that I?”

“Yes, Mary.”

“I can’t help it, Owen. I couldn’t help it—I couldn’t help it. Owen, I *was* beautiful, wasn’t I?”

“Yes, Mary.”

“I was beautiful. Do you love me still?”

“Yes; I have never ceased to love you in all the changes of years.”

“Years! Have I been ill for years? Owen, *you* have changed. You are growing white. Look into the mirror, Owen. Look! O God, what a picture! Look! Look! We will both look. Heaven pity us both! What does it mean?”

The two gazed in silence, the poor invalid wringing her hands.

“Owen, I want to hear you sing again—that song I loved—Burns’s. Let me rest while you sing it.”

His beautiful voice came back again, and he sang:

“Oh, wert thou in the cauld blast,
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I’d shelter thee, I’d shelter thee;

Or did misfortune's bitter storms
 Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
 Thy bield should be my bosom,
 To share it a', to share it a'.

“Or were I in the wildest waste,
 Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
 The desert were a paradise
 If thou wert there, if thou wert there ;
 Or were I monarch o' the globe,
 Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
 The brightest jewel in my crown
 Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.”

“Owen, you do pity me?”

“Yes, God knows I pity you, and love you.”

“He knows it all.”

“Yes, Mary.”

“Let us leave it all with him. You have been true.”

The gold of the mid-afternoon burned along the snow clouds in the west, and Mary Martin turned toward the light. It was a changing day. The air was mild, and one live robin came and sang a rift of belated song in the gnarled bough of an apple tree near.

“Owen, there is no room for us in the inn. I am going away again. The camels will come with their bells, and the stars of God will shine where I am going. I am going away, and I will wait for you there. I am happy—my soul is happy. I am glad I have lived to be loved by one true heart. It is better, all, beyond. There is no room for me in the inn. I am going away.”

She turned her white face to the sunset light.

Over the snowscape the sinking sun blazed like a far gate of heaven, and the tinged clouds seemed gathered around his departure like a shining spot. She lifted her thin hand again in the slanting light.

“Owen, what did they do with my wedding ring? Look into the bureau; it may be there.”

It was not there.

“Go, ask the people here. Where are they? They may know.”

They did not know where it was—that matter was an incident of long-vanished years.

“Owen, find it, and put it on my hand when I am dead. Cross my hands on my breast, with the ring on my wedding finger, and stand by me when the prayer is said, just as you were going to do. You will, if you find it?”

“Yes, just as I was going to do.”

“And the minister will say something from the text that tells how Mary was turned away from the inn in her sorrow. I pity her.”

She lay dreaming for a time; then spoke again. “Owen, you said that you pitied me?”

“Yes, Mary, and I love you.”

“‘Mary!’ How beautiful that word sounds to me! *He* said that some good was born out of every virtuous sorrow—he—the rector—so long ago.” The room was still again.

“Owen?”

“My Mary!”

“I love to hear you speak that word. Owen, I wonder if any good will be born out of my sorrow?”

“I hope so. Our eyes are holden. We can not see the far ways of life. Not far—not far.”

“Owen, there are others who suffer in mind.”

“Yes, Mary.”

“Pity them; shelter them. The world is cold; the inn is full; pity them.”

He went out. He found the ring among treasures that friends had kept. When he returned she lay dead in the last light of the cold sunset, her thin hand outstretched to receive the ring.

It is Christmas. The snows of God are falling. Bells, and happy feet are passing under windows hung with green crosses, and lighted with warm astrals and well-fed household fires. A party of ladies are going from the church to the new hospital. They call the beautiful building, on whose towers the snows are falling, The Inn. The hospital is for mental maladies, for the homeless who have lost their mental direction, wayfarers in mind whom the world neglects and forgets. Owen Marlowe's name is cut in marble over the door. The building is beautiful, a palace, not a little outcast hut grated and barred on a New England hill.

And where is he? The snow is falling on Mary Martin's grave, and on his.

Again put the spectral driftwood on the fire. A blue flame arises.

I am going to tell you some tales of the sea.

NIX'S MATE.

THE shores of Boston Harbor abound with legends that have been made familiar by the prose of Drake and the poetry of Whittier. Among these are several relating to Moll Pitcher, whom sailors used to consult before embarking in the days of marine prosperity, and a larger number that are associated with Captain Kidd, the pirate. These latter began with the old saw :

“ My name was Captain Kidd,
As I sailed, as I sailed.”

Among the latter is one with a curious ending relating to the North Shore.

A man dreamed that he had found the Kidd treasure under a certain patch of thatch on the shore near his cottage that overlooked the sea. He went to the shore in the morning, and there found the patch of thatch that he had seen in his dream.

“ If I dream the dream three times,” he said, “ the treasure will be mine.” He went about repeating the haunting rhyme :

“ My name was Captain Kidd.”

He dreamed the dream on the following night. Now he was told in these dreams that he must dig for

the treasure without speaking a word, and that if he uttered a word the prize would be lost.

He told his wife his dream, and added :

“If I dream it again, the treasure will surely be ours.”

On the third night he dreamed the same dream.

“We shall surely be rich now,” he said to his wife.

“But if you were to forget, and speak while digging?”

“You trust me; it is only women who can not hold their tongues.”

He set forth to dig for the treasure. His wife watched him from the door. She called after him :

“What is it you are to remember?”

“Silence! Do you take me for a fool?”

‘My name is Captain Kidd.’”

“Not yet,” said his good woman doubtfully.

He dug away the patch of thatch. He struck his spade against something hollow, and started back in great excitement. At this point his cat who had followed him unbeknown leaped into the hole that he had digged.

“Miew!”

“Scat!”

The treasure was lost, and with a woebegone face he turned toward his home to bear for life the reproaches of his wife. Most of the tales of buried treasure on the coast were like this.

But of all the many legends of the North and South Shores of Massachusetts Bay the tradition of Nix's Mate has the strongest coloring.

I have often passed it in the steamers in midsummer days, and the dark rock amid the green islands seems to attest the truth of the story that is associated with it ; indeed, one seems to read the tale in the black ledge itself. Was it an accident that the island disappeared, while the other islands remained fertile ? None but the superstitious could believe that the island faded away and turned black on account of the prophecy of the accused mate.

Put on the driftwood, and I will tell the story in my own poor rhyme. I seem to hear the bell buoy ringing as it warns the ships day and night away from the shapeless reef. Pile the driftwood higher, for the tale is wild and strange, and one of the lonesome sea.

NIX'S MATE.

"The tide runs strong, and the sea grows dark,
Hark ye, Pilot! (Cling, clang, cling!)
The night wind freshens and drives the bark;
(Cling!)

The sluggish fog horns fill the air,
And fitful is the beacon's glare,
And near us lies an island bare.

Hark ye, hark ye!"
(Cling—clang—cling!)

"Quiet, lad! 'tis the bell buoy tolls
As the heavy sea beneath it rolls.
The lights are bright on the long sea wall:
I know the reefs where the breakers fall,
And I know where there are no rocks at all."

"But the isle is black, without shoals or sands,
Hark ye, hark ye! (Cling, clang, cling!)
And black on the rock the beacon stands.
(Cling!)

And the bell buoy's voice has a warning tone,
And flares the light on the pile of stone:
What makes the isle so black and lone?
Hark ye, hark ye!"
(Cling—clang—cling!)

"That island, boy, was once fresh and green,
The fairest isle in the harbor seen;
'Tis the ghost of an isle that you yonder see:
Now the bell strikes one, now the bell strikes three,
And the night shade falls, and the wind blows free.

"The trees are gone, the fields, the shore,
And the heron comes to the reef no more;
No seagull's wing to the rock dips down,
Nor petrel white, nor seamew brown,
Nor boat stops there from port or town."

“Do you know the rocks of the reft sea wall?—

Hark ye, Pilot!” (Cling, clang, cling !)

“I know where there are no rocks at all.”

(Cling !)

“Then, Pilot, we’re safe ; so tell to me

The tale of this isle on the haunted sea,

While the bell strikes one and the bell strikes three ;

Hark ye, hark ye !”

(Cling—clang—cling !)

“Listen, boy ! the tide runs fast

Where the green isle lay in the years long past.

There once a gibbet the moon shone through,

And its iron frames the high winds blew—

There the crimes of the sea received their due.

“Old Nix was a captain, hard and bold,

And he reaped the sea, and gathered gold :

He gathered gold, but one windy night

They found him dead ’neath the gunwale light,

And his mate stood near him, dumb and white.

“And his mate they seized—a young sailor he—

And charged him with murder upon the sea.

And they brought him here where the island lay,

Where the gibbet rose o’er the windy bay :

’Twas more than a hundred years to-day.”

“O Pilot, Pilot ! how dark it grows !

Hark ye, hark ye ! (Cling, clang, cling !)

Across the bay the fog wind blows.

(Cling !)

The beacons turn in the fog clouds drear,

And my head is dulled with nameless fear :

They did not hang that sailor here ?

Hark ye, hark ye !”

(Cling—clang—cling !)

“Here lay the ship, and the island there,

And the sun on the summer oaks shone fair ;

And they took him there 'mid the chains to die,
And he gazed on the green shores far and nigh,
Then turned his face to the open sky—

“ And he said : ‘ Great Heaven, receive my prayer ;
The shores are green, and the isle is fair ;
To my guiltless life my witness be :
Let the green isle die 'mid the sobbing sea,
And the sailors see it, and pity me.

“ ‘ In her old thatched cottage my mother will spin,
And dream of her boy on the coast of Lynn,
Or watch from her door 'neath the linden tree ;
O Heaven ! just Heaven ! my witness be,
Let the island beneath sink into the sea !

“ ‘ Let it waste, let it waste in the moaning waves,
With its withered oaks and its pirates' graves,
Till it lie on the waters black and bare,
The ghost of an isle 'mid the islands fair,
Where bells shall toll, and beacons glare !’

“ He died, and the island shrank each year :
The green trees withered, the grass grew sere ;
And the rock itself turned black and bare,
And lurid beacons rose in air,
And the bell buoy rings forever there.

“ The bell buoy rings in the moaning sea,
And it now strikes one, and it now strikes three !”

Silas Pettijohn is here, and he remembers the story of the misfortune that befel an old town hero, old "Bunker Hill." He was the poet on that day, or was to have been, and that was the day that he won his wife—was it not, Silas?

The farmers like to relate the story of old "Bunker Hill." It is a 4th of July story to the farms. Let us have it to-night by the driftwood fire. Judge Pettijohn, tell it to us as you remember it, and you might add to it your own experience. Now, Silas, in memory of the times of old!

OLD "BUNKER HILL."

SILAS PETTIJOHN'S FOURTH OF JULY POEM.*

WHEN I was told that Judge Hope's sprightly step-daughter Evelyn was to read Jefferson's immortal "Declaration" in the old church of Hingham on "4th of July day," my heart bounded into my mouth and choked me. Hingham-old-church, whose ribs are the most venerable on the coast, was a long walk from Scituate, but I resolved to make it. I always admired Evelyn's genius, though her father, Judge Hope, had once refused to let me sing out of the hymn book with her in meeting. When I had taken hold of the long music book nearly a yard away, he had bent over me from the pew behind, and said, "Boy!" There were volumes of meaning in his tone.

Very early on the morning of patriotism, I took my shoes in my hand and followed the white coast along the sea. How light I felt! My heart would not have weighed a wren's feather. I started so early that the roads were all vacant. One old farmer, a very early riser, stood in his shirt sleeves by the well, drawing up a butter pail. He, to use the common term, "hailed me."

* By permission of Home Queen.

"Sho, now! where you goin', Si, so early in the morning?"

I walked faster, and did not answer a word.

"Hallo, Si! Say, what's your pucker? You ain't a-goin' over there to Hingham to hear that there gal read, are ye? Sho, now! I don't believe in any such doin's. There—now I've done it!"

The last remark alluded to the fact that his butter cooler had dropped into the well again, while he had been giving too much thought to my affairs.

How the birds sung on that morning! The Baltimore orioles in the high tops of the cool dewy elms; the robins in the long dark shades of the orchards; the thrushes in the alder bushes by the weedy weirs and wayside brooks—even the ospreys had a joyous note in their screams as they drifted from their great nest of sticks to their fishing places in the tides of the curling sea. The meadows were sweet with new-mown hay, and as the sun rose over the waters and idle sails, flaming and dazzling, the conquiddles, as the Indians used to call bobolinks, shook the dew from their wings and began to flute the trees over the waking meadows. Nature in New England finds its perfect days on the seacoast on the 4th of July.

I arrived at Hingham in time to see the floral procession, and the chariot of goddesses of the States pass under the great bowery branches of the elms. The floral procession and the car were followed by the "militia," the "engine company," and the "guard of public safety." The whole "show" was in turn followed by all the queer people in the four towns. I joined the latter, as it was my right to do so. I caught a glimpse of Evelyn. She sat on the floral car beside the God-

dess of Liberty, and she held in her hand Jefferson's immortal declaration against tyranny and tyrants.

The band struck up the President's March—or, as it was known then, Hail Columbia. It was very inspiring and the farm horses that were drawing the car, not having had a Roman military training, became a little too patriotic and “joggled” the car, to use a local verb. The goddess began to scream, and I hurried forward to push behind. As I was about to put my hand on the sacred vehicle, an awful voice came swooping down on my head:

“Boy, don't try to steady the ark—remember Hophni and Phineas!”

It was Judge Hope.

I did not. What did the judge mean? What was the ark? And who were Hophni and Phineas?

The car arrived safely. The people filled the little church. I remember that it was reported that the great Henry Ware was to make the address of welcome, and Edward Everett was to speak, and it was hoped that John Quincy Adams might ride over from Quincy and be present and take a part in the exercises. But the great event in the minds of all, both young and old, was the reading of the Declaration of Independence by a *girl*. The literary exercises were to conclude with a poem by a Harvard student.

I took a far back seat and waited to see where Judge Hope was to sit, placing myself in a corner as far from his dreadful presence as possible. He occupied a “reserved” pew; I did not.

The band played Adams and Liberty, and a then famous Boston singer sung a noble ode, of which I remember—

"Thy name, Isabella, through all earth shall be sounded,
Columbus has triumphed, his foes are confounded."

Then Evelyn Hope arose, looking as pretty as a
rose bush in the dews, and began—

" 'When in the course of human events—' "

How fine it sounded, and how she did arraign poor
old crazy King George III! She launched forth such
dreadful judgments, that I almost pitied him!

" 'He has forbidden' "—

" 'He has refused' "—

" 'He has called together' "—

" 'He has refused' "—

" 'He has endeavored to prevent' "—

" 'He has suffered the administration of justice
wholly to cease' "—

" 'He has made our judges dependent on his will
alone' "—

How her voice rung out in indignation, at the long
list of topical "fors"!—

" 'For quartering large bodies of armed troops
among us' "—

" 'For protecting them' "—

" 'For cutting off' "—

" 'For impressing' "—

" 'For transporting' "—

" 'For abolishing' "—

It was dreadful, but it stimulated my excited mind
to apply all these acts of a tyrant to *her* father-in-
law seated stern and stately in his reserved pew yonder.
Why had I not an "inalienable right" to sing out of
the same hymn book as his pretty step-daughter, even
if I had to pick whortleberries and blackberries to buy
my shoes and clothes?

The Harvard student who was to read the poem sat near to Evelyn, so near that it made me jealous. His musical verses were a flower garden of words, and I could see that they filled Evelyn's imagination with delight. After the poem there was a great rattle of drums, and the judge came out praising the poem. As he passed me he gave me a side glance and smiled, and said :

“ *Hophni*, or Silas, or whatever your name is—don't you wish you had genius like *that* ? ” (He referred to that Harvard poet.) He turned his head to a full half glance, and said : “ Maybe you have. Youth is an unknown quantity—there is no knowing what you may come to. I do admire genius. I like,” he continued, turning to one of the selectmen, “ to stop and speak an encouraging word to the *children* as I go along.”

Yes, I did wish I had genius like that, or even more ; and especially so, when I saw that Harvard boy help Evelyn up to her place in the car again.

I turned toward old Scituate, my feet as heavy as lead. I went to bed in the garret of the little farmhouse without even so much as to stop to drink again from the

“ Old oaken bucket that hung in the well.”

Judge Hope lived in a fine old farmhouse overlooking the sea, near the town line between the Scituates and the Hingham. Great elms rose in front of the house, whose branches continually waved in the sea winds. The Baltimore orioles built their pouched nests there and sung in the early summer. I loved to walk by the place when the judge was away, and, as I

saw that it was genius that most pleased the proud old man, I resolved to be a genius. I began to compose poetry, which I committed to paper, and hid behind a loose board in the garret. I had a dream that made my head as light as an eagle's plume, that I would one day rival the Harvard student in poetic name and fame, and that the bumptious old judge would call me to him in a glow of admiration, and say :

"The gods have chosen you, and I will not resist their will; and you and Evelyn may sing out of the same book."

My first poem was an astonishment to myself. It was on the Battlefield Soldiers. I had taken my inspiration from the Harvard student's rattling poem on that great Fourth of July when Evelyn read the Declaration. I wrote the first line thus :

"We poor soldiers of the battle."

I carried this about in my head for some time, and it bobbed about there like a pea in a dipper. Suddenly as I was hoeing corn, just before the dinner horn blew—I remember the time exactly—there came to me this line from Parnassus, as the schoolmaster used to say in regard to such things as that; it came like a windfall in autumn :

"Have to stand and hear the cannon *rattle*."

I dropped my hoe. Then I knew that I was a genius. A fish hawk was flying in the air—it was a good omen : a fish hawk is an *osprey* in poetry, and is a kind of eagle.

The dinner horn blew, and I ran for the house. My legs were like wings to me. I flew. I washed in

the tin basin; poured some water over my head from a gourd dipper, then went to the garret and wrote down:

“ We poor soldiers of the battle
 Have to stand and hear the cannon rattle,
 And while we are marching on ahead,
 We soon are lying with the dead.”

I made a circle around the garret chamber, hitting the dried pennyroyal branches that hung from the cross beams with my head. I then lay down on the bed of husks, and thought of Homer, Shakespeare, and Byron.

It did not seem quite right for the “battlefield soldiers” to say that they “were soon lying with the dead.” That would be *lying* too soon. I took that poem that night to the schoolmaster. He said that anything was allowable in poetry; that poetry had a license. The dead, and animals, and everything, all talked in poetry. Then I felt relief.

I wrote four more verses on the Battlefield Soldiers, then I began my Fourth of July poem. It began hard:

“ My country now to me appeals,
 To thee, O land, I come.
 I'll pledge my heart, my hands, my—
 my heart, my hands, my—
 my hands, my— ”

My little sister, who saw the manuscript in this shape, said:

——“ *heels* will rhyme there bootiful.”

I could rhyme “drums” with “comes.” I took the problem with me into the cornfield.

There was a very patriotic man in the place by the

name of John Trott. They called him old "Bunker Hill." His father had fought in the memorable battle that his popular name suggests, and he owned a gun or blunderbuss, or some kind of a heavy arm that had done service in the fight of the 17th of June, 1775.

This son of the old Revolutionary soldier was very proud of his historic gun. He seldom went to any place but to church, except on the 4th of July. On that day he usually put on his heroic father's regimentals, took the big gun, filled his powder horn with powder, and a paper bag also with coarse powder, which he put into one of the broad pockets of his coat. In this lively manner he appeared among the militia alone, an army in himself. He used to fire a salute after the other salutes, from the gun of Bunker Hill.

Marvelous things happened to me! I felt myself going up the hills of fame. Two of my poems were published in the village paper. Two years had passed, when I *was* asked to read a poem at the 4th of July celebration. The idea of patronizing the home production of poetry had taken a strong hold on the minds of the people.

I had made slow progress in my attentions to Evelyn. She was my heart world: I could see that she liked me, and that gave me hope; but the old judge, like Jupiter, shook his great shaggy head. I was not recognized as a genius yet. Fame was wanting.

After tremendous mental conflicts by night and by day, I finished my poem for the great occasion, and took it to the son of the heroic Revolutioner, John Trott.

"Jingo," said he, "that is great. I'll put on my regimentals that day, and will go over to the old town

hall with you, to hear you read it. I'll fire a salute that day sure, such as I never fired before."

He did.

"There is goin' to be great doin's that day," he added. "The new fire injine is to be out, and the company is all to be dressed in red, with leather caps. That injine is the greatest thing in the whole earth. It will carry water right over a house!"

I will never forget the day that we started for the celebration, John Trott and I. It was to be a day of glory, with a new poet and a new engine. We got up early that morning. My heart had beaten like a trip-hammer all night, and I was glad when the first streak of the morning sun lifted over the cool blue sea, and I heard the roosters crowing for day. The roosters all crowed thirteen times on 4th of July morning, so I was told. They did that morning anyway. I heard them.

I found John Trott waiting for me at the well-sweep, in front of his house.

"This is a glorious morning for the doin's," he said. "Seems as if Providence is smiling upon us. Roses bloomin', martin birds singin', dew a-droppin' down from the cherry trees, and all. Have I got everything?" he added.

He certainly looked as if he had got everything in the past and present. He had his regimentals, his gun, and "decorations," which latter consisted of certain medals and ribbons that *other* people had received for services in the Revolution and in the State militia.

"There, consarn it all, I have forgot that extra powder. There's no pucker. Let me go in and get it now."

He entered the door, and returned with a paper of powder, which he put into his great pocket, which flapped about him loosely.

"There, now, I've got everything. Let's go."

The woods along the sea were fresh and cool and green. The air was exhilarating. The sun rose red, and the long day broke on the fullness of the growing fields.

It was a long walk to the town hall. But at nine o'clock we were in sight of the spires of the town, and that was too early.

"Let's go into the blacksmith's shop and rest," said the old man, "and maybe the injine will go by. The fire company's goin' to parade first. We don't want to get there too soon. It wouldn't look well."

I was dressed in white, and the blacksmith's shop did not seem to be just the place in which to wait.

"I'll wait outside of the shop," said I.

"I'll go inside. My regimentals won't sile like yourn."

Fourth of July morning in the blacksmith's shop was usually the busiest of the year. Then, if ever, there were hammer strokes, and then sparks flew.

The shop was full this morning. Horses were waiting shoeing; carriages to have the tires set; all kinds of repairs on vehicles. Two blacksmiths were making their hammers fly. I sat down on a clean bench under the great trees.

A trumpet sounded. It was the first ever heard in the old town. The engine company was out.

I sat under the trees repeating over my poem in my mind. It went all right. The trumpet sounded again. Then the bells began to ring.

The scene in the blacksmith's shop was not only lively, but patriotic. John Trott began to relate to the assembled farmers the story of the Battle of Bunker Hill.

As he did so, his fancy waxed warm. He could not stand still, but marched around with a measured tread among the anvils. He stopped at times, and laid hold of the handle of the great bellows.

I heard him say, "And that was the hour that Warren fell."

The farmers filled the door as John Trott became dramatic. I caught the spirit and listened.

Cling, clung, cling, clung, rang the anvils.

I heard John Trott shout:

"Hold, hold! cried the general"——

Clung, clung, cling, cling, beat the hammers. John Trott proceeded:

"Wait until you see the white of their eyes!"

He was repeating an order issued at Bunker Hill.

"And then"——

Cling, cling; cling, clang.

BANG!

Had the universe collapsed? I was outside, but I could feel all things reeling around me. I heard the chimney fall. I could see nothing at first, for the smoke of the convulsion of all things filled the air. I was dazed.

I heard next a great cry of "Fire, fire, fire!" Bells were ringing, men were bearing off the wounded. One strange man said: "Run, boy; the shop has exploded!" I ran.

The engine company came tearing down the hill with the new engine. Women were running, and boys,

and dogs. Everything seemed on the go. The blacksmith's shop *was* gone.

The blacksmith's barn was in flames. The engine company was soon in the road, and everything was confusion.

People were drawing water and pouring it on the fire. The captain of the engine company ordered that the buckets and pails of water should be poured into the engine tub or tank. The people obeyed, and while this process was going on, the barn went, too.

The blacksmith's house next caught fire on the roof. The engine hose was lifted to extinguish it. It seemed to send water everywhere but to the right place.

I saw my opportunity. I would be a hero as well as a poet. I seized a bucket of water, ran up the stairs of the house while every one else was screaming "Fire! fire!" I reached the garret, threw open the scuttle, and with a few dashes of water put out the fire.

How the people cheered! I looked down over my white suit; it was striped now, and the stripes were neither red nor blue, nor any Brother Jonathan color, suitable to the day. What a scene was that below me! People still coming from the village crying "Fire!" a crowd tumbling over each other, and pouring water into the engine tub with which to quench the fire. The blacksmith's shop was in ruins, and—I had not seen *that* before—there was a long line of injured people under the trees, and old Doctor Diggs with his wig going round among them.

I thought of my poem. I clapped my hand against my coat pocket, to see if it were there. It was. I pulled it out, to be sure. I must not lose that, whatever might happen.

I took another look down. The hose of the engine was turned toward me. The aim was correct. In a moment I was deluged with an outpouring of water, and the poem had disappeared, gone somewhere with the stream, limp, blurred, and ruined, over the roof.

There was a great shout for the engine, which was now looked upon as a miracle. I hurried down the stairs, and out into the air.

“Here, *my son*, come here, and Evelyn may take you home in the carriage. You can take no part in the exercises to-day, but you have done well; to act a poet is better than to write a poem. I shall always believe in you now.”

It was Judge Hope. My heart bounded. What did I care for poetry now? I was poetry myself! The world was all full of it!

I got up on the carriage seat beside Evelyn.

“How did it all happen?” said I.

“Oh, the powder in John Trott’s pocket caught fire from the sparks of the anvil. Poor John! He was nearly burned to death.”

“Evelyn, my great opportunity is gone——”

“Yes, and I am so sorry.”

“I wrote that poem for *your* sake, Evelyn.”

“I know it. Repeat it to me.”

We rode along under the cool trees. It was high noon now, and the ospreys were wheeling over the sea. The air was fiery and still. The trees were delightful. We came to a cool grove of pines.

“Whoa!” said Evelyn.

We stopped.

“Now recite the poem.”

I did so.

"That is just *awful*, but *you* are real good."

"Beautiful?" I choked. "Beautiful, you mean?"

"No, *awful*. I wouldn't have had the judge listen to that for anything. You do not know what you have escaped. But I think that *you* are real good."

"What shall I do?"

"Forget it. *You* are real, real good."

"And you!——"

"I will just be true to you. I believe that you can become a poet yet. Poetry grows. I'll help you write poetry. *I* can."

"And we will both sing out of the same book?"

"Yes, I'll wait. You are real good."

I did not feel quite so distressed now; but I was hurt.

We rode on, singing *Rosalie*, the *Prairie Flower*, *Ben Bolt*, and *The Sword of Bunker Hill*.

We rode in sight of the well in old Scituate; the "orchard" was there then, "the meadow and deep-tangled wildwood." We crossed "the bridge," and stopped at the "mill," near the "rocks" where the "cataract fell." We rested under the cool shadows of the elms, and sung:

"The moss-covered bucket I hail as a treasure,

For often at noon when returned from the field,

I found it the source of an exquisite pleasure,

The purest and sweetest that Nature could yield.

How ardent I seized it, with hands that were glowing,

And quick to the white-pebbled bottom it fell;

Then soon, with the emblem of truth overflowing,

And dripping with coolness it rose from the well!"

The orioles sung with us and plumed in the air. Suddenly I said :

“ Old Bunker Hill ? ”

“ Poor old man ! It will be a dreadful shock to him ! ” said Evelyn.

“ Let us go back and take him home. ”

We rode back, and there I found Judge Hope caring for the shattered old man.

“ I like you for this, ” he said. “ This has been a very eventful day ! ”

It had, and Evelyn and I both sing out of the same book now, and I try to live the poetry that I can only adequately express in deeds rather than words. The judge has never been able to induce me to read to him my poem.

MILO MILLS'S FOURTH OF JULY POEM.

A STORY OF AN OLD-TIME INDEPENDENCE DAY.

MILO MILLS was the poet of the school.

I shall never forget the June day—all birds, blossoms, and waving meadows—when Major Cameron stopped his horse before the schoolhouse, and sat in his wagon waiting for the school to close. Major Cameron was one of the District School Committee, which we deemed a position of the highest honor and gravest responsibility, as indeed it was. For what was he waiting? Why did he not come to the door?

“School is dismissed,” said the master. We usually rushed out at the word, but we walked into the yard very quietly this afternoon, as the “committeeman,” as he was termed, stood watching us.

The major leaned forward with a grave look, and said, “Milo Mills, I wish to have a word with you.”

What had happened? What was about to happen?

The major began speaking with Milo in a low tone, but in a firm, distinct voice, which he evidently intended we should all hear. “Milo Mills,” said he, “I represent the Town Council.”

We were all ears. Had the major come to arrest Milo? That could not be. Milo was an honest, faithful, great-hearted boy. It was true that he had "spells of the imagination," as the woman who lived by visiting and dressmaking used to say, but such things do not break the peace.

"The Town Council have voted an appropriation of one hundred dollars this year to celebrate the Fourth of July." He spoke so that we could all hear. We were greatly surprised. One hundred dollars! "And I have been honored by being made the chairman of the committee to expend this munificent sum." What a beautiful word—"munificent"! We stood rooted to the ground. We almost wondered if the sky was not bending down. What would he say next?

"Milo, they tell me that you are a poet."

An osprey, whose nest was in a decaying button-wood tree, came sweeping down, and one of the class in the Latin Reader said "Tarquin." We recalled the old Latin story of Tarquin and the eagle which had been read so often in our hearing.

"And I have the honor of inviting you, in behalf of the committee, to read a poem of your own composition after the great oration."

We opened our mouths and our eyes, and stood like so many statues. Was ever a school so honored in any of its members before?

There was a deep silence. Milo looked like one petrified. His mouth opened a little, and then closed again; then a little wider, and a lump moved up and down in his throat.

"Speak, Milo," whispered the master. "You can

do just as well as anybody. Speak up brave. Homer and Virgil were once no older than you."

That sounded encouraging indeed, but Milo stood dumb. A preoccupied robin alighted on a locust bough overhead and began to sing. The girls waved their aprons and said "Shoo!" A robin isn't an eagle, and this seemed to the class in the Latin Reader like a veritable council of the gods.

"What do you think? Will you come?"

Milo made a stage bow. Why shouldn't he, when Virgil himself was once no older than he?

"Go 'long," said the major to his horse. "Hud-up."

The vehicle moved away. We were all rejoiced for Milo. The news flew like the birds of June. Milo was a poor widow's son, and every one was glad for his mother as well as for him. There was a happy mental atmosphere in Rexford that June night. When good hearts are made happy the whole community is happy, and if there were ever two great, loving, forgiving hearts anywhere they were those of the widow Mills and Milo.

But the next day a shadow crossed the mental sky. It was a gray rift of doubt.

"Do you think that he will be *ekal* to the emergency?" Mary Strong, the busy dressmaker, asked one and another as she wended her way from one guidepost to the other, and the next evening the people's minds were all interrogation points. There were shakings of heads.

"If he should fail," said the same tailoress, on her return, "it would be just *awful*. The whole town, and the nation, bein' it is the Fourth of July, would

be disgraced!" She added, to the parson: "Don't you think he looks rather pinddlin'? and, la me! if it were me, my knees would knock together like drum-sticks. I could never stand up under such a strain."

The question began to be asked as to who was to be the orator on this notable occasion when one hundred dollars was to be expended. The people were at last greatly astonished to hear that the great Senator Webber had been secured to deliver the oration, and that he would receive fifty dollars for the effort, so that with the military company and the engine company there would be nothing left for fireworks. And the poet, he would have to go unpaid.

The beginning of a thing is a long way, and the act of the patriotic Town Council in appropriating one hundred dollars filled the town with an inspiration to make the celebration the greatest possible success. The military company voted to turn out.

The company possessed an old siege gun that had been used in the investment of Boston, in General Ward's day, and this patriotic and historic piece of ordnance they voted to bring out and to fire. It had not been fired for nearly one hundred years, but there was an old soldier of the War of 1812, named Hackett, called Major Hackett, who, although he was only used to small arms, volunteered to load and fire this ancient gun, which was to be exploded by a long iron rod with a heated point.

The fire company resolved to parade in their red shirts to the sound of the trumpet.

The schools voted to form a floral procession. They arranged to have a floral car, in which the Goddess of Liberty should ride, surrounded by some

thirty or more young girls, representing the States, with white dresses, blue sashes, liberty caps, and shields.

The scene of all this patriotic expression was to be the Oaks in the lot outside of the town that had been once devoted to the general training. The flagpole stood here. Here the preparations were begun. Booths began to be built for the sale of powder crackers, torpedoes, and election cake.

As the plans evolved, the mind of Mary Strong became more and more troubled about Milo. In order to give him a sense of his responsibility, so as to make his inspiration rise to the occasion, she felt an impulse to talk to him. She met him one day by the wayside. She lifted her spectacles and said, "Milo?"

"Yes, marm."

"That is a great thing you have undertaken, and I've been wantin' to see you for a long time, so as to give ye a cheerin' word an' encourage ye. Do you know what all the folks are sayin'?"

"No, marm."

"Well, then, I must tell ye, so as to nerve ye in to do your best. They all say that if anybody fails, it will be *you*."

There came an appalled look into Milo's face.

"Think, Milo, how you would feel if you were to stand upt here, and set to shiverin' and shakin', and the great Senator Webber, after his great, great oration, lookin' at ye, and all the people laughin' at ye! And your voice all stuck in your throat, so that you couldn't get it up nor down! But as bad as that would be, it would be a great deal wuss if the poem

itself should not rise to the height of the great occasion."

The great day came at last. A fiery splendor lifted its arch above the sea, and in it the sun rose clear; all the bells in town began to ring, and the flag shot into the warm blue air as if to meet the sun.

The town was up betimes, and all was preparation. The drummer and fifer went through the streets, scaring babies and dogs in the yards, and even the birds in the trees. People poured into the town from the farms—lads and lasses, the wise and the foolish, queer old vehicles, and people seldom seen on the street except on Saturday market day.

Senator Webber, the orator, came early in a coach drawn by four bay horses, and stopped at the inn.

The day blazed. The air warmed to an intense heat, and toward noon great white peaks of clouds began to rise above the horizon, like Italian Alps or tropical Andes. The heat increased, and the air became perfectly still. Leaves drooped, and birds flew about panting.

The procession began to form. The military company were to lead, and they indeed looked fine. After the company the floral car with its Goddess and the States wheeled into line, very shaky. Next came a coach, with Chairman Cameron as the master of ceremonies, and the Senator and the poet.

As the coach was waiting, Jasper stepped up to the carriage and said to Mr. Cameron: "If the exercises should be likely to be too long we might omit the poem. We could have it printed in the paper."

Milo had passed a sleepless night. He saw and felt the meaning of Clerk Jasper's remark.

The firemen took their places, the town officers in carriages, the people on foot, the Antiques, and that musical pony.

The drum and fife filled the lifeless ear of the air. So did another sound—a distant rumbling in the sky.

The procession moved toward the training ground, on which had been erected a platform for the speakers. Just before the coach with the orator and the poet started, Milo's mother handed him an umbrella, and said: "Take it, Milo; it may rain before the exercises are over."

She looked up. The ospreys were wheeling low under the deep blue sky. The white vapory clouds with black bases but pearl-like heads, like the Alps at Lucerne, were rising. They were beautiful, as the full light of the noon sun fell upon them. Not a leaf stirred, but the birds were singing everywhere.

The procession started gayly. As it came to a halt another rattling sound, like a park of artillery, seemed to rise from the hills.

Mary Strong came up to the carriage and whispered, "Milo?" The poet bent down his ear. "If it should rain it will be luck to ye. Sometimes I hope it will. Think of the boy 'that stood on the burning deck'!"

The procession moved on, and the air grew feverish. The prudent haymakers were hurrying in the fields. A peak of cloud met the sun, and the earth became half shadow and half sunlight.

The training ground, some half mile from the town, was full of people. Fans were waving everywhere under the great clouds of sunshades.

It had been arranged to fire the siege gun when the

head of the procession should reach the platform. The gun had been set in an embrasure of rising ground overlooking the sea. It had been heavily loaded, so as to make a great noise, and a keg of powder had been left open near it, so that it might be loaded again. Major Hackett stood like a hero on the meadowy height, with a long rod in his hand, on which was a fuse. He ordered all the small boys away with a royal wave of his rod, which looked like an immense poker.

The procession swept round to the platform. In doing so the floral car leaned over at the curve, greatly to the trepidation of the Goddess of Liberty. But it righted. As the procession reached the platform, Major Hackett, on the hill, gave the long poker a flourish, and the drummer and the fifer took their places behind the musical pony, so that he might canter to the tune of Yankee Doodle, which stimulation did indeed prove to be needed.

The anticipated moment came. The major marched proudly up to the gun and applied the fuse. The gun responded instantly. There followed a tremendous explosion. The cannon leaped out of the embrasure, and backward, and a part of it flew into the air, like the explosion of the Adams in the hands of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery—a broken gun yet to be seen in the chamber at the top of the Bunker Hill Monument.

Major Hackett may have seen service, but the unexpected conduct of the ancient gun filled him with nervous terror. He turned around and around with the poker in his hand, dipping the latter up and down, until in the dense cloud of smoke he reached the keg of powder. He touched this by accident, when there

followed another explosion. The earth seemed flying from its base. Pudding stone rose into the air. Several horses broke from the procession and ran to the town.

Out of a cloud of smoke Major Hackett came hobbling down the hill, having left the unfortunate poker behind him.

The earth was growing dark now at noonday. Clouds were piling upon each other, and the south was a long black wall.

The Senator mounted the platform ; our poet followed with his prudent umbrella.

There was a black silence in the air.

The master of ceremonies recited a prepared introduction, extolling the eloquence of Senator Webber, and asking the indulgence of every one for Milo, and added : " If the exercises should be very long, we may have to omit the poem, which can just as well be printed. The weather looks threatening." It did.

Zigzag lightning darted across the black wall which was now rising higher and higher, with a vapory mantle hanging halfway between the earth and the sky.

Senator Webber arose.

" I should be sorry to disappoint my brother, the poet, but it does look as though my oration, which is long, as I have so much to say, would be likely to fill the time under the somewhat alarming circumstances. I am glad that the poem can be published." He continued, taking a statuesque attitude : " This is our nation's jubilee. We have assembled here together to commemorate the day on which our forefathers offered their hearts and hands and all that they were to their

country. So the Romans of old, led by their eagles, went forth with their spears and shields. So we in spirit march forth with them to-day, and offer our hearts, hands, and——”

An appalling gust of wind broke the stillness of the air. It was raining in the black and purple distance, and the rain was traveling like a flying host. The limbs in the grove at a little distance began to be lashed hither and thither, and great drops of cooling rain to fall.

—“offer our hearts, hands, and our——”

“*Heels!*” shouted old Jasper. “It’s comin’ like an army of the giants of old. We’ll have to offer our heels to our country to-day as sure as the elements are against us.”

There followed another peal of thunder, and the rain began to fall. The crowds were running.

—“shields—heels——” said the Senator, and then leaped down from the platform and followed the crowd, declaring, “We never know what is goin’ to happen.” He was right.

The people ran to the oak grove, or hid under the carriages, or found shelter in the booths. The storm swept over the scene, with blinding rain and hail, as though a winter lake were being blown away. The air instantly cooled. The poor horses stood shivering, and one of the tents was blown away.

The poet? Where was our poet amid these fearful scenes? He had spread his umbrella, and sat still on the platform like the boy that stood on

“the burning deck
Whence all but him had fled.”

In some twenty minutes the clouds passed over, and left behind it an opening in the sky which seemed almost like a vision of the gates of paradise. The people began to look out of their shelters. The poet, sitting on the platform under his umbrella, was the admiration of all. Some of the boys under the carriages began to cheer. The cheering was followed by the people in the grove. The rain abated, and the people came out of their covers, and gathered around the platform. Among them were Chairman Cameron, Clerk Jasper, and Mary Strong.

Chairman Cameron ascended the platform and shouted, "Ladies and gentlemen!"

The people came running to hear what the chairman should say, and the crowd of the morning gathered again.

"Ladies and gentlemen: we can not tell what a day may bring forth. We rise up smart as peppergrass to be cast down by hailstones. To-day everything has failed—the procession, the old cannon, the floral car, the Yankee Doodle pony, and even the oration; all but the poet. I wonder if he will fail too, as we have been predicting?"

There went up a great shout of "No, no, no!"

"Shall we have the poem?"

"Poem, poem, poem!" shouted the people.

The sun's rays burst out, and an immense rainbow spanned the retreating clouds. The robins set up a great chorus in the grove. How beautiful all Nature looked!

Milo closed his umbrella and stepped forward to the front of the platform. There arose a great cheering. He took from his pocket his poem, and, dropping it in

his hand by his side, began to recite it in a musical voice :

“ O Time ! O Change, how have these green hills altered
Since those far-distant days
When Vikings hailed, from prows that never faltered,
The summit of these bays ! ”

The poem pictured the long history of the coast and its heroic towns. The people listened to it as to a historic revelation. As he lifted the paper at the close never was heard such cheering in the old port town as arose on the air.

“ Shout your fill,” said the chairman ; “ there is one thing that hasn’t failed ! ”

Mary Strong hurried up to the platform. “ Milo, come here,” she said. “ You owe that to me, now, don’t you ? You remember how I encouraged you down by the pastur’ bars, don’t ye ? Well, what I have to say to you is, ‘ Prepare for further usefulness, and never forget your friends ! ’ ”

To-night let me tell you about the husking stories, songs, and tunes. I love to recall and echo such tales of the New England corn harvest. As the wings of swallows in old chimneys bring memories of vanished farms, so these long-remembered merriments relight the past. They are tales for fire gleams and embers.

HUSKING STORIES, SONGS, AND FIDDLERS.

THERE stands a gray old house amid walls mantled with ivy, near Plymouth, Mass, in the present town of Plympton, which is known as the Elisha Brewster place. It occupies a high ground on a byway; below it are woodland pastures, and near is Duxbury, where the oldest Brewster house was erected. This most picturesque house is something of a museum, and here are to be seen Elder Brewster's Bible and the first rocking chair made in America.

Elder Brewster's looking glass is here. What a history it might reveal if it only had a soul! All the Pilgrim Fathers may have looked into it, and even Robinson of Leyden!

The neighborhoods around Plymouth used to be made lively in early autumn by husking parties. The old Colony people had but few frolics, but the corn harvest was a merry season, and such merriments grew with the widening of the cornfields in prosperous colonial times, and reached their height in the early days of the republic. In the later times the privilege of kissing whom one liked was accorded to the finder of a red ear of corn. The fiddler became a character, and the tunes of Monie Musk, the Devil's

Dream, the Virginia Reel, and Rosin the Beau were heard after the husking suppers.

In early times the Indian women joined in these huskings and received one bushel of corn out of every ten that they husked, as their pay. The old natural story-tellers were here at their best, and exercised their art at these corn festivals for more than a hundred years.

It is an October night, let us suppose—a night of the full hunter's moon, and the scene is a barn near the Elisha Brewster place in old Plymouth. The huskers gather, young and old; some of them enter the house, and such as do pass in, are brought before the magic mirror. They think of what the Pilgrims were who had looked into that glass, and they almost shrink as they peer into it. Elder Brewster of old engaged in no such trifles as these; he bowed the heavens and pointed out from his cannon-guarded pulpit, in his gray log church, the destinies of men.

The fiddler came. He was commonly a cider-drinker, as were the poor Indians. The parson came with some doubt in his heart that these frolics were quite right and profitable, but the Hebrews had harvest feasts, and he only spoke of his misgivings to the conservative deacons, and the latter only replied by shaking their heads.

It is now, let us suppose, in the later days of these merry festivals. They have grown. To-night they are to husk a hundred bushels of corn; after that they are to have a supper in the house, and after supper they are to sing, listen to the fiddle, and relate wonder tale.

By nine o'clock many young men and maidens

have found red ears of corn, and in claiming their privileges have disclosed whom they love and who are their lovers, and so engagements of marriage were often brought to pass.

By ten o'clock the husking was done. Then came the supper.

To-night the story-telling we may imagine begins with some verses by the old parson's son. The ballad tells the tale of the time when corn was scanty and the hunger great. I will give you my own version of this old story, for I can not produce the rhymes of those vanished years :

FIVE KERNELS OF CORN!

(A Thanksgiving Tradition.)

"Out of small beginnings great things have been produced, as one small candle may light a thousand."—*Governor Bradford.*

I.

'Twas the year of the famine in Plymouth of old,
 The ice and the snow from the thatched roofs had rolled.
 Through the warm purple skies steered the geese o'er the seas,
 And the woodpeckers tapped in the clocks of the trees;
 The boughs on the slopes to the south winds lay bare,
 And dreaming of summer the buds swelled in air,
 The pale Pilgrims welcomed each reddening morn;
 There were left but for rations Five Kernels of Corn.

Five Kernels of Corn!

Five Kernels of Corn!

But to Bradford a feast were Five Kernels of Corn!

II.

"Five Kernels of Corn! Five Kernels of Corn!
 Ye people be glad for Five Kernels of Corn!"
 So Bradford cried out on bleak Burial Hill,
 And the thin women stood in their doors white and still.

“Lo the harbor of Plymouth rolls bright in the spring,
 The maples grow red, and the wood robins sing,
 The west wind is blowing, and fading the snow,
 And the pleasant pines sing, and arbutuses blow.

Five Kernels of Corn!

Five Kernels of Corn!

To each one be given Five Kernels of Corn!”

III.

Oh, Bradford of Austerfield, haste on the way,
 The west winds are blowing o'er Provincetown Bay,
 The white avens bloom, but the pine domes are chill,
 And new graves have furrowed Precisioners' Hill!
 “Give thanks all ye people, the warm skies have come,
 The hilltops are sunny, and green grows the holm,
 And the trumpets of winds, and the white March is gone,
 And ye still have left you Five Kernels of Corn.

Five Kernels of Corn!

Five Kernels of Corn!

Ye have for Thanksgiving Five Kernels of Corn!”

IV.

“The raven's gift eat and be humble and pray,
 A new light is breaking, and Truth leads your way,
 One taper a thousand shall kindle: rejoice
 What to you has been given the wilderness voice!”
 Oh, Bradford of Austerfield, daring the wave,
 And safe through the sounding blasts leading the brave,
 Of deeds such as thine was the free nation born,
 And the festal world sings the “Five Kernels of Corn.”

Five Kernels of Corn!

Five Kernels of Corn!

The nation gives thanks for Five Kernels of Corn!
 To the Thanksgiving feast bring Five Kernels of Corn!

The fiddles were tuned, and the queer songs were sung. I recall two of them that belong to the later times, and will sing them here. One pictures the Indian's heroism, and one an unthrifty farmer:

THE INDIAN'S DEATH SONG.

The sun sets at night, and the stars shun the day,
 But glory remains when the light fades away.
 Begin, ye tormentors, your threats are in vain,
 For the son of Alknomook shall never complain.

Remember the arrows he shot from his bow,
 Remember your chiefs by his hatchet laid low,
 Why so slow? do you wait till I shrink from my pain?
 No! the son of Alknomook shall never complain.

Remember the wood where in ambush we lay,
 And the scalps which we bore from your nation away;
 Now the flame rises fast, you exult in my pain,
 But the son of Alknomook shall never complain.

I'll go to the land where my father is gone,
 His ghost shall rejoice in the fame of his son;
 Death comes like a friend to relieve me from pain,
 And thy son, oh, Alknomook, has scorned to complain.

OVER THERE.

Oh! potatoes they grow small
 Over there!
 Oh! potatoes they grow small
 Over there!
 Oh! potatoes they grow small,
 'Cause they plant 'em in the fall,
 And then eats 'em tops and all
 Over there!

Oh! the candles they are small
 Over there!
 Oh! the candles they are small
 Over there!

Oh! the candles they are small,
 For they dips 'em lean and tall,
 And then burns 'em sticks and all,

Over there!

Oh! I wish I was a geese
 All forlorn!

Oh! I wish I was a geese,
 All forlorn!

Oh! I wish I was a geese,
 'Cause they lives and dies in peace,
 And accumulates much grease
 Eating corn!

Oh! they had a clam pie
 Over there!

Oh! they had a clam pie
 Over there!

Oh! they had a clam pie,
 And the crust was made of rye—
 You must eat it, or must die,
 Over there!

Another curious song of these primitive days was one which would seem to have originated in the work among the Indians by the Jesuit missionaries:

“ In de dark wood, no Indian nigh,
 Den me look Heben and send up cry
 Upon me knees so low;
 Den me pray God mid inside heart,
 He fight for me and take me part,
 De *priest* he tell me so.”

There were three haunting lines in this song:

“ He lub po' Indian in de wood,
 An' me lub God; and dat be good,
 Me praise Him two times mo'.”

The "two times mo'" seem to have meant *over and over again*.

Beautiful indeed was a later Indian song which is attributed to the parting of three Indian graduates of Dartmouth College :

"When shall we three meet again?"

The last stanza has a classical tone and haunts one like a minor chord :

"When the dreams of life have fled,
When its wasted lamps are dead,
When in cold oblivion's shade
Beauty, wealth, and fame are laid,
Where immortal spirits reign,
There we three shall meet again."

The ballad of the Beggar Girl,

"Over the mountain and over the moor
Hungry and barefoot I wander forlorn,"

and Mary of the Wild Moor, a late production,

"One night when the wind it blew cold,
Blew bitter across the wild moor"—

were favorites, as were Sally in our Alley, Black-eyed Susan, and Billy Boy.

Then legends were told.

One of the oldest legends was related to me last summer by Mrs. Zerviah Gould Mitchell, now eighty-six years of age, and the oldest member of the only surviving family of Massasoit, who lives on the Winslow Reservation, a little principality, if I may so term it, at Lakeville, Mass. I may call this legend

THE SILVER PIPE.

King James I, of England, on hearing of the goodness and virtues of Massasoit, once sent him a present of a silver pipe. The chieftain prized it highly as a gift from his "white brother over the sea." But one of his warriors did a deed of valor that so won his heart that he resolved to make him a present of the pipe as his choice treasure. The warrior, finding himself about to die, charged his squaw to put the silver pipe into his grave at the burial; but she, out of regard to the value of the treasure, hid it, and covered the grave without it.

One evening she went to the place where she had hidden the royal present, resolving to smoke from the pipe alone, and to hide it again. She put out her hand to take the pipe, but it moved away from her. Again, but it moved away; and again and again, but a dead hand was moving it. Then she bitterly repented of her disobedience, and promised to bury the pipe if she were able. At this resolution the pipe lay still, and she opened the grave, fulfilled the warrior's command, and was enabled to smoke in peace of mind and conscience, we may hope, the rest of her days.

Another legend was as curious.

A NEW WAY TO MAKE PEOPLE HAPPY.

Massasoit seems to have been a philosopher, and he favored a strange custom among his people, which if untruthful in letter was not so in spirit. It was formed on the principle that happiness is a matter of comparison.

Making a journey with Edward Winslow some

distance from Plymouth, he sent a messenger to that place to tell the people that Winslow was dead. After some hours Winslow with Massasoit appeared in the town. All was rejoicing now where all had been sorrow a few minutes before.

“Why did you send us word that Winslow was dead?” asked one of the Pilgrims of the great chief.

“To make you happier on his return,” was the reply; “it is a custom of my people.”

Some of the earliest of the New England or colonial fireside stories are the most charming of all. Such is the incident of

GOVERNOR WINTHROP'S WOODPILE.

Governor Winthrop was born at Groton, England, in 1578. His early intelligence and benevolence were so great that he was made a justice of the peace at the age of eighteen.

He came to America in 1630 and settled on the Mystic near Boston, and had a town house near where the famous Old South Church now stands.

After he became Governor, a man met him one hard winter day, and said:

“My dear Governor, I have a sorry word to say to you.”

“What, my good neighbor?”

“Harry the Cottager” (or some like name) “is a thief.”

“From whom has he stolen?”

“From you.”

“What?”

“Wood.”

"This is a hard winter, and he is poor."

"True, good Governor, but stealing is a crime against peace and good order."

"True, but I have compassion on a poor and hungry man. Harry the Cottager is not by nature a thief."

"What will you do?"

"I must prove this charge; then I must reform him or punish him."

"The law demands justice."

"The Bible says '*Restore* such an one.'"

"True. You have a merciful heart."

"Send Harry the Cottager to me."

The man came, trembling.

"Harry the Cottager, you are poor?"

"Yes, your Honor."

"And hungry?"

"No, your Honor."

"But cold?"

"Yes, your Honor."

"You see my woodpile."

"Yes, your Honor?"

"I have wood enough for us both, and I would not be a Christian to let you go cold. When you have need of wood, come to my woodpile and get all you want."

Harry the Cottager confessed his fault, and went away from the Governor an honest man. One could not steal from such a man as that.

The story of the Angel of Deliverance, or of the mysterious stranger that appeared in the street of Hadley, Mass., at the time of the attack of the Indians,

and who disappeared as mysteriously as he came, and who was really Goffe the Regicide, was always a favorite by open fires. Robert Southey, the English poet, was so interested in this story that he once thought of making it the subject of a long poem. The New Hampshire story of Three Guns, or of the little boy who was led astray by a motherly bear, was always welcome at inland husking parties. But the adventurous narrative of the Capture of Annawon, as furnished by Captain Church, was demanded of story-tellers everywhere. It was the kind of story that huskers and other people as well, for two generations, best liked to hear. It pictured the end of the Indian war and of the coast Indian race. I have seen the night scenes associated with the Capture of Annawon given at Warren, R. I., in the Armory Hall, at a patriotic festival, *by the flash of a musket*. The representation was too brief for a grand historical tableau. Such a realistic scene might be better made by the passing of night torches.

The corn festivals which are becoming popular as a means of raising money for charity, and which are the most instructive, patriotic, and worthy of all entertainments of the kind, are reproducing these old scenes, songs, and characters. For a torchlight tableau nothing could be more effective than the capture of King Philip's great chieftain—

ANNAWON.

After the death of King Philip at Mount Hope, Captain Church and his party pursued Annawon and a remnant of Indians to a high rock in a swamp on the Taunton road. They were guided to Annawon's

hiding place by the pestle of an Indian woman who was pounding corn. The party glided down the rocks unperceived and seized Annawon, who was resting, Captain Church asking him what he was to have for supper, and saying that he had come to sup with him.

Church's narrative furnishes a vivid scene for a painter or tableau-maker. I quote from the substance of it one of the dramatic episodes of the night of the capture of Annawon: "Church spoke not to Annawon, because he could not speak Indian, and thought Annawon could not speak English; but it now appeared that he could, from a conversation they had together. Church had lain down with Annawon to prevent his escape, of which, however, he did not seem much afraid, for, after they had lain a considerable time, Annawon got up and walked away out of sight.

"Being gone some time, Church began to suspect some ill design. He therefore gathered all the guns close to himself, and lay as close as possible under young Annawon's side, that if a shot should be made at him it must endanger the life of young Annawon also. After lying awhile in great suspense, he saw by the light of the moon Annawon coming with something in his hand. When he got to Captain Church he knelt before him, and after presenting him what he had brought, spoke in English as follows: 'Great captain, you have killed Philip and conquered his country. For I believe that I and my company are the last that war against the English; so I suppose the war is ended by your means, and therefore these things belong to you.'

"He then took out of his pack a beautifully wrought belt, which belonged to Philip. It was nine inches in

breadth, and of such length as, when put about the shoulders of Captain Church, reached to his ankles. This was considered at that time of great value, being embroidered all over with money, that is, wampam-peag of various colors, curiously wrought into figures of birds, beasts, and flowers. A second belt, of no less exquisite workmanship, was next presented, which had belonged to Philip. This that chief used to ornament his head with ; from the back part of which flowed two flags, which decorated his back. A third was a smaller one, with a star upon the end of it, which he wore upon his breast. All three were edged with red hair, which Annawon said was got in the country of the Mohawks. He next took from his pack two horns of glazed powder, and a red cloth blanket. These, it appears, were all of the effects of the great chief.

“He told Captain Church that those were Philip’s royalties, which he was wont to adorn himself with when he sat in state, and he was happy in having an opportunity to present them to him.”

But the ghost story was the one that cast a spell, and such stories sometimes ended unexpectedly. Of these, those told by Cotton Mather in his *Wonders of the Invisible World* and like volumes were the most terrifying and mystical. There was one story which used to be known under some such name as

THE LEVITATIONS OF MARGARET RULE,

that is supported by the testimonies of magistrates and divines of the old Boston theological period. We have never heard any story of which a solution seemed more difficult.

There lived in Boston, near the close of the seventeenth century, a young woman by the simple name of Mercy Short. She had once been taken captive by the Indians, but was redeemed at Quebec, and sailed in a ship for Boston, where she became a member of a respectable family. There was great excitement in Boston at this time concerning some Goodwin children who were believed to be bewitched. A historian speaks of them in these exact words: "They would fly like geese, and be carried with an incredible swiftness through the air, having just their toes now and then upon the ground, and their arms waved like the wings of a bird." I see that you smile, but listen again to the exact words of a most credible historian: "One of them flew the length of the room, about twenty feet, none seeing her feet touch the floor."

Now, think of that! No one but the famous Robert Calef seemed to have dared to laugh at such statements in those shaky times. Twenty feet! If any of you think you can fly twenty feet without your toes touching the floor, just try. A writer in the Memorial History of Boston, one of the most careful and conservative books, says that, "according to the information of the time, they cried out from blows by cudgels, and though no blows or cudgels were seen by bystanders, the marks, in red streaks, were seen on their backs."

In the summer of 1692 seven persons from Salem who were accused of witchcraft were brought to Boston for imprisonment. Among these was one woman who had certainly a good name, for her name was Sarah Good.

One day the mistress of Mercy Short sent her to

the prison on an errand, and the girl chanced to see Sarah Good.

“Give me some tobacco,” said the supposed witch to the girl. Mercy Short had been taught to reprobate witches. So she picked up some shavings and tossed them toward Sarah Good with the words—

“That’s tobacco good enough for you.” Here Sarah cast upon her an evil eye, and she fell into fits, some of which lasted for days, and once she lay for a long time in a swoon as dead. Ministers and pious people of Boston held a day of fasting and prayer for her, and she was at last delivered from the spell.

Now you may smile at this, but her case was followed by another that is as well attested as any event in Boston history, that should make a materialist ponder.

It was the case of Margaret Rule. Her afflictions came upon her in September, 1693. They were witnessed by the clergy and the chief men of the town. The Mathers and others record them as veritable history. We are told by the most rigid chroniclers that her tormentors kept her from food nine days; pinched her so that black and blue marks could be seen; thrust pins into her neck, back, and arms; poured scalding brimstone upon her, raising blisters upon her skin.

And now comes the first of the most astonishing statements concerning her, that “scores of witnesses could scarcely endure the smell of the brimstone.”

As I can not think that evil spirits brought real brimstone into the house, I will not press this statement, well attested as it is. But what will you say of this record of old and of recent history? “Six persons testified over their own names in three affidavits

that they had seen Margaret Rule lifted by an invisible force so as to touch the garret floor." (See Memorial History of Boston, vol. ii.)

One day—and this incident of my story is a part of a sworn statement—some friends called on the afflicted girl. While they were there her body began to rise from the bed into the air. A person present resolved to oppose the levitation: the attendant seized her so as to throw the weight of the body upon her, but she continued to rise. Then several persons—which event it is claimed was witnessed by ten or a dozen persons—tried to prevent the levitation, but their strength was overcome: up, up she rose. How she came down at last I am sure I can not tell, but it is all very strange if it happened, and quite as strange if the eyes of so many people of unquestioned honor and integrity were deceived. I can fancy it now—the gathering of the terrified people on the autumn day by the windy sea; the rising of the body into the air; the alarm; the efforts to prevent the levitation—but I can not imagine how she came down again; nor why she did not go straight up through upper floor, roof and all. They say such things happen still, and have always happened. Now what do you think of the story of Margaret Rule?

AN OWER TRUE GHOST STORY.

There was doubt in those sturdy and steady old days.

The bound boy or 'prentice lad would perhaps lean forward from the old red settle and take the tongs to punch the fire.

"Stop, Andy!" The voice came from under the shaking border of a high cap or a wig. "Stop, Andy! you will make the sparks fly."

Andy would stop. He did not wish to make the sparks fly; he was thinking. He would glance around as if cautiously, and say to the story-teller:

"Now, mister, won't you tell us one ghost story that you know to be true? One can not be sure about these. They may have been 'magnations."

The red settler of later times would relate the famous ghost story told by John Wesley.

"But," would say some skeptical aunt, "*he* may have been deceived. I've tried *his* remedies in *Primitive Physic*, and some on 'em weren't good."

Elder John Leland, of Virginia and Cheshire, Mass., he who is said to have made Madison President, and who carried the great Cheshire cheese to President Jefferson, was an oracle in old New England days. The red settler, driven into a corner for the palpable roof of ghostly immortality, would now tell the elder's famous ghost story, while the huskers' eyes grew wide and wider. I can hear him say: "What was this curious story? Ye that have ears prepare to open them now."

ELDER JOHN LELAND'S GHOST STORY.

The mystery occurred in Virginia, and I will give Elder Leland's own account of it. His family consisted of himself, wife, and four children.

One evening all the family being together, their attention was attracted by a noise, which very much resembled the faint groans of a person in pain. It was distinct, and repeated at intervals of a few seconds. It seemed to be under the sill of the window, and between the clapboards and the ceiling. They paid very little attention to it, and in a short time it ceased. But afterward it returned in the same way—sometimes every night, and sometimes not so frequently, and always in the same place and of the same character. It continued for some months. He said it excited their curiosity and annoyed them, but they were not alarmed by it.

During its continuance they had the siding and casing removed from the place where it appeared to be, but found nothing to account for it; and the sound continued the same. He consulted his friends, especially some of his ministerial brethren, about it. I think he said it was never heard by any except himself and his family; but it was heard by them when he was absent from home.

Mrs. Leland said that often, when she was alone with the children, and while they were playing about the room, and nothing being said, it would come, and they would leave their play and gather about her person. They had a place fifty or sixty rods from the house, by the side of a brook, where the family did their washing. One day, while she was at that

place, it met her there precisely as it had in the house.

After the noise had been heard at brief intervals for, I think, six or eight months—I am following the story as he told it to Governor Briggs—they removed their lodgings to quite an opposite and distant part of the house; but it continued as usual, for some time, in its old locality.

One night, after they had retired, they observed, by the sound, that it had left the spot from which it had previously proceeded, and seemed to be advancing, in a direct line, toward their bed, and was becoming constantly louder and more distinct. At each interval it advanced toward them, and gathered strength and fullness, until it entered the room where they were, and approached the bed, and came along on the front side of the bed, when the groan became deep and appalling. “Then,” said the elder, “for the first time since it began I felt the emotion of fear. I turned my face, and if I ever prayed in my life, I prayed then. I asked the Lord to deliver me and my family from that annoyance, and that, if it were a message from heaven, it might be explained to us, and depart; that if it were an evil spirit, permitted to disturb me and my family, it might be rebuked and sent away; or if there was anything for me to do, to make it depart, I might be instructed what it was, so that I could do it.”

This exercise restored his tranquillity of mind, and he resumed his usual position in the bed.

Ye that have ears prepare to open them now.

Then, he said, it uttered a groan too loud and startling to be imitated by the human voice. The

next groan was not so loud, and it had receded a step or two from the bed, near his face. It continued to recede in the direction from which it came, and grew less and less, until it reached its old station, when it died away to the faintest sound, and entirely and forever ceased.

No explanation was ever found. "I have given you," he said to Governor Briggs, "a simple and true history of the facts, and you can form your own opinion. I give none." His wife confirmed all he said. "I think I can say," says Governor Briggs, "that I never knew a person less given to the marvelous than Elder Leland."

I have here followed Governor Briggs's narrative as given by Dr. Sprague in the *Annals of the American Pulpit*. One might as well doubt the heavens as to question the sound sense of Elder John Leland.

"What do you say to that?" would ask the red settler.

Andy and his aunt were a little silent for a time.

But Andy had a tall head, and he began to stammer on the letter B, and he at last ventured—

"But——"

"What, my boy, but what?"

"Tell us a ghost story that we can not doubt."

"I will tell you one story that I know to be true," said the old red settler.

"Punch the fire."

The huskers sat close, and their eyes gleamed.

The woman in the tall cap punched the fire, rattling the red peppers as she did so. The skeptical aunt ceased knitting, and let the kitten climb up into

her lap, boxing its ears, then stroking it, the latter as a reaction of conscience.

“There was once an old woman,” said the old red settler, “who died very mysteriously. Now I know this story to be true. They buried her in the green churchyard under the hornbine tree at the foot of the lot, and they set a stone over her, with this epitaph :

‘I was sitting in my chair,
 Busy about my worldly care,
 When in a moment I fell dead,
 And to this place I was conveyed.’

She was churning when she died. This is a true story.”

“In a splatter-dasher churn?” may have ventured the critical boy.

“Yes—there was no other.”

“It is not surprising that she died.”

“But that is neither here nor there,” continued the old red settler. “The churchyard lot ran down to the road, and people used to stop by the wall to read the epitaph. You that have sense prepare to use it now.”

“Well, one moonlight night a young couple were standing by the wall, when the young man, who was a doctor, called out, loud enough for the dead to hear :

“‘Old woman, old woman, what did you die of?’

“You that have ears prepare to open them now. The tale is true.

“The two listened, and, ‘ye that have eyes prepare to open them now,’ the old woman answered—

“Now hear what she said—

“The tale is true. The old woman answered, after the question had been asked :

“Old woman, old woman, what did you die of?” she said—she answered—NOTHING AT ALL! Herein is wisdom.”

Then——

The clock struck twelve.

“Good night,” said the old red settler. “Ye that have heels prepare to use them now.”

They did, and the bushes were terrors to them as they passed along the silent roads.

Pokanoket! We stand on legend-haunted ground! Old Sowams in Pokanoket (now Warren, R. I., and the Mount Hope country) has the grandest of all Indian legends.

Let us forget the present, and go back to-night into the mysteries of three hundred years ago. Vanish, ye tall stone tower with your wonderful legends; dissolve into steel gray air, ye white spire of faith; Anglo-Catholic Church, Roman Catholic Church, hush your bells and music and litanies; chimneys of factories, vanish away. Are ye all gone? Then let the sun on the dial of the day move back like that of old.

KING PHILIP'S LAST HUNT.

It is an evening twilight in winter nearly three hundred years ago. Along yonder river is a row of Indian huts, a village that no white man has ever seen, unless it be Verrazano, whose dream of the roses of Rhodes, according to a poet's tradition, gave the name to Rhode Island. In the midst of the lodges is the fur-roofed cabin of the chief, a bark palace amid the oaks and pines through which the sea and river winds sigh. White wings of herons rise into the air; afar the gray wolf howls in the still white forest. The sun is going down, and the world is still.

To the door of the cabin come two tall, bronzed-colored men. One is Massasoit, the other his brother from whom he seems never to have been separated, Quadequina. Near them is a river and at their feet flows a spring.

There has been a great plague. The tribe of Massasoit, some thirty thousand in number, have been reduced to a few hundred souls. The empire of Massasoit, which stretched from Cape Cod, the Malabar Bay of the Pilgrim's imagination, to the Narragansett, is a desolation. What this sickness was we do not know. The early historians of Plymouth Colony say that the savages "died in heaps"; that their bodies

turned yellow in their last hours, and that their bones lay white and unburied in their hunting places and villages.

Sowams in Pokanoket seems to have been largely exempt from this terrible scourge. The remnant of the smitten tribes was left here by Massasoit Spring.

We may imagine Massasoit, then more than thirty years of age, saying to his brother and companions: "What does this desolation mean? Why are the forests, the rivers, the shores made thus desolate and silent?" The sun goes down over Sowams in Pokanoket. No car whistle blows, no nine o'clock bell rings.

And now the clock of the years has circled three times the dial. A ship lies off the coast of Holland, bearing the flag of the Cross of St. George. It is called the Mayflower, and is to convey a band of Pilgrims over the sea, who have been dreaming of the purple skies, evergreen hills, and balmy airs of Virginia.

Their old pastor, John Robinson, of Leyden, comes to them, promises them that in the unknown lands to which they are going "new light shall peal out from the Word." He kneels on the deck, lifts his hands in prayer—a scene which has been beautifully represented in the painter's art, as may be seen in Pilgrim Hall in Plymouth. The pastor bids them farewell and expects to follow them in time, but his soul soon passed over a wider sea.

"E'er yet the Speedwell's anchor hung,
Or yet the Mayflower's sail was spread,
While round his feet the Pilgrims clung,
The pastor spake and thus he said:

“ Men, brothers, sisters, children dear,
God calls you hence from o'er the sea.
Ye may not build by Harlem Meer,
Nor yet along the Zuyder Zee.

“ Ye go to bear the saving word
To tribes unnamed and shores untrod ;
Heed well the lessons ye have heard
From these teachers taught of God.

“ Yet think not unto them was lent
All light for all the ancient days,
And Heaven's eternal wisdom spent
In making straight the ancient ways.

“ The Living Fountain overflows
For every sheep—for every lamb,
Nor heeds though angry creeds oppose
With Luther's dike and Calvin's dam.'

“ He spake, with lingering, long embrace ;
With tears of love and partings fond,
They floated down the creeping Maas,
Along the isle of Gesselmond.”

The nations of the world had been sifted to form the Anglo-Saxon race, and it had taken a thousand years of Anglo-Saxon blood to mold these Precisioners for their destiny.

The Pilgrims are on the sea now, but they do not find Virginia. Massasoit of Sowams, in Pokanoket, hears a strange report: A company of helpless wanderers have landed on his coasts, some forty miles away. He summons his brother, Quadequina, and his trusty warriors, and goes forth to meet the strangers among the hills and pines of the windy eastern sea.

Of the scene that followed, a local historian has given a most graphic account :

“The Pilgrim Fathers,” he says, “entertained the greatest regard for Massasoit, and the account of their reception of him at his first visit is curious and interesting. On Thursday, the 22d of March, 1621, only a hundred and one days after the Pilgrims had landed at Plymouth, Massasoit, accompanied by his brother, Quadequina, and sixty of his warriors—all armed with bows and arrows, their faces painted ‘some black, some red, some yellow, and some white, some with crosses and other antic works; some had skins on them and some naked: all strong, tall men in appearance—approach Plymouth, in order to form a friendly league. Having first sent word to the English of his coming, he suddenly made his appearance with his warriors, in imposing array, upon a hill (now called Watson’s Hill), a short distance from the new settlement. In the rear of the hill is seen the valley through which Massasoit wound his way, in order not to be seen until he arose upon the hill and arranged his company of picked men in the best manner to impress the Pilgrims. Immediately the Pilgrims essayed to make a show, to produce an effect upon the barbarians; but, alas! sickness and death had spread such havoc among them in that most distressing winter that nearly half of their number were now no more, and of the remaining number few were prepared for any pressing emergency. But a crisis had now come, and something must be done. First of all, Edward Winslow went to the imposing company of heathen strangers carrying a pair of knives, a chain and a jewel for Massasoit, and a knife and jewel for

his brother; also a pot of strong water, with some biscuit and butter for a treat, which were readily accepted. Winslow remaining as a hostage, Massasoit with twenty unarmed men descended the hill toward the Pilgrims. Captain Standish mustered his company; but so reduced had they become at this time that only six musketeers composed it. The captain made his best display; deep-toned orders were given, followed by facings and wheelings, and handling of matchlocks. Shade of Baron Steuben! we have been accustomed to refer to you as the *ne plus ultra* of old-fashioned tactics; but the style of those used on this occasion was a century and a half old in your day. Captain Standish marched with his company to the brook at the foot of the hill to meet Massasoit, and gave him a military salute, which was politely responded to; the distinguished visitor was then conducted to an unfinished building, hastily prepared with a green rug and three or four cushions."

There, on that March day, a treaty was made and signed between Massasoit and the Pilgrims. Edward Winslow offered himself as a hostage for the keeping of the treaty, but the great chief asked for no pledge like that. Honor to him was his native character—his vital air.

Massasoit kept that treaty true to its spirit and letter for more than fifty years, or until his death. It was his fidelity to that treaty which made this nation possible. The Pilgrims themselves violated this treaty; the forest king did not. The honor of a Regulus was his.

In the summer of 1621, Mr. Edward Winslow, Mr. Stephen Hopkins, and an Indian guide named Squanto,

crossed the Taunton River and the Kickemuit and came to the village of Sowams in Pokanoket, or to some place near that village. They were the first white men that ever came to the town. They begged Massasoit for corn for food and for planting. The chief received them like a father. He gave them the cereal which has become the strong food of the nation. Indian corn or maize ought to be made our national emblem; five grains of corn ought to be put on every plate on Thanksgiving day in memory of these scant rations that once kept our forefathers alive.

And now Sowams in Pokanoket becomes the place of a very thrilling scene, one worthy of poet's, painter's, and sculptor's art. In March, 1623, news came to Plymouth that Massasoit was sick and likely to die. Edward Winslow set out to visit him at Sowamset. He took with him, besides his Indian guide, a very mysterious person, "one Master John Hamden," who, to quote Winslow's own narrative, was "a gentleman of London who wintered with us and desired much to see the country." Was this the great John Hampden who afterward led the Commons of England against the crown; the hero and martyr of Chalgrove Field; the father of English constitutional liberty?

Winslow begins this story in a simple yet most picturesque and graphic manner:

"News came to Plymouth that Massassowat was like to die, and that at the same time there was a Dutch ship driven so high on the shore by stress of weather, right before his dwelling, that till the tides increased, she could not be got off. Now it being a commendable manner of the Indians, when any, especially of note, are dangerously sick, for all that profess

friendship to them, to visit them in their extremity; therefore, it was thought meet, that as we had ever professed friendship, so we should now maintain the same by observing this their laudable custom, and the rather because we desired to have some conference with the Dutch. To that end, myself having formerly been there and understanding in some measure the Dutch tongue, the Governor again laid this service upon myself, having one Master John Hamden for my consort and Hobbamock for our guide. So we set forward and lodged the first night at Namasket."

Winslow relates in the same simple manner an affecting incident that happened on the way, which shows how the Indians themselves regarded Massasoit. On this journey false news was brought to them that Massasoit was dead, and Winslow thus pictures the effect of the news on his Indian guide:

"In the way Hobbamock brake forth into these speeches: 'My loving sachim, my loving sachim! Many have I known, but never any like thee.' And turning him to me, said whilst I lived I should never see his like amongst the Indians; saying he was no liar, he was not bloody and cruel like other Indians; in anger and passion he was soon reclaimed; easy to be reconciled towards such as had offended him, and that he governed his men better with few strokes than others did with many; truly loving where he loved; yea, he feared we had not a faithful friend left among the Indians, showing how he oftentimes restrained their malice, etc., continuing a long speech with signs of unfeigned sorrow."

In Winslow's narrative we have the first written

description of ancient Sowams, now Warren. He says:

“At length we came to Mattapuyst and went to *sachemo comaco*, for so they call the sachem’s place, though they call an ordinary house *witeo*; but Corbatant, the sachem, was not at home, but at Pakanokit which was some five or six miles off. The squaw sachem, for so they called the sachem’s wife, gave us friendly entertainment. Here we inquired again concerning Massasoit; they thought him dead but knew no certainty. Whereupon I hired one to go with all expedition to Pakanokit that we might know the certainty thereof, and withal to acquaint Corbatant with our there being. About half an hour before sunsetting the messenger returned and told us that he was not yet dead, though there was no hope we should find him living. Upon this we were much revived and set forward with all speed, though it was late within night ere we got thither.

“When we came thither we found the house so full of men as we could scarce get in, though they used their best diligence to make way for us. There were they in the midst of their charms for him making such an awful noise as it distempered us that were well, and therefore unlike to ease him that was sick. About him were six or eight women, who chafed his arms, legs and thighs to keep heat in him. When they had made an end of their charming one told him that his friends, the English, were come to see him. Having understanding left, but his sight wholly gone, he asked who was come. They told him Winsnow, for they cannot pronounce the letter *l* but ordinarily *n* in the place thereof. He desired to speak with me.

When I came to him and they told him of it, he put forth his hand to me which I took. Then he said twice though very inwardly, 'Keen Winsnow?' which is to say, 'Art thou Winslow?' I answered, 'Ahhe,' that is, 'Yes.' Then he doubled these words: 'Matta neen wonckanet namen Winsnow!' That is to say, 'O Winslow, I shall never see thee again!'"

But the treatment of Massasoit as a patient by Winslow and Hamden resulted favorably, and the narrative gives us the first domestic scene of ancient Sowams of which we have any record:

"He requested me, that the day following, I would take my piece, and kill him some fowl, and make him some English pottage, such as he had eaten at Plymouth, which I promised. After, his stomach coming to him, I must needs make him some without fowl, before I went abroad. I caused a woman to bruise some corn and take the flour from it, and set over the broken corn, in a pipkin, for they have earthen pots of all sizes. When the day broke we went out, it being now March, to seek herbs but could not find any but strawberry leaves, of which I gathered a handful and put into the same, and because I had nothing to relish it, I went forth again and pulled up a sassafras root and sliced a piece thereof, and boiled it till it had a good relish, and then took it out again. The broth being boiled, I strained it through my handkerchief and gave him at least a pint, which he drank and liked it very well."

When Massasoit had partly recovered he desired that Mr. Winslow and Mr. Hamden should treat all the other sick people in Sowams in the same way, "which shows his great, sympathetic heart. We after-

wards revealed to them through the Indian guide a plot by other Indian tribes to destroy Weston's colony. He said, 'I was asked to unite in it, but I refused, and remained true to the treaty I had made.'

We may not be sure that John Hamden was the great English commoner, but we do know that the next white visitor to Sowams in Pokanoket is one of the most illustrious and influential men of all history. It was Roger Williams, fleeing from persecution, and he came in the dark winter of the year 1636. King Philip, as he came to be called, and his brother Wamsutta, must have been boys then. Massasoit was of middle age, "a portly man" we are told, "of grave countenance." Williams, alone in the world with a principle, found warmth in the forest king's heart and by a pagan's fire. Here he lived before his memorable journey to Providence. Roger Williams, the apostle of a principle which has entered into the constitution of every republic and almost every empire of the world, and that is destined to become universal, received his first welcome in Sowams, weeks before Providence said to him, "What Cheer!"

Said Senator Anthony, on the occasion of the placing of the Williams statue in the old Hall of Representatives in the Capitol at Washington :

"In all our history no name shines with a purer light than his whose memorial we have lately placed in the Capitol. In the history of all the world there is no more striking example of a man grasping a grand idea, at once, in its full proportions, in all its completeness, and carrying it out, unflinchingly, to its remotest legitimate results. Roger Williams did not merely lay the foundations of religious freedom, he constructed

the whole edifice, in all its impregnable strength and in all its imperishable beauty.”

Philip and Alexander, or Pometacom and Wam-sutta, the two sons of Massasoit, probably passed their early life in Sowams.

Times changed. King Philip saw his dominions disappearing. He was a great hunter, as his ancestors had been, and he now resolved to make a last strike for liberty; to go forth. It was his last hunt.

The white man should be his game, and the warrior Queen of Pocasset, his brother's widow, should go with him on this last wild hunt to exterminate the white settler from the oak forests of Pokanoket.

There was a long and tragic procession of events that led up to this desperate resolution. They sound like a drama. I must try to give you a view of them now.

As the traveler from Boston drops down Mount Hope Bay on one of the New York steamers from Fall River, he can hardly fail to be impressed with the picturesque landscapes on the east.* This region, overlooking the calm inland seas and lifting its dreamy fields to a level with the brow of Mount Hope on the west, was once known as Pocasset. A part of Pocasset now bears the name of Tiverton.

The old sachem of Pocasset had two daughters, named Wetamoo and Wootonekanuske. One of the rustic palaces of Massasoit doubtless stood directly across the bay from the airy brow of Pocasset; and as

* I follow in the remaining part of this narrative one of my own Zigzag Stories, which is used by permission of Estes & Lauriat.

Wamsutta and Pometacom (Philip) here spent a part of their youth, we may fancy that their light skiffs often shot across the bay to the dwelling of the beautiful princesses on the Pocasset shore. Alexander (Wamsutta) married Wetamoo, the more interesting of the two Indian maidens; and Philip (Pometacom) married Wootonekanuske, who was probably the younger. The wooing of the Pocasset princesses seems to have been the last romantic event in the history of the once powerful tribe of the Wampanoags.

Wetamoo became Queen of Pocasset. So far as we know, no historian has given a connected account of the life of this brave but unfortunate Indian queen. It is our purpose to write a brief sketch of her history, as far as the fragmentary data that remain concerning her will allow.

Massasoit regarded Alexander with deep affection, associated him in the government of the Wampanoags. Several of the old deeds of sale given by Massasoit in his last years bear the signature of Alexander.

On the death of Massasoit, Alexander was invested with the sachemship. He was a noble Indian, prudent and considerate, but lofty in spirit and dignified in demeanor. He was a true patriot; and he witnessed with alarm the expansion of the colonies, and repented the sale of the beautiful hunting grounds of his fathers, now passed from his control.

An altered spirit between the Indians and the colonists began to manifest itself soon after his succession. The English, conscious of their power, ceased to be scrupulous and forbearing in their dealings with the Indians, as they had been with the great Massasoit

in the infancy of the colonies. Unprincipled men found their way to the frontier settlements, who defrauded the native inhabitants and treated them arrogantly. The Indian sages saw that the glory of the old tribes was departing, and their counsels advised that the rising tide of emigration be stayed.

Alexander treated the English respectfully but coolly. He looked out on the dominion that had been his father's and regarded it as despoiled; he looked back on the long friendship of his father for the English, and saw in return that his people were despised. He felt the cloud of war darkening in the distance, and began to prepare for the storm. He numbered his warriors, determined to maintain those river-bright regions that God and Nature had intrusted to his keeping, and to defend, if need be, the liberties of his race. But we have no evidence that he ever intended to commence an aggressive war.

In 1661, not long after the death of Massasoit, rumors began to float through the air that the Pokanokets were preparing to make an attack upon the colonies. Governor Prince at Plymouth received a letter from a friend, who had been called by business to Narragansett, which stated that Alexander was meditating hostilities, and was endeavoring to persuade the powerful sachem of the Narragansetts to unite with him against the English.

Governor Prince acted promptly. He ordered Captain Thomas Willet, one of his assistants, to go at once to Mount Hope, the royal residence of Alexander, and to inform the sachem of the reports that had reached Plymouth, and request him to be present

at the next session of the Court at Plymouth, to vindicate himself from the charges that the colonists were making against him.

Alexander received Captain Willet cordially and with dignity. He listened to the complaint respectfully, and replied that the accusation was false; that the Narragansetts were his enemies, and that he had no wish to destroy the friendly relations that had so long existed between the Pokanoket chieftains and the rulers of Plymouth Colony. He agreed to the proposal made by Captain Willet, in behalf of the Governor, that he should attend in person the next Court at Plymouth, and there publicly declare his pacific intentions, and satisfy the government that the charges made against him were untrue.

Alexander may have been sincere when he made this denial of the accusation, and this promise to answer in person to the charge before the Court at Plymouth. If so, reflection altered his purpose, and led him to regard the request of the Governor's messenger as a covered insult, and compliance with such a request as a departure from the dignity of the sachemship. Was he, the chieftain of the Wampanoags—a tribe, time out of mind, glorious in peace and renowned in war—to be held accountable for the acts of his government to parties of adventurers whom the generosity of his father had allowed to make their homes within the limits of his dominions? His lofty spirit, animated with all the fiery impulses of youth, recoiled from such an exhibition and fall. He looked upon himself, not as a cringing roytelet to be ordered hither and thither by those whom his family had pitied and spared, but as the rightful and proper head

of all the river-cleft regions from the Narragansett to the sea.

The Court assembled, but Alexander did not appear. Instead of repairing to Plymouth, he went to his former enemy, the powerful sachem of the Narragansetts, doubtless to ask the assistance of his warriors for his own protection, and for the protection of the liberties of the Indian race.

Governor Prince, on hearing of Alexander's visit to the Narragansetts, called together his counselors. Having received their advice and approval, he ordered Major Winslow to take a band of picked men and to go to Mount Hope and surprise Alexander and bring him by force to Plymouth. Whether this act of hostility was wise and prudent, one can not tell, for the motives and purposes of Alexander must remain forever a mystery; but it proved the beginning of those dark scenes of New England history known as the Indian War, and in this case the English clearly were the aggressors.

Major Winslow immediately set out from Marshfield with a small body of men for the royal residence of the Pokanoket chieftain. He intended to strengthen this force from towns near the bay. He needed but few men; for the Indians, after nearly half a century of peace, had ceased to be suspicious, and the appearance of a company of English soldiers at any of their principal settlements would not have been regarded as a cause for alarm.

About midway between Plymouth and Bridgewater, Major Winslow and his men came to a smooth sheet of water, doubtless Moonponset Pond. Upon the bank was a rustic hunting lodge, where a band of

hunters were reposing and feasting after the toils of the chase. The major soon ascertained that this was one of the transient residences of Alexander, and that the unsuspecting sachem was then there, with Weta-moo, banqueting with his friends.

The colonists lurked about the hunting house awhile in silence. They discovered that the guns of the Indians had been left unguarded some distance from the entrance. Major Winslow ordered the seizure of these; then, with a few sturdy followers, marched directly into the cabin.

The Indians manifested no surprise on seeing the English, but greeted them cordially. Major Winslow requested Alexander to step out of the cabin with him for a brief conference. The sachem readily complied.

“I am ordered to arrest you for plotting against the English,” said the major. “You must return with me, to answer to the charge at Plymouth.”

The sachem seemed bewildered. He was slow to believe that such perfidy and insolence could be possible in the English. Major Winslow reaffirmed his order and his purpose.

Alexander's eyes flashed and his heart palpitated. A moment's reflection kindled his wild passions; and he stood before his accuser, like a roused satyr of the forest, towering with rage.

“This is an insult!” he said, on returning to his followers, “which my spirit can not bear, and to which I never will submit!”

The Indians caught the hidden meaning of the declaration, and made ready to defend their chieftain. Major Winslow, understanding the movement, leveled his pistol at the captive's breast and said :

“I am ordered to take you to Plymouth; and I shall do it, so help me God! If you comply peacefully, you shall be treated kindly; if you resist, I will shoot you upon the spot!”

The Indians outnumbered the English almost ten to one; but they were disarmed. Seeing the helplessness of their situation, they urged Alexander to submit peacefully, and promised him, with true Indian fidelity, that they would accompany him to Plymouth.

Among the number was Wetamoo, young and beautiful, dressed in the fantastic habit of an Indian queen, in a manner to shed the utmost luster upon her charms.

The colonists began to return with their unhappy captive. Alexander, accompanied by his beautiful queen, led the retinue of Indians, sullen and silent. It was the warm season, and the day was sultry and oppressive. The English offered the sachem a horse that he might ride; but he declined the offer with dignity, saying that he preferred to walk with his family and friends.

Arrived at Duxbury, the illustrious captive was taken to Major Winslow's residence, where he was hospitably entertained, but guarded with scrupulous care. Here a sense of his wrongs, and the discovery of the true situation and the perils of his people, bore down his high spirit and unsettled his mind. His mental anguish was so great as to destroy his health, and he fell a victim to a burning fever. His disease was rapid and his sufferings were fearful to behold. The pride of the Indians who had followed him now gave way, and they begged piteously to be allowed to take their beloved chieftain home. Even the frigid

spirit of the colonist was not proof against such heart-rending appeals ; and the Court at Plymouth, on receiving the report of the doctors concerning the actual state of the sufferer, consented to allow him to be taken back, on the condition of the Indians sending them his son as a hostage for his reappearance at that place on his recovery.

The Indians mounted the quivering sachem on a litter upon their shoulders and entered the cool trails of the forest. They traveled slowly, silent as Stoics, the settled purpose of revenge smoldering in their hearts. There was pity in each eye and the dark line of trouble on each brow, but they shed no tears. At length the forest solitude was broken by a calm river. They lowered their burden gently and tenderly, and placed it in one of the canoes lying upon the shore.

The light paddles lifted, and the boat dropped down the smooth river, now fanned by the airy boughs of marginal trees, now shining in the tempered light of the sun. Presently the paddles were suspended and fell tardily. A change had come over the chieftain ; he was dying.

They took him to the shore, and laid him down under a spreading tree. The braves gathered around him in silence and in awe. Wetamoo bent over him, her bosom heaving in sympathy, and her hands performing the last wifely offices. His breath became feeble and faltered. Presently the last tremor of agony was over, and the son of Massasoit lay before the statue-like assemblage of his friends and followers—dead.

“ They have poisoned him,” said Wetamoo. “ They shall bitterly repent the day.”

The death of Alexander (1661) was followed by years of peace, but from that hour the Wampanoags became secretly the foes of the colonies. And we may in justice remark that, with all the cunning imputed to the Indian character, the first wily stratagem of the New England Indian war was accomplished by the English, and that, with all the warlike propensities of which the Indians are accused by the early historians, the first act of open hostility is here directly traceable to the colonists' own doors.

Philip succeeded Alexander in the sachemship, beginning his reign at Mount Hope, the ancient governmental seat of the dominion.

Wetamoo retired to her home in Pocasset, firmly bent on avenging the death of her husband. But the reign of Philip began peacefully, and the injured queen, having but limited power, contented herself for a time with living pacifically in her own romantic dominions. She married, in due time, Peter Nanuit, an Indian of fine natural endowments, and a friend to the English (1661-1675).

Fourteen years of peace elapsed between the tragic death of Alexander and the beginning of active hostilities; but the period was overshadowed by the rising cloud of war, and the peace was one that brought no feeling of security to the colonists.

Philip prepared for the worst, quietly and methodically, during all these years; now laboring for the union of all the Indian tribes against their natural enemy, now foiling the colonists by a stroke of statesmanship that would have excited the admiration of a Metternich or a Talleyrand.

The killing of the executioners of Sassamon, a

treacherous Indian, by the English, brought on the long-expected hostilities. The first signal for active war made Philip ambitious to unite under his leadership all the neighboring tribes.

He went to the beautiful Queen of Pocasset, whose airy cabins looked down on his council fires from the evergreens over the bay, and appealed to her for the assistance of her warriors. Her husband, Nanuit, was on intimate terms with the English; she was at peace with the colonists and with the sachems and sagamores near and far, and she seemed to hesitate to expose her dominion to the perils of war.

“Remember,” said Philip, appealing to her pride, and opening an old wound by a well-timed allusion to an injury that she once had studied to avenge—“remember that the English at Plymouth poisoned your husband and my brother.”

The wild passions of Wetamoo were roused. She promised her warriors to Philip, and soon gave to the cause the romantic inspiration of a warrior queen. Her tribe numbered about three hundred braves. They were portly men, displaying upon their persons in war all the trappings of barbarian splendor, and they were proud of their queen.

Captain Church, the most conspicuous English officer in the first Indian war, visited Peter Nanuit at Pocasset just before the breaking out of hostilities. The Indian leader received him in a friendly manner, and he was the first to inform him of the certainty of war. He said that Philip had already begun to hold his dances—those fearful revels that, according to the Indian custom, preceded the shedding of blood.

The lurid war fires now in the still nights illumined

the wooded rocks of Mount Hope, and gleamed on the calm bosom of the bay. Dusky forms circled around the rose-colored flames, while light canoes danced on the palpitating waters. On the east lay Pocasset, her fair brow now crescented, now orbed, with the rising moon.

Captain Church held an interview with Wetamoo at Pocasset on the eve of the war. She lived on a hill a little north of what is known now as Howland's Ferry—a place familiar to those who visit the attractive resorts, near Newport, on the outlets of the charming inland seas. She appeared very melancholy on the occasion. She said that her people had then gone across the water to attend one of Philip's dances, though without her approval. She seemed unwilling to converse, but affirmed that she saw on every hand the ominous signs of war.

Philip soon sent terror through the colonies by the attack on Swansea, June 24, 1675, and on other exposed settlements. Wetamoo, true to her pledge, joined him at the head of her noble body of warriors. She followed him through the long trails of the forest, inspiring her men by her presence and example to do deeds of daring; she shared his privations and sufferings amid summer's heat and winter's snow.

Nanuit joined the English. Wetamoo disowned him when his alliance with the colonists became known, and soon after her divorcement married Quinnapin, a Narragansett sagamore, engaged in the coalition against the English. Quinnapin is described as a "young lusty sachem," well skilled in the arts of war (1676).

Soon after the first attacks made by the Indians,

Captain Church with a body of expert soldiers went to Pocasset to ravage the dominions of the warlike queen. She was at her own residence at this time, but, discovering the approach of the enemy, took refuge in an almost impenetrable cedar swamp, near at hand, and so eluded her pursuer. Arriving at the place where Fall River now stands, Captain Church heard of the attack on Dartmouth. He hastened to the distressed town, but too late to avert the work of destruction. The colonists, however, took one hundred and sixty prisoners, whom they induced to lay down their arms by promises of protection and kind treatment. These pledges were so well kept that the Plymouth authorities sold all the captives into slavery, and received from the sale a comfortable sum to aid them in prosecuting the war.

Wetamoo joined Philip after the burning of Dartmouth, uniting her forces with his, probably in a thick forest on the river some miles below the old town of Taunton.* It was now midsummer in the dismal year 1675. The name of Philip had become a word to make the colonists' hearts sink with terror in the long line of frontier towns. There was something so dark and fearful, so startling to the imagination, in the Indian mode of warfare—in the war whoop, in the taking of human life by the hatchet and the scalping knife, in the indiscriminate slaughter of the young, the helpless, and the old, in the leveling of homes, in the burning of towns—that the solitary settler seemed to see wild visions by day and by night,

* According to one authority, Wetamoo had about five hundred warriors.

and to start back from the reflection of his own fancies as from lurking foes. Cotton Mather tells us, with all the gravity of a historian, that the report of a cannon and of small guns, the hissing bullets, and the rolling of drums had been heard in the air "in a clear, still, sunshiny morning"; and other early writers speak of an Indian bow that appeared on the face of the sky, and of an eclipse in which the outline of an Indian scalp was seen imprinted on the disk of the moon.

When the inhabitants of Taunton learned that Philip and Wetamoo with their united forces were concealed in one of the great Pocasset swamps on the river, below the town, they abandoned their homes, and gathered together for defense in eight garrison houses. On the 18th of July a body of soldiers from Plymouth and Taunton appeared before the Indian encampment. They found about one hundred wigwams fantastically constructed of green bark, but discovered but few warriors. They cautiously penetrated a miry and tangled thicket, whose dense foliage bending from tree and shrub and interlacing vines obstructed the view. Philip and his warriors retreated silently and unseen, a little way before them, as they advanced; an expert now and then exhibiting himself to lure the colonists on. The latter, becoming excited by this singular warfare, as the hunter becomes animated when breaking through the thicket in the chase, quite lost their wonted prudence and self-possession. Their progress was suddenly arrested by a volley of bullets poured upon them through the covert of a dark, matted growth of underbrush, from an invisible foe. Fifteen of the

English fell dead on the spot. The rest, seeing the peril of their situation, fled precipitately, "finding it ill," says an old historian (Hubbard), "fighting a wild beast in his own den."

The English now surrounded the swamp, a gloomy tract of country seven miles in circuit, in the hope of starving the Indians and capturing Philip and the terrible Pocasset queen. Here they held a blockade thirteen days, when they found that Philip had floated his warriors on rafts, one moonless night, past the drowsy sentinels, and himself with Wetamoo had gone far away into the wilderness in the heart of Massachusetts.

Philip ravaged the western frontier of Massachusetts during the autumn, but the old chronicles afford but casual glimpses of the interesting Wetamoo. During the ensuing winter the colonial army made the famous attack on the winter quarters of the Indians at South Kingston, R. I., capturing the fort, and imitating the example of the "barbarians" and "pagans," by killing women and children without mercy, and applying the torch to the dwellings. "They were in much doubt," says the manuscript of the Rev. W. Ruggles, "and they afterwards made it a subject of inquiry, whether burning their enemies alive could be consistent with humanity and the benevolent principles of the gospel." But they were fighting for their lives, and for the lives of their families, with a terrible foe, and they did not stop to decide this nice moral question until well after the close of the war.

We here lose sight of Wetamoo for a time. We only know that she shared the fortunes of Philip, and that the work of destruction went on. February 10,

1676, a party of Indians attacked and burned the town of Lancaster, Mass. They took a number of prisoners; among these, Mary Rowlandson, the wife of the Rev. Joseph Rowlandson, clergyman at that place. The English had made slaves of the captive Indians; and to remove them from scenes which ever would have appealed to their patriotism and pride, they had sold many, including both women and children, into a servitude more cruel than death—that of the West Indian plantation. As the English had imitated the “barbarians” in killing women and children, so the Indians sought to follow the example of their enlightened combatants in the treatment of captives, and accordingly copied the beauties of civilization by selling them into bondage. Mrs. Rowlandson was sold to the lusty young sagamore Quinnapin, who bought her for a dressing maid to Queen Wetamoo (February, 1676).

Mrs. Rowlandson published a narrative of her captivity, which, like many old accounts of the kind, is made up largely of perverted passages of Scripture to show the barbarities of the “pagans,” without, however, very frequent allusions to the Sermon on the Mount, which seems to have fallen into disuse during the war. She complains bitterly, deeming it an act of extreme barbarity that her little daughter Mary was sold by a *praying* Indian *for a gun*, but makes no allusion to the source of such mischief; nor does she seem to have comprehended at all how nearly equally balanced in this war was “man’s inhumanity to man.”

Mrs. Rowlandson gives us the following description of her new mistress, the Pocasset queen: “A severe and proud dame she was; bestowing every day, in

dressing herself, near as much time as any of the gentry of the land; powdering her hair and painting her face, going with her necklaces, with jewels in her ears, and bracelets upon her hand. When she had dressed herself, her work was to make girdles of wampum and beads."

The following anecdote, which we copy for the sake of completeness, leaves no pleasant impression of the disposition either of the Indian queen or of her maid:

"As I was sitting once in the wigwam, Philip's maid came with the child in her arms (the son of Philip, made a prisoner July 31, 1676, sold into Spanish slavery when a child by the colonists), and asked me to give her a piece of my apron to make him a garment. I told her I would not. Then my mistress told me to give it, but I said no. The maid told me if I would not give her a piece she would tear a piece off it. I told her I would tear her coat then. With that my mistress rises up, and takes up a stick big enough to have killed me, and struck at me with it; but I stepped out, and she struck the stick into the mat of the wigwam. But while she was pulling it out, I went to the maid and gave her my apron, and so the storm passed over."

Once, when Mrs. Rowlandson had received for some work which she had done for some Indians a quart of peas and a sirloin of bear's meat (both Philip and the Indians *paid* Mrs. Rowlandson for whatever work she found time to do, aside from her special duties), she prepared a nice dinner, and asked her master and mistress, Quinnapin and Wetamoo, to dine with her, as Philip had once asked her (the queen's

maid) to sit at a nice table with him. The queen and sagamore came, seemingly much pleased. Mrs. Rowlandson set before them the repast in a single bowl. Now, Wetamoo was a queen and Quinnapin was a sort of prince, inferior in rank, and merely the queen's husband. The former was not used to this style of service, in which she and her husband were treated as equals; and she left the table with injured pride, and refused to eat a morsel.

Quinnapin was the sagamore who brought the message to Mrs. Rowlandson that she might go to the foot of Wachusett Mountain, where arrangements were making for her ransom.

Mrs. Rowlandson gives an interesting account of an Indian dance that took place soon after their successes at Sudbury and other exposed places. The cotillon was performed by eight persons in the presence of the braves and a great concourse of people. Quinnapin and Wetamoo were among the gayest and the most elegantly dressed of the dancers. Quinnapin was decked in a white linen robe, bordered with lace and ornamented with silver. He wore on his head a turban composed of girdles of wampum, and on his feet white stockings with pieces of silver tinkling from the ties. A magnificent girdle of wampum passed over his shoulders and clasped his waist.

Wetamoo was arrayed as fantastically, in an ornamented blanket, with bracelets on her arms, jewels in her ears, and many necklaces falling from her shoulders. Her face was painted red, and her hair powdered white. She wore red stockings and white shoes. The merry party danced to the music of a brass kettle.

All this seems shocking in barbarians; but we

have read of other dances at very serious times—one at Brussels when Europe had reached the height of military splendor, and others in neither lands nor in periods remote.

Philip did not join in the dance, but stood aside, looking on, careworn and thoughtful. When the revel was done, he sent for Mrs. Rowlandson, and said to her kindly: "Would you like to hear good news? I have something good to tell you. You are to be released and to go home to-morrow."

We again lose sight of Wetamoo. Philip carried destruction into the very heart of the colonies, and was for a time successful. Then the fortunes of war varied, then turned. His powerful ally, Nanuntenoo, the Narragansett (the friend of Roger Williams), was captured by the English and executed, dying, as he said he wished to die, "before he had done anything unworthy of his character." Philip attempted, but failed, to raise the Mohawks against the English. Awashonks, another interesting Indian queen, detached the Seconets from his cause, and united her warriors with his enemies. It is said that after the defection of Seconets he was never seen to smile. His own warriors deserted him, and the colonial army everywhere pursued him and occupied his dominions. Wetamoo remained true to him in all the vicissitudes of war.

In July, 1676, Philip and Wetamoo, and the remnant of their warriors, attempted to return to their old homes at Mount Hope and Pocasset. They were attacked on the 1st of August by Captain Church near Bridgewater, and totally defeated, losing one hundred and thirty of their men. Among the prisoners taken by the English in this decisive battle were Philip's wife,

Wootonekanuske (Wetamoo's sister) and his son. Wootonekanuske seems to have been a quiet woman, and to have held to the last the affection of her chief. When Philip knew of her capture, he said : " My heart breaks ; now I am ready to die."

Philip and Wetamoo were now fugitives. In the listless August days they pursued their way through the shadowy swamps, toward those river-cleft regions where reposed the bones of their fathers, now no longer their own. Wetamoo longed to see the shores of Pocasset once more before she died ; and she traveled through tangled forests and forded hidden streams in the hope of resting her eyes once more on the scenes of her happy maidenhood. She reached Swansea on the 5th of August, or about that date, and hastened to a wooded peninsula overlooking the bay, now known as Gardiner's Neck. Herē she beheld Pokanoket and the green declivities of Pocasset, glimmering in the sunset, for the last time. She had left Pocasset with three hundred warriors ; she returned in sight of its shores with twenty-six followers.

On August 6th an Indian who had deserted Philip sought the protection of the colonists at Taunton, and, to secure terms for himself, offered to conduct the English to the place where Wetamoo was resting after her wearisome marches, with a few faithful warriors. The English, following this guide, came upon the encampment and made prisoners of the warriors. The heroic queen, seeing her helpless situation, determined not to be taken, but to die free. She seized a piece of wood, or raft, and threw herself into the river. The poor creature struggled awhile to reach the opposite shore ; but her strength was already spent by reason

of fatigue and scanty food, her arms failed her, and she sank to rise no more.

The captive warriors were taken to Taunton.

A short time after this event a party of English discovered on the Mattapoissett shore the dead body of an Indian woman, remarkable for its symmetry and beauty. They cut off the head, and took it to Taunton to exhibit it on a pole in their streets, but without knowing, according to Cotton Mather, whose head it was. When the captives saw it, "they made," to use the choice and sympathetic expressions of the enlightened old chronicler, "a most horrid and diabolical lamentation, and fell into such hideous howlings as can scarce be imitated, crying out that it was their queen's head" (1676).

The destruction of Philip soon followed.

It was the night of August 11, 1676. Philip stood on the summit of Mount Hope in the evening overlooking the dusky landscape, in order to catch the first indication in the far, far distance of the approach of his pursuers. The great outlets to the sea stretched southward like bars of living light, while below rolled the bay like a sheet of silver, mirroring the moon.

What reflections must have crowded upon him in this last solitary vigil! Just below him were the graves of his fathers, and the bones of the sachems and warriors of old. Over the bay lay Pocasset, the scene of his early wooing. On the west glimmered Sowams, the royal residence of his father. The Kickmuit went shimmering to the north; but the lovely old Indian town on its banks was gone, forever gone. The low winds breathed through the cedars below, and the

brightening moon scattered over them her night beams.

The sachems were gone, all gone. His warriors had perished, one by one; fallen like the leaves of autumn, till the tree was bare. His wife and child were no longer his own. The faithful Wetamoo had died, hunted like a beast, in sight of her own sun-bright rivers, dreamy hills, and shady forest retreats. He saw the moon sinking low on the tide: he never saw the sight again.

The story of the tragic death of Philip is too well known to need repeating here. He perished the next morning, when the autumn sun was just trembling on the verge of the sky, and the night dews lay thick on the woodlands and the meadows.

We will say, however, in order to aid the tourist who may visit Mount Hope, that the great sachem was surprised and killed at a little knoll, at the foot of the eminence, on the southwest side. The last scene that Philip beheld was doubtless Mount Hope Bay and the broad bosom of the Narragansett, lighting up in the morning sun.

So ended King Philip's last hunt.

THE END.

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