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In

In King Philip's War

A story of two boys
captured by the great sachem

by
Frederick A. Ober

with illustrations

by
J. Watson Davis

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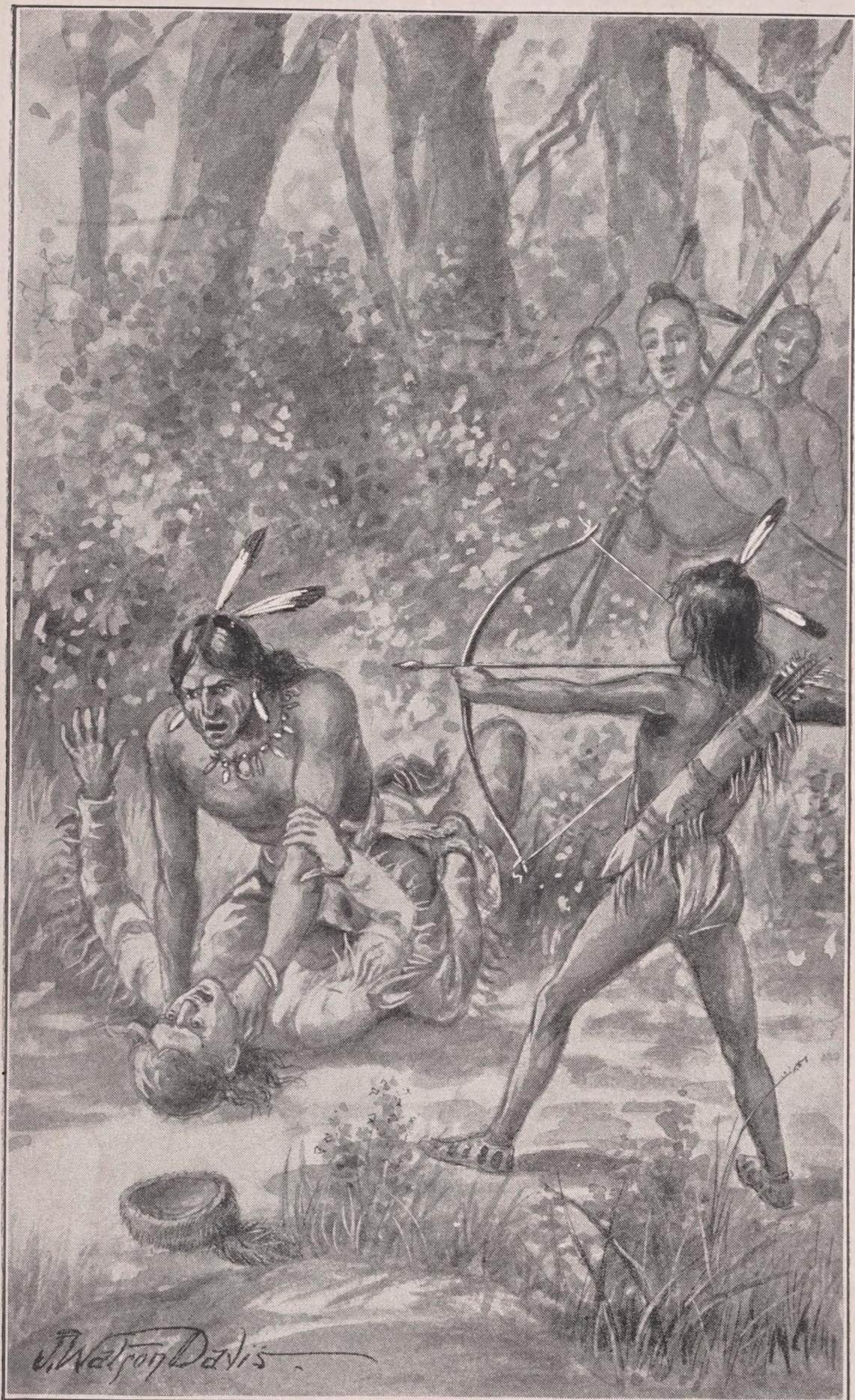
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The boy, fitting an arrow to the bow-string, let it fly right into the left eye of the warrior.

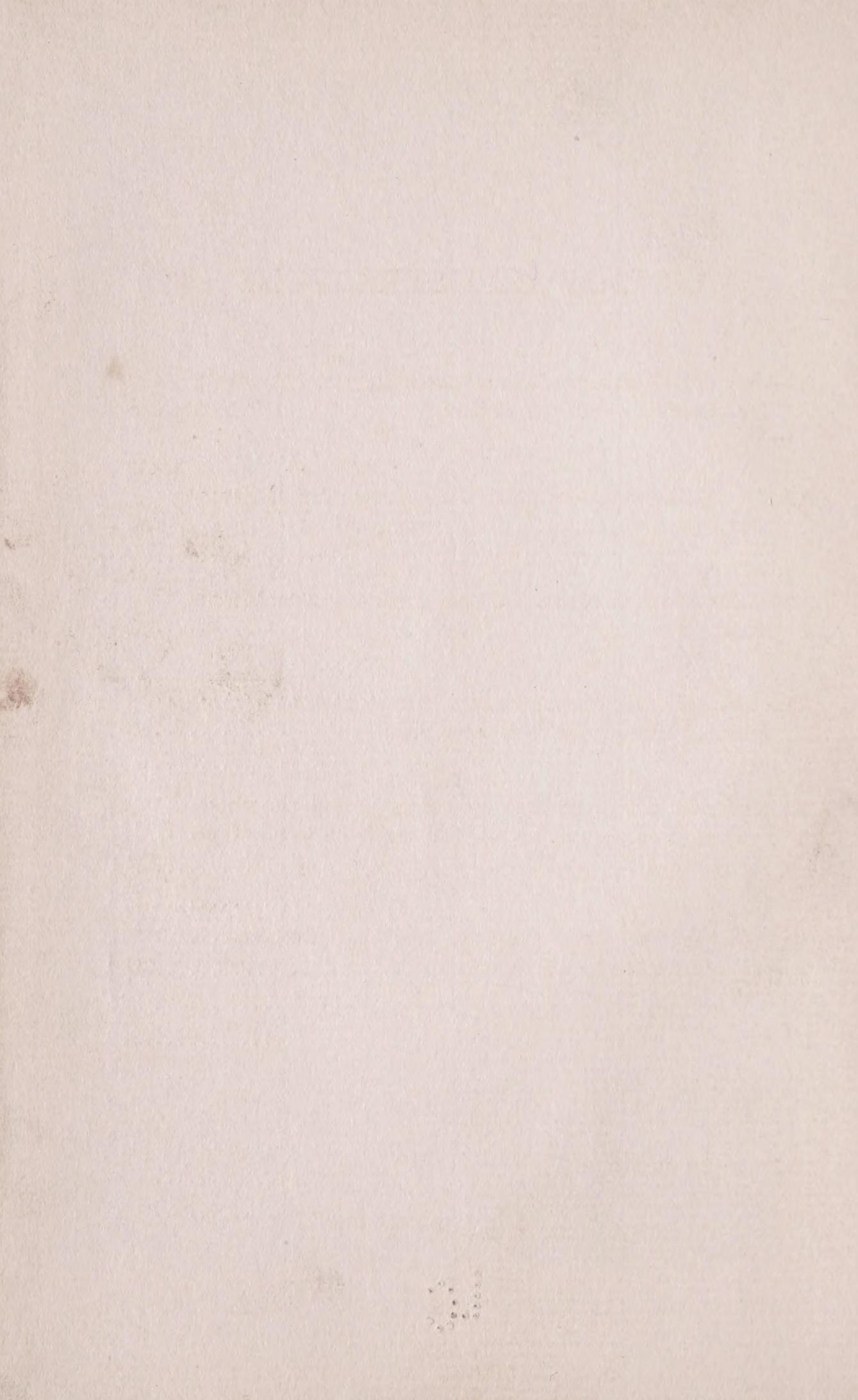
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—In *King Philip's War.*

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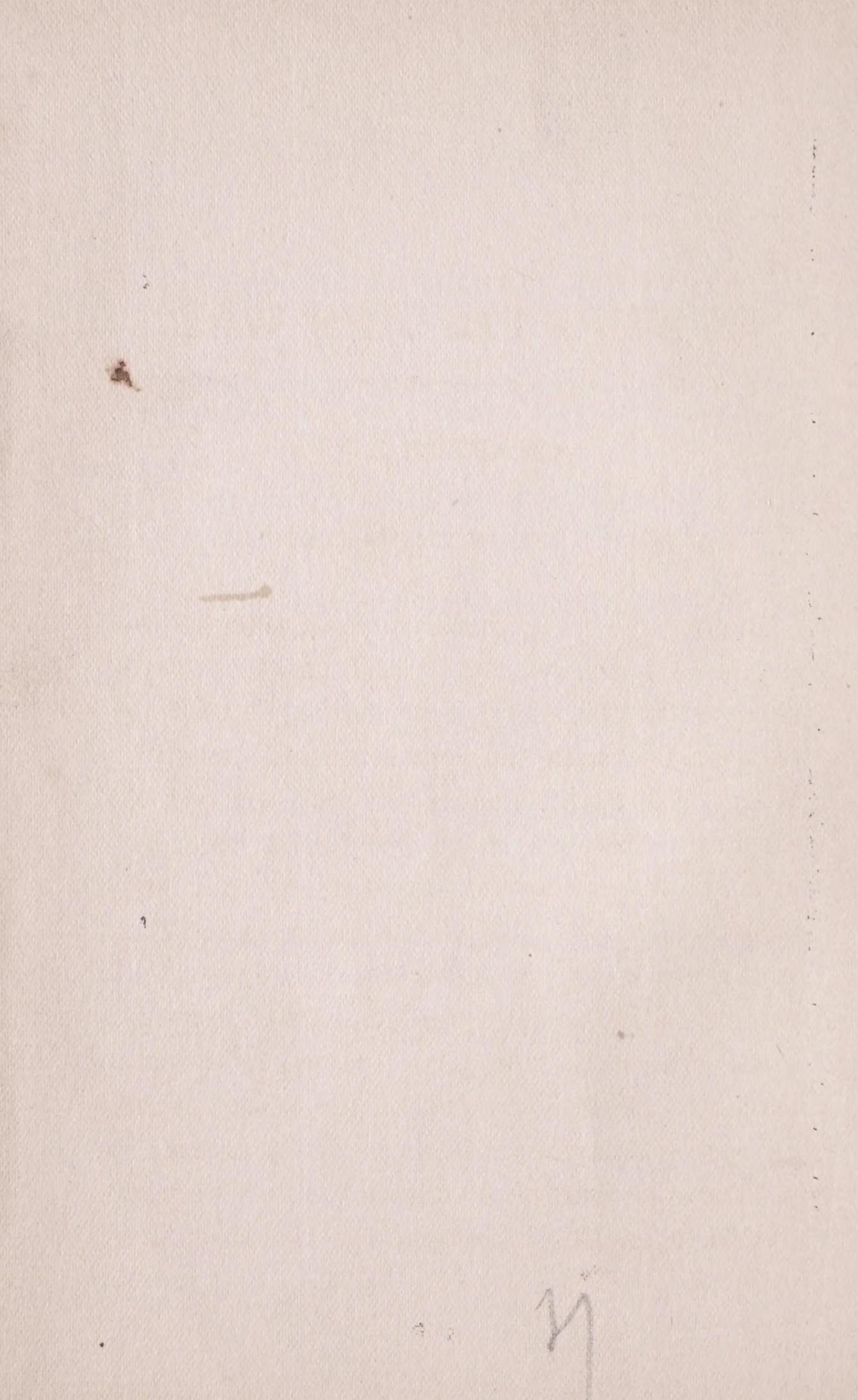
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In King Philip's War.



IN KING PHILIP'S WAR.

CHAPTER I.

A WOLF HUNT IN THE WILDERNESS.

BRIGHT and early, that beautiful Spring morning in 1675, the two boys whose adventures are narrated in this story, were out and attending to their flocks, in the corral beneath the cliff. Weary and spent, from their long journey of the day before, the sheep and lambs were not prone to wander far that morning, nor did they recover themselves till late that afternoon. The young shepherds were at first quite anxious, expecting to find some of the lambs dead from exhaustion; but to their great joy, none were permanently disabled, and before the second night all were frisking about in a very lively manner.

There was much to do during the first week in the forest-encircled pasture, for the sheepfold

had to be repaired in many places, water conducted to it by means of wooden conduits (which had become choked and somewhat decayed during the Winter) and the yet infrequent grassy spots sought out. As the two boys were their own cooks, housekeepers, and factotums in general, as well as shepherds, they had little leisure during the month of April; but as May opened, and especially as it advanced, and the ever-lengthening days gave them more and more of daylight, they had many hours for rest, recreation and study.

Their daily routine was somewhat as follows: At daybreak, both were up and out, and while one cooked their breakfast and set forth their rude fare, (consisting mainly of corn-meal pudding hastily prepared, with just a dash of molasses on it, to take out the "corn-mealy" taste, and a drink of water from the spring) the other let the sheep out of the fold in which they had been imprisoned over-night, and started them to feeding.

After breakfast, one of them brought out the much-worn and fragmentary Bible (given them by their mother) from which he read a portion of Scripture, and then followed a brief and simple prayer to the Author of all good. Thus

beginning the day in a spirit of devotion, with their hearts attuned to the songs of Nature all around them, there was little danger that they would find their isolated existence either dull or solitary. In fact, it grew so attractive, and they found so much wherewith to employ their time, that both looked forward with anticipatory regret to the season's ending; and but for their longing for home and the home-folks, might have resolved to pass the coming Winter on the hill-top.

Their flock of dependents, also, now increased to more than two hundred in number, grew into their affections steadily, until at last there was scarcely a lamb or sheep in the fold that was not known to them at sight, and loved by both of them. The shepherd's life has always been an attractive theme for poet and historian, from the earliest times, and if we look back over the pages of history we shall find that the world has been deeply indebted to those who led a pastoral life, more than to any other class, perhaps. Indeed, were not the first astronomers the shepherds of Chaldea, who studied the stars as they lay out amid their flocks at night?

Like those shepherds of old, our two friends

devoted their leisure to study and discussion of the natural objects within their ken. They were, possibly, the very first of our American "Nature-lovers," of whom so much has been said and written, in our latter days; but as they did not put on record what they observed, they obtained no credit for the things they noted in their solitary life.

These two young heroes of our adventure-tale, Winthrop and Wilfred Wilkins, were boys of studious habit, but had received little schooling, save what their parents had taught them at home, in the long evenings of Winter. Still, it is not necessary to attend college, or even common schools, if one have the desire to learn, for ways will always open for the studious mind to refresh itself at the founts of learning. Besides their Bible, the boys had brought with them an old-fashioned, well-worn "horn-book," which had passed down from one generation to another, from days beyond their parents' recollection, and which now served to instruct and please them in their lonely eyrie.

This old "horn-book" was a very thin slab of wood, above five inches long and two or three in width, upon which a sheet of paper was pasted

containing in clear print of "black-letter" English, the Lord's Prayer, the alphabet, and short sentences. The whole was covered with a thin, transparent sheet of yellowish horn; hence the name by which this simple aid to study was called. They also had a Primer—a very small pamphlet—which had somehow strayed over from England to America with one of the colonists; but their chief treasure was an old and well-thumbed "Cocker's Arithmetic"; a most primitive text-book, indeed, but in their eyes one of the literary wonders of the world of books.

The Bible, Shakespeare and Milton (it has been said by somebody) have sufficed as mental food for many minds; but our young friends had only the first-named, and eagerly absorbed its great and living truths. Every scrap of paper they could find at home, they had brought with them to the hill-top; and the old gray gander that lorded it over the more humble members of the farmyard had been deprived of nearly all his valued wing-feathers, in their quest of quills for pens with which to write.

They had of course, no real lead-pencils; but as substitutes used chunks of lead, which made fairly black marks on white paper. They got

their ink by steeping the bark of the swamp maple in water, boiling the liquid till quite thick and diluting with copperas. After their ink gave out they used the juices of various plants.

These trivial things are mentioned in advance of their adventures, in order that the boys and girls of to-day may realize how little is really needed to supply the wants of young people who are desirous of progressing with their studies, and to point the contrast between old-time methods and those more modern.

“Where there’s a will there’s a way,” was as true then as it is now. These boys had the will, a desire to learn, and a determination to succeed; and though they were confronted with obstacles which might have dismayed boys, and even men, of weaker mold, these things only whetted their ambition and spurred them on to further effort.

At the outset, their life in the sheep-pasture was quite uneventful; but one morning, suddenly, they were made aware of a menace to their flock, possibly to themselves, which they must meet and avert.

Winthrop was housekeeper, that morning; Wilfred had gone down to the sheepfold, to at-

tend the flock. He had been gone hardly a quarter-hour when his brother heard a cry, and looking out from the doorway of their cabin saw him scrambling up the hill carrying in his arms the mangled remains of a wee lamb.

“Look, Wint., look at this poor creature. And it is not the only one, either. There are four more killed, two sheep and two lambs, besides old Bob (the ram) badly wounded.”

“What, five, in one night?” exclaimed Winthrop. It must have been——”

“*Wolves*, of course,” interrupted Wilfred, taking the words from his mouth. “Not a wolf, mind you, but *wolves*,—a whole band of them, too.”

“And we didn’t hear a sound, either,” said Winthrop, after a long, low whistle of surprise.

“Not near the fold,” replied Wilfred; “but, don’t you recall their howling off in the forest?”

“Yes, but we’ve heard that every night, and so didn’t notice it.”

“Just so,” rejoined Winthrop. “They are sly old rascals, those wolves, and kept up that howling for the very purpose of getting us used to it, until we became so well acquainted that we wouldn’t pay any attention to it,—then they

sneaked silently down to the fold and did the business!"

"Wint., we should have kept watch; you know, father said——"

"Oh yes, I know what father said—that we ought to take turns sleeping with the sheep; but not unless we were sure there were wolves about."

"Well, we're pretty sure now, aren't we, brother?"

"Dear me, yes. And there's old Bess, our pet ewe, lying down there, dead as Julius Cæsar; not to speak of Milly, and Jane, and the two wee things we have hardly got acquainted with, Wint. I declare, I feel like crying. It makes me mad, too, to think it might have been prevented. But we'll get even with the sneaks, see if we don't!"

"That we will," added Winthrop, who still stood in the doorway, with the hasty-pudding kettle in his hand, which he was scouring at the time. "And we ought to have thought of it before, instead of 'locking the door now the horse is stolen,' as the saying is."

"Yes, that's right; but who'd have thought they'd have sneaked up onto us without a note of warning? I rather expected to find a lamb or

two killed, or maimed, off in the pasture, when we have been away from them a while; but not this, not this!”

“No use to cry over what we can't help, Wil. The thing now is, not only to prevent another happening like this, but to kill the scoundrels—if we can!”

“That's it—if we can,” repeated Wilfred gloomily, caressing the dead lamb, still across his arms. “We'll try, anyway, Wint. Where are those fish-hooks father brought along? I meant to have looked them over, before this. We must get them ready against to-night.”

“Hanging up over there in the corner,” answered Winthrop, going to the place indicated and taking down a bunch of big hooks, such as were used for catching halibut, and casting them on the puncheon table. Then he hunted up some lengths of chain, fragments of a “trace” or “tug,” which had done duty in pulling out many an old stump on the farm.

“There they are, Will., all ready to be fixed up and dipped. But come in and get breakfast first. There's plenty of time to make the trap and load the guns. Of course, they'll come back to-night, and we must keep watch, so we'd better

get all the rest, and perhaps sleep, that we can, for it may be an all-night job, brother."

"You're right, Wint.; but really, I don't feel like eating; this thing's taken my appetite away."

"Mine, too. Still, we must be sensible, you know. We shall need not only all our wits about us, Wil., but perhaps all our strength—if it comes to close quarters with the wolves."

"Right again, Wint. We'd be fools, sure enough, to let sentiment get the best of us, at a time like this. Sentiment for babies, say I. But, 'tis hard, isn't it, to see those poor things in this condition, ones we've petted, too, and loved as much as a human can a dumb critter that's dependent on him for very life."

"Well," exclaimed Winthrop, wiping the tears from his eyes, "seems t'me that's kind of sentimental, ain't it? But you can't help it, I know. We did love that mite of a critter, that seemed so glad to see us every morning, and Old Bess in p'ticular, who'd rub her nose 'gainst our legs and try to lick our hands when we fed her."

"She'll never do it again," said Wilfred ruefully; "and, what goes ag'nst my grain is, we've got to cut her up, to get the tallow for the trap, for she's the fattest of the bunch."

“Then the sooner we get at it the sooner it’ll be done. If it must be, it must, and it can’t be no muster,’ as old Sam says.”

“Yes, brother. Go ahead, and I’ll follow after. Set an example by eating hearty, and I’ll do the same.”

“Anybody’d think I was older’n you,” complained Winthrop, half querulously, “for you’re always asking me to take the lead. You know I’ve no appetite, and ’specially as I’m cook, this morning.”

“Take it as a compliment, then, Winty boy, that I let you lead, instead of making you follow. You ought to be proud of it. But, soon’s breakfast’s over we’ve got to take care of the killed and wounded, you know, and after that we’ll fix the fish-hooks.”

“And I hope they’ll fix the varmints, Wil.; or some of ’em, anyway. But, don’t you think it would be a good idee to call the neighbors together for a big drive? We might catch a few with the hooks; but if we could muster up a score of men and boys we might drive ten times as many into a corner and get that number of scalps; not to mention the hides, which are ready money, you know, over’n Taunton.

"That *is* a good idee," assented Wilfred. "But, who's going to drum up the neighbors? One of us will have to stay here, and both of us ought to. Still, if it's done, no time should be lost. What say to drawing lots,—longest straw stays, shortest goes?"

"It's all the same to me. Neither job 'll be very attractive, I guess. The one that goes hunting for the men will have two days' hard tramping, and the one 't stays at home may have a scrimmage with the varmints."

"Then I'll stay right here," exclaimed Wilfred emphatically. "There's no doubt in my mind that we'll catch at least one wolf to-night, and he may be ugly. As I'm the strongest, of course it's my duty to stay!"

"No, Wil., it's mine. It isn't likely to be a question of strength, but of shooting; and I can shoot just as well as you can."

"Maybe you can; but still, it *is*—or may be—a question of strength, for you know we haven't any powder and ball to waste, and if we should get an old wolf in the trap it would be to our advantage to use cold steel, rather than cold lead."

"Then I'll 'rastle with you to see who's strongest. Come now."

“No, no,” answered Wilfred, laughingly, “You ought to know I can throw you, Wint. But I don’t want to try you, even for fun. It’s unseemly for brothers to engage like that.”

“I’ve a good mind to make you try it, all the same,” muttered the younger brother. “I ain’t afraid of you, anyway.”

“Now, look here, Wint. Wilkins. Don’t be a fool! I’m older ’n you, and for that reason father said you’d got to mind me. I’m stronger ’n you, too; but I won’t put it to any test, because I don’t believe in it. And, I trust the time’ll never come when we have to find out whose the stronger man of us two. The best thing we can do is to join our strength against the common enemy, let it be a wolf or an Injun;—but to try against each other—never, never!”

“Wil. you’re right,” answered the younger boy with a smile, “and I *am* a fool, even to think of such a thing. But, let’s compromise on this business: “We’ll both stay here to-night, and see what happens; then, if we both think best, I’ll go off neighbor-hunting to-morrow.”

“Agreed,” replied the elder youth. “Now put these things out of the way and help me get the jackets off the critters, before they are too stiff

to handle. I've got to flake off poor old Bess's tallow and melt it, you know, then we'll dip the hooks ans set the trap."

Between watching the sheep in the pasture, stripping the pelts off the dead animals, and preparing the meat and tallow for bait, the boys were busily engaged all day, and tired out at its ending. In the late afternoon they tied together several bunches of hooks, four in each bunch, back to back, and dipped them in melted tallow, by repeated immersions finally securing attractive baits in the shape of big lumps of fat. The night was cool, fortunately, else the tallow might have run, or softened, so that the hooks inside would show. As it was, each lump preserved its pear-shaped figure, and when thrown down on the ground near the sheepfold appeared as if it had dropped there by chance. To each bunch of hooks was attached a bit of chain, this again fastened to a line tied to a small log of wood. This attachment would prevent any wolf that might swallow the bait from wandering far, acting as a clog on its movements, without forcing it to the point of disgorging, or breaking away entirely.

Having made the corral as nearly impregnable as possible, and placed four innocent-looking

lumps of tallow with their concealed hooks in spots around the walls, the boys retired early to their bunks, after loading their "firelocks," which they set up ready at hand in case they were needed.

The first part of the night passed peacefully, broken only by the howls of wolves at a distance, and daybreak could not have been far away when Wilfred, who had slept "with one eye open" (as the saying is) heard a terrible commotion down in the sheepfold. He was not compelled to awaken his brother, for the latter was out of his bunk before he had reached the door. Each grasped his firelock, lighting a slow-match with which to ignite the powder in the pan when necessary to discharge it, and then, half dressed, but wholly awake, the two sallied out.

It may not always be "darkest just before the dawn"; but on this particular morning the gloom was intense, owing perhaps to a fog that rose from the lowlands. Anyway, the boys groped their way over a path that was perfectly familiar by night or by day, and soon reached the limits of the fold, within which the sheep were bleating loudly, and driving about as though chased by demons.

For the moment, perhaps, the boys forgot their baited wolf-hooks, which had been placed outside the walls, but they were suddenly reminded that one of their traps had been successful in fastening a victim, by a big dark body which rose in front of the foremost youth like a specter and lunged at his throat.

It was Wilfred's throat that came near being torn, by a double row of ivory-white fangs that flashed out of the darkness, and so close a "call" was it that he felt the hot breath of the wolf in his face. He owed his life to the fact that the log to which the chain and line were attached caught behind a rock at the moment, and before the maddened wolf could gather itself again from the recoil, Winthrop was upon the beast, with the muzzle of his firelock pressed against its breast.

He could not see the animal distinctly, but the fire-red eyes, gleaming like two coals in a cavern, made good points for guessing at a vital spot, as he applied the match. Then he held steadily against the breast of the beast, until its snarlings were drowned in the report of the piece. There was brief silence then, broken only by confused sounds within the fold, as the animals continued to drive blindly about; though no longer bleating so piteously as before. They were evidently

in great terror of something in their midst; but it was probable that the intruder had taken the alarm and was now seeking to escape, rather than to slaughter any more of the sheep and lambs.

As Winthrop had darted in front of his brother, in his eagerness to get a shot at the wolf, the latter had shouted: "Look out! I hear another one ahead!" And after the report had ceased echoing among the cliffs, they both heard a rustling sound, as if the log and chain were being dragged over the ground.

"Give me your musket, Wil., and I'll follow that one—and shoot it, too," exclaimed Winthrop as he bent over the wolf he had slain.

"No, no, brother," replied Wilfred hastily. "You've done your share. Not only shot the wolf, but saved my life. At any rate, I'd have had a hole torn in my leg, if you hadn't shot as you did. It was a gallant deed, Wint.; but I don't want you to have all the glory, nor run all the risks, either, my boy. The critter that's running away is our game, sooner or later, and we don't gain anything chasing him in the dark; so load up while I take a peep into the pen. I wish it was a little lighter, though.

“Ha! Now I see the beast. Oh, Wint., it’s—
Sure as I’m alive, it’s a bear! Yes sir, and a wal-
lopper, too. My goodness gracious, Wint., he
looks as big as a house!”

CHAPTER II.

WOLVES, BEARS AND SAVAGES.

DAYBREAK was slow in coming, but soon there was light enough to see what was transpiring within the corral, and the first glimmer revealed the animal which Wilfred had hastily pronounced a bear. He had seen merely a huge bulk, moving stealthily around the wall, as if seeking a place for egress, and knowing that there was no other animal so large, and native to those wilds, at once came to a correct conclusion as to its identity.

He earnestly hoped he might be mistaken; but the increasing daylight placed the matter beyond a doubt. There he was, a great hulking fellow, prowling about with his big head wagging from side to side, and growling over the predicament in which he found himself. He had killed a sheep or two, and having had no time to devour

his prey, was doubtless in quite a surly mood at the interruption.

“Savage as a meat-axe!” whispered Winthrop to his brother, as they peered through chinks between the rocks and regarded the captive wonderingly.

“Methinks he is,” answered Wilfred; “but, look here, Wint., you haven’t re-charged your firelock. Get at it right away, for our next move is to give that big fellow a taste of lead. It won’t be long before he gets out, for he found it easy enough to get in; and the only reason he doesn’t do so, is that he can’t carry away the sheep he has killed. He’s hungry as blazes, and I guess he wouldn’t mind making a meal of us two, if he got the chance.”

Winthrop loaded the musket as quickly as he could, but with all his haste the time seemed to drag fearfully, to both the boys. Meantime, Wilfred kept the beast covered with his own musket, intending to shoot as soon as his brother was ready, but not an instant before.

At last, after what seemed an age of waiting, Winthrop exclaimed, “All ready, Wil. Let me blow up my match, first, then—Shall we fire together, or had I better hold my shot, in case you don’t fetch him?”

“Get a bead on him, as I have,” answered Wilfred coolly; “but don’t fire till we see how my shot affects him. I’ve got in two slugs; but this old firelock kicks like tarnation, and ’twixt that and the smoke, ’twill be mighty hard to see what’s what.”

“All right, brother. I’m good and ready, now. Let her go!”

“Bang!” The report that ensued, immediately Wilfred had applied his match, seemed like that of a cannon, magnified as it was by the echoes against the cliff; but the boys were prepared for that, while the bear was not. In fact, he seemed more surprised at the noise, than the slugs he got behind the fore shoulder, for he stood up on his hind legs and looked around in a dazed fashion that would have seemed ludicrous, but for the seriousness of the situation. The wound soon reminded him, however, that something had happened to himself, and he snapped at the spot from which blood was slowly welling, at the same time growling ferociously.

The bear had dropped the sheep which he was attempting to carry off, and for which he seemed no longer to care, having other matters that absorbed his attention. Looking around, he soon

saw the heads of his enemies above the top of the wall, and made a bee-line for them at once, walking rapidly, still erect on his hind legs. He was on the opposite side of the corral when Wilfred fired, but had traversed half the distance before Winthrop, resting his musket on the wall, drew bead at the small white spot on his breast (which seemed as if made for that very purpose) and then fired the powder in the pan.

Notwithstanding the difficulties attending the firing of that primitive weapon, the firelock, necessitating a steady aim and eye, while the tell-tale match was being applied, and despite the fact that the bear was in motion, advancing menacingly toward him, the boy made what is known as a "center shot", and the beast fell right in his tracks.

"Hooray! hooray! Good for you, Wint!" shouted Wilfred, as he saw the great creature sway a moment, then plunge forward to the ground.

"Guess we got him, that time," was all Winthrop deigned to remark, while ruefully rubbing his shoulder; the rusty old fire-lock having kicked him hard, owing to the big load he had put in it. The impact of the clumsy butt, in fact, had

spun him almost completely around, and might have sent him sprawling to earth, had not Wilfred caught him in his arms.

“Did it hurt much?” he asked anxiously. “Hope it didn’t break your shoulder, Wint. Mine’s as tender as a chunk of raw beef, and I know it must be all black and blue! Let’s look at it, now.”

“No, no, I’m all right. Better load up, fast as we can, for bears are mighty good at playing ’possum, you know. That old feller mayn’t be as dead’s he looks, and I’m glad we’ve got the wall atween us.”

“Oh, he’s dead enough. But, see! Here’s something coming right at us now, that ain’t very dead, let me tell you. It’s another wolf, sure’s I’m a sinner, and he’s mad’s a hatter, too, with that big lump in his stomach that he can’t digest in a hurry. Grab your gun and run, Wint., fast’s you can, out of this.”

Charging through the narrow pathway between the wall and cliffs in which the boys were standing, came a big gray wolf, eyes ablaze and air on end, mouth wide open and dripping fangs exposed. He may have been more anxious to get away than to make a meal of his enemies; but

they didn't stop to consider this question, knowing their firelocks were unloaded, and bounded off at top speed.

They had reached the open pasture before a halt was called, and then Wilfred exclaimed breathlessly, "Confound it, Wint., I'm not going to kill myself running away from a disabled wolf. Might's well die a-fighting as a-running, seems t' me. Here, make a stand behind that rock and load up fast's ever you can, while I open an argyment with the critter. Suiting his action to the word, Wilfred slackened pace, and loosening a big knife, which he always carried in the belt around his waist, he whipped it out and turned about, facing the direction from which they had run.

"Jerushy-Jane!" he exclaimed, forcibly and with disgust, "There ain't any wolf in sight, Wint! What d'you think of that?"

"No wolf?" snapped Winthrop, busy behind the rock at loading up the firelock. "Why, there *was* a wolf, wasn't there?"

"'Course there was, you ninny. Whatever did we run for, if there wasn't."

"I'm sure, I don't know. Because you said a wolf was coming, I guess; but I didn't see him,

though. P'raps you got excited, Wil., and just imagined there was a wolf."

"I didn't," retorted Wilfred hotly. "And you know better. There was a wolf, sure's I'm born, and he took after us, too."

"So you said," rejoined Winthrop, calmly proceeding with the laborious performance of loading his musket. "But just wait till I get this old sinner's appetite satisfied, and I'll help you look for the varmint."

"Ha, what's that noise—off there behind those small pines? Sounded like a wolf's yelp, as if somebody 'd hit it a clip."

"That's the critter!" exclaimed Wilfred joyfully. "He just slipped off one side and scooted for the woods. We might have known he would. Well, I'm going to look for him, Wint. You wait here a minute."

"Better load up first," cautioned the younger boy. "Don't know what you might find in those thick woods, you know."

"Oh, I'm not afraid of a crippled wolf. I'll cut him up in no time."

"All right. Do 's you please. But I won't wait here. I'll go up and have a peep at the bear. He might take a notion to come to life and give us another run in the pasture."

“Go ahead, Wint., and I’ll meet you at the fold soon’s I’ve saved that wolf. He can’t be far, and his scalp’s worth a dollar, anyway.”

While Winthrop climbed the hill again to the sheepfold, Wilfred struck out into the forest, the edge of which lapped over into the pasture in small pines and thickets of junipers. He soon found the trail the wolf had taken, following it easily by the broken twigs and branches caused by the log attached to the chain, which caught here and there and impeded the progress of the beast. He followed it, however, farther than he had expected it to lead, and had penetrated a greater distance into the forest than he had supposed it possible for the animal to go, before he was brought to a halt.

There was something about this that he could not understand, especially as the wolf’s yelping had seemed to come from a spot much nearer the pasture-land. He wished, then, he had charged his piece anew, and as the signs became numerous that something unusual had happened, he stopped to do so, beneath a huge pine, the spreading branches of which formed a roof above his head and sheltered him from outside observation.

He poured the powder into the bell-shaped

muzzle of the musket, and was in the act of ramming home the wadding, when his attention was caught by the breaking of a branch, at no great distance away, and he paused to listen. Nothing succeeded to this, he rammed down the wadding with the iron rod, which, clanging against the barrel, made a noise that might have been heard a long way off. He thought of this at the time, but proceeded with his work until the slugs were snugly stowed on top of the powder, with a good thickness of wadding above them, then primed the pan and re-lighted the slow-match, which, somehow, had become extinguished.

After all was prepared for any emergency that might arise, he stepped from beneath his pine-roof,—and found himself face to face with a stalwart savage.

This was a surprise, indeed; but, accustomed as he was to be ever on guard, he threw up the musket, so the next motion would bring it to his shoulder, and, with the match close to the priming, awaited what the savage had to say.

Without manifesting the least surprise,—for he had probably been made aware of Wilfred's near presence by the clanging of the ramrod—the Indian merely grunted, eyeing him the while with

suspicion. In one hand he held a clutch of arrows and a big hickory bow, and in the other—something that made Wilfred start with an expression of anger,—for it was the freshly-stripped hide of a wolf.

Forgetting for the moment that the Indian might have companions near, who would come to his assistance in the contingency of a fight—even if he should not get the worst of it—Wilfred exclaimed angrily, “Where did you get that wolf-skin?”

The Indian made no reply, but, after eyeing him a while with an expression of supreme scorn on his face, turned on his heel and retraced his steps by the trail he had followed to the pine.

Casting prudence to the winds, Wilfred sprang forward and placed one hand on the naked shoulder of the savage—his left hand—; but still held his musket ready for instant service, in his right.

The savage wheeled about as if on a pivot, and in his upraised right hand there gleamed a dagger-pointed blade a foot in length. This he held menacingly above Wilfred's head, and to meet the situation the boy threw up the musket-barrel ready to parry the expected blow, yet still with an undaunted front.

The Indian was much larger than the youth, being fully six feet tall and magnificently proportioned. His real height seemed more than it was owing to a bunch of eagle plumes in his top-knot of coarse black hair. He was naked above his waist and below his knees, hips and thighs being covered by a half-garment of raccoon skin, which, ornamented as it was with several tails, made a fanciful appearance.

Wilfred noted, (even as that shining blade was poised above his head with deadly intent) that the Indian's features were cast in a kingly mold. His eyes were black and flashing, deepset beneath massive brows, his cheek-bones high, nose hooked, mouth large but shapely, containing a double set of strong, white teeth.

"What you want?" at last said the savage, scowling fiercely.

"That wolf-skin. It's mine," replied the boy, still keeping an eye on the knife and maintaining his attitude of defense

"How that? Wood full wolfs! All b'long you?"

"No, but this one caught with my hooks. What you do with them?"

"No see um," rejoined the savage. "No see

um, no ketch um. This wolf me ketch in pit. Shoot um, so—”

He lowered the knife, and taking up his bow, fixed an arrow on the string and aimed at a pretended quarry.

There was something in the Indian's attitude and manner that convinced Wilfred of his sincerity; still, he was puzzled. That the savage did not intend him any violence, unless he himself should become the aggressor, he felt quite convinced, so he lowered the musket to the hollow of his arm and watched him warily.

“I believe you,” he said, after the pantomime was over. “But, really, truly, there is a wolf in here somewhere that has swallowed my bait, and he can't be far away. You no see um?”

“No, no see um; but can find. You come.”

The Indian plunged into a thicket of small trees, and soon struck a trail that ran parallel with that which he was on when he made his appearance. Wilfred followed trustingly after this savage with whom he was so recently at the point of conflict; and this may be ascribed either to his ignorance, or to his intuitive knowledge of human nature—even Indian human nature—; but he was not deceived.

The Indian led the way and he followed after, soon arriving at a thicket denser than the wood around it, where, with chain entangled in the branches of a fallen tree, Wilfred saw a wolf—his wolf, as he called it—crouching at bay.

“Him your wolf?” asked the Indian, turning around with a broad grin on his swarthy face, and pointing at the beast.

“No,” Wilfred answered quickly, “not mine now; *your* wolf.”

The savage looked puzzled. Then it slowly dawned upon him that the youth meant to make amends for his rudeness of a while before, and waive all claim to the beast. But he would not accept the gift, though his changed manner showed that he appreciated the intention.

“No, no,” he said emphatically, shaking his head. “Your wolf. Me no want um. You want kill um?”

“Yes, I’ll kill him,” exclaimed Wilfred, laying down his musket and whipping out his knife. Or, rather, he stood the musket up against a tree, to a branch of which he hung the slow-match by its string. As he advanced, the wolf showed fight, gathering itself up and making ready for a spring. There was still considerable play to

the line and chain by which it was held, and as Wilfred came up the beast met him half way by leaping toward his throat. Instead of retreating, the boy kept his arm rigid and held the knife so that the keen point penetrated the wolf's throat beneath the jaw, and following up his advantage he thrust the beast to the ground and pinned him there.

He made short work of the remaining job, and it was over within a few minutes after it was begun. Instead of a snarling, vicious "varmint" ready for a fight and hungering for gore, all muscle and sinews, animated by deadly intent, there was now a limp and almost lifeless body with spasmodically twitching legs, and fitfully snapping jaws flecked with foam and blood.

The Indian had looked on approvingly, and now he patted Wilfred on the shoulder.

"Good boy," he exclaimed. "Make big sachem sometime."

There seemed a touch of sarcasm in his voice, and Wilfred looked up, as he bent over the wolf, to note also a gleam of malicious humor in the sparkling eyes. It seemed as if the Indian were playing with him. At all events, he was more patronizing than Wilfred liked, and he could



The boy held the knife so that the keen point penetrated the
wolf's throat.

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not but feel that the man himself belonged to a class superior to the average run of "savages" as the settlers called the red men around them in the woods, who sometimes emerged long enough to trade a little and secure rum and provisions in exchange for wild-beast skins.

However, he said nothing, though wondering somewhat. Between them both, they soon had the animal skinned, and then the Indian held out his hand, saying he must go his way.

"Well, won't you take the hide?" asked Wilfred; "or at least, the scalp? It's worth a dollar, you know."

The Indian drew himself up haughtily. "Me no want dollar," he exclaimed. "Me got plenty dollar. Plenty land, too. Want nothing."

"Oh, pardon me," said Wilfred. I thought
——"

Then his jaw fell and the speech froze on his lips, for, as he was speaking, the Indian had slipped between him and his musket, and now held the trusty weapon in the hollow of his arm.

CHAPTER III.

“VARMINTS” THAT PROWLED IN THE FOREST.

THE Indian's face wore a sardonic smile, but there was a glint in his eyes which, somehow, belied the intent of that apparently hostile act, and noting this Wilfred took courage.

He could not believe that he had misjudged the savage, for his reasoning was intuitive and rarely at fault. Still, whatever his intention, the Indian's attitude was evident enough, whether assumed for the occasion or not. He stood there like a statute—and the boy could not but admit that his pose was grand, statuesque—that of a veritable warrior and commander of men.

“He may mean just to try me,” mused the youth; “or he may intend to kill me; but anyway, I'll die a-fighting!”

That was a favorite expression of his, and realizing that he had used it often in mere jest, he

smiled grimly, now that the crucial test was to be applied.

“ I’ll be true to my colors, anyway,” he further reflected, “ and nobody shall be able to call me a coward, even after I’m dead and gone ! ”

Acting on this conviction, he seized his knife and advanced threateningly toward the savage, all the time keeping an eye to the chance of dodging the slugs, when the match should be applied. He had made up his mind to await that moment, after making a feint in order to draw the Indian’s fire, and then rush in and slash at a vital spot with his knife. In fact, that was the only thing to do, as it appeared then—for the chances were that his opponent’s aim would be confused by the application of the slow-match, and under cover of the smoke an opportunity might present of darting upon him before he could either draw his knife or club the musket.

That was his plan of attack, and that it would have been that of his enemy, also, soon appeared, for, suddenly lowering the firelock the Indian rested its butt on the ground and extended his hand.

“ Good, good ! ” he said in a deep bass voice that rumbled like distant thunder. “ That right

—that what me do. No fight you; know how too much. Make great sachem, like me. Like me, Metacom.”

Wilfred stood transfixed, arrested in his advance not only by the changed attitude of the foe, but by his words.

“Metacom? Why, that was no other than *King Philip*, then, who stood before him! Philip, second son of the great Massasoit, who had been latterly more than suspected of a deadly enmity against the white settlers. He had not been seen for months; but it was well known that he had organized an insurrection among the Narragansets, who were already showing signs of uneasiness, and that, unable to restrain them much longer, he was probably concealed somewhere on the outskirts of either the Massachusetts or the Plymouth settlement, awaiting an opportunity to strike a deadly blow.

This, then, was Philip the King, renowned sachem of the Wampanoags, sometimes known as the Pokanokets, who, rumor had it, were ready now to break the peace of fifty years that had existed ever since it had been entered into between the Pilgrim settlers and Massasoit.

“Well,” said the savage grimly, “no want make friend of Metacom?”

His expression appeared frank enough now, and he evidently meant what he said, and all his acts implied. He wished to be on friendly terms with the white boy, and meant him no harm—that was certain.

“ I don't know,” Wilfred answered, speaking slowly, after due deliberation. “ I would like King Philip as a friend, if he would also be a friend to all my people. But I have heard—I have heard that he would be their enemy!”

“ Mebbe yes, mebbe no,” replied the Indian, scowling darkly. “ Some bad white men me no like; some good white men me like. Some bad Wampanoag you no like; some good one you like; mebbe. No like all!”

This forceful reasoning had its effect on Wilfred, who then gave way to inclination and proffered his hand, which the savage grasped in his own, and only released after he had squeezed it hard.

“ Now go back,” said the Indian, “ Me go, help skin bear, then go to wigwam in big wood.”

Wilfred desired to ask him where his wigwam was located, knowing that there, also, would be his family and followers, probably; but he thought this would be unwise, if not actually

leading to a betrayal of confidence; for if he knew where Philip lodged, and the white settlers demanded that he should reveal the secret, he might be placed between two fires. Better know nothing, or as little as possible, he argued to himself, then he would betray neither one party nor the other.

Philip must have divined what was going on in his mind, for he said: "Live not far 'way—just now; but not bymeby. White man seek um, no find um. Me like bear, plenty hole for den."

"But how did you know we had shot a bear?" asked Wilfred, shifting the conversation to less dangerous ground. "It was only scant day-break when we did it."

"Umph! Think me no got ear, no got eye? Metacom no fool."

He would say nothing further on the subject, but he did not hesitate to reveal that he had followed every movement of the youths and their neighbors; knew their plans for the summer, and also those of the people in the settlement. He displayed such knowledge of things which Wilfred had supposed known only to himself and his friends that he felt almost afraid to consort with

him longer, lest he might betray something having a vital bearing on the white settlers' future. His companion had the frankness of perfect confidence in his own superior ability to the white people in warlike matters, and hesitated not to tell his young friend that his spies had been prowling about the settlements for months.

“ Me know all you do, all you say,” he remarked quietly; not in boasting, but as if mentioning a mere matter of fact. “ You say me enemy to white man. If me enemy, why me no kill him, have plenty chance to.”

“ I suppose,” replied Wilfred, looking the sachem straight in the eye,—“ I suppose you are not quite ready yet, and want to kill all at once.”

Philip laughed uneasily, and shifted his glance; but made no direct reply, for the boy had evidently made a home-thrust.

After a while he said: “ No kill you. No kill your friends.”

“ But why kill at all?” demanded Wilfred, casting caution to the winds and resolved to enter a plea for the white people, in order to avert possible disaster.

“ No say shall kill,” he finally answered, evasively. “ Plenty white man should be kill. Much mens make me evil. But no say, no say.”

Realizing that he was again treading on dangerous ground, Wilfred said no more on the subject, but he resolved to exert all his influence—provided the friendship continued—to win King Philip over to his side. He knew the King had been insulted, often, had been robbed, and even suffered the loss of some of his subjects, who had been murdered by evil-minded white men, and thus far had failed to obtain redress in the courts. If he now determined to appeal to arms, and avenge by pillage and massacre what he could not otherwise be compensated for, there was at least some show of right—as it appeared to the mind of the savage.

While the two were conversing, they had walked rapidly over the return trail to the pasture, and at last brought the sheepfold in sight beneath the cliff. There they found Winthrop awaiting the arrival of his brother; but the fine show of impatience with which he had intended to greet him was swallowed up in his surprise at the unexpected company he brought.

Had the Indian come alone, he would have known how to receive him, and have held him off for parley at the musket's muzzle before allowing him to approach within arrowshot; but as he

came in the guise of friendship, vouched for by his brother, that was different. He was puzzled, of course; nor did Wilfred's introduction greatly enlighten him, except as to the identity of the Indian guest.

“ This is the great King Philip, brother, whose name hath been in our mouths full oft. He cometh to help us skin the bear.”

“ He is welcome,” answered Winthrop, “ and as you both must be hungry, why not come with me to the house? ”

“ Of course we will, for if the sachem is as hungry as I am, he will not scorn our humble fare. The usual thing, I suppose, Wint., hasty pudding and ham fat? ”

“ With mutton added, this time,” replied Winthrop, laughing lightly. “ I had to kill the wounded ones, you know, and as father and three of our neighbors were here when I returned, why, they all took hold and helped me, not only to skin the sheep, but the bear, also.”

“ Father here, and others? ” asked Wilfred. Then he whistled softly, and, in spite of himself, cast a glance at Metacom, who stood silently by.

Philip knew what that meant. He knew that his friend was afraid there might be trouble,

perchance he met with those sturdy settlers, who were already incensed against him; yet he said nothing, and looked as though he understood nothing. Only his black eyes snapped, like hardwood coals on a frosty night, and his hand instinctively sought the knife in his wampum belt.

Asking his guest to excuse him a moment, and leaving him leaning in a lazy attitude against the wall, Wilfred took his brother aside and plied him with questions as to the whereabouts of the visitors at that moment, the object of their coming, etc.

“They’ve gone off looking for a stray ewe,” replied Winthrop; “and, Wil., won’t there be a rumpus when they get back and find that Injun here? My, I wouldn’t like to be in your shoes, brother! Guess there’ll be a sort of ready reck’ning when they meet! You know, there’s Jabe Brown, who, it’s gen’rally known in the settlement, shot one of Philip’s men for killing a cow. Then there’s Hen. Avery, (meanest man in the whole region, it must be said), who as good ’s cheated Woonashum out of the wolf bounty on two dozen scalps. There are three with father; but two of ’em won’t find favor in the sight of your friend; and as to that matter,

guess he won't be any too welcome to the whole lot!”

“ Well,” answered Wilfred, after hearing this information given in haste by his brother, “ if Philip wants to stay, then stay he will, so far's I have anything to say. But, I do hope he will take the hint that he's not wanted, and get out. Perhaps he may be gone when we get back, and that would relieve the situation.”

But he was not, having, for reasons of his own, chosen to stay and dine with his new friend. There was “ nothing for it,” as Winthrop said, “ but to put a bold face on the matter, and run the risk of no rupture occurring when the various guests met at table.

By the time the meal was ready to be served, Goodman Wilkins and his four companions returned to camp, and (it may be well understood), there was astonishment and disgust, which was hardly concealed, by the white men, at the presence of Philip at the board. Goodman Wilkins took his elder son aside and remonstrated with him for his indiscretion; but when Wilfred had explained the situation fully, he agreed there was nothing else to do; and with good grace did the honors at table, attempting to make all feel

at their ease. Although half naked as he was, Pometacom was by no means disconcerted, for he possessed the good breeding of one long accustomed to authority. He was used to the ways of the white people, having frequently sat at the Governor's table, with all the dignitaries of the colony; and that he was now "in undress," so to speak, was a matter of his own choice and convenience. He needed no introduction to most of them seated there, as three had met him before, two of them in circumstances not altogether creditable to themselves.

The customary grace before meat was said by Goodman Wilkins, to which Philip attended with decorum, and then all fell to at the simple repast, which progressed pleasantly enough until Jabez Brown, the man suspected of having killed one of Philip's followers, openly leered in the sachem's face. They were seated on opposite sides of the table, and Philip could not but have seen that there was intention in the act; but he ignored it, preferring to keep the peace, in honor to his host.

"I say," broke out Brown, exasperated by the Indian's behavior, so superior to his own, "I say thet Injun's a mis'ble critter, anyhow, an'

I can't stomick settin' with one, nohow!" At which he rose and left the table, followed by Hen. Avery and another, as they saw trouble brewing and hastily concluded to take sides with their neighbor.

For a moment, Philip sat unmoved, but after glancing at his hosts, and perceiving that they were much disturbed at the incident, he quickly came to the conclusion that, as he was, though innocently, the cause of trouble, he would remove it by removing himself. He had hitherto spoken but little, in monosyllables only, when addressed, recognizing the doubtful, delicate situation, and behaving according to the impulses of a nature far more refined than that of his censors.

"Good-bye," he said to Wilfred, nodding, also, to the others; "me go. Come 'gain sometime when wanted."

"I hope ye ain't mad," said Goodman Wilkins, "I didn't expect Jabe Brown to break out like that. He'd oughter know better."

"P'raps so," assented Philip with a grim smile. "He need master!"

"I'm sorry," said Wilfred, "that this happened. But you're my guest, and, as the others

went of their own accord, I say you should stay!"

"No, no, heap trouble, p'raps, if me stay. Old man in me strong!"

They all understood that he meant he would not be responsible for his actions if further provoked, and would go before his passions were aroused. And, it must be confessed that all were relieved by this simple solution of the difficulty.

"Well, I'll see you off to the woods," said Wilfred, disregarding his father's warning glance; for the first time in his life, perhaps, disobeying his slightest wish. For, both knew there was trouble brewing outside, where the three absentees had gathered, each with a musket in his hands, with the evident intention of giving the sachem a warm welcome when he should be clear of the hut.

Goodman Wilkins knew this, and wished to keep his son out of the difficulty; but Wilfred also knew this, and was determined that no harm should come to his guest. Philip protested; but despite his protests, and the open displeasure of their father, the boys took their stands, one each side the sachem, and accompanied him outside. As they walked across the open space be-

tween the great rock and the woods, the three settlers danced about wildly in a vain attempt to get a shot at the sachem, without hitting one of his escorts. At last Jabe Brown yelled out: “ Curse ye, Bill Wilkins, git out er the way, or I’ll put a hole in ye, consarn yer meddlin’ ways ! ”

“ I won’t,” answered Wilfred stoutly. “ And you don’t dare fire at me, either ! ”

“ I dassent fire, hey? We’ll see ’bout that ! ” The man threw up his flint-lock, squinting along its barrel with one eye. The other eye was closed, for sake of a better aim; but if it had been open its owner might have saved himself some bruises, for King Philip, as if ashamed at being driven to the woods like a dumb animal, suddenly gathered himself for a mighty leap, and, darting backward at the group of three, seized Brown by the neck and threw him to the ground, with his musket still in his hand. Then he yanked him erect again, and catching hold of his shoulders used him as a sort of human flail, with which he toppled the others over like so many ninepins.

“ Ho, ho,” he shouted. “ You think Metacom baby, eh? No can fight—ugh ! ”

He cast the unfortunate man to the ground,

and after a sweeping glance around, as if seeking for more enemies to overthrow, he slapped his broad breast a resounding whack, and strode toward the forest, head in air, and snorting defiance to all the world.

At the forest edge he halted an instant, waved his hands to the boys, and shouted: "Good-bye, good-bye. Metacom their enemy; but your friend—friend for life.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SHEEPFOLD IN THE WOODS.

As the occurrences narrated in the previous chapters had much to do with the great Indian outbreak of 1675, known as "King Philip's War," during which (though it lasted but a few months over a year) more than 600 colonists were slain, and 13 towns destroyed; thousands of Indians also losing their lives and properties—we cannot too carefully inform ourselves concerning the events next preceding that terrible disaster to New England.

The main features of this war are, of course, given in the histories of that period; but, while some historians (though they are few) laud Metacomet, or King Philip, as a hero; and some again denounce him unsparingly as "a cruel and crafty savage, without mercy or compassion," no

one gives all the evidence in detail by which alone he may be truly judged.

It shall be our purpose to supply this evidence, by narrating the chief events of his life in connection with his friendship for the two boys whose acquaintance we have already made in the woods. Owing to the peculiar circumstances under which this acquaintance was formed, or begun, and their subsequent intimacy with the great Sachem of the Wampanoags (even during the time he was massacring the white people, destroying their settlements, and committing terrible atrocities) they obtained a knowledge of his nature which was denied to all others save the members of his own family, and hence the great historic value of their story, independent of its interest as a narrative of adventure in the early colonial times.

In the first place, let us get better acquainted with the boys themselves, the real heroes of our story. Their home, at the time we first meet them, was in one of the log farmhouses then composing the little frontier settlement of Swansea, lying near what is now the dividing line between Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Their father, Goodman Wilkins, was one of the early settlers

of New England in the second generation, and from having first seen the light on the voyage from England to America, was christened Seaborn. For, at that time, the proper names of people were often derived from some circumstances attending their birth or surroundings. Some others were inspired by piety, as Abiel, "God is my Father;" Abigail, "Father's Joy;" Hannah, which means Grace; Comfort, Deliverance, Peace, Hope, etc.

The sons of Seaborn Wilkins, however, owed their Christian names to their beloved mother, who called the first-born Wilfred, and the second, two years younger, Winthrop. The one girl in the family was little Dorothy, so called after her grandmother, who had lived with them ever since her husband had lost his life in Taunton river, while hauling lumber across the ice, one winter's day ten years before. The grandmother was the oldest member of the household, and little Dorothy the youngest, so they shared the honors and privileges of queenship between them, the divided allegiance of their loving subjects preventing either one or the other from being spoiled by attentions showered upon them both.

Seaborn Wilkins was rough in appearance,

owing to the hard life he had led, always on the front of the wilderness, fighting the forces of Nature; but his heart was warm towards all his fellow-men. His sons knew well the warmth of that great, generous heart, and the depth of his love, equaled only by that of their gentle mother. As "Aunt Susan," all the neighbors in that frontier community knew the blue-eyed, sweet-faced wife and mother in the Wilkins family. Nobody had ever heard her utter a harsh word, or even chide her children; yet they obeyed her implicitly, for they loved her to distraction. The father was sometimes rough of speech, and always brusque in manner; the little mother was his direct opposite; yet both were equally honored by the devotion of their children.

It was well that peace and contentment always dwelt beneath the roof-tree of Goodman Wilkins' humble hut of logs, for there was scant room there at any time. Built of huge logs, the spaces between which were chinked with clay, the dwelling was one of the rudest sort. It had a chimney of sticks and clay at one end, in which was a yawning fire-place, big enough to take in the largest sticks of firewood that the farmer could roll into it without assistance; the floor of the

hut was of puncheons or split logs, well packed with beaten earth or clay. The lower story of the farmhouse was divided into two apartments, one of which was used as a kitchen, dining and living-room generally, and the other as a bedroom, occasionally being furnished up as a parlor. A rude ladder led to a loft beneath the slanting roof, where were two bed-rooms, one belonging to the boys, the other to their grandmother, separated by a narrow hall or landing-place.

During the winter preceding the spring in which we find them first, Wilfred and Winthrop had felt the pinch of "Jack Frost" frequently, and sometimes, of a morning, their bed would be covered with a mantle of snow, which had sifted through the crevices in the roof; so it will be seen that the house that sheltered them was none too tight and warm. Yet they loved it warmly, having known no other home, for they knew many a spot that was attractive—at least to them, and to little Dorothy, who was as well satisfied with it as themselves.

Having all been born here, they had grown into it, almost as a turtle becomes attached to its shell. Wilfred had lived here sixteen years, Winthrop fourteen, and Dorothy seven, these figures

measuring respectively the spans of their existence. Their lives had been serene and happy; for in those days it did not take much to create contentment. They did not expect much, so they were not greatly disappointed when they did not get it. The boys had grown up clad in homespun clothing, gone barefoot in summer, and worn heavy cowhide boots in winter. They practised economy because they had to, and having become accustomed to hard knocks and coarse fare, they had thrived on them, so that it would be difficult to find two sturdier youths of their age, with hardier frames, tougher sinews and firmer muscles, in the Swansea settlement.

This much as an introduction to the home and the boys with which and with whom we have to deal in this story of the great Colonial war. The home and the kindly folk it contained were typical of the times in which the latter lived, when most men were brave, honest and hard-working; the women home-loving, home-staying, and help-meets in every sense of the word.

Spring, at last, had advanced so far that the cattle could be turned out to graze on the tender grass springing up in sheltered nooks by the sides of walls and along the watercourses. The

hillside pastures took on a garb of green, and the maple buds reddened in the sun. Then it was that Goodman Wilkins said to Wilfred, the elder son, "Methinks the time is nigh to drive the flocks off to the hills. You're ready, of course, you and Winthrop, having had naught else to do but study and work, the winter past."

"As to that, father," replied Wilfred, "while it is true that the winter has, in sooth, been long enough, yet we have had much to do, please bear in mind, and——"

"What?" roared Goodman Wilkins. "D'ye mean to say ye're not ready yet? Egad, I'll go myself, then, old as I am, and eke unable to leave."

"Father, I did not say we were not ready," rejoined Wilfred laughingly; "for, truth to tell, we both are ready, eh, brother?"

"As ever we shall be," answered Winthrop. "But, I' faith, I'm not over glad to go, to bide alone for the next six months, with no other company but the sheep, and in the midst of the big forest. It is really something awesome. Don't you think so, mother?"

"Indeed I do, my son," upspoke the mother, her eyes moist with tears. "Many's the night

I've lain awake, unable to close my eyes for thinking of my dear boys, out there all alone in the great forest, with no neighbors other than the wolves and savages, watching the flocks that the wild beasts would fain rend and destroy. Is it really necessary, Seaborn, that they must go into the woods to bide all summer? Can they not go and come, out in the morning, and returning at night, leaving the flocks well hedged about?"

"Susan, eke must thou have lost thy senses," replied Goodman Wilkins roughly. "Knowst not that it is at night the sheep and lambs are most in danger. Then is it that the wily wolves come down from the mountains and prowl about the sheepfold, looking for their prey; and then it is, perchance, that the wicked savages also come down——"

"Ah, that is it," exclaimed the gentle mother, with a shudder. "That is it: to think of my precious boys exposed to the assaults of all those terrible creatures of the wilds, which would hesitate not to devour them, as well as the flock.

"And I have heard," she added, lowering her voice to a whisper,—“I have heard that the Indians are getting very restive, this season. So Neighbor Jackman told me, only yesterday, that

he saw three of King Philip's men prowling about the big pasture in the pines. And they had not alone their rude bows and arrows, but guns and powder-horns;—in sooth, were equipped for warfare as well as for the hunt.”

“Tush, tush, wife, that is but an idle tale. Methinks Neighbor Jackman may have been indulging over much in usquebaugh, or fire-water, and saw more things than he could swear to. No, no; though there be rumors of Metacomet's rising against the white settlers of this colony, I, for one, believe them not. Remember, goodwife, he's a son of Massasoit, the good old Sachem who kept faith with our friends and fathers full fifty years. It cannot, must not be, meseems, for it is not in his blood to harm the white folks.

“As for the wolves,—and they are really the only wild beasts to be feared—our sons are well prepared to give them something that will reduce their droves full sore, or I mistake me. For they carry along the means for making wolf-traps, with which to circumvent the four-footed enemy. And they be not their father's boys, if they do not so, I ween.”

“That we will,” interposed Wilfred hastily.
“Without a doubt, we shall be able to circumvent

the wolves, dear mother. Don't you remember the skins we brought back home from last year's hunt—full a score; and the prices they brought us at the Taunton store, especially those two big ones with the bristly manes?"

"Sooth, do I," answered Goodwife Wilkins, trembling at the recollection. "And well do I recall that one of those big ones, he of the glaring eye and shaggy hair, came near to taking thy life, my son. So I say, 'twere well if we could but avert this departure for the forest-pasture this summer, of all times. Truly, Seaborn, more to us should be our own flesh and blood, than the price of many lambs and sheep, e'en though we be not rich, but scant of wealth.

"What should we do—Oh, what could we do, were they never to return?"

"Now, out upon thee, Goodwife," exclaimed the farmer angrily. "Go they must, and go they shall; that settles it. And return will they, too, for they have been before, without harm coming to them eke at all. 'Tis true, old Ben Bowden was then with them, while this season they must go alone; but that matters not so much. It is settled, I tell ye all, Indians or no Indians; wolves or no wolves; so there!"

“Of course it is, mother dear,” broke in the brothers together. “And you’ve known of it all the winter long,” added Wilfred, “so what’s the use of worrying?”

“Ah, but this is the time for parting,” sighed the little mother; “and moreover, it is only but of late that the rumors have been spread of the Indian uprising. That, and the wolves——”

“Oh, bother the wolves,” exclaimed Winthrop. “I tell thee, mother dear, they are not to be feared at all. So kiss us good-bye, and give us thy blessing, for of a verity we must be off, this very day.”

Having heard the discussion with ears and eyes wide open, little Dorothy was disposed to rebellion, lifting up her voice especially when the wolves and “murtherous salvages” were mentioned. But she was pacified by the promise of a fine gray squirrel as a pet, at the home-coming in the autumn, and, like her mother and grandmother, kissed the boys good-bye with tear-stained face, though without another word of protest.

From the farm to the hill-pasture in the woods, where the sheep were to be maintained during spring and summer, even until late in autumn, it was nearly an all-day’s journey. It was not far

in a straight line, nor would it have taken long to go there had there been good roads to traverse; but the only highways were trails and winding foot-paths, over which it was most difficult to drive the restless, roving animals, so prone to dart off into the woods on either side.

After painfully making their way through the woods, sometimes in deep gloom, sometimes across sunlit spaces of open glades, the shepherds came at last to the great pasture-lands of the hills, comprising a thousand acres or more of natural grasses, within the shelter of a vast contiguous forest. A hill near the center of this pasture was high enough to afford a view over the lowlands for many a mile around; but there was within that view no scene that suggested human habitation, for a sea of trees encompassed the hill on every side.

This hill was a spur from a much higher one, which was wooded, and connected with the lower one by a saddle-back ridge, like an artificial rampart, from which flowed an underground spring which gushed into outer air at the base of an immense rock surrounded with pines.

Within the shelter of these pines, and built against the sheer side of the rock, stood a log

“lean-to” with a bark-covered roof. A little lower down the hill was a large enclosure within a fence or wall of rocks, where the animals were to be quartered, and after driving them into it, the boys and their father sought the hut.

After assuring himself that the lean-to was secure and comfortable, Goodman Wilkins took the return trail to his farm, though the day was well-nigh spent and he would have to travel part way after dark.

“Remember, my boys,” he said, as he wrung their hands for the last time at parting, “that while it isn’t very far down to the farm, you can’t both leave here at once, and ’t isn’t expected that either of you will at all, at least, not under two months from now. P’raps me and Ma and Dot. will take a run up here in June, or July; but don’t count on seeing us any sooner’n that.

“Don’t forget that the lambs need a deal of looking after, and be sure to keep a sharp lookout for wolves. You’ve got provisions enough here for a month, and we’ll bring you more when we come up. There’s a firelock apiece, and you both know how to use ’em.

“Now, what more can I say. . . ? Oh, the savages. There *are* Injuns in the woods, prowl-

ing about—not a bit of doubt as to that; but they won't be likely to harm you if you mind your own business. Howsomever, don't on any account allow any of 'em to step inside the hut—leastwise, not to sleep in it over night; but don't do anything likely to provoke 'em, either. Even if they do steal a sheep or two, it is better to lose that much than to start a quarrel that might end in losing a scalp. Not that there's any danger, in my 'pinion; but you never can tell what may happen, my sons."

With this sage advice, Goodman Wilkins had left his boys alone in the hut on the hillside, plunged into the woods, and was soon out of sight in the dusk of the waning day.

CHAPTER V.

'A COUNCIL OF WAR IN CAMP.

WE will now continue the narration from the point where it was broken off by the abrupt departure of King Philip, after his onslaught upon the unfortunate Jabe Brown and his friends. They were severely punished for their baseness in attacking a guest of their friends; but their bruises were not bad enough to hold their tongues in check.

Jabe was the spokesman, as well as chief mourner, and as soon as he had recovered his wits he and his two friends lost no time in bestowing a tongue-lashing upon Wilfred and his brother.

“Consarn yer picters,” exclaimed Jabe, rising from the ground with a great effort, and tremulously shaking his fist at the elder boy. “You’re the cause of all this, Bill Wilkins, an’ you’ll suf-

fer fer it, too, lemme tell ye. Ef it wa'n't fer the proof we've gut thet you're a traiter, and sure tew be shot ennyways, I'd up an' dew it right naow. 'Yisseree, I'd shoot yer deader'n a red herrin'."

"Don't let anything like that stop you, Jabe Brown," answered Wilfred promptly. "I'm quite willing to be held responsible for all I've done, even to the Governor and Council, whenever they may send for me, and to give them whatever information I have—which is just nothing at all. As you know, I met King Philip by accident, and this morning, for the first and only time in my life; so there can't be much to prove against me, or against my brother."

"And if it comes to shooting," broke in Winthrop, "why, two, or as to that matter, three, can play at that game, neighbor Brown. Put that in your pipe and smoke it!"

"This reminds me, boys," said Goodman Wilkins, who had stood aloof without saying a word hitherto, "that I've brought ye two fine flintlocks, in place of them old firelocks that are out of date now, and hardly fit to shoot wolves with—let alone some other kinds of varmints that prowl round on their hind legs lookin' for trouble."

"If ye mean me," excitedly exclaimed Brown,

“jest say the word an’ we’ll hev it aout, right here and naow. Your boys hev played the traiter by keepin’ comp’ny with a Injun, an’ the wust one of the hull Wampanogy nation, tew, lemme tell ye ag’in, Sea. Wilkins.”

“Well, maybe they have; but seems t’me they couldn’t have done much harm in the short time they was together,” replied Goodman Wilkins calmly. As to saying the ‘word,’ I say it now, and right here on this spot: that you, Jabe Brown, are wuss’n any Injun I ever met or heerd of, and my ’quaintance’s pooty ’xtensive, too.”

“Ain’t no wuss’n yew be,” rejoined Brown, doggedly; but giving no sign of picking up the gauntlet Goodman Brown had cast at his feet. In fact, he was more bluster and brag than anything else and was cowed by the determined front of his opponents. As to his two friends, they were already ashamed of the part they had played in that short but exciting game of “bluff,” and as they were not very badly hurt, they soon came to reason—or rather, allowed reason to come to them—and went over to the enemy.

“You *was* a leetle brash, Jabe,” said Hen. Avery, “and so was we. But the best way out’n it now is tew fergive ’n fergit, I says.”

Hen. Avery had a foxy face, and he held out to Wilfred a very foxy paw, which the latter was constrained to shake, though loathing the beast with all his soul. He knew there was no trusting him, nor for that matter Mr. Brown, either; but was willing to patch up a peace on almost any terms, realizing the precarious nature of his position.

The third neighbor, being of that negative cast that accepts whatever comes along without question and follows the first leader in sight, fell in behind his friends without a word, and so a truce was made that for the time being tided over the trouble that had loomed so large at the outset. It was only postponed,—that reckoning with Jabe and Hen.—all the Wilkinses realized full well, for they knew the sneaking, vengeful natures of both; but the goodman pretended to welcome the advent of peace with joy.

“That’s right, neighbors, that’s the talk,” he declared hilariously, passing around and grasping each man by the hand in succession. “We can’t afford to have trouble right at the start off, ’specially over the very Injun that may cause further trouble. What we’ve got to do is to have a ‘jaw’ about what’s best to do. Now come back

to camp and finish eatin', friends. After that we'll take a swig of that old cider of mine—which I'm glad I brung along, now, though it was a heavy load to carry, that jug—and then fill up the pipes and smoke it out."

"That suits my c'mplexion," said Hen. Avery; "but I hope thet lamb ain't all gone. Anyway it's too cold tew eat, I'll wager a penny to a turnup."

"If 'tis we'll warm it up," said Goodman Wilkins. "Wint., run in and set the table over ag'in, and Wil., hunt up them pipes and 'baccy, for we're goin' to have a 'powwow,' as the Injuns call it."

Lest my readers might imagine the use of tobacco and cider were unknown in the colony, at that time, we will quote from a contemporary, who, writing twenty years previous to the date of this story, says: "The Colonists made shift to rub our Winter's cold by the Fireside, having Fuell enough growing at their very Doores, turning down many a drop of the Bottell, and burning Tobacco with all the ease they could, discoursing betweene one while and another of the great progresse they would make after the Summer's Sun had changed the Earth's white furred Gowne into a greene "Mantell."

Jabe Brown was still quite surly, feeling that he ought to provoke another quarrel in order to avenge his injured dignity. But, after he had repaired the error of leaving before dinner was finished, by amply stowing away such food as was now before him; and especially as he and his neighbors sat together beneath the trees, puffing contentedly at the fragrant "weed,"—why, he felt much better disposed toward the world in general. His private grudge against the boys was yet warm, and indeed he took good care that it did not get cold; but at the time relegated it to the background.

"Now, as to this Pokanoket sachem called King Philip," said Goodman Wilkins, opening the powwow with reference to the absent chief who had caused the disturbance, "you all know that he's the second son of good old Massasoit, so called, who was chief of the Wampanoags when the Plymouth Pilgrims arrived here, sometime in 1620. The fust Injun they ever talked with, my grand'ther used to tell me, was a redskin named Samoset, who met the Pilgrims soon after they had landed at Plymouth and su'pprised 'em by saying '*Welcome Englishmen,*' having been taught them words by some of Capt'n Smith's

fishermen, years before. Next day he come with another Injun called Squanto, who also had a few words of English, and these two told the Pilgrims 'bout Massasoit, their chief or sachem, who—to make a long tale short—they brought with them next time they come.

“ Well, my grand'ther says they made a treaty with him which the old chief kep' faithfully all the rest of his life, or for nearly forty year. Some of us can remember well 'nough when he died, only fifteen year ago, in '60, and how't his son Alexander succeeded him as chief sachem. He didn't live very long—only two year—as we all know, and then come Metacom, this Injun we call Philip.

“ My grandad used to tell that these sons of Massasoit got their names from the Pilgrims, who give 'em to 'em after them great old Greeks of hist'ry, you know. Anyhow, that's what he is called now, King Philip of Pokanoket, that being the name of the place we call Mount Hope, over next to the Narrerganset country, where his father used to live, and where he has his chief wigwam now.

“ It ain't very far away, and if war does break out, why, the fust thing to do would be to march

against Pokanoket—in my 'pinion—and burn the wigwams, and ravage the big corn-fields that Philip has planted there—more'n a thousand acres, they say—which would well-nigh break his heart, I'm thinkin'."

"Huh!" sneered Hen. Avery. "An' while we wus marchin' ag'inst Pokenoky—or whatever you call it—what d'you think this here King Philip would a be doin', eh? Why, he'd be a rampagin' about, a-killin' of us and our wives and chidrun,—that's what he'd be a-doin'!"

"Sure's fate," assented the nameless neighbor. "Sawnsea'd be the very fust place he'd tackle."

"'Cause me an' Jabe live in it, I s'pose you think, don't ye?"

"Well, it's pooty sartin he don't love ye any too much."

"There never was a good Injun, in my 'pinion," growled Jabe Brown, an' this here Metacom, 's you call him, ain't a bit better'n the rest."

"Father, may I say something?" asked Wilfred. The goodman having nodded assent, and there being no opposition from the others, he ran into the hut, soon re-appearing with the fragment of an old book. "Here is what Governor Bradford wrote of these same Indians," he

said, " fifty years ago: ' We have found the Indians very faithful in their covenant of peace with us, very loving and ready to pleasure us. We often go to them, and they come to us. Some of us have been fifty miles in the country with them. Yea, it hath pleased God so to possess the Indians with a fear of us and love unto us, that not only the greatest king amongst them, called Massasoyt, but also all the princes and people round about us, have either made suit unto us, or been glad of any occasion to make peace with us, so that seven of them at once have sent their messengers to us to that end. So that there is great peace amongst the Indians themselves, which was not formerly; and we, for our parts, walk as peacefully and safely in the woods as in the highways in England. We entertain them familiarly in our houses, and they as friendly bestow their venison on us. They are a people without any religion or knowledge of any God; yet very trusty, quick of apprehension, ripe-witted and just.' "

" Pooh," ejaculated Jabe Brown, puffing out a big column of smoke, " that statement don't signify nothin'. That old Massysawit was peaceful enough 'cause he was a man of peace, and

didn't have no warriors nor fightin'-men; but his son, this here skunk thet turned on us to-day 's a diff'runt feller altergether. See the warriors he's been gettin' tergether, the last two year, and the divil's doin's he's been puttin' them Narrergansets up ter!

"An' speakin' uv them Narrergansets. Didn't yer never hear uv the all-fired thrashin' Captin Mason give 'em, way back in '35 or '36? An' all thet wus sence old Guvner Bradford writ them things, 'n I guess the nater uv the red-skins hes changed sence then, ef he writ thet he entertained um in his haouse. Ketch me a-entertainin' a scurvy Injun in my haouse!"

All the others smiled at this remark, for it was well understood in Swansea that Jabe Brown's house was occupied by him only on sufferance, for his goodwife, sharp-tongued "Aunt Sapphiry" "ruled the roost" in that domicile, permitting the entertainment of nobody she did not approve—and she rarely approved of anybody whatever.

"Well, ye may laff, darn ye all; but I'm mighty p'tikerler 'bout the comp'ny I 'sociate with, lemme tell yer."

"Sh'dn't think ye'd draw the line at a king,

though," said Hen. Avery, with a loud guffaw. "Kings is mighty scurce hereabaouts."

"They ain't so scurce 's they will be pooty soon!" retorted Brown. "Jest wait till I draw er bead on that feller. Jest wait; thet's all!"

"But where did Metacomet, as some call him, get his education?" asked Winthrop, anxious to create a diversion. "He can talk English as well as anybody, I've heard, and well enough to be understood," as we know.

"Oh, he's been to school some," volunteered the nameless neighbor. "I've heerd tell that the folks in Plymouth and Mass'chusetts colony allers made a good deal of him when he used to come to visit 'em, treatin' him like a prince, when his father's alive, and like a real king after he's dead. He picked up a good deal 'f English in the streets, and some in school; but he's a real heath'n, they tell me, knowin' nothin' 'bout any true God, and worshipin' a sort of divil called *Hobbamocco*. He's his evil god; but he's got another one, they say, called *Kitan*, who's his good one. He don't mind the good one much, but is afeard, they say, of old Hobbamocco and makes sacrifices to him of live beasts, some say of childern. I've heerd he's a regular cannybull, or somethin' like that."

"Cannibal, a man-eater, is what you mean, I s'pose," said Wilfred. "No, no, Metacomet isn't that; but as for his belief in a strange god, I don't know."

"Well, I do," rejoined the nameless neighbor, "for I know a man thet's seen him at his tantrums, down in Plymouth woods, when he thought nobody wan't seein' of him, an' he says it was a sight, so 'twas, to see him cut up, and bow down and gyrastrate before an old wooden imige of the most hejous thing he ever saw."

"He's a heathen, sure 'nough," remarked Jabe Brown sagely. "But yew may bet I'll make a Christyun uv him b'fore I git threw with him."

"Yew mean a dead one, don't yew Jabe?" asked Hen. Avery.

"Ezackly, thet's what I mean," admitted Jabe, knocking the ashes out of his pipe. "Naow, this conf'runce's ended, and we hain't agreed on a plan uv campaign. It won't do to let thet mis'ble skunk git away to kill, an' murder 'n burn,—fer thet's whut's whut. It's my privit 'pinion thet he's goin' tew come back to see Bill, here, bein' mighty fond uv him all uv a suddin'; and, lemme tell yer, I'm goin' ter lay out fer him and give him a dose of his own med'cine."

"And me, too," chimed in Hen. Avery. "Now,

what's the rest of you goin' to do? Stay here in camp like a settin' hen, or lay out an' ambush Mister Metacomet. And he won't be Met-a-comet much longer after he's Met-a-flint-lock, lemme tell yer, boys! How's that, eh?"

"Pooty good, I vum," cried Jabe Brown, with a loud guffaw, in which Hen. was not slow to join. "An' may we all be there to see, says I."

"Well," said Goodman Wilkins, "somebody's got to carry some of that bear meat down to the settlement. E'en though it's ruther late 'n the season for bear meat, it'll come mighty handy, just now, when we're 'twixt hay an' grass, so to speak, for fodder of that sort. Then there's the skin, that's wuth somethin', while three wolf-scalps ain't to be sneezed at. Pooty good mornin's work, boys, I call it."

"But one of the scalps belongs to Philip," cried Wilfred. "He must have forgotten to take it, he left in such a hurry."

"He *was* in pooty consid'ble of a hurry, thet's a fact," said Jabe Brown, with a scowl. "An', seein's how't was mostly on my 'count, guess I'll 'propr'ate thet air scalp myself. "It's wuth a doller, 'n thet won't more'n buy linimunt to rub my j'int's with, fer he left me ruther shook up, the mis'ble varmint!"

CHAPTER VI.

KING PHILIP WARNS HIS FRIENDS.

WILFRED offered no opposition to the taking of Philip's wolf-scalp by Jabe Brown, because in the first place it was not his; and in the second, he could replace it by one of his own trophies, if the matter ever came to a settlement. Soon after this division of the spoils, Goodman Wilkins set out for home, attended by the nameless neighbor, while Jabe and Hen. made their preparations for "laying out"—as they termed lying in ambush, for King Philip.

Their belief that Metacomet would soon return, was shared by Wilfred and Winthrop, who looked forward with keen apprehension to the possible result, but dared utter no word of protest against the proposed scheme for waylaying him in the woods.

In order to keep in touch with affairs, however,

it may be mentioned at this juncture, that Philip did not return for more than a month; or at least, if he did, was wary enough to keep out of the white men's clutches,—and finally the latter abandoned their project and went back to the settlement, after a noisy altercation with the boys. They had subsisted upon the latter, meanwhile, demanding the best their lean larder afforded, and drawing heavily upon their slender resources.

Before he left, Goodman Wilkins explained to the boys why their mother and sister had not come with him, and why they had allowed so long a time to go by, without a visit. Their grandmother had been very ill, and though little Dorothy was exceedingly anxious to accompany her father to Hilltop—as she called it—she had finally given way, (though not without tears), and had sent “sweetest love” and many kisses. In return, the boys sent back a new set of birch-bark furniture for her dolls to play with, several willow whistles which were “wondrous shrill,” and a pair of small gray squirrels they had captured in a hollow oak tree near the camp.

“If Metacomet returneth,” said Goodman Wilkins to Wilfred, “try to worm from him what

plans he hath, for I much misgive me that he meditateth mischief. For five years back he hath been collecting and training his men of war, holding powwahs and performing incantations, as our Governor calleth them, so I misfear me there be fire beneath all that smoke. Our settlement lays so near to Pokanoket, with only the broad water between, that methinks it may be the first to feel the weight of his murtherous arm, my boy."

"I hope not, father," answered the youth. "If I thought aught of harm might come to you and our family at the farm, I would not stay here another day. Perhaps it might be better for you all to come hither, father; or for us to go with you back to the farm?"

"No, my son, remain where the good Lord hath sent thee. My heart misgives me, now and then; but my trust is in the God of our fathers, in the God who hath so miraculously preserved us through trials many. Perchance King Philip will continue this friendship he hath begun with you; try to wean him from his false idols of wood and stone and direct him to the true God, my son. This may be thy mission, remember: to win a soul from sin is to snatch it therefrom, as a brand from the burning.

“ I hope so, father; but I misdoubt my ability. Still, I shall try to turn Philip from his murtherous ways, if possible, and perchance he cometh again I will do my best to turn him from his project. Peradventure I find he meditateth harm to the settlement, and there be time to do so, I will burn a great beacon light on the summit of the hill. You can see it from the farm, from the south-east corner of the barn it will be full in sight. Wint. and I will gather the fuel for it to-morrow, without delay.”

“ That is a wise measure, my son, and the Lord must have put the thought in thy mind. Yes, we will watch for the beacon-fire, and let it mean instant departure, peradventure there be mischief brewing. But whither can we go, if the settlement be attacked? ”

“ Come hither, father dear,—all of you, at once the flame bursteth from the pile we shall build on the top of the hill. Here, with a goodly company to defend, we can make ourselves secure enough against a thousand barbarian Indians. Why, the very rock is a fortress in itself. Have you ever been atop it? No? Verily, father, there is space atop enough to provide accommodation for a hundred men! Moreover, the surface

is sunken in the center, with a natural parapet all around it, full breast high. Standing lone and solitary as it doth, we can encircle it with earthworks, by trenching around-about and throwing up the earth, and this shall be the circle of our first defence. We will then build covered ways to the great crevices leading to the top of the rock—and there it is: a fortress within a fortification!”

“Yea, son; but who will build it? You and Winthrop cannot labor at it all the time. It is a man's work,—the work of many men, in sooth.”

True, father, it *is* men's work, and hence we shall expect you to come, the first convenient day, and bring as many as possible, with mattock, and spade, and spend no less than one day at the labor. In the meanwhile, I will be laying out the fortification—for I am a natural surveyor, not to say engineer, you know,—and Wint. will cook up a store of food against your coming.”

Thus it was settled, and henceforth, for many a day (Winthrop falling heartily in with the plan), the two youths labored at enclosing their rock-camp within an earthwork not less than breast high, with a deep ditch or fosse without.

The nature of the ground aided the scheme, as well as the situation of the rock, for the latter (as already intimated) was precipitous on one side, where it faced the valley, and needed only a half-moon cut across the rounded slope that connected with the main ridge and the forest to make the situation all but impregnable.

There was only one objectionable feature to this scheme, and that was that the sheepfold would be left outside the fort and the breastwork. But, as it lay directly beneath the cliff, and could be easily defended by a sharpshooter or two perched in the trees on the brink of the precipice, no concern was felt. A great pile of rocks and stones was made at the brink aforementioned, which on emergency could be toppled over the cliff upon the heads of any enemy rash enough to assail the sheepfold from that direction.

“All this may be a labor in vain,” remarked Wilfred, one day, as he and his brother toiled in the sun with mattock and spade, “and if you say so, Wint., we’ll throw it up.”

“Not I,” answered Winthrop, stoutly, leaning on his spade a while and looking about him at the view outspread below the hill. “Why, Wil., don’t you remember that our Minister says no

labor, undertaken in the right spirit, is ever misspent? In the first place, we have a motive—the best we could have: the preservation of our loved ones from the murderous savages, perchance they attack them.

“In the second place, perchance they do not attack, we shall have a retreat of our own for all time to come, which can't be surpassed for its natural advantages, anyway. Look at that view! Isn't it glorious? And think of the fun we have in making ourselves secure against all foes outside, of whatever kind! Then again, we are hardening up our muscles, and getting appetites that would shame a savage. There never were two people anywhere who eat so much and sleep so well as we do, I'm mighty sure.”

“That's enough,” laughed Wilfred. “If you're satisfied, I am, for I was the one that started the ball a-rolling. We'll build ourselves a monument, anyway, as well as a fortress and a home, for this earthwork will outlast a lifetime, I'm sure.”

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And the boy was right, for, though that labor was performed more than two hundred years ago, traces of it may be seen to-day, by anyone curious enough to visit the historic hilltop, and

search amongst the trees and shrubbery with which it is overgrown. Local tradition will inform you that a great fight took place here between some settlers and the savages; but we, readers, who have penetrated to the heart and soul of the matter, know that preceding that fight some very hard work was done by two boys of our acquaintance, who were then as eager and hopeful as any boys of to-day,—though they did live and dream and plan two hundred years and more ago.

The heart of youth is ever the same, be it yesterday, to-day, or to-morrow; hence the doings of youth are always interesting, whether of yesterday, to-day, or to-morrow. Our friends of that period of which we write lived then; we live now; others succeed us to-morrow; but the motives and animating principles are ever the same.

So, as we have seen, these boys took a vital interest in life as they lived it then. They took hold of whatever they thought good, and—what is of greater matter—they took hold “good and hard,” doing with all their might the work that lay before them. For this reason they had good sleep and hearty appetites, clean consciences and dauntless spirits. They did not peer too far

into the future;—only just far enough to maintain themselves on guard against possible surprises.

Day by day the earthworks grew apace; day by day the great beacon-pile, composed of dry pine branches and other inflammable material, waxed larger and larger, until there was a heap nearly twenty feet in height, ready to flame up the instant that fire was applied at its base. Tinder, flint and steel were always at hand, concealed in a dry hole beneath a rock, where also was a wind-break so that the fire could be evoked without delay, or subjected to the risk of being extinguished, whether a storm were raging, or the night were fair.

Meanwhile, the flock was not neglected, one or the other of the young shepherds being on watch for wolves and bears, wolf-pits having been dug for the former, at convenient places, and the hook-traps scattered about in likely spots.

Busily engaged as they were, the days chased each other rapidly away (it seemed to the boys) and the end of May had arrived and June begun before they were well aware of the advent of summer. At about the time of the longest days of the year, (or a few days over a hundred years

before the battle of Bunker Hill was fought), they became aware that something unusual was stirring, down in the settlement. Two boys of their acquaintance came up from below, one day, and passed the night with them. From them they learned that hostile Indians had been seen prowling around Rehoboth and Swansea, and that the previous Sunday two of them had come boldly into the latter settlement and made free use of a settler's grindstone.

They well knew the day was devoted to the Lord, said the boys; but when the owner of the grindstone expostulated with them, they replied they knew not his God, but had one of their own, who was good enough for them. Then they proceeded to sharpen their tomahawks, and departed not until they had put a fine edge on them, when they went to the house of another settler, who was at church, and stole some provisions.

They had the saving grace of humor, it may be said, for, afterwards meeting a white man in a lonely road, they took him in custody and catechised him, telling him he should not work nor walk, on the Sabbath day, nor tell lies, then dismissed him with a kick, and the injunction to remember what they had told him.

These two were but the advance guard, as later events proved, of a more murderous band. But, before we relate what these did, let us turn again to the Hilltop and note what transpired at the camp.

The last week in June, 1675, had arrived—a week ever to be remembered in the history of New England. One evening, near the close of the day before that appointed by the Governor of the colony as one of fasting and prayer, the two boys sat before the door of their camp looking out upon the prospect spread before them, illumined by the last rays of the setting sun. During the afternoon they had been visited by Jabe. Brown and Hen. Avery, who said they had information that Metacomet was in that vicinity, and, in pursuance of their scheme to ambush him when opportunity offered, they were going to lie out in the forest, that night, near the trail he always took when passing that way, from one settlement to another.

The youths were discussing the disquieting things they had heard, and especially the information conveyed to them by Jabe. and Hen., who boasted that they had a warrant for their apprehension, and if not successful in waylaying

Philip, were bent on taking his young friends to Plymouth for trial before the magistrates.

“Then you’ll see whut’s whut, an’ who’s who, I guess,” Jabe had said. “So, if ye have any news of Mettycomet, ye’d better disgorge.”

“We haven’t seen him since you were here last,” replied Wilfred, quietly, “nor even heard from him.”

“Don’t b’lieve yer,” answered Jabe. and Hen. simultaneously; and with their tongues tucked into their cheeks they went off into the woods. That was about mid-afternoon, and the boys resolved to put their camp in a posture of defence, in order to repel their attack, provided they should return with the determination still to take them away, as they had sworn they would do, in any event.

Having herded their flock, barricaded the one window of their hut, and made ready to do the same by the door,—behind which stood the two flintlocks and the old firelocks, loaded each with a pair of slugs and four fingers of powder—they sat down to rest.

The long twilight of the June afternoon carried daylight on till after eight o’clock, and the watchers were beginning to get sleepy, when they

were saluted by a guttural "How do?" and turning in the direction of the voice, saw Philip standing there.

"Why, how did you escape?—I mean, get here"—asked Winthrop, in the confusion of the moment betraying the thought in his mind, which was, as to the whereabouts of Jabe. and Hen. Avery. Wilfred promptly clapped a hand over his mouth in order to prevent any further secrets to escape; but it was too late.

"Ho!" ejaculated Metacomet scornfully. "Easy 'nough. They two fool! Tie 'em to tree; put gag in mouth. They no trouble Metacom. How do?"

He held out his hands to the boys, and they welcomed him to the camp, though not without trepidation, being—as Jabe had expressively described Wilfred's situation—" 'twixt the divil and the deep sea."

Philip noted all, and put them somewhat at ease by saying: "Me not stop long. But you my friend. Want tell you, something happen down settlement. Better get fam'ly up here, right 'way."

"Happen?" exclaimed both boys at once. "You mean——?"

“Yes, me mean Injun kill, burn! Bad Injun, no can stop 'em.”

“Kill? Murder the white people, you mean? But you can stop 'em, Metacomet. You are king, sachem. Go, go down now, and head 'em off!”

“No, no can't do. Me sachem, yes; but can't stop 'em, now. Too many; too bad, too full rum. Me start too big fire. Bring ten t'ousand warrior t'gether, hope scare white mans; no mean harm; but warrior break 'way—want kill, take scalp, burn house, wipe white mans all out.”

The boys looked at him with horror depicted in their faces, too much overcome to say anything more, for they realized the hopelessness of the situation. Philip returned their gaze, at first stonily, then pityingly. “Tell you what,” he finally said, “me no want kill, but me sachem; if no kill, they kill me. Must do!”

“No, you mustn't,” exclaimed Wilfred, recovering his voice. “You *can* stop it, and you must! Why should there be bloodshed?”

“Don' know, but must be. Hobbomocco say so; he know.”

“But he doesn't know, fool,” shouted Winthrop, beside himself with grief and anger. “Some old divil of a medicine man told you, and

you are simple enough to believe it! That's all."

"Mebbe," assented Metacomet, stolidly; "but that no help now. What is, can save fam'ly, p'raps more; but must act quick. Only one sun more mans down there see; then lose scalp! What this you got on hill? Heap big tree, all dry; burn, p'raps, eh?"

He had seen and noted their signal-pile, and perhaps (the thought flashed through Wilfred's brain) he might prevent them from setting off the flame.

But no, it was Philip himself led the way to the top of the rock, and he it was struck flint and steel together, and lighted the flame that flared high into the sky, proclaiming to the doomed people down below their impending disaster.

It was a strange situation: a man on murder bent warning his prospective victims against—himself!

CHAPTER VII.

THE WAR'S FIRST MASSACRE.

THE grim humor of the proceeding must have struck Philip forcibly, for he turned to the boys, who were close behind him, filled with wonderment, and said, with a shrug of his broad shoulders: "Huh! what my mans think? You no tell Metacom light big fire!"

"No, no, of course not," they hastily assured him. "But," Wilfred added, after a pause, "King Philip, you have already lighted a bigger fire than this, by inciting your warriors against the white people. Has it spread beyond control, think you. Can't you quench it?"

"'Fraid not," he answered after a long silence, during which he seemed lost in profound thought. "Not want to, neither. White mans do much harm to Metacom; now he pay back." He gave the blazing pile a vicious poke with a long pole

he held in his hand, then went back and sat down on a rock, with the boys.

There and then, in the intervals of feeding the flames, he narrated the story of his grievances against the white settlers, and of his people. They may have been in some measure imaginary; but after he had finished, neither Wilfred nor his brother could truthfully assert that he had no cause for complaint. In fact, they already knew as much, and though they pleaded the cause of their friends and the white people generally, it was with but faint hearts they did so.

Here follows, however, the gist of Philip's complaints, divested of the barbarisms with which it was clothed in his rude speech. It was a prevalent rumor in the settlements that Philip knew far more of English than he chose to reveal in his speech, having been instructed mainly by a half-brother who had received his education at Harvard college. This half-brother was later killed in battle, fighting for his people and against those who had endeavored to lift him from barbarism and into the light of civilization.

Be this as it may be, Philip could express himself with force and even elegance, at times, when wrought upon by the mood that followed con-

temptation of his people's wrongs, and his listeners were almost persuaded that he was more "sinned against than sinning."

The trouble began, he said, away back in 1660, when his brother, Alexander, died of a fever caused by exposure from having been arbitrarily summoned before the magistrates at Plymouth in mid-winter. His lamentable fate had so impressed Philip that he resolved, when he attained to the sachemship of his tribe, that he would not obey any such mandate from the Plymouth Pilgrims. In fact, he successfully evaded their summons, by playing upon their well-known rivalry with the Massachusetts authorities, appealing to the latter for justice which, he asserted, was always denied him by the Plymouth men.

In the matter of granting lands to white settlers, Philip had always been generous, for, though receiving pay for them, it was in such contemptible sums, or nearly worthless goods in barter, that he soon had nothing to show for his once broad domain. The land, however, was always in evidence, and as the settlers resented the fact that Philip and his men still claimed the privilege of hunting over it at will, which they denied, the king saw that he had parted with his

vast patrimony for a "mess of pottage,"—and as he had eaten the pottage, he felt very sore and heart-sick, indeed.

But, he stifled his resentment until, having put one of his men to death, an interpreter named Sassamon, for betraying his plans to the whites, the authorities at Plymouth had demanded that the murderers of Sassamon suffer the extreme penalty, also, for their crime. In truth, they sent and arrested three Indians, whom they tried in court at Plymouth, before a jury composed half of Indians and half of English, and sentenced them to be hanged. It was claimed that they had killed Sassamon on a frozen pond, supposed to be the Assawomset, and then thrust his body through a hole in the ice, leaving his hat and gun outside, as though he had fallen in and drowned.

This murder was committed early in the spring of 1675, and the body was found at the breaking up of the ice. Two of the Indians sentenced to be hung protested their innocence, and Philip declared they were innocent; but his protests were not heeded, and they were executed. This affair wrought the culmination of a long period of resentment on Philip's part, during which he

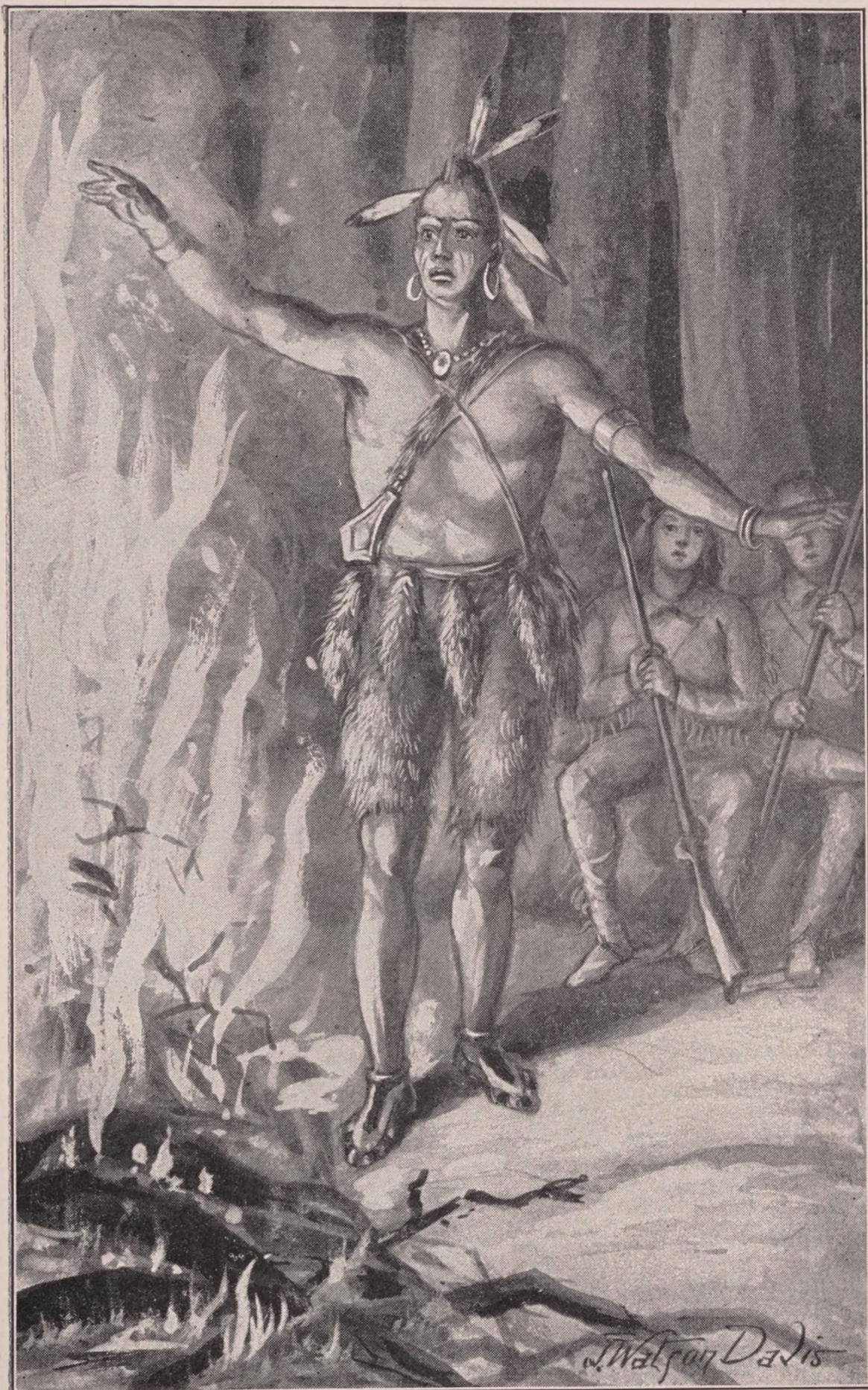
had brooded over an insult to his majesty and might, four years before.

It was in 1671 that, hearing that Philip had been inciting the Narragansets to rebellion and preparing for a struggle with the white invaders of his territory, the Plymouth court summoned him to appear before it and explain his actions. At first he refused to obey; and it might have been better for him in the end if he had persisted in this refusal, for, finding him guilty, the authorities punished him by taking away his guns, to the number of seventy. Philip had appeared at Plymouth in all the panoply of war, with regalia of wampum beads, and fully armed. He took with him a large retinue of warriors, also armed, and insisted upon occupying seats in the meeting-house, where the trial was held, on the opposite side from the English. But, notwithstanding all his precautions, he was overawed by a body of armed white men stronger than his own, and compelled to deliver up his guns. The Plymouth people took away all the guns he and his men had with him then, and Philip promised to deliver all others in their possession. But he was merely making the best of a bad bargain, at the time, and having extri-

cated himself from the toils, never fulfilled his promise in respect to a complete disarmament.

No sooner, in fact, were the enraged Wampanoags once more in their forests, than they vowed vengeance against the English, and Philip bent every energy toward accomplishing the great desire of his heart: a union of all the New-England Indians against the whites. He succeeded in compromising the powerful Narragansets, and by working warily for several years, formed a league comprising more than ten thousand warriors.

He had drawn arms and ammunition from every quarter: from the Dutch settlers along the Hudson; from disaffected English on the New-England coast, and even from the French of far-distant Canada. All this warlike material was carefully hoarded, buried in pits and hollow trees, and concealed in dense swamps, against the day appointed for the bloody uprising, which was already determined. This day of reckoning, when the Indians expected to totally extirpate the white settlers all along the coast, was fixed for the early summer of 1676; but the execution of Sassamon (whom Philip denounced as a traitor) precipitated the catastrophe, and cost the



“No, Metacom never stop fighting white mans till he dead!
He better be dead sachem than live coward!”

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—In King Philip's War.

New-Englanders an ultimate loss of more than 600 lives, besides an immense amount of property.

“Can’t keep warriors quiet any more,” said Metacom, after this recital of his own and his people’s woes. “Must kill somebody. Want blood! blood! blood! White mans’ blood! That only can wash out Indian wrongs.”

As Metacom said this he stood erect and spread out his arms, reaching his hands upward as if imploring the aid of heaven for his cause. In silent awe the two youths looked upon that magnificent figure, outlined against the red flames of the beacon-fire, and listened to the torrent of rude eloquence with which the injured King denounced the doings of their own race and people.

“No,” he shouted; “No, Metacom never stop fighting white mans till he dead! He better be dead sachem than live coward!”

With these words, he leaped aside, into the outer darkness, and disappeared. The boys listened long, but no sound came back, for he had penetrated the woods with the stealth and noiseless movements of a serpent. They looked at each other and rubbed their eyes, as if awakened from a dream, a horrible nightmare; but there before them was the beacon-flame, now burning

low and sending forth fitful showers of sparks, though all around was darkness and silence.

“ Well, we've got Philip's side of it, anyway,” said Wilfred, at last breaking the silence. “ And there isn't the least doubt in my mind that he told the truth, for the settlers *have* wronged him and his people from the very first. Even Massasoit was cheated and hoodwinked, his lands stolen from him under pretence of purchase, and his choice hunting grounds taken.”

“ But, I always understood,” said Winthrop, “ that the Pilgrims paid both Massasoit and Metacom for all the lands they took, and never seized them forcibly.”

“ Yes, so they did; but how much did they pay them? I remember one time seeing copies of some deeds, and the payments were something like this: In 1662, the settlers of Dedham purchased what is now the township of Wrentham, six miles square, for 24 pounds. In '68 some of our people in Swansea bought 500 acres for 20 pounds, and the year before Goodman Willet paid Philip only ten pounds for a tract a mile wide and two miles long! And yet, he was well paid, when the prices he received are compared with the truck that Massasoit was paid in, con-

sisting mostly of beads, old nails, kettles and rusty muskets."

"Yet methinks," said Winthrop, "that it be very foolish, not to say criminal, for Metacom to make war, and he will surely rue the day he does it."

"Surely as the sun doth shine each morning," assented Wilfred solemnly. "And we must not allow our sympathies to blind us to the enormity of his acts. I misdoubt if we do not have many friends slain in the coming war, which may already be waging along what we might call the skirmish line, down in the settlement.

"Did father see the signal, I wonder, and will he abandon the farm and bring mother and sister and grandmother, all, up here?"

"He said he would," answered Winthrop. "God grant he may, and as many of our neighbors as he can prevail upon to leave!"

"That is their only hope, meseems. I'm all a-tremble, Wil., with the doubt and fear of what may happen next."

"And I. But whatever followeth, we must demean ourselves like men. The fort is not yet finished, nor is there shelter enough for many souls; still, we shall expect help from the others, when they come.

In conversation, thus, the boys passed the night, watching and replenishing the fire, and speculating upon the fate of the two who had gone to ambush Philip in the forest.

“We must seek for them when daylight comes,” said Wilfred. “Hark!” That was the report of a musket; and there is another! Two gun-fires; what can that mean? Perhaps they have broken loose and taken a shot at the King as he passed them by. I know not how else to account for that double discharge. What think you, Wint.?”

“As you say, brother; or mayhap Metacom hath shot them both.”

“I misdoubt that. He is greatly wrought upon by the recounting of his wrongs; but I do not think Metacom would kill them in cold blood, gagged and unarmed as they were.”

The youths were left long in doubt, or until daybreak, when, at its first dawning, appeared the two for whose safety they had feared. Their skins were whole, and both carried the muskets with which they had departed; but their demeanor was changed. Like whipped curs, or wolves caught in a pit, they sneaked into camp and sat down on a log, at first without a word,

then humbly responding only when first addressed by their friends.

“Oh, nawthin’,” finally answered Hen. Avery, in response to the repeated questions as to what had happened. “Leastwise, not much.”

“Nawthin’ much but what yew know ’bout a’ready,” added Jabe. “Guess yer friend’s told yer, so what’s the use?”

“Hold on, Jabe.,” exclaimed Hen., “Don’t fer- git the promise. Boys, s’pose we might’s well spit her out now’s any time, an’ the gist of it is that Metacom give us our lives on we agreein’ to make peace with yew fellers an’ jine agin’ the common inemy, which is them all-fired Injuns. He says they’s great carryin’s on down in th’ settlemunt, and if we values our skins we’d better stay right here.”

“Well, you’re welcome,” replied Wilfred. “The only question is, do you value your skins more’n the lives of them that’s dear to us down in the plain? Shall we stay here, or go and join in the fight?”

“As tew that air,” interjected Jabe., “seems t’ me if the mischief’s to be done, it’s done a’ready, and the best thing we can do is tew stay. Havin’ saved our skins by the skin of our teeth,

so to say, we kinder valyoo 'em pooty high, jest naow, eh, Hen.?"

"That's the talk, Jabe. But mine's pooty empty—speakin' of skins. Ain't got any licker of any sort up here, have ye, Bill? I been a-spittin' cotton ever sence that durned Injun—I mean King Philup, an' wouldn't say a word agin him for th' world!—took that air gag out'n my mouth, an' I'm 's empty 's a drum that's been beat a week."

"I b'lieve there some of father's hard cider left," answered Wilfred; "but as Wint. and I drink nothing but water, I can't vouch for it."

"Don't ask yer to, do we, Jabe? We'll do the vouchin'. Jest keep yer eyes skinned an' see us do it, that's all."

Little time was lost by the pair in hunting out the cider jug and "sampling" what it contained. It was evidently very satisfactory, for the jug was passed quite frequently from one to the other, and when they got through the last one tipped it up very nearly perpendicular to the horizon.

"That's the stuff," said Hen., while both smacked their lips with satisfaction. "Now I feel 'bout right, an' ain't got no inimity 'g'inst

nobody, not even Philicommet, or whatever he calls hisself. But say, what's that noise down below? Sound somethin' like a hoss a-comin' up th' hill. An' by gum, it *is* a hoss, sure's your born, an' a lot of people behind of him, too!"

"Old Whitey," exclaimed Winthrop, jumping to his feet; "and father, and all the family! Oh, Wil., they're safe! they're safe!"

"Safe so far, anyway, thank God!" devoutly exclaimed his brother, joining in the race to meet the refugees, who, owing to the steepness of the ascent, had almost reached the brow of the hill before they were discovered.

"Oh, father, mother, then you did see the beacon fire? And you brought Dorothy, and grandmother—and the cat. See, Wint., they've got even old Sam. You must have had plenty of time to get ready, then, father. Had the Injuns really reached there ere you left?"

"Hold on a bit, Wil., my son, till we're all safe alighted. There now, folks, here we are. Whoa, Whitey! Git down, mother. Take your sister, Win. She ain't a bit sorry to be here, I'll wage; nor, as to that, air any of us, either though 'twas ruther suddin, howsomever—"

Goodman Wilkins looked around with a sigh

of relief, but his brow clouded at sight of Jabe and Hen. standing deferentially by. He didn't like the sight of them anyway, on general principles; but just now there was such a change from their wonted demeanor that he looked at them open-mouthed, seemingly astonished. "What's struck you two, anyhow?" he asked. "Look's though ye'd been thrashed!"

"Guess we hev, pooty nigh it," answered Hen., sheepishly. "P'raps you wouldn't look this way if you'd had a chip in your mouth all night's we have."

"What! th' Injuns been here, too?"

"One on 'em has, an' the biggest rooster 'f the gang, too."

"Sho! Ye don't say so. I thought he's down firin' the village."

"No, father," interposed Wilfred, who was holding little Dorothy in his arms, and kissing her plump red cheeks, while Winthrop was similarly engaged with his mother; "No, father, it was Philip that fired the beacon-pile, in order to give you warning."

"Wha-at? That savage give us a warnin'? Why, when we left, his men were killin' cattle and firin' into buildin's, and makin' ready to burn

Parson Miles' garrison-house. I tried to git the parson to come along; and as to that, we urged all that we could find to j'ine us up here on the hill; but none of 'em would listen, so we come alone."

"Had anybody been killed when you left, father?" asked Wilfred.

"Not's I know of; but it wa'n't any fault of the Injuns, for they was firin' their muskets fast enough by th' time we was packed. Why, the fields was full of 'em, all at once, and they seemed to have dropped down out of the clouds. And work quick? Why, our house was a-burnin' before we had gained the woods.

"Our home gone? Oh dear! But 'twas lucky you saw the fire, wasn't it? You might have been burned up in it, mightn't you?"

"Looks that way Wil., my son. But, bless the Lord for all His mercies, we're all safe, so far, and here will we abide."

CHAPTER VIII.

KING PHILIP TAKES REVENGE.

THE twenty-fifth of June, 1675, was a memorable day in New England's calendar, for then were hostilities actually commenced in the great "King-Philip's War," which placed the instigator of them beyond the pale of forgiveness. Hitherto, as in the proceedings of 1671, the English had striven to keep peace with Philip, and had winked at his enormities when he faithfully promised to be their friend henceforward. But in the four years intervening, as it was now shown beyond a doubt, he had been secretly inciting all the neighboring tribes to join with him in open rebellion. Only the death of Sassamon, bringing about a maturing of his schemes a year in advance of the time he had set, revealed his perfidy in all its hideousness.

Close after the arrival of Goodman Wilkins

and his family at the Hilltop Fort—as we shall hereafter call the boys' retreat—came several fugitives from the settlement, bearing tidings of more distressful proceedings than any he and his had heard or experienced.

Among these fugitives was the beloved and devoted Minister of the Swansea congregation, Rev. John Miles, who, from his militant propensities was known as the “fighting parson.” It was in his house, (which, being larger than any other in the settlement, had been fortified and garrisoned,) that many of the inhabitants took refuge, when it was known that the Indians were decidedly hostile. “Parson Miles' garrison,” as it was called, became afterward widely known through the gallant defense its inmates made at the outbreak of the war.

Having come from Swansea in Wales, he may have bestowed upon the settlement in America the name by which it was known. At all events, he was minister of the first Baptist church in Massachusetts, which was established at Rehoboth, a few miles distant from Swansea, to which latter place he removed a few years before the outbreak of the war. Highly respected by all, he was a force for good in the community, and nat-

urally looked up to as a leader in any movement for its betterment or defense.

He had escaped from the garrison in the night, while it was but imperfectly beleaguered by the Indians, and made his way to the Fort, in order to ascertain if it would provide a safe retreat from the settlement, in case of necessity. Goodman Wilkins was a deacon in his church, of which he was a "pillar of support," whose advice was often sought by the parson—but not always taken.

The Goodman had urged him strongly to accompany him in retreat; but the Parson thought his duty lay with his flock, gathered in the garrison house, so would not consent. Thinking the matter over, however, he came to the conclusion that if the Indians multiplied as they had already increased around the settlement, the holding out of his garrison was merely a matter of a few days, and had acted upon this conviction.

Although he had desired to bring with him all the non-combatants: the helpless women, the sick, and the children; yet the risks were too great, so he had come alone, bringing only his musket and a pack of provisions on his back.

"For all his many mercies, bless the Lord!"

exclaimed the Parson fervently, as, discovered approaching by an outpost, he was warmly welcomed within the Fort.

“Nay, I cannot tarry long with ye, for my flock below are in need of succor, and I e’en must soon return. And how have we fared? Ill, full sore have we suffered, though it be but a night and a day since ye left us, my brethren and sisters.

“That wary pagan, Metacom, hath now his revenge, which for four years he hath plotted since the death of his warriors who so foully slew the praying Indian, Sassamon. He hath already smitten us full sore, and methinks this be but the beginning of ye bloody war so long meditated by those barbarian savages.

“Immediately ye left, or only yestere’en, some savages appeared in a field adjoining the house of brother White and most barbarously slew some cattle therein grazing. Then they had the exceeding impudence to enter the house and demand strong drink, yea—a noggin of rum—no less, would suffice them, heathen pagans that they were. Well, that insolence was more than Goodman White had the patience to endure, and when they gathered together aside, meditating

murther, perchance, he, to impress them with his means of defense, let fly a shot which wounded one of them in ye thigh.

This, it seemeth, was all those savages awaited, for it is a common tradition amongst them that the side which fires the first shot in a war shall be the one defeated in the end! By directions of Metacom, 'tis said, they refrained from firing that first, most fateful shot, and for the reason aforesaid, urged on our settlers, by their many and unprovoked barbarities, until they were exasperated beyond what their temper could endure. Hence resulted that fatal firing of ye musket by said Goodman White, and the wounding of ye savage, whom his companions, (with great manifestation of rage, albeit with glee, to think their artful scheme had prevailed) hastened away to acquaint Metacom ('tis said) of the happening, which so far furnished him with excuse for further villainy."

"But, were any of our friends slain, or injured aught," asked Mother Wilkins, voicing the question all would fain have put.

"Yea, sister, that they were," answered Parson Miles. "Presently I shall come to that; but all things in order, sister."

The good man was accustomed to arrange his material for sermons in regular divisions, and proceed leisurely through the various "fifthlys" "sixthlys," and "lastlys" to the end, despite the impatience of his listeners. So on this occasion, though evidently filled almost to bursting with news of dire happenings, he still would have his way in communicating it.

"Yea, indeed there hath been bloody doing down below, and, if rumor be correct, more than eight of our people, including some of Pocasset and Kickamuit, have been most murtherously slain!"

"Eight, already?" exclaimed his awed listeners.

"No less, friends, no less. In the first instance, two men of the Plymouth company were killed when on their way to, and in sight of, my own garrison house. I knew them not; but suffice it they were our fellow-citizens, of our blood and breed, and it irked me that they should not have gained the shelter of my house. Inasmuch that I and others by me fired a volley at ye bloody band as they appeared in the highway leading hither, and, we think, laid low at least two of the raging pagans.

“Neither knew I the six who were slain, soon after, at Matapoit; but they, also, were countrymen of ours and entitled to our assistance—which, alas, we could not bestow. And moreover, upon their mangled bodies did those vile heathen wreak their vengeful, brutish barbarities, for they beheaded them, every one, dismembered them, and set their heads and limbs upon tall poles by the roadside, in order to strike ye damp of terror into all who might behold them!”

This sad tale was greeted with exclamations of pity, terror and distress, by the little company assembled within the Fort, and there was dire misgiving in the hearts of all.

“The blow hath fallen, then,” said Goodman Wilkins, sadly. “I had hoped it might have been averted, Parson. What think'st thou?”

“Much I misfear it hath its course to run,—that plague which Metacom hath started, so far hath it become disseminate. Hitherto we have brought said sachem to reason, held him within bounds, by treaty full oft, and by depriving him of firearms; but now, it to me seemeth, he hath burst beyond all bounds.”

“Are you sure that Metacomet was in Swan-

sea?" asked Wilfred, "It might have been some one else who committed the deeds."

"Some one else, yea, forsooth," answered the Parson; "but whomsoever it may have been, they were inspired by the devilish spirit of the sachem you call Metacomet, Philip, or whatever."

"Bill. and Wint. air mighty good friends of the heathen," said Hen. Avery, who, with Jabe. Brown, had overheard the conversation, being now considered as of the garrison. "Mighty good friends, they be, and you'd better not sass him when they're 'round, lemme tell ye."

The Parson's scorn of these two unregenerate members of the community in which he dwelt was equaled only by that of Goodman Wilkins, (but not excelled), for they had been as thorns in the sides of both parson and deacon for many years. But still, he could not quite ignore this pointed allusion to the intimacy existing between the sachem and his young friends, so he asked them how true it was that they had a friendship with the chief.

They frankly admitted the charge, and told their pastor all about the first meeting, as well as the last. He listened attentively, then thought a while before he said: "I cannot see that either

of you hath been culpable. You did not seek the acquaintance of Metacom; but to the contrary, it seemeth, he sought yours. It may be good might come of this, peradventure it were followed up and the sachem induced to listen to reason and argument. What say, Wilfred, my son, would you be willing to seek out this raging beast of a King and endeavor once more to make him call quits? I cannot say that he hath not gone too far ever to be pardoned by the colonial court; but at least he might be driven into exile, without his life paying forfeit for his misdeeds."

"I would be willing," answered Wilfred, "and I fear not Philip nor his followers; but I'm sure it would be a bootless mission. Remember, sir, that he is already forfeit of his life in regards to the affair of Sassacom; for there be no doubt the court intended to hang him, once they got him in their power. Philip knew this so well he hath held aloof, and it is not likely he will of his own motion place his head within the hangman's noose, which is now dangling from the gallow-tree at Plymouth. There are two sides to this story of Sassamon's murder. Philip hath told me his side; and we all know the other."

"Be careful, lad, be careful. Do not say thou

takest sides with this unregenerate pagan, who hath mocked our religion, laughed to scorn our ministers and law-givers, besides having committed murder—yea, murders many, 'tis like—the headstrong, heartless wretch that he is.”

Thus the Parson cautioned this young member of his flock, having the right to admonish, even to chastise, if he saw fit.

“Didn't I tell ye, Parson, he's a good friend of the king,” said Hen. Avery with a chuckle. “He's all the time a-stickin' up for the varmint, e'enamost 's though he's his own kin.”

“Since I'm the only one who defends King Philip,” answered Wilfred slowly, and without taking notice of Hen. Avery's sneer, “it can matter little what I say, being in the minority. But, you have said it when you have called him '*king!*' That is the gist of the whole matter, for, as he himself told me, peradventure he be king—and he hath long been recognized as such—why, then, do not the court and other dignitaries treat him as such?”

“‘Let the king of England send me an ambassador,' he hath said, ‘and with him I will treat; but not with his acknowledged *servants*. I serve no man,' he said, furthermore, ‘and to no man

bow the knee! These servants of the English king would sign treaties with me, as if I were a king; but they scan all my doings and threaten me with punishment, as I might be of a truth their serving-man and even slave.' ”

“Sooth, Metacom hath a sturdy pleader in thee, son Wilfred. But let not thy liking for him lead thee astray. Being thus, however, thou art the very one to send in search of him, and, once found, to reason with him, plead, if necessary,—to cause him to turn about, recant, and abandon the evil of his ways.”

“Dost think it necessary that he should go, Minister?” asked Wilfred’s mother, having listened silently, but with blanching cheeks, to the conversation that led up to this decision. “He is full young, methinks, to entrust with such a mission. And—and, having been separated from us, now, two months and more, we have looked forward to some weeks of tarrying in his company.”

“Sister Wilkins,” replied the Parson, with an assumption of sternness which (let us hope) he did not feel, “thou art the last one I should expect to find weak-kneed, in a cause like this, and at a time like this. Dost not know that many

precious lives—perchance hundreds, or thousands, may hang upon his decision? Remember, sister, the injunctions of Holy Writ, with which the good Book aboundeth, to give all, without reserve, to the cause of the Lord. This, our cause, is certainly that of the Lord and the righteous on one side, and that of the devil and the unregenerate heathen on the other.”

“Yes, I know,” rejoined the mother; “but he is my first-born, e’en though yet young, and alway he hath been as the apple of my eye. If I felt convinced he should go, I would——”

“Then be thou convinced, sister Wilkins,” exclaimed the imperious parson, “for the cause demandeth it. I say it, and let that suffice.

“When can you go, my son? The sooner the better.”

“To-morrow, anytime,” answered Wilfred. “But, I do not know the whereabouts of Metacom at present. It may be sending me off on a wild-goose chase, anyway. Would it not be better to await some tidings of him, reverend sir? Perhaps he may appear soon at this place; perhaps he may be far away—I know not.”

“Time is most precious,” rejoined the Parson; “but, as thou sayest, it were better to await

some tidings of the pagan's whereabouts. I will bide here one day more; for I can add nothing to the strength of the garrison, peradventure I descend. Meanwhile, we will pray without ceasing, pray for guidance in this momentous matter. For the Lord is our Shepherd; we shall not want, we shall not go astray, if we place our faith in Him."

"Amen," fervently exclaimed Goodman Wilkins and his wife.

"We are but clay in the hands of the potter," continued the former. "Howsoever the Lord formeth us, it is the shape we are to take; wherever He leadeth us, that is the direction we shall go. My son, thou wilt obey the commands of the Lord, as expressed through this, His servant."

"I will, father," assented Wilfred earnestly. "I have no other wish."

"But I'd like to go with Wil.," now spoke up his brother. "We two can do much more than either one alone. Besides, I hate to have him go all by himself. He might find himself in peril, and——"

"No, my son," hastily interposed his mother. "It is not necessary, I'm sure, for both my children to be offered up, a sacrifice. Not both."

“Nay, not both,” exclaimed the father, looking toward the Minister wistfully, yet with an expression in his face which plainly said: “even though thou slayest me, yet will I obey.”

“Nay, nay, only one,” replied the Parson. “Think not me cruel, dearest sister and brother; but I view the matter in the capacity of judge, impartially, having in mind the best good of all.”

“We misdoubt not,” said Goodman Wilkins, and his wife bowed her head. To this humble assent there might have been a protest, had little Dorothy been awake; but during all the conversation she had slumbered in her brother’s arms. Imprinting a kiss on her lips, he gave her in charge of her grandmother, who was weeping silently by, though having taken no part in the discussion.

“God will go with thee, my child,” she said, with a feeble attempt to smile through her tears. “Put your trust in Him; fear not the heathen. They have raged, lo, these many years, and have not prevailed against the chosen of the Lord!”

“Nor will they ever,” added the youth, patting her withered cheek and bending over to kiss her forehead. “I have no fear, grandma, and no more should you have here while I am gone.

“Of course, it would be pleasanter, far, to stay here with you, now that we are assembled once more together; but it may not be for long I shall be absent. Sooth to say, however, I know not where or how to proceed; but the day may show.”

All unexpectedly, the day did show, before its ending, a way for reaching the King, for his whereabouts were revealed by a messenger who came, with tidings direct, that he was then at his ancient seat, Mount Hope, or Pokanoket.

CHAPTER IX.

'A GREAT INDIAN FIGHTER APPEARS.

THE time set for Parson Miles' departure had arrived, and, in default of other direction in which to turn, Wilfred was to accompany him down to the Garrison. So they set out together, Wilfred in advance, in order to break away from the leave-takings, to which he was adverse. He carried, besides his musket, a pack of wolf skins and scalps, and some skins of foxes, also, which he and his brother had snared in early spring, when the fur was at its best, thick, soft and of good color.

From these spoils of the forest the boys hoped to obtain a large reward for their skill and prowess; not in money, but in barter, and it was Wilfred's intention first to deposit the pack at the garrison house, and on his return take it to Taunton, where the proper officials resided who paid

bounties for wolf-scalps, and where was situated the only trading-post, or store, of consequence.

As the good Parson tarried behind for quite a while, Wilfred strolled along leisurely, with his musket in the hollow of his arm, eye and ear alert for signs of savages. Merely because the trail or road from Swansea to Hilltop had not been frequented as yet by Indians, was no reason, he rightly thought, that there might not be some in that vicinity; so he kept on the watch. About half way down the great hill his vigilance was rewarded by the sight of a prowling figure on the edge of the wood bordering the roadway—a human figure at that—very evidently as anxious not to be seen as Wilfred was to get a glimpse of it. The two had probably caught sight of each other at the same time, and both dodged back into the friendly shelter of the trees at once. Then ensued an amusing rivalry between the two presumptive enemies,—for the boy assumed the moving object to be an Indian, of course—each trying to outwit the other by practising what he knew of the art of woodcraft.

Although neither, at the outset, arrived in sight of the other, each knew, of course, that he was contriving to get a shot without himself be-

ing seen. They were steadily approaching—as the sequel showed—and at first, though all was silent, no noise breaking the stillness save the cawing of crows, and the tapping of a woodpecker's bill on the trunk of a dead tree, finally Wilfred's trained ear detected a crackling sound. His heart and his body stood still (it seemed to him) at the same moment, and placing his ear to the ground he listened intently for a repetition of the startling sound.

Soon it came, although slightly different from the other, yet much nearer. He was then stretched at full length behind a log that lay prostrate on the earth, and, as he knew very well, if he could but raise his head he might perceive the object he sought to know more about. Then flashed into his mind the recollection of a trick an old trapper had taught him, and he at once put it in practice. It was this: to place his cap on the end of his ramrod, and then slowly lift it above the log, as if he were himself peering over to get a look at the enemy.

The instant he did so—as he expected—there rang out the report of a firearm, and a bullet ploughed through the cap on the ramrod. Instantly, Wilfred lowered the rod, as if the head

presumably within it had fallen to the ground, and then, with wildly-beating heart, but with steady nerves and musket held firmly, he leaped to his feet.

The wood was thick in front of him, being more open near the ground than at the height of his head; but he heard the sound of someone breaking through the underbrush, rapidly approaching, and soon saw the figure of a man.

Up went his flintlock to his shoulder, and, up went that of the approaching man, also. But, instead of firing at each other, the would-be contestants awaited, with their muskets leveled, each what the other had to say. The invader was the first to break silence, which he did in a stentorian voice, exclaiming:

“So it was a boy that fooled me, eh? A mere sapling, at that, fooled the old Indian fighter, Captayne Benjamin Church, who ought to have known better than to be taken in by a trick like that. Where you from, Boy? And where'd you learn that trick?”

“Up above,” answered Wilfred, lowering his musket. “Oh, that dodge I learned of old Ben Jackson. As you say, it is simple, and I wonder——”

“Of course you do, my boy—you wonder how it took me in. But, I was thinking only that there was an Injun in front of me, sure enough; and didn’t expect to find one of my kind.

“But, what d’ you mean by ‘up above?’ Didn’t know there was anything beyond this p’int but forest and wilderness, except perhaps a pasture or two, where they put out their sheep.”

“That’s it,” answered Wilfred. “One of those pastures belongs to father, so my brother and I have been up there tending the sheep ever since last April. We’ve got a fort there, too, a refuge.”

“You have, hey? Well, I’d like to see it, I vum! Didn’t know there was anything beyond this p’int,” he repeated, “so your coming sort of s’prised me. Who’s your father? Goodman Wilkins, you say? Sho! He’s one of the oldest friends I’ve got. I live down to what they call Sogkonate, in the Injun language, but what I call Little Compton, where I’ve got a farm.

“Leastwise, I had one, but guess by this time the savages have done their best to turn it back to a wilderness ag’in. That’s what we call ‘turnin’ Injun,’ you know,—when land that’s been once cultivated runs wild ag’in. And,

seems to me, there'll be a lot of it that way soon, if we don't check Metacom in his rampagings."

"Yes, indeed," assented Wilfred. "That's what we all think, and that's what Minister Miles says. You know him, don't you? He's right behind me somewhere, coming down the hill."

"Know him? Know Parson Miles, the Welshman? Guess I do, and it's from his garrison I've just come. We had a bit of a scrimmage there last night, but beat the pagans away after a stiff fight, and losing seven of our number by bullets.

"Yes, seven, I'm sorry to say; but you don't know 'em, tain't likely, being's they're Massachusetts soldiers, just arrove.

"Ha, there's the Parson! Look at him, now, marching along with a musket on his shoulder, just like any scout or soldier. But, he don't keep the watch out that a scout might, I must confess. He's prob'bly thinkin' of his next Sabbath's sermon, and laying down the law to saints and sinners.

"Hello, Parson. What ye up to, eh? Ain't going to shoot Injuns, be ye?"

Thus rudely interrupted in his meditations,

Parson Miles drew up suddenly and looked around in a dazed sort of fashion. But when his gaze alighted on the pair of watchers by the roadside his eye brightened, and he advanced with hand extended.

“Well, well, well, Captain Church, how came you here? I know what brings you—the exigency of war; but you are expeditious, my good sir. It is a far distance from here to Little Compton.”

“Yes, Minister, that’s the truth; but travel fast and far we must, when the country needs our services. Only three days ago I had a confab, long and serious, with the Governor and court at Plymouth, who desired me to hasten hither and collect some yeomen for to ferret out that conspirator against our peace, Metacomet, who, I hear, yet harbors at his seat at Pokanoket.

“Ha, sayest thou so? Then thou art for going thither, Captain, of a surety, since always thou art at the forefront of the fray.”

“You have said it, Parson, and I was but beating up some yeomen for company when I chanced across this young blade. And, faith, he all but put me out of business, old warrior that I am!”

“How so?” asked the minister. And he was

at first greatly shocked, then as greatly diverted, at learning of the artifice by which Wilfred drew the veteran's fire.

“Sooth, you cannot do less than take him with you, Captain—at least, so far as he desires to go, for to a certain point you two are in accord: that is, both are in search of Metacom.”

“Is that so, youngster? Wouldst kill the fiendish pagan?”

“No, not I,” stoutly answered the youth. “I would, rather, save his life, peradventure it were endangered, than shed his blood.”

“Oh, ho! Then thou'rt not the blade I'm looking for, my boy. For, knowest thou not, this is to be a war to the death, knife and tomahawk to sword and musket; and no quarter asked on either side.”

“Be that so,” rejoined Wilfred, “I would yet seek to avert blood-shed by both sides. Our skins are different from those of the foe; but the same kind of blood flows through our veins, I believe.”

“Nay, nay, boy; not so! Believe me, though both bloods may be of the same color, yet methinks they have different virtues. In the sanguineous stream of t'other side are carried malignant humors that defy correction. Only by

letting of it out can we make its owners good and virtuous, fit to be citizens conjointly with us."

"But then they would be dead. Meanest thou, sir, that they should all be killed?"

"Nay, not all, only the bad ones."

"But, how would you discriminate?"

"Out of their own mouths shall they be condemned," interposed the Minister. "But, a truce to this parleying, my friends. This youth, Captain, desires to find Metacom in order to propose a truce, or perchance a cessation of hostilities, and since thou knowest his whereabouts, thou art the man for the business."

"Yea, am I," answered the fighter. "But it irks me to take thither an emissary of peace, when my conviction sure is that the only satisfactory one is a bullet sent direct at the heart of said proud pagan."

"Still, the lad is stout and plucky. Let him try his plan, and thereafter will be time enough to try mine—which is sword and bullet."

"Then he goes with thee, Captain?"

"If he choose. I like the lad too well, however, to deliver him into the hands of the enemy. It is almost certain death, in my opinion, for him to 'proach Metacom in his present temper."

“I’ll chance it,” responded Wilfred. “Metacomb thinks I know him well enough to have no doubt as to my welcome.”

“Yea, well enow, perchance; but yet there are his sub-chiefs, or *sagamores*, to be considered. Know ye not, my friends, that it was on account of what he called Philip’s white-livered surrender of his arms, that one of his *sagamores* deserted him for the settlers’ side?

“‘I’ll fight on the side of the fire-guns,’ said the sub-chief; ‘and so be it Metacom hath surrendered his, I go over to the side of the *Umpame* men men’—as he called the Plymouth colonists.

“So, as I said, and here now repeat, there be many minds to satisfy other than that of Metacom, even peradventure he be inclined for peace—which is the most preposterous thing to entertain in the world.”

“But you’ll take me with you, and perchance the opportunity presents, that will allow me to attempt to reach the sachem?”

“Yea, that will I. But, if thy life be lost, or thy blood be shed vainly, blame not me for that.

“Now, let me tell ye, Minister, what I have already done in order to prevail upon these

heathen savages for to surrender and give over their designs.

“Thou knowest, Minister, the Indianess called the Squaw-Sachem—as she is styled,—of Pocasset. She is near of kin to Metacom, some say half-sister; but, notwithstanding, she be well inclined toward the Plymouth colonists. Howsomever, as my way hither led through her lands, I tarried to have parley with her.

“First, however, I passed through the lands pertaining to that other Indian sachemess, Awashonks of the Sogkonates, near my place.

“I had heard that emissaries of Philip had incited a dance, which, you know, is the sure precursor of war. And sure enough, when I arrived at her wigwam, there were hundreds of painted warriors there, within and round about, and Awashonks herself, in a foaming sweat, was leading of the dance.

“She received me civilly enow, and broke off her own part in the performance—though the others continued, unmindful of my presence—and sat down with me to parley. At the same time she called to six of Philip’s men—who, it seemeth, had come to make the dance and invite her to partake in the uprising—to join with us.

“ So there I was, surrounded by the heathens, the men of Metacom being all in war-paint, their ugly faces painted black and their bristly hair combed up atop their heads adorned with fish-hawk's feathers. They had their powder-horns, too, and bullet-bags at their backs,—which proved to me that they were rigged for war. I felt of their bullet-pouches and finding there great store, asked them, civilly enow, what they were for? The impudent scoundrels stuck their tongues in their cheeks and answered, to *shoot white wolves with*, and made no bones of saying they were the sort of wolves that walked on two legs, too!

“ Now, what think ye of that, Parson Miles? I' faith, it made my blood to boil, and, all unassisted as I was by friend of my own blood, I turned to the Squaw-Sachem, Awashonks, and said, said I, loud enow for all to hear: ‘ The best thing for you would be to knock these Pokanoket villains on the head, else will ye be involved in war from which no red-skin will survive!’

“ And how took they this advice? Well, the Pokanokets blustered a bit; but soon they made excuse to be gone, and went outside to get their muskets. I fully expected to be waylaid on the

journey hither; but as thou seest, here am I, at thy service, and ready to march to-morrow against the heathen in their lairs!

“ Did I win over Awashonks? Yea, did I, for she hath agreed to assemble all her warriors and make for the region beyond the Assawomset ponds (near Middleborough), where the Plymouth people shall protect her from all harm.

“ Thus have I secured at least five hundred innocent heathen from pursuing the ways of Metacom, and diverting them into the right road, which leadeth to peace.

“ After that I also saw the Squaw Sachem of Pocasset, and she hath promised to consider, but hath not yet dismissed the emissaries of Metacom, who were dancing like fiends around her wigwam and gradually drawing in her followers.

“ This is the manner in which the wily Metacom exciteth warlike desires in the minds of his barbarious kindred. She is well-disposed toward us, but she hath great fear of Metacom, who hath threatened to descend upon her territory and put all to the sword,—or rather, to the tomahawk, cutting off the heads of all, if she joineth not with him.

“ And sooth, I pity her, being between two

fires, as it were. For, if she joineth with Metacom, her lands will be ravaged by the whites; if she fleeth toward Plymouth, who shall feed and succor so large a company, peradventure they be well inclined to us?"

In passing, it may be mentioned that the Captain's fears as to the Squaw-Sachem of Pocasset were soon after realized, for, joining with Philip, her territory was the first invaded by the white settlers, her people were either killed or scattered, and she herself was drowned while crossing a river in a canoe. The English soldiers in pursuit found only her corpse, but they cut off her head and set it up on a pole, as a warning to all Indians recreant to their treaty obligations.

While conversing, the three friends were still walking toward the settlement, approaching the outskirts of which they deployed their scanty forces in wary reconnoissance of the town, with its ruins of houses still smoking, where the Indians had applied the torch.

It was indeed a deserted village, for all the sheep and cattle in the fields had been driven off by the savages, and the settlers left alive had sought shelter in the garrison-house, which was the only structure of consequence left standing.

A wide stretch of pasture lay between the trio and the garrison, across which ran the road, so, for the first time, they were obliged to come out into the open. But, as there were no Indians in sight, they gathered together again and made a dash at double-quick, each one with his musket carried ready for use, provided any lurking red-skin should be concealed behind the flanking walls on either side.

It was not possible to scan quite all the field, with its clumps of trees and dividing walls; but there in sight was the great garrison-house, and within it, as all knew, was a company of soldiers, besides the scores of settlers gathered there for shelter.

CHAPTER X.

MINISTER MILES' GARRISON HOUSE.

THEY had crossed half the distance, when Captain Church called a halt. "Belike the garrison is well held," he said, "and the troops may still be there; but I like not the aspect of things. Where are the sentinels? They should be out upon the roof, or at least a gun or two should be visible, somewhere about the place. But all is still as death! Yet, the fort seemeth intact. I understand it not."

"I see something moving, sir, over there by that haystack in yon meadow. Verily, it looketh like an Indian's head!"

"And that it is," exclaimed Captain Church, "or else, what is more probable, the semblance of one, made after the manner in which you yourself deceived me this very morn. But, whether it be or no, what are we doing here, right out in the

open, a fair mark for any enemy to shoot at? Here, let us get behind the corner of this wall. I' faith, we could ask for no better shelter.

“Now, are the muskets primed? We are three, against how many nobody can tell. But there are savages about—that's certain, and they lie between us and the garrison, which is still worse.”

All three were now alert, even the Minister, who had “stopped mooning over his next Sabbath's sermon,” as the Captain expressed it, and was examining the priming of his musket. “It galls me full sore to do so,” he said mournfully, “but if there be fair shot at any prowling savage over there, I shall most assuredly take aim and pull ye trigger, leaving the result to the Lord.”

“That's the talk, Parson,” said the Captain, heartily; “but if the game appeareth outside yon haystack, let me take ye first shot, the lad the second, and you what may remain. It ill becomes a man of God to engage in warfare, until all other expedients fail.

“Ods bodkins, what's that?” he exclaimed, as Wilfred's musket rang out with loud report, and the smoke from pan and muzzle drifted into his very eyes.

“Have a care, lad. Don't allow your gun to explode of itself again. We have no powder to waste, my child.”

“Perchance you will allow that shot was not wasted,” answered Wilfred, withdrawing his musket from the loophole in the wall through which he had thrust it, and beginning to load again in haste. “Peer beneath the smoke cloud and see what you may, by the stack.

“I' faith, but it is a savage, sure enough, stretched prone in death, or else in simulation thereof,” exclaimed the Minister.

“And so it be, by the long horn spoons!” cried the Captain. “Lad, but thou'rt a wonder. My heart, but your eyes are sharp, indeed.” Sharp they be, and thy trigger-finger quick to respond.”

“None too quick,” replied Wilfred, coolly. “Watch the stack closely, sir, for there be others, many, if I mistake not, and it would be strange if they do not rush forth on a sudden. Should they do so, remark that I'm only half loaded, and cannot look two ways at once.”

“Ods furies! thou'rt right,” exclaimed the soldier. “There they come, full tilt: three, four, five—yea, full five of them, charging straight for us now. Minister, fire thou at the right-hand one,

and I'll take the next but two. But, perchance we kill those two, that will leave yet three to combat." And he groaned; but none the less made ready to give the savages a warm reception.

The Minister said nothing, except to assent to the proposed arrangement for firing, while Wilfred also kept silence, but gritted his teeth over the tedious operation of loading.

The Indians had not given utterance to a sound, probably on account of the contiguity of the garrison, wishing to get at their prey without attracting attention. Half way to the angle of the wall, however, they seemed unable to hold tongue longer, but let out fiendish yells, loud enough and terrible enough to "wake the dead."

This had the effect of drawing out the hitherto silent inhabitants of the garrison. The great door swung open suddenly, and there appeared a file of soldiers, headed by an officer waving his sword. Seeing them at the same time they were perceived by the trio in the angle, the savages suddenly veered off towards the woods beyond the field, but still yelping defiance and shaking their tomahawks.

“They won't keep that direction long,” said the Captain. “It's ag'in their rules to go off and leave a dead warrior behind. I'll just make for the stack, and as the savages are running in an angle away from it, when they swerve to it ag'in I'll be there to warm 'em up a bit!”

“I'm with you,” cried Wilfred, who by this time had finished the painful process of charging his piece; and together they leaped over the wall and took a bee-line for the hay-stack.

The soldiers were marching bravely along in a straight line, seemingly expecting the Indians to come their way, in order to get shot; but the latter not being of an accommodating disposition, the distance between the bodies of fighters was constantly increasing. Still, the soldiers had served the purpose of diverting the attention of the common enemy, and probably had saved the situation, if not the lives of our friends.

Wilfred and the Captain had almost reached the stack when—as the former had divined they would do,—the fleeing savages suddenly curved around to the left, with the intention of making a dash for the dead warrior they had left behind. They had not gone far on this course before they saw that to continue thereon would mean certain

death to some of them, probably, and they were thrown into confusion. They halted quickly, huddling together as if in confab, making an excellent mark to fire at; but being at least two hundred yards away, apparently felt themselves secure.

“They want to get that dead Injun mighty bad,” said Captain Church. “If we could only have reached the stack before they turned and saw us, they wouldn’t have hesitated a second, and we might get a shot.

“Tell you what, lad, I’ll chance a shot as ’tis, if you’ll let me rest my musket on your shoulder. What say? The powder may scorch ye, as she flashes in ye pan; but ’twon’t be much.”

“Fire away,” said Wilfred. “Don’t mind me at all. But quickly.”

Taking careful aim, with Wilfred’s shoulder as a rest, the Captain “let drive,” and, astonishing to relate, took one of the Indians in the head. Leaping straight into the air, as if propelled by a bomb that had been sprung beneath him, the savage fell to the ground, dead, amid his astounded comrades.

“That confab’s ended,” exclaimed Captain Church, quietly lowering his musket. “Did she

scorch ye much, my lad? You didn't move a hair."

"Not much," replied Wilfred, putting his hand to his right ear, which was black and bleeding. "But, should we not charge them, now, while they are hampered with the burden of the dead man? See, they are gathering him up to bear away. Soon they will be out of sight in the wood."

"Well, let 'em go. The poor cusses are entitled to one of the two. They might drop him if we pressed 'em close; but we would be getting only another scalp, wuth a shilling, that's all.

"By the way, you'd better save the scalp of that one you shot, my lad, before the sojers get it. You might 's well have the shilling, when it's yours."

Wilfred drew back as if stung by a snake. "No, no," he exclaimed. "I shot the poor critter, because he was our enemy and might have done us hurt. But now he is dead, I will nothing further with him; far be it from me to mutilate the dead."

"Well, lad, you won't be so squeamish after a while, p'raps. Anyhow, I'm going to save that scalp, for it's wuth a shilling, as I said." At

this Captain Church whipped out a keen, long-bladed hunting-knife, and gathering up the Indian's coarse black hair in his left hand, with his right dexterously incised a circle in the scalp, and then with a sudden wrench, removed the gory trophy.

Wilfred turned shudderingly away, and at that moment the soldiers coming up, bringing with them the Minister, he mingled with the throng. Many were the compliments he received for his accuracy of aim, and for so completely frustrating the intent of the savages; but he turned them off by pointing out how superior was the marksmanship of his comrade, who had killed his man at twice the distance. The Minister proposed burying the dead Indian, but Captain Church interposed an objection. "No, let him lay there," he said. "He won't be there overnight, either. Yes, you may watch that carcass as you like, but the sneaking varmints will get him away in spite of ye."

"But in that case," rejoined the Minister, "this dead body will serve as a bait to draw them hither, perchance, and had better be buried, lest it work to our further discomfiture."

"Nay, Parson, let it remain above ground,

and save our strength for greater purposes. If the savages wish to be their own sextons and carrion crows, why let 'em. As to their prowling around—at night—they'll do that anyway, dead man or no dead man. And when they see that he's been sculped, they'll know there's somebody here und' stands their own tactics, and will have more respect for us."

"Mayhap," assented the Parson. "Then, peradventure there be nothing further outside to claim our attention, let us go into the garrison, where I would fain act as host, and invite ye to partake of my hospitality, scant and unworthy though it be."

Inside the great garrison-house, Wilfred found confusion reigning, what with the many settlers gathered there, in addition to the company of Plymouth soldiers. There were but twenty of the latter; but, as Captain Church remarked, they made "noise enow and boasting" for full five score. Immediately he had the ear of their commander, he taxed him with being so delinquent in the matter of guarding the outer walls of the garrison-house.

"Wherefore were ye so tardy in appearing, and why that silence around the house as of the

very grave? We thought, in sooth, that all within were killed."

"We were disputing," said the young commander shamefacedly, "as to the signs and portents pertaining to that great eclipse of ye moon, which was witnessed by ye Massachusetts troops when on their way hither. They encamped around the garrison last night, as you know, and you may have heard that at the time they were on the point of crossing Neponset river, this side Boston, they were of a sudden enveloped in darkness. Affrighted were they, and full sore confused, and especially were they cast down by perceiving in ye very center of ye moon the figure of a savage's scalp. Some saw ye scalp, yet others affirmed that dark spot in ye moon's center to be a sagamore armed with bows and arrows."

"Sagamore, forsooth, ye caitiff! And if so, what of it?"

"Why, if so, some held it to be a bad omen, and presaging disaster to our arms; but if not, they were not so cast down."

"And that ye were so intent upon wrangling about that ye could not give heed to the proper sentineling of the place? Out upon ye! Me-

thinks ye war will never come to a close if we depend on such as ye. What think, Parson, of these signs and portents?"

Minister Miles, who happened at that moment to pass by, halted at this and replied, thoughtfully, "It remindeth me of the answer made by the Roman general, Marcus Cyassus, to one of his soldiers, in a similar event. The soldier expressed fear because of the eclipse occurring in ye sign of Capricornus, but his commander said he cared not for that, so much as if it had occurred in Sagittarius—or the Arrow,—fearing ye arrows of the Parthians, who were his enemies, and very expert archers, withal."

Wilfred found within the garrison many of his friends and former neighbors, most of whom had lost their dwellings, farming-stock and tools,—all they had in the world, in truth. Right in sight from the upper windows of the garrison-house were the ruins of the Wilkins' dwelling, which had been one of the first ones burnt by the Indians. Sadly, and with tears, the boy looked upon the blackened rafters, fallen within the cellar, and thought of the happy days and nights passed in that home, now but a memory.

His heart swelled with resentment against the

author of this outrage; that Indian to whom he had purposed setting out on a mission of peace and good-will. Almost, then, he was willing to forego it and devote himself, heart and soul, to the cause of the colonists. Philip himself was not personally concerned in the burning of the settlement; but it was his hand that lighted the spark from which the conflagration was kindled, which now promised to spread throughout New England and involve thousands in a common ruin.

But, as he reflected on the matter, his better feelings prevailed, and he resolved to pursue his original purpose, which was indeed in the cause of the colonists in a higher, better sense than mere killing and massacre. If, perchance, he could win Philip back to peace, and induce him to declare the war should go no further, he would be gaining a great victory.

But, was it not already beyond his control, even were he disposed to peace? That was something Wilfred could not answer, neither could Captain Church nor the Minister; though the former affirmed with vehemence that nothing short of the death of King Philip would bring the war to a close.

The night was passed in the crowded garrison-house, which was not any too comfortable, despite the endeavors of Minister Miles to make his guests "at home" and forget their terrible losses, or at least lose recollection of them for the time being. In the morning, after a fervent prayer before meat, at the common table, some of the settlers and all the soldiers set out for the "neck" of land leading to the dominions of Philip, across which a stout fence had long since been erected. It was their intention to take down from the poles by the roadside, the heads of several citizens, which had been cut off and placed there by the Indians, nearly a week before. This sad office they performed almost in silence, and it was with spirits greatly depressed that the company turned back from the bridge at the narrowest part of the neck and took up the march homeward.

Just as they turned about, they were fired upon by a company of Indians in ambush, but so far away that only the guide, one William Hammond, was struck by a bullet, which, however, inflicted a mortal wound. Seeing this, most of the troopers—for the company was mounted—scampered off in a hurry; and but for Captain

Church would have left the poor guide to be scalped. Church shook his sword in their faces, backing his horse in front of them, and finally persuaded them to halt. He no longer had a musket, having exchanged it for the sword, in token of his authority to command, but that he greatly preferred the former he himself declared, in his fury calling for some one of the troopers to lend him a carbine, or short musket, telling them he would then show them "what's what, and who's who."

Finally, being unable to make the soldiers do more than stand in their tracks, while he advanced against the concealed enemy, Captain Church called for volunteers to go with him and rescue their sorely-wounded comrade, who was then in such a dazed condition that he was unable to more than keep his seat. At this, he was joined by several of his own yeomen, among them being a Mr. Belcher, and a Mr. Gill, as well as Wilfred Wilkins, who—the Captain had by now discovered—was ever foremost on the fighting-line. The boy was afoot, while most of the others were mounted; but that mattered little to one so swift on his feet as he, as, the ground being rough, he was enabled to keep pace with the best of them.

This little company about-faced and charged across the bridge, at which another volley was fired by the Indians, two shots taking effect, both Gill and Belcher being struck. The latter received a shot in his knee and his horse was shot from under him; but the former, having on what was known as a "buff coat," beneath which was a cuirass or breastplate of steel, escaped real injury, the ball that struck him hardly breaking the skin.

Nothing daunted by their rude reception, Church and his few retainers darted forward and reached the poor guide just as he fainted from loss of blood and fell from his horse. Wilfred caught him in his arms, and after the Captain had dismounted, helped the latter place the dying man in the saddle. Then, with a comrade on each side, to support him there, the man was taken back to the bridge; where he expired, while yet seated in the saddle, and in sight of all.

CHAPTER XI.

SEARCHING THE SWAMP FOR SAVAGES.

WHILE the guide lay dead upon the ground, and the soldiers were making a litter in which to take him back to the garrison-house, "ye skulking enemy returned" (in the language of the old chronicle of this sad event) "and discharged all their guns at Captain Church, at one clap; and, though every shot miss'd him, yet one of ye army on ye other side ye river, was wounded in ye foot."

By this, it seems, Captain Church was the last to retreat across the bridge, at the hither end of which he "heroically made his stand," and vowed he would not retreat another rod.

"Lord help us," he exclaimed, shaking his fist at the "army," and his sword at the enemy, "if such a beggarly handful of savages shall thus

dare such an army of white men! Here we stand, come death or come glory, and I call for volunteers to help me hold the bridge."

"I needn't have asked thee, my lad," the old soldier said grimly, "for I knew thou wouldst be the first to respond," addressing Wilfred, who immediately came to his side.

"I would all were like this slip of a man-child by my side, who hath the heart for any daring. Come, will ye let a youth yet in his teens shame ye? Methinks none of ye have shame within your breasts, forsooth. Oh, for some of my brave yeomen. Ha, what was that?"

He was answered by a shout from some distance down the road, and in a cloud of dust there came marching along at the double-quick, sixty or seventy soldiers, their captain, mounted on a big gray horse, well forward in the van.

"Heaven 's heard us!" shouted Captain Church. "It's my old comrade, Fuller, veteran of the Pequod War. Now we shall make the enemy account for himself, my boys, for there with him be my own men, too, may God be praised!"

Seeing the approach of reinforcements, the Indians in the bush slackened their fire and evi-

dently fled deeper into the forest, for soon there was no more heard from them. But Captain Church was disappointed, in the main, when informed by his old friend, Captain Fuller, that he had orders not to pursue the foe and endanger the lives of his soldiers, but to erect a fort at the Swansea end of the bridge and there remain till further notice.

“Hear that, ye listening gods!” shouted Church, in a fine frenzy at having his ambitions balked by the cowardly precautions taken at headquarters. “What, forsooth, be the lives of soldiers for, if not to be endangered? Let them go home, then, and hide beneath their beds, for with the women and children of this colony can I make a better fight than with them! Still, I have my gallant yeomen, and this lad here, who hath never left my side, albeit hard pressed by the enemy. What say, men, shall it be to sit supinely here, or search yon wood for the savages? Of a truth, they will ne’er search for us, save by night, and at times when least expected!”

“To the woods! to the woods!” shouted his men, stepping forth from the ranks and gathering about him, “lead us on and we will follow after!”

“Hear ye that, poltroons from Plymouth, all, and eke from Massachusetts? I care not if ye be ‘instructed’ by those stay-at-homes who have purchased exemption from service by becoming members of the church. It may seem full impious in me to question the doings of ye general court; but I am the Church militant—the *fighting Church!*—Eh boys, what think ye all?”

“Yea, verily,” they shouted, amid laughter at their Captain’s play on words; “Yea, that’s the talk; the fighting Church for us!”

“Hear that, lad?” exclaimed the mollified Captain, turning to Wilfred, still at his side. “Hear what my own men say? Wilt thou, too, go with us in the seeking for that heathen, Metacomet?”

“That I came for,” answered Wilfred calmly; “but, as you know, it was to save, and not to murder Philip, Captain Church!”

“Yea, I know. But, so thou goest as thou hast begun, I’ve no fear but we shall get his scalp, in th’ end, for thou’rt a fighter born, my lad!”

So it was settled off-hand by Captain Church, no protest being offered, that he and his yeomen should go and seek for Philip at and near Pokanoket, whither, it was believed, he still lay con-

cealed, while the bulk of the army lay intrenched in the fort they would erect at the Neck.

“But, ye are fools, every one, to squat down here, on your hams, making pretence of building a fort, while that pagan, Metacomet, hath good knowledge of your whereabouts and can always find ye out! What, think ye, he will be doing while ye wait him here? Not sitting in his seat at Pokanoket, methinks, nor idly waiting anywhere, in sooth. Nay, he will be rampaging up and down ye country, murdering and destroying, shedding the blood of your mothers, wives and children,—say I!”

And it was even so, for the brave Captain knew his quarry well, having had experience in hunting the same kind of game. The dilatory tactics pursued by the soldiers came near to being the undoing of the colony, for, as one of the sagamores said long after, when captured and interrogated as to the cause of the war being so prolonged, the white men always marched in a body, and slowly, resting often and at well-known places; while the Indians scattered about, each man fighting “on his own hook,” and taking no rest until the object sought had been accomplished.

Now, it was estimated that King Philip had at his command more than 6,000 warriors, and including the Narragansets, who were about to join him, he could put at least 10,000 warriors in the field. New England, at this time, contained a population of about 100,000 white people, of whom, it is said, not more than 16,000 were capable of bearing arms. Scattered as they were, along a great extent of sea-coast, and inland on the borders of all the principal rivers, they did not all assemble to combat the common enemy; but first and last, nearly every community felt the weight of the war.

Against Philip's ten thousand warriors (though he never had one half that number assembled at any one time) how many soldiers, do you suppose, reader, Captain Church drafted to accompany him in his search for the enemy.

Some say thirty, some twenty; but the truth is, he had not more than two dozen, all told! But every man, including himself, was a seasoned veteran—every man, that is, except our young friend, Wilfred Wilkins; but, as we have already noted, if the doughty Captain had all as good as he, then he could desire none better.

The woods across the river were, doubtless,

alive with savages, even though they no longer showed themselves; but Captain Church was compelled to wait till next morning before commencing his march, on account of the necessity of provisioning his little troop. Over at Rehoboth was Mr. Treasurer Southworth, with ample stores, and from these the Captain was allowed to draw all he needed of provisions and ammunition. This done, early on the morning of a bright day in July, 1675, the devoted band set forth.

The previous night, the veteran had tried to draw the Indians into an ambush, and would have succeeded in the game at which his opponents were so expert, had it not been for the carelessness of his friends, the soldiers of Captain Fuller's command. For, some of them, while in ambush, concealed in bushes by the river side, "being troubled with the epidemical plague of lust after tobacco, must needs strike fire to smoke it. And thereby they discovered themselves to a party of the enemy coming up to them, who immediately fled with great precipitation."

"Ods codfish!" exclaimed the Captain in vexation (when he became aware of the trivial

circumstance that had spoiled his plan) "but we can never accomplish anything in company with such inconsiderate villains. Come away, my merry men, and we alone will seek the enemy."

Provisioned as they were for several days, the little company of rangers bade adieu to Captain Fuller and his regiment of "city soldiers" and plunged into the swamp.

This great swamp of Pocasset was not far distant from that bordering on Pokanoket, and the Captain held great hopes of at least stirring up the hornets' nest, as he called it, even if he could not destroy its inhabitants.

It was at Quaucut brook that they discovered fresh signs of the Indians, and following the trail soon revealed a broad and beaten track which led into a great pine swamp, not far distant from the main road to Sogkonate.

"Ah, ha!" exclaimed the Captain, "now I know where the pagans are assembled! There is an island in this swamp which for long time has been a favorite rendezvous of the red-skins. I have been there myself, and if we follow this trail we shall soon see Indians enough, I warrant you! Now, my men, this is the last chance for any of

you that are afraid, to turn back and divest the company of a coward's cumbrance; for once within the wilds, there will be no turning back. So, get out, and at once, faint hearts! We want none but the stoutest hearts that beat!"

Not a single man stirred, except to tighten afresh his belt, to loosen the stopple of his powder-horn, or examine the priming in his rifle-pan. So the Captain was satisfied, and said, with a grunt of approval, "Deploy into three companies, and march in single file, each company parallel with the other. By so doing we shall doubtless stir up something ere the sun has reached meridian."

They had not proceeded more than a mile in this manner, before the central file discovered a bunch of Indian wigwams, and some of the younger members made as if to plunder it of its contents. It happened that Wilfred was with this file; but though he was the youngest there, he held aloof from the plundering and kept watch without, while his comrades entered within, after parleying with him as to the wisdom of such a procedure. He opposed it, of course, arguing that not only would the plunder load them down and weary them, but they would lose time by

waiting and be unable to rejoin their friends at the rendezvous agreed upon, and thus risk being cut off, and perhaps frustrate the Captain's scheme of rushing the camp, if it were found occupied by the savages.

The yeomen were obdurate, however, and Wilfred could not prevent the raid upon the huts. As he stood without, he heard the sound of someone approaching, and, with musket ready, peered into the undergrowth. To his great joy, the newcomer proved to be no other than his Captain, who, as soon as he saw the position of things, and heard Wilfred's account of what was going on, entered in haste one of the wigwams, and taking the first pair of raiders by the scruff of their necks, kicked them out most unceremoniously. He repeated the process with all the others he could lay hands on, and by the time he was through with them, they, as may be imagined, were very wroth indeed.

“Ye caitiffs, miserable spawn of Satan, know ye not that ye are doing that which will draw down upon us most swiftly the vengeance of the pagans? Ods codfish, men, what are ye thinking of? This lad I verily believe, is the only scout amongst ye worthy the name! Get hence,

now, and, since your leader hath proven himself unworthy, for the day I appoint the boy to lead the van."

This he said in a hoarse whisper, fearing that any noise, however slight, might alarm the enemy and put his band in jeopardy. Indeed, no word had been said aloud, and it was a queer spectacle this little group presented, of the doughty Captain booting first one and then another, and the injured party daring hardly to resent it, but making mouths awry and rubbing the parts that had been attacked most sorely.

"Pick up your muskets, now, and follow after this lad, who will proceed as before, straight ahead until the island in the swamp is reached. The other two-eighths of us (there being twenty-four in all) will come the flank movement, and so we may surround the pagans, before they have a chance to flee."

The Captain darted off to rejoin his own command, on the right, but hardly had he disappeared than he returned again, saying that he had discovered several Indian dogs loose in the swamp, wandering about as if lost, and this, taken in conjunction with the fresh signs all about, in his opinion meant that the savages had

abandoned their camp and were preparing an ambush for their reception.

Having warned them to advance very slowly and with the greatest caution, he again departed, to give these new instructions to the other groups ahead. He no longer expected to surprise the camp in the swamp, but desired his men to converge on a given point ahead, if possible before the place of probable ambush was reached, and thus be able to present a compact front to the enemy. If he were mistaken, he had explained, they could again scatter as before and march in open files.

That he was right in his surmise was soon proved, by the next discovery, which was that of a second group of wigwams, in the midst of a "stately field of corn," one of which contained a young squaw and an infant hardly more than a month old. The squaw was sullen and would not speak, while of course the infant could give no information, so the prize promised little to enlighten the captors, save by inference. This inference was that there were Indians "close aboard," as in fact was soon verified, for, standing as usual, without the wigwam, while his companions peered within and took account of the

plunder it contained, Wilfred saw the glint of a gun-barrel, on the slope of a hill not far away.

It could hardly be a gun belonging to any of his comrades, for they had not advanced that far, he reasoned; but in order to be sure he called one of the men to his side. Pointing it out to him, the man, either being very far-sighted, or placed more advantageously than Wilfred, discovered not only a single Indian, but several others, all with guns in their hands. They had evidently not yet seen their enemies, but were on the watch, with their attention apparently diverted by one or both of the other bands of whites approaching, somewhat in advance.

As the Indians were more than a gunshot away, it would be futile (all agreed) to fire at them; but something must be done to warn Captain Church and the others of their vicinage. There was an evident purpose in the Indians appearing out in sight so boldly, and at first the watchers were puzzled.

At last Wilfred said: "My friends, it seems to me plain enough. They are there to lure us and our comrades into an ambuscade, upon which, if I mistake not, we are now, all three bands converging! They would have us all make

a dash toward them;—but before we reached yon hill, I'm sure, we should run up against some Indian muskets! What think you?"

"I think 'bout the same's you do," replied the former leader, who, though he had been temporarily displaced by Wilfred, held no malice; "and if I was the head of this division, I should send a man out either way to warn the Capt'n and the others. P'raps they've seen 'em, and then ag'in, p'raps they hain't."

"That's sound advice," agreed the youth; "but to do so involves great risk to those who go out. I don't like to order, nor even ask anyone to do what I won't do myself, so I say this: I'll be one to go, if another will take the opposite direction, while the rest remain right here till we return,—or, till something happens."

"And I'll be the other," spoke up the former leader. "Stay right here, boys, and keep your eyes peeled. If you hear firing ahead, or on the flank, make for the spot where it's heaviest. If there ain't any firing, why, we'll all be back inside a jiffy. Ain't that about it?" he said, addressing Wilfred.

"I don't know any other way out of it," answered the youth. "Unless," he added, "we beat

a retreat at once; and that, of course, under these circumstances, is not to be thought of."

"Not for a minnit," promptly replied the gallant young man, and he was seconded in this opinion by the other six. There was, in truth, quite a rivalry between them as to which ones should go on this perilous mission; but it was quickly settled, and Wilfred started in one direction, while his comrade went off in the other.

They could not have far to go, for the bands were not far apart; but the swamp was dark, and dense with matted vegetation, outside the verge of the "island," or small spot of dry land where the wigwams were, and the pools of stagnant water were frequent.

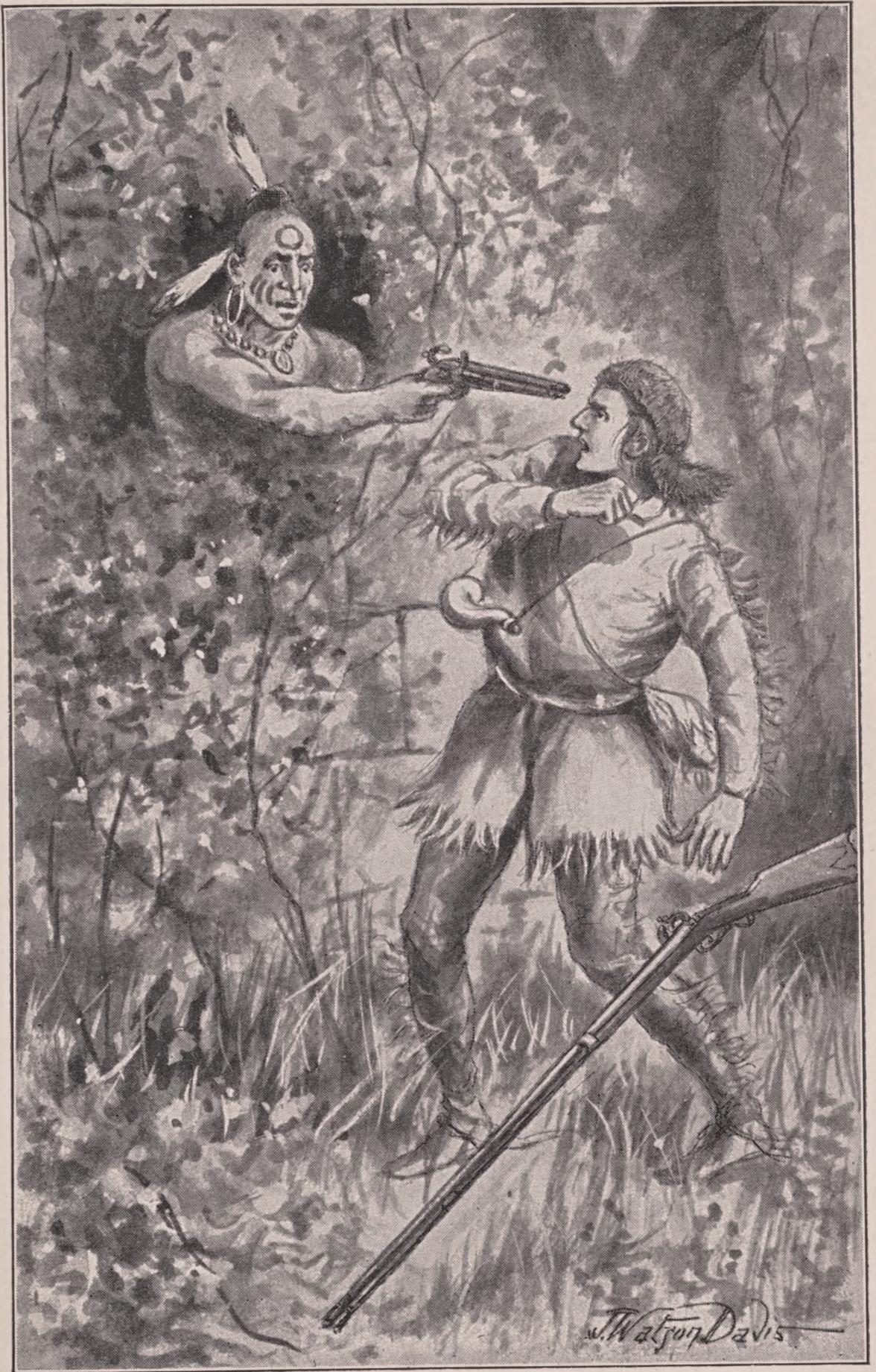
Very soon after leaving his comrades, Wilfred was plunged into a thicket of tangled briars, the barbed hooks of which were so closely interlocked that he had to draw his knife to cut a passage through them. This done, he emerged, panting and almost exhausted, upon a knoll covered with scrub oaks, where he had an encounter, which ended his endeavors in behalf of his comrades for that day, and a long time after.

CHAPTER XII.

MADE CAPTIVE BY METACOMET.

ON the highest part of the knoll stood a big and branching oak-tree, beneath which was a wigwam newly made of green bark, covered so with branches and trailing mosses that it could scarcely be distinguished from the surrounding shrubs. At first, indeed, entangled as he was in the "catch-me-quick" briars, Wilfred did not notice the hut, and in his haste walked right upon it, only halting when he found his way obstructed by what appeared to be a wattled wall of bushes.

He was about to break his way through this wall, (supposing it to be an Indian fence, made for the purpose of keeping deer or other animals out of a field, or pertaining to some sort of trap or snare for catching partridges or rabbits)



The savage held an enormous horse-pistol, which he pointed directly at Wilfred's head.

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when he was arrested in the very act by a hideous apparition. It was no less, in fact, than the head of an Indian warrior, perched upon a pair of broad shoulders, (naked, of course), and protruding through a hole in the wall, which proved to be the doorway of the wigwam. This aperture was at some height above the ground, for the further concealment of the hut's true character, and, doubtless, if the boy had not made a break directly for the frail structure, its inmate would not have showed himself.

As it was, the savage not only made his presence known, but on the instant of his exit jerked out his right arm and hand, in the latter holding an enormous horse-pistol, which he pointed directly at Wilfred's head. So close was he, in truth, that the muzzle of the pistol almost took him in the mouth, grimly grinning at him, as if to say: "Now we've got you, my fine fellow! Another move, and you're a dead one!"

The pistol might have been empty, to be sure; but no one in his senses would take the chances of its being so, under the circumstances in which it was presented, so Wilfred fell back a pace or two and threw up his hands, in token of surrender.

“Umph!” grunted the savage, as if very well satisfied with himself; but at the same time holding the pistol on a line with the boy's head, aimed at his eyes.

“Drop that musket,” he seemed to say next, though by an expressive nod of his head, seemingly unable to speak in English. Wilfred took it to mean that, anyway, and leaned the gun against a tree, after which, folding his arms, he awaited further developments.

“Go farther away from the gun,” the savage signaled, and Wilfred moved three paces to the right.

“Now stay there,” was the next sign, which also was promptly obeyed. Then the wary savage slowly crawled through the rude doorway, ever keeping that formidable weapon directed toward his prisoner, and when he had extricated himself from the wigwam he darted stealthily to the tree and seized the gun. With the flintlock in his possession, he pitched the pistol into the wigwam, and signed Wilfred to go in after it. At once, the lad saw that he had been artfully entrapped into giving up his gun on false pretences—for it was an empty pistol that the Indian had pointed at him;—which fact he might have de-

tected had he but had the wit to examine the powder-pan beneath the flint.

This, all too late, he realized, and gritted his teeth with rage. No one could blame him much for not examining that weapon while it was under his nose, in sooth; but he blamed himself.

“To think,” he muttered, “that I should be taken in by such a paltry trick as that! Ugh! The rascal has my musket, too—that’s the worst of it. I wonder,” he soliloquized to himself, “if I couldn’t, somehow, get the better of him?”

He glanced over his shoulder, as he slowly wormed his way into the hut, to see if, perchance, the savage might be off his guard; but was greatly incensed to observe that, instead of covering him with the musket, he was holding it carelessly in the hollow of his arm and laughing immoderately.

This made the lad draw back again, for, not only was the Indian’s action rather unusual in a savage, but there was something about him that seemed familiar.

“He doesn’t appear to regard me as a deadly enemy, anyhow,” mused Wilfred. “Seems to have seen me before. I wonder if he could have

met me anywhere? It won't do any harm to make believe so, anyway.

"Look here," he said aloud, "Haven't you ever been in Swansea? Don't you know the Wilkins' farm over there?"

The Indian answered not a word, but only grinned the more—if that were possible, showing his "ivories" in a manner that betokened great amusement.

"You old heathen, you! So, you don't understand what I say? I'd like to choke the life out of your big carcass—that I would."

The Indian slapped his naked thigh a resounding whack, and, to Wilfred's great surprise, made reply: "You no can do it."

"What? So you can speak my language? Not many Wampanoags can do that, so perhaps I can guess who you are. Why," (as a turn of the Indian's head revealed in a different, and, somehow, a familiar attitude)—"Look here, can you be—are you—Metacomet?"

"P'raps so; p'raps he's spirit. Some call me Metacom; some call King Philip. One time you call me friend! How now?"

"A friend once should be always a friend," said Wilfred falteringly, somewhat overcome by

the situation. Yet he was alive to the fact that here was the dearest desire of his heart—or next to the dearest desire—the meeting with Philip—accomplished without great delay. The dearest desire, of course, was to get his promise to end the war; but that in due time.

Rallying his scattered wits, Wilfred then added: “I wanted to see you, Philip; I came here to see you, but——”

“Me know that, so me come to meet you. Know all 'bout it,—all. My scouts tell me you come, not 'fraid Metcom; trust him, so must be friend.” Saying this, the Indian advanced with hand extended—as one time he had done before, and Wilfred accepted the proffered renewal of friendship without hesitation.

“Come into wigwam,” said Metacomet, after they had grasped each other's hands and looked into each other's faces, finding there an assurance of mutual trust and confidence. Little wonder, was it, that Wilfred knew not his friend, for Philip's face was painted black, his hair raised on the crown of his head to a kind of cock's-comb, like a zebra's bristly mane—all this in token of war.

“Not know me, eh?” asked Metacom, “Me

know you. More—me know you come, come straight here to wigwam, for Hobbomocko tell me so! Want see you very bad, too. My heart want see you. My face black, but heart all white, before little Sagamore. That me call you now, 'Little Sagamore,' 'cause you be small chief under Metacom, eh?"

"I don't know about that," answered Wilfred, "I wouldn't like to be a Sagamore and fight my friends, the white folks, you know."

"That so, s'pose not. But wait, we see. Ha! Hear that? Gun go off."

They were then inside the wigwam, which apparently held nobody beside themselves, having probably been constructed especially for this meeting, Wilfred concluded; though, as later events proved, erroneously.

The walls of the wigwam, frail as they were, seemed to press upon the youth and suffocate him, when, the reports of the guns without coming to his ears, he was thereby reminded of his friends, perhaps in danger through his own remissness. He looked at Philip almost fiercely, as he said: "I cannot stay here, while your men are killing my friends! It was to save them that

I was hurrying on, when you stopped me. Let me go! let me go! and I will return after——”

“After your friend murder my men? That what you would say? What difference? If you friend no kill my men, my men kill your friend. That war, that chance soldier take; so stay still.”

“No, I cannot. If you kill me, then, of course, I am released from my obligation; but so long as I am alive I must be doing my duty!”

“Well, p'raps it too late, now! Me make good ambush for Church and he think he make for me—that all. First one to fail get kill! You no blame Metacom, eh?”

“No, no; but it was to warn Captain Church and his men of that very ambuscade that I was going, when you halted me. Let me go to them—if not too late—and I will come back.”

“No need. You stay here. Listen! You trust Metacom? You no b'lieve he tell lie?”

“I—I don't know. Yes, I believe he will tell the truth to me. But don't delay me now. Tell me later. Give me my musket and——”

“No, Little Sagamore, no need. Hear me, now. Me say, expect you to come, eh? Well, me no want kill you, my friend, so me make what may be call *false ambush*. If want to, can kill

all men Church have with him, and heself, too; but this time no want, 'cause you with him, see?

“Now wait, in one, two moment you hear much fire of Indian gun. You think all must be kill; but not so. That done to make Church men 'fraid and get out; but not to kill. Mebbe one, two, get kill; but not mean to—not this time! *Next time*, yes—kill all; but not now. You un-d'stand? Yes? Then what you think?”

“I think you are not only a great strategist, Metacom, but you can be a true friend. Still, it is hard to stay here doing nothing, while my friends out there are engaged with the enemy.”

“Oh ho, so that it, eh? You want go kill Injun, 'cause he your 'enemy.' P'raps you kill Injun already, eh? That so?”

“I—I fear I have killed one, Metacom; but it was in self-defence.”

“Yes, that what English always say: have to kill Injun, so he no kill white man; but when Injun kill white man, that they call murder!”

The conversation, getting near the danger-line at this moment, was providentially interrupted by a perfect fusilade of firearms, as if two regiments were engaged.

“Ha! that my men. You think they kill whole

world, eh? But no, they shoot in air, no hurt nobody—not to-day; to-morrow, mebbe.”

“But the sound is terrifying, Metacom. Some must be killed!”

“No, guess not. If any white man killed, me kill Injun that do it—that he know, so he be careful. You wait here. After all over, we go see.”

Now, strange as it may appear, although Captain Church's party did fall into an ambuscade, that day, and were attacked by “seven or eight score Indians pursuing after them—” (according to the ancient history of the event, published in the year 1716), not one was killed. How they came to be thus miraculously preserved, they knew not at the time; but the reader of this story has already been informed. However, Captain Church and his contemporaries looked upon their preservation as an interposition of Providence, and great was their vain-glory thereat. From reading the history of the event, written years after by Captain Church himself, one might think that a mighty battle had been waged and hundreds of Indians overthrown; when the real truth was that no single soul, on the settlers' side, received serious harm that day. In order

to show that such a happening really did occur, the writer of this narrative will quote from the pages of a contemporary historian, as well as from those of Captain Church's "entertaining History."

Somehow or other, after Wilfred's departure, the three companies came together, and "Capt. Church (for so he may well be styled after this time) marched further into the neck. But before they saw anybody they were saluted with a volley of above fifty or sixty guns. Some bullets came surprisingly near to Capt. Church, who, starting to look behind him to see what was become of his men—expecting to have seen half of them dead—saw them all upon their legs, and briskly firing at the smokes of the enemies' guns (for that was all that was then to be seen). He blessed God, and called to his men not to discharge all their muskets at once, lest the enemy should take advantage of such an opportunity to run upon them with their hatchets! Casting his eyes to the side of the hill above them, the hill *seemed to move*, being covered with Indians, with their bright guns glittering in the sun, and running in a circumference with a design to surround them.

“ Now was the time for this young captain and his small company to show their valor upon this great rout of Indians, just ready to devour them ! But victory stands no more in the number of soldiers than in the plurality of voices ; and although some of this small company had courage enough for themselves, yet their captain had enough for himself, and some to spare for his friends, which he there had opportunity of improving to the full.

When he saw the hearts of any of his followers fail, he would bid them be of good courage and fight stoutly, and, (possibly by some divine impression upon his heart) assured them not a bullet of ye enemy should hurt any one of them ; which one of ye company more dismayed than the rest could hardly believe until he saw the proof of it in his own person, for the captain, perceiving the man was not able to fight, made him gather rocks together for a kind of shelter, and barricade for the rest, that must of necessity either fight or fall by the enemies.

It chanced as this faint-hearted soldier had a flat rock in his arms, which he was carrying to the shelter he was making upon the bank, a bullet of ye enemy was thus warded off from his

body, by which else he must have perished, which experience put new life into him, so as he followed his business very manfully afterward, insomuch that they defended themselves under a small shelter hastily made up, all that afternoon, not one being either slain or wounded! Yea, such was the bold and undaunted courage of this champion, Capt. Church, not being willing to leave any token behind of their flying for want of courage, that he went back in the face of his enemies to fetch his hat, which he had left at a spring, whither the extreme heat of ye weather and his labor in fighting had caused him to repair for the quenching of his thirst, an hour or two before.

This assault rather heightened and increased, than daunted the courage of Capt Church; for not making a cowardly flight, but a fair retreat, which Providence offered him by a sloop coming to his rescue on the river, after his ammunition was spent.

Then, borrowing three files of men from the Massachusetts forces, Capt. Church returned to Pocasset, where they had another skirmish with ye enemy, wherein some few of them were slain,—which struck such a terror into Philip that he

betook himself to the swamps about Pocasset, where he lay hid till the return of the rest of the forces from the Narragansets, like a wild boar kept at bay, by this small party, till more hands came up. On Monday, July 18, they marched 18 miles before they could reach the swamp where ye enemy was lodged. As soon as they came to the place, (Plymouth forces now being joined with them), our soldiers resolutely entered in amongst their enemies, who took advantage of ye thick underwood to make a shot at them that first entered, whereby five were killed outright, and seven more wounded, some of whose wounds proved mortal.

After the first shot ye enemy retired deeper into ye swamp, deserting their wigwams, (about 100 in all) newly made of green bark, so they would not burn. In one of them they found an old man, who confessed that Philip had lately been there; but having spent some time in searching the swamp, and tired themselves to no purpose, the commander-in-chief (night drawing on apace, and thinking it not safe to tarry longer in so dangerous a place) ordered a retreat to be sounded, that they might have time to dispose of

their dead and wounded men, which accordingly was done.”

This is the story of the first real search for King Philip, as told by a reliable historian, who died just two hundred years ago. As already remarked, he was a contemporary of the actors in this long and bloody war, and he gathered his facts from those who were engaged in the various fights and skirmishes, so they must be authentic. The real motive for Captain Church's return so quickly to the swamp, from which he and his men had been driven in the bloodless battle of a few days before, may be found in his desire to recover his young friend, Wilfred Wilkins, who had so mysteriously disappeared when seeking to warn his comrades of the ambushade.

In his anxiety to find him, he swallowed his vexation at the regular soldiers, for whom he felt such contempt, and begged for a file or two to accompany him in the search for Wilfred. To no avail however, was the search extended, for neither Captain Church nor any one with him saw the lad for many a long day thereafter, as he was kept a prisoner by Metacomet, who retained him with him, even in his flight.

CHAPTER XIII.

A FUGITIVE IN THE INDIANS' COUNTRY.

So confident and vainglorious were the English forces, that they really believed they had all but subdued the mighty sachem, King Philip of Pokanoket, merely because they had brought his warriors to combat in Pocasset swamp. They had, as they thought, found out his retreat, and, though the swamp was vast, being more than seven miles in extent, they succeeded ultimately in surrounding the heart of it, where Philip was believed to be hidden, and considered him almost as good as taken. Those were the very words used by the commander-in-chief of the combined Plymouth and Massachusetts forces, in his report to his superiors at Boston, the officials of the "great and general court."

But, while that very report was being transmitted to Boston, a band of warriors issued from

the swamp, and after killing half a dozen people of Pocasset Neck, burned their houses and devastated their fields. Then they appeared again, in an altogether different locality, carrying fire and slaughter with them and leaving behind, when they retreated into the swamp a second time, many ruined homes and blood-stained hearthstones.

Then all the people were gathered together in a few large and well fortified garrison-houses, and labor in the field, as well as travel on the highways, was almost entirely given up. Of all the hundreds gathered to find and attack the wily sachem of Pokanoket, there seemed to be but one little band, and one commander, who knew how to combat him. That band and that commander we have already met, and have seen how completely the strategy of King Philip triumphed over that of the gallant Captain Church and his men. When the Captain came to reflect upon it, he saw clearly enough that, instead of beating Metacomet, in the "great swamp fight," he had been, in effect, defeated, completely outgeneraled at every point.

"Ods codfish!" he remarked to himself, one day, after returning from another of the "wild-

goose chases" through the swamp, whose dank and miry depths he had in vain explored for the third or fourth time; "but that pagan, Metacom, is a wily divil. Here I have been right at his heels, as I thought, two or three times running; have been at the verge of catching him by the hair, as 'twere, eke as many times, also; yet cannot say that I've had a sight of him, yet! Moreover, sooth to say, I can't tell if we have truly killed any of his men; though as to that, we ourselves have lost at least a score. At this rate's goings-on, I' faith, he will conquer us, rather than that we shall conquer him!"

"Ye're become the laughing-stock of those pagans in the swamp," he said to Captain Henschman of the Plymouth forces, who, after the manner of the Massachusetts men, had stopped the chase at the verge of the swamp, and sat down to build a fort. "Wherefore build we a fort at this place, where there is nothing to defend, and not one Indian savage to slay? Wherefore, but for the orders ye have received from those nincompoops at Boston, say I."

"Treason, worthy Captain, thou'rt talking," protested Henschman, "to so question the motives, yea, and the wisdom, of our superiors, who

are grave and reverend men, at all events, worthy thy respect.

“Knowest thou, it is ill fighting a wild beast in his own den, and neither I nor my men are willing, forsooth, to run into the mire and muck of a dark swamp, having been taught by our late experience how dangerous it is to fight in such dismal woods, when our eyes be muffled with leaves, our arms pinioned with the shaggy boughs of the trees, and our feet shackled with ye roots, spread every-which-away in those boggy fastnesses. Therefore have I resolved, the great council concurring, eke to starve the heathen out of ye swamp, where I know full well they cannot long subsist, since we have destroyed King Philip's fields of corn, yea, all his standing grain in the fields. To the end, therefore, that this may be accomplished, I have concluded to build here a fort, and there a fort, as it were to beleaguer ye enemy, and prevent their escape out of ye places where, in sooth, we have them fast now.”

“So say ye,” replied Captain Church, quite scornfully; “so say ye, forsooth; but, methinks Metacom be not unbeknowing of all that is taking place. He can read herein his doom, if doom it

be, and, knowing full well that if he tarry longer he may fall into our hands—from whom, indeed, he hath no cause to hope for mercy—think ye he will linger? Nay, forsooth, at this very time he may be on his way to other regions, there to burn, destroy and slay!”

It was even as this perspicacious Captain had predicted,—though he knew it not—for within a few days it became known that Philip had indeed escaped from the great swamp into the country of the Nipmucks, who were already friendly to him and gave him advantage to ravage the lands adjacent to the Boston territory.

Finding all the exits by land well guarded by the settlers' troops, and wishing at that time to avoid an encounter with them, Philip set his men at work making rafts of logs, which they concealed in the creeks and waters leading to the arm of the sea 'twixt the swamp and Taunton, and one dark night, after posting two hundred of his warriors as a rear-guard, he withdrew quietly from his place of concealment, leaving there, when the rear-guard itself had followed him out, only a few hundred women and children. These non-combatants were likely to impede his motions, which were thereafter to be rapid and er-

matic, from one end of New England to the other, in order to confuse the settlers and give them no point at which to aim.

Yet the trusting Captain Henschman replied to the more experienced Church, when he suggested the possibility of such an escape, "I tell thee, comrade, we have him now as in a pound, where it will be no hard matter to deal with him, when the occasion arise. Within a week, methinks, the great sachem will himself come forth and offer to surrender."

"Ho, will he?" scoffed Captain Church. "Nay, simpleton. Perchance ye want word with Philip, ye must seek him in his haunts, varlets. This, henceforth, shall be my purpose. I will conjoin with no troop of regulars, spending valuable time within a fort, in vain expectancy of the foe coming to deliver himself up, forsooth; but with my little band of yeomen I will hang upon his heels, so that in the end he shall be brought to earth, as though he were a wolf, or a stag, that hath been persistently dogged by ye hounds."

This mode of pursuit was faithfully followed by the gallant Captain, until, as he had said, he accomplished his end through very persistency. But it was only gained through the treachery of

an Indian in Philip's own company, who guided Church and his men to the sachem's retreat, after many weary months of hunting. Speaking as one who views the matter critically, and without expressing sympathy for either party, Philip made a fatal mistake in allowing Captain Church and his band to escape, that first time they fell into his ambushade, when he might have killed them, every one. He had opportunities afterward, also, of putting his deadly enemy out of the way; but he was then hampered by the presence of his young friend, Wilfred, who acted as a check upon his aims and cruel purposes.

Now, in order to ascertain just what was happening within the swamp—which we have seen beleaguered by a cordon of English troops,—let us transport ourselves once again to the wigwam on the knoll, where we left Philip and Wilfred engaged in earnest conversation respecting the situation of the latter's friends while being driven out of the swamp by the Indians.

“How is it,” Wilfred asked his friend, “that you can command all your warriors, sending them hither and thither, making them attack or retreat, at your will, without being on the field yourself?”

“Ha, that my secret,” answered Philip, with a low chuckle. “First, train men to mind. Kill many warrior before they learn. Now, what me say, they do. Never disobey!”

“But how do you get your commands to them? I’ve seen no messengers.”

“No?” The sachem chuckled again; but after a moment’s thought, he gave a shrill, prolonged whistle, which had hardly escaped him when a lithe young Indian appeared, naked down to his waist and up to his thighs, straight as a poplar, and shining like a golden statue. He might have come up out of the ground; for he certainly did not come in from outside the hut; but there he was, standing at “attention,” watchful, alert, ready for Philip’s commands. The sachem said a few words in the Wamponoag tongue, and off darted the Indian youth, like an arrow from a bow, and was out of the wigwam in a jiffy, gliding along as silently as an owl in the air.

“In five minute, p’raps ten, we hear three gun, over there,” said Philip, with a motion of his hand to the westward. Wilfred listened and wondered, and he wondered all the more when, after about six minutes had passed, there were

the reports of three guns, one after the other, at regular intervals.

“Ha!” said Philip. “What that mean, you say? No matter what it mean; but you hear it, no? It what I say, no? That how I get orders to my sagamore. Never once have to go into field. Me know all the country,—carry map in my head, and move men like—like—what you call the game English play on board?”

“You mean chess, I suppose,” replied Wilfred.

“Yes, me mean that, all my braves move like chess-men, you see.”

“It’s wonderful,” exclaimed the boy. “I don’t see how my people are going to prevail against you, unless they bring a great force!”

“Ah, that it; they have soldier, like leaves on trees, like grass in field; while me,—me have only few t’ousand men, and when they gone, no use. English come right up out of sea, more and more!”

“Yes,” assented Wilfred, “the cause of the white settlers is that, also, of all civilized people. The cause of the Indian is that of a race which must pass away, because it does nothing for the good of the world!”

“What, you think that? You know that?”

But why? Great Spirit make Indian, same he make white people. No fair to kill Injun for white."

"It seems so, that's a fact; but you can't stand against the might of the white race. Sooner or later, you will be overcome!"

"Think so? Me no think that. Me kill all—yes, kill all white people."

"You can't do it, Metacom. More will come in, even if you kill all who live here now—which will be impossible. Remember, the white man is far more ingenious than the Indian. What, you don't believe it? Well, then, why do you use muskets, in place of the bows and arrows your people used to have—have now, in fact,—those too poor to buy muskets?"

"Oh, musket better'n bow-arrow; shoot more, hit better."

"Yes, that is so; but who made the musket, and who gave it to you? The white men, of course; and moreover, the Indians had lived thousands of years without ever inventing such a weapon, and might live thousands more without it.

"Why, they never discovered the uses of iron, and gold, and silver; never made a single piece

of machinery; never sailed a larger boat than a canoe; never owned a house bigger than a wigwam; and, lastly, while the white people are scattered all over the earth and have communication with each other, and come to each other's assistance when required, the Indians are but a feeble folk, and instead of uniting against their enemies, they all pull apart, never hanging together long enough to do anything."

King Philip's countenance and attitude, during this arraignment of his race, were suggestive of his thoughts. As Wilfred progressed with the enumeration of his people's failings he said again and again, "True, it is true; my people no good!" But, as the youth named their chief failing, which was a lack of union and mutual help, his attitude changed. A thought was born, due to the boy's suggestion, and it was this: He would try with all his might to unite all the tribes of Eastern North America against the hated white folks. If he could do this, he knew, they would outnumber their enemies, and perhaps be able to overpower them. He at once brightened up.

"Thank, Little Sagamore," he said. "What you say, too true. But my people, they fight, and

my people, they can die! P'raps not all feel this way; but most; and this way me feel: Better die fighting, than have white man for friend!"

"But why choose to die, Philip, when you may live, perhaps live to be of great good to your people? Not here, methinks, for you have outraged the feelings of both Plymouth and Massachusetts; but in some other country, which might be given you?"

"No, no, never go to other land. Many Injuns they make to go a'ready,—send 'em off for slaves. Plymouth people, Massagusset people—they have nothing but hate, now, for Metacom. You know what they put in treaty they make, this month, with Narraganset sachems? No? listen: Here 'tis! My brother, he go Harvard college, make writing for me of what in that treaty. Here 'tis, what he send me, only day two ago."

Philip drew a scroll of paper from a buckskin pouch that hung by a thong from the roof-tree of the wigwam, and handed it to Wilfred, who read:

"Article VI.

"The said gentlemen, in the behalf of the governments (Plymouth, Massachusetts, and Con-

necticut) to which they belong, do engage to every the said sachems of the Narragansets, that if they or any of them shall seize and bring into any of the above-said English governments, Philip Sachem alive, he or they so delivering, shall receive for their pains, forty trucking cloth coats; in case *they bring his head*, they shall have twenty like good coats paid them! For every living subject of said Philip's so delivered, the deliverer shall receive two coats, and for *every head* one coat, as a gratuity for their service herein, making it appear to satisfaction that the heads or persons are belongings to the enemy, and that they are of their seizure!" *

"Now what you think? That what you call civilize, eh? You gov'ment make treaty with Narragansets, (my friend,) take hostage from 'em, make 'em promise to get me, or *get my head!* Think what that mean!"

"I can hardly believe it," said Wilfred. "It is too horrible!"

"Yes? You must b'lieve it. It true! And you people blame Metacom for cutting off English

* A literal transcript from treaty negotiated with the Narragansets, July 15, 1675, by Commissioners of Connecticut and Massachusetts.

mans' heads and sticking on poles? Ugh! Sometime, me stick heads of Plymouth gov'nor and Massagussetts gov'nor on pole, too! See if don't!"

Metacomet rose and strode about the wigwam in great wrath, clinching his fists and throwing his arms about as if he would like to get those colonial governors by the throat. He did not calm down for quite a while, and meantime Wilfred was debating the possible value of his own life, should Philip conclude to keep him as a hostage. He dared not any further venture with a proposal for Philip to consent to cease fighting, or empower him to act as a peace commissioner with the colonial governments, for they had placed themselves beyond the pale by their own acts, or acts having their sanction, which were a disgrace to the civilization they professed.

So he concluded to ask the King for permission to return; but Philip seemed to have divined the thoughts in his mind, and at last spoke out and said: "You see me no can treat with fork-tongue serpent like them. They offer price for my head, same as if me wolf, or fox; no think me man like they. No, no, after this me ask no favor, *fight, fight, fight*, night and day, all time!

And you—me keep you to see if me fight fair. No hurt you, no make fight 'gainst you friend; but you stay with Metacom, all, all time!”

“But, Metacom, I would like to go back. No use for me to stay here.”

“No stay here,” repeated Philip, grimly; “can't stay here, for soon soldier come, look for you. Then 'bliged kill many more. You hide.”

“I would like to see my mother, Metacom. She will grieve sorely.”

“Yes, she grieve. But Indian mother grieve, too, when son killed. You no worry. Me get word to mother, you well. Get word on morrow.”

“Thank you, Metacom. But, why keep me at all? I can do you no good.”

“So you say; but have reason. You my friend? Good, got no other friend, want you stay, so not forget what white mans look like. More—me have little boy; want you take care him, too, so if me die, he have friend—white friend.”

Philip's face softened, at thought of his child, and through the black war-paint on his cheeks two great tears trickled down.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE WHITE MAN'S DEADLY ENEMY.

PHILIP kept his word with Wilfred, and the very next day sent a messenger to inform his family that he was safe and well. Wilfred yearned to go himself, and could hardly restrain himself. He pleaded with Philip for just one glimpse of his mother and sister, promising to return with the messenger, if he insisted; but the chief was inexorable. So he contented himself with writing a missive on birch bark, (having no paper) using the juice of pokeberries, (having no ink), which the Indians called the "red-ink berries." When his mother saw the missive, written with the crimson fluid, her heart gave a great bound, and she nearly fainted, thinking the lad had used his own blood, and conjuring up many horrors attending his situation, which really did not exist.

The Indian messenger gained the Fort on the hill without startling the inhabitants of the stronghold, by first waylaying Winthrop as he went forth to feed his sheep. He had been expecting some such arrival, and so was not astonished at the appearance of the young savage, holding above his head the roll of bark. He conducted him to the Fort, and while he was at breakfast the family discussed various schemes for delivering Wilfred from his thralldom; but all to no purpose. The best the messenger would do was to take a small package made up by Mother Wilkins, and one of Dorothy's dolls, which, with many misgivings, she sent to comfort her brother.

There was no use in attempting to converse with the Indian, for, acting under strict instructions from his sachem, he pretended not to understand a word of English, answering all their eager questions with grunts, at the same time with a twinkle in his eyes which belied his pretensions. Winthrop, at the last, made as if to accompany him back to Philip's camp; but the Indian was so emphatic in his refusal, even brandishing his tomahawk menacingly, that he desisted from the attempt, and was compelled to

remain at the sheepfold, while the young warrior leaped into the bush and disappeared.

Wilfred's joy at receiving news from his family was great, of course; but it was tempered by the reflection that, for the first time in his life, he was restrained from joining them by an overpowering will inimical to his best interests. Metacomet seemed as pleased as himself at sight of the simple gifts, and when he drew forth from the bundle a gayly-colored handkerchief and handed it to him, as a present from his mother, he was delighted. He immediately tied it around his head, proclaiming to the sagamores, who were by this time crowding around and into the wigwam, that the family to which his captive belonged, and from which the messenger had just returned, was, on no account whatever, to be molested. They signified their assent by guttural "*hughs*," and look significantly at each other, "*hughs*," and looked significantly at each other,

If a stranger had been present, without any information as to previous happenings, he might have thought this a family gathering, around a peddler who had chanced in with his wares, for there was no sign of hostility on either side. The sagamores, in fact, already looked upon Wilfred

as one of themselves, the most intimate friend and companion of their great sachem, so he was hedged about by a self-appointed body-guard, any member of which would have risked his life to protect him. At the same time, there was no concealing the fact that they looked on him as a prisoner, or rather a hostage, who was on his honor to make no attempt to escape.

When, at last, in exploring the bundle, Wilfred came to the doll that little Dorothy had sent him, there was a great shout of surprise and pleasure—for these simple “children of nature,” though they were, most of them, sagamores, or sub-chiefs, still, were very simple children of Mother Nature, and easily pleased or vexed. They had never seen such a doll as this before, for dear little Dorothy had sent her very best, her choicest treasure, the “beloved rag baby.”

Then, sure enough, Wilfred's tears did start, and, ashamed of his emotions, he turned his head aside and bent over as if to examine the object further, with the big drops falling on dolly's face. The boy's feelings were perfectly understood by that throng of half-barbaric warriors, for they knew he was thinking of the loved one, from whom had come this gift, right from a child's in-

nocent heart. Some of those very warriors had, perchance, dashed out the brains of children as sweet and innocent as Dorothy, in their raids upon the colonists; yet, they could not only understand, but sympathize with, the youth's emotions, and kept perfect silence while he wept.

When, smiling up through his tears, Wilfred passed dolly to Philip, for inspection, the chief received the dainty object with a grave tenderness that was reflected in the faces of all about him. After examining it most curiously, he passed it to one of his sagamores, who in turn gave it critical attention, evidently well pleased at the privilege, then handed it along, until it had gone the rounds.

The Indian messenger, the Apollo-like youth who had made the journey to Hilltop and return, without hope or expectation of reward, was standing by, with arms folded, deeply interested in the doings of the lad, but taking no part in the proceedings. To him, as he came to the last object of importance in the package, Wilfred presented that object, which was a big hunting-knife, with bright and shining blade. As he took it up and handed it to the Indian, the latter drew

back in surprise, for evidently the last thing he thought of was payment for his services.

“For you,” said Wilfred. “You have been good friend, now take this.”

The young man's eyes sparkled, but, surprised into speaking English—the tongue he professed no knowledge of at Hilltop—he exclaimed, “Me no want; big sachem no let me take gift!”

“You will let him, won't you?” asked Wilfred, looking at Philip.

“If you want; but he glad to serve you.” Then, turning to the delighted Indian, who stretched out his hand most eagerly for the knife, he said, in Wampanoag language, “Take it, but use it to defend him, if chance occur; after this you are his body-guard. Stay near him.”

The messenger gladly assented, and as he strapped the knife at his waist he looked proudly at his new master, first, then around the circle of warriors for their approbation. They merely grunted, as usual when they did not wish to betray their feelings, and soon the party broke up, for tidings were arriving of the near approach of the foe. This was just previous to the second attack of Captain Church, when he lost several of his men and was driven out of the swamp. Hav-

ing prepared in advance for that contingency, Philip paid no more attention to the settlers' coming than to give orders to his sagamores, who all went off to their respective posts.

Turning again to Wilfred, after the two were left alone with no other company than the newly-appointed body-guard, Philip said :

“ Little Sagamore, this no place for you. To-night we go to Pokanoket, where squaw live, and son. Me want see boy. He all I got. Want you be friend to him. When big fight come, you and squaw, and boy all be in safe place. Get ready, leave when dark come.”

Thus it happened that, while his sagamores made their last fight in the swamp against the soldiers, and conducted the retreat which their sachem had so wisely organized, Philip and Wilfred were speeding, with a small body of warriors, in the direction of Mount Hope. All night, they traveled, and when the boy become weary, several of the warriors made a litter of boughs and carried him in relays, until the dawn of morning broke.

Philip had been aware of the devastations committed by the soldiers; of the destruction of his vast fields of corn, comprising more than a thou-

sand acres; the burning of his wigwams, the capture of women, children and old men, who had been left behind; but his anger, when freshly reminded of these things by re-visiting his home, was fearful to witness. Through it all, however, he uttered no word, made no sign, of hostility to his white captive, but treated him with uniform consideration.

The party at last arrived at the rocky elevation, near what is now Bristol, in Rhode Island, known as the residence of Pokanoket; where Philip long had held sway as king of the Wampanoags, and also his noble father, Massasoit, many years before him. Instead, however, of finding there the large collection of huts which once constituted the royal settlement, dominated by the vast wigwam in which Philip made his home, the visitors saw nothing but ruin and desolation on every side.

Very naturally, indeed, the white invaders had first turned to Philip's settlement at Mount Hope, in search of him, and, failing in that, had wrought him all the ruin that was in their power. And King Philip would not have gained the reputation as a great strategist, (which even his enemies have accorded him) had he remained there await-

ing their approach. He had, as we have seen, swiftly evacuated his quarters at Mount Hope, and as swiftly carried the war into the enemies' country, after the first depredations had been committed.

He took Wilfred by the hand, and going with him to the great rock on the crest of the hill, called his attention to the scene of desolation spread out before them. Beyond the immediate environs of the ruined settlement, a fair scene was outspread beneath and for miles around the Mount, and it is noted to-day as a beautiful prospect, which appealed to the savage as well as to his successor, the white settler, who lost no time, when the war was over, in appropriating his erstwhile place of residence.

Standing there, silent, for a time immovable, Philip made a most impressive picture; and when, after contemplating his lost territory a while, with face sternly set and hands clenched hard together, he turned to the lad and simply said, in a hard, tense voice, "You no can blame me?" Wilfred was in full sympathy with the stricken warrior.

"Not for defending your home," he replied.

“I wish I could help you win it back. Who knows, it may not be too late!”

“Too late!” murmured Philip, with a proud toss of his head. “Too late now. Reward offered for Metacom, ‘live or dead!’”

Signing Wilfred to follow, he retreated from the brow of the hill, and taking an obscure trail through the forest northward, walked thereon for nearly an hour, finally arriving at a deep but narrow ravine, which, like a canyon, cleft the table-land over which they had been traveling. Arrived at its brink, they seemed to have further progress cut off entirely by the steep wall that descended from their feet to a roaring river in its depths.

Turning sharply westward, Philip led the way along the brink of the precipice, through a thick wood filled with underbrush, to a point where the two walls of the chasm approached till hardly more than thirty feet apart. The great depth of the chasm was still preserved, however, and from the dark recesses beneath came up the increased roar of the river, now fretted by cascades and waterfalls.

“White soldier not go more than here,” said

Philip. "They 'fraid. Here my warrior make last stand, here they stop!"

"And well they might have been afraid to go further," thought Wilfred, peering over the precipice verge into the rumbling depths.

A giant pine-tree had fallen across the chasm, and upon its trunk, full three feet in diameter and hedged with an abatis of great limbs, which formed a secure railing on either hand, Philip and his captive walked over to the other side. They were greeted there by the warriors of the body-guard, who had preceded them, several of whom stayed behind to watch the bridge.

"Somebody always here," explained Philip, as he saw Wilfred regarding the sentries curiously. "They hold that bridge 'gainst a hundred!"

"And if you only had a cannon," said Wilfred quickly, before he thought upon the fateful suggestion in his words, "you could hold it against a thousand!"

"Ho, that so!" exclaimed Metacom. "You great boy. Me never think that. *Have got cannon, down in plain. Send for 'em, mount him here. Got cannon, got powder; that make island safe!*"

To think (when his safety was involved) was to act, with King Philip, and within an hour he had twoscore men scampering through the forest to the place where his cannon was concealed. It was only an old field-piece, which he had picked up in an abandoned fort; but it served his purpose well, later in the game, and Wilfred had cause to regret, for his white friends' sake, this sinister suggestion to his red friend Philip, sachem of the Wampanoags.

The cannon was mounted at the "island" end of the pine-tree, and served to defend the bridge across the chasm so well that the spot became memorable in the events of the time. Meanwhile, Philip and Wilfred were approaching the crest of this island-hill, where it rose to a point like the top of a sugar-loaf, upon which, surrounded by immense pines and hemlocks, was perched a wigwam made of stout poles covered over with bark. Some knowledge of their coming must have preceded them, for in the doorway stood a handsome Indian squaw, holding by the hand a beautiful little boy about seven years of age. Not a word was said by either party, as the two groups mingled; but Philip, after patting his

squaw on the cheek, stooped down and gathered his son in his arms.

“This my boy,” he said to Wilfred, holding the child above his head, then lowering him to his shoulder. “And this my squaw—my wife. These two hold my heart, but me no see 'em for long time!”

Metacom's wife smiled pleasantly, and throwing an arm over his disengaged shoulder, drew him into the wigwam, where she had spread a feast of good things for the visitors.

“Come in, Little Sagamore,” cried Philip cheerily. “Wife have good breakfast for us ready. After you eat, you sleep; me too, for all-night work make tired.”

Setting their muskets in a corner of the hut, and taking, each, a stool made from the split broadside of a hemlock trunk, with its limbs for legs, the new arrivals drew up to the rude table, where the main dish was a huge bowl of samp, flanked by meats of various kinds, all smoking hot.

In the throat of a stick-and-clay chimney (which had been copied after that of the settlers) hung a great iron pot, in which the samp had been boiled, and which then contained another

portion, being stirred vigorously by a comely Indian maiden of about Wilfred's age.

"My wife sister," said Philip, indicating the maiden with a sweep of his hand. "She talk English; been school in Plymouth; but my wife, she no talk, only Wampanoag. She name Weet-amoe, after squaw-sachem, my sister, and boy name Pometacom. That all, now you know family you live with when me gone. Now eat."

Being very hungry, Wilfred needed no urging, and though the fare was coarse, he enjoyed it greatly, especially the samp, which, as Philip explained, was made from maize, or corn, saved from fields on the outskirts of the Indian settlement, overlooked by the soldiers in their raid.

"Got great pit full maize," said Philip; "but don't know how many have to feed. P'raps bymeby have to eat acorn, eh?"—addressing his wife, who sat opposite, ready to serve, but not eating.

He repeated the remark in Wampanoag, and she replied, smiling into his eyes, and looking at him and their boy as if perfectly content now that the family was re-united.

"She say," said Philip, with a happy smile,

“that she willing to eat acorn all her life, if only we can stay all time. What you say, son?”

Up to this time the little boy had not uttered a word, but he snuggled into his father's arms as if he, too, were quite contented, now that the wanderer had returned. He said nothing, however, but, sticking a chubby finger into his mouth, gazed at Wilfred in open-eyed admiration.

“He like you,” said Metacomet. “That good, for he no have brother, no sister; only mother and aunt. Me no want him grow up with girl; want him be with men, so make warrior when big.”

“To fight the white people?” asked Wilfred. “In that case, I don't think I can train him. You must not expect me to do that.”

“That what he do,” replied Metacomet savagely. “He must never make friend with white mans. They always his enemy. Forever, ever!”

CHAPTER XV.

WAR PARTIES SCOUTING THE COUNTRY.

THE wigwam was divided by a partition into two parts, and overhead was a loft—for it was a different hut from the average, and evidently built for the purpose for which it was then used.

Generally, the Indians of that time lodged in huts or wigwams built for an entire family, sometimes for a whole tribe, if not too large; but this particular habitation was an exception. It had, besides, what was unusual in the wigwams of that period, a rude chimney, so that the smoke from the fire, which was always burning, went out-of-doors without first permeating the entire hut, as was the case with the others.

A writer of the seventeenth century, who visited the Wampanoags, says of them and their ways, "They live in wigwams, or houses made of mats or boughs, like little huts, the fire in the

midst of the house. They cut down a tree with axes and hatchets bought of the English, Dutch or French, and bring in the butt end into the wigwam upon the hearth, and so burn it by degrees.

They live upon parched corne (which of late they grind at our English mills) venison, beavers, otters, oysters, clammes, lobsters and other fish, ground-nuts, akornes, etc., which they boyle all together in a bigge kettle.

Their riches are their wampom (wampum) bolles (bowles), trayes, kettles and spoones, beaver fures, and canoos. They lye upon a matte, with a stone or piece of wood under their heads. They will give the best entertainment they can to any English coming amongst them. They will not taste sweet things nor alter their habit willingly; onely they are taken with tobacco, wine and strong waters, like rumme and usquebaugh (whiskey); and I have seen some of them in English and French clothes. Their ordinary weapons are bowes and arrowes, and long staves or half-pikes, with pieces of swords, daggers, or knives in the ends of them. They have Captaines, and are very good at a short (or near) mark, and nimble of foot to run away. Their

manner of fighting is most commonly all in one fyle (single file). They are many in number, and worship *Kitan* their good God, or *Hobbomocco*, their evil God; but more fear the latter, because he doeth them the most harm."

These notes by a contemporary will serve to explain the manner of people among whom Wilfred was now domiciled, and the scant accommodations which, at best, were his when Philip left him in charge of the wigwam and went off to carry on the war, already raging in the western part of what is now the state of Massachusetts. Brought up as he had been in the severe simplicity of a Pilgrim household, with only the comforts obtainable in a frontier settlement, the lad was prepared to "rough it" with the Indians, without experiencing any great degree of hardship.

So, when Metacom, next morning, called him down from the loft in the wigwam, which had been assigned him as his quarters, he felt that he had nothing to complain of. On the contrary, barring the fact that he was a prisoner on the "island," he found little in the situation which excited his apprehension. He had said his prayers the night before, just previous to lying

upon the corn-husks furnished for a bed, and having committed himself to God, had fallen asleep without delay.

Daylight had long since appeared when Philip called him, and breakfast was already waiting. As he descended the rude ladder from the loft, he found little Pometacom waiting for him at the foot of it, having probably been instructed by his father that henceforth he was to look to him for protection. As the fat little fingers slid into his palm, Wilfred felt a sense of comfort, and love for the youngster born of the circumstances in which they were placed. He seated him next himself, and having greeted Philip and his wife, awaited his turn to be served. The fare was similar to that of the night before, but Wilfred's appetite was still good, and, being absorbed in thought of what was coming next, he ate the food placed before him almost without knowing what it was.

“You lord of wigwam now,” said Philip, “for soon me go talk to Narraganset. They make treaty with English; but me make 'em break it. After, go see Pequot, then Mohigan, then Mohawk—travel far—join 'em all against white

mans. What you say wise talk; owe you thanks!"

"I'll keep my mouth shut, after this," answered Wilfred, vexed to think that he had put a suggestion of confederacy into Philip's mind. "I want you to understand that I will not ally with you against my white friends. You have me prisoner, you can kill me, if you like; but you cannot make me fight against my own kith and kin."

"Not want," replied Philip. "Not want kill you, neither. You not und'stand: you safe here; in settlement you get kill."

"I would rather die, then, fighting with my people, than live here knowing they were in danger. My place is by their side."

"Yes, mebbe; but so they go to Hilltop Fort, they all safe. That place my warrior no touch, even if me get killed, they have orders."

These were almost the last words the sachem said to Wilfred previous to departure, having already instructed him as to what was to be expected of him while he was absent. He then embraced his wife, took Pometacom in his arms, and led the way back to the pine-bridge, where his little army was waiting his coming. The Indians

composing it had toiled all night, and the result of their labors was apparent in the rusty old cannon, which they had mounted so as to command the bridge. It was rudely mounted, to be sure, but firmly, and undoubtedly would serve the intended purpose well, provided any of the Indians knew how to serve it. But, though they were very proud of their achievement, and were commended by Metacomet for their success thus far, not one could boast of being able either to load the piece, or fire it off.

“What you say?” asked Philip of Wilfred. “S’pose you know how load cannon; how fire it off, eh? Why not show my men? Here gun, here powder, here ball; don’ know how use ’em. Injun great fool!”

“Yes,” answered Wilfred bitterly; “and if I show him how—make him wise, he will turn his talents against my own people, perhaps.”

“Don’t know. P’raps so. Can’t do much harm, for soldier not come here.”

“Not yet; but if they should find out this place, do you expect me to use the cannon on them?”

“Oh, do as please,” exclaimed Metacomet, gruffly. “S’pose they not come!”

“Well, perhaps they won’t,” rejoined Wilfred. “Anyway, I’ll show you how to load the gun, just for fun. Here goes. Give me the powder.”

Under his instructions, the Indians rammed home a light charge of powder, and having primed the vent, after previously reaming it out with a piece of wire, Wilfred touched a burning coal to it, which had been brought from the hearth-fire in the wigwam.

Bang! loudly spoke the cannon, the wadding having been rammed home hard atop the powder, and a dense volume of smoke went up through the trees.

The savages were delighted, not only at the loud report, but to find that the cannon stood the test, not moving a particle from the blocks of wood on which it had been mounted. They chattered a while together, like a lot of crows, then Philip said: “Now we want see it load to kill. Put in ball, shoot enemy.”

“But there isn’t any enemy in sight,” said Wilfred.

“No, know that; but make b’lieve he there. Shoot him—Pam!”

“All right, so long ’s there’s no enemy to shoot at, I don’t mind loading up the cannon ‘to

kill' ;" and he proceeded to do so, forthwith. The balls were of various sizes, some too large, others too small; but a few were found that fitted fairly well, and one of these was inserted, after the gun, with infinite labor, had been tip-tilted to receive it, and then blocked back again in place.

Sighting it carefully along the trunk of the prostrate pine, at a tree standing on the opposite bank, Wilfred was about to touch off the powder in the vent, when Philip stayed his hand.

"No! That foolish. Noise make enemy come here. Keep it so, till enemy come."

Philip's warriors were greatly disappointed at his veto, for they had promised themselves great enjoyment watching the splinters fly from the tree-trunk; but when their chief explained briefly his reasons, they sullenly acquiesced. They did not wish to attract attention to this, their last, retreat near Pokanoket, any more than did Philip himself. But there was one disappointed one in the party, and that one was Wilfred, who, for the very reason that the others had for not firing off the piece, desired to discharge it. Such a loud report, he had argued to himself, might attract the attention of his friends and provoke

a reconnoissance; hence his willingness to teach the Indians how to load and fire the cannon.

While Metacomet may have suspected his motive, he gave no sign of having done so, but carefully watched Wilfred cover the vent with birch bark, to guard the powder against the damp, and then gave the order to march across the bridge.

This diversion, while it had occupied much time, had put all the warriors in good spirits, and the willingness with which Wilfred had shown them how to load and fire the cannon gave him a high place in their esteem. So it was with no concern as to the propriety of leaving the "island" in his care, and even trusting him implicitly, that Philip and his men filed over the fallen pine tree and waved a farewell from the opposite bank of the chasm.

Wilfred held up Pometacom to view, so long as his father was in sight, and then marched with him on his shoulder to the wigwam. There he found the squaw and the comely maiden at work around the fire-place, as unconcerned as if the parting with Philip had not been for a longer journey than to Patuxnet and back. But Indian character is deceiving, for beneath the

apparently calm and placid exterior of her comely face, Philip's squaw concealed her real feelings, as behind a mask. She had wept bitter tears, that very morning, over the prospective absence of her lord, and the dangers she apprehended would attend his course; but no one saw them, least of all her dreaded lord and master.

We will now leave for a while the lonely wigwam on the "island" and follow the fortunes of King Philip. He had made a shorter stay with his wife and son than he intended, owing to the alarming tidings brought him from the seat of war. His sagamores had effected the retreat from the great swamp; but, owing to the pressure upon their flanks by the English soldiery, after they had reached the open country, they were compelled to leave behind more than a hundred women and children, who were taken prisoners and afterward sold into slavery.

By striking across country, Philip intercepted his fleeing warriors and joined them just in time to prevent a disastrous rout. He found them encompassed, not only by the Plymouth and Massachusetts troops, but also by bands of Mohigans,—the very same whom he had hoped to persuade to join him against the settlers. He

experienced a momentary dampening of his ardor and enthusiasm at this discovery; but all the more, when he had reflected on the matter, his savage spirit of resistance rose to the occasion.

Dashing into the midst of the throng of Wampanoags, who had been caught while crossing a stretch of open country where there was no friendly forest shelter, he raised his war-cry, thus proclaiming his arrival. Instantly there was a change in the order of fighting, and instead of the desultory skirmishing that was going on when he reached the scene, a plan was soon developed that put the enemy to confusion.

Rallying around their great chief, the sagamores and their bands formed the nucleus for a compact body of warriors, against which the soldiers and their Indian allies charged in vain. Again and again, they sought to break that phalanx of battling warriors, which, at first solid as the trunk of an oak tree, gradually swung around until it completely enclosed their women and children—such as had not been left behind—and held them safely there, within a hollow square, which the soldiers could not force, try as much as they would to do so.

There were at least two gallant captains on the English side, Henschman and Mosely, who should have been able to outwit the enemy and beat King Philip at his own tactics. Henschman was not an Indian fighter, but he had seen long service for a young man, while Mosely had been engaged in a field where scenes of blood were not wanting to harden him to the commission of any crime. He was, in fact, an old buccaneer, and had been for years in the West Indies, living at that pirates' haunt, the island of Tortuga, on the coast of Haiti.

He had been with such pirates of ill-repute as Lollonois and Mansveldt, Morgan and others, and with them had sacked the cities of the Spanish Main. He had seen whole communities put to the sword, innocent children hanged and quartered, and cut down in cold blood, merely for the lust of gold. For, the buccaneers of the Spanish Main fought, not for glory or for fame, but merely for gold and gain. So this man was not likely to be over-nice in his treatment of the Indians, and was even more cruel and blood-thirsty than the savages themselves. He cut down the women and children without mercy, and whenever a warrior was taken captive, if he

were cognizant of the fact, he would claim the privilege of cutting off his head.

One of these warriors, an old sagamore named Cornelius, was taken in this fight, and handed at once over to Mosely for punishment. Without giving the poor old chief time to say a word, he raised his big broadsword and brought it down as if to cut off his head. The old man was kneeling on the ground, and putting up his arm to ward off the blow, his hand was cut clean off at the stroke.

“It’s all right,” shouted the excited buccaneer, “he’ll look a little better that way, after his head’s cut off, and with another swoop he beheaded the Indian on the spot. Philip came up just in time to witness the death of his favorite sagamore, and, despite the surrounding files of soldiery, he dashed in to avenge the act upon the head of the buccaneer.

It happened that Mosely, through his long practice in the Indies, was the most expert swordsman in the army, and wheeling about just in time to meet his antagonist, he aimed a blow that would surely have cleft the sachem’s head, had he not dodged to one side at the right moment. Philip then sent home his own blow, with

a long and heavy spear he always carried when in conflict, and pinned his adversary through his tunic to the ground. There he held him, the while striving to get out his tomahawk and brain him on the spot; but some of the soldiers crowding upon him, watching for chance to shoot, he was forced back and away from his enemy, by the very press of the throng.

When it was known that the gigantic Indian who had almost ended the life of the buccaneer was none other than King Philip, the throng gave way as if by magic, and the haughty sachem strode through the files of wondering men unharmed.

He would fain have gone back to have it out with the prostrate buccaneer, for his blood was up and he feared no hundred, nor thousand men, even, that could be brought against him. But, even in his heat of passion, casting his eye over the field, and seeing that the forces he engaged were overwhelming, he at once proceeded to organize a retreat which, at this distant day, even, is regarded as most masterly.

He extricated his men from their desperate position, and sending out some of his sagamores to lead the van, took the post of danger at the

rear, and faced the foe until his little army was safe within the forest. Then the soldiers pursued their customary tactics, and, the forest being of limited extent, endeavored to surround it. While they were doing this, or soon after they had perfected their plans and planted their outposts, Metacomet, when night came on, stole through their pickets, and by next dawn was well on his way into the heart of the Nipmuck country.

The next intelligence the commanders of the settlers' army had, Philip was ravaging towns within a day's journey of Boston, the capital of Massachusetts, which, evidently, he intended also to take and plunder, as soon as his allies should join him in the uprising.

As Captain Mosely was pursuing his way to Boston, thinking he had indeed driven Philip back to his lair, where he could be easily surrounded by the Plymouth men, there came news that Quabaog, or Brookfield, was invested. On the outskirts of the town a man and his wife were murdered in open daylight,—and on the Sabbath day, at that, while a lad tending sheep in a field was fired at and barely escaped with his life. The Indian who fired at the shepherd lad “wore a sign as if he were a friend,” by which

it was known that he was one of the so-called "praying Indians," who were supposed to be completely civilized and were settled near Boston in the town of Natick.

Indian Sassamon, whose murder precipitated the war, was once a "praying Indian," but became afterward King Philip's secretary, and was killed by his orders, because suspected of betraying his plans to the English. The wily Philip had, somehow, overcome the prejudices of the praying Indians, by working on their fears and superstitions, and caused them to come over to him, almost in a body. This he had accomplished while supposed to be concealed in the swamp surrounded by his enemies. He slept little, neither scarcely ate twice in any one place, during that first summer, after once started on the whirlwind campaign that embroiled all the eastern colonies in bloody war.

The terror of the English was great, indeed, when they discovered the defection of their trusted "praying Indians," and it was increased, if possible, when they reflected that these people were not only well armed, with muskets furnished by the colonists themselves, but were as well trained as their own militia. It was a skillful

stroke, this that Philip made,—one that requited him somewhat for the loss of the Mohigans, upon whom he had depended for assistance at this very juncture. But the Nipmucks, for a time, held true to him, and within the confines of their territory were such towns of importance as Brookfield and Mendham, which he soon assailed with a large force of warriors.

Well knew Metacomet, then, that his action in penetrating the very heart of the enemies' country would draw out the flower of their army; so he resolved to act quickly, to ravage the outskirts of towns, burn the houses, gather up the horses and cattle,—in fact, lay waste the land, even as the settlers had wasted his own estate at Pokanoket.

He tarried at Mendham merely long enough to kill a few of the settlers in the fields and burn the more exposed of the houses; but Brookfield, being a larger and more important place, tempted him to stay for its complete destruction. It was not far from the chief town of the Nipmucks, who, being on the verge of a treaty with the English, Philip wished to compromise them, so that they could not do other than join with him for good and all. They had received him into their

territory, not daring to oppose him; but they also feared the English, whose prestige was great in that region.

“Thus it happened that, while Captains Wheeler and Hutchinson, commanders of troops sent out from Boston to oppose Philip, and treat with the Nipmucks, were riding with two chiefs of the latter, one morning, they fell into an ambuscade cleverly planned by Philip—“an ambush of two or three hundred Indians, laid in such a narrow passage, between a steep hill on the one hand, and a hideous swamp on the other, that it was scarce possible for any of them to escape, many being killed, and others mortally wounded, whereof Captain Hutchinson was one. The troop was thrown into confusion, and those left alive at once retreated upon Brookfield, which place they would never have reached alive—not a single soul of them—had it not been for an Indian, who led them through a by-path in the woods, the main road being alive and swarming with King Philip's men.”

CHAPTER XVI.

KING PHILIP'S WHIRLWIND CAMPAIGN.

IMAGINE the terror and confusion of Brookfield's citizens, as the defeated troops came pouring in. There was scant room for them, in the great garrison-house; but into it all were gathered, and they had hardly closed the doors when the Indians took possession of the town. They at once burned all the outlying dwellings, save a few in which they placed sentinels to watch for the expected army from Boston. Then, for two days, the wretched prisoners in the garrison-house experienced the horrors of a veritable pandemonium. Hundreds of howling savages gathered around the little fortress and exerted themselves to destroy it, "verily like wolves, yelping and gaping for their prey."

King Philip felt sure of capturing the garrison, at first; but as the hours wore away and it

still held out, he resolved to set it on fire. This fiendish scheme was almost accomplished, for, while many of his warriors surrounded the house and let loose a flood of bullets and burning arrows, others pushed up a cart filled with hay, hemp, and other combustibles, which they set on fire as soon as it was against the walls. By means of long poles with fire-brands and rags dipped in burning brimstone at their ends, they repeatedly set the cart-load of combustibles afire, only to have it extinguished by showers of rain.

The seventy terror-stricken people within the walls saw in this the hand of Providence, and on their bended knees gave thanks to God for His mercies, supplicating, also, a continuance of divine protection. Their prayers, it would seem, were answered, for after two terrible days and nights, passed in momentary expectation of torture and death, the beleaguered citizens and soldiers were relieved by the sound of musketry-fire at a distance.

The time was then about an hour after dark, and the camp-fires of the savages were already lighted, in anticipation of welcoming amongst them the distressed garrison, for whom they were

preparing the ordeal of burning at the stake. For, though King Philip might have wished to spare his foes the tortures of a lingering death at the stake, his warriors were now beyond control, their evil natures wrought up to a pitch of excitement that made of them veritable fiends. They had been indulging in a protracted waltz, which was being kept up after dark, right in sight of the afflicted prisoners in the garrison-house.

A few hours more, they knew, would probably deliver the white people into their hands, when suddenly the sound of a musket-shot broke upon the air, and then another, followed by a desultory volley, and the huzzas of approaching soldiers. Never had succor more opportunely appeared, than when those ninety-two dragoons under Major Willard dashed into the field in front of the garrison-house and drew their foaming horses to their haunches.

With his accustomed caution, Philip had posted sentinels along the roads in both directions, east and west; but these had been negligent, probably having abandoned their posts and drawn in toward the house filled with prospective victims for their contemplated massacre.

still held out, he resolved to set it on fire. This fiendish scheme was almost accomplished, for, while many of his warriors surrounded the house and let loose a flood of bullets and burning arrows, others pushed up a cart filled with hay, hemp, and other combustibles, which they set on fire as soon as it was against the walls. By means of long poles with fire-brands and rags dipped in burning brimstone at their ends, they repeatedly set the cart-load of combustibles afire, only to have it extinguished by showers of rain.

The seventy terror-stricken people within the walls saw in this the hand of Providence, and on their bended knees gave thanks to God for His mercies, supplicating, also, a continuance of divine protection. Their prayers, it would seem, were answered, for after two terrible days and nights, passed in momentary expectation of torture and death, the beleaguered citizens and soldiers were relieved by the sound of musketry-fire at a distance.

The time was then about an hour after dark, and the camp-fires of the savages were already lighted, in anticipation of welcoming amongst them the distressed garrison, for whom they were

preparing the ordeal of burning at the stake. For, though King Philip might have wished to spare his foes the tortures of a lingering death at the stake, his warriors were now beyond control, their evil natures wrought up to a pitch of excitement that made of them veritable fiends. They had been indulging in a protracted war-dance, which was being kept up after dark, right in sight of the afflicted prisoners in the garrison-house.

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Galloping through the Indian camp, saluting the savages with volleys from their carbines, the dragoons formed a cordon around the garrison-house, and made such a formidable appearance that the savages scampered for the woods, despite all Metacomet could do in the way of speech and example to make them take a stand.

Some of the troopers succeeded in getting inside the house, but their horses, left behind, were ruthlessly slaughtered, as were all the sheep and cattle in the vicinity. Seeing that his men were demoralized, Metacomet set fire to all the remaining houses of the town, killed every living thing that could offer no defence, and made the best of his position by ordering a retreat. About a hundred had been killed, on each side, and perhaps more Indians than white people; but the former were ten times as numerous as the latter, and cared little for their losses, so they could in the end prevail.

Within the forest, Philip's men regained their courage and after he had harangued them hotly, demanded to be led again to the attack. But the wily savage knew that the time had gone by to commit further assaults upon the towns and villages in that region, now that the soldiers were

pouring in from every quarter. He still believed himself capable of assaulting and capturing the larger centers of population; but first he would draw the troops further from their bases of supplies, and then return and complete the work of destruction.

“These Nipmucks will not help us,” declared the chief, when he had assembled his sagamores together. “Their hearts are soft, their legs tremble with fear of the English. Neither can we rely upon the praying Indians, whom it is sufficient that we have compromised, as also the Nipmucks—for the English will not dare send their best soldiers after us, because of this fire we have set in our rear. We will now make a dash for the valley of the great river, and ravage the country between Deerfield and Squakeag, where the settlers are scattered, but the fields are many and ripe with maize and grain.

The sagamores gave assent, and that very night was the march begun, through the forests westward to the valley of the Connecticut river. So expeditious were they, so cruelly were the hapless women and children forced along with the warriors, that many fell dead on the march, and others were so exhausted when they reached the

vicinity of Deerfield, that they were left behind in the woods, near the great hill now known as the Sugarloaf, from the top of which opens out a beautiful view of the valley.

For a while, the English were puzzled as to Philip's whereabouts; but soon there came reports from the Connecticut, dire tidings from the Indians about Hatfield and Hadley, who had at first professed friendship for the settlers; but latterly had been gathering weapons of war and hiding them in the woods. They had accompanied the soldiers as scouts, in several expeditions; but the Mohigans, who were really friendly to the white people, warned them of the Hadley Indians. They had noticed, they said, that whenever the enemy was approached, the Hadley Indians sent up a shout, as if to put them on their guard. Seeing themselves suspected, these Hadleys suddenly decamped, one night, and as Philip and his band reached the river, after their forced march from Brookfield, they joined themselves to the sachem's company.

Once in the beautiful Connecticut valley, Philip struck the settlers several swift and terrible blows, beginning at Hatfield, in the bend of the river, and extending his depredations as far

north as Squakeag, or Northfield. No white person dared go into a field unarmed; or even at all, in fact, so numerous and watchful were the prowling savages. None of the engagements were much more than skirmishes, in which ten or twenty at a time on each side were slain; but Philip was planning for the striking of a blow that should be felt throughout the colony. His favorite resort when in the valley of the Connecticut was the steep hill in what is now South Deerfield, known as Sugarloaf, from its almost conical shape. Here, to-day, is still pointed out a hollow in the rock at its apex where, it is said, King Philip used to sit for hours at a time and scheme the settlers' downfall.

The view from this point is not only very beautiful, but also extensive, taking in a great portion of the valley, including several settlements upon which, at that time, Philip had evil designs. With his keen, almost telescopic eye, Philip ranged over the prospect before him, noting the movements of the white people and directing the operations of his warriors by means of messengers, lithe young Indians, who could run like the wind, always in waiting by his side. Some were coming or going all the time, bearing

orders to the sagamores for their further fighting, while Philip held aloof among the clouds.

The first fight of importance was with Captain Beers and his company of thirty-six men, who were sent to Northfield with supplies for the little garrison there. He and his band were set upon by several hundred Indians, as they were passing through a swamp, and twenty of them killed. More than that number of Indians were slain, for these soldiers fought valiently, back to back, and until their ammunition was exhausted. Less than sixteen of this band escaped, who fled back to Hadley, whence another force, this time of one hundred men, was sent to Squakeag, for the garrison. This time, they did not tarry longer than was necessary to fetch away the residue of the garrison, as the post was considered too isolated to hold by a mere handful of men in the midst of forests swarming with savages.

Every time he attacked the settlers, now, Philip brought into the field an overwhelming force, having reasoned out this scheme of action to his satisfaction, and nearly every band of white people that he assailed was almost destroyed. So severe was the punishment he inflicted upon the English that they felt compelled to abandon

all settlements except a few, and concentrate people and provisions within strong garrison-houses. One of these points thus fortified and held, was Hadley, which was considered strategically strong, and so orders were issued to retreat from Deerfield and make a stand in the former place. One September day, the gallant Captain Lothrop and a company of nearly one hundred men were sent to Deerfield for the purpose of gathering and husking the corn in the abandoned fields, estimated at about three thousand bushels, and taking it to Hadley, where it would be secure from the ravages of the enemy.

King Philip had expected some such move as this, and from his eyrie on the peak of Sugarloaf hill he had watched every movement of the devoted band. Like a hawk, or an eagle, sure of its prey, he hovered in mid-air, as it were, while he noted every move and planned every detail of a bloodier massacre than any that had yet been perpetrated. By his orders all the Indians kept within the woods, and it appeared to Captain Lothrop that they must have left that region and gone elsewhere. The Captain kept his men in hand, however, and they accomplished the object of their foray, which was the securing of the

less than nine hundred Indians, so that, whatever form of fighting occurred, the white soldiers were foredoomed to fall.

Then was Philip avenged for whatever wrong he had suffered at the white man's hands, for he and his men slew, that day, not less than ninety of that band, which was a hundred strong at the beginning of the fight! The road, the swamp, and the adjacent fields were strewn with the mangled remains of Captain Lothrop's company, which, composed of sturdy young men from the eastern part of the State, was known as the "flower of Essex county."

This company being so far distant, more than a hundred miles, from the county in which it was raised, suggests the widespread nature of this conflict, waged by King Philip for more than a year, and which carried sorrow and death to thousands of homes.

They sold their lives dearly, those choice spirits culled from the best families of Essex, and it is known that, surprised as they were by the ambushed Indians, they killed as many of the enemy as they themselves numbered, all told. The soil of swamp and field was ensanguined with human gore, and the waters of the little stream that

crossed the road so deeply tinged that it has ever since been known as "Bloody Brook!"

Here, as in other places, Metacomet's presence was felt more than seen, for, while he directed the fight, he took no active part in the actual assault. After all was over, after the wounded had been despatched by the pitiless fiends, and the slain deprived of their scalps, Philip, it is said, stalked gloomily about the battlefield, gloating over the slaughter he had caused.

"Now will the English hear me?" he muttered. "Now will they double their reward for my head? Not a few coats, or shillings, will be offered for my head; but enough to ransom a greater king than Philip Pokanoket!"

"So will I treat them all. Now they will know my name, through all the length and breadth of the land! This makes it so I never can be taken alive, but must die a-fighting!"

Hard upon his heels, as he withdrew his men from the battle-ground of Bloody Brook, was Philip's personal enemy, Captain Mosely, the old buccaneer having been sent out to succor Lothrop when too late. He reached the scene of blood only in time to drive off the Indian stragglers who were plundering the slain, and to bury the

dead. It entered Philip's mind to call back his warriors and "have it out" with Mosely; but they were now laden with plunder, which they were carrying off to their dens in the forest, and were, also, so content with their great victory that they cared not to engage the enemy a second time in the same place. The fiery Mosely hung upon their flanks a while, pursuing them after a fashion for seven miles or more, but without bringing them to a standstill.

Finally, he gave it up, and Philip, organizing his forces anew, started direct for Springfield, where he nearly succeeded in surprising the strong garrison there, and did succeed in detaching the Springfield Indians, who flocked to fight beneath his banner.

Philip's prestige was now so great that all the Indians in the valley came to fight with him, and his fame even extended to the Mohawks and their allies, who doubtless would have joined him if he had approached them at that time. But, though still having in mind the winning over of the other Indians, Philip was too intent upon pillage and massacre to take the time for a visit. He had now a thousand warriors in hand, which number was as great as he could well take care

of and hurl with rapidity and precision against the scattered settlements.

He would first carry terror to the hearts of the settlers, he said, by appearing in places wide apart and where least expected, burning, murdering, destroying. Then he would send out the call for a general uprising, and at the head of ten thousand warriors march upon the capitals of the colonies, where he would dictate terms to his hated enemies.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE MASSACRE AT NARRAGANSET FORT.

DARING and resolute as the great sachem of the Wampanoags had proved himself to be, yet it is known that at the end of the first summer's campaign he was reduced to great straits for the maintenance of his horde of Indian warriors. They could subsist upon the country, to be sure, whether in their own region or the recently-ravaged fields of the enemy; but those Indians who had been induced by Philip to join him against the white people, were now clamorous for their rewards.

During the Autumn of 1675, in fact, King Philip experienced a crisis—it may be termed a monetary crisis—which he tided over in a very ingenious manner. Previous to the breaking out of hostilities he had been accounted a very wealthy person for an Indian, as he owned not

only a vast acreage of land, but a great store of wampum, the Indian money. So plentifully supplied was he with this "wampumpeag," or wampum money, that he had several coats, or robes, completely covered with it. One of the most profusely ornamented of his coats, which was in fact his royal robe of state, he was wont to wrap himself in when "holding forth" from the throne, on all great occasions. He may be said, in truth, to have borne his bank upon his shoulders, for, besides so lavishly ornamenting his garments with wampum, he also carried quantities of it in his numerous pockets.

So it was that when the time arrived when, in his opinion, it was best to approach the sachems of rival tribes about forming a league offensive and defensive, against the colonists, he bethought himself of his many garments decorated with wampumpeag. He sent for them by swift messengers (for they were stored away in the great wigwam on the forest "island") and when they arrived, after calling around him his trusted sagamores, he ordered the various coats cut into many pieces, which he promptly distributed among the sachems of the tribes he desired to league with him.

The wampum-covered cloth was sent out by trusty men, the pick of his tribe, north, south, east and west, with this message: "Metacomet, King of the Wampanoags, desires the assistance of your tribe against the encroaching white men, who have come from across the sea expressly to devour us, and are determined upon our extermination. They have been severely punished: their women and children, their old men and their soldiers, killed by hundreds; their towns and houses burned. But now the season of fighting draws near its ending, and we go into winter-quarters. Join with me, Metacomet of the Wampanoags, next season, at the corn-planting time, in the first of the moon, and together we will drive the white men into the sea! Come and fail not. The plunder will be vast, the slaughter great!"

Metacom, son of Massasoit, King of the Wampanoags."

"All the savages hanging together like serpent eggs," as the old saying hath it, there was little doubt that Philip would, sooner or later, accomplish his desires. There was a great stir amongst the surrounding tribes, on all sides visible tokens of disquiet, and preparations for a great confed-

eration of the tribes. Meanwhile, it behooved the settlers to be stirring with greater alacrity than hitherto, and strike a blow that should counteract his own dreadful doings; for by his successes, especially in the valley of the Connecticut, all the Indians were emboldened and encouraged.

That "nothing succeeds like success" was as true then, in the seventeenth century, as it is today, and seeing that King Philip was more than holding his own against the colonials, and that, too, without having received outside aid to any great extent, his Indian neighbors nearest to Pokanoket first wavered, then decided in his favor, and went over to his side. These were the Narragansets, who, not long before, had bound themselves by treaty not only to remain neutral, but to deliver up to the English settlers any of Philip's subjects who should seek refuge amongst them.

They had also agreed to deliver up Philip himself should he fall into their power, dead or alive (as we have seen); but the excuse now urged by the Narragansets for not abiding by the treaty with the settlers was that none of their sachems had signed it. In proof of this we

have only to peruse the original document, which bears the signatures, or "marks," *not* of Canonicus, Ninigret, Pomham, Matatoag, Quiapen, and Quananshit, the six great sachems of the tribe; but only of Tawageson, Tayston, Wampsh, and Agamoug, who at best were only sagamores or sub-chiefs.

The English call them the "attorneys" of the Narraganset sachems; but the sachems retorted that they had no attorneys, nor wanted any, having delegated their authority to nobody whatever. They, in fact, were disgruntled at this evidence of sharp practice on part of the colonials, and refused to abide by a treaty which was none of their making. More than this, they made it the excuse for resorting to hostilities which that very "treaty" was intended to prevent. Thus did the plans of the English come to naught, and serve only to increase the evil which they sought to correct.

"As for the late league made, or rather renewed, with the Narragansets, it was sufficiently evident and known that they had all along, from the first day it was confirmed, broken every article of it, especially in not delivering up the enemies, which had sheltered themselves with

them all this while, which, though they did not positively deny, yet did nothing but find excuses, to defer it one week after another, till at last they would be excused till the next spring, upon pretence that they could not before that time get them together.

And besides the favoring of those that fled to them, and supplying the whole body of ye enemy with victuals, upon all occasions, it was likewise strongly suspected that in all the late proceedings of ye enemy, many of their young men were known to be actually in arms against us, many of whom were found either wounded amongst them in their wigwams, or elsewhere occasionally seen returning back, after exploits abroad, to be healed of their wounds at home. Also, some of our men's guns, that were lost at Deerfield, were found in ye fort when it was fired. Therefore, all scruples as to the justness and necessity of ye war being removed, the only question was whether it were feasible and expedient in ye winter."

That it was finally considered both "feasible and expedient," is shown by the summons that went forth for the raising of an army, the largest yet gathered, consisting of a thousand men-at-

arms, half that number from Massachusetts, and the remainder from Plymouth and Connecticut. Besides the thousand white soldiers, commanded by the Honorable Josiah Winslow, governor of the Plymouth colony, as commander-in-chief, there were numerous "reformados," or volunteers among the praying Indians, who did very good service. In fact, it was owing to a reformado Indian, one Peter, supposed to have been the husband of the Squaw Sachem of Patuxet, that the Narraganset retreat, the fort in a vast swamp, was discovered.

Towards mid-afternoon, one of the coldest days in December, 1675, the combined armies under General Winslow arrived at the edge of the big swamp. The hardy settlers had marched for several days, camping at night in the snow, suffering extremely from the terrible cold of mid-winter, with little to eat, insufficiently provided with blankets for protection from the cold, and without means or opportunity to make a fire. As they were marching through the country of the Squaw Sachem of the Narragansets, called the old Snake Queen, they were joined by Peter Nunnuit, the renegado Indian, who, for reasons of his own, offered to lead them to the fort.

Having reached the borders of the swamp, the Indian told them they would soon find Indians enough to satisfy them, and had hardly said this ere some of the soldiers were picked off by Indian sharpshooters, falling down in the snow. Plunging desperately in, these hardy colonials charged upon the unseen enemy, who retreated into their fort, which, surrounded as it was by an almost impenetrable abatis of fallen trees with jagged branches pointing outward, could not be forced. It was upon raised land, forming a sort of "island," containing five or six acres, within the fastness of the swamp.

There was but one entrance to this Indian fort, and that was to be gained only by first crossing a great tree over a creek. The water beneath was frozen, to be sure, and the ice covered with snow; but all who attempted to gain the fort by this way were shot down by the hidden sharpshooters, who soon piled up a heap of slain settlers as high as a haystack. One after another, by dozens and by scores, the soldiers were slain, as they pressed forward, ignoring the commands of their captains, every man for himself. In the end, nearly one hundred were killed, including six captains, the most valiant men of the colonies, such as

Gallop and Davenport, Gardiner, Johnson, Siely and Marshall.

In the center of the army rode General Winslow, unable to gain the front from the press of the throng ahead, and thus saved from being himself numbered with the dead, that day. Among the reformado white men was our old friend, Captain Church, who, refusing the command of a Company, had hastily gathered together two-score spirits as brave and as experienced as himself, and with them sought out another and safer entrance to the fort.

They swung around the abatis, searching in the snow for a place weaker than the body of the work, and found it, too, in a great gap beneath another tree, where there was an open passage. It seemed so easy of access that the wary Church became at once suspicious.

“Hold, my men,” he shouted, “methinks these red devils do not open a road for nothing! First fire a volley through it at whatever lies beyond!”

But his men did not hear him, or if they did were over-confident, and their negligence cost many of them their lives. For, though the passage was open, its farther end was obstructed by

a wigwam blockhouse masked by limbs and branches, from which poured forth a blasting, withering fire, sent out by the Indians concealed within. The scouts were soon joined by others, however, and with yells and cries of encouragement, they swept all obstructions aside and overwhelmed the blockhouse.

The desperate Indians would not retreat nor surrender, so the wigwam was set on fire, and the flames spreading to the other huts, estimated at three or four hundred in number, soon the fort was filled with smoke, and it was difficult to tell friend from foe.

While running around the wigwam, seeking a hole through which to poke his musket, and fire upon the inmates of the hut, Captain Church was three times shot; but still fought on. Gaining the center of the great enclosure, he ran full-tilt upon gallant Captain Gardiner of Salem, who looked him in the face, but without speaking. Church called him by name, and receiving no response, raised his cap, when out poured a torrent of blood, and his friend settled to the ground and in a moment was dead.

With captains so brave, small wonder is it that the privates fought so well, and great won-

der it is that any Indians escaped at all. But they knew all the hiding-places, and when the white men had thought them subdued or exterminated, again and again they would leap up and deliver withering fires of musketry into their faces.

The wigwams were made of bark and branches, but were lined with tubs of corn, baskets of grain, and all sorts of provisions which the Indians had gathered for their winter stores. All their seed-corn for next season's planting was also there, so that when the flames swept over the wigwams, not only were nearly all their present provisions consumed, but, as well, their means of subsistence in the future. And, these tubs and baskets being ranged around the walls of the huts, made them almost bullet-proof, inasmuch as several bodies of Indians, after it was thought the fight was over, managed to enter some of them and maintain a desperate battle with the invaders.

At last, the fort was gained, the pandemonium of sounds decreased; but still raged the flames and still yet ascended clouds of smoke. Somewhere beneath that pall of smoke—as was afterwards ascertained—hundreds of fighting

men lay either dead or wounded. Within and without the fort, more than a thousand Indians had been killed, and probably more than half that number of women and children besides, burned to death or suffocated in the smoke! Terrible, indeed, was the penalty paid by the Narragansets for allying themselves with the Wampanoags—for not delivering up to the colonists the refugees from that hunted tribe. At one fell blow, the Narraganset power was broken. In a single afternoon, between noon and night, their choicest warriors were slain, their proudest families destroyed.

The obstinacy of the colonials had won, despite the great obstacles in their way; but it was more by good fortune than their own sagacity, that they escaped destruction that ensuing night, for their subsequent proceedings were marked by lack of sense, stamped with the token of imbecility. Perhaps it was because all their great captains had been slain, or because the advice of the wise ones was not heeded, that they did not exert themselves to extinguish the fires within the fort and encamp there for the night. But, some of the petty officers seemed beside themselves with fear, and one of the surgeons told

Captain Church that if he advised such a course he would allow him to bleed to death, then and there. And the blood was welling from his wounds at the time—as he stood arguing and expostulating with the commander and his cowardly surgeons.

So the fruits of their victory were allowed to slip into the hands of the Indians, and tons of provisions lost; while the famished soldiers were almost perishing, on their scanty diet of a biscuit per man per day. Besides, there were the wounded, more than a hundred in number, with nearly as many slain. The intense cold was fast stiffening their wounds, yet orders were given to march out into the cold and darkness, the well ones bearing their dead and wounded comrades, staggering along through the deep snow, for sixteen weary miles, before a camp was made.

The Indians, returning to their smoldering wigwams, finding there the charred remains of wives and children, of daughters and mothers, may well have rent the air with lamentations; but at least, they were permitted to enjoy what remained after the white soldiers had retreated, and regarded the affair as in a sense their own victory, inasmuch as they still continued to

“hold the fort.” Their spirits were subdued, but not yet broken; and the chief object of the settlers’ search, the great Wampanoag sachem, had escaped again, almost by a miracle.

That was a terrible winter, especially for the Indians, who, frequently attacked by the colonials, were disposed in every direction. Still Philip swept the colonies like a whirlwind of flame, appearing here, there, everywhere, and always unexpectedly; his men skulking up to the outskirts of towns and penetrating into the hearts of settlements, with musket and firebrand, carrying murder, massacre and desolation. The mere list of towns wholly or partially destroyed would be a long one, reaching from the valley of the Connecticut to that of the Merrimac. Sometimes the Indians would be within a score of miles of Boston, and the alarm would go out to gather for its defence; again, Plymouth colony would be pounced upon, and the flame of war borne right against its battlements.

While the Wampanoags suffered much, it appears that their would-be allies, the Nipmucks and the Narragansets suffered more, until finally they were completely severed from their friends of other tribes and cut off from all communica-

tion with the world outside their provinces. In sheer desperation, finally, Philip made a perilous journey to the Mohawk country, where he was received so badly that he barely escaped with his life. So enraged was he, in fact, that he killed several settlers on the borders of their territory, under such circumstances that it appeared to be the work of the Mohawks themselves. They and the Mohigans were so incensed that they joined with the colonials in their war against the Wampanoags, and thus the circle around these devoted people grew more and more restricted, until they found themselves with enemies on every side. Through it all, however, the majority of his people clung to Philip, following his fortunes—or rather, his misfortunes—with a faithfulness worthy of a noble race.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE LITTLE SAGAMORE'S WIGWAM.

IN the dragnet spread by the colonials were gathered up all sorts of Indian fish; sachems and sagamores, squaw-chiefs and sub-chiefs; but never a glimpse got they of the great sachem, King Philip. He seemed to direct every fight, plan every burning and massacre; but kept himself in the background; not so much from cowardice as from prudence. He seemed indeed ubiquitous; some of the settlers thought he might in the end prevail, since his schemes showed so much of cunning and of wisdom. He contrived to spread fear and trembling throughout the length and breadth of Massachusetts colony, and Plymouth, as well; but all the time, steadily and persistently, the colonial authorities bent their energies to the great work of isolating him and his people from all other tribes.

Gradually, they drew the circle about him, slowly but surely they cut off his allies as well as his supplies, until in desperation he turned once more to the scenes of his first successful exploits in the vicinity of Pokanoket. There, at last, he met his death, within the territory that had descended to him from his ancestors, almost in sight of the place of his birth. Through all these latter adventures of his he had been without his family, having left them (as we know) in charge of the young hero of this story, Wilfred Wilkins, who (as we shall shortly note) was faithful to the bitter end.

If Philip still had a heart, it must have bled for his friends, such as the Narragansets, thousands of whom had been cut off at the fort in the swamp; the Nipmucks, hundreds of whom were killed or captured before the war came to an end; and even some of the Pequods, who stood by him until destruction overtook them. Among the sachems who died because of Philip's deeds, and there were many,—not one expressed regret for his misdeeds nor lamented his fate. Matoonas, the Nipmuck sagamore, was hanged, and near the gibbet his head was stuck up on a pole. When he was brought before the court that

sentenced him, and asked what he had to say in his favor, he said he probably deserved death, for if he had followed the teachings rather than the practices of the praying Indians, he would not have met his fate in such a manner. Sagamore Sam of Quabaog had threatened to march upon Boston and burn it to the ground; yet was he, at last, led through Boston streets with a halter round his neck, "with which he was hanged at the town's end."

Most noted of them all was Canonchet, chief sachem of the Narragansets, who was captured by the Pequods and handed over to his enemies, the English. He boasted that he would not deliver up a Wampanoag, "nor the paring of a Wampanoag's nail;" and when sentenced to die said: "It is well, kill me now, before my heart gets soft, but mark, my killing will not end the war."

Soon after Canonchet was taken, King Philip himself had a narrow escape from capture, and lost his most beloved wife and son. "Skin for skin," says the old historian, "all that a man hath will he give for his life;" but Philip would doubtless rather have died than lost those treasures of his heart. With his wife and child in the

hands of the enemy, most of his friends dead, himself a fugitive, he experienced the full measure of misery (it might be thought) before the end came to his life and his schemes for vengeance.

To understand how this disaster came to him (and while both sides are preparing for mortal conflict) let us leave a while the chief actors in the great and bloody drama and revert to our young friend, who had been placed by Philip in charge of his home and belongings.

During the occurrences narrated in the previous chapters, Wilfred had been kept practically a prisoner on the "island." Not only was he closely watched, but he felt himself bound in honor not to attempt escape. He had not given his word, to be sure; but the obligations Philip had fastened upon him appealed so strongly to his sense of honor, that he felt constrained by them.

Moreover, as the days, weeks and months went by, as summer lapsed into winter, and this in turn gave way to spring, he had really become attached to his charges, the sachem's wife, sister and son. By degrees, as the war waged more fiercely, many Indian fugitives drifted toward

the wigwam on the "island," mostly women and children, who appealed to Wilfred for shelter and protection. In truth, Philip had made this his refuge of last resort, and while holding aloof himself, so that suspicion should not be directed toward it, had yet sent a great store of plunder thitherward, so that eventually a vast deposit was formed. "Where the carcass is, there will the eagles gather," the good and great Book says, and had Philip been better acquainted with its proverbs, as well as its precepts, he would have known better than to have sent thither such a quantity of plunder. For, first some of the Nipmuck Indians, then some of the Narragansets, then some of the white scouts, noted the trend of the parties bearing this plunder—always centering at one particular spot—and availed themselves of this knowledge (as might have been expected), to the eventual discomfiture of Philip and his friend. An expedition was formed by the Plymouth people to go in search of this repository, and at the head of it was the great Indian fighter, Captain Church.

This was all unknown to Wilfred, however much he might have anticipated and dreaded the outcome of the mistaken move on Philip's part.

He devoted himself to succoring the fugitives, to keeping them employed, and to the welfare of his little household. With a laudable desire to promote the cause of religion and good works by at least his own personal example, Wilfred strove to convert the wife and mother, as well as her sister, to his way of thinking. Through the comely maiden, who had a fair knowledge of English and was herself well disposed to the white people's religion, the lad taught the gentle Weetamoe the principles of that faith which has sustained countless thousands on their heavenward march.

He recognized in this wife of King Philip, who might in the event of his death, become the "squaw sachem" of the Wampanoags, a character truly admirable and great. Handsome as to face and feature, she also possessed a gentle dignity which goes with all great natures. A typical queen, she was, though now without a throne, and with few people subject to her. She was devotedly attached to her son, little Pom-etacom, and recognizing the great value to him of such a friend and counsellor as the young white man, encouraged their intimacy to the utmost. It needed no urging on her part, however, for

Wilfred to take an interest in Pometacom, for the two became friends almost at sight. They could not speak each other's language, and at first this was a drawback to their perfect acquaintance; but the Queen's sister acted as interpreter, when needed, and soon they acquired a mutual speech that sufficed.

Like his great father, Pometacom was disposed to silence, rather than much speech, being thoughtful, even pensive at times, his few years of existence having been passed amid scenes that made him observant and self-reliant, for one of his age. He had been carefully trained by Metacomet to comport himself in accordance with his future expectations, as the ruler over a powerful tribe; but he had real dignity, without being at all headstrong or self-important. The true kingly dignity is born in one, and cannot be acquired; and this is true, even though so many kings have turned out fools and weaklings.

The two boys, then, were constant companions, and regularly (as at meal times and after supper was over) in company with Queen Weetamoe and her sister. Slowly, but surely, Wilfred's influence was telling upon his companions, all of whom looked up to him for guidance, as being

not only the stronger nature, but a representative of a higher civilization. Had Philip been able to divine how the youth would draw these members of his family from their devotion to a barbaric life, to a yearning for something higher, and nobler, he might have hesitated before leaving them in his care. For, though the King recognized the great qualities of the white people, yet he knew full well that when his own tribe adopted white people's ways and entered into their thoughts, his influence would wane.

But it was not from any desire to augment his own influence or power, that Wilfred exerted himself to divert his friends from their semi-savage mode of life, for he was entirely forgetful of self, only thinking of the great good that might eventuate. It was a slow process—but he thought that perhaps he might reach King Philip through his wife and child, and end the war by the combined influence of the three. Yet, all the while, Philip was doing his utmost to make it actually impossible for the white people ever to overlook his misdeeds. How many homes had he despoiled? How many families had his warriors murdered, in that terrible war, which now

seemed as if but just begun, so extensive were its operations.

Not many weeks had passed before little Pom-etacom had crept into Wilfred's heart, with his winning ways, his manly bearing and innocent wiles. The time soon came when Wilfred began to feel that he could not well live without the little fellow's company, and wonder what his life would be if he should be taken away. And yet, the time was hastening on when he would lose, not only Pometacom, but his mother and her sister. All unbeknown to him, the expedition organized at Plymouth by the redoubtable Captain Church was nearing the place of his abode; and though it might be thought that he would have welcomed friends of his own race and complexion, yet, it must be confessed, his sympathies were divided.

Unknown to him were the preparations being made for his capture and the enslavement of his friends; and this, perhaps, was well, for during the few weeks yet remaining he made the days of little Pometacom the happiest of his life. The time was coming shortly when he would be torn from the arms that had sheltered him from harm, and taken aboard a vessel bound for distant

parts, there to be sold into slavery. Also his mother, Weetamoe, and the gentle girl who had naught but smiles and sweet words for all. She, too, was made a slave; and soon we will tell how it all came about. Unaware of the impending peril, Wilfred and Pometacom wandered at will through the forests of the "island," telling each other the secrets they had learned from bird and beast; from the blue jay and the squirrel; from the woodpecker and the rabbit; even the shy wild deer had something for them in the way of teaching.

From the thistle and the milkweed Wilfred made silvery balls of down, which Pometacom, with many a shout of happy laughter, set floating in the air. Trumpets and horns, he also made, from the stalks of pumpkin leaves; fiddles from corn-stalks and pipes from the cobs, in which he and Pometacom pretended to smoke dainty rolls of the sweet-fern.

Wilfred had a jackknife, of course—for he was one of the real and original Yankee boys,—and with that he whittled out pop-guns from the elder sticks, whistles from willow and chestnut, and even bows and arrows. Of these last Pometacom had a beautiful set, made by a warrior, at

his father's orders; but though bows and arrows were ornamented with feathers and porcupine quills, and gay with colors, red, yellow and green, yet he fancied most the rude weapons fashioned for him by his white friend.

Most of all, however, he prized the beautiful doll that little Dorothy had sent her brother by the messenger, and which he was allowed to play with to his heart's content. For hours together, he would sit beneath the great oak, in pleasant weather, and in a corner of the wigwam when in-doors, caressing and talking in Wampanoag to that pretty plaything of his white friend's sister. Wilfred tried to tell him of its much beloved mistress; how dear she was to him, how sweet she was, and Pometacom felt that he knew and loved her already, without ever having seen her.

“When I get big chief,” he frequently said to his friend, “I make little sister beautiful present. If my father have any land left, after he done fighting, I give her many, many acres for her farm, so she be very rich, and perhaps we all live near each other, and my people learn white people's ways and be good all, all the time together.”

“I hope so, Pometacom,” Wilfred would reply, while his brow clouded at the thought of what the future really held for them—with Philip either dead or a fugitive, a price set on his head, and perhaps his wife and boy proscribed, driven to the woods as outcasts.

“And I make you great sagamore,” the boy would continue. “And all you tell me, that I do, and that my people do. We stop fighting, we worship white man’s God, and be so good your peoples never, never want to kill us. I want to be another great sachem; real king, like my grandfather, Massasoit, who for many years the white man’s friend.”

“You could not do better,” Wilfred told him. “For Massasoit will always live in history as the first great friend of my people. He had lived many years the wild life of a rude Indian, not knowing any better life; but only after he became the white men’s friend, did he rise to that eminence that his memory will always live!”

“Yes,” assented Pometacom (after he had gained the sense of this assertion) “but, if my grandfather always friend of your people, why not my father? He want kill them, tell me never



As Wilfred and Pometacon were going through the wood, a maiden sought them out, panting from the fatigue of running.
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to like nor make treaty with them, for they all bad and want only Indian's land."

"That is not so," answered Wilfred; "but, sad to say, there are bad white men, as well as bad red men; and, I know not, but somehow they have set us all by the ears. Your people have more land than they can use; my people take it and make it fruitful, where before nothing grew but the wild things of the woods. It is God's will that only those who make the most and best of His gifts shall continue to occupy the earth. Then he told the boy the parable of the "two talents," and impressed him with the necessity for carrying out the evident will of the Creator, if he would make his people great.

Thus, it will be seen, Wilfred was shaping the twig that it might become a fruitful tree of promise, with God's aid, and there is little doubt what manner of man and ruler Pometacom might have become had he and his mentor been allowed to grow up together. But, there came a day—a day that neither of them ever forgot—when, as they were wandering through the wood together, the comely maiden sought them out, panting from the fatigue of running, and, with hand on her heart, and eyes, wide-staring, she told that

she had come from the hither end of the great pine bridge, where the warriors were posted who had been left behind by Metacom as sentinels. And she said, breathing hard and gasping for breath, that they had told her to go to the Little Sagamore in haste, for there were white men—soldiers, in great numbers—approaching the chasms from the other side. He was needed, and at once, to fire the big-mouthed gun, that he had loaded long ago for just such an emergency—to kill the invaders. Now they had come,—the white men—and were about to charge across the great pine-tree, so there was no time to lose!

Hearing this, Wilfred told the maiden to take Pometacom to the wigwam and then to a cave in the rocks, which had already been prepared for such an occasion, and there hide, with Weetamoe and the others who could be warned in time. Then he took up his musket and ran towards the pine-bridge; but had not gone far before he heard a cry, and looking back, saw his little companion, struggling in the arms of the maiden, and insisting that he should accompany his friend, wherever he went.

“I am chief,” he cried; “let me go;” and the girl was compelled to let him, so stoutly he strug-

gled. Once on his feet, he ran as swiftly after Wilfred as his little feet could carry him; but the latter paid no attention to him then, being in haste to get to the spot that was menaced by the enemy. There he found a little knot of Indians, gathered behind a big rock, peering out cautiously at a much larger party of white soldiers on the other side the deep chasm.

“Oh, Little Sagamore,” cried out the young man who had been deputed by Philip to act as his body-guard, “behold the coming of your people. You only can prevent their crossing the bridge, you and the big-mouthed gun. We wait to hear it speak!”

CHAPTER XIX.

HOW WILFRED WAS COMPELLED TO SURRENDER.

“WHAT, have ye turned cowards?” demanded Wilfred scornfully. “Could ye not hold the bridge without my help? Why, only a few men can command this bridge—with the aid of this great gun.”

“True, Little Sagamore; but we know not how to fire it off. Show us how to blow the white men into pieces, Little Sagamore.”

“As though ye knew not how,” rejoined Wilfred, at the same time tearing off the birch bark from the vent and tamping powder into it.

“Haste, men, haste, or they will be upon us! Go ye to guard the bridge with your guns and spears. Think ye I can do it all?”

But the Indians still cowered down behind the great rock. They were eyeing him curiously, some with their guns at full cock, others with

bent bows, arrows drawn to the head, as if with intent to let loose at their white commander.

Then it flashed upon the lad that his men suspected him of turning traitor to their cause, of sympathy with the white invaders, and were waiting to see if he would oppose the latter, in the interests of the Wampanoags. It also flashed upon him, what might be the consequences of his act, if he were to fire upon those white men now gathered on the brink of the precipice and preparing to dash across at full speed. They had seen him, through the intervening screen of trees, but had not yet guessed his identity, and it occurred to him that he might yet escape detection, if he could but disguise himself as an Indian.

Ignoring the intentions of his scowling scouts, who were regarding him with suspicious glances, he beckoned to his body-guard, who advanced reluctantly.

“Give me your paint-box,” he said, and the Indian youth handed it over. “Now, hold this slow-match where the wind cannot blow it out, while I paint my face the color of yours.”

The wondering Indian complied, and when Wilfred was most intent upon the work of disguising himself by coloring his face a deep cop-

per-red, he applied the slow-match to the powder. Instantly, of course, there was an explosion, and the old cannon leaped up as if alive, settling down again upon the blocks, as the smoke-wreaths curled around its muzzle.

Shrieks and yells followed the report, all from the other side; for, though the Indian had not known enough to sight the cannon, it was already aimed along the length of the bridge, which was beginning to be alive with soldiers. All unknowingly, the crafty red youth had been the means of killing several white soldiers and wounding many more, for a large number were gathered at the other end of the bridge.

“What—what have you done?” gasped Wilfred, startled by the noise, and suspending his work, just as he was about putting the finishing touches to his disguise.

“Done,” repeated the Wampanoag, “Done what you no want do—Fire at white soldiers—fire, and kill too.”

“Now we’re in for it, of a verity,” rejoined Wilfred. “You fool. So you suspected me, eh? Well, you are caught in a trap of your own setting, of a sooth. For, if we had waited until the bridge was covered with soldiers, we might

have stopped them. Now, knowing we have no other gun, they will charge right across, and take us all.”

“They don’t know that,” sullenly replied the Indian. “You load, quick, and we fire small gun, make b’lieve many men. Then you fire—*bam, bam*—shoot all white mens dead.”

Whatever Wilfred had intended will never be known—whether he had indeed prepared himself to fire upon his own people, or was merely dissimulating to gain time—; but he was now compelled to act, with savage eyes glowering on him, with savage hands ready to take him by the throat. For, it seems, the Indians blamed him for the discovery of their retreat by the white men, and took not into account the acts of Philip and the other Indians in sending hither so much plunder that it was found out, perforce, by the watchful white men.

They were enemies of those soldiers on the other side the chasm—that they knew; but first of all, even if they fell victims to those soldiers, they would wreak vengeance upon the traitor! The soldiers were thrown into temporary confusion by the rude welcome they had received at the cannon’s mouth, and drew off to reform and

consult as to the best mode of attack. They succeeded in carrying all their dead and wounded with them, save for two or three who had fallen into the abyss, so the Indians, who were ready to rush over and scalp such as they might find, were deprived of their prey.

This made them all the more sullen and revengeful, and they watched Wilfred warily as he loaded the piece, some of them still covering him with their guns, the while, the others firing aimlessly across the bridge. All the while, Wilfred was thinking, thinking, how he should escape from the dreadful dilemma in which he was placed. In truth, he saw no way of escape; but while offering a prayer to God for aid in this dark passage of his life's journey, it suddenly came over him that, come what might, he could not—he *could not*—fire upon his former friends, men of his own blood, perhaps some of his own kin. Acting upon this impulse, he resolved to frustrate the schemes of the Indians and aid the invaders. What he did and how he did it, will be revealed later in this story, when he was placed on trial for his life, and evidence was sought to hang him as a traitor to the colony.

Even the sharp eyes of the savages were de-

ceived, and when the soldiers again rallied and made as if to charge across the bridge, he commanded them to halt, standing with the slow-match ready to be applied, and with the cannon aimed right in their faces. Behind him were grouped the Indians, hardly a score in number, but all braves of stout determination, ready and willing to sell their lives in defence of this last refuge of their Queen and her child.

And Pometacom, who had reached the spot soon after Wilfred, and who had kept silence, fearing he might derange the plan of defence, was standing amid the group, clutching in his chubby fists the bows and arrows made for him by his friend. Wilfred had seen him, but had spoken only to warn him away, having been unable to do more than this in the confusion of the first moments. As Wilfred stood there, with lighted match in hand, the boy crept forward and seized his disengaged hand, resisting all efforts to make him retire. Seeing this, most of the savages who had covered Wilfred with their muskets lowered their weapons and, with significant glances at each other, turned their attention to the common enemy.

If their young prince could trust the white

youth, so should they—their actions seemed to say; at all events, they acted on this assumption. Meanwhile, the soldiers had pushed their advance half across the bridge, and were firing at the defenders of the island, who replied with desultory shots. The noise, the tumult, was increasing, so that Wilfred could hardly make himself heard, as he shouted a warning for the intruders to halt where they were, and advance further at their deadly peril.

“I can sweep you all into eternity,” he shouted. “Come no further, but go back. One step more and you are all dead men!” The soldiers huddled together, those foremost unable to retreat for the press behind, and their hold on life, like their footing, seemed precarious, indeed.

“Wait ye!” cried a deep voice from the throng, a voice which Wilfred recognized at once as that of Captain Church. “I would parley with the leader, perchance we may arrange aught to our mutual advantage.”

He elbowed through the ranks on the great pine-tree, at imminent risk of dislodging some of the soldiers and sending them to their death below, and at last stood boldly out, valiant leader

that he was, one always "ready to speak with the enemy at the gate."

"Ho there, varlet, wouldst shoot us down in cold blood, unable to retreat, and compelled to advance?"

"Not compelled to advance, noble Captain," answered Wilfred coolly, "and to retreat is no shame, seeing that I shall blow off your heads at the first sign of coming hither."

"Ha, wouldst thou? Methinks no savage talks with accent like unto that. Perchance thou 'rt no enemy, after all."

"Enemy or no; my position compels me to do harm to ye and your followers, if ye advance, for I have here a sacred charge to defend."

"But we will not harm them, nor thee, perchance we get across, and no further opposition offereth," rejoined Captain Church in his most wheedling tones.

"Come, now, it is irksome here, poised on this tree 'twixt ye heavens and ye black chasm down beneath."

"Then go back!" exclaimed Wilfred promptly. "No one asked ye, forsooth, to make this par-
lous venture—least of all, these present here."

"But we feel constrained," continued the Cap-

tain. "We have heard that there dwelleth here one whom we used to neighbor, a youth named——

"Yes, yes, I know," interposed Wilfred. "*I am he*—know that, without further beating about the bush. I have fought with thee—now I am opposed—Is that clear?"

"Clear it is, but why should it be? We would save thee from the trickery that hath ensnared thy soul, beseems. Give in, now, and allow us to cross!"

"Only on oath, from you and those with you, that the lives of all on this island shall be preserved. For they are in my charge, and defend them I shall, to the utmost of my being!"

"Ha, there is something! What say, comrades? Will ye save these pagans from merited death and preserve them, without slaughter?"

"Aye, aye," came in a chorus from the waiting soldiers. "Anything only to give us relief from this constraint!"

"Hear ye that, lad, to which I subscribe Amen. Now will ye?"

"So far as in me lies," answered Wilfred; "but there remain some others to consult.

"Nay nay, do not advance yet," as the Cap-

tain and those behind him started over. "Halt, where you are, or yet the powder may speak, and to your hurt, mark ye!"

"Thou'rt hard upon us, lad," muttered the Captain, balancing himself with caution upon his precarious perch. "Canst not trust us?"

"Yes, noble Captain, I can trust you, and perchance those valiant men-of-war in company with you, for I've fought with you and tried your metal; but, how about those who are above us all in authority?" The Captain was crestfallen, for, with a pang at his heart, he recalled how he had been overridden when last he arranged a surrender for some sagamores. He had promised them immunity from harm, and relying on that promise they had given up their arms and were taken to Plymouth. Having full faith in the integrity of the authorities, he had left them in charge of the Plymouth men, and hastened back to the seat of war. During his absence, (while, in fact, he was still hastening back to battle for the colony,) the sagamores were brought to trial and sentenced to be hanged! As soon as the news reached Captain Church he made all haste to return, and enter protest against the sentence; but the first things that greeted him, as he

sighted the gateway of the stockade surrounding Plymouth settlement were the sagamores' heads, on poles above the gate! Wroth was he then, and he raged like a lion; but to what purpose?

He hung his head, as he replied, "Son Wilfred, I promise—and these brave men here with me promise, that, so long as we have strength to strike a blow and pull a trigger, we will defend these, your friends, from harm. We will ourselves—you and I—go with them to Plymouth, and plead their cause before the Court."

"As well might we meet before an assemblage of wolves, or of hyenas," rejoined Wilfred scornfully, "and you know it, Captain Church!"

"Well, what wouldst thou, boy? Here will I swear, that, perchance they do aught underhand to thee and thy friends, I will forswear my country, or at least will not raise a hand in her defence again for the war; and so, also, will promise all my company."

"Yea, we promise, we promise!" shouted the soldiers. "Now, let us over!"

"No, hold yet a few minutes, friends. There are some warriors here I would fain consult."

Turning to the braves, who were huddled in a scowling group apart, awaiting the result of the

parley, Wilfred, in a few words, explained the situation. He told them it would be impossible to hold off the white men, now that they had found their way to the place, even if they could decimate the ranks before them. That, as surrender was inevitable, some time, it would be best to avail themselves of the proffered terms of amnesty, and yield.

His remarks were received with great disfavor, even though the warriors recognized the perils of their position, and much dissatisfaction was expressed thereat. But they pretended to consult together, and, as they drew apart for this purpose, one of them suddenly sprang at Wilfred from behind. He clutched him by the throat and bore him to the ground, so sudden had been the onset, before the lad was aware of his peril.

The brave seemed animated by an insane furor, probably arising from long brooding over the wrongs inflicted upon his people by the white men, and, acting upon impulse, committed the deed that sealed his fate. For, as he fell to the ground, with Wilfred underneath, an avenger sprang quickly to the rescue—none other than little Pometacom, while the others stood wonderingly by, in stupefied amaze.

The boy had in his hands his bows and arrows, tiny, but made of toughest wood, and fitting an arrow quickly to the bow-string, he let it fly with all the strength of his arm, right into the left eye of the warrior. With a howl of anguish, the brave loosed his hold on Wilfred and rolled over by his side, while the latter rose unhurt, before the Indian's comrades came to his aid. Captain Church and his company had seen something of the happening, though the combatants had been partially screened by trees, and at once availed themselves of the unobstructed passage across the bridge.

They came flocking over, in such numbers that the savages were quickly overwhelmed, without a shot being fired; and thus, through the aimless vengeance of a stupid savage, the surrender was accomplished. For, there were no other warriors on the "island," though there were hundreds of women and children, and some old men too feeble to fight. The taking of the bridge defenders settled the fate of the islanders for good and all, as Wilfred knew would be the case, so there was now nothing further to arrange, except the prompt evacuation of the camp.

“Well, lad, we have thee, now!” exclaimed Church, joyfully.”

“Yea, and we have him *without terms*,” added his lieutenant, a big, hulking Welshman, who had not been long enough in the colony to get the “burr” out of his speech.

“Nay, not without terms,” retorted Wilfred, indignantly. “You had all promised—given your solemn word—that we should not be mistreated.

“Yea, but you had not accepted, forsooth, but was consulting your redskin wretches, when over we dashed and took the place!”

“You never could have done it but for my tolerance,” rejoined Wilfred hotly. “I had you all at my mercy,—that you cannot gainsay,—and, meseemeth, it were mercy ill applied.”

“Thou shalt have the benefit of the doubt, my lad,” interposed Captain Church. “I, for one, know thy integrity, thy good intentions; and if I be not overborne, all thy friends shall go free, after we have done our duty and conducted them to Plymouth as prisoners of war. Who have ye here of position, perchance? This boy by thy side, who clingeth to thy hand so fast, and who

made so promptly to thy rescue—he seemeth noble in his bearing.”

“And he has a right, for his lineage is prouder than yours or mine, most noble Captain. He is, in sooth, Metacomet’s child, his only son, Pomocom. I love the lad and—as he hath shown by that prompt and generous deed,—he loves me; else I mistake myself—and him.”

“Ha, the son of Metacom? Then in sooth have we made an important capture to-day! He shall serve as hostage for his sire, methinks the Court will declare, so we must act warily with them, my son.”

“We will act honestly, and bravely,” rejoined Wilfred, with some heat. “And, so I swear to you, and will swear to them,—they shall act honestly and justly by this lad and his mother!”

“His mother? She, too, the great Queen Weetamoe? Lad, thou’rt a wonder, to have had them in charge. Thy reward for their surrender shall be great, i’ faith; at least, so should the Court declare.”

“My reward—the only reward I ask,—is their freedom,” replied Wilfred. “Chance placed them in my charge—or rather, Providence—and by me shall they be always defended.”

CHAPTER XX.

CAPTAIN CHURCH AND HIS PRISONERS.

“I ADMIRE thy courage, son; but be not too obstinate; the Plymouth brethren are none too liberal, thou knowest, and might not view thy chivalrous determination in too favorable a light.”

“Perchance,” answered Wilfred; “but I am not measuring myself by their standard, which is far short of just, let alone being liberal, in sooth. Right is right and honor is honor! These people have done nothing to merit punishment, much less death or imprisonment—which have full oft been meted out to others of their kin.”

“Yea, thou are right; with exception of him who fired off the cannon, killing some of our men, and putting others in grave peril, besides wounding several more. Leave out him, and the

savage that took thee by the throat, and it seemeth as thou sayeth."

"Well, the last one you mention has already received his deserts; the first one was merely acting on the defensive. We did not ask you to come in search of us, nor to cross the bridge; kindly bear in mind the justice of our position."

"That I do, my lad, that I do; but I am trying to place myself in the attitude of judge—of the judge before whom ye will be taken,—of him and his coadjutors. It is a principle of war, you know, to always look out for a way of retreat; to raise questions that may occur and be prepared to combat them with forceful argument."

"As to that, perhaps you are in the right, my Captain; but, why take us before the judges? "Why not leave us here on parole, where we are harming nobody, and where we shall stay, unless forcibly removed?"

"Tut, tut, lad, know thou, it is in accordance with the orders of those our superiors, that we are to take all prisoners, first to Plymouth, then to such places as the honorable Court may direct."

"Then, a truce to this parleying; the sooner we are there the better, for our minds will then

be set at rest. Come, now, and I will show thee where I had abode for these months past. It is a sorry house enough I shall bring thee to; but it hath a place in my affections, as well as its inmates, who were in my care.

“This boy, young Pometacom, Philip’s only son and heir, is, as you see, grave and contained beyond his years, yet hath he deep affection for me, and is capable of being led—Mark me, led, *not driven!*—in the direction of good works and high morality. I love him for his own sake; I honor him for his high qualities; and as well, I honor and respect his mother, the lovely Weetamoe, who shall be treated with the courtesy due her sex and rank, so long as I draw breath and am her protector.”

“Well hast thou said it, son, and sturdily. For these sentiments do I honor thee. If the matter remained only between thee and me, sooth, it could be arranged to the satisfaction of all; but above us is the great Court of the Colony, in a sense our commander-in-chief, and if we obey not its commands we shall be considered derelict.

“I’ faith this boy by thy side is a sturdy lad, as I have said, verily a ‘chip of the old block,’ I

doubt not. Yet was Metacom a son of great and good Massasoit; and see what he came to!"

"Because he was imposed upon by bad and malicious white men," answered Wilfred bitterly. "Mind thee, I'm not for defending Metacomet. Doubtless he hath, ere this,—long ere this—committed the unpardonable sin, in the eyes of man. In the sight of God there is but one sin unpardonable, our Minister hath preached, and that is, the sin against the Holy Ghost; but, if I mistake not, the list of sins of that sort hath been extended by man created in His image."

"Yea, hath it," responded Captain Church; "if thou meanest the sins on account of which the death penalty is demanded. But it ill be-seems me, a man of the sword, to cavil at those who, in the security of their homes, decree death to those I capture in fair fight. Couldst only see the heads these Christian judges have caused to be set up on poles; the hands they have ordered stricken off; the unfortunate wretches they have made to be hanged in chains!—ah, my soul sickens, when I reflect upon what will be demanded by God for this!"

"We may leave that with God," answered Wilfred solemnly. "It only behooves us to so

comport ourselves that we be found guiltless. Bear that in mind, good friend, and especially remember to apply it here,—right here, in dealing with these unfortunate friends of mine.”

The while this conversation was conducted, the Captain, Wilfred, and Pometacom were proceeding toward the wigwam, followed at a short distance by the company of soldiers and their prisoners. Arrived at the hut, the Captain was invited to enter, without ceremony, for Wilfred believed the Queen and her sister to be hidden in the cave, and hoped to obtain further guaranty of safety before delivering them up to his captors. To his surprise, at the far end of the wigwam, one each side the hearth, stood Weetamoe and Awashan, her comely sister. In front of them was the table, spread with all the dainties their restricted stock of food afforded.

Taking in the situation at a glance, Wilfred stepped forward, as Pometacom ran ahead and threw his arms about his mother, in one hand still clutching the bow and arrows with which he had done such valiant service. In a few words, Wilfred presented his friend, the Captain, having no need to explain the occasion of his visit, for the news of the invasion had already reached

the inmates of the wigwam. The women received their guest most graciously, and in order to cover his confusion, invited him to be seated at the table, where they comported themselves with the grace of high-bred dames, greatly to the surprise of the blunt old soldier.

“Beseems we might be at the Governour’s board,” he said to Wilfred, in a stage whisper, after having recovered his wit somewhat.

“You might better say at a King’s table,” retorted Wilfred quickly. “You may recall that Philip hath ever held that he should treat only with our dread sovereign, instead of with ‘underlings’—as he hath called them full oft. But, have a care what thou sayest, Captain, for the maiden, Awashan, was educated at Plymouth.”

“I’ faith, sayest thou? Sooth, lad, she is verily a beauty, and I care not she heareth me say so, old soldier that I am, with wife and family full grown. She is both beautiful and good, I trow.”

“That is she,” assented the youth; and then, turning to the girl, he said: “Hear that, Awashan, my friend payeth thee a compliment!”

“It matters not,” replied the maiden, a dark flush mounting to her cheek. “As God made me,

so am I. What news brings he of our royal master? Hath he been taken yet? Have the English yet his head?"

"Nay, daughter," replied the captain, though taken aback by the girl's frankness. "His head yet remaineth on his shoulders, methinks, and with it hath he worked the destruction of ourselves and properties. Last heard from, he was ravaging the settlements 'twixt here and the Narragansets; but to-morrow, or next week, perchance, he may be in yet another region, for verily he hath means to travel fast."

The maiden smiled significantly as she interpreted this answer to her sister, but she answered nothing. Weetamoe also smiled, but a frown swiftly followed, as the tactless captain added: "Full oft have I striven to catch him, but hitherto without avail. Still, the hope remaineth that, having now his wife and boy, the old bird may be caught, as in the snare of the fowler!"

"Ye shall not use us as bait; rather will we repel him," flashed out Weetamoe, when this had been interpreted. "Think not that we will caution him to surrender! His life, we know, is forfeit; but it is worth more than our lives, and

yours added! You may keep us prisoners till we die; but die we will, before betraying Metacom!"

The Captain, forgetting for the moment that he was a guest of the Queen, though as well she was his prisoner, was about to reply hotly, when Wilfred interposed, with praise for Pometacom, who, he declared, had saved his life. He then narrated the details of the fight, and how the boy had darted in and rescued him from the deadly grasp of the warrior.

Pride and love filled the eyes of Weetamoe, at this recital of her darling's gallant act; but the white men were reminded that she considered herself, first of all, a Wampanoag, when she chided her son for shooting one of their tribe, and expressed great concern for the wounded warrior.

Pometacom hung his head, but answered stoutly: "He was killing Little Sagamore, our good friend; and moreover, if he had not sprung upon him we might have beaten off the enemy!"

"Ye might, forsooth," exclaimed the Captain, when this had been interpreted to him; "but would ye, thinkest thou, son Wilfred?"

"The question is, not would I, but *could* I,"

replied Wilfred evasively. "You must admit, I think, that if that cannon had gone off, there would have been few white men left on the bridge!"

"Yea, that will I; but ever I had belief that thou wouldst not have treated so terribly thine own countrymen."

"Captain," said Wilfred abruptly, without answering directly, "will you accompany me back to the bridge? I desire to show you something."

Wonderingly, the soldier consented, and after the meal was over he and Wilfred retraced their steps to the brink of the chasm, where, without witnesses (all the company and their captives being gathered around or near the wigwam) they made a searching examination of the field-piece. As what they found—or rather, what Wilfred pointed out to the Captain, and he confirmed by a test—had an important bearing upon the lives and liberties of the youth and his Indian friends, when they were brought before the Court for trial, it will not be revealed at present, but will be kept until the proper time. Suffice it, that, after all was over, the Captain gathered Wilfred in his arms, exclaiming: "And I was

base enough to suspect thee, lad. Forgive me: thou hast indeed the nature of the dove, but the wisdom of ye serpent!"

"I had a duty," answered Wilfred simply, "to both white friends and red friends; and tried to save you all from harm!"

The two friends turned their steps toward the wigwam, there to begin the removal of the people and booty from the island. Half way back, perhaps, had they gone, when they heard a shriek, and saw the lovely Awashan speeding toward them. Close in pursuit was the burly Welshman, who for the nonce was Captain Church's first lieutenant. He was an ill-favored rascal, at his best, but now his face was distorted with evil passions and his eyes were bloodshot. As Awashan reached her friends she wheeled around behind them, and darting between the two, she placed her hands, one on either shoulder, leaning heavily thereon, and panting as though all but exhausted.

Seeing at a glance that the Welshman was pursuing the maiden with no good intent, and that he still meditated seizing her, notwithstanding his presence and that of his Captain, Wilfred thrust out his foot, as the fellow ran past, and

was the cause of his plunging heavily to the ground. He was not so badly stunned that he did not recognize the youth's intention, which was to cause him to desist, and was quickly on his feet again and advancing toward him threateningly.

"Have a care, boy," he said, "what you do to a colonial soldier! Remember your position, which is not a whit too secure!"

"Whatever I remember," answered Wilfred, "I shall not forget myself so far as to do harm to a maiden! Moreover, this one is in my care, forget not that, not to mention the captain of your company!"

"To my superior officer I bow," rejoined the Welshman, "in matters military; but this is a private affair, in which he has no say."

"What? Will he permit you to insult a woman, and in his presence?"

"Of course I won't," exclaimed the Captain, now aroused to what was happening. "Lieutenant, go back to your duty. And, know that this girl is under our care; you are not to touch her nor approach her!"

The man withdrew, muttering threats against Wilfred for his interference. "I'll meet thee in court, my gay lad," he said, as he went away.

“Perchance a rope may then be placed round thy neck——”

“You have the face of a hangman, truly,” retorted the youth in a flash; “but no honest judge would accept evidence from such as you. As to meeting me: anywhere will do, and at any time; you’ll find me ready!”

“I’m sorry,” said Awashan, tears gathering in her big brown eyes. “But that man pursued me, and he lay hold of my shoulder, saying I was to be his prisoner, and—and, there was no one else to go to.”

“And quite right, fair maid,” upspoke the Captain gallantly. “Quite right art thou, for in us two, thou hast alway defenders! I am sorry, myself, that this man’s official connections make it impossible for me to correct him. He came as a volunteer, from the Governor’s own household, and strongly recommended for the position, to which I appointed him, for this expedition only.”

“Captain,” said Wilfred, “so be it thou canst not punish him, and have no jurisdiction, is it not also true that thou hast no right to interfere, should any one else take it upon himself to chastise that scoundrel and correct his manners?”

“Ho, what is this? Wouldst still be at him, lad? Have a care, as he saith, for he is big and burly, and might injure thee! But as to the field being clear—consider it so, my lad, for I shall not interfere.”

“I ask nothing more,” rejoined Wilfred calmly, “than a fair field and no favor shown to either of us. I would to heaven that I could bespeak the same at my forthcoming trial in the court!”

“But thou shalt have it!” roared the Captain. “Have it, eke if I beat down the tipstaff’s pikes to get at the judge!”

“Do not fight on my account,” pleaded Awashan, still with a glistening tear or two trembling on her lashes. “I am, you know, only—only an Indian, and not worth the while for you to get into trouble over.”

“Indian or no,—that is not the question,” answered Wilfred. “Thou art a maiden, and a sweet one, good and pure, believing in our God and his angels, and no insult shall be put upon thee so long as I am within call of thy voice!”

“I thank you,” said Awashan gently. “I have no father and no mother,—both are dead; only my sister, and she is as helpless as I; while Philip

is absent, and, doubtless we shall never see him more, for the Plymouth Christians have set a price upon his head, they tell me."

The Captain winced at this unintended thrust, but said nothing. Wilfred answered: "It is true; Christians or no, they have so done. But while I cannot prevent my people from cutting off Philip's head—when they catch him—I can, and so long as I am a free person will, stand off harm from them to his family!"

"Boy, thou hast grown, in these few months since I have known thee, to the stature of a man," said the Captain, admiringly. "I would that thy father and thy mother could see thee now."

"Ah, would I could but see them awhile," said Wilfred with a sigh. "But whatever I do they doubtless will approve, and that must suffice."

"Eke it must, and will," said the Captain cordially. "They will have good cause to be proud of thee, and I shall tell them so."

Two days after the soldiers had invaded the "island," a long procession wended its way

through the forest, across the prostrate pine, and along the farther side of the chasm, in due time arriving at Mount Hope, then passing to the Taunton river, taking in Rehoboth on the way. Word had been sent ahead that Metacomet's squaw and son were among the prisoners captured by the great Captain Church, and, (though there were rumors that King Philip was hot on the trail, burning to avenge their capture and rescue them from the English,) numbers of the settlers ventured out from the garrison-houses where they had taken refuge, in order to have a sight of the beautiful Weetamoe, her sister and the boy.

Among them, of course, were the Wilkins family: father, mother, sister and brother, of King Philip's friend, who was held a technical prisoner. That is, he was allowed his liberty, though only on parole; this much Captain Church having been obliged to concede to the lieutenant and his men, who were clamorous for more severe proceedings against the youth.

The Welshman was insistent that Wilfred should be bound, at least his arms be confined, thinking that with his enemy disabled he would still be able to seize on Awashan and retain her

as his share of the booty. But Church would not consent to this, so Wilfred walked as free as any of the soldiers, and had much more influence with their Captain. Little Pometacom clung to him the more, now that he was a prisoner, feeling perhaps that, besides his mother and his aunt, he had no other friend.

As he likewise clung to his mother, Wilfred was of necessity more in the company of his Indian friends than of the white soldiers. This fact gave color to the tale told by the Welshman: that Wilfred was a traitor to the colony, and was but a spy in the pay of Philip. He said to them: "You just watch him and see if it ain't so. See how he clings to the company of the squaw and her brat, likewise to that of the wench. He's with 'em all the time!"

"That's what makes ye mad, Ike," exclaimed one of the common soldiers, which remark raised a loud guffaw. "Ye'd like to be there yerself, some on us guess, pooty likely!"

"Well, that's my hunt," answered the lieutenant. "And if I want to, I'll be there, too; but I'm going to have it out with him, fust!"

"He may take it out of you!" remarked one

of the rangers, in the free-and-easy style peculiar to that company, banded together more for protection, than for display. "He looks like a lusty chap, and kin handle them flippers of hisn pooty keen, yew bet!"

"I'll give him the chance, right away," remarked the Welshman. "Only I'm sort of ashamed to be seen at fisticuffs with a boy!"

In bravado, probably spurred on by the taunts of his men, the Lieutenant improved the first occasion that offered to open a quarrel with Wilfred, who was by no means averse to take him up. It is not claimed for our friend that he was a saint; only "just an everyday sort of a boy," not very different from the kind that is turned out now-a-days. He had some confidence in his ability to take care of himself, which even the hard knocks he had received had not yet driven out of his head, so he was not likely to shun the enemy.

Nor did he do so, for, without putting himself in the Welshman's way, he always contrived to be around when the latter sought speech with Awashan, or her sister, in response to their entreaties. This finally became so offensive to the man that one day, as they were breaking out of

the forest, he turned upon Wilfred without a word of warning, and smote him full in the face.

Though taken by surprise, he dodged instinctively when he saw the blow coming, and it glanced to one side; which was a most fortunate thing, as the Welshman was a "powerful hitter." Some of his soldiers said "a mule's kick ain't a circumstance to what Ike can do with his fist!" Wilfred heard this, and had determined that if it came to blows to force the fighting to close quarters at once, so, after standing still a moment, as if dazed (though all the while he was merely taking the measure of his opponent) he suddenly leaped upon his antagonist and cut him under the chin with such force that he tumbled to the ground.

Ere he could regain his equilibrium, he dealt another forceful blow, and down he went a second time, bleeding freely from his damaged nose. A third blow of the same sort took all the fight out of him; and yet he was furious, as he lay there on the ground, afraid to rise, especially when one of his men said jeeringly, "Ike's sorter 'shamed to be seen fisticuffin' with a boy; that's the reason he's layin' there so quiet like!"

"He don't fight fair," sputtered the discom-

fited Welshman, rising to his feet, but without offering to engage in another bout.

“ Well, I dunno,” said another soldier, “ seems t’ me ’twas all right; he didn’t kick, nor bite, nor scratch; but just hit hard,—that’s all.”

CHAPTER XXI.

OUR FRIEND ON TRIAL FOR HIS LIFE.

THE return to Plymouth of the redoubtable Captain Church, with his long train of prisoners and plunder, and among the former the wife and child of the relentless Metacomet, attracted a great throng of sight-seers, insomuch that it was difficult for the victorious soldiers to make their way through the town.

In the van of the procession rode Captain Church, at his side his young friend, Wilfred, and close behind, mounted on native ponies, Weetamoe, Awashan and Pometacom, followed by the captive warriors. All were closely guarded, but only the limbs of the warriors were manacled; and but for their sad countenances, it might have been thought that the three members of King Philip's family were being honored by this cavalcade and troop of infantry around and behind them.

As they passed beneath the cross-beams of the great gateway, fair Awashan suddenly clapped a hand over the eyes of Pometacom, who was close beside her, and uttered a shriek of terror. For, set on spikes above the beams, were the heads of seven Indians, so freshly dissevered and recently placed there that the blood seemed to be dripping from their wounds. Grim and ghastly were their faces, their vacant eyes staring into the sky, as if supplicating the great God of battles and vengeance for revenge. And grim were the faces of the soldiers as they gazed upon these gory spectacles, the visible tokens of recent victories over the savages.

“There’ll be some more there eftsoon,” remarked one of the soldiers loudly to his companions, so that even the captives heard him. “It be mercy misplaced, to let these cusses go who have been taken red-handed, no matter whether they be red-skins or white-skins, say I!”

There was a murmur of assent at this sinister suggestion, for the soldiers had been well coached by the Welshman, who now rode at the rear of the captives, with the air of a triumphant conqueror. Looking at him there, and knowing

not the circumstances of the capture, one might have held him to have been the real hero of the occasion, instead of his modest commander.

Wending its way through the crowded streets of Plymouth, which were neither many nor wide, the troop came to a halt in front of the block-house used as a jail, into which, though it was already overcrowded, the captives were quickly hustled, between files of infantry on either side the entrance. The common captives were turned into a rude stockade adjacent to the jail, where they herded with hundreds of others who had been taken in the various raids and skirmishes by the colonials.

“Gaol’s pooty full, now,” said the grim old turnkey to Captain Church; “but soon’s the next batch ’s taken out and hung, there’ll be room enough,—unless,” he added facetiously, “you go out and ketch some more before breakfast. It doos beat all how you can capter them savages, Capting, fighting ’em in their own way and on their own ground, too. It doos beat all!”

“I’ve larned their ways,” answered the Captain modestly. “It’s easy ’nough after you know how, friend.”

“Yaas, s’pose so. Say, ain’t ye goin’ to leave

that white feller, also the two squaws and the youngster? C'n make room for 'em somehaow, out there 'n the stockade."

"No, no," answered the Captain. "The lad goes with me, and the women and child will lodge with Mistress Church, likewise. "I'll be surety for their appearance when wanted, you know."

"No, I don't know 'bout that. S'pose you may think they 's yourn, 'cause ye took 'em; but I hev orders to keep 'em under lock an' key till the Gov'ner gits back, tomorrer, when they'll be taken to court."

"Can't help that," rejoined the old soldier, somewhat nettled. "They lodge at my quarters, that's flat; so give me receipt for the warriors, and we'll away at once. I' faith, I'm fatigued, and so, in sooth, are we all, having been two days and nights on ye road."

The old turnkey muttered a protest in his throat; but was about giving a receipt when the Welsh lieutenant rode up. "You'll receipt for all or none; at your peril for part only," he shouted. "That boy there's a traitor, the wust sort of a spy, an informer ag'inst the colony. I demand he be put in the gaol!"

"Go back to your place!" thundered Captain

Church, now thoroughly aroused. "These are *my* prisoners, and this is *my* business. Go back, and at once, or I'll cut ye down in your tracks, ye meddling critter!"

There was no longer delay in arranging the matter now, for the turnkey, as well as the lieutenant, was cowed, and after giving directions for the soldiers to march to the commissary and turn over their plunder, the Captain led the way to his house, which was on a side street not far from the bay.

"Here, mother," called out the Captain cheerily, as the little cavalcade drew up to his door and a kind-looking lady appeared. "Got some visitors from down Pokanoket way. Thou'rt glad to see 'em, ain't thee? Of course, and me too? Of course. Tired are we, and hungry; but not for long will we be, I trow, knowing thee as I do, mother. Pounds to pickles, the pot's aboilin' a'ready and the fowl on the spit in the fireplace, eh? If not, then what's the use of sending on a post ahead, with the news of our coming?"

"Fret not thy gizzard," answered the motherly dame, with a smile of welcome offering her hand, first to Weetamoe, then to Awashan. "Dis-

mount, my dears, and come in, away from this rabble.

“And is that Dame Wilkins’ boy? Sooth, he is full young for the deeds he hath done. And this brown-cheeked little one? Philip’s son, sayest thou? Poor babe! I knew his father once, when he was but a boy, meseems.

“Come inside, all, and such fare ye shall share as we have got.”

“This is my mother’s house,” said the Captain, as, a short time after their arrival, all were gathered in the big, low-ceilinged living-room. “My wife and boys are down at Sogkonate, on the farm, exposed to the perils of Philip’s raidings, so be he goeth that way. In God’s hands be they; He will care for them. Now, ye are our guests till to-morrow when the court assembles; after that, God wot?”

“His excellency the Governour is away a brief bit, which accounts for the lack of a reception by the authorities, to-day. But he will be here the morrow, and hath sent word for the holding of ye court. He is an upright man, is Governour Winslow, and the first that was born in the colony to hold that high position. He it was who commanded when we took ye Narraganset

fort, and—But pardon me, I forgot we had here some of King Philip's kin."

All were weary and little disposed for converse, after the bountiful meal was discussed which good Mother Church provided; and though the morrow to come was very like to be a sad day for them all, they slept well, and arose in the morning refreshed and ready for what fate should bring them. Breakfast was scarcely over when the clatter of hoofs betokened the arrival of the dragoons who were to guard the prisoners to the meeting-house, in which the court was to be held. Arrived there, and seated in the dock, like common prisoners arrested for some crime, Wilfred and Weetamoe, Awashan and Pometa-com, awaited in silence the coming of the judge and their accusers.

Around them were the grim old tipstuffs with their pikes and halberds; beyond, as great a throng as could crowd into the meeting-house, which, in lieu of a court-house, was used on occasions of this sort. It was a silent crowd that gathered there, and scarce a murmur broke the stillness as the dignitaries entered: grave judges, generals of note, and at their head (preceded by a tipstaff in small-clothes), the honored Gover-

nor, Josiah Winslow. Having seated themselves, the court was called to order, followed with prayer, when the crier proclaimed the cause of this assemblage.

As our readers already know what it was, we will not reiterate; but suffice it to state there was no delay, neither was there lack of disposition to give the prisoners attention.

Among the spectators, in the small gallery, Wilfred could see his father, mother, sister and brother, who had made the long journey to Plymouth, amid perils beset by the way, in order to be near, *when* if possible to support and comfort him. Winthrop tried to get permission to sit with his brother in the dock, but was sternly refused and thrust back by the attendants. So there he was, in the company only of his Indian friends, with one arm protectingly over the shoulder of Philip's little son, and holding one of his hands in his.

The little fellow was dazed by the transition from his forest haunts to such scenes as these, and had scarce uttered a word for days. Neither was his mother disposed to converse, being sore oppressed, as well as the sweet-faced Awashan.

“Of what is the white prisoner accused, and

who is here to defend him?" asked the Governor.

"Of consorting with Metacom, our great enemy, and of plotting against the well-being of the colony, and of shooting down soldiers sent to subdue him and his companion savages," was the answer. "He hath no one for defence, saying that he is guiltless of all these charges, and preferreth his cause should speak for itself."

"On the face of it," declared the Governor, "he appeareth guilty of the first charge; still, that may be explained. In sooth, our gallant fighter, Captain Church, hath already given me sufficient proof that he was made a prisoner by Metacom, and constrained against his will. Neither can he be said to have plotted against the colony, peradventure he made no effort to pervert our soldiers nor led any expedition with intent of murder or ravage. Nothing that I can find in the evidence bears out this assertion, so that, as well as the first count, will be dismissed. But, as to the firing upon our soldiers, men of his own blood and family—that is far different. Know any one of ye that he hath done this?" demanded the Governor.

There was a death-like silence in the room,

following this question, then a commotion amongst the band of military men retained as witnesses in several pews by themselves. Then strode forth the lieutenant whom Wilfred had thrashed and said, "May it please your Honor and the court, I myself saw this person touch off the piece that killed three of our men on the bridge and wounded others. He it was and none other, for he had the gun in charge, and others saw him, as well as me."

"Prisoner, what sayest thou to that? Stand up and answer."

"May it please this honorable Court and your Excellency the Governor," replied Wilfred, calmly, "I never fired that piece when it was pointed in the direction of any human being!"

"But you fired that first shot, we all saw ye!" yelled the Welshman. "And it was murder, forsooth, murder most vile!"

"Most worthy Captain Church, who hast rendered such gallant service to this colony oft and repeatedly, what sayest thou on this charge? Did the youth fire that cannon at its first discharge?"

"Nay, of a verity, he did not, your Excellency. He did not!" All his men then present swore

to the same effect, testifying further that it was an Indian who had done it.

“Sufficient on that point,” declared the judge. “Now, to establish the intent of this young man: whether he had resolved to slay his own countrymen, and to that end not only aimed ye cannon at ye company, but was prepared to discharge it in their ranks. Peradventure this intention be established—whether he really committed the act or no—it will be our painful duty to declare him well meriting the *penalty of death*, to be carried out by hanging by the neck! These be times most parlous, as ye all do know, hence ye extreme penalty must be applied to all who are, or meditate being, traitorous to ye commonweal. Prisoner, what hast to say on this point?”

“As before,” answered Wilfred unhesitatingly, “I say it before my God, whom I have always served, even among the savages,—I not only did not fire the piece at my countrymen, but I had no intent to do so, moreover!”

“Had no intent?” repeated the Welshman derisively. “How then thy boastings and threatenings. Didst not threaten us, if we but made another step, ye would blow us to perdition and back?”

“Not in quite those words,” answered Wilfred with a smile. “That I did threaten ye, I’ll admit. That I used my utmost endeavor to prevent ye from crossing the bridge and taking captive my innocent charges, these three present herewith, and others—that I admit. But, that I intended in all seriousness to kill or murder ye,—that I deny.”

Turning to the Governor, he added: “Your Excellency, I had in my keep a sacred trust. A trust bestowed by a savage—by Metacomet, whom ye call King Philip. His child (now by my side); his wife, and her sister—all are here—were entrusted to me while I was yet a captive and at his mercy. I had gone to seek him—as my true friend Captain Church can tell ye—in order that I might beg him to bring to end this unrighteous war.

“Meeting him by chance in the forest—though by design on his part well carried out—I had opportunity to labor with him long and earnestly. But he answered me: ‘There is a price set upon my head by the Court of Plymouth. Think ye I can surrender, with that sure end in view? No, I will never surrender! It is too late! Let

them withdraw their price upon my head, and then we will talk!’

“But he yet detained me captive, and seeing that he trusted me with the care of his dearest and most beloved, it occurred to me that perchance I might reach him through them, and to that end, also, have I labored; when my aim was frustrated by the coming of the soldiers.”

“Dost think, lad, that thou couldst have reached him, enraged as he was, and is, against us?” asked the Governor.

“I know not,” replied Wilfred modestly; “but I could have tried. At all events, I could have tried the only way that was open.”

“Through these, his wife and child? What thinkst thou, woman?” addressing Weetamoe, who sat like a statue, paying no attention. When the question was interpreted by Awashan, she replied haughtily: “If Little Sagamore could not reach my husband, the great Metacomet, then no one could, or can! But no one can. He will never surrender!”

“That seals thy doom,” muttered Captain Church to himself. “If only thou, poor wretch, had left open a door of hope, thy liberty might have followed; but now, there is no hope!”

“Now, to recur to the cannon and the crossing of the bridge,” said the Governor. “Thou sayest no evil intent was in thy heart, yet by the piece thou stoodst, slowmatch in hand, ready to apply it to the powder, and send our soldiers to their death. Now, how can that be, lad, admitting it to be true?”

“Your Excellency, I admit that I stood beside that cannon, and with a slowmatch in my hand, making as if to apply it to the powder;—but, not with intent to send your soldiers to their death.”

“How now, prevaricator? There remained only to apply the match, and that, as already admitted, thou wert quite ready to do?”

“Yes, your Excellency, even so,—but, the piece would not have been discharged; no lives of white men would have been lost.”

“Why now? Remember, lad, thou’rt on thy grave’s brink; a misstep, and in thou goest! Bear in mind thy precarious situation, my boy.”

“I will, I do, your Excellency. But, I have not incurred the penalty of death for any deed of mine. The piece would not have gone off, because—oh, because—. Will your Excellency al-

low a friend to testify—none other than the worthy Captain Church?”

“Come forward, Captain, and give evidence. It is our will,” said the Governor.

“I hear, your Excellency, and will obey; but first let me introduce a witness—, dumb,—though having a mouth which will lie not—yet will bear convincing testimony as to this youth's innocence of evil intent.”

The great doors of the meeting-house were thrown open, and within was dragged the veritable cannon that had seen service at the bridge. It was trundled up the aisle, (having been mounted on wheels), and brought to a standstill before the Governor and the Court.

“Point it another way! I command thee, Captain!” exclaimed the Governor, as the doughty soldier lighted a match and proceeded to apply it to the vent.

“Have no fear, your Excellency, have no fear, for it cannot go off. There is a ball inside, forsooth; but,—mark this, your Excellency and the honorable Court—*there is no powder behind the ball.*”

CHAPTER XXII.

SOLD INTO SLAVERY.

IN proof of his assertion, the Captain applied the match, (despite the frantic protests of the Court), and when no result followed, save a slight curling of smoke, the silence in which he had performed the act was broken. There followed a murmur of applause, which quickly swelled into an enthusiastic demand for Wilfred's liberty.

"Set him free! set him free! he hath done no wrong!" were the cries that greeted the Court, and as soon as his dignity would permit it, the Governor gave heed.

"This is a strange thing, of a verity," he began. "Stand up, my son. Tell me, didst load the cannon that way with intent?"

"With intent that it could not, by any possibility, do harm to the company of white men on the bridge."

“Then, knowing that, how couldst have the assurance to threaten them, withal, seeing that they might have disregarded thy warnings, rushed forward and overpowered thee?”

“I took the chances, your Excellency. Knowing somewhat of human nature, (as I thought), I played upon their fears, hoping to induce them to retire without committing bloodshed.”

“Lad, it was rash in thee so to run a risk; yet I cannot but admire thy courage and sagacity. But how was it that in the end our men prevailed and overcame thee?”

“One of my Indians took me by the throat, holding me for a traitor to his side because I did not fire upon my friends. But for this boy, Philip's son, I might not have escaped alive. He rescued me.”

“Brave lads, are ye both, I' faith, and would I could reward ye as according to services rendered. Thou, Wilfred, son of Goodman Wilkins, shalt go free, and peradventure thy inclination run that way, a lieutenancy in the colonial army is at thy service.

“Gentlemen, (turning to his coadjutors), I find no crime attached to this lad's doings; with your concurrence, he shall be set at liberty.”

There being no dissenting voices, the Governor's dictum being supreme, his suggestion was complied with quickly, and soon Wilfred found himself in the arms of his family. Even the grave and taciturn Pilgrims of the older generation allowed themselves to applaud the decision of the Governor, and some time elapsed before silence could be secured in the court-room.

Wilfred's family had been allowed to enter the dock where he and his Indian friends were confined, and there made the acquaintance of the shy and silent group. Their advances were not repelled, but neither were they encouraged, so that it was with tears gathering in her eyes that little Dorothy told Wilfred she could not get Pometacom to speak.

"But it is not from aversion to you," he explained. "The poor boy is out of place and cannot but be constrained. He is like a cat in a strange attic, sweetheart; but when once free again you will find him a good companion."

"But isn't he free now?" asked Dorothy. "You are, you know, for the Governor said so. I heard him. And why not your friends?"

"I don't know, my love; but they are still retained prisoners. I shall not leave them until

all is settled, so you and the rest must await me without the court, peradventure there be more to come."

There was "more to come," and quickly it came. For, hardly had the applause over the verdict subsided ere the worshipful Governor ordered quiet restored and proceeded with the trial of Philip's family.

"We have here," he said, "representatives of the tribe of Wampanoags, higher than whom in standing there are few. They are intimately related to that personage of bloody deeds and evil mind, Philip, or Metacomet, King of Pokanoket, who hath, as ye all know, been recreant to his trusts and obligations by treaty entered into with us, at divers times and places. Although the personal innocency of these his relatives may be granted, still, they are of his blood and kin, they may be cognizant of his schemes, and are doubtless well aware in which place he at present hideth.

"Know ye, that so far back as 1620, our predecessors entered into treaty with the great Massasoit, by which there was mutual agreement, to wit: That neither he nor any of his should do injury to any of our people; That if any of his

did any hurt to any of ours, he should send us the offender, or offenders, that he or they should be punished; That if any thing were taken away from any of ours he should cause it to be restored, and we should do the like to his; That if any did unjustly war against him, we should aid him, and if against us, he should also render aid; That he should send to his neighbor confederates to certify to this, that they might not wrong us, but might likewise be included in these conditions of peace; That when his men came to visit us on any occasion, they should leave their arms (which were then bows and arrows) behind them; That in so doing, our sovereign lord, King James, would esteem him, Massasoit, as his friend and our friend and ally.

“ This league the same sachem, a little before his death, in 1660, did renew in favor of his son, Alexander; and after him the same was done with his successor, Philip, or Metacomet. Now, King Philip but indifferently performed his obligations, and never was he well disposed toward our religion, rather encouraging his people in their old pagan superstitions and devilish idolatries. Howsomever, it became so bad along in his reign that in 1671 we forced him to a new

covenant with us, and these are the Articles to which he then subscribed, to wit: ' We, Philip, and my council and my subjects do acknowledge ourselves subject to the King of England and the government of New Plymouth, and to their laws.

' I am willing and do promise to pay unto the Governour of Plymouth one hundred pounds in such things as I have; but I would entreat the favour that I might have three years to pay it in, forasmuch as I cannot do it at present.

' I do promise to send to the Governour, or whomsoever he shall appoint, five wolves' heads, if I can get them; or as many as I can procure, until they come to five wolves yearly.

' If any difference fall between ye English and myself and people then I do promise to repair to the Governour of Plymouth to rectify the difference amongst us.

' I do promise not to make war with any, but with the Governour's approbation at Plymouth.

' I promise not to dispose of any of ye lands that I have at present, but by the approbation of ye Governour of Plymouth.

' For the true performance of the same, I, the said sachem, Philip of Pokanoket do hereby bind

myself and such of my council as are present, ourselves, our heirs, our successors, do hereby promise faithfully, in witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our hands, the day and year above written.

‘The mark, ‘P,’ of Philip of Pokanoket,

‘The mark, ‘U,’ of Uncomdaen,

‘The mark, ‘W,’ of Wocokom,

‘The mark, ‘7,’ of Samkama.

In the presence of the Court, and divers of the magistrates and other gentlemen of Massachusetts and Connecticut.’

“This is the treaty last entered into between us and Metacomet; but, yet the same perfidious caitiff still harbors the most mischievous thoughts against us, and hath killed and murdered hundreds, already, of our most estimable citizens. Since we cannot get him into our power alive, nor even dead, we may not yet captivate him, and since we now have members of his family, who in a certain sense are responsible for his deeds and his debts; and furthermore, since the said sachem hath never paid the debt of one hundred pounds, either in money or heads of wolves, as promised,—whereas, all these things exist, and the said family is undoubtedly

responsible for said debts, it hath been proposed that they be *sold into slavery* in ye West Indies, to satisfy the cause of justice and ye debts of said Philip, or Metacomet, lately called King of Pokanoket!"

Having delivered himself of all this, and apparently feeling that he had quite exhausted the subject, (if not his hearers), the honorable Governor awaited the next deliverance on the matter.

There was silence awhile, during which, the defenceless prisoners at the bar remained as if turned into stone. As the speech was delivered, Awashan interpreted it to Weetamoe and her son, so they got the gist of it, though slow to comprehend that the entire pronouncement was an arraignment of themselves. When they did so, finally, they settled back in their seats with a stolid air of resignation on their faces. Only Awashan betrayed any feeling, and this was on account of her efforts as interpreter.

There was one face, however, that showed a lively indignation at the proposed procedure, and this was that of the one friend who had stuck to them through it all. Wilfred, as soon as he fully appreciated what was intended by the

Court, leaped to his feet and began a defence of the Indians, which was listened to with respect and attention.

But it was in vain that he plead, that he held out to the Court the advantages of treating with leniency these members of Philip's family; the danger of arousing still more vengeful feelings in Philip's breast if they should suffer any indignity.

“These poor creatures,” he said, “have done nothing of themselves to merit punishment. Are they to be punished merely because they are united to Philip through the bonds of birth? It is not their fault that he has committed massacres, burnings, murders. In fact, he is but retaliating now for the sins committed against himself. Arouse his feelings by mistreating these his nearest and dearest, and who will be responsible for his atrocities? Once assured that all hope is lost, that he can never regain wife or child, then he has nothing to live for, and will plunge into a very carnival of murder and massacre.

But, your Excellency and gentlemen of the Court, treat them with consideration, e'en though ye restrain them of their liberty, and, the knowl-

edge of it getting to King Philip, will doubtless mitigate his unnatural ferocity. For, he is now like a wolf or a bear, deprived of its whelps or cubs, and who can blame him for giving rein to his murderous hate?"

Let it be said to their credit, that the Governor and his coadjutors gave heed to Wilfred's impetuous harangue. They weighed the subject carefully pro and con; they called for evidence as to all mitigating circumstances in behalf of the prisoners; yet, with one accord, did they condemn them to slavery and life-long servitude, and decree their transportation to the West Indies!

When the sentence was interpreted to Queen Weetamoe, (who, with her associates, had awaited patiently, yet wearily, the expected verdict, though indulging in no hope of amnesty), she gave no other sign than a gesture of despair. But, the sight of these three comparatively innocent persons condemned to a fate which to them was worse than death itself, affected many of the spectators to tears. Especially did the youth and innocence of the little lad, Philip's only son, appeal to them, and the bright beauty of Awashan's lovely face.

But the hearts of the Pilgrim settlers were hardened against all who had Indian blood in their veins; for they had suffered too much, had been harried too terribly, had lost too many of their friends and kindred by cruel death and tortures, to allow their sympathies to plead for the poor prisoners.

Looking back upon the verdict of the Plymouth Court, after a lapse of more than two centuries, we may consider it harsh, even cruel; but there is no doubt that the judges considered themselves justified in severe measures against King Philip and his kindred.

Near the conclusion of the war, a special agent was sent over from England, to enquire into the causes of that outbreak, and report as to the culpability of both settlers and Indians. Following is his report, made at the time, in the quaint English of that day:.....

“As to the Causes and Results of King Philip’s Warre,” he says, “various are the Reports and Conjectures. Some impute it to the imprudent Zeal in the Magistrates of Boston, to Christianize those Heathen, before they were civilized, and injoyning them the strict Observance of their Lawes, which, to a People so rude and Li-

centious, hath proved Intollerable; and that the more for the Magistrates, for their Profit, put the Lawes so severely in Execution against the said Indians, the People (on the other Side, for Lucre and Gain) intice and provoke ye Indians to the Breach thereof, especially to Drunkenness, to which those People are so generally addicted that they will strip themselves to the Skin, to have their full of Rumme or Brandy.

“The Massachusettes having made a Lawe that every Indian drunke should pay 10 Shillings or be Whipp'd, according to the Discretion of ye Magistrates, many of these poor People willingly offered their Backes to the Lash, to save their Money; whereupon ye Magistrates, finding much Trouble and no Profit, to arise to the Government by whipping, did change that Punishment into 10 Days' Worke for such as could not, or would not, pay the Fine of 10 Shillings, which did highly Incense ye Indians.

“But, whatever the cause, ye English have contributed much to their Misfortunes, for they first taught ye Indians the use of Armes, and admitted them to be present at all their Musters and Trainings, and shewed them how to handle, mend and fix their Muskets; and having been

furnished with all sorts of Armes by permission of Government, so that ye Indians are become excellent Firemen.

“ And at Natick there was gathered a Church of Praying Indians, so called, who were exercised as trained Bands under Officers of their owne; these have been the most barbarous and cruel Enemies to the English of any others. Capt. Tom, their Leader, being lately taken and hanged, at Boston, with one other of their Chiefs.

“ No Advantage but many Disadvantages, have arisen to the English by the Warre, for about 600 Men have been slaine, and 12 Captaines, most of them brave and stout Persons and of loyal Principles; whilst ye Church Members had liberty to stay at Home and not hazard their Persons in ye Wildernesse.

“ The losse to ye English in ye severall Collonies, in their Habitations and their Stock, is reckoned to amount to 150,000 Pounds, there being about 1,200 Houses burned, 8,000 head of Cattel killed, and many thousand Bushels of Wheat, Pease, and other Graines, burned, of which ye Massachusetts Colony hath not been damnified one third Part; and upward of 3,000 Indians,

Men, Women and Children, destroyed,—who, if well managed, would have been very serviceable to ye English; which makes all manner of Labour very dear.

“The Warre at present is near an end. In Plymouth Colony ye Indians are surrendering themselves to Governour Winslow, upon Mercy and bring in all their Armes; are wholly at his disposall, except Life and Transportation; but for all such as have been notoriously Cruell to Women and Children, as soon as discovered they are to be executed in the sight of their fellow Indians. In the Peace concluded with ye Indians, they are to have Liberty to ‘sit down at their former Habitations, without let.’”

It was the misfortune of Weetamoe and her son that they were tried, before Governor Winslow's authority to hang and transport his prisoners was withdrawn. If they had been brought to justice later, after the Indians had been wholly subdued, there is no doubt they would have received clemency at the hands of the stern Pilgrims. But, coming before the Court, as they did, when King Philip was at the height of his bloody career, they suffered the full penalty for being allied to one so detested by the colonials.

While they accepted their fate with resignation, both their staunch friends, Wilfred and Captain Church, were disposed to rebel. "It is a tacit breach of trust," declared the latter. "E'en though I did not promise them freedom from transportation in so many words, it was because I had no thought that such a thing would be contemplated."

But he plead and raged to no purpose; neither were the further pleadings of his friend of any avail. One morning, a week after the trial, a foreign vessel might have been seen in Plymouth harbor, manned by Spaniards and Portuguese. Aboard this vessel six hundred Indian prisoners were taken, with manacles on their limbs, and thrust beneath the hatches.

CHAPTER XXIII.

HOW THE GREAT SACHEM MET HIS DEATH.

DURING the week that intervened between the trial and the transportation, Wilfred labored hard with the Governor and the magistrates to induce them to revoke their decision; but in vain. Had he and his friend, Captain Church, been less loyal, they would have denounced the colonial government and sulked in their tents; but, though they felt the authorities had been too severe, and were entirely in the wrong, they remained true to the cause; with sad hearts performing their duties, as it were under protest.

Captain Church, however, though urged by the Governor and Council to take the field again without delay, refused to leave town until the prisoners were aboard ship, and meanwhile entertained them at his mother's house, together with Wilfred and his family. As their white friends did all in their power to cheer them up

and make the fate in store for them seem brighter than it really was, the prisoners on parole gradually grew less gloomy, and at last, under the influence of their environment, became reconciled to their sentence, and even indulged in hopes for the future.

Between Wilfred and his parents, during that week of preparation, long and earnest discussions took place, which always ended with his mother in tears, and his father furious with vexation at having his authority opposed. The others had an inkling of what was going on, but only at the last moment was it made clear to them. Then they knew that Wilfred had been making one more effort for his friends, and had waged a last hard battle in their interests. Having abandoned all hope of clemency from the judges, he had come to a determination which no argument or appeal could shake.

Into the domestic warfare that was waged on Captain Church's hearthstone there entered an element of bitterness which had hitherto been foreign to the Wilkins household. For the first time, Goodman Wilkins found his son opposed to his authority in matters domestic. He appealed in vain to Church to aid him in reducing

his son to subjection, for the doughty Captain was really on Wilfred's side.

“Ods codfish! Goodman, let the rascal go, if he so desireth. I' faith, but I admire his pluck; and so wilt thou, my friend, when the rancors of this war have subsided. Let him go, I say, and honor him for his chivalry!”

At last his father yielded, and, as his mother had given her consent days before, (though with many a heart-pang at the thought of again losing her eldest son), Wilfred was allowed to have his way.

What this “way” was, appeared when the party gathered at the harbor-beach to bid the prisoners God-speed, and to wave a last farewell. Not only were the intimate friends of the prisoners there—those who had cheered and sustained them during their captivity—but hundreds of soldiers and the townspeople, the former led by the gallant Church, and who openly expressed their sympathy by vociferous cheers. It was very evident what an unfavorable light the populace viewed the matter in; for by this time their sympathies had prevailed against their opinions as to policy. Even some of those who had composed the Court seemed wavering, now

that the dread sentence was being carried into effect, and one was heard to say, that "if the trial was to come off now, ye captives might get a different verdict." But it was now, of course, too late. While the composure and perfect deportment of Weetamoe, Pometacom and Awashan had won entirely the hearts of such citizens as had met them, these had nothing to do with the making of the laws or the carrying of them into effect.

At last came the crucial moment. All the common prisoners having been taken aboard ship, all their effects having been carried there also, the small boat was now in waiting to take off the royal prisoners. It was manned by black-browed, brown-skinned foreigners, who looked more like pirates than ordinary sailors, and who awaited impatiently while the last words were said, the last injunctions given.

Then came the most dramatic happening of the leave-taking. Down through the throng behind the little group of sorrowful prisoners and their friends, rode no less a personage than the Governor himself. He paid no attention to the astonished looks and exclamations of the populace and soldiers, but rode straight through them

to the gathering by the boat. There he halted, and beckoning to Wilfred, said, while his brows were knit and his eyes seemed hard and stern, "Young man, I learn that thou'rt bent upon accompanying ye prisoners into their captivity. Is this thing true? Hast fully made up thy mind to do so?"

"I have, your Excellency," replied Wilfred firmly, yet respectfully.

"Ha, knowest not that I can forbid thy going? That I can put in operation a law aimed to prevent a citizen of this colony from leaving it in time of war?"

"Yea, know I full well, your Excellency. But, you will not do so."

"How now? Will not, sayst thou? *Will not!* I' faith, that's pretty talk, to one of my position, from a beardless youth."

The throng pressed forward, in order to behold the rash youth who had ventured to defy their Governor, and some of the rearmost raised a cheer, betokening their approval. But Wilfred stood silent, firm though not defiant, clasping in one hand the chubby fist of Philip's son, who had clung to him both by night and by day, and would not let him go.

“Yea, your Excellency, as thou sayest; still, I feel that thou art a man with the bowels of compassion, notwithstanding thou hast condemned these my friends to slavery. Surely wilt thou allow me the poor boon of accompanying them to that strange land, where they may be buffeted and wounded, without one to defend them, with no one to champion their cause, and with no one to protect this dear lad, who clingeth to me as his last refuge.”

“Right art thou,” exclaimed the Governor, throwing himself from his horse, and, his whole aspect changing. Advancing toward Wilfred with his hands outstretched, he took him in a close embrace, at the same time saying: “I *am* a man with ye bowels of mercy and compassion, and full sore hath it irked me to affirm this sentence! But, man and magistrate, are two separate and several persons, sooth, so that what I feel constrained to do as a magistrate, I loath and condemn as a man! In proof of this, I entreat thee to accept this *purse of gold*, the which is to be applied to thy necessities; and, perchance the opportunity offer, to the purchase of the freedom of these thy friends and our honored prisoners.”

So saying, he thrust into Wilfred's hand a fat purse, crammed to bursting with gold pieces, and made him keep it, too, despite his protests.

"Nay, nay," he said. "Perchance I have done wrong, acting in my capacity as magistrate, in some small manner I wish to make amends. It is not possible to revoke the sentence of banishment; but it is possible, once the captives sail to a far country, and thus comply with the letter of the law, for them to return! Hence it is we permit thee, brave lad, to accompany these kinfolk of Metacomet: that thou mayest exercise supervision over them, and at the right moment secure their liberty, perchance they return hither.

"And wilt grant them amnesty, peradventure this may be brought about?" demanded Wilfred."

"That will I, perchance the war be ended, and Metacomet hath done nothing that may cause us to change our views."

"Then, father, mother, sister, brother, friends all, here-assembled, ye hear what our good Governor hath said. We go now joyfully, as on a pleasure voyage; when at the first it seemed we were going to our doom. Wint., my brother, care for our dear ones while I am away. It may

not be for long, perchance. I would you could go with me, but that cannot be. In the nature of this business, one must stay, while one goeth out on the vasty deep." Then, having communicated the welcome news to Pometacom and his mother—Awashan having already heard it and rejoiced—Wilfred assisted them into the boat, and their voyage was really begun.

All went off, however, with joy betokened in their faces, as if on an excursion of pleasure, instead of a venturesome voyage to a far and unknown country. So long as the boat remained in sight, the crowd ashore could see the little son of dread Metacomet snuggling in the arms of his friend, seeming to care naught for his banishment, so long as it was in his company. Even the wan faces of the two women showed traces of smiles, now and then, and a determination to endure their fate with fortitude.

So they went off into the great unknown, these four, together with six hundred more; while the man of all men who had been most instrumental in their banishment, rode with sour visage up the strand, through the throng, back to his chair of state. The people had signified their approbation of his generous act,—when he had acted

the man, and spurned the magistrate, that artificial creation of mean-spirited lawyers—; they had shouted out their approval in a mighty cheer; so it was well shown to Governor Winslow, what acts of his were most like to meet with approval from the populace.

The Wilkins family went back to the Hilltop Fort, within which they had erected a comfortable domicile, supplementing the camp, and where they staid until the war was over. Winthrop strove sturdily to fill Wilfred's place, and little Dorothy, child that she was, tried to forget her own grief at her brother's departure by helping her mother and grandmother in their household labors. She had shared with Pometacom the shelter of Wilfred's strong arms, and fain would have gone with them to the Barbadoes; but was comforted by the Indian lad's assurance that when he returned he would perhaps be a big brave, then, and would make her sachemess of Pokanoket!

After this, the scenes in the great drama of blood and desolation were quickly shifted. Deprived of the hope that sometime he might see and shelter his wife and son, Philip became desperate, at the same time he seemed to lose the

shrewd cunning, which had aided him so well in his attacks upon the settlers. He was fiendish in the tortures he applied to his captives; but they were fewer than before, and soon the tables turned. Instead of being the hunter, he was the hunted; surrounded by troops and militia on every side, he was driven to seek refuge once more in the swamps about his ancient seat of Pokanoket, the various hiding-places in which were now known to some of his enemies, almost as well as himself.

The last act of the drama was opened about mid-summer of 1676, when Captain Church, convinced that an end to the war could be brought about only by the capture of Metacomet, once more took the field, armed with a commission from the Governor that gave him ample power.

“To Captain Benjamin Church,”—this Commission read: “You are hereby nominated, ordered, commissioned and empowered to raise a company of volunteers of about two hundred men, English and Indians; the English not exceeding the number of sixty, to discover, pursue, fight, surprise, destroy or subdue our Indian enemies, or any part or party of them, that, by the providence of God you may meet; or them, or

any of them, by treaty and composition to receive mercy, if you see reason (provided they be not murtherous rogues, or such as have been principall actors in those villanies).

And forasmuch as your company may be uncertain, and the persons often changed, you are also hereby empowered, with the advice of your company, to choose and commissionate a Lieutenant, and to establish Sergeants and Corporals, as you see cause.

And you, herein improving your best judgment and discretion, and utmost ability, faithfully to serve the interest of God, his Majesty's interest, and the interest of the Colony; and carefully governing ye said Company at home and abroad. These shall be unto you a full and ample commission, warrant and discharge. Given under the publick Seal, this 24th day of July, 1676."

Per Jos. Winslow, Governour."

The very same night he received his commission (which was the most liberal and far-reaching issued to an officer of his rank during the war) Captain Church marched into the woods, camping early in the morning at Munponset Pond, where he captured a band of Narraganset

Indians. By sudden surprises and swift marches, he in this manner carried terror to the Indian allies, who quickly abandoned the hitherto great sachem, and Philip, left with only a few of his most faithful friends, buried himself in the swamp surrounding Pokanoket mountain.

This was about the middle of August. So swiftly had Captain Church pursued his career of conquest, that but a little more than two weeks elapsed between the time he received his commission to go out on the forlorn hope, and the time King Philip was really brought to bay. The secret of this success lay in the fact that the wily Church, taking heed to the lessons of his defeats, had impressed the services of the friendly Indians, and even caused those at first hostile to the colonial cause to join his ranks.

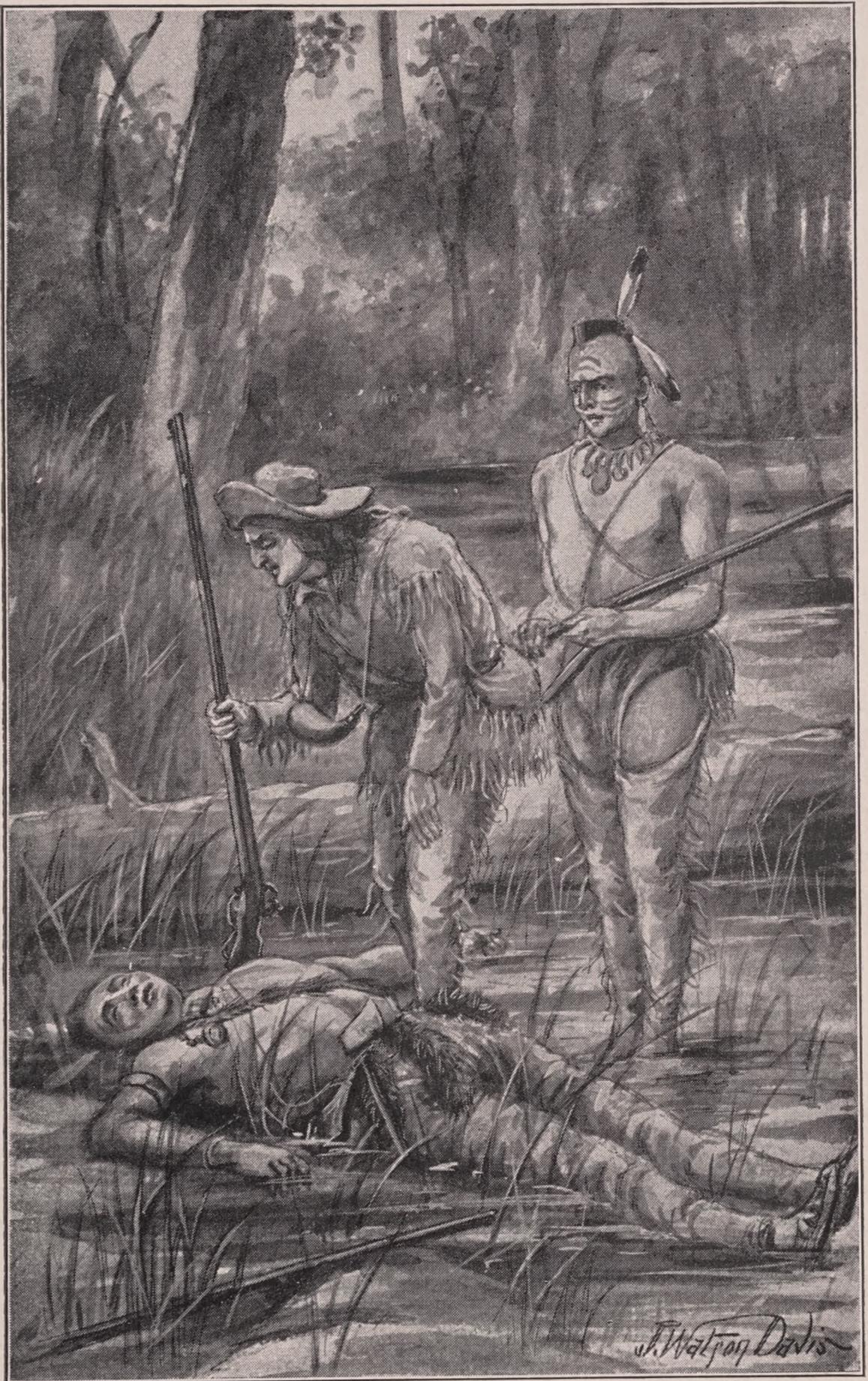
One of the disaffected Indians, who had been threatened by King Philip with instant death for recommending a surrender, went to Church and told him he could lead him and his company to the sachem's hiding-place. "In the providence of our God," wrote Parson Miles to Wilfred (who was then in Barbadoes in the West Indies) "this manœuvre succeeded, else

we might be hunting that dread sachem to this day, and after all might miss his hiding-place.

“ Know ye, (but exercise your discretion in communicating this information to his kindred who are with you) that the so-called King Philip, who hath been a pestilent Ringleader, that had once many hundred men barbarously inclined, was now reduced to a small company of two-score, before he was killed—as followeth :

“ He being hid in a Swamp on Mount Hope Neck, with his little Party, one of his Indians being discontented with him, made an Escape from him and came to Taunton and informed Capt. Church, our valiant Plymouth officer of a Company that was in search after said Philip.

“ The Captayne being on an island refreshing his Men with necessary Provisions, (but understanding where King Philip was, and that he intended very speedily to remove afar offe, to provide his winter Quarters, retaining still his same barbarous Spirit and Purposes, without the least Appearance of Reluctancy or offers of Mediation) whereupon the said Captayne and his Company went in Pursuit of said King Philip, taking ye Indian Guide with them. They beset a Swamp, where they heard he was, which



Approaching the place where the body lay, upon search it appeared to be the redoubtable King Philip.

was very Mirey, and the Ground so loose that our Men sank to their Middles in their Attempts to come to this skulking Company; but all in Vaine, the Passage was too difficult.

“While they were thus Beset with Difficulties in the Attempt, the Providence of God most wonderfully Appeared, for, by Chance, the Indian Guide and ye Plimouth Captayne being together, the Guide espied an hostile Indian and bids ye Captayne shoot; whose Gunne went not offe, only flashed in ye Pan. With that ye hostile Indian looked about, and was going to shoote; but ye Plimouth Man prevented him and shot ye Enemy through the Body, dead, with a brace of Bullets! And, approaching the Place where he lay, upon search it appeared to be *ye redoubtable King Philip*,—to their no small Amazement and great Joy. This seasonable Prey was soon divided, for they cut offe his Head and Hands, and conveyed them to Rhode Island, and quartered his Body and hung it upon four great Trees. One Indian more of King Philip’s Company they killed, and some of the Rest they wounded; but the Swamp being so thick and miry, most of them made their escape.”

“Captayne Church ordered the Body to be pulled out of ye Mire, so some of his Indians took hold of him by his Stockings and some by his small Breeches (he being otherwise Naked) and drew him through ye Mud to the Upland; and a great, doleful, naked, dirty Beast he looked like, forsooth. Captain Church said that forasmuch as he had caused many an Englishman's Body to rot above Ground, that not one of his Bones should be Buried. And calling his old Indian executioner, he bid him behead and quarter him. Accordingly he came with his Hatchet and stood over him; but before he struck, he made a small Speech, directing it to Philip, saying that he had been a very big Man, and had made many a Man afraid of him; but, so big as he was, he would now chop him to Pieces; and he went to work accordingly.”

With the death of King Philip, the war was practically ended; but there still remained several sagamores who had fought with him and who kept to the fields for months thereafter. One of these sagamores, on being captured, said to Captain Church, “Man, you first made Metacomet ready to die, and made him poor and miserable as he used to make the English, by

killing or capturing all his relations; for his heart was broken when he lost his wife and child; and now you have his head! There is now nothing more to fight for; all the sagamores will yield, now, for the end is nigh."

His prediction was true, for the last of the great sagamores was taken at the end of the summer. This was Anawon, who had been with Philip in the swamp, and whom Captain Church heard urging on his men to fight with great shouts of: "Iootash! Iootash!" He escaped, but soon after was taken by stratagem, and accompanied Church to Plymouth, where he was put to death, notwithstanding the protests of his gallant captor. One night, while Church and his company, with their prisoners, were encamped in the forest, Sagamore Anawon, who was sleeping by the Captain's side, arose and crept into the darkness.

Thinking he might intend to return and murder him, Captain Church prepared for his coming by priming his piece and keeping wary watch. But the grand old man soon showed his good intentions by returning unarmed, as he had left.

"Great Captain," he said, addressing his cap-

tor, " You have killed King Philip and conquered his country; for I believe that I and my company are the last that war against the English. So the war is ended by your means, and surely these things belong to you. Thereupon he opened a pack he had brought with him, and pulled out at first King Philip's belt of wampum, curiously wrought in various figures of birds, beasts and flowers. It was nine inches broad, and when hung upon Captain Church's shoulders reached his ankles. Another band of wampum was that which King Philip used to wear upon his head, as a sort of crown. This had two flags on the back part, which hung down his back; while another smaller belt was adorned with a star, and this he used to hang upon his breast.

These wampum belts, with their rude figures of animals and flowers, had been made by fair Weetamoe and Awashan, who, while the great King Philip's spoil was being bestowed upon his captor, were exiles in a far country 'neath a tropic sky. With them, as we know, was the hero of our story, who had tried in vain to win Philip from the career that ended in his shameful death, and also the son of the great sachem, who,

but for the war, might have succeeded Philip as King of the Wampanoags.

Inglorious was the death of King Philip, and base the betrayal of his hiding-place by the Indian who had once been his follower and shared his hospitality. But, however brought about, that death was necessary to the ending of the war, and, hastened as it was by Captain Church, to him should be the glory attaching to its consummation. His deeds are chronicled in history; but those of his young friend and comrade, Wilfred Wilkins, have been hidden in the obscurity of colonial records, and now for the first time see the light.

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As a historical romance "Darnley" is a book that can be taken up pleurably again and again, for there is about it that subtle charm which those who are strangers to the works of G. P. R. James have claimed was only to be imparted by Dumas.

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